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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LISTENING TO INDIANS

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JULIE RAMON, Papago
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Sam Myers:
    I'm in Tucson, Arizona, at the university here, talking with one of the students, a young woman from out near San Xavier, and her name is Juliann Ramon.

Juliann Ramon:
    You can call me Julie. It's shorter.

SM: O.K. Julie. You're in your fourth year here at the university?

JR: Oh, more or less.

SM: You're going to graduate next summer?

JR: Maybe. If I go to summer school.

SM: But, before we go into that any further, let's go back to the beginning. Did you grow up in this area?

JR: I've always lived at San Xavier. [San Hah-veer]

SM: It's a village out there by the famous mission. Do you attend church at the mission?

JR: Sometimes. I don't go regularly.

SM: Anyway, what school did you go to out there?

JR: Well, they have like a mission school, kind of a small mission school.

SM: That's a Catholic school?
JR: Right. Run by the nuns, the Franciscan nuns.

SM: That's where you started?

JR: Right.

SM: Did you speak Papago when you were there?

JR: Right.

SM: Do you still speak Papago?

JR: I still do.

SM: Is there a word in Papago for hello?

JR: Not really. You can always ask, like, "How are you?"

SM: You always say, "How are you, how have you been" something like that?

JR: Or, "What are you saying?"

SM: That's interesting. Do you have one for goodbye?

JR: Not really. You can always say, like "I'll see you later," or, "I'll see you again some time."

SM: "I'll see you later." How would you say that?

JR: Dom-yea.

SM: Back to the school. You grew up then speaking Papago, and did you speak English or did you have to start to school speaking only Papago?
JR: I think I started school speaking Papago only, but I knew, I think, a couple of English words.

SM: Do you remember a problem going to school?

JR: Not really. I don't think I ever had.

SM: Were the nuns, the teachers, sort of considerate of the fact that you were coming to school speaking one language, and then you were going to do schoolwork in another language?

JR: I really don't remember that part. That's something that I think about sometimes, you know, and I always wonder how I understood English or how they talked to us. And I think it was probably because we knew some English words, being, you know, close to Tucson, then you come into contact with Anglo people, and I think there was some basis for beginning to learn the English language.

SM: But apparently it must not have been too traumatic an experience, or you would have remembered it better.

JR: I think so.

SM: It might have been kind of something you slipped into rather easily then, and I would guess the nuns must have taken some pains to communicate with you. But you did all your schoolwork in English?

JR: Right.

SM: Always. From the beginning. And not Spanish ever?

JR: No.

SM: And you didn't have any Papago-speaking teacher aides to help out?
JR: Except for the cook.

SM: You could always run to her and say something.

JR: Yeah. Also, for instance, when the nurse would come. They always had a Papago lady who was like an interpreter, and she would talk to us, if we didn't understand like what she wanted us to do.

SM: They did have an interpreter then?

JR: Yeah, for the nurse, but not for the teachers.

SM: So that when you had something hurting, you could at least express it to the nurse or to the interpreter who could explain it to the nurse. Otherwise they might bandage up your toe when you had a headache. Do you remember any particular problems then, as you started out in school out there at the mission? Or did it go along kind of a happy experience?

JR: I think it was a very happy experience. I think so.

SM: That's good. How far did you go in the mission school? How many grades?

JR: At the time it only went up to like the sixth grade, but I stayed there like until I was in the fourth grade, and then this priest, he was kinda, well, what should I say. I guess he wanted us to have a better education, and so he felt that I would probably do better if I went to, you know, an Anglo school.

SM: So you did?

JR: Yeah. I went to a parochial school on the mission, and it was called St. John the Evangelist.
SM: Was that in the city?

JR: Yeah. That's in the city, it's on the south side.

SM: So that starting with the fifth grade you began to travel into the south side of the city to go to an Anglo Catholic school?

JR: Right.

SM: You were thinking of the other school as a Papago mission school, or at least all the students were Indians?

JR: All the students were Papagos.

SM: But in town they were mostly Anglo kids?

JR: Right. And Mexicans.

SM: Mostly Mexican-Americans?

JR: I'd say about half and half. Maybe there were more.

SM: Is that the right term to use, Mexican-American?

JR: I've always called them Mexicans, I think. I guess the term around here now would be like Chicano--the Mexicans call themselves Chicano--but I think most of the Papago people still think of them as Mexicans.

SM: Do you also think of them as being part Indian?

