AGNES DILL, Tiwa

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Isleta, New Mexico

Part II

This transcript is one of a series of interviews with American Indian people throughout much of the United States by S. I. Myers of the History Department of St. Louis Community College at Florissant Valley, St. Louis, Missouri, 63135.

The purpose of these interviews is to bring the Indian peoples' own comments to students in classrooms, and to foster greater understanding among the peoples of the United States by providing Indians the opportunity to express their ideas and opinions to a wider audience.

This transcript has been edited for clarity and ease of reading, but every effort has been made to preserve the original feeling. Conversations and opinions were encouraged on any subject of interest to interviewees; questions and responses do not necessarily reflect the viewpoint of the interviewer, the National Endowment for the Humanities, or St. Louis Community College.

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Sam Myers:

We are continuing our conversation with Mrs. Agnes Dill, Tiwa Indian, at Isleta, New Mexico. Mrs. Dill, have you been living here in the house ever since you built it in 1971?

Agnes Dill:

I moved in here in February of '72.

SM: And you've saved a few of the things from your museum and your collection, because you have many things here.

AD: It's probably mostly the baskets I saved and the rugs. 'Course we had that at home. A few pieces of pottery, not very many, just some I had myself before I married my husband, and some of the rugs. Almost everything I have now has been given to me.

SM: You have a stand over there with some baskets and a sand painting and some pottery, and then right next to it you have an electronic record player. So we are living in two worlds. We have things here that go back hundreds of years, and a modern piece of technology there, and you enjoy all of them, don't you?

AD: Oh yes. I can sit there on the divan and just watch. Pottery, rugs, baskets, even the books, Indian books, give me a very peaceful feeling out of it. I can just sit there and enjoy, when it's quiet. I don't know, it just does something to me. I just like to look at it. I can't explain.

SM: I want to ask you what you're doing now, because I understand you are engaged in a lot of projects, and one of them is talking to young people.

AD: Right. I talk to the young people a lot. I try to talk about something they want to hear, what they'd like, so I always give them a
paper and have them jot down their first priority, and on down, what they want to hear, or questions. And one of the questions I always get is, "Why is the white man trying to change us?"

SM: These are young Indian people?

AD: They're young, high school age.

SM: Do they come to you, or do you go to the high schools?

AD: I talk to them here, when they have their meetings.

SM: Here in the pueblo?

AD: Um hm. Like the NYC students in the summertime. National Youth Corps. And any scouts, 4-H.

SM: Indian Guides?

