

11-23-2020

Interview with Rocio Villanueva

Rocio Villanueva

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.csumb.edu/auntiesewing_interviews

Recommended Citation

Villanueva, Rocio, "Interview with Rocio Villanueva" (2020). *Auntie Sewing Squad Interviews*. 7.
https://digitalcommons.csumb.edu/auntiesewing_interviews/7

This Interview is brought to you for free and open access by the Auntie Sewing Squad Oral History Archive at Digital Commons @ CSUMB. It has been accepted for inclusion in Auntie Sewing Squad Interviews by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons @ CSUMB. For more information, please contact digitalcommons@csumb.edu.

Oral History Transcript

Interviewee: Rocio Villaneuva

Interviewers: Marily Munoz-Serrano and Fernanda Hernandez

Date: November 23, 2020

Location: Zoom

Collection: Auntie Sewing Squad Oral History Archive, SBS 112: Women and Social Change, From 1890s to the Present, Fall 2020

Length: 00:49:46

Overseen by: Dr. Chrissy Yee Lau

Auntie Bio: Rocio Villanueva is from Yahualica Jalisco, Mexico. She came to the United States at the age of 16. After high school, she joined the military and was deployed to Iraq in 2006. While in the military she was sexually assaulted and injured. As COVID-19 started, she began to take on a new skill which was sewing. She joined a few sewing groups, including the Auntie Sewing Squad. Her role is to make and deliver thousands of masks to many places, like Veterans Affairs, Rancho la Hermosa orphanage, and her community.

Thematic Summary of Interview: (00:00:00) Rocio Villanueva starts off with talking about how she joined the Auntie Sewing Squad. (00:11:37) She relays her opinions about the election and Donald Trump. (00:17:10) She discusses her background and her experiences when moving to the United States from Mexico. (00:21:20) Villanueva speaks on the advantages and disadvantages of being a female in the military. (00:35:37) She ends with expressing her feelings about people who have been fighting for basic human rights and also standing up for different movements like racism and police brutality.

Interview Transcript

MM: My name is Marily [Munoz-Serrano]. And this is my partner Fernanda [Hernandez].

FH: Hi.

RV: Hi. My name is Rocio Villanueva and I am a mom of four kids and I'm also a veteran.

MM: Oh yeah

MM: Today is. November twenty third, Monday at 4:00 p.m., 4:02 p.m. So like you said you're a veteran and you're a mom. So what got you into the Auntie Sewing Squad? RV: You know, I've been sewing since March. Locally in San Diego. And, you know, just like just like the Auntie Squad. They're just like little groups that have been sewing for the community. And that's how I found out about them. Because some of them already closed down since you know, a lot of people went back to work from the initial shut down. And that's how that's how I started sewing.

MM: So you started sewing in the Auntie Sewing Squad?

RV: Yes but...

MM: So you have never had experience before then?

RV: I'm sorry it was cutting off, but I don't know if you asked me if I ever sewed before.

MM: Yeah.

RV: Yes. Never. Like my mom used to sew. And, you know, when when the pandemic started and everybody got quarantined I was like, I kinda had a little of anxiety because first of all, I have PTSD and and MST. Which is, you know, post-traumatic stress disorder and then MST is military sexual trauma. So I already have a lot of therapy that I do on my own. And so when everything shut down, I was like, you know, I'm not a nurse so I can't help. You know, I can't be going to the hospitals or help anybody. I have no experience with that. And then, you know, I, I, you know, I noticed that there was no face masks. And I was wondering, as I maybe I can, you know, learn or or figure out how to make one. So I did the sewing machine and my mom showed me how to make the first one. And you know, and since then. Sorry, I'm sorry, my kid just walked in

MM: Its okay

FH: Its okay

RV: Oh, my goodness. Sorry about that.

