

The University of Southern Mississippi  
Center for Oral History and Cultural Heritage

Deepwater Horizon Oil Disaster–Gulf Coast Fisheries  
Oral History Project

An Oral History

with

Henry Martinez

Interviewer: Barbara Hester

Volume 1043  
2012

This project was funded by a grant from the U.S. Department of Commerce, National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration through Mississippi State University-Northern Gulf Institute, Grant Number NA06OAR4320264. Louis M. Kyriakoudes, Principal Investigator.

©2012

The University of Southern Mississippi

This transcription of an oral history by The Center for Oral History and Cultural Heritage of The University of Southern Mississippi may not be reproduced or published in any form except that quotation of short excerpts of unrestricted transcripts and the associated tape recordings is permissible providing written consent is obtained from The Center for Oral History and Cultural Heritage. When literary rights have been retained by the interviewee, written permission to use the material must be obtained from both the interviewee and The Center for Oral History and Cultural Heritage.

This oral history is a transcript of a taped conversation. The transcript was edited and punctuation added for readability and clarity. People who are interviewed may review the transcript before publication and are allowed to delete comments they made and to correct factual errors. Additions to the original text are shown in brackets [ ]. Minor deletions are not noted. Original tapes and transcripts are on deposit in the McCain Library and Archives on the campus of The University of Southern Mississippi.



Louis Kyriakoudes, Director  
The Center for Oral History and Cultural Heritage  
118 College Drive #5175  
The University of Southern Mississippi  
Hattiesburg, MS 39406-0001  
601-266-4574

*An Oral History with Henry Martinez, Volume 1043*

Interviewer: Barbara Hester

Transcriber: Wesley French

Editors: Stephanie Scull-DeArmeY, Linda VanZandt

## Biography

Mr. Henry Martinez was born on November 25, 1942, in Arabi, Louisiana, to Mr. Felipe Martinez Ortega (born on October 4, 1986, in Garrucha, Spain) and Mrs. Mary Molero Martinez (born on February 2, 1908, on Delacroix Island, Louisiana). His father was a fisherman in Spain and around Delacroix Island. As a young man he was a merchant marine and fisherman. His paternal grandparents were fishermen, and his maternal grandparents were farmers. His mother's father was a fur trapper.

On June 3, 1961, Martinez married Joy Treadaway (born October 8, 1941) on Delacroix Island. They have three children, Lisa Marie Martinez Serigne (born April 24, 1962), Rene Joseph Martinez (born January 31, 1964), and Michele Marie Martinez Schwarz (born July 26, 1970).

At the time of this interview Martinez was a semiretired commercial fisherman, a career he had enjoyed for all of his working life. He enjoys building model boats. He is a Roman Catholic.

## Table of Contents

Beginning to fish as a child with father, trapping for fur.....	1
Regulations .....	1, 9, 26
Decline in crab, shrimp populations .....	1
Strike nets, still nets .....	2
Trammel nets, seine nets, gillnets.....	3
Freshwater intrusion from Braithwaite Siphon.....	3
Loss of wetlands .....	3, 5, 16, 29
Agencies should be rebuilding wetlands by dredging mud, sand.....	3
Brown shrimp.....	3
Sustainability issues .....	4
Suction dredge .....	4
Barrier islands, hurricanes .....	4
Changes in commercial fishing.....	5
MR GO, Mississippi River Gulf Outlet, loss of lakes, wetlands .....	5
Trapping for fur, loss of wetlands.....	6
Hurricane Katrina.....	6, 8
Hurricanes, 2005 .....	7
Hurricane Camille, 1969.....	8
Fishing for a living made him happy, not wealthy .....	9
Imported seafood and regulations are destroying commercial fishing .....	9
Turtle excluder devices .....	9
Sea turtles.....	9
Tilapia imported from China .....	10
BP Deepwater Horizon oil disaster.....	11
Fishing, crabbing before BP Deepwater Horizon oil disaster.....	11
Unfair implementation of BP remunerations to fishermen.....	11
Vessels of Opportunity .....	12
Lawsuit.....	12
Marketing crab from Delacroix Island, Louisiana, circa 2012 .....	13
Marketing catch as a young man .....	13
Fishing with a crab line.....	14
Crab traps, circa 2012 .....	14
Different geographic regions have different-tasting seafood.....	14
Making nets.....	15
Father, came to Louisiana from Spain, seined fish.....	15, 17
Nutria .....	15
Father, multigenerational fishing family.....	17
Mother.....	17
Spaniards, Canary Islanders of Delacroix Island, Louisiana .....	18
Father's boats .....	18
Building his first boat.....	19
Decision to quit school at fourteen and fish for a living.....	20
Trawling crabs, crab lines .....	21
Thieves steal crab catch from traps, sometimes steal traps .....	23