AD: They don't have Indian Guides here. And this is the question they ask. I don't feel that the white man has changed me. And I don't feel that they're trying to change the Indians from what they were, their own lifestyle and their culture. I believe the Indians themselves want to change, so when I talk to the Indian students, and they bring up this one question, I always say, "All right, let's take this. This seems to be the number one item. Number one question. Then I say, "May I ask you a question? You girls," I says, "The style now everywhere is mini-dresses, mini-skirts. Who had you wear these dresses? Why do you wear them?" "Because we want to." "All right, why did you change your hairstyles from the hairdo that Indian girls are supposed to wear?" "Because we want to." "Why do you watch T.V., listen to the radio and so forth? All of the modern conveniences that we have now. Do you enjoy having
those things?" "Yes." I said, "Who has twisted your arm, or has force you at the point of a gun or any other way, to dress like you do, or to do the things that you say is a white man's world? Who has done that?" "Nobody." "Well, why have you done it then?" "Because we want to do it, we like it." I said, "O.K., then, nobody has forced you to do it. You want that same way of life, because you're exposed to this kind of life now. And how many of you would like to go back to hauling water from a great distance, to bringing in wood and kindling to build a fire like your forefathers did? Or how many of you would like to go back, take away all the furniture, your divan, and all of this stuff, and start sleeping on sheep pelts, and all of these things like we used to do?" None of them wanted it. I said, "O.K., times are changing, and you're changing with them. But, with all this education, and all of the modern conveniences, and all of the things that we have this day, you can still be an Indian. You can still maintain your identity." I said, "You can bring all of the beautiful arts, all of the beautiful craftwork, the beautiful things that we have, right into your home." I said, "Decorate your home with it, and in your clothes, use these beautiful designs and things in your clothes, and listen to good Indian music. There's still some good Indian music. And that is being an Indian. And also, one of the things that we've lost are the wonderful qualities that we used to have as Indian people." I said, "The values is what we're losing, and nobody is forcing those on you, because values are always values, and they can always stay the same. But," I said, "we know that our people, our mothers and fathers and, of course, I'm much older than you are, but," I said, "many of you still have the grandmothers and grandfathers who, I know, want you to behave like Indian children used to years ago. Many of us were told when we were little, and when I was young, that when we went down to the village, or walked anywhere, and we met an older woman, we must always say, 'Good morning Mother,' or 'Good afternoon, Mother.' Always called her 'Mother.' If it was a younger woman we said, 'Sister.' If it was an older man
we had to call him, 'Father,' or a younger man, 'Brother.'" So I said, "Do any of us do those things now? No. Why? Because modern conveniences, travelling, cars have come in. We don't meet each other like we used to, but even if we do, you young kids just go by without even noticing anybody." And I said, "If some of our great grandparents or some of our older people came back to life right now, they'd go right back into the grave, because they wouldn't want any part of some of the bad manners that we practice now." I said, "Those are the things that to me makes you an Indian. The values that we used to have that are lost already. Truthfulness. We never had to lock doors. Being trustworthy, trusting. We never had to lock a thing, never had to hide anything. What do we do now? We have to lock our cars, we have to lock everything right here even in the pueblo to keep from having it stolen. Trustworthiness is gone. The consideration of the old people." I said, "No old person was ever put out into a rest home or anywhere. 'Course they didn't have rest homes in those times, but never, never, never did we disregard the old people, and we took care of them. And there were never any orphans, because there was a place for each child. Those are the values that we're losing, those are the ones we should be concerned with, instead of our physical appearances and all of that." So then the kids would leave with a better understanding.

SM: And a little bit more self-assurance, perhaps? A little bit less resentment of the world around them?

AD: Right. Uh huh. And I think that these are some of the things that I know with the Indian students. My husband was still living when I had substituted in the schools, and I found that there were a lot of the little kids who needed a lot of help with their reading, and with their arithmetic, especially those two subjects. I think if you have those two, you have a good foundation of everything else. Well, language, reading and arithmetic. And I thought to myself,
somebody has to do something for those kids, because the teachers don't have enough time to give individual help. So we heard of a tutoring service up in Albuquerque, and I contacted those people who had this tutoring service, high school students tutoring children, and so I started one here. I met with some of the high school kids, juniors and seniors, and put this to them. So they were all for it, so we got together then, and we went up to town and had some of the demonstrations and meetings that the tutoring service was giving. So we came down here and we started this little tutoring service, and those high school students, they kept me working, because they wanted to meet every night with these little kids, and they wanted a demonstration every time to teach them sort of a remedial reading thing, because that really was one of my lines, remedial reading, and I taught so many in Tahlequah and those other places that didn't know how to speak English, and this is some of the type of thing that I introduced. And then I got some Indian teachers to demonstrate, you know, some of the techniques, and these high school kids just took it up so well, and they really liked it, and then I checked up with the teachers to see how these little kids were progressing, and they said they were doing a lot better. So that was one little service that we had. At the end of the tutoring service I had certificates made for them, the boys and girls.

SM: For the children?

AD: No, for the tutors. It was worded real nicely, and I had them printed just like a real certificate, and I had the governor of the pueblo and the president of the council sign it, besides me. So then I called their parents. I had a little party, a graduation party. I had their parents come in and the tutors' parents, and I presented their certificates with their parents there. We have a lot of difficulty here getting the parents involved with the children, getting them interested to come out to PTA or anything like that they have
Here. So what I was trying to tell these parents was to try to get them interested in helping their students help other little students, and, oh, I just gave them a big lecture, and I happened to have two white friends here, and when I got through and everything, he said, "Well, you sure told those people off. If it was anybody else, they couldn't get away with it. But they just sat there and listened to you, and I saw them nodding." I said, "Yeah, they know--I tell them in a way that they won't get angry." And I always include myself in everything. I say, "we." I never say, "you," because that's bad. Because they say, "Well, who is she to tell us anything?" So I always say, "we did," or, "We're not interested in our youth," or "we're not this and that." And the parents came away just thanking me, and were just so good to their children that they were able to do something.