FH: It's okay

RV: I started, you know, after that, I just kinda you know started sewing and I had no idea there was going to be I was going to be sewing that many[masks]. You know, at the beginning, I thought I was going to be maybe like 20, you know, or whoever needed them. But I mean, that's so right now I sewn over three thousand masks and I'm actually new to the Auntie Sewing Squad. So for them, I have only done a couple maybe like 60. But the other ones I have been for the community too.

MM: ohh okay

FH: That's good

MM: So before you enter, you joined the Auntie Sewing Squad you were sewing on your own. And just giving them out to the community.

RV: Yes. Sewing on my own. And then sewing for other sewing groups. Like right here we have the San Diego sewing group. But then there's a pathway sewing group. And that's all the groups that are on Facebook.

FH: ohh okay

MM: ohhh, so you found them through Facebook. And you just joined the community.

RV: Yes. And you know what I find about the this this group, I was like, really excited because their passion about their community is so different. Like, they actually care about others, like it wasn't just like, okay, we need this masks for this, like, yes, they're like like a family. And so that's what I like about this group.

FH: Yeah that's pretty good. They're like more like not just like, oh, do this and there, you guys actually interact more and communicate. Just get to know each other, not just sew mask's.

RV: Yes

MM: How do you guys communicate or when do you sew?

RV: Usually on... they posted on on the Facebook group. They they get requests and then once that request is put in. They posted and all of the the the people that are ready, to either already have mask made, they just write down that they have it ready or they commit to doing the amount and you sometimes a request of maybe a thousand masks. You got like 60 people, each of them donating hundreds or 50 or, you know the amount that... they're all different. And that's how they finished the whole project or or the request.

MM: Wow!

FH: Oh, Makes sense.

MM: So it's like a teamwork everybody does however much they can to get to the thousand.

RV: Yes. And, you know, it's not just sewing. Ladies, or a members there is also we have some members there are cutting fabrics, some people are donating fabric or or you know, helping for the shipping. So it's like everybody has some kind of like. They come volunteering to do whatever they can so they don't know how to sew, so they can definitely do something else.

MM: Yeah. So it's like a factory, like every person has their own thing and then somebody puts it all together and distributes it.

RV: Yes.

MM: I think it was mentioned earlier, you did the deliveries for them. For the masks.

RV: Yes.

MM: How does that work?

RV: You see, since I'm a veteran. I go to the V.A. (Veterans Affairs) hospital. So I know that sometimes sometimes people think that, oh well, because they're government hospital they should have money to have masks. But in reality, through this COVID crisis. Even the hospitals struggle. So, you know, you would think like a veteran hospital will take care of the veterans and have enough masks for everybody. But it wasn't like that. So every month, you know, I would just go to the hospital and deliver them to the they have an office where you can take the mask in. They actually requested for the veterans. So they were always happy to receive masks even really Children's Hospital, Palomar Hospital. They were all happy to take masks.

MM: Wow!

FH: Thats really nice [of Rocio to donate masks]

RV: I also went to Mexico. I crossed the border to Puerto Nuevo and I delivered some masks to the orphanage. There's an orphanage down there, called Rancho la Hermosa orphanage [Baja California, Mexico]. And, you know, they were all happy to to receive the masks.I.... the orphanage is a place where my family and I go a lot. But, you know, I also deliver mass to them.

FH: That's really nice. From the places that you have delivered, have any. Which one? It's probably the orphanage or I'm not sure, which one has stood out to you the most. Or like have you felt more like what's the word more... like sentimental, I guess, towards like delivering to

them were like, I don't know. I don't know. I'm trying to say actually nevermind.

RV: It's okay I understand, you know, what I... because I made so many masks. You know, it was kind of like, OK, it was, it was turning into a number. So it for me was just like, OK, I have this request for this hospital. So, you know, it was just kind of like I was already getting used to it. Like every night sewing. But the masks that I made, that ment more, that like impacted me more. . It was it was the... a the that they mask with a clear vinyl. And it's for the people that deaf of hearing. And so at first I was just like I hope they work, you know, because I know how to make it and everything instructions and you know, hopefully works. And when they write me back and they say how they could actually, you know, go out and communicate because that's the only way they communicate. So to me was really meaningful. Yes. It was like really special, just knowing that somebody can use the mask....[Zoom cuts off/glitches, but RV said "it really feels good"] You know.

