Larry Mosqueda

Interviewed by Anthony Zaragoza

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Zaragoza: Just start by telling us your name and where you're from.

Mosqueda: Okay. Larry Mosqueda, now from Olympia, Washington. I was born in Fort Madison, Iowa and grew up in Des Moines, Iowa. I went to college at Iowa State University for my bachelor's. I went to the University of Washington in Seattle for a master's and Ph.D. I graduated from Iowa State 1971 with a B.S in political science; Master's in political science at the University of Washington in 1973, and a Ph.D. in 1979.

Zaragoza: Is there anything about your early life in Iowa that is memorable to you, is important to you, was formative to who you would become?

Mosqueda: Well, I went to 12 years of Catholic school, which is interesting, including an all-boys Catholic school. So I learned about the church, and I stopped being a Catholic the first Sunday of my freshman year of college because it's didn't make any sense. I figured out it doesn't really make any sense; because if it made sense, it wouldn't be faith. That's why it's called faith.

What I did later, I wrote my dissertation on the Catholic Church, *Chicanos, Catholicism and Political Ideology*, which later got published as a book, so I didn't just have some fall-off-the-horse myth routine like St. Paul, but basically, I analyzed what was going on and figured out that this is not something I wanted to do.

We grew up fairly poor. I remember we moved about—I think my mother said she didn't want to move anymore after their final house that we moved into when I was in college—something like 20 times. Working-class background. My dad was a high school dropout but got his GED. But he was really smart. He scored 99 percentile on the math part of the GED. He was born in 1930, as was my mother. They would have gone to college in the modern era, but as a Mexican growing up in the 1930s and '40s and '50s, that wasn't an opportunity that existed for them.

Zaragoza: Anything else about your early life that you feel was maybe a turning point or is important?

Mosqueda: Turning point before college, so you mean?

Zaragoza: Yeah.

Mosqueda: Not necessarily, just that I grew up in the Catholic Church, and lived in about three or four different towns in Iowa—Fort Madison, Iowa, where I was born; Des Moines, Iowa; Davenport, Iowa; back to Fort Madison; then back to Des Moines. And also, my blue-collar family. My dad was a factory worker and also became a barber, and my mother was always working, but she was always a homemaker, too. But she was always working various jobs.

When I was 14, they started a Mexican restaurant in a little corner of a building that was about the size, I would say, of this dining room, which is about 10 X 15 feet—really a takeout place. They didn't really start to make any significant money on that until I left to go to graduate school. But now they own six restaurants—pretty good-sized restaurants—in Des Moines, Iowa, so they're pretty well known in Des Moines, Iowa now. My dad died in the year 2000; my mother is still alive.

Zaragoza: What about in college or graduate school, some important memories from those times?

Mosqueda: In college, I joined the Army ROTC. Because I started college in '67 and the Vietnam War was on then, and I tended to be, I think I classified myself as a liberal, like a Kennedy-type liberal, an 18-year-old type of liberal. Kennedy was killed in '63. The Vietnam War was on, so I figured, well, I'm going to get drafted and go to war, so I might as well be an officer, a lieutenant in the Army. So I was in the ROTC for two years, but they didn't teach me about the Vietnam War in ROTC. I mean, nothing. No class whatsoever, just techniques.

But I studied on my own and talked to a lot of veterans who were coming back, and they were really critical of the war. I studied on my own and I decided this war was wrong and I wasn't going to go no matter what, so I quit ROTC after two years and became antiwar activist. So I can actually trace my political development from being a liberal—basically a Democratic Party liberal—into being an antiwar activist, which means peace activist, to becoming, a couple years after that, an anti-imperialist activist, which is different from being antiwar, and then becoming more of a Marxist analysis in my first year of graduate school. So it wasn't like, again, falling off a horse like St. Paul having an epiphany. It was a gradual analysis of what was wrong with American society and what was right and what could be done.

Zaragoza: What year was it that you dropped out of the ROTC?

Mosqueda: April '69.

Zaragoza: At that point, how old are you? What year were you born?

Mosqueda: May 1, 1949, so I was 19 years old. So essentially, at 19 I figured—because I was talking about these issues and studying the issues, and I remember myself actually arguing for the war when I was a freshman in college with other people, sort of like I'm not going to kill or anything, but sort of trying to be like real politic from a liberal standpoint. And then I figured out how wrong I was about that, and then I became active in the antiwar movement.

Zaragoza: What about graduate school in terms of important moments for you, formative events or processes that led you to the life that you have lived?

Mosqueda: I started graduate school in the fall of 1971. I had quit ROTC, then they had a lottery draft, and I wasn't going to go anyway, but I got a large number, like 330 or something, so I wasn't going to get drafted either. But I was planning to leave the country—go to Mexico or Canada or someplace like that—but when I got to graduate school in '71, I remember being in a graduate seminar, and Ken Dolbeare was actually one of my faculty. Do you know Ken Dolbeare?

Zaragoza: I don't know him but we've had correspondence over e-mail.

Mosqueda: Yeah, so he was what I considered to be an old man back then. He was in his forties [laughing] and I was 22. But he's old now; I think he's in his eighties or something. I think he lives in Columbia.

Zaragoza: That's right.

Mosqueda: So anyway, he was one of my instructors. Other people were instructors, too. I remember saying in class—because they were talking something about being an armchair critic or an armchair liberal or something, or a street corner critic—and I said, "I'm a street corner Marxist." [laughing] Which meant that I really hadn't read any real Marx yet, but it made sense to me. The Vietnam War and the anti-Vietnam movement in '71. The Vietnam War was really big, and so '71 to '73, up to '75, the Vietnam War was really a big issue, and I was still in graduate school.

But also, the Chicano movement was big in the 1970s, especially in Seattle, so I got involved with them. And it's interesting because I was considered one of the more radical people in graduate school in our Political Science Department. But also, there was still a little bit of identity politics that was going on, although I'm not a real believer in identity politics per se. But I could tell that the black students, who were like hardcore radicals, including some Panther types, they liked me because I wasn't white. And some of the white radicals liked me because they weren't accepted by the blacks, so they

could have a person of color that they would know. So it looked like my life was going to be—when I wasn't living in LA, I was going to be the diversity among different people. [laughing] That was actually one of the things, too.

And my Spanish was never very good, so I really wasn't—I remember one time I was thinking I should be a nationalist. But I figured, hell, I can't be a nationalist. I can't even speak the damn language. [laughter]

Zaragoza: What your parents' take on the Vietnam War and on the Chicana/Chicano movement?

Mosqueda: I don't remember discussing the Vietnam War with them per se, although I must have, sort of about being in antiwar demonstrations. But I think that they were worried that my brother and I might have to go off to war and stuff like that, so they didn't really want to talk about it that much. But also, they didn't want to go outside the mainstream of American life. When I was in ROTC, they said that was good because I got to wear my little uniform and everything, but when I quit ROTC, that was fine with them, too, because whatever I wanted to do about that.

The Chicano Movement, actually, they were very much in favor of a Mexican-American Movement but not the Chicano Movement per se because the word "Chicano" was like the word "queer" in gay and lesbian culture. Basically, it was not always a really acceptable term per se in the 1960s, 1970s, because it actually had sort of political connotations. Now it's much more acceptable, but in the '60s and '70s, there really wasn't a Chicano Movement in Iowa. It was more civil rights for Mexicans.

I was involved in MEChA, too, at the University of Washington, but I always tell people that I think there was like probably maybe close to 10 Chicanos at Iowa State University when I went to school there, out of 20,000 students, and about three or four were cousins. So it really wasn't a MEChA meeting, it was more like a cousins' reunion and we sat around the table. [laughing]

Zaragoza: What was your parents' history in terms of what brought them to Iowa? How long had they been there? What's their backstory?

Mosqueda: My grandparents are all from Mexico from the Irapato, Guanajuato area. They came at in different times. They didn't know each other back then. I had two sets of grandparents. Both my grandfathers worked on the Santa Fe Railroad, and the Santa Fe Railroad, as you know, goes from Mexico to Chicago.

Zaragoza: Yep. That's the same railroad that my great-grandfather worked on.

Mosqueda: Yeah, probably in Kansas or something?

Zaragoza: Yeah, Kansas City to St. Louis.

Mosqueda: Yeah, and people got dropped off along the way and worked along the way.