Costs of crabbing, shrimping, circa 2012 .....	23
Paying crew.....	24
Shrimp trawls, oyster dredges ruin crab traps.....	24
Costs of fishing when he was a young man.....	24
Prices paid for catch.....	25, 30
Shrimp factories as regulators.....	26
Licenses, regulations.....	26
Bycatch .....	27
Locks of yesteryear .....	27
Recently planted marsh grass not good for crabs .....	28
Grass floats on top of water, does not build land.....	29
Causes of disappearing wetlands .....	29
Favorite seafood.....	31
Family and food in Spain.....	33
Commercial fishing with family in the Mediterranean.....	34
Seafood auction of commercial catches in Spain .....	34
Importance of honesty.....	36
Appendices, photograph of Henry Martinez.....	38
Photograph of Felipe Martinez Ortega .....	39
Martinez Family Tree, Spain .....	40
Ortega Family Tree .....	41

AN ORAL HISTORY  
with  
HENRY MARTINEZ

*This is an interview for The University of Southern Mississippi Center for Oral History and Cultural Heritage. The interview is with Henry Martinez and is taking place on April 11, 2012. The interviewer is Barbara Hester. Also present is his wife Joy Martinez.*

**Hester:** I am Barbara Hester with The University of Southern Mississippi, the Center for Oral History and Cultural Heritage. And today I am at the home of Henry and Joy Martinez, at (the address of the interviewee has not been transcribed in order to protect his privacy). Today is April 11, 2012, and it's approximately 1:30 in the afternoon. Good afternoon, Mr. Martinez. If you would, state your name and your address for the record, please.

**Martinez:** My name is Henry Martinez, and I live at (the address of the interviewee has not been transcribed in order to protect his privacy).

**Hester:** Thank you. And what is your occupation? (0:01:03.6)

**Martinez:** My occupation is commercial fisherman.

**Hester:** OK. And when did you start?

**Martinez:** As a child with my father. And then I got my own [boat] when I was about fifteen. We used to fish crabs, seine fish in the winter. The crabs was in the summer, and then the shrimp during the seasons. There's a shrimp season in August, and it goes to the thirty-first of December. But by that time it gets too cold, and we would go seine and fish. And then when they didn't have no fish, when they had hard freezes that would kill the fish, we'd go trapping muskrats and all the furbearing animals that we can catch. And now, I just fish crabs and shrimp, because—I don't know. It's a battle with sport fishermen. (0:02:04.8) And they got the money, and we don't. And they make the laws, and we can't fight them. They took all the nets away from us that we used to fish, seine and stuff. We can't use [anything]. So we're down to just crabs and shrimp. And right now, the crabs (0:02:24.2) seem to be kind of a little bit overfished. And between the overfishing a little bit and BP [British Petroleum], because I think BP has something to do with not having enough of crabs right now. And I don't know what the toll is going to be with the shrimp because now they got freshwater coming. (0:02:45.5) They got this [freshwater siphon] wide