FH: Yeah, I remember I was on social media one day and somebody, like, mentioned about the like the people that have hard of hearing that they need like their mask, like... how they're supposed to communicate if mask is not clear. And I remember seeing something like that. So that's really interesting. You, like the clear ones, came to be like a thing.

RV: I also heard a lot of nurses reached out to me and, you know, telling me how how there was no masks, you know, and and, you know, you feel bad and, you know, you just kind of I tried to help whatever you can. And, you know, I actually like after, you know, weeks of sending the masks, like I'll receive thank you notes and/or pictures with them wearing it. And I was just like, oh, my God, like that. At least... I like... I like.... you see that. It is that people are using them, you know, so it's nice to see them.

MM: Making an impact. How have you felt about Donald Trump, like handling of the whole situation of COVID and the lack of supplies.

RV: I don't think it was handled very well. You know, being a veteran and like not being kind of, you know, just seeing both sides of, you know, the government as republic, Republican and Democrat, like, it's been really hard for me even from the first term of Donald Trump. Right. I wasn't happy for, you know, for all the things that he was doing and definitely wasn't happy for all the Coronavirus, you know. Oh, the way he took care of everything, is... to me hasn't been good, at all. I say it's been very much horrible. I. I don't know what to say. Yes, I'm I'm really glad that people didn't choose him this for this second term.

FH: Were you surprised at the results? That he didn't win again?

RV: I was I was you know, I was really surprised. It was heartbreaking because, you know, his past presidency hasn't um been based on respect for others like that, there's... he has no respect for others, you know? You know, he doesn't like people from different religions or or they have different beliefs or race. You know, it's it's been it's been really hard to even think about, like,

finding a way.... to like him or to even support him. You know, so what what it's been really surprising, like to believe the results is that a lot of people still voted for him. You know, it breaks my heart, as you know I have four kids, and it's heartbreaking, and, you know, to see the reality. But we got to get our, you know, our community involved. We just got to get involved, and actually going vote because it can happen.

FH: Yeah, I'm glad it didn't end up being another four years.

RV: Yes!

FH and MM: talk over each other

FH: During the election, did you feel like stress? You could go ahead.

MM: No you go ahead [giggling]

FH: Did you feel stressed or anxious during the election?

RV: Oh, yes. Like the first election when you want. I cry all night. [laughter/giggles from everyone] Just like, how is this possible, you know? And then this year, you know, it just took so many days to actually find it. At first when it was all red and I was just like, oh, no, not again, you know. And, you know, how... oh... the state. So, you know, started well, all the ballots started coming in and actually counting all the ballots with. Which, I think it was really important. And then I think that's something that they need to eventually do because, you know, we have to count all the votes, you know. So I was I was, you know, relief that we we we saw that he was not going to be in, but still right now. It's kind of hard, to like know, to see how all this people still support him?

MM: Yes. How did you feel about the anti-mask protesters?... And with you trying so hard to make sure everybody has masks and then seeing people thinking it's like abuse of their right?

RV: I actually had friends on Facebook there, anti-facemask and anti-wearing mask. And they have actually told me that they don't work, what am I wasting my time making them and they have actually reached out to me and and, you know. And at the same time, it's like I don't try to, you know, argue with them. And, you know, I just just just. I just told them, you know, that we wear them to protect each other, you know, and that, you know, it is kind of like... It can save lives, you know, and it's hard to explain to people that don't like wearing masks how important they are. So it's really hard, because it doesn't matter what you tell them, it doesn't matter. All the facts you give them.

FH: Sometimes you just have to, like, let them think what they want because they're not going to change your mind.