JR: Not really. I never really knew, you know, like what the origin was until...
SM: You grew up?

JR: Yeah, right.

SM: And began to read some books?

JR: Yeah, right.

SM: A lot of people forget this, but that's what Mexico is all about. It's a merging, a blending, Mestizo?

JR: Yes.

SM: Mestizo... of the European and the native Indians and so the product is a person who was called a Mexican or a Mexican-American in Mexico. And then some almost entirely Spanish, some almost entirely Indian, and everything in between.

JR: Right.

SM: So then, in the fifth grade you went into the Anglo mission school in town. How was that then?

JR: Well, the first year I really felt it. It was very difficult.

SM: How old is a child in the fifth grade?

JR: I was about 11, I think. It was really hard at first, because it seems like they were really far ahead of where I was. It seems to me that way, so I had to work very hard. By the time I think I went to sixth grade I guess I was at the same level as they were, and so, from that time on it was a little bit easier.

SM: Was there quite a group of you who came from San Xavier?
JR: No, there was just me and there was another boy, but he was a grade ahead of me.

SM: Were you the only Indian child in your fifth grade?

JR: Right.

SM: I'd like to ask you about that word the gentleman in the other office was using a moment ago. He said, "Milikan."

JR: He was using a different dialect. They say "Mirigan" and San Xavier is "Mirigan." They kind of extend it.

SM: Now that's referring to the so-called white Europeans from the East?

JR: Right.

SM: And he said "Milikan." In fact I asked him to spell it, and he said "Milikan" with an accent on the last syllable, but you say it differently. Now what dialect was he using?

JR: I really don't know. It's still Papago, but they've got several dialects.

SM: Papago people are spread over several areas in Arizona, aren't they?

JR: Yeah, we have three reservations—the San Xavier, then they have the main reservation out by Sells, and another one by Gila Bend.

SM: So that there could be different dialects in each of the groups, or even within the same group?
JR: Well, I think dialects are according to geography. Like San Xavier people and the Papagos on the east side of the main reservation speak the same dialect, and then there are other areas that speak different dialects.

SM: And so he was using one and you were using another. Like this, "San Xavier." There's about five ways to say that.

JR: Right.

SM: And all of them correct apparently. Well, back there in school then. How far did that go?

JR: Up to the eighth grade.

SM: And you finished the eighth grade there?

JR: Right.

SM: Did you have a graduation ceremony?

JR: Right.

SM: We did too when I was in eighth grade, but they don't do it any more.

JR: Not any more.

SM: That was kind of a big deal when you went through that whole thing, 'cause a lot of people, in the old days, long before your time, never went any further. Then you went to high school?

JR: Yeah.

SM: Where was that?
JR: I went to Sunnyside High School, that's a public school.

SM: In Tucson?

JR: Right. It's the school district that's close to the reservation.

SM: It would be on the southwest corner of the city?

JR: Right. And there was a bus that goes out there and picks up the kids.

SM: At the reservation. So you rode the bus to high school?

JR: Right. For four years.

SM: How far did you have to ride?

JR: Oh, not very far.

SM: It really isn't all that far, 12 miles or so, and you don't have big snow drifts to plow through in this country, do you?

JR: No. Just about every two years or so, something like that.

SM: You have a little snow every two years?

JR: Yeah. Uh huh.

SM: I've seen it in the air, a flake floating down, but I've never seen it stay on the ground except up in the mountains. There it gets deep. How was your high school experience, Julie?

JR: It went very fast. I liked it, I learned a lot. Some of the teachers were encouraging.
SM: As a high school student and an Indian girl going to an Anglo school in the city of Tucson, did you run into any problems there? Did you ever feel discriminated against?

JR: No. I've never really felt that, not even at St. John's and Sunny-side. It might have existed, but I never really felt it.

SM: Do you think discrimination exists as far as other people are concerned?

JR: I think it exists.

SM: But anyway, you went to high school and are graduated, and then what did you do?

JR: Then I came to the university.

SM: Right away? The next year?

JR: Um hm.

SM: And that's the University of Arizona here at Tucson. What's your major now?

JR: I'm majoring in political science.

SM: You are what we call a senior now, and you will have a BA degree in political science. Is that right?

JR: Right.

SM: Do you want to become a political person?
JR: I really don't know what I'm going to do with it. I have some plans like maybe I would like to go to graduate school in political science, or I would like to work for the government.

