

Interview

The following interview has been conducted on behalf of the oral history from Century High School. The interviewee is Lorenzo Rubio, and the interviewer is Claudia Herrera, the interview took place at the Washington County Sheriffs Department, on June 2nd 2005 at 9:40 a.m.

C.H.: O.K. how long have you been with the Hillsboro police force?

L.R.: About twelve years.

C.H.: What motivated you to enter the police force?

L.R.: Just working with the community, and I'm a community organizer but at heart, and so I like to get involved, and make sure that certain needs that are fulfilled in the community, and that is why I got a goal.

C.H.: Do you focus more on adults or children?

L.R.: Both, more on adults and parents particularly, because I think that they need to be educated so that they can raise their kids right, and knowing what the parents rights are as well as the children's right's.

C.H.: What about older siblings?

L.R.: Like adolescents, we talk to them. I go to high schools, I go anywhere where they'll let me talk about being safe and how to avoid becoming a victim.

C.H.: How would you compare your work shift to other officials work hours? Do you think you see most of the crime, why or why not?

L.R.: No I don't see most of the crime in fact I hardly see any crime, unless I'm made aware of it. Patrol are the ones who see all the crime because they are out there, in their patrolling areas, so they are being vigilant. My job particularly is to go out to communities before crime happens, and show them how to prevent it

C.H.: In your perspective how g\ahs crime changed from the 1980's to now? And why do you think it has changed?

L.R.: It's changed... well let me say it this way. Crimes pretty much stay the same. It's obviously because of the new technology and stuff, there's a few different types of crimes, but eh general type of crimes, like burglaries, larcenies, and criminal mischief that type of thing, also steeling cars they all stay pretty much the same. There is new technologies that helps us to prevent thing from happening, like cars there is more alarms out there, and we teach people, when there is car break ins, the reason tend to break into cars, is mostly because there is something of value inside the car that someone wants. And so we educate them, and tell them 'don't leave things of value in the car.'

C.H.: And is vandalism considered as revenge?

L.R.: It could be, most vandalism is from kids who have nothing to do. They've got a lot of time in their hands, and once they get together, you know ideas come up, and it's just criminal mischief is what it is.

CH.: In you perspective how has crime changed?

L.R.: It's changed by more technology and computer crimes, Internet crimes, I.D. fraud. The new technology makes easier for someone to steel another person I.D. I.D. theft is the most biggest, the most increasing crime, not only here locally, but in the whole United States.

C.H.: What is being done to prevent that?

L.R.: There is not really a lot you can do. The victims themselves have to do the majority of the work, by doing that don't give out your personal information like your social security, savvy criminals are going to get it. I mean just look at our banking systems, they sell our personal information to other companies, and so there has been in the news lately that people have hacked or broken into the computer data basis and have gotten information. It's in the DMV where there are copies of everyone driving record with all the information in the hands of criminals, so it's out there.

C.H.: What are your crime prevention strategies?

L.R.: One of our crime prevention strategies is to go out and educate people on how to avoid or decrease the incidence of becoming a victim in crime, we give them the tools, we educate them, but most importantly we try to unit them like in communities, so that they can come together and report suspicious activity, and when they see something going on in their community they report it to call in to the sheriff's office or the police, and that way there is a quicker response. We know that criminals when they go into a certain area they expect there isn't going to be anybody watching them, but when they know somebody's called the police they know that 'hey well I'm going to stay away from that neighborhood,' so it just community awareness.

C.H.: So you work a lot with the neighborhood watch?

L.R.: We do a lot of work with the neighborhood watch, business also

C.H.: In what area?

L.R.: Any are that is incorporate in Washington

C.H.: Has there been an increase in gangs, if any and how much?

L.R.: I think that there has been an increase in gangs, as to the numbers I know, I here numbers being thrown out by the inner agencies gang enforcement team, we can pull up to 400 gang stets that are in the Washington County, and I'm sure there is a lot more that we don't know of.

C.H.: Do you have any statistics that you can show me?

L.R.: Not at the moment but I can surely get some to you.

C.H.: What part of Hillsboro has been most affected by crime and gang, compared to the 1980's and now? (Repeated the question.)

L.R.: I don't know about the 1980's. I don't remember seeing hardly that much activity. But now a day certainly it always has to do with wherever there's people or stores. In the Hispanic community obviously its going to be around King street and Walnut it seems that's a very busy place, and even there might not be some actual crime visible, the perception is that there is a lot of crime there. And so once people believe that there is a lot of crime in their minds there's a lot of crime.

C.H.: In what ways do you think the population increase is related to crime and why?

L.R.: I think obviously where there's an increase in population there's more people living closer together, crowded type of situations, maybe not as many jobs, and so that creates the need for people to steel, and to commit any type of crimes. Think that the influence of Californians into Oregon has created those types of situations.

C.H.: So say that all the neighbors are into the gang makes it more difficult for the police to stop them?

L.R.: I they are involved in criminal activity, yah. But you know it's not a crime just to be a gang.

C.H.: In what ways do you think that crime and gang encourages the drop out rate?

L.R.: Mostly because they are less educated people, if you drop out of high school chances are you're going to have a hard time finding a job, because if you don't have a job you're going to need money to live on and that's where the gangs get involved in criminal activity because they have to get some money, and mostly gangs, especially the Latino gangs get involved in drugs.

C.H.: Do you see gangs more involved in drugs now or in the 1980's?

L.R.: More now, it's more visible and you hear about it, and there is more ways of making drugs, and the fact that there's a lot of people they are going to be amounting in drugs.

C.H.: What drug was introduced in the 1980's?

L.R.: I'm not really sure of any drug in particular. I think that there was always certain drug available, like marijuana and LSD. Now a day it's more like meth, that's the most popular, back then it might have been cocaine or heroin. But now a day it's meth, because we're finding out that it's a lot easier to make.