RV: Yes, that's true. And I didn't know that. At first I would just like and I will send them like all the facts. Look, this is the fact. And then they're like... still[didn't change there mind]... I was just like, OK. [laughter]

FH and MM: [trying to think of the next question]

RV: I see some other questions as well[in her printed out copy of possible questions we prepared for her]. About when I came to the United States, I don't know if you still need me to answer those, but...

MM: Would you like to answer any of those?

RV: Sure. Oh, yes.

MM: Did you face any challenges when you came here, moved to the United States?

RV: Yes. I guess the challenges were like the language is still right now I don't feel like I'm efficient. And just a lifestyle, you know. In Mexico, where I live. It was it was a little pretty much a little farm. There was not that many people. I pretty much can just go out and do and play outside because I was so young. So I can just pretty much do whatever I wanted. And, you know, coming here to the United States and moving to apartments it was just like I felt like I was in a cage. [laughing] No but it was it was hard. It was hard, you know, learning English again and, you know, having started pretty much starting all over with friends. So it was challenging on that side.

FH: Yeah, and like I know, like I came at a very young age, both my brothers, my oldest brother. He was like like fifteen. And I know like he's like even to this day, he struggles with, like, speaking English. It's still like a little like chopped. But he still tries.

RV: Good, good, yeah.

FH: Did you experience anything like racism when you moved here? Or like anything similar to that?

RV: Oh, yes. Well, you know, I experienced... it... watching other people, being mean to other Mexicans is what I was going through the ESL classes [English as a Second Language], which is, is you know, English is a Second Language and, you know, I saw many people being racist, to, to people, with like dark skin that, you know, that actually were, you know, for no reason just being mean to them and say racist stuff. And for me, it was not until I was in the military. I, You know, my first duty station was in Missouri fort Leonard Wood, Missouri. And and that state is mostly like white people. And you I, I try, you know, they'll tell me, OK. This area, you cannot go because you are Mexican. And I didn't understand. Like what do you mean I can't go. It was like little towns hidden where my base was and you know, then one time I had to go down there and then there my friends were like, OK, just don't say any words. Just just come, come with us,

but don't speak, you know? And and so I was like, OK. But I had no idea how how bad people is like I mean, how bad people are. Like there's like like really mean people. And is, is... so hard to even experience that I... But I'm in the military, you know. People like guys will say, oh, "you're a waste of wife," "what are you doing a Mexican shouldn't be in the military" or, or like, oh, "aren't you bearing the kitchen like every other Mexican?" like comments like that are really harsh. It's like it's like sometimes, I most of the time I ignore it. Because I don't want to make everything worse, you know, especially as a new soldier. I was just a private. So it wasn't like I was an officer or a sergeant where I can actually speak up.

FH: Why did you decide to join the armed forces?

RV: Well, since I moved to um, well because when I was in Mexico, I had no idea about US. But after I moved to California. And, you know, it was actually during war time, which it was in 2006 when I joined, 2005 when I actually joined them. And there was the war with Iraq. And, you know, I know I keep hearing on news of the veterans or the service members that were coming back home pretty much that, you know, like how they needed more soldiers to go to war. So I feel that it was my duty to to go. And, you know, I really try hard to, you know, to do whatever I could to sign in. And and, you know, because this country has been really good to me and my family. So I felt like it was my duty and and I felt like I could do it. So it was something that that it happen. And I'm really proud to have served. You know, since I got injured in the military and I had to get out. But the service that I did, I'm really proud of. FH: Yeah I'm sure you are, thank you for that.

MM: Thank you, for your service.

RV: Thank you.

FH: Were there any, like other disadvantages or advantages being a female in the military?

RV: I will say the... Military sexual trauma is one of the the hardest thing about being in the military, and I think it is one of the hardest things because not even like physically I... when I went in and, you know, going through basic training, going through the car, training, how they say it wasn't really something that it made me feel like or may I might not be able to make it, you know. But the way sexual harassment in the military was pretty much, handle when I was there. It was really bad. And he made me wanna get out and he made me not want to be like a good, good, good soldier. Like, I just wanted to be away from the people that were, you know, doing the sexual assault and. And that kind of interfered with the job.