SM: It was great that the students did it, and it was also great for those children who needed the help.

AD: Now those kids are in high school. That was one of the first things I did. See, I had been away from the pueblo for so long, and then, too, I was what you would call an educated person from the pueblo people here, and even if I came home three, maybe two times a year, I spent all my vacation here, because my parents were still here, my brothers and sisters. Then I came home at Christmas time. Those were the only times I came home from Oklahoma. All right, even though I came here, and I visited relatives here, I was still sort of considered a foreigner, an outsider. And I wanted to get involved with affairs and the people here. I felt like now is the time for me to go back to help the people in the pueblo, to do something worthwhile in the pueblo, because I've got enough experience now. You know, Indian people don't think that youth is very smart. I mean, you can't tell anybody what to do, or what to say, or anything until you have gained some years. Old age brings on experience, brings on knowledge. So I said, now I've been away from home these many years, I've experienced so many things, now
is the time that I think I should go back and see what I can do over there. But I have to win my way back into the good graces of the people of the pueblo, acceptance again. Well, I was never one to act superior or to feel superior to other people. I always have been pretty much on the level with everybody. We have so many of our Indian students who become too superior when they get a little education, a little position, or something like that, and this has been the failure of a lot of so-called educated Indian youth that come back to the pueblos, because they have become so far above their own people. So I always said I'm not going to--I can't be like that. I guess it was just my make-up, I just can't be ... none in our family's that way. So I came back and immediately I went visiting everybody and just treated them like I always did.

SM: Then moving back into the pueblo permanently probably helped?

AD: I guess that helped too. But see, my mother and father were so well known here and so well respected. Everybody knew them as "Mama Paul" and "Papa Paul." My mother's name was Beatrice, but she was known as "Mama Paul" to everybody in the pueblo. And they were so good to everybody. They were very highly respected, and naturally, because I was a daughter of these two people, they just sort of took me in too. So I don't give myself all the credit. Well, anyway, I got involved. They had this Community Action Program here, and so I applied for a position. I wanted a teaching position, 'cause they had what they called the pre-school, which later became Head Start. But they already had a person in mind for that. So when they told me to apply for the directorship I told them I just didn't think that I was qualified to be the director, because I never had any administrative training. And they said the qualifications are a degree. I said there are degrees and degrees. My degree is in teaching, not in administration. I said, "True, I have a degree, but that doesn't make me an administrator." And so I said, "Can I put in more than one application?" So I came home and I filled out the application, and I
applied for director, assistant director and teacher. I told my husband, "Anything, even janitor, just so I can get in somewhere." So I got the assistant directorship. There was a great battle here that night of selection, and there's a lot of nepotism in our government here within the pueblo structure. One of the persons that applied had a tenth grade education and was a policeman, and had a brother on the council, so this man had told me, "I sure would like for you to be director, but we're going to have a battle between you and him, because he's got a brother on the council, and he's gonna sway the other men." Sure enough, that's just the way it worked. He became the director, and I became his assistant director. But it turned out that I did everything. So anyway, I started working with that. That was my first "in" with the pueblo people here, and, oh, everybody was so nice, so good, and from that time on it was O.K., I could almost do anything. Many times I had to go and talk with the council on a lot of things, because I had a lot of difficulty with the governor at that time, the governor of the pueblo. He's the one that really started the Community Action program, but I still had a little trouble with him, so I had to explain a lot of things to the council, and many times I went in there and I just preached a sermon to the councilmen.

SM: How many people do you have here in the pueblo?

AD: Around 3,000.

SM: And the governor and the council would be like the mayor and the councilmen in a town?

AD: Like a city commission.

SM: But don't the governor and the council members tend to have a little more prestige and have a little more carry-over from father to son in this kind of situation?
AD: No. Not any more.

SM: Is it sort of customary in some pueblos that some families seem to get the nod more often than others?

