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, 63136.

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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LISTENING TO INDIANS

NO. 102

DANA FOLZ, Clallam
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Sam Myers:

Today I'm in the state of Washington talking with a young lady whose name is Dana Folz. That's not an Indian name is it?

Dana Folz:

No.

SM: Your father was non-Indian?

DF: He was white.

SM: Your mother, though?

DF: She's Indian and Hawaiian.

SM: Indian and Hawaiian, but mainly she's Klallum. How do you spell that?

DF: Clallam.

SM: Now that's a third way of spelling it. Clallum, and also with a K. I guess that's one of the lessons I've learned, Dana, that there are six or seven ways to spell most every Indian name.

DF: That's because there's no written language for the Indians.

SM: Yes. And then the Indians pronounced a word or a name, the French pronounced it one way, the English pronounced it another way, and eventually it comes down with all these variations, doesn't it?

DF: Yeah.

SM: So anyway, you're Clallam, and a little bit of Hawaiian. That's Polynesian, isn't it?
DF: Yeah.

SM: And a little bit of English?

DF: German and Norwegian.

SM: You're going to school here in Longview?

DF: Yes.

SM: What school do you go to?

DF: Monticello.

SM: Is that a high school?

DF: That's a junior high.

SM: Well, you must have reached the ripe old age of . . . may I ask you?

DF: Sure, fifteen . . . well, not quite, in less than a month.

SM: You're going to have a birthday and you're going to be 15. I think you're the youngest person I've talked to. That's a kind of record. How are things going in school?

DF: Pretty good. I didn't get a 4.00 though.

SM: Are you working on a 4.00? That's perfect, all A's. What did you get?

DF: Three point seven one.

SM: That's pretty good. You got one B or two B's?
DF: Two B's.

SM: Do you work on a semester basis or a quarter?

DF: Quarter. And then the records, in the record it's semester, but we get grades every quarter, and then the average of the two grades is a semester, and so we get two semester grades.

SM: For the school year?

DF: Um hm.

SM: I don't suppose you have summer school?

DF: Well, we do, but that's for students who are having problems.

SM: You went to a powwow last night?

DF: Yes.

SM: That was down at Portland, wasn't it?

DF: Um hm.

SM: They had a big convention down there all last week. Did you go to any of it? The National Congress of American Indians.

DF: No.

SM: And this powwow had no connection with that, did it?

DF: I'm not sure. My mom just told me that we would be going, so I went.

SM: Did you wear that pretty dress I saw, the one made of buckskin and
beads? I think people would love to see you in that really, and when our listeners see a picture of you they'll know why I said that. Anyway, what did you do down there? Did you go down to participate, did you dance?

DF: Well, at first I was a little bit scared, 'cause I hadn't gone to a powwow for about two years, so I just kinda watched, and then after a while I started dancing.

SM: Where was it?

DF: It was in a church. It was in a Catholic church, I know that, but I'm not sure which one. It was a beautiful church.

SM: Was it? Did they have a big room where people could dance?

DF: It was off the main church.

SM: So you went to the powwow and finally got up enough courage to participate?

DF: Yeah. Then it was gettin' a little late and we had to leave real soon.

SM: And that's an hour's drive home again too.

DF: Yeah, that's why, 'cause usually powwows start gettin', you know, everybody starts comin' and putting on their dress, and usually it starts gettin' good around 11:00 or 11:30.

SM: Oh you mean it starts to get warmed up and everybody is having more fun then?

DF: Right. More people come to dress and dance.
SM: Help us understand about these powwows now. Ten years ago, 15, 20 years ago, in many towns, the Chamber of Commerce would get some Indian people to come in and they would be paid something to put on a "powwow," and it wasn't a real one, but it was an entertainment. Did you ever see one like that?

DF: No.

SM: Well, that's the way it often used to be, and the Indian people have been sort of turned off by that kind of thing, because they felt this was sort of a rank exploitation of something that was really theirs. It still happens though. Now the kind of powwow you're thinking about, talking of, is quite different, isn't it?