So Fort Madison is along the way from Texas to Chicago, and so that's how they ended up living there in a Mexican community there. And it really was Mexican; it really wasn't Chicano. I've seen the old pictures of Fort Madison, Iowa, and literally, the Mexicans lived in these huts, like these dormitory-type huts that had big concrete walls, and a family living in each one. I remember both of my grandparents literally lived on the other side of the tracks—you know that old saying?

Zaragoza: Yeah.

Mosqueda: But literally, the tracks were 10 feet in front of the house, and so that's where the Mexicans lived. Then both neighborhoods were on the other side of the tracks. So we lived there and that's where I was born.

I can remember actually the poorest person on the block where my maternal grandparents [lived] was this white family. And they were the poor, poor. I remember some girl named Beatrice or something, she lived down the block. They were so poor they had to live with Mexicans. [laughter] That type of thing. So I remember the poverty. But also I remember we always had enough to eat, beans and tortillas, everything like that. Plus, a lot of the family lived in the same neighborhood, the extended family and people like that.

Zaragoza: Did your parents have the consciousness that it was poor and working-class people, especially poor and working-class people of color, who were being sent to fight and die in Vietnam disproportionately?

Mosqueda: No, I don't think so, at least they never said that to me specifically. They were conscious of being Mexican, because I remember doing a lot of research, talk about being Mexican, Mexican-American or Chicano, so they would actually go with the word Mexican or Mexican-American. And there actually were a lot of Mexicans there—people from Mexico—in the area, too. Other people were Mexican-Americans, so I think they were trying to sort of be Mexican-American. But they never really discussed whether there were a disproportionate number of people going to Vietnam.

Zaragoza: So, you drop out of the ROTC, you finish college, you go on to graduate school. Other memorable events during your graduate school time that you want to talk about?

Mosqueda: I estimate that it took me about six more months to graduate from with my Ph.D. than it would have if I hadn't been an activist, but it wouldn't have been a rich experience at all. I finished in eight years; I think the average at the UW was 10. I was doing well in graduate school, and doing what I wanted to do, although I never really had the exact goal of being a college professor or getting a Ph.D. It was just graduate school. So when I finished undergraduate school and went to the University of Washington, it took two years to get a master's, and I did that okay. Then I did another couple years of graduate courses, and I passed my exams and I said, "Well, I might as well get a Ph.D. You're getting close." So it was just doing that. And I got a Ford Foundation scholarship back in 1975, after I finished my exams, to do my dissertation on the Catholic Church, *Chicanos, Catholicism and Political Ideology*.

I remember being in a lot of protests, being in a lot of demonstrations, sit-ins and things like that. I remember one of the times when they were taking over the President's office—the students of color taking over the President's office—I was designated as one of the leaders, so I went to go and negotiate with the President. One of the things I learned was to not be the leader, not be identified as the leader, but sort of be a representative, because he wanted us to do things and we kept telling him, "We can't do that, so I have to go back and talk to people." That was one of the things that was happening in Seattle in the 1970s.

I met a lot of different community people, too, like Roberto Maestas, the Chicano activist, now deceased. I remember helping to take over the Beacon Hill, which is El Centro now. Those type of things. There was a lot of good people, and I learned a lot from them.

Zaragoza: What was Seattle like at that time? We're talking mid-to-late [19]70s, right?

Mosqueda: Yeah. When I arrived there, that was when Boeing has just laid off 50,000 people, so the price of housing was really, really cheap. My first apartment was a studio [that was] $50 a month, and so I could find a place right away. I remember the last spring quarter of my first year, I rented a house with another guy and it was only like $175 a month for a whole house—fairly nice house—in Seattle in the Wallingford area, which is close to the University. I remember a friend of mine bought a house the next year—a graduate student did—for $15,000 overlooking Green Lake. Probably worth about $800,000 now.

Zaragoza: If not a million.

Mosqueda: That was a small house, too. So, it was a fairly cheap place, but it didn't occur to me to buy property in Seattle. That wasn't really what I was doing. I met my future wife Patty, in '73. I remember it was a month before my M.A. exams.

Zaragoza: Do you want to talk about how you met?

Mosqueda: Yeah, we met with a mutual friend that has just introduced us, and so we started dating at the end of the same month I got my M.A. We've been together since then, since 1973, and we got married in '77. And also, as I mentioned, I got my Ford Foundation grant to do my dissertation. Part of it was to go to Mexico and go to LA, and so I went to Mexico for three months to take some Spanish classes at Cuernavaca, and then we moved to LA to do some research there. And you have these visions that you're going to get it done in a year—a year seemed like a long time—but obviously, it didn't happen in a year. [laughing]

Zaragoza: Was Patty active alongside you as you were going through this?

Mosqueda: Yeah, somewhat, although a little bit less than me, but really supportive. She was teaching Head Start and things like that in Seattle. We lived in LA '76 to '79, and we got a place in Venice Beach, of all places, so that was nice. A friend of mine taught at UCLA, a graduate student buddy, and so I stayed with him for about a month, and then we looked for a place to stay. We found a place in Venice Beach for $250 a month. [laughing] I've been back there since, and the place is still the same but I think it's like several thousands, $2,000 a month or something. One of those kinds of places. Because it really wasn't fancy, but it had a view of the water, right on the water, like 50 feet from the beach—from the sand—and we could see the beach from our living room.

Zaragoza: So you then go back to Seattle to finish up your Ph.D.?

Mosqueda: Not to live, no. I got a year fellowship, but I wasn't done so I applied for an extension for a year, and fortunately I got that, so that worked out really well. After that, I started looking for a job. I got a job at Claremont Colleges in Southern California. Do you know where Claremont is? It's about 70 miles from the Santa Monica area in Southern California. And it was in Chicano studies, so I taught there. Because I wasn't affiliated with a university per se in LA, although I had a UCLA library card and stuff like that, I joined NACCS.

Zaragoza: Yeah, National Association of [Chicana and] Chicano Studies.

Mosqueda: The local LA people. So I would meet them on a regular basis. I would deliver papers at meetings. Some of the people at Claremont liked my paper on the Catholic Church, so I got a job interview there, and that's how I got the job there. That worked out well.

Zaragoza: What was Chicana/Chicano studies like at Claremont in the late '70s?

Mosqueda: Yeah, it would be '77 to '79. It really was just starting up, and again, it was the result of a protest by students from the previous couple years before. So we were all brand-new. Literally, they hired five people, and we were all brand-new and it was a brand-new department. We were all fairly young, like early thirties, late twenties. That was good. We had a historian, myself, somebody in psychology, somebody in language, anthropology and somebody in something else. That was basically Chicano studies. We really weren't at one college. Claremont Men's, Pomona; we were supposed to service the entire five colleges, like Scripps, but I was actually housed in the Claremont Men's College, who is now Claremont McKenna.

I found out later it was one of the most conservative campuses in the country that's legitimate, you know, it's not Oral Roberts or some other ridiculous school, but it was a legitimate school. But I didn't really like it because it was too conservative, the campus, and kind of boring, so I ended up moving back to Venice after a year. I was still teaching at Claremont, so I would drive in to teach, but live in Venice as I was finishing the final draft of my dissertation. I decided that I wasn't going to apply for the regular position at Claremont, so I played out my final second year and then applied for a job at the University of Colorado in Denver. They had a job that sounded like it was just written for me, and I ended up getting that job.

Zaragoza: What was that transition like from California to Denver?

Mosqueda: It was good because it was actually sort of a semi-radical department. The University of Colorado Denver (UCD) had a small department, about five people, and so we had a Latin Americanist, myself, another political scientist, literature and people like that. It was fairly leftist and I ended up being a fairly well-known radical in Denver for 10 years.

That was interesting, too, because the University of Denver, which is a private school, and which is different from the University of Colorado at Denver, I got to be friends with the chairman of the University of Denver, and he wanted to recruit me for a position there. I didn't really want to do it, but I did it anyway. I interviewed for the job and didn't get the job and it was because of racial discrimination. I know that because we sued them. [laughing] People who get discriminated against usually are on their own against a college, but since the chairman had actually recruited me, and he had a cadre of people who were supporting him—about three or four people—it was me and the chairman suing the University of Denver. So the chairman of the department was suing the university, too. So we had inside people, not just me and what I felt, but he was actually in the meetings where they were talking about me, and the other faculty who didn't like me were saying things like I looked "too

Mexican." That was actually a quote. [laughing] I'm not sure what that meant. And also that I couldn't be objective in teaching Chicano students—probably—and I couldn't be objective in teaching white students, which means you couldn't be objective in teaching, period. So, we sued. That took about two years of depositions and everything. We even had Leonard Weinglass as an attorney for about three or four months, but we ended up with somebody else.