SM: In political science now, are you taking it with a lot of education courses so you can teach it?

JR: No.

SM: O.K. So you're not going to be a teacher, but you are planning to go to graduate school then here at the university?

JR: Not at the university. Maybe someplace else.

SM: Do you have any place in mind?

JR: Not really. I think I'd like to go out of state.

SM: Of course if you go out of state then you'll have non-resident tuition, won't you? Or can you get a BIA grant?

JR: I think there are scholarships available for graduate study.

SM: Do you have a pretty good grade point average?

JR: It's all right.

SM: If you get a job with the government then, like with the Bureau of Indian Affairs, is that what you mean?

JR: Not really. Just a government agency, like maybe Social Security, or maybe even with the State Department, or something like that.
SM: You think you'd kind of like that? Become a bureaucrat?

JR: Yes, for the moment. But you know, eventually I want to come back to the reservation and do some things out there.

SM: Why would you want to come back, and what would you want to do out there?

JR: Well, in a sense I'm kinda already doing it, you know, 'cause like this year we got a grant to do a series of educational workshops for Papago. The one we had was like for our non-Indian teachers to let them know like about the Papago culture, like the differences and similarities between the English and the Papago language, and a presentation of how some Papago teachers on the reservation are teaching their classes, what kind of method seems to work, you know, for them. We did one like that, and we're gonna have another one next month. It's gonna focus on curriculum development for parents. We are going to have a group of Papago parents experience how curriculum is developed, and therefore they could have a better input into their school system.

SM: So they can understand, participate more, and so on. Do you accept the idea that the Anglo way of running schools is O.K.?

JR: Not totally. I think you have to take part of it, things that you feel will work with Papago students, but then I think you also have to take the Papago part into consideration. I mean I think you have to abide by their wishes, what Papago parents want their children to learn.

SM: Now the mission school out there, that's run according to the church rules, isn't it? But if you had a public school board out there, then the school board would be made up of Papago people?
JR: Right.

SM: They would run their own school?

JR: That's what is happening on the main reservation. They have a public school, it has an all-Papago school board.

SM: So then they are seeing to it that things go according to this consideration for Papago culture?

JR: It's beginning to, I think, but for a long time it wasn't.

SM: Then how long has this been changing now?

JR: About two years.

SM: That recently? Before that it was pretty much a curriculum dictated from somewhere else, state level or something?

JR: Right.

SM: And are the people then quite interested and maybe enthusiastic about it?

JR: I think so. I was just talking to Sister Wanda Clare, who is the Title IV director for the public school at Sells, and she said they had a meeting last Thursday, I guess like a public hearing, and she said about 100 parents showed up and they gave their ideas.

SM: Their ideas for how the school board will operate the school, and take into consideration the feelings of the Papago people, and that sort of thing?

JR: Right.
SM: In some cases the Indian people have taken over their school entirely, but still get the state aid, so they have the funds like any other school does, and they're running them the way they like, and then they teach their own languages usually too. Do they teach Papago to the kids?

JR: Let's see now. There's also a bi-lingual, bi-cultural program, but I think it is in its second year, one of the BIA schools.

SM: You really have three kinds of schools out there. You have the mission schools, the BIA schools and the public schools, and your people would have the greatest control over the public schools, wouldn't they?

JR: I would think so.

SM: Every once in a while one of my students says he'd like to go out and work with the Indians, and wants to know how to do it. Now if they're thinking like, "I want to go out and help those poor people," that's kind of patronizing, isn't it? And people don't like that.

JR: I would think so. I'd think you'd have to look at yourself and say, "What kind of skills do I have that will be useful for the Papagos?"

SM: It would be ideal if someone could come out there wanting to work and help, with the idea that, "I'll teach them the things I know and maybe they'll teach me the things they know that I don't" and then it's a 50-50 sort of a bargain, isn't it?

JR: Right.

SM: If some student really seriously wanted to work with Indian people because he or she just liked to do that sort of thing, how would one go about it?
JR: Well, if they wanted to be teachers there's the Bureau that does recruiting, I guess, from all over the United States for its teachers, but . . . . Or I guess they'd have to be in the area to kinda know what's available, and it depends upon where you want to go, you know, which reservation, I guess, you are interested in.

SM: You pick one out that you think you'd like most, and go there. But just to come driving down the road, that's not going to accomplish too much, is it, for a young person who's just out of school? They've got to have some kind of connections.