DF: Yes.

SM: What would you say? Is it a social gathering, or religious or both?

DF: I'm not really sure. I'm pretty sure there is usually a meaning behind it. It's nothing like being paid. I think it just gets put on.

SM: You go because you want to participate, it's fun?

DF: And dance.

SM: And you meet people you know. It's more social, but it has religious overtones, doesn't it? For example, you usually move in a circle, don't you?

DF: Um hm.

SM: That in itself has symbolism.
DF: Yeah, and there's different kinds of dances like, you know, the war dances, but everybody goes out.

SM: Everybody goes out in the war dance? Girls too?

DF: The men do the dancing, but ladies... well, I don't really know that much. Like they'd go out and dance, the men would dance, but then there's the Owl Dance, where the lady and the man would go out and dance and do a dance around. Everybody would get in a circle and just go to the beat around, and then they'd turn a circle, everybody would turn a circle around.

SM: As they move in the big circle they make little circles?

DF: Yeah, just once. And then they just dance around, and then to a certain beat they'd turn around in a circle.

SM: You're drawing diagrams on the table with your finger, but we can't see that so we have to depend on the words. So they move in a circle and turn every so often. That's the Owl Dance.

DF: Um hm. And then there's...

SM: There's one called the Round Dance. What is that?

DF: Well, let me think. I'm not really sure, I haven't gone to a powwow in about two years.

SM: Besides, you didn't know I was going to ask you about powwows today, did you?

DF: But I can't say I'm really positive, but I'm just tryin' to remember, and if it's not right... you know, everybody gets in a circle, and
then there'd be like maybe a warrior or leader, and they do a dance, like you'd dance and everybody would be facing like the middle. Then you'd kinda step back and do beats to the music and step back.

SM: Step forward again and back again and forward, and then do you move around in the circle too?

DF: Yeah, and then everybody follows the first person like in a circle, and the person might break up the circle.....

SM: Now do you always move clockwise in the circle?

DF: Yeah.

SM: You never go counter-clockwise, do you?

DF: Let's see. Wait. I think it's counter-clockwise. I'm looking at the clock.

SM: Do you allow pictures at these powwows?

DF: Yeah, people can take pictures of one of these, but if it's, like really religious, you can't, it's not allowed.

SM: Now in a building like that, do you have a drum in the center of the circle?

DF: At that one there was, I think, probably about five or six drums. There was a line that everybody went around.

SM: So then when you got there you kind of stood around and watched what was going on for a while?
DF: First I had to get dressed.

SM: Oh, get dressed after you got there. You don't wear your dress on the way down?

DF: You take it in the suitcase and go to a dressing room and get dressed.

SM: Did your mother dress too?

DF: No.

SM: Did she participate with you?

DF: I really didn't dance that much, only a couple rounds, and then we had to leave. She danced though. She danced the Owl Dance with Richard.

SM: Was Richard there?

DF: Yeah.

SM: Now that's a good question. Richard is non-Indian, right? But they let him participate?

DF: Yeah.

SM: Do they let him because he's married to your mother? Or, for example, if I wandered in there with no connections except that I knew you and your mother and your dad, would they let me participate?

DF: Yes, if you weren't making fun or anything.

SM: Oh yes, sure.
DF: If you were there to watch and learn, or to participate.

SM: With sincerity.

DF: Like over there, there was one black man over there, and he was just standin' there, goofin' around, I guess, and I guess he started makin' fun, and they had him out, they just told him to leave.

SM: That's too bad, and other people have done that too, I guess?

DF: They'd probably just be put out.

SM: There is a group in St. Louis called The Association of American Indians. I have a membership in it, but I haven't actually attended. I would feel sort of self-conscious, I suppose, much more so than you did at first last night.

DF: I could see why. Most people, like if you're not Indian, like I asked one of my friends to come along with me. The first thing they say is, "Oh, am I gonna be the only white person there?" And that doesn't really matter, 'cause if you're there, you know, to watch and participate, it doesn't really matter. Or lot of times if you're married to an Indian they consider you Indian, or if you're white and you start going out with it and dressing down and participating.