open here in [Braithwaite, Louisiana], and I think we're going to lose our May season with that because the brown shrimp don't like freshwater. The white shrimp do, now. The fall shrimp do, but this May season here, that siphon is going to kill us. We're not going to have that, and maybe it's going to die anyway. Maybe the BP might have messed the shrimp up, too. I don't know because the fishermen is going to pass it bad for the next few years if something don't change. You know? I know the Wildlife and Fishery has took over the crab business. (0:03:26.9) Now the state gives all the power to the Wildlife and Fishery for them to make the laws the way they want. And I'm pretty sure they're going to come up with a season, which that might help us, but if they take [the crabs] away, then we don't have nothing else to do. You know, if we get a season when the season's for the crabs, and if they make it in the winter when they really should make it, then we're dead. They ought to give us back some of what they took, like let us have strike nets, no still nets because I was against the still nets when they was legal because fishermen abuse it. They put that still net out; nobody's watching it, and the fish get rotten in it. And then *all* the fishermen get the blame for that one person, leaving their net out. You know? So I think if they're giving us anything back, they should give us [the strike nets] to help us out because it's going to be bad. I think a lot of people's going to lose—they young boys anyway, they're going to lose a lot of what they got.

**Hester:** Can you go into a little more detail about the nets for me, please? Explain the difference between them.

**Martinez:** Well, you see, the strike net is a net that you go looking for the fish, and when you see [them], you put your net out, and you catch them. And you pick up your net and bring it home.

**Hester:** Are you saying strike?

**Martinez:** That means you striking it; you striking the fish. You putting out your net on a fish, but you also taking your net home. It's not staying out there, and catching fish, and leaving it unattended, and then tomorrow morning you get up, and you say, "Oh, I'm tired. I don't feel like going," and [then] those fish [that] is in that net [will] get rotten. And they float up. And the sport fishermen pass, and they see those rotten fish. And I don't blame them for getting mad because I get mad at the other fishermen that do it. You know? I never was for the [still] net. They call that a still net. When you leave it out, and nobody attends it, that's a still net. You put it out, and you could go home, and leave your net there. That's no good! And that's the reason why they took that fishing away from us. They was just supposed to take [the still net away]. But they took everything away from us, [strike nets, seines and trammel nets].

**Hester:** Can you explain the trammel net? What is that? (0:06:00.8)

**Martinez:** The trammel net's a [net] that you go look [for fish with]. It has three walls. You don't need much trammel net, a hundred and fifty feet, but then you put a wing on it. A wing is a single net without nothing else, just with this net. And when you pull it, it chases the fish into the trammel net. And you don't need that much, maybe three hundred fathoms. And you'll go striking with it. And the seine is the same thing. (0:06:33.3) The only thing, a seine is a one-wall net with a bag in it, and you make all the fish go into that bag. But the way it is, you need at least four men to work it right. So it takes four people to handle it. But you can lose the fish any kind of way. It's a old-time net that was brought here by the Spaniards. And if they got anything on the bottom that the net gets hooked, it raises a little angle, [and] all the little fish get away. You lose them. It ain't like the trammel net. Once they hit it, they make the sack, [and] they stay there. Well, the gillnet (0:07:09.2) catches a certain size fish. The small ones get out, and the big ones don't get in because they can't fit in the hole. So it's a certain size of fish that you catch. But they took all of that away from us, and I think we need a lot of that back.

**Hester:** Did you use a gillnet, as well?

**Martinez:** I used it, but because I was forced to use it. I didn't want to use it. I used the seine most of the time. I had a brand-new seine when they changed the law. It cost me three-thousand dollars. I had to just get rid of it. I just left it sitting in the yard and let it rot.