C.H.: Where there any major drug bust's in the 1980's? And what drug was found?

L.R.: I think that the major drug bust's back then might have been marijuana. Oregon was known for cultivating marijuana.

C.H.: What gender was more involved in drugs compared to now?

L.R.: I think it's always been men

C.H.: Have there been any cases of women?

L.R.: I'm sure there's have, but it's always the men who are in the forefront.

C.H.: Where there any drug prevention programs in schools in the 1980's? If not, why?

L.R.: I think that the DARE program that you probably familiar with was very prevalent. Compared to now I think that less and less schools that have the DARE program. Mostly because a lot of people thought that there is no way to measure the effectiveness of the DARE program, so you don't know if it works or not. And so there is a lot of controversy over that.

C.H.: How do you think DARE has taken an affect on children at a young age, and as teenagers?

L.R.: That's the problem there is now way to measure how affective it has become. But it's like anything else, as a parent you teach your kids don't burn yourself, or don't touch anything that hot, and your hoping that they'll learn. You don't go back to find out if they did it again or not unless it's obvious. But you hope you teach them right.

C.H.: What type of punishment was enforced in an act of domestic violence in the 1980's compared to now?

L.R.: There's always been enforcement when someone gets assaulted, but I think back then the attitude was mostly 'well this is something that and you husband, or you and your wife you got to work it out.' Now a day if there is physical evidence of abuse then on the other party, the husband or the wife, then both get arrested.

C.H.: Has domestic violence increased or decreased in the 1980's compared to now?

L.R.: I'm not sure whether it's increased or decreased. I know that there is more awareness of it. Women particularly are being educated as to what their rights are, and what they can do, and so maybe it's reported more.

C.H.: Has there been any cases of men being beaten by their spouse in the 1980's?

L.R.: You know I'm sure there is. But a lot of times men are ashamed to report it.

C.H.: What type of protection was given to the victim of domestic violence?

L.R.: Back then? Not very much, usually they would make the abuser leave for a few hours, even if there are children. Now there is restraining orders that force the abuser to leave the house and not have any contact at all with the victim.

C.H.: What if the victim breaks that restriction?

L.R.: Then they get arrested (the abuser.) Depending on what there requirements are for the restraining order. Neither on of them can call the other, so if either one of them breaks it then they are both subject to arrest.

C.H.: In your perspective where there large numbers of child abuse in Hillsboro area now or then?

L.R.: I think like the same with domestic violence, there's always been a large number of child abuse, but because of more awareness programs there is more reporting. You see more in the newspaper everyday that someone else gets arrested. Because of the education, parents, schoolteachers, and other public people are more aware of what they have to do to report it. Back then there wasn't a clear definition of one could do or who to go to. Now we have specialized teams we have treatment centers who can evaluate a child and find out to what degree there was abuse so there is more awareness.

C.H.: Has there been any improvements regarding child abuse in education?

L.R.: Yes, One is recognizing child molesters. We go out to talk to parents; we talk to teacher, and church groups. So that parents can recognize the characteristics of a child abuser.

C.H.: Are there any rape crime especially involved in marriages?

L.R.: Not that you hear a lot about, I'm sure that there are, but because of the awareness women know what their rights are, even if someone is married it still doesn't give a person the right to rape you, so knowing what your rights are tends to minimize those type of crimes.

C.H.: Has the number of Hispanic living in Hillsboro increased by how much?

L.R.: well I think it has increased by a lot. Back in 1969 there was only a couple of dozen Latino families, so we all knew each other. Now here in the last census in Hillsboro alone there's close to 80,000 people and I think that we Latino's probably make up closer to 25% of the population. There is not very many other minorities in Hillsboro in comparison to Latinos.

C.H.: Based on the rising population of the Hispanic from the 1980's until now. Was and ahs discrimination increased or decreased?

L.R.: Discrimination is there but again awareness makes it more out in the open. Just think about when you're shopping for a new car, and you realize you want to but a red Mustang and so what happens when you have you mind set on a red Mustang. Everywhere you turn you're going to see a red Mustang and you start noticing that. The same thing with crime and discrimination. Once you become a role of any type of discrimination, and if it's affected you then you start noticing it.

C.H.: can you tell me something about the racial profiling that the police are doing?

L.R.: Just the fact that they are gathering up information so that they can come back and determine whether their police agency is being discriminatory, and so they are keeping data as to the race, and the reason for stopping people. So once they complete that then they can say 'you know what we are doing this too much, maybe we shouldn't be doing that because we are just targeting one specific race.'

C.H.: How did the Hispanic population react against discrimination from cops and the public?

L.R.: They don't react too much, unless it's a high profile case. But generally Latinos like police, because they feel like they are out there to protect them. There is always one or two police officers who are the 'bad apple,' so they give everybody else a bad name. The police agencies, Hillsboro's, Washington's sheriff's office we're making a lot of strive in working with the Latino community. We put out a lot of information in Spanish as to what their rights are, driving education classes to make sure that you get your license, and you're driving legally. There is other programs like that we offer to help and work with the Hispanic people

C.H.: Are there other programs that you give out?

L.R.: There's just a number. I have a list here that we do and anything that we offer to the general community, we offer in Spanish.

C.H.: In your opinion what situation of the Hispanic community needs more help on?

L.R.: There's always more need for education, particularly for the youth. Simply because the fact that our youth sometimes have a lot of time on their hands, and we want to make sure that there is activity and programs for them, so that they don't have time to get into trouble.

C.H.: Do you think that police officers should be involved?

L.R.: I think in something's, yes. Because we need to not only educate, but we also need to serve as a role model.