SM: Dressing down, by that you mean putting on the costume?

DF: Yes.

SM: Is it fair to say "costume," or don't you like that term?

DF: Well...
SM: Now you have this beautiful dress made of buckskin and beads and so on. You refer to it as a dress, don't you?

DF: Yeah.

SM: You don't refer to it as a costume though?

DF: No.

SM: You see, we don't know these things so I have to ask somebody.

DF: Lot of people dress down in full regalia. I never really thought of it.

SM: That dress, is that typically Clallam?

DF: No.

SM: Is it Plains Indian, Northwest Coast, Southwestern, who would it represent most?

DF: I'm not sure.

SM: It looks like it would be Plains Indian.

DF: I'm not really sure. I knew before, 'cause I asked my mom. I can't really recall.

SM: Anyways, it's not strictly a Clallam.

DF: No, Clallams don't dress in leather. They were a Coastal Indian, and they dressed up in ... like they used a lot of cedar bark, and wove it and wore that, 'cause, since you lived on the coast, it would make
it slippery and cold, buckskin or any fur, so . . .

SM: When buckskin gets wet it's not especially nice, is it?

DF: It's kind of clammy.

SM: Yes, the old hunters, you know, that people look at and see the pictures of, when they got wet it wasn't very comfortable until they really dried out.

DF: Um hm.

SM: In your case now, do you think of yourself as Indian, or how do you think of yourself?

DF: Indian!

SM: Do you?

DF: Yeah, Indian. . . .

SM: Because you're not 100%, are you?

DF: No.

SM: Part Indian, part Hawaiian, part white, German, and what did you say, Norwegian? But you think of yourself as Indian?

DF: Yeah, ever since I was small. I never thought of myself as white. Like I hear somebody talking about Indian, I just automatically forget about everything else. I always thought I was half Indian. My mom just learned that she was Hawaiian too, so that makes me Hawaiian, so I just learned that I was Hawaiian, but I just refer to myself as Indian all the time.
SM: Somebody said being Indian is more a state of mind than it is how much blood you have, and that's the way it is with you, as you have already expressed.

DF: Yeah, I guess that's right. You don't really need to have Indian blood in you to be Indian.

SM: Yes, in fact, there were children who were taken in and adopted by Indian families back down through history who grew up believing they were Indians, and they were just as Indian as their darker neighbors or brothers and sisters, weren't they?

DF: Yeah.

SM: So, anyway, it's interesting now to see a young lady like you who, at fifteen, well, looking at you, you could pass for most anything you chose. Like you could say, "I'm Hawaiian." You could say, "I'm German." You could say, "I'm French or Italian or Greek."

DF: I never thought of that before.

SM: You could. You'll notice pictures of Greek girls, for example, and they have coloring similar to yours. And so you could just about be anything you wanted to be, couldn't you... but you prefer to be Indian.

DF: Yeah. Since I prefer to be Indian, that's what most people... that's what I am, that's what most people think of me.

SM: I think they think of you as Indian largely because of the fact that your mother and you are active in all these things. Your mother teaches, now she went over to teach a class right now at the college, didn't she?
DF: No, she's not teaching, she's getting her master's up in Portland.

SM: Do you mean she just drove up to Portland this morning?

DF: Um hm.

SM: Oh, I thought she was going over to teach a class at Lower Columbia. She was going over to take a class at Portland.

DF: She's minorities affairs director at LC.

SM: At the college here?

DF: She counsels.

SM: Counsels mostly, and guides people into school.

DF: She does a lot of this too.

SM: She's a very interesting lady, in case you don't know it.

DF: Yeah? Many people have told me that.

SM: I met her over a year ago, and it may be that that's what started this whole project of talking to people across the country. But, back to you, school's going well, and next year you're going to be in what grade?

DF: I'll be a sophomore.

SM: In high school?

DF: Some towns have like four-year high schools. Ours just have a three.
SM: Are you going to go to Lower Columbia College then?

DF: I don't know.