Zaragoza: What was the result of that lawsuit?

Mosqueda: We ended up suing and settling out of court, to our satisfaction. That was like 30 years ago, at least. No, more than that, like 35 years ago. They said they were going to recruit people. It was one of those things where they don't admit guilt and all that kind of stuff.

Zaragoza: Right, but they tried to make some kind of amends.

Mosqueda: Yeah. The chairman of the department, of course, resigned his job but he got another job because he was really good. His name was Dennis Judd and he was a really good political scientist. He got a job at the University of Missouri St. Louis. I think he's retired now. He also taught at the University of Illinois Chicago Circle. I'm pretty sure he's there.

Zaragoza: What kinds of political activism were you doing in Denver?

Mosqueda: I was in in Denver from '79 to '89, and so I was involved first with the Nicaragua Movement, and then with El Salvador, and then combining them, Central America. Again, the Chicano Movement that existed in Denver—because there's a lot of Chicanos in Denver—but I mostly was involved in antiwar stuff. The Vietnam War was over, but I was working with Central America, and I was one of the leaders in the CASA—Central America Solidarity Alliance—which is a group we had in Denver. That's when I really got involved in El Salvador issues.

I started going to Central America/El Salvador then. My first trip to Nicaragua was 1984. I went there twice in '84, including the elections. And one thing I decided to do back then was to go to every election in Central America for the rest of the century, from '84 to 2000, which is what I did for both Nicaragua and El Salvador. I ended up integrating my political work with my academic work, which is all legitimate. I always tell people when I teach classes, "If you have somebody who's teaching movies, like Anne Fischel, you want somebody who actually makes movies, not just talks about movies. And if you went to medical school, you want somebody that actually operates on people and not just give you a textbook, a medical book. And law school, too, you want somebody that actually practices law and not just somebody who talks about law. So, in political science, you want somebody that actually gets involved with political aspects."

Zaragoza: With the process.

Mosqueda: Yeah, with the process. Which is actually accepted if you're within the overall "normal" quote "paradigm," like a Democrat or a Republican. Because if you look at Kissinger and people like that—the right-wingers—there's nothing wrong with them being involved with politics as long as they're within the Democrat or Republican Party. But if you're a radical, oftentimes people don't like you to be involved with politics because you're outside the mainstream. But I integrated my political work, which was especially Central America work, with my academic work because I'd always bring it into the classroom and talk about real life and talk about what was going on in the world in Latin America, especially Central America.

Zaragoza: What was the activist scene like in Denver during those days?

Mosqueda: There were quite a few activists in Denver, especially around Central America, you know, Salvador and Nicaragua. I can remember the Nicaragua 1979 revolution up to 1990 when the Sandinistas lost the election. That was always a big scene.

I figured out there were radical people who were supporting the revolution, there were religious people supporting the revolution, and then there were people who were antiwar. That's why I made earlier the reference that it's one thing to be antiwar, it's another thing to be anti-imperialist, because a lot of antiwar people aren't necessarily against American foreign policy overall, they're just against wars. So I try to focus more on the anti-imperialist aspects.

I ended up meeting a lot of interesting people, including who were contras, because Pedro Chamorro, he was one of these contra leaders in the 1980s, working with the Reagan administration. And his family, the Chamorro family, they're part of the people who were working with the Somoza family before. So he was a contra leader, but then he eventually, over a couple years, became an anti-contra leader, because even though he was rich, he recognized that what he was doing, what his family was doing, was wrong. So our group hosted him as he became an anti-contra leader.

I remember going out to dinner with him one time in Denver—it was me and him having dinner in a Denver Mexican restaurant—and some guy came over and he recognized him, and he was actually a right-winger. So me and Chamorro were sitting there, two Latin American people—him from Central America, me from here—but the other guy must have assumed that I was a right-winger, too. Because they were talking about training camps in Nevada—they had training camps in Nevada—and so one of the ways to get intelligent information is to not say anything and let people talk.

So there was quite a bit of activity going on in Denver at the time. And also I got involved in Central America. Remember the Miskito-Sandinista dispute in the 1980s?

Zaragoza: Yes.

Mosqueda: Some of the people who were the leaders of the anti-Sandinista were actually in Denver, Colorado, including some people in our department, and including people at the University of Colorado. Ward Churchill was there, and I knew him way back when.

Zaragoza: And he was pro-Sandinista and anti-Miskito?

Mosqueda: No, he was pro-contra Miskito . . .

Zaragoza: . . . and anti-Sandinista.

Mosqueda: And pro-contra.

Zaragoza: Oh, wow.

Mosqueda: We actually became personal enemies. And he threatened me twice. He physically threatened me twice in different meetings, one time in private and another time in public. Because when he threatened me in private, he said there was going to be blood flowing in the group of six people. So I wanted to get him mad in public, so I got him mad in public and he threatened me again, so it could be a public threat. That was actually one of the things that were going on in Denver when I was there. And I think we won that one, too.

Zaragoza: Wow. I mean, that's an interesting position to take.

Mosqueda: Yeah, well, he said he was an Indian—Ward—but I know Ward basically, because if you take a look at his history way back. First of all, he was in Vietnam as a Green Beret, but I know people who were Green Berets back in Vietnam who were anti-war. But he was working, when he got back, with *Soldier of Fortune* magazine in Boulder, Colorado. And he doesn't have a Ph.D. He got a master's. I don't know how he got his job at the University of Colorado, his teaching job. I think it was strictly political. But basically, he was an anti-communist. He was always an anti-communist, so he transferred that anti-communism to anti-Sandinista, who weren't really communists to begin with. So, pretending he was an Indian, because one of the things that the liberal left in America like is the Native people, so they try to be like their liberal and leftist by saying they are for Indian rights. So he would actually try to race-bait people into saying that white people are racist against Indians, when in fact he was a white person himself. He said he was Métis. Do you know what Métis are?

Zaragoza: Yeah, Métis.

Mosqueda: In Canada?

Zaragoza: Yeah, French Canadians who are mixed peoples.

Mosqueda: Yeah. Because when I first heard that term I figured, well, what tribe is that? Then after I figured out it was just like Mestizo, like I'm Mestizo, right? Mexican-Americans who are part Indian. And so I was going to challenge him. "I'm an Iowa Indian Mestizo." [laughing] When actually I'm a Chicano from Iowa. So he's just a white guy, and he never really did prove that he was a Native American at all.

Zaragoza: Were there other interesting characters in Denver that you want to speak about who made an impact on you politically, intellectually, as a teacher?

Mosqueda: There were people coming in. I remember I met Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz when she was there. She wasn't teaching there but she was coming through. Also Bertram Gross. He wrote the book called *Friendly Fascism*. He was coming through, and he was very political and radical. In fact, he wrote one of the letters for me to get tenure at the political science department, reading my stuff. There was a lot of people I've learned from who were activists as opposed to just academics.

Zaragoza: Where do you go after Denver?

Mosqueda: After Denver, because I really didn't want to stick around Denver my entire life, there were only really two jobs I wanted. One was the University of Washington in Seattle and the other was Evergreen, because I went to graduate school here so I knew the area. Seattle is obviously a really great city and UW is a good place to be in Seattle. So I got a job interview there but I didn't get the job in the couple of years before I came to Evergreen.

I got a job interview at San Francisco State in 1988. It was an interesting place, too, because one of the things—I didn't get that job, and I met the chairman a couple months later at some conference, and he said, "They really wanted somebody to teach Marxism but they didn't want a Marxist." [laughing] At least he was upfront about it. Which is legal because it is illegal to discriminate based on race, gender and all that kind of stuff, but it's not illegal to discriminate based on politics, because that's not a protected class.

Zaragoza: Especially those politics.

Mosqueda: Yeah, those politics are not a protected class. So I didn't get that job. But in 1989, I got this job interview at Evergreen, and again, the description looked like it written just for me. I applied for it and I got this job. So then I stuck around Evergreen since then, so it worked out pretty well.

Zaragoza: Thirty years you've been here almost.

Mosqueda: Thirty years, yeah. Seattle is a little bit nicer, but then I'd have to get the money to buy a house. Even then, in the '80s or '90s, it would have been difficult and probably maybe not impossible. But also, this is better. San Francisco would have been okay, too, but this is actually a good place to raise kids- Olympia is.