JR: Right. I think you have to kind of look into it and get to know the people in the administrative positions, I think.

SM: You would have to approach the schools, the churches, the governmental agencies. These are the avenues, aren't they?

JR: Right.

SM: A church, for example, may have a mission or a mission school, and that would be one avenue of working with the people. The BIA might have a BIA school or other agencies, all kinds of them, health agencies, etc., and so they could go that way. Or the local offices, like the tribal office, for example. Now ordinarily, though, they prefer to hire Indian people for the various jobs that come up, don't they?

JR: Usually. But, you see, what I see on the reservation, there's a lot of economic development, like we have a mine, two mines. The Papago Tribe is running its own utility company, and all sorts of economic development.

SM: If somebody wanted to come out and work with the Papago people who live in the area there, they could apply for a job there, but chances
are they'd have an uphill struggle, wouldn't they?

JR: Not really, because you see, it's like we're not really ready for that type of economic development because like we don't have, for instance, the utility company. We don't have electricians, trained electricians, to be able to assist in whenever your wires go down or something like that.

SM: You'd hire them from the outside?

JR: Yeah, you'd have to because we don't have any trained electricians.

SM: Someone the other day said that as far as the Bureau of Indian Affairs goes, if there's a job opening and one applicant is Anglo and one is Indian, and if they're anywhere near equal, the Indian will get it.

JR: Yes.

SM: The Indian people are getting preference now, while the old attitude was just the reverse?

JR: It seems to be that way with the Bureau, but it still doesn't seem to be that way with the tribe.

SM: The tribe is practical in the sense of hiring the best man or the best woman for the job?

JR: Maybe.

SM: Maybe? Sometimes?

JR: I mean, I'm thinking of specialized skills.
SM: You just can't generalize too much about these things. So, then, what would your advice be to these young idealists or young people who want to get out and live in the area with, and work with, Indian people?

JR: To see what's available and if they would like working, 'cause ... you feel very isolated, because the Papago Reservation is almost 3,000,000 acres. It's the second largest reservation.

SM: Would you recommend that they come out for a visit to see if they're going to like living in the area, if they're going to like working with the people?

JR: I think that would be very helpful.

SM: They would have to finance themselves, of course.

JR: Right.

SM: Are there facilities, let's say, for a 20-year old girl to come out and visit?

JR: Not on the reservation. They'd probably have to either stay in Tucson or Phoenix.

SM: Now if they could catch up with you, you'd probably help them with a little advice, and maybe even show them around a little bit, wouldn't you?

JR: I'd be glad to.

SM: Well, these are all just in the realm of supposing, you know, because the kids really stump me when they ask me those questions.
JR: Yeah. Well, all the young teachers that come out, especially like to the public school, have what we call a "culture shock." Just like an Indian person who's never been in the Anglo society and experiences different things. I can't really explain it, but it's like, they find it's so different, you know. Like, for instance, you find the Papago kids are present-oriented, rather than future-oriented, and so they can't really see the kinds of things that they learn in school, they can't see that those things will be beneficial, like in the future. And so they really don't take a great interest in learning, you know, some of the things that are being taught, and the teachers probably feel it's like indifference, or they aren't that intelligent, or whatever, and so they try to speed it up. They say they're at this level and they're supposed to be at this other level. They find that their students are indifferent, maybe, to that type of thing, and then they say, you know, "Why don't you kids want to learn?"

SM: They get impatient with the children?

JR: I think so. Or either they just kind of, after trying so hard, they just kind of give up. They just kind of, you know, just plod along.

SM: Put in their time?

JR: Yeah.

SM: Lose their ideals?

JR: Maybe. I think that's what happens a lot of times, and also, plus the way that the Papagos live—you know, I think is a shock to them.

SM: How is that?
JR: Oh, like you still live in like adobe houses, and you might say that they have poor housing conditions.

SM: Is that true?

JR: It's true, but now they have like a housing program that's being put in effect on the reservation.

SM: O.K. So this new young person comes out here and they see this adobe house which is not very impressive. O.K., and so they say that is poor housing. But do the Papagos think it is poor housing?

JR: Not really. Only in times like when it rains and the roof leaks, or something like that.

SM: But ordinarily he thinks it is as good as anybody's, doesn't he?

JR: I think they have different attitudes.

SM: Different attitudes about the housing?