SM: You haven't thought that far ahead?

DF: Well, yeah, I want to go to a big college, one with sports in it too.

SM: What activities do you participate in over at school?

DF: Well, I like all sports, but I hurt my knee and I used to be really active in sports, but right now I had an operation on it. I split a cartilage and had a few ligaments...

SM: Like a football player. You hear about them all the time. And how is it coming?

DF: Fine.

SM: Do you have a scar?

DF: Yeah, it's not really noticeable. It doesn't bother me any.

SM: But you have to take it a little easier now?

DF: Not really. I don't. Maybe I should, but I don't.

SM: Do you participate in other sports?

DF: Yeah, like I'm a cheerleader.

SM: That's pretty active.
DF: That's considered as all sports, 'cause you. . . .

SM: How many cheer leaders do you have?

DF: We have seven.

SM: And you're one of the seven.

DF: We're supposed to have six, but that's where I hurt my knee, at the try-outs.

SM: So you were out for a while?

DF: So we just brought another one in, just in case.

SM: Oh, you've got a stand-in.

DF: She's not a stand-in. See, she was alternate, and then we just brought her in and. . . .

SM: When you had everything worked out for six and now you've got seven, does that complicate things?

DF: No, we didn't have anything worked out. This was right after I made it, so we just brought her in, just in case.

SM: That's fun?

DF: Yeah, it's real fun.

SM: Do you have to practice a lot?

DF: In the summer we did. Now we're taking it easy. We shouldn't be.
SM: Do you practice during the summer for the fall season?

DF: We practice all summer for football, but then now we're going to have to start for the other sports.

SM: Do you attend all the football games and the basketball games?

DF: Of all the grades, plus the girls' sports.

SM: What do they participate in?

DF: Basketball, volleyball and track.

SM: Have you ever participated in track?

DF: Yeah, like when I lived in Oregon and I was in grade school, they used to have girls' sports down there. I went to State one year.

SM: You went to the State from your school? In other words you had won all the way up to the State. That's pretty good, isn't it?

DF: Yeah.

SM: What were you doing?

DF: Oh, I was supposed to be in the high jump. I did that alone, and I did the long jump, the relay, and we won the relay first place.

SM: That's the one that took you to the State?

DF: Yeah, plus the long jump. I didn't do very good in that. The next year I made it to the District, I think it was, or County or something like that. The next year I hurt my knee.
SM: It's O.K. though?

DF: It's O.K. now.

SM: That's good. Are you going to keep on in sports?

DF: Yeah, if I can.

SM: When you get on into college are you going to try out for cheerleading and so on?

DF: Not cheerleading--sports.

SM: What would you try out for?

DF: Basketball.

SM: Do most of the colleges or high schools around here have a girls' basketball team?

DF: High schools and the junior high do.

SM: Not the colleges so much?

DF: I'm not sure. We only have Lower Columbia.

SM: You have an older sister?

DF: Yeah. She goes to Oregon College of Education, they have all the sports.

SM: Where is that?

DF: Monmouth, Oregon.
SM: That's south of here?


SM: Do you know if she's coming home for Thanksgiving?

DF: Yes, she is.

SM: What else is going on at school? Are there lots of Indians in your school?

DF: No.

SM: Very few?

DF: There's a few, like say, they have very little in them.

SM: Like 1/32, 1/64 or something?

DF: Stuff like that. And they go, "Oh" when I go, "You're Indian." "Oh, I'm Indian too. I have that much, but, you know, I still have some of it in me."

SM: Well, that's kind of nice, though, instead of the old way it used to be that people would deny it, so we're making some progress there, aren't we?

DF: Yeah. Now if you're Indian it's kinda, it's really neat. People think it's really neat.

SM: Well, that's good now. Some kids say that everybody picks on them because they're Indian, but they don't do that to you?
DF: Oh no! People think it's really neat. They go, "Oh, you're Indian." I go, "Yeah," They go, "Wow!" They think it's really neat. They like the dark skin, all around tan, all seasons.

SM: You don't have to get tanned all over in summer.