Zaragoza: What were your first impressions and your early experiences at Evergreen [in the] late '80s, early '90s?

Mosqueda: Basically it looked like it was a fairly radical, progressive place. In fact, I told people that on my job interview, I had three interviews—you know how Evergreen makes you work too hard—so I gave three basic talks. I did something on my dissertation on the Catholic Church, so I talked against the church in my dissertation. Then I talked about American foreign policy, and then I talked about colleges as a whole. I didn't really need the job because I had tenure. I sort of wanted the job but I didn't need it, so you get a lot less nervous if you don't need the job. I ended up getting the job, so I figured I'm going to try to make it even more radical, which is what I've tried to do.

Luckily, I found a kindred spirit in Peter Bohmer, because he was here already. He was already radical doing his stuff, so I could become more radical here, too. It also came with Patrick Hill. I don't know if you knew him?

Zaragoza: I didn't know him but I know about him.

Mosqueda: He was actually a fairly radical, really leftist Provost, and he was pretty good. He was the person who I mentioned before, hired me as a wildcard; Angela Gilliam was part of that process, too. Patrick was really good, so I got tenure when I came in. They didn't call it tenure then, they called it a continuing contract. In fact, what they call tenure now were continuing contracts. A continuing contract was basically tenure because Evergreen tries to pretend that it doesn't have tenure when it really does. Back then, they had a continuous contract, which was, I think were repeating three-year or five-year contracts. Then you had to re-up but hardly anybody gets laid off from that. So I got that because I already had tenure in Colorado. I totally wanted to get that, so I had that and I wasn't worried about that.

Basically, it became a more organizing year around Central American issues, 1989—'89 to '90 was when I came. Still working on Central America, El Salvador and Nicaragua. I've been to Nicaragua five times since 1984, and El Salvador eight times, and I've been to Cuba four times.

Zaragoza: Did you ever take students to any of these places?

Mosqueda: Not officially. One time eight students came to El Salvador with me on a CISPES [Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador] delegation, but I made it clear that I'm not their leader in the sense of taking a class of students. They were going to El Salvador with CISPES, and I'm one of the people going with CISPES, although I would help them with whatever they were doing. But it wasn't my class, so it wasn't legally my class. At that time, we had a pretty CISPES delegation from Olympia, from Evergreen. And so that was good.

Zaragoza: When you come in the late '80s, early '90s, what was your take on the educational philosophy and the way that education was done here compared to your prior institutions?

Mosqueda: I thought it looked good, especially team teaching, team teaching with different individuals and teaching one class. Those were the two main big things. The evaluation process seemed interesting. I came to not like the evaluation process after a number of years, because it seemed to take too much time, and not a good use of time. I talked to Patrick about this, too, and he sort of agreed with me.

Team teaching was good—we (Anthony and I have) team taught together—as long as you picked the people. One of the things, too, I've noticed there's been—we talked about other people who didn't like their teaching partners. I think one of the problems at Evergreen was that they'd just stick people together willy-nilly. The subject matters might coalesce but the people don't. And academics, I think, tend to be, not egotistical, but . . .

Zaragoza: . . . self-centered?

Mosqueda: Self-centered, yeah. And if you get two or three people together who aren't really simpatico with each other, then you're going to have them clash. My philosophy has been, for the last 30 years—especially after the first few years—is that I should teach with people who I think could teach the class by themselves, maybe differently than I would, but they know the subject matter enough to actually teach a class by themselves. Therefore, when you get down to arguing—or discussing—about which one book you want to use over another, either one would work, but you're arguing about which one was the best book to use, as opposed to "This book is a terrible book to use."

I think the first year I was here, there was a class that that had three faculty really clashed.

Zaragoza: Were you with the three of them?

Mosqueda: No. And I could see that team just falling apart, because they were all egotistical. They're all reasonably good on their own, but they're all egotistical in terms of the right way to do it. I was supposed to teach the next year with one of the people on the team—and I could see that that probably wasn't going to work. Peter and I and him had a meeting, and we all said to each other that we sort of liked each other as people, but we really shouldn't teach together. We both said that to each other. [laughing]

Zaragoza: So it was mutual.

Mosqueda: It was mutual. So now, I can still get along with that faculty, but if I ever had to teach with him 40 hours a week, we might have been duking it out. So it's not a good idea to just have the deans pick people to teach together because it's not a question of—because sometimes people make references, like to dating, a serious relationship, all that kind of stuff, but you don't want to fight it out in front of a bunch of students, you know? You really don't want to have to fight it out anyway. So if some right-winger wants to teach—and I haven't taught with a right-winger—but if some right-winger wants to teach a class on whatever, let them, because I believe in academic freedom. But I'm not going to sit in the classroom and talk about my dear colleague I respect. It isn't like Congress to pretend to respect his view, because I don't. [laughing] If I was teaching with somebody right now who was—it's hard to think of an intellectual who would actually defend Trump, but you can find intellectuals who defend Reagan. So I'm not going to pretend that they have anything that I really want to listen to for more than an hour, certainly not for 10 weeks or 20 weeks.

Zaragoza: What was your teaching partner that was farthest afield from you?

Mosqueda: None horribly politically different.

Zaragoza: I mean in terms of discipline.

Mosqueda: I taught at MIT one year, the Master in Teaching, because what they do is they bring somebody in who's not an educator, some other area. So there are other people who taught like literature and some psychology and just educational methods. Because in MIT, normally you teach—have you taught in MiT?

Zaragoza: No.

Mosqueda: It's a two-year program. Normally you do one year of classroom and one year in the field, students are in the field. And I decided I didn't want to do the in the field because I thought the students at the master's level—talking about people who could teach the class—deserve somebody

who's actually a trained educator of educators, rather than saying you sit in the back of the classroom so you're doing an okay job. So I didn't do the second year. There wasn't any big split; actually, I didn't want to do the second year. But that was the farthest I did.

The farthest technical I taught with was Laurie Meeker. She was good, but she was teaching the students how to actually physically make films, which I couldn't teach. I was learning with the students how to physically make films, the technique of it and the mechanical stuff. That was a little bit hard, too, although it worked out well. We made a film together, Laurie and I, because we were doing the same work schedule as the students. The students were to make a film—16mm back then, because that was about 25 years ago—so we made a film on gay rights called *Special Lies: Hate Propaganda of the Radical Right*. We could see in real time how long it would take students to do the interviews, do the transcribing, do the editing—especially because editing took longer back then because it wasn't digital, it was analog, and it was also even splicing films and stuff like that. That was where I learned a lot, but also a lot of work to do that kind of stuff.

Zaragoza: Your main focus while you've been at Evergreen has been around political economy?

Mosqueda: Yeah, political economy.

Zaragoza: Do you want to talk about the Political Economy program that we've had at Evergreen.

Mosqueda: Yeah, because that's actually one of the main reasons I really wanted to come here, because the job was advertised as Political Economy. But actually, I ended up being one of the wildcard hires. Because they might have wanted to have an economist as opposed to a political scientist, but I got hired because I, I guess, impressed the people I interviewed with.

But political economy has always been, to me, meaning—because I taught political science—my degrees are in political science—and my political science courses were always like three-to-five-hour classes, either a semester or a quarter, but here it's 16 hours full-time, and usually for more than one quarter—political economy meant to me like you teach politics, economics, history, sociology, and maybe something else, like film or media or something like that, but those are the four basics. And I often explained to the classes that if you take an economics class at some college, you might actually talk about abstract things like widgets and what it takes to produce widgets, except there's no such thing as widgets, so your teaching is somewhat abstract. And in political science classes often in universities—that's what my degree is in. In fact, I even have a B.S. in political [science] [because] at Iowa State, they did not have B.A.s at the time, they had a bachelor of science, so I got a bachelor of science. But at Princeton it's called politics and at Harvard it's called government. And a lot of people

teach government, even though we're not at Harvard, which means you don't do economics, or you don't do sociology, or you don't do psychology. So political economy should be to integrate the area of politics, economics, sociology—people's lives—and psychology and history. Otherwise you're not really teaching political economy.

Remember, I was teaching in MIT. These were all graduate students. We used Howard Zinn's book, *A People's History of the United States*, which I use in almost all my classes. To me it's a basic introduction to American history. Some of the stuff they were learning in MIT to all these college graduates—and people from WSU and places like that—it was shocking to them. These college graduates had no idea of American history from a political economy standpoint. So they would be teaching kids in the future about—one of the things we talked about, because it was near the quincentennial of Columbus, the 500-year anniversary—is that Columbus did not discover America. He landed here in the west, but there were already people living here so he did not discover America.