FH: I can imagine.

MM: So in the past,... during this whole COVID situation, did you hear about Vanessa [MM forgets last name, so FH steps in "Guillen"]

RV: Yes. Yes, definitely I do. I was actually one of one of the things that kind of brought me

back down with my symptoms. My my symptoms [from PTSD] pretty much got really bad. And I ended up in the hospital because all the things that her parents were saying happened to her were similar things that happened to me. And I never told my parents because I didn't want my parents to be like, oh, because they didn't want me to join. They were like, "no, how are you going to go to the military," your daughter? And you just came to this country and there's so many other things you can do and and you know, and so, you know. And so my parents were not happy. Me being in the military. So I didn't want to tell my parents what was going on. And so it triggered when, when all this stuff that happened with Vanessa Guillen it trigger, everything. And and, you know, it it just so frustrating to see that after pretty much, what, fifteen years since I got out. It's still happening like it is still happening. There is a change that needs to be done.

FH: Yeah and then how it got like that far, for her to something happen to her.

RV: Yes. When I went in, in 2006, it was maybe five females out of 200 males. So, you know, sexual assault was something that ok, well there's not that many. But now there's so many females in the military. That shouldn't be some thing that, you know, that will be happening right now.

FH: Yeah

RV: They should have more rules or that, but they do need to fix that.

FH: They should've like taken care of it before that happened to her

MM: They should have more protection for women in the military definitely.

RV: Yeah

MM: Yeah. Sorry.

RV: No, no, it's okay.

FH: Do you have another question?

MM: Has there been other things that you've been involved in that are similar to what you're doing now?

RV: Yes. During COVID, COVID19 I volunteered doing the food distribution for the north country of San Diego. So every month that I help them load up the cars with food for people that need it. So that's one of the things then. And also, I have helped there's an organization called Neighbors to Neighbors. And what they do is they also deliver food to people that have cancer. So they can't you know, they can't get out like us. Because you know, if they get sick it'll be really bad.

FH: Yeah

RV: They'll be more, you know. So I help deliver food for them. And. Well, what else have I done. You know, just a face mask. I have sent face masks all over the U.S. for the Navajo Nations. I sent some for a lot of the military hospitals. And this is hard to say that, you know, the way you think the government will be taking care of all the military service members. FH: Yeah

RV: And as we have done so many masks for the service members, what else, you know just staying home, too, because my kids are doing the e-learning.

FH: Yeah

RV: It's been hard. It's been hard.

FH: Yeah.

MM: Yeah. How do you balance that?

FH: What led you to. Sorry, you could go.

RV: Ok, how do I balance that? Well, during the day, I know they have their zoom meeting, so I have to be here because they all need something and during the day and the afternoon, we have family time. We go outside, And then right before in the nighttime. That's when I start doing my mask usually. But now I don't do as many masks as I used to do before when we were actually quarantined. Well, now we're quarantined again.

FH: Yeah

MM: Yeah

RV: But when it was the initial quarantine, the kids were not going to school. So I had you know I had more time to do face masks, yes.

FH: And then it was like the summer vacation.

RV: Then I actually received an award. Yeah. Yes, Yes. I received an award from the Senate. It's called the Senate for making face masks. I just haven't, I haven't posted or said anything about it, because I feel like you know when like when you receive something that you don't. I don't know. I just. I don't know, I just feel like everybody is helping right now so

FH: Yeah

RV: You know, yes but

FH:: That's so cool that you got it

MM: You should be proud of it

RV: Oh thank you.

MM: You're doing great things.

FH: Yeah.

RV: Well thank you

MM: For not only the nice things but also Mexico because you've donated, you've driven out masks to the orphanage. And here you've done so much great work.

Fh: Yeah

RV: Thank you. And I'm actually going to

MM: You're welcome

RV: Yeah thank you. I'm going to, we're going to do a Christmas party for the kids at the orphanage due in December. So I'm excited about that.