DF: I don't have to worry about that. People, they like it.

SM: Well, that's great. Now that's one of the happiest thoughts that anyone has expressed for a while.

DF: I don't know, people think it's neat, because I think it's one reason because there isn't that many of us here. Mom started bringing Indians in to Longview, really.

SM: Into the college?

DF: Yeah. There wasn't that many. Like they'd hide themselves, and then finally she has them getting out. There's not that many Indians in my school that really make themselves known.

SM: How many would you say in your junior high school?

DF: Oh there's a lot, but ... not visible.

SM: Not to that degree, huh?

DF: Yeah. Like I'm the only one that I know about. Like I know one girl that was needing help ... my mom. Not very many make themselves a bit visible. Like they go to school, and they probably go home and stuff.

SM: Kind of stay out of things, hold back?
DF: But there's not that many. Like a lot of them, like I say, 1/32, maybe 16th, with blond hair and blue eyes.

SM: Well, you know, you just made a significant comment on the changes occurring in the United States. Now of course we can't say that it's true every place just because of your experience, still it's one experience and that's a valid thing. You probably don't remember your grandmother. Well, she undoubtedly, judging from the conversations I had with your mother, had plenty of problems with this prejudice thing, you know. Your mother has encountered some of it, and you have encountered practically none. In fact, you're kind of special in your school, because you're Indian, right?

DF: Yeah. Yeah, I know there's a lot of changes.

SM: So things are changing, and I hope for the better. Of course, in the process, then, as you participate in sports and your scholastic activities and everything, you're losing I suppose, some of the old Indian culture, aren't you?

DF: Yeah.

SM: But you're trying to preserve it, like that dress you have, and going to that powwow last night. You're still trying, aren't you?

DF: Yeah. You do lose it. You know, we don't know about it. Like I just started just a couple years ago, and I just go all the time with my mom now. The last couple of years we've been busy and we haven't had time to go, but it's still there. They're keeping it going. It's kinda neat.

SM: The fan you have. Do you know where that came from?
DF: No.

SM: Someone made it for your mother?

DF: Yeah.

SM: I don't think I've ever seen one made more perfectly, more beautifully than that one. They're made of eagle feathers with beadwork around the handle, I guess you could call it. And the moccasins too.

DF: They were made for her.

SM: And she lets you wear them. Did you wear that dress and the moccasins and everything at the powwow last night?

DF: Yes. Um hm.

SM: Aren't you afraid you'll damage them or wear them out or something?

DF: I wasn't.

SM: Because they're so unusual, you know. They look so very, very valuable.

DF: Yeah, they are.

SM: It would cost a fortune to replace all those things. You have to be kind of careful. And then you have hair ornaments. Is there any significance to them that you know of?

DF: I don't know if they have any significance. I always thought they were just like jewelry. Just like we wear jewelry.

SM: So you don't know, because you haven't got into it that deeply, whether these things are religiously significant, or whether they're simply
decorations or adornment?

DF: Um hm.

SM: The dress and the fans then, they're kind of family treasures now, aren't they?

DF: Yeah. They just got the dress just a little while ago. We've had the moccasins and the fans. These feathers we have a lot of, like feathers of life and eagle feathers, and things like that.

SM: Do you know the sign language too a little bit?

DF: Well, no. My mom taught me the Lord's Prayer a couple of years ago in sign language.

SM: Can you still do that?

DF: Well, I couldn't right now, but if my mom would show me again I could.

SM: We're hoping that we could get set up someplace with a movie camera and a sound recorder. How would the sound come through? Do you sing it as you go through the signs?

DF: Someone else would, like there'd be one person doing the signs and another person would be singing.

SM: Do you ever do the singing?

DF: No.

SM: Does your mother ever?
DF: She used to do it.

SM: Oh, the doorbell just rang. It was someone calling for Dana to take her with them over to their house, where she is going to be babysitting today, so we have to end this tape now. I want to thank her very much while she's still here where she can hear me... for the time this morning, and for putting on that striking dress. Thank you, Dana, I appreciate it.