So in MIT I taught you shouldn't lie to your students (children). If you're going to lie, you should become a lawyer or a car salesman. [laughing] But don't be a teacher. That's one of the things I was trying to teach the future teachers. So political economy was really, really where I wanted to be, so it ended up working pretty well.

Zaragoza: Give us a brief history of political economy during the time that you were a central focus of Evergreen political economy.

Mosqueda: I got there in '89, so it was in the 1990s to about 2010 or something. When did you get hired?

Zaragoza: 2004.

Mosqueda: Because when I was looking at your portfolio, I was worried that you were coming from WAZZU [WSU] in American studies, which normally American studies tends to be literature, but I could tell your portfolio was political economy. So when I looked at it, this was really good, because I didn't want to have American literature. I mean, I believe in literature, but not in political economy, so I ended up doing a lot of political economy.

So I wanted to get more people into political economy, and we had good people. The senior people were Ken Dolbeare and Jeanne Hahn and Alan Nasser. Those were the senior, the leftist people. Then you had people like Peter, who's older than me. I wasn't really senior at Evergreen, but I was senior enough—in my forties—that I became a senior person here. We were trying to hire more young people in their thirties to become the future, so we got you and Savvina Chowdhury. But Evergreen has

a really bad, I think, policy of not replacing the people that leave or retire. Just anybody that retires or gets fired or whatever, there's a position that's open, and they can use it for anything they want. That might be something that people should think about, but also something that people should decide, "Do we need to replace this particular position, too?" So we're moving more toward sciences.

One of the bad examples was the previous Provost, or two previous Provosts ago. The administration decided to have a business school—teach business courses—without the consent of the faculty. They didn't even ask. They just said, "This is what we're going to do." My understanding is that this was based on surveys done by high school students who were juniors in high school, figuring what they wanted to take when they were going to college. So you've got 16-year-olds determining what a college should look like in the future based on teenage desires back then. And I remember back when I was 16, when I was a Kennedy-type liberal, business actually sounded like something that might have been good because then you make more money when you grow up. That kind of thing. So I don't think we need a business school here.

Plus I don't think we'd be very good at it, because if you want to go into business, UW is very good at business school, even if I don't really like business per se. If you're going to learn business, UW is the place to go, even Western is the place to go, but Evergreen to actually have a business, we could have a glaze of entrepreneurship and a glaze of a non-profit on it, but it's not really a particularly good business education, I don't think.

I didn't really want to do that, so I tried to get more progressives, more radical people. And radical to me means going to the root, the original meaning of the word. I always emphasize that in class and everything—having a root-based analysis of American society and global society.

Zaragoza: How did political economy, as an area, evolve over the time that you were at Evergreen?

Mosqueda: I think it evolved to the point where you got some pretty good political—like one time we had five people teaching it in the same program. That was in 1991, because I remember it was the first Gulf War. We had five faculty because we had about 120 students enrolled in Political Economy.

As people left—senior people retired and the people were dying off or retiring—we had people who were not being replaced, and so we had less offerings that we could offer students. So you had the general Political Economy, which is the Introduction to Political Economy and Social Change—Peter called it Political Economy and Social Movements. They mean the same thing but I prefer the term Social Change because social movements are part of social change but social change can also mean fascism. We're going through social change right now. It was a fascist change, not a social movement.

Or, you could call fascism a social movement, too, but also it's not progressive. We weren't replacing the people, so there weren't enough advanced classes. That's when I decided I wanted to teach things like Marxist theory, because Marxist theory is an advanced class, a senior-level type class, although I would take sophomores.

Also then it's when I started to want to do more individual classes by myself. That's when I taught the course Power in American Society, because power in American society is basically a political economy, and so it's similar to a Social Change class that you get in two quarters because it's 20 weeks but without the mathematics or economics. So literally the students get about 60 percent of what they would get in a two-quarter class without the straight econ, which is basically American history, political theory, American imperialism and social change that was going to happen in the future.

Zaragoza: Would you say that that's your signature class, the Power in American Society?

Mosqueda: Yeah, because that's actually a class that I taught almost every year. I think that was one of the things about Evergreen, too, because when I first got here, they were talking about how we changed many classes—they used to change—this was before my time, and obviously before your time—they used to actually change offices. Did you know about that?

Zaragoza: I've heard about that.

Mosqueda: Yeah. In the 1970s, because they're teaching in teams, they wanted to have offices close to each other, so they would actually change the entire office of the faculty to be close to each other, which seems like a lot of moving around in the late summer/early fall. [chuckles] A waste of energy.

Mosqueda: Which is the hottest time in Olympia.

Zaragoza: Yeah, so they would actually change offices. They didn't do that by the time I got here. My Power in American Society—which is actually a title of a class I taught in Colorado, too, and that's where I got the title—became a signature class here.

So the way I taught the class, because it was 16 hours of class time, with about 14 or 15 hours actually in the classroom, which is a lot of time to teach students during the week- a full-time class. So what I would do was I would give a lecture for about an hour, hour and a half, and then I showed a video about the topic, and then they'd have seminar. So you'd get just as much seminar time and just as much lecture time, and having the video visually viscerally showed the students what's going on, both historically and contemporary, and also brings in other voices. It's like having another faculty member there with the videos. Because a lot of times, I know that other people would seminar for three or four

hours, which actually was like pulling teeth sometimes for some students, so I'm not sure if it's the best thing to do. I like seminars but I think one of the problems, too, in graduate school they call them pro seminars, really they are more professional there.

Zaragoza: Right.

Mosqueda: So I'm not sure seminaring at the level we seminar here is the best use of classroom time all the time. I think we do too much of it. I'm pretty sure—in fact, everything I heard about the sciences, the hard sciences, physics and chemistry—they don't really seminar that much. And so our stuff is just as important as their stuff. We should seminar but we shouldn't sort of pretend that seminaring with a 19-year-old American is actually the best thing to do.

Zaragoza: During this time in Political Economy, what were some of the experiences of students—challenges, achievements, growth?

Mosqueda: I think in the 1990s, Evergreen was growing, faculty-wise and student-wise, and so it had a good reputation. One of the problems with the last 10 or 15 years, not just the last two, is they haven't been doing enough outreach to get more students to come to Evergreen, more progressive students and more students who are the kind of students that would go to other private liberal arts schools. One of the things about Evergreen is that its claim to fame it's like a private school in the sense of classroom participation, but we should try to be getting as good of students as we can, and not just people who this is their last easy choice to get into.

Also sometimes we have more faculty or students who think that anything goes. Because I've heard people talk about different stuff, anything goes type of a thing in the classroom, and that's not what I do, that's not what I really want to do. In fact, I remember getting an e-mail in the last two years, and I don't remember who the faculty are but they said that we shouldn't fail anybody, we shouldn't give reduced credits to anybody if they're enrolled in class, which is not true, I don't think, because the students feel like they're failing. Well, if they are failing, they should get to know that they're not doing an adequate job.

Zaragoza: Right.

Mosqueda: And for me, I always tell the students that I've never had a student in the last almost 40 years who couldn't get at least the equivalent of a B if they did what they're capable of doing—if they read and they write to their ability. I had one student who was from Japan. He was a really smart kid, but his English was not very good at all, but he worked really hard. His papers weren't that good, but you could tell that he was really thinking about stuff, and so he ended up getting full credit because he

was working really hard. I've had other students who were fairly smart but they weren't working really hard and they didn't turn in their papers and they didn't turn in their work, so they'd get reduced credit, not because they did a bad job. It was because they didn't do enough work.

When I tell people from a conservative standpoint or from a radical standpoint, you have to show up. If you go to a job and you're from a conservative standpoint and you don't show up for work, you don't expect your employer to pay you. You have to go to work. And if you're a radical working on, say, Central America, some people that I know—El Salvador or Nicaragua or even here—when you don't show up when you have an obligation to people, people might get hurt and people might get killed. You have to show up. In fact, in my syllabus, usually I quote Woody Allen: "Eighty percent of success is just showing up." So if they do basic reading, and show up and talk in seminars, they're going to do fine. If they don't turn in their work—I've had students who don't turn in any work, and yet come to class some of the time or most of the time, and they wanted to get credit. But you've got to be fair to people. If they didn't turn in any written work, it's nothing personal.