Fh: Oh, that's very exciting.

RV: Yes

MM: Yeah. So, do you go back and forth between the United States and Mexico often?

RV: Yes. Yes, I do. Before I was really scared because all that is happening in the border. But once I found out, I found out about the orphanage and you know, how I wanted to help, me and my family, which is like my husband and my kid started just going down there and just we just made it like a routine. Like we go there every four months and every time we go, we take something to do, like you know, like a project with the kids. And they they already know us. So it's pretty cool to see that. Like, we already have a fun thing with the kids FH: Yeah

MM: Yeah

RV: So it's pretty cool.

FH: Yeah im pretty sure

MM: That's amazing

FH: Yeah

MM: Does your husband or your family. Well, does your family help with all the planning that you do or these other stuff you've been doing?

RV: Oh yes. If it wasn't for my husband taking care of the kids, I wouldn't be able to volunteer. So he helps me, you know, with the kids and or even my daughter, the one that is 10 years old. She's being, like, cutting elastic to help me make masks

FH: Awww

RV: She actually learned also to make masks. So I showed her, she has a little sewing machine.

FH: Awww that's so cute.

RV: Thank you. I mean, I'm trying to show my kids, you know, that, you know, we have to be you know,

FH: Yeah

RV: That that we'd have to take care of other people and, you know, and it is hard right now, though, with all the stuff going on.

FH: Yeah

MM: What part of Mexico did you say you guys were from or where is the orphanage?

RV: The orphanage is in Puerto Nuevo

MM: Puerto Nuevo

RV: Yes. It's called Rancho La Hermosa Orphanage. I could send it to you in writing if you want. And where I'm from is the name of the town is Yahualica. And it's a little town too.

MM: Ohh okay, thank you

RV: You guys are so young, too. Wow. I was expecting to have an interview by like, ladies that are like, you know, really, really old. And I was just like, oh, my goodness.

FH: If you don't mind me asking, how old are you?

RV: I am 34.

FH: Oh, you're young, yeah you're young too.

RV: Aww thank you. I feel like I'm 50.

FH: Ohh nooo

MM: How have things changed since you were young until now?

RV: I will say that, you know, I have a lot more responsibilities. You know, leaving as a free young kid in Mexico, in our little town. You have zero responsibilities.

FH: Yeah

RV: You can go out and, you know, and run around and nobody will say anything. And then, you know, moving to the United States and, you know, and just being just changing your whole lifestyle and, you know, being in the military after that and being a mom, you know, is just more responsibilities. Way more.

FH: Yeah

RV: But, you know, I still have the same values.

FH: Yeah

RV: The, you know, the things haven't changed my values. And I'm trying to to show my kids to that, you know, that is really important to have values

FH: Yeah

RV: To respect others and, you know, and treat everybody as human. And just trying to do my best on that.

FH: Yeah

MM: Yeah. So we know you're an immigrant and you are also a veteran. How do you feel about seeing all these young kids separated from their parents at the border? And like yeah.

RV: It's heartbreaking. Just you talking about. It is heartbreaking. And it makes me feel really frustrated. It makes me, it brings all this emotions, because, you know, like even though the president say, well, who built the cages? And it's like saying like he could fix that, you know, like if he knew that it was wrong he could have fixed it if he really wanted to. You know, so it's

really heartbreaking. I tried to go and help, too. And when I reached out to the the people who are in charge of the immigrant detentions right here in down south. And, you know, of course, they don't let nobody volunteer, especially the kids. So it is heartbreaking because like, even if you tried to help, there's no way you can help. And it makes me really angry.

FH: Yeah. Me too. Like especially because he doesn't try to do anything to, like, help them. You know. That's not right for them to be in detention centers or anything like that. RV: I'm a mom and as a mother. It is it is like I say, it's heartbreaking, you still think about you getting to be separated, you know, your kids are going to be separated and you might never see them again.