JR: Yeah, different attitudes about housing, and also because I think most of the people, their immediate concern is like "What are we going to eat, or where are we gonna get the money to buy food for a couple of days from now?"

SM: And they plan much less or think much less about next year or five years from now. And then in our other society, our Anglo society, they tend much more to look toward the future. So when they go to school they're learning for something that's going to help them when they're 20 years old.

JR: Right. In other words, if you're in like fourth grade or something,
you already kind of know what you're going to be, and therefore, I guess, you have the incentive to go to school and to learn these things because you know that in the future you're going to be.

SM: It's going to pay off?

JR: Yeah, right. But Papago students aren't aware of that. They can't really see that far ahead in the future.

SM: Why is it that we have these differences in our attitudes. Is it because our Anglo society is more organized and materialistic?

JR: I would say so, because, like if you think about becoming a doctor or a lawyer, you always think about how much money you're gonna make.

SM: What does the Papago think?

JR: I guess just to live each day as it comes, to see what it brings.

SM: Would you say that they're much less materialistic than we are?

JR: They could be, but then again, I think of like people like who are in their 30's now, Papago people in their 30's. I think they like material things, you know, that Americans have, like having a car, having a nice house, that kind of a thing, and so they work for it, and most of them do have, you know, a car or a house or whatever, but I don't think they realize like . . . that cars might depend on gas, and in a couple of years maybe we won't have any more gas to run the cars, kind of like. I think that's something most Papagos want--to be comfortable, I guess.

SM: Juliann, in your own case now. Would you say that your attitudes are typically Papago, or would you say that yours have been strongly
influenced by all these years of going to other schools? For example, would there be a difference if you had never gone to one of these schools, but had stayed out on the reservation to live there and work, and got married maybe, or whatever, but not gone to these schools? Would you have different attitudes?

JR: I probably would.

SM: Now you can see their attitudes and understand them, but you can also see ours and understand them too, can't you?

JR: Right. Well, the way that I've tried to structure my life is that I take what I can from, you know, the Anglo society, like an education or whatever, but the values... I think I'm still very Papago in my values.

SM: The values of the Papago culture you keep, because you like those better?

JR: Um hm.

SM: Is there any way to describe what they are?

JR: That's hard.

SM: It is a hard question, and you've just been through four years here almost at the university where you've been getting this sort of thing thrown at you frequently too, I suppose. I always wonder what these things mean when people say, "I would prefer to keep the Papago values and take some of the convenient things from the Anglo culture." I'm not quite sure what they mean by that.

JR: Well, I think I'd still like to live on the reservation, and I still
want to be able to go like to a medicine man in case I'm ill, and to still eat Papago food, still go out in the desert during the summer and pick the cactus fruit, you know, still be able to, you know, go to the feasts that we have, to have a good time, and to still meet, you know, with my relatives, to know my relatives.

SM: This means much to Indian people usually, doesn't it?

JR: Right.

SM: Of course it means much to most white people too, but it comes out different somehow. All of us have these things that we like, and to some, family means more, to some extended family means more, and I think that is true in your case, isn't it?

JR: Yeah, I suppose.

SM: You've got lots of aunts and uncles and cousins?

JR: Right. All over the reservation. Well, the tendency has been to kind of move away from that, like from the kinship type of thing, because you know, the people now, if you see them someplace and then you tell them you're their relative or such and such, and then they say, "Oh, are you really my relative" or something. Then they say, "I guess nowadays we kinda don't know one another, I guess, like the relatives." But, you know, I think we want to return to that, to, I guess, the closeness of the kinship system.

SM: And can you keep the Papago pretty much intact and still take advantage of some of these other handy things, like automobiles, for example?

JR: I think you can.
SM: One man said there's no reason, in his opinion, why he couldn't work at his job eight hours a day the same as anyone else across the country, but when he gets home at night he can be just as Indian as he wants to, and that's about 2/3 of the 24-hour day.

JR: Yeah.

SM: Can you do that?

JR: I think you can.

SM: That's what you hope you can do?

JR: Right.

SM: But now, let's see then. If you get your degree, and if you go on for a master's in political science, you're thinking of leaving this area, though, for that master's work. Would you be doing that for the purpose of getting another slant on everything, instead of this same school here?

JR: I think so, yeah. I'd like to see, you know, a different part of the country.

SM: And when you get that accomplished, that master's work, then you're coming back here?

JR: Right.