Zaragoza: What were some of your biggest challenges at Evergreen?

Mosqueda: Part of it is, I didn't really have any right-wing students. I have had right-wing students, like conservatives and libertarians, but that's not a problem. I tell people to just do the work. But a challenge is not having enough people—like in Political Economy—that could actually move on and tell people where to go if they wanted to go on to graduate school in the area.

Also, when Rachel Corrie was killed, that was a challenge, too, because there was about three or four people who are Zionists who were on the faculty. They were trying to pretend that Israel was victimized in the Middle East, and obviously that's not true. Fortunately, most of the Jewish faculty—especially people I know, my friends—they were really Anti-Zionist. They're not anti-Israel per se, but they're anti-Zionist. Sometimes people think that you can be racist by being anti-Israel, which is not true. I don't accept that at all, so one of the things I try to do is make sure that people know what's going on in the Middle East and also Central America. And after Rachel died, that's when I started including Palestinian and Israel politics in my classes.

Zaragoza: Do you want to talk about the Rachel Corrie incident and what happened to her, the student of The Evergreen State College who was killed?

Mosqueda: Rachel was actually with us in OMJP, the group I work with. OMJP—Olympia Movement for Justice and Peace—started in the first Gulf War in 1991, and then it sort of died away because there wasn't any Gulf War. There was some bombings and stuff. Then it restarted again on September 11,

2001. Rachel was never in my class per se, but we worked quite closely together in OMJP and antiwar activity. In fact, I remember one night she spent the whole night at the Percival Landing because we were going to have a demonstration the next day and she was setting up the information. She actually slept in the field—a young student, 19 or so—in 2001-2002. So we worked very closely together, and she mentions me in her memoirs. She said she wanted to come to a couple OMJP meetings because she didn't want me to be all alone. [laughing] So she was looking after my well-being, too.

When she was going to Palestine—to Gaza—back in 2003, I was telling her to be careful and everything because I didn't trust the Israelis. Obviously, I was correct on that. But she was killed. She recognized that there was a lot of white privilege issues—white students—white privilege that existed, too, and usually it works, but not all the time. So when I've talked about that in my class, one of the things about white privilege [is] the very fact that we even—I know, you know, but the world knows Rachel's name is because she was a white American who was killed in Palestine. I always ask the students, "Can you name me one Palestinian who was killed in Palestine?" Because half of my students have heard of Rachel Corrie, they're young people. They know that people have been killed but they can't think of a name of anybody who was killed in Palestine who's Palestinian. So white privilege extends even to a death, because it's more "important." Rachel [has] become an icon now, obviously, and the people know her as somebody who was very important and working in—obviously, she was important, too—a personal friend, and she knew my daughter, too, they played soccer together—by now, she'd be 39 years old, something like that, and we'd be reading her second novel—celebrating her second novel—because she was really talented and a writer. She's somebody that Evergreen should be really proud of. We would have been proud of her anyway, but we would still be proud of her.

Zaragoza: What were some of your successes at Evergreen?

Mosqueda: I retired three years ago, so one of the things that's interesting is that students from 20 years ago and adults or 30 or 40 years ago, some of them might be retired. I can see successes in people who are becoming academics, becoming activists, becoming people who are leaders in different areas, including CISPES people, including people who are academics. I know students of mine who have gone on to become academics and people who have become writers and stuff like that. We can't claim their success is our success, but it's something that we can make a difference in people's lives. So those are some of the successes.

Other successes are some of the protests we were involved in—not just protests but also—I always tell people, "I want to do more than protest now." Protest is making a moral statement that I

don't agree with the immoral policies of the government, whereas I want to try to stop them now; not just protest against them but stop them. Part of the protest is there's a lot of stuff that we do with CISPES, but also at Evergreen. We did Port Militarization Resistance in 2007-2008. We actually stopped the military for part of the time from coming through, for several hours, which means that the military then thinks about whether they come through. And they haven't come through recently.

Recently—I didn't participate in it—there was an anti-fracking demonstration, and so there's this movement now at Evergreen and also Olympia that the Port of Olympia can't really bring things through without being protested against, without being stopped at least temporarily. And the temporary can be several hours or several days. Also it adds costs to what they're doing, and it educates people. I think that's part of the success at Evergreen but also in Olympia.

Zaragoza: How about disappointments at Evergreen or about Evergreen?

Mosqueda: One of the disappointments now is obviously that Evergreen is going through an economic crisis and it shouldn't be. They have official reasons that a lot of people are trying to get an education to get a better job, and Evergreen doesn't really promote itself as getting jobs, although people do. We have a real lack of strong leadership in recruiting people. We should be recruiting people. The other colleges in the state, including the other four-year colleges, are doing reasonably well. I think Central is down a little bit, but we shouldn't be down a huge amount of people. So Evergreen [appears] every once in a while in a national magazine that we're a good bargain, which means a cheap education for people, which is true, but that should be a drawing point as opposed to a negative point. We should be doing a better job of recruiting people and make it more progressive than it is, not just progressive in individual sexuality-which is important- things like that, but also progressive in making a movement politics. All those things are important, but movement politics is what we should be working on right now.

Zaragoza: Speaking of movement politics, I know that folks from Evergreen played a big role in the 1999 WTO uprising in Seattle, and I wondered if you wanted to speak about that some.

Mosqueda: Yeah, that was an important thing because, as you know, WTO—the World Trade Organization—coming to Seattle, my first reaction when I heard about that—I think it was 1997 when the WTO announced they were going to come—was, "What the hell do they think they're doing? The WTO thinks they can just waltz into Seattle, Washington, a progressive city in and of itself, and not have major protests against it?" I think that was one of the reactions that Michael Moore, the filmmaker, said, too. "What do they think they're doing?" [laughing]

So they give us this big warning that this is going to come. It wasn't really a warning, they gave us a big announcement that they're coming. So in the year before that, there were people like Dan Leahy—hopefully you'll interview him, too—and other people . . .

Zaragoza: Last summer I did.

Mosqueda: . . . were teaching classes, and myself, too, about what the WTO was about or what trade was, about to educate people about it—a real-world thing—so my understanding is that about 500 students and faculty and people went to Seattle out of 50,000 people who were there, so that means one percent of the world that was in Seattle was from Evergreen.

Zaragoza: Right, and out of 5,000 people at Evergreen, 500 went, so that means 10 percent of Evergreen took part.

Mosqueda: Yeah, and some of my students told me later that some of their professors had told them in 1989 that they had to come to school that day because they couldn't skip school to go to the protest.

Zaragoza: That's exactly what my graduate faculty told me.

Mosqueda: And I figured, what the hell? It's like having the Olympics of protests that's going to happen right down the road and you're telling students not to come? It's like whatever you're going to say in class is as important? No, it wasn't important. I don't know if you went or not. But they (the faculty) have power over you.

I was teaching in MIT—Masters in Teaching. I was teaching with a couple of other faculty who were—one was not disabled but sort of movement-impaired a little bit, so she couldn't go. But we also didn't want to tell students they had to go, so we gave students the option that they could go, and the faculty that didn't go were going to teach about the WTO, what was going on in world trade and sort of protest movements, because it all fits in very nicely. About half of the students in MIT went and half of the students didn't. And some of the students who didn't go found out later that they really wished they would have gone because it was such a big movement. And some of the students who did go said it was one of the most moving things that they ever participated, in because of the 50,000 people protesting. And also not just protesting, but since we had talked about it in class, intellectually academically preparing people, not just physically preparing people for what it was all about. So it became a very important thing for Evergreen. They were making also puppets and stuff like that at Evergreen for some of the stuff that was going on there at the WTO in Seattle. That was a really important event for the world, and also an important event for Evergreen, and a learning experience for Evergreen. So we should have not closed down the school to make people go to a protest, which was

literally the Olympics of protest was coming here, and it wasn't going to be violent because it was non-violent to begin with.

Zaragoza: It's a teaching moment, as they say.

Mosqueda: Yeah. A lot of times what people can't figure out, because they're really embedded in a dominant ideology, is what's going to happen. One example of that I can predict in the year 2020, the Republican National Convention is going to be in Charlotte—

Zaragoza: Charlottesville?

Mosqueda: Not Charlottesville, but what's the other town? South Carolina?

Zaragoza: Charlotte, North Carolina, where the Hornets play?