AD: Well, see, that's that nepotism thing. I guess you heard somewhere along the line about the Reorganization Act, or the Wheeler-Howard Act of 1934. O.K., maybe somebody already explained to you what that act did within the pueblos, the government structure of the pueblos?

SM: Set up an organized government?

AD: All right, there was only Santa Clara, Isleta, and Laguna, who went under the constitutional system, or popular vote. Then Zuni just came in lately. O.K. That's four pueblos out of 19. The rest of them are selected by a cacique. A cacique is a headman of the pueblo, not exactly a ceremonial head, but he was really the ruler when the Spaniards came, and they're the ones who choose the governors, the other 15 pueblos. So it's only Isleta, Santa Clara, Laguna and Zuni who have constitutions and a popular vote. All right, in Isleta, I worked real hard to get the women's vote. The women did not vote until 1971 or '72. Now the women vote.

SM: Up at Taos they said the kivas have much to do with the choice of men.

AD: Yeah, they're traditional. That's the cacique. You see, the cacique is the one that does the choosing.

SM: Now the word cacique would be sort of synonymous with chief in some ways?
AD: There's just no word, there's no word really. Cacique is a Spanish name. But he's really like ... yah, I guess chief, both religious and civil, sort of like a priest or something like that.

SM: He was more than just a governor, he was a priest-governor, a little bit more than either one?

AD: Right, it's a combination. And that was inherited from father to son.

SM: And they had to measure up or else they'd be deposed?

AD: Right. So Isleta, the caciqueship ran out, I guess the inheritance ran out, so there was . . . Isleta has no cacique.

SM: And that made it a little easier to get this voting thing going too?

AD: Right.

SM: Otherwise you'd have had some resistance there. Now then, in Isleta both the men and the women do vote for the council members?

AD: No, we only vote for the governor.

SM: How are the council members selected then?

AD: O.K. The candidates for the governor, maybe there's three or four. The highest vote-getter, of course, is the governor. The second highest becomes the president of the council, the third highest is the vice-president of the council. The council of 12 men is chosen by these three men. The governor chooses four men, the chairman or president of the council chooses three, because he's automatically a member of the council, so that makes eight. The vice-president chooses three, so that makes 12. A lot of them choose those that will
follow their own idea. So what we want to do—a majority of us have been talking—is to have the constitution amended again, where we can vote for the councilmen also, because the councilmen represent the people, and this way they don't represent the people, they represent one man.

SM: You have given a good picture of the operation of the government. Now, Agnes, what other activities are you involved in?

AD: Well, my husband, I had to be with him quite a bit, I didn't do much then. After he passed away I became involved in a lot of things right away. I didn't wait. I did it deliberately. I just made up my mind I wasn't going to sit around and pine around like I've seen a lot of women do, and lose all their friends and lose everybody else because of pining away so much.

SM: Back in the old days when the man of the family, or the chief of the tribe died, he was mourned in very extreme ways sometimes, and sometimes it was simply that his wife, or wives if he had more than one, would mutilate themselves, cut off a finger or something, or cut their hair, and go into mourning for a definite period. Does any of this kind of thing still prevail?

AD: No, I don't think they ever did that in Isleta. No, I was speaking of everybody in general, not just Indian women. I think Indian women accept death much better than the non-Indian people anyway.

SM: Why is that?

AD: I guess they have more stamina. I don't know.

SM: Or do they have more faith in a hereafter?
AD: Could be. Could be. I don't know. Hereafter . . . life goes on hereafter. We'll see our loved ones again.

SM: Most Indian people believe in a hereafter, don't they, whether it be Christianity or their own religion?