SM: So if you do go to work for the BIA you'd want to come back and work here among the Papago people yourself?

JR: Or for the tribe.
SM: But then you'd have the best of both worlds. You'd be doing what you want, living where you want, among the people you like and are related to, but you would be a trained, experienced person in this other society too, and be able to use those skills for your welfare, and then for the help of the people too. That's a pretty neat goal. I like that.


SM: Political science. Is that the best curriculum or degree to use in this kind of work?

JR: I think so, because I started out like I wanted to be a teacher, but then I came over here and I find out you have to take all these methods courses. I kinda didn't like that. And then one summer I worked on a youth program on the reservation, and I was very naive about the way the government is structured, and the way the tribal government always has to interact like with the federal government, and with the BIA, and then I figured, well, it seems like, in order to exist I guess as Papagos and as Indian people, I think you have to know what the federal government and, you know, government agencies are like, because you have to deal with them a lot. You know, it determines the kinds of programs that you're gonna have on the reservation, or what kinds of policies that will affect your life. You know, kind of like it's all very interconnected, and I figure the more that you understand what you're dealing with, you know, the better able that you'll ... I can't say it.

SM: The better able you'll be to cope with it all?

JR: Yeah, or to get, like what you want.

SM: In other words you've got to learn how the system operates so you can work in it, cope with it, defend yourself from it, and everything else?
JR: Right.

SM: That's a pretty good case for political science. Also, another person told me that it would be very helpful for people to get trained in specific fields. Like you were saying the power and light utility you've got worked up, and you need specialized experts, and right now you have to hire them from off the reservation. You started out saying maybe you should look into teaching, and this same person said too many people have done that, with the result that all these other specialists we need we don't have, we have to hire them.

JR: True.

SM: Do you think it's good for the Indian people to think of segregating themselves out there on the reservation and having it their own way?

JR: I don't think you can be totally segregated, unless you go back to the life that I guess was previously there—like you depended on the desert for your food and for your clothing and that kind of thing, you know. You could still do that, I think, but then there's already been like too much interaction with Anglo society, and I don't think Papagos will want to go back to that kind of life. And also because it was a very, I guess, insecure type of a life. Like if it didn't rain, you know, food wouldn't grow, all this stuff.

SM: Now we have what we call affirmative action and bussing to integrate the schools and all that, and actually the idea of the reservation goes in the opposite direction, doesn't it?

JR: Yeah.

SM: What do you think of those bussing problems back in some of the eastern cities?
JR: I will say I think you ought to consider it's like the quality, I guess of life and of education. You know, if the United States is all that it's made out to be to guarantee equality of all these things, then I think, you know, they should make efforts to make it more equal.

SM: But is it true also that the Indian people don't worry about equality so much. They don't say, "Look you've got this, so I want this." They worry about that less than other groups. They simply want to be left alone to do things their own way more?

JR: I think so. I don't think we're so concerned about being equal, because.

SM: You're satisfied with your own way?

JR: Yeah, and also because I think Papago teachings or whatever, you know, or your grandfathers, grandmother have told you to respect other people and to not look down upon them because they have something to contribute, no matter how small.

SM: Even if they're white or black?

JR: Yeah.

SM: A report of the Civil Rights Commission was talking about some of the problems Indian people have right here in Tucson. It said that when people are arrested here, that if they are Indian they are sort of taken advantage of. If you have a white person and a black person and a Chicano person and an Indian person all arrested, and they're all put in jail, the Indian person will end up getting the job of sweeping the streets or something, doing some menial task at the low end of the whole structure. Is that true?
JR: I think so, because, like well in South Tucson for a long time there was, I guess, that kind of discrimination, because like there was this young man, he's a Papago--tried to investigate, I guess, the charges of brutality in the South Tucson jails, because one time there was this man who was in jail, and I guess they put him out on--what do you call it--sanitation detail. You collect the trash and the garbage, you know, and so I guess the bin or whatever was full, and I guess there was also a mattress or something, so they put the mattress on top of that, and then they asked him, a Papago man, to sit on top of the mattress, and so I guess it was one of those trucks that has several bins like, so I guess when it turned the corner the man fell down and knocked his head on the road or something, on the asphalt, and then after that, I guess he became unconscious, and was for a long time, and then finally he died, and they kinda blamed the city of South Tucson, you know, for his death. So those kinds of things exist.

SM: So then this Civil Rights Commission report that the Indian people get the short end of things in jails is possibly true, or would some of those other groups get the same kind of treatment?