FH: Yeah

MM: Yeah

RV: I don't know if I will be able to handle that, even if I'm a veteran. Even if I've gone through all this training, you know, as a mom, there's nothing that that you can fix with, you know, taking taking your kids that way. There's nothing that you can. You know, compensate with that, those kids need to go back with their parents and they need to fix that. It doesn't matter whose side was or or who built the cages or who did anything, he should fix that. You know, he knew it was wrong. And it is it is really bad.

FH: Yeah. And it just sucks that he doesn't even like try to like do anything to fix it.

MM: He doesn't see immigrants as human beings. He sees them as like criminals and rapists and all these horrible things.

FH: Yeah

MM: And in reality a lot of immigrants are doing amazing things like you who are you're an immigrant and a veteran. You're doing all these amazing things, volunteering during a pandemic, which he has completely mishandled. And it's this is ridiculous and sad.

FH: Yeah

RV: Yes. And on top of that, if you if you think about it, I'm not sure I was actually sexually assaulted in the military and it's just like uhhh. I don't know. I don't know. I don't even know what to say with, you know, with the way the way people let this president be president. FH: I know

MM: It's very

FH: Disappointing.

MM: Yeah

FH: Do you think that this year, like with everyone fighting for basic human human rights, have done a better job than like other years?

RV: Oh, yes. I think they have been because they've shown that they are really hurting. And you can now with social media, you can actually show people what's really going on. FH: Yeah

RV: Because like like for example, I had a family member who got stopped by the police not long ago. It was it was before the pandemic and the first thing that that person was going over the speed limit in the first thing the police officer told the person was oh this is not Mexico for you to be speeding that way. And comments like that are not okay to do, you know. FH: Yeah

RV: And if you don't have proof, you know, if you don't have proof what's really going on, then we're never going to know. And we're never going to be able to fix anything.

FH: Yeah

RV: So now for all this people that got together there and then they actually stand together and, you know, they they actually show and everything was really going on on social media is been helping a lot. And it's hard to see it. I'm not going to lie. Is really hard to see what's really going on.

FH: Yeah

RV: But, but we have to be aware

FH: Yeah thats true and with everybody putting in their little part of, like, showing from different places that really helps

RV: Yeah

MM: Yeah

RV: I don't have anything like against the police because I have family members that work for the police department.

FH: Yeah

RV: I have friends that work for the police department. And, you know, it's just the bad people, the that work there And there's so many bad people that work there. And, you know, I have friends you know, family members that are Black. And so my my family is is already all mixed because I have a lot of family here.

FH: Yeah

RV: And so it's heartbreaking to see just everything just kind of destroyed.

FH: Yeah

MM: Yeah. So would you consider, would you say that the issues with the police department is a few bad apples or a system, the whole system is messed up?

RV: I think it's the system that supports the bad apples.

FH: Yeah

RV: Because if the system makes the system needs to change so that all the bad apples can get out or yeah you cannot, you cannot make a bad apple good again, the only way to fix the system is for them to leave and change the system. Definitely change it. Not saying like like take down the police, you know, but making rules and making it better for them, for the people, because they're supposed to be taking care of the people. You know, that's their job. So, yes.

FH: Yeah I agree with you.

MM: Like you mentioned, even in the military, there's abuse and there's they're taking advantage of the powers that they are given as I want to say primarily men in power. They take advantage, a lot of minorities like women and people of color, and especially if you're in both categories. It can be really dangerous.

RV: Yes, I agree.

FH: Yeah

MM: Yeah. What was your reaction in the presidential debate if you watched it when Donald Trump refused to, they announced the proud boys.

RV: I was mad. I know it isn't right away and right away I actually posted on Facebook did he just say that, you know, I was just like, am I not? Am I the only one that see's the other side of this guy. You know what I mean, like, I was really frustrated, you know. And so because, you know, like when you when you hear him speaking, he speaks that way. And you don't agree. It makes for me. It makes me feel like maybe I'm like you make me question myself. If I'm if I if I am the only one that thinks different, you know. So. It's definitely something that I don't even know what to say about this president, you know, I just it's like something I just want to move, move on. Yes.