AD: Right. So anyway, I think that after he passed away I just became involved in all kinds of things. Just about that time there was a woman's organization that was formed, a national Indian women's organization that was formed through the courtesy of the Country Women's Council, known as CWC and the bigger women's organization, I can't think of now, who decided they'd work with Indian women, when they'd been working with other women all the time. And so 58 women met in Fort Collins to talk over their problems of Indian women, and their concerns, and so forth, for this week called "Indian Women Plan For The Seventies." This was sponsored also by the Bureau of Indian Affairs, by the Department of Agriculture, and also the extension clubs throughout. Lot of backing. But it was done through these two big women's organizations. At that time, because they had these women from all over the United States, they decided to form a national chapter of Indian women. That was the beginning of it. So they elected their president, their officers, and began the organization with those 58 women. In 1971 then, the first conference was held in Fort Sill, Oklahoma, and this is when I decided to go, because my husband was very ill at the time they formed this thing in 1970, and I couldn't leave him. Then I decided to go to the conference, in 1971, and that is when I got involved with it. When the organization was formed, they divided the geographic areas into six areas, which was the Southwest area, Northwest area, Northcentral, Northeast, Southeast and Southcentral, and the first president was from Oklahoma. So the first conference was held in Oklahoma, and the conferences are to rotate clockwise, so the Southwest would be next. They chose Albuquerque. And before we had our national conference, I formed
the New Mexico chapter of North American Indian Women's Association, and was elected president. So I was president of the state chapter, and we were hostesses then to the national conference.

SM: You were in charge of all these people?

AD: Right.

SM: That was a kind of a strain?

AD: Yes, it was. But it was a wonderful conference, it went over big. At the first conference there were only 150 women, the second conference was a little more than double that, and our theme was "Survival Through Education," so we got our keynote speakers and all of this, and it was a three-day conference, and they came from all over. We had it at the Indian school in Albuquerque, and we used the dormitory facilities and the eating facilities there, and the auditorium for our meeting.

SM: I can imagine the struggle you had getting ready for that.

AD: It was very, very challenging and very interesting. And then the third conference was held in Browning, Montana, way up there, and their conference there was "Awareness of Indian Culture," and that's when we were having our national election for president, that was in '73, and I was elected president.

SM: And you became the national president?

AD: The national president. And I was still state president--I couldn't do both, it was just too hard, so I resigned. I didn't have to, but then I did, because I was local president here too. I formed a local chapter here, 'cause we have local chapters within the state chapter.
I gave that up too after so long. It took everything I had to be national president. By that time we had almost a thousand members.

SM: Did you travel a lot?

AD: I travelled a lot, I did a lot of speaking, I went up to Canada. I think my first one was to go to Panama City, Florida, because the CWC national conference was down there, and they wanted a report on what was going on, so I went down there and gave a talk. Then from there, just different things began to pop up, and I went to Canada to Edmonton, to the Alberta Indian Women's Conference.

SM: Do they have a Canadian organization too?

AD: They have now; they patterned it after ours. Then I went to talk up there too, in Thunder Bay. Oh, I had a wonderful time up there; I was there three days, four days. Besides having all of these other activities, I also have church activities, so I talk to a lot of youth too in that capacity, and I just go from one thing to another. And during the course of this time, some three years ago, I was also appointed by the governor of New Mexico, to the New Mexico Film Commission, where we bring in movies in the state. I served District 3, which serves about five counties. Bring movies from Hollywood, New York.

SM: To the public?

AD: No. To have them filmed here in the state. To encourage filming of movies here in the state, and we've been very, very successful. I thought maybe at this election, the new governor coming in, I'd probably be out, 'cause several of them were out, but they kept me in.

SM: He's Spanish, isn't he?

AD: Now he's Spanish, but the other one was Governor King, Anglo, and so
we became very good friends, Mr. King and I. So I'm still on, I don't know how long.

SM: What is the name of the new governor?

AD: Governor Apodaca. I'm not a politician, I don't play politics anyway. Well, I belong to the film commission, and just this year I was appointed by President Ford to the Educational Advisory Council on women's educational programs.

SM: Have you been to Washington, D.C.?

AD: Oh yes, I've been there many times through my presidency of NIWA.

SM: Your presidency was for a year?

AD: Two years. Just got out in June.

SM: Did you meet President Ford?

AD: Yes, I met him. I invited him to our national conference in Marquette, Michigan.

SM: Did he come?

AD: No, but he sent a representative, Mrs. Knauer. Mrs. Knauer then appointed me to a steering committee on consumer affairs to work with the pueblos, and I haven't done too much of that yet. I had one meeting, and two meetings with the advisory council on women's educational programs, and we're gonna have our next advisory meeting here in Albuquerque, 'cause I talked them into that too. I'm the only Indian on the staff of the 17-member team. They are one, two and three-year appointments, and I've got a three-year appointment, so I'll be on three years.
SM: That's quite an honor.