JR: Maybe not in the city, but in that area of South Tucson, that's where most of the Mexican-Americans and the Indians live.

SM: Is that a separate town, or is that just the south side of Tucson?

JR: It's an incorporated city, I think, but it's still in Tucson.

SM: The report was also talking about the state prison at Florence, Arizona. The report says that in the prisons the black prisoners and the Chicano prisoners would form organizations, groups--call them gangs if you want to--for their own protection, but the Indians wouldn't do this because it isn't in their nature to do this sort of thing, and
so then they would be pushed around by all the other groups. In fact, they said that the blacks and the Chicanos even had the administration of the prison sort of favoring them, because they had the political clout to demand it, whereas the Indians without it were left out and pushed to the bottom of the heap. Is that true now, do you think?

JR: I think that could be very true. I think it all has to do with like being aware of what the system is, I think.

SM: That's why you're in political science?

JR: Yeah. I mean, if you are arrested and you knew what your rights were, I think you would have a right to demand it. I mean, you would know how to demand it, but if you don't, then, you know, you just kinda.

SM: Get taken advantage of?

JR: Yeah, right. And I think that's the same way in prisons.

SM: Well, are Indian people just less assertive, or is it simply because there are fewer of them?

JR: It may be that, you know, there are fewer of them, but I also think because of their lack of education, you know, and so on, that they really don't know.

SM: Is it true that a group of Indian people are sort of hesitant to organize themselves into some kind of a group like that?

JR: Especially if they come from different tribes, because some, you know, tribes are agonistic [sic] towards one another.
SM: You just sort of sit it out alone, each one?

JR: Yeah. We're kind of like in the minority of minorities, I guess.

SM: Well then, even though the figures could be inaccurate, the idea might exist like it was stated in that report?

JR: I think there are organizations of Indians that are forming now in prison.

SM: Oh really, are they doing it now?

JR: I think so. Because like out in California there's a newsletter that comes out that's put together I guess by the Indian prisoners, and I think at Florence, you know, Arizona State Prison, I think there's also that kind of a thing.

SM: The Indians are beginning to get organized there?

JR: Right. Because there's a professor of English here that has like a group of students--it's some kind of course, I really don't know what the course is--but they make visits to the Indian, you know, prisoners.

SM: Now is this professor of English an Indian?

JR: No. He's an Anglo.

SM: But he's out there trying to see that they get their fair treatment.

JR: Whatever they can for them, I think.

SM: Has all of this embittered you in any way, this kind of prejudice
we've been talking about in the prisons and in the South Tucson jails, this sort of thing?

JR: It hasn't.

SM: I get the impression that it hasn't, that you are practical, that you know it happens, but that you know it can be corrected too. Is that true?

JR: Yeah. I don't think I'm really that bitter, you know, about....

SM: You have confidence, don't you?

JR: Yeah. I guess because I feel, you know, like the more you let other people know how you feel about different things, about being Indian, I think the better off the world is. I mean, the more people that, you know, you come into contact with and try to express your opinions.

SM: Well, we've touched on a lot of things now, and how would you sum it all up?

JR: I think things are getting better. I think we're making a beginning, especially the tribe, I think, is making a beginning.

SM: This turn towards improvement, how long ago did that come about? When did it start to get better, would you say?

JR: I think just recently.

SM: In years?

JR: Maybe two years, three. It seems to me like there was like with economic development there was like a big rush. Also like I think in
the early '70's, but that kinda has slowed down, kinda like, and everything's just kinda slowed down. People are beginning to do things. I'm speaking of like in the educational field. Parents are becoming more aware of, I guess, their responsibilities, of their rights, and I can only speak to it from that viewpoint, you know, but in general I guess things are all right.

SM: The low point was back there in the past someplace?

JR: Yeah, for me it was, but it seemed to be so, you know, for a lot of people.

SM: Actually, as far as you yourself are concerned, you're a pretty successful person. You've come a long way, you're about to finish at the University of Arizona and get a degree. Now that's success measured in the terms of this kind of society, but still, you want it too, don't you?

JR: Um hm.

SM: Well, is there anything else you want to add?

JR: Not really.

SM: That just about sums it up then. Well, I'll tell you thanks then, Julie. I appreciate your taking the time to talk with me, and to help bring some light to some of these questions. I hope it all helps.

JR: I hope so too.