Mosqueda: Yeah. Because the Democratic [city] council there—I think the vote was six to five—wanted people to—because there was a lot of money presumed to come in—they said they hoped people protest quietly and respectfully. No-- it's going to be like 1968 in Chicago. I mean, these people are so stupid—the city council and the mayor—that they think that—the only two options were Charlotte and Las Vegas. Las Vegas can handle something like that there, too, plus they would have had a police state in Nevada and all that kind of stuff. But these people in Charlotte think that it's going to be like please, thank you, may I please, you know. No, it's going to be '68, especially if Trump is actually the nominee in 2020, if he's actually still around in 2020 at the Republican Convention. And it should be a major—not riot—should be a major uprising that's going to happen. And then they're going to be shocked that it's going to happen.

Zaragoza: Plus, with that, given the current configuration and context, then you have a very explosive mix. Because you have the proud boys and other organizations on the far right, proto-fascist militia types who are now protecting and counter-protesting and having their own protests that are counter-protested. So it actually, given Charlottesville, seems like a very explosive mix.

Mosqueda: Yeah, it's going to be really explosive. In fact, I'm pretty sure that some people are going to die, because it's going to be like Chicago in '68. It's going to be Chicago '68 with more firepower.

Zaragoza: Yeah.

Mosqueda: They should have let it happen in Las Vegas, because you can confine something in Las Vegas as opposed to—plus, Las Vegas, what do you expect? Sin City--the Sin convention. [laughter]

Zaragoza: Do you want to talk at all about your contributions to Evergreen governance and administrative type roles that you played?

Mosqueda: When I came here, I basically did the basic stuff. I was on the agenda committee and also on the search committees, things like that, things which are, I think, important. I was on a Hispanic committee, too. Were you on that one about three or four years ago?

Zaragoza: Yeah.

Mosqueda: So I was on these committees and they did some good work, but they weren't played out by the college, they weren't enforced by the college, which actually throws you off for being on these different committees. I wanted to be on committees that actually did something, like hired somebody. If you're on the hiring committee, at least you get a result out of that.

Zaragoza: Yeah, there's a product.

Mosqueda: Yeah, there's something at the end, not just "Well, we need to get together and be nice to each other," that type of thing. In fact, one of the things, too—like you're on a committee now, excellence in administration or something like that, diversity excellence or something? Somebody was talking about diversity?

Zaragoza: My main role right now is on a think tank for revitalizing the Tacoma Program Campus.

Mosqueda: I remember back then, too, having more diversity, which actually means hiring more people of color.

Zaragoza: That's right.

Mosqueda: So one of the things that really happened that was negative was Washington State passed an anti-affirmative action law—initiative—which actually made it—a lot of it was based on racism and ignorance. You give people the benefit of ignorance, a lot of people have racism, which the people who voted for Trump have various degrees of racism. It's hard to be a Trump voter and not have some degree of racism. Not the alt-right people, but the stupid people who don't know, for example, what American history is all about.

So, I was on different committees, but also one of the things I noticed—because I read my five-year reviews for the last 20 years—I consider my community work to be part of my academic work, so the school has learned to accept that because that's what they even said in my emeritus statement is that my work in El Salvador was a really important part of my work. That's something I worked on to try to make sure that people recognized that; that it's not just working on some committee to benefit the administration, free labor type of thing.

Zaragoza: You also taught at the Tacoma Campus.

Mosqueda: Yeah, I taught at the Tacoma Campus three times. One year, one quarter; another year, two quarters; the other year was three quarters, the whole year. I was going to teach again except that it didn't work out in this last couple years. But I'll do it again because I was talking to you about that.

Zaragoza: Yep.

Mosqueda: Because Tacoma is actually, as you know, is a lot different. The average age in the forties as opposed to 20-something, and the racial composition is about 50 percent black and over half people of color. I always tell people, if you have two or three students of color in a seminar at Evergreen-Olympia, it's like the UN. [laughter] There's some diversity at Olympia in regards to geography, but not in regards to race.

Zaragoza: I think that's changed over the years, but, yeah, you're fundamentally correct. And Tacoma is a very different place because a multicultural setting is the norm.

Mosqueda: Plus because I teach the same material. I'm going to teach a really anti-imperialism but not anti-military. But at Evergreen maybe—in the last couple years you might have one veteran in a class—at Tacoma, you might have up to half veterans, or active duty, or family members.

I remember teaching one time at Tacoma and I was talking about anti-imperialism, and one veteran who was actually sort of right wing, he was challenging me. But I didn't really have to respond to him because the other veterans were challenging him and agreeing with me, from a firsthand experience. I think firsthand experience is good, but always not as necessary. Like when we teach slavery, we don't want to have anybody in the room who's actually been a slave. You can if they're from Somalia or something, or even sort of wage slavery, or even a sex slave or something, but hopefully nobody's actually been a slave in the room. So we teach history, but it's just not all firsthand experience.

That's like going back to when I was talking about the Vietnam War is that I learned a lot from my veteran friends who were antiwar when they got back in the late '60s. So I'm glad I didn't go to Vietnam because, assuming I got through, I would have firsthand experience, but I didn't need it. [laughing] I don't want to kill somebody else to get some experience to talk about it. That type of thing. So it's good to have firsthand experience, but also to want to have less people with a war experience, because you want to have less wars.

Zaragoza: What about some memorable people from your time at Evergreen? Who stands out to you that you think is important to talk about?

Mosqueda: The people who are gone, gone from the campus. Ken Dolbeare and Jeanne Hahn were always important people. Alan Nasser was an important person. Patrick Hill was really important for the Provost. He actually knew how to be a real Provost. I don't think we've been as lucky with Presidents. I think probably the best President we had was Jane Jervis, although I think she was a little bit elitist, too, but at least she was smart. The other Presidents, you could take them or leave them as far as that goes.

But also people who were faculty, like other people who are still there. Peter's been an important person for Evergreen—Peter Bohmer—and it wouldn't have been the same without him. I think I've actually contributed quite a bit to Evergreen culture-wise in the last 30 years, so that's good. You've had more radicals. We need more radicals (meaning going to the root). I mentioned Jeanne, but also Anne Fischel is really important. We've got a lot of good younger people. The good younger people are Savvina Chowdhury and also Therese Saliba are good. So they stand out for people that I've taught with and that I wanted to teach with.

But a lot of people who I don't want to teach with or didn't teach with are not because I didn't like them. It's because, again, you don't want to have a clash of personalities. I mentioned before, a lot of people at Evergreen, a lot of faculty, tend to be more libertarian-bent, not right-wing libertarian but libertarian-bent, as opposed to a radical communal bent, so they want to be left alone to do their thing—which I understand as an academic. There's one thing that Jane Jervis said one time is that organizing faculty is like herding cats, which is true. It's hard to punish us. If we do something egregious, you can punish people—show up drunk for class or something like that, or steal money or all that kind of stuff—but if we're sort of just headstrong, it's hard to tell us what to do. Whereas I know at UW, before I got there—I know that back in the '50s before I got there—sometimes the faculty of political science had to come to the chairman's house the week before the class starts, and he would tell them what to teach. So he was the boss.

It's like when I worked in a factory on a summer job, so I had a boss and he had a foreman, and if he wanted you to clean up a mess, you cleaned up the mess, so you didn't have a discussion about it. But faculty get to have discussions and then we can sort of go on our own. Unless you really messed up, you only have to be somewhere totally about 20 to 25 hours a week—you have to be in class, you have to have some office hours, you have to do your evaluations—but other than that, you can do what you want, more or less.

Zaragoza: You mentioned Ken Dolbeare. Tell a good Ken Dolbeare story that captures his contributions or time at Evergreen that you can remember.

Mosqueda: I remember him at the UW, too—I didn't teach with Ken, but basically one of the things I know that he was trying to do back at UW and at Evergreen was to try to bring in younger faculty. That's one of the things he saw as his legacy. Because we all get older and go away, like old generals like in a war type situation, but if you can bring in younger people, people who are in their thirties or forties, it's like appointing people to the Supreme Court. You can actually have an influence for the next 20 or 30 years. So I think Ken is one of those who had that attitude, bringing in younger people. And he helped to bring in Peter Bohmer. Even though Peter, I think, got a job first in public administration, which really is not his main area, but that's when he first came here. He was doing that, and then he transitioned to Political Economy, hardcore economics.

Zaragoza: Do you have a good Jeanne Hahn story?

Mosqueda: No, except that I always tell people that she's firm but fair and also hard. Because, as I mentioned before, a lot of students tend to think they can get away with stuff, and she doesn't let people slack off.