AD: What I want to do is to work mainly for the good of Indian women, see what we can do with these Indian schools.

SM: When this organization of American women gets organized, they have a lot more political influence, don't they?

AD: Right. Only we're supposed to be non-political, but we are being heard. This is how come I've been involved in so many other programs, see, and they continue to come to me yet, and as long as I'm a member, even if I'm not a president, I'm still going to be interested in all the things that I became involved in. One of the big things that I started in my time was to work on an Indian women's job bank, to try to see if we can somehow get an office or a central place where people can send to when they need people for employment, so we can get people out, but we're having very little luck with that, because everywhere we've gone, Secretary of Labor and all the other organizations where we think we can get some help and money, they say it's too big a scope on a national basis. They want us to start it on a regional basis. Well, we were still working on that when I got out of the presidency, so I don't know what's going to happen with it.

SM: Who followed you as president?

AD: Mary Jane Fate, an Athabaskan from Fairbanks, Alaska. She is way up in Alaska now. A very young woman.

SM: The Commissioner of Indian Affairs is from Alaska too.

AD: That's his cousin, I think. I don't know, there's some kind of relationship there. So that's been my involvement right now, and I've got all kinds of other things--little things--that creep up, that I take care of.
SM: You have a busy, busy life.

AD: I do. I'm getting tired of it now. (laughter)

SM: You seem to be thriving on it. You look healthy and happy.

AD: Well, the one thing that I enjoy so much during all of these things is meeting so many interesting people, and now occasionally the Chamber of Commerce from Albuquerque, they will call me up, or the tourist center, and say, "Mrs. Dill, I have 15 foreign diplomats here from Washington. Can I bring them down there? Would you like to talk to them? They want to know more about Indian government or Indian people, or something like that. Is it all right if you can come up and talk to them, or we can come down there?" And I say, "Whatever you want to do." And then maybe another time they'll say, "I have a man here from Germany for such and such a thing, may I bring him down here?" They're all coming down. I don't even have a guest book. I should have a guest book.

SM: Do you mean they come down to your house here?

AD: Yes, they come here to the house, or if there's a large group, and if they want a tour, then they ask me to go tour with them.

SM: To the pueblo?

AD: No, no. Through the state. The pueblo don't know my abilities, I guess.

SM: Oh, they'll get wised up some day. You know I'm going to write to Bill Casto and tell him thanks for steering us in your direction.

AD: Well, I hope you'll tell him "hi" for me, and tell him I'm still kicking.
SM: Mainly to thank him for sending us to see someone as interesting as you are.

AD: Well, thank you. I just wonder sometime.

SM: Part of the thing that's interesting about you is that you don't even believe it yourself. You're so modest about it all.

AD: Well, thank you. I guess that comes from my mother's and father's teaching. There's six of us--I lost a brother when he was 16. Six of us, and we all have college educations, we all have good jobs.

SM: That's remarkable. There are many, many families in the country that don't have a record like that.

AD: Well, I'll tell you how this came about. My father went to school at Carlyle, as I said. But he wasn't privileged to finish high school. He only went to the 11th grade, and he worked a lot in the East during the time he was going to school, and his father wanted him home at the end of his junior year, and he had fully wanted to go back. That was his intentions, but when he came down here, my grandfather--my father's parents were pretty wealthy people, in that they had a lot of cattle, a lot of horses, a lot of sheep, and very much in the government business too. My dad was the oldest, and the only boy at that time that could do anything. So his dad needed him at home to ride the range and to take care of the cattle, so he said, "To my greatest disappointment I had to stay home." And Papa--I call him Papa, we all do--was very spiritual, a religious man. He said, "As I rode the range many, many times I thought of running away and going back to Carlyle," and he said, "The more I thought of it, the more I wanted to do it, but then I got to thinking . . . no, that wouldn't be right for me to do that, because one of the commandments is to honor thy father and thy mother, and thy days will be numbered,
or something like that," and he says, "If I disobey my mother and father, especially my father, and run off to go to school, I might not even get anything out of my education, because I disobeyed." So he said, "I just stayed. But at the time that I was riding the range, and wanting to go to school so badly, I made a vow that if I ever have any children, that I would give them the best education I could possibly give them." So he really fulfilled that. I was the first one, then my brother, got out of high school and went to work, but he earned every bit of his money, then he went to college. Now he is tribal affairs officer in public health.