FH: Yeah. It's so frustrating.

RV: Yes, it is frustrating.

MM: And you mentioned moving on, but right now, Donald Trump is refusing to accept that Biden has been elected as our president. So how do you feel about that or what was your reaction to that whole situation?

RV: Well, I kinda expected for him to do that.

FH: Yeah

RV: I mean, I, I hopefully hopefully it doesn't turn into a really bad situation where people are actually going to go out and you know, actually do a civil war. Hopefully it doesn't go to there, but it is so hard that so many people still support him. That's the hardest thing. FH: Yeah.

RV: So it doesn't matter what he says like you know that that doesn't matter all the bad things that he's says people are still going to support him. And so that's that's that's why it's so hard for people to accept that. So and he knows it. And that's why he's doing what he's trying to do whatever he wants, like, use his power you know. So I, I'm hopeful, hopefully we don't go into a civil war, that would be bad.

FH: He's just being childish, like he has to get over the fact that he didn't win.

RV: Yes

MM: So you mentioned a civil war, did you ever expect any of these things to happen in America?

RV: Never. Never. Not even. You know, I honestly thought, you know, that we had already passed through the whole racist you know, the whole racist went, you know, where black people were not able to vote. And while women were not able to vote and I honestly thought that, you know, we were we were making progress and and all this stuff happening. I honestly feel like he just pushed us back. But hopefully we will be able to fix it, like, completely where where, you know, people are not going to be. I don't know how I don't know how to say it where where it will not be okay to be racist when when you know where yeah because freedom of speech. But being, you know, saying other things are racist. It will not be okay.

FH: Yeah

MM: Yeah

FH: I don't think I have any more questions. Do you?

MM: I don't think so either. Is there anything you would like to mention or talk about?

RV: I didnt think about anything. But it's really hard to talk about Donald Trump

FH: Yeah

MM: Yeah

RV: Talking about Donald Trump is hard.

MM: It's kinda crazy, these past few years.

FH: Yeah

RV: Yes

MM: Yeah

RV: But if you have any questions, you guys can text me that question and I can write it back and send it to you guys. It's okay.

FH: Okay

MM: Okay

FH: Do you have anything else to add before we end or.

RV: I will say that just as being part of the sewing group has been really therapeutic for my PTSD. So I really enjoy being part of them. It makes me feel like at least I can help a little bit with whatever I can.

FH: Yeah that's true

MM: Yeah

FH: Did did you sign the. Did you send her the document that we had to sign?

MM: Oh the consent form

RV: Yes

MM: I sent it to her, she'll sign it after the meeting

FH: Okay, alright sounds good.

MM: And if you have any issues just let me know and I can help you. Or let one of us know

FH: Yeah

MM: Yeah

RV: Okay. I will definitely do that right now, too, because I'm by the printer.

MM: Okay

RV: Okay

MM: If you could print it out, sign it and then just scan it and then send it to us.

RV: Okay

FH: Yeah, I was gonna say, yeah. Do you have anything else to say. I don't have nothing else.

MM: I just think you've done a great job and been really amazing.

FH: Yeah.

RV: Well, thank you because I'm really bad at interviews. I'm I'm horrible at interviews, especially public speaking. I cannot do that. This far.

FH: Yeah

MM: Yeah

FH: I've been the one to interview someone so it was so different.

MM: Yeah, me too. I've only done a small interview for my dad, but it's a lot easier when it's your dad.

FH: Yeah

MM: But thank you very much for your time.

FH: Yeah, thank you

RV: Aww thanks, thank you guys and thank you for you guys for what you guys are doing that's really nice and really good. So I really appreciate everything you guys are doing. Thank you, too. Thank you for being so active with your community and just getting back to a lot of people.

Like, I'm pretty sure that it like makes a great impact in their lives.

MM: Yeah

RV: Thank you

FH: Thank you.