Zaragoza: No, and doing that, brings the best out of people—certain people. Other people fold, but certain people, she's very good at bringing the best out of them.

Mosqueda: Yeah. And also, one of the only disputes I had with her—it really wasn't academic—is that she always wanted to give full credit or no credit. I finally got her to start to give some partial credit. The syllabus always said the expectation is that students will get full credit, and they need to get full credit, and there has to be some good reason not to get full credit. Because one of the problems of giving no credit is that they end up having a lack of financial aid in the future. You can flunk somebody for teaching at a regular college and they've got a four-hour class. If you flunk a class but you've passed the other three classes, you get to 12 hours, more or less. So if you flunk a 16-hour class, zero credits, it really puts you in a bind for the next year.

That's one of the things I always tell my students, too, is that this is a problem with Evergreen. It's actually part of the class nature at Evergreen, hidden class nature, is that if you get less than 75 percent of what you tried the year before, you're not eligible for financial aid next year. But if you're not on financial aid, it takes two years to flunk out of school, because that's when they start to have you take a year off and come back. But it's because actually, theoretically, they do not flunk you out of school, if you don't get financial aid. You just don't have the money to go to school. So it's a class bias

in even how you can flunk. You can actually get two years of not doing very good as opposed to one year without doing very good.

Zaragoza: Like Martin Luther King used to say, "It's one thing to be allowed to sit at a lunch counter, it's another thing to be able to afford a meal when you sit there."

Mosqueda: Yeah. Because I had one student one time—I forget his name, I wouldn't mention it anyway—he was kind of a real slacker rich kid because his parents were paying out-of-state tuition. He came to class but he didn't do any work. Like nothing. He didn't turn in anything. He said he read some of the books. So I told him I should give zero, but he said he wanted some for showing up every day, so I gave him three hours. But I said, "It's a waste of your money and your time."

I always tell people they should actually drop out of school temporarily because they can always come back. Tacoma's people come back. Do you have any people who are like 21 years old?

Zaragoza: Very few, but there are some.

Mosqueda: Very few. So you can always come back. It's not like high school. You can come back to college anytime. It's difficult if you have a family and all that kind of stuff, but not impossible. So I told him he should take a year off, but he didn't want to do that, so I gave him three hours because that's about what he did.

Zaragoza: Any memorable Peter Bohmer stories?

Mosqueda: Some you probably don't want on tape. [laughter]

Zaragoza: How about ones that are right on the line?

Mosqueda: The first time I met Peter in 1989 was one of the times we went to a protest within the first two weeks of my arrival in Olympia. I got a little annoyed at him because we both agreed not to get arrested at the protest, but he got himself arrested. But I couldn't get arrested because I was out on bail from Denver. I got off on that trespassing charge at a El Salvador protest in Denver. But I didn't want to get arrested, so I said, "You're making me look bad. I can't get arrested." [laughter]

Zaragoza: That's a perfect story.

Mosqueda: Other than that, Peter was always important for organizing and protesting and stuff like that. And also I went to Venezuela with Peter's class. Peter and Anne Fischel were teaching a class on Venezuela. This was about five years ago-- things were a lot better in Venezuela back then. I went on a sabbatical as part of the class—not officially part of the class, just with the class. It's always good to do that kind of stuff.

I remember we were protesting one time—which war was it?—1991, the first Gulf War. We organized a big protest and we ended up with like 4,000 people—back in the days when you had a lot of people—in Olympia. We ended up going to the State Capitol. We got in the State Capitol with a couple of thousand people. That's when Peter got in trouble, press-wise, because he was actually standing on top of a legislator's desk trying to calm people down. I emphasize he wanted to calm people down. [laughter] But it's just a picture of him standing on a desk. Then also we were up in the gallery before that. We were one of a couple of major organizers. I turned to Peter and I says, "I think we've lost control." [laughter]

Zaragoza: What year is this?

Mosqueda: This is 1991. Because it's one thing to have a protest with 200 people with a bullhorn and you're sort of in control. You can tell people more what to do. But you've got 4,000 people that just took over a State building, you're not in control anymore.

Zaragoza: And the feeling of power and defiance that surges through folks in moments like that, which is so rare in our lives.

Mosqueda: Especially for younger people, as opposed to I'm thinking strategically, "What are we going to do next?" They're sort of taking over, which is good. It's like remember the Wisconsin protests, which I did not participate in, but they were there. You could tell that they were there and chanting and everything, and had power.

Zaragoza: Yeah. And they were together.

Mosqueda: Yeah.

Zaragoza: Here we are, Larry, around the 50th Anniversary of Evergreen. What is it going to take for Evergreen to not only be around for 50 more years, but to stay relevant and to stay true to itself?

Mosqueda: Most of the schools that were started—like an Evergreen type of thing—in the late '60s and '70s were as response to hardcore protests—Black protests, antiwar protests, the Chicano protests in LA and places like that. So there's a lot of schools that started, and Evergreen is one of the few that's left of that particular genre. So Evergreen, I think, needs to look at its history and figure out, what did we do that was actually relevant? Evergreen needs to figure out, what do we do best? And what does the world need in the 21st century?

Certain things we really know we need is more economic equality. Inequality is a big thing, so we need to focus on that. Also we need to work on environmental climate change. We already have

some expertise in different areas, but we need to focus ourselves on, is this what you want to work on, this is the place to be, based on what we've done in the past, and also based on the people we're hiring now.

But also we need to really be very conscious about recruiting people and not just try to get a warm body, which means working with people who are first-generation students, but also students who want to work on these specific issues. Tacoma Campus in the Bridge Program, I think, is very successful. You're still out there working?

Zaragoza: No, no, we're starting to work on reestablishing that.

Mosqueda: And I think that's important for Evergreen because we should actually—I always tell people Western Washington has some pretty good schools. One is UW. If you want to go to a big state university, UW is as good as any—Michigan, California, places like that. If you want to go to a medium-sized school, Western Washington is as good as any.

And Evergreen is as good as any if they do it right, a liberal arts type of school. So they need to figure out, what works best for the liberal arts type of school? What are the top, say, 20 liberal arts schools? What do they charge for tuition and what do we charge? We can become the better bargain than what they do. Because the students, they don't want to do business—our students don't want to do business. UW does a good job of doing business. I'm not a business school fan, but if you're going to go to business school, that's a good place to go.

We need to figure out what we can do best for the next 20 years. It's already going to be 2020. I can remember talking about, back in 2000, [that] we need to figure out what we're going to do in 2020. Now it is 2020 already, so we need to figure out for the rest of the half-century at 2050. The 50 years coming up next year, the anniversary—the next year or the year after—next year, I think—but what are we going to do to the year 2050, and then how do we get to those stages?

Then we can become really relevant and really have a bunch of students, which will fit into the type of people we are and we want to be—environment, economic equality. Bernie Sanders is actually still relevant obviously today. I'm not just talking about him as a person, but his movement is still very relevant. So that should be our people, our students, who we want to get in, not the University of Chicago students. We don't have to be them. In fact, we can't be them. We try to be them, we're not going to be very good, it's not going to be very successful.

Zaragoza: Is there anything else that you want to say or that you want to cover that we haven't talked about yet, Larry?

Mosqueda: Was it Carl Sandburg who said, in talking about America. "America was promises." So if you think about it that way, Evergreen was promises, a lot of potential. We moved toward our potential, but we sort of lost our way a little bit by trying to be like a regular liberal arts school, which means that we can be conservative. We don't want to be conservative. We can have conservative people here, of course, but that's not our goal. If we're talking about economic justice—let's use that word—we're talking about climate change solutions. That's not conservative, and so we need to figure out how to really move in that direction.

And diversity is not some jive-ass liberal nonsense. In 2050, most of America is going to be people of color. Most of America. California is already that way. So Evergreen, if it thinks of itself as a national college, diversity is not something we're going to do for people of color. It's actually the people of color are going to do something for Evergreen. So we need to become a school of the future—we can come up with slogans—"school of justice" in the future in 2050.

And then we have stages, obviously. They'll want to use terms like five-year plans. Obviously by 2025, we could even have a theme song like old rock song "In the Year 2525." So 2025 into 2030 and then 2040 and then 2050. But we need to get on it right away and not just try to recruit warm bodies.

Zaragoza: Larry, thank you very much for taking this time.

Mosqueda: Thanks. It was good to think about all these issues.