SM: Here?

AD: At Albuquerque. He was also an academic teacher in shop, but then he got tired teaching, and he went to Chapel Hill, North Carolina, and got his master's degree in public health, and then under the public health system he's tribal affairs officer to all the 19 pueblos and the Jicarilla and Mescalero Apaches and the Utes in Ignacio, Colorado. And he travels all over too, so he's got quite an important position. My sister next to him also went to Las Vegas— we all three went to Las Vegas—she went into business, so she's administrator in public health at the Laguna Clinic. My sister next to her is a teacher at the Albuquerque Indian School. She's been teaching since '44, and she's not married. Then we lost a brother in between. He had rheumatic fever and his heart was damaged, so he didn't last too much longer. He played football during his heart ailment. Then Veronica was in her second year at New Mexico State, and so she decided she didn't want to go back and leave my daddy after my mother died, so she stayed home with my dad. And then, after he died, then she went into beauty school—anyway, that's her line really— so she had her own shop until her husband had to sell it. So now she's still in beauty work. And then my little brother went to the university some, and then he went into the Marines during the Korean War, and
came out and went back to the university. Then he went back in as a reserve, and then in again as a career Marine. He just came home last fall, now he's teaching engineering up at the Southwest Indian Polytech Institute.

SM: He has a degree in engineering?

AD: He doesn't have a degree, but his experience in the Marines. . . . He didn't quite get a degree, so he's gonna go back now and get his degree.

SM: Is he retired from the Service?

AD: He's retired from the Marines.

SM: It's a good explanation of the family attitude on getting an education.

AD: And the push that we got from our parents. They stood behind us. Any time anything went wrong in any of the schools, with our records, or anything, they were right up there to find out what happened, or why was it. And if we were in the wrong, why they really got on to us. They didn't take our part if we were in the wrong.

SM: Church work keeps you busy too?

AD: Right. I'm a Mormon. I spent a lot of time up at Brigham Young University with Indian students up there. I'm pretty well known up there too. I do a lot of talking.

SM: This has been a very interesting hour. I guess we've even used up a little more than that, but it went so fast.

AD: Seems like I did nothing but brag about myself.
SM: No, you didn't at all. You're just too modest. It's been enjoyable, we're glad we came.

AD: Well, I hope it'll help somebody. My main reason really, to consent to this, is my whole life I've tried to sort of correct the misconceptions that non-Indian people have of Indian people, because I think that they have a stereotyped impression or feeling about Indian people—all Indian people are wild, all Indian people are ignorant, they don't have much intelligence, and so forth, and I think it's time now that we break that kind of a thing.

SM: I think it's changing quite rapidly now, don't you? This organization you've got going nationally now . . .

AD: Oh yes. Twenty five years ago you'd never even think of a women's organization. And now there's women getting into government, councils, and all that. It's gonna be a long time before they do here among the pueblos, because of the religious aspect too, but I think that it's still, nevertheless, that they're getting involved in things . . . like Ada Deer and Annie Wauneka, she's the Navajo, she's been a council member for years and years and years, and I think the only way we can break down this kind of a thing that the people have about Indian people, or any other people, ethnic groups, say, is to make ourselves heard.

SM: We have to find out more about each other so that we can respect each other.

AD: 'Course I have no quarrel with any group of people, and when they start getting on to me and complaining about all the ills and things that have been done to Indian people in the past—true, they have been, but we've got to forget about those things and go on. You didn't do it to me, and I didn't do it to you.
SM: We know they happened, so we've got to start from knowing that to a better way.

AD: And it was also inevitable that the white man would come here, because eventually they would come here sometime. This world is a small world, I mean it's not as big as we think it is, especially now since we can get around so much, and I believe that all the things that have happened throughout history were meant to be, and I think it was meant for the white man to come here. There was no escaping that.

SM: Well, again, I want to thank you very much for your time and your good thoughts.