**Hester:** You talked a bit about the Braithwaite Siphon, the freshwater coming from there. Could you explain what happened there? (0:07:53.8)

**Martinez:** The freshwater, they think [it's] building land. But it's going to take more than a siphon to build the land. They got to knock the levee down and move everybody out, and let the river run over like it did for thousands of years. That's how all this got built. The scientists know. This [siphon is not] going to [work]. All that there does is eat up the land more. If you go to Delacroix Island right now, the water must be running maybe ten, twelve knots. It's passing through there. That water moving that fast is eating that mud bank like you won't believe. And everything is going to turn to water instead of building up because they don't have enough sand coming in it to settle and build it up. If they want to restore the land, they got to dredge and siphon mud and sand in here, not just plain water. And the shrimp, the brown shrimp, don't like that water. (0:08:54.8) They don't come in it. They don't grow in that water because the water's too cold. So they stay small. We used to catch the nicest brown shrimp in the state, down there in Delacroix. That bayou right in front of the houses there, we used to catch a twenty-one/twenty-five brownie there. That's not even heard of in Louisiana, a big brownie like that.

**Hester:** So the shrimp—



**Martinez:** But the siphon changed it all.

**Hester:** So—

**Martinez:** Go ahead.

**Hester:** No. I don't want to stop you, what you're saying.

**Martinez:** It changed our way of life, [the siphon]. We got to do things different. Now, we just got August, which is a better season. It's a three-month season. A brownie, you got from May. As soon as the white shrimp show up, [Wildlife closes the season]. [Right now] people [are] working in offshore, which should be closed. That should be closed out there, so the egg layers can lay their eggs (0:09:54.9) for the August. You see, I'm a conservationist myself, but I'm an old fisherman. The younger ones, they don't conserve. They don't do their own conservation. They want to catch everything. But you got to treat the waters good because that's your future! If you mistreat it, [if] you abuse it, well, then you're going to lose everything! But we got to get something back to help us with the young people, [who] got to raise their kids. I mean, they're not educated. I'm not educated. I only [went to] eighth grade. But I can build a boat. I can build a house. I can make anything you want. The educated people can't do that.

**Hester:** And you know the waters out there.

**Martinez:** And I know the waters without the GPS [global positioning system]. (laughter) But everything has changed now because the land has gone. (0:10:57.3) And they trying to fight a battle that they not going to win with restoration because they not going to get that. They [not] going to get restoration. The only restoration you can get is move further north because they can't restore everything that we lost already. I don't think it's possible. Only if they use suction dredges to do it.

**Hester:** So could you explain the suction dredges (0:11:22.6) and how—

**Martinez:** A suction dredge is going to take the mud from here and pump it over there, [which would fill in the land].

**Hester:** So where would you put it out here? Where would you pump, and where would you put it?

**Martinez:** You got to put it where they had those islands before, restore where the islands used to be, and they'd break the hurricanes. They'd slow the water down a little bit. You know? Now, a hurricane goes to Texas, and we flood. We didn't have weather like that before. I remember Hurricane Audrey and a bunch of other

hurricanes, that many went to Morgan City; they went to—what was the name of that place? Right there, Sabine(?) River, there? On this side of the—

**Hester:** Lake Charles?

**Martinez:** Pecan(?) Island and all of that? All of that, Cameron.

**Hester:** Cameron, yeah.

**Martinez:** Cameron, yeah. Wiped out Cameron. We didn't get a drop of water! Now, we get a hurricane that hit in Texas, and we get seven feet of water at Delacroix! They don't have nothing out there to stop [the water]. (0:12:27.4) And the shrimp don't last as long as it did because [there's no land to hold them here]. Took all our lakes away. The lakes is open Gulf. Before, the shrimp, in the October months, which was the best months to trawl, they would leave, but they would leave slower. They'd get hooked in these lakes. And you could go trawl in the lake. But now they don't have no lakes! When they leave from the inside waters, it's, *zip*, in fifteen minutes, you're in the open sea because what used to be closed in, is wide open now. And it changed our fishing altogether. And modern times changed it, too, with the new equipment that they got, and big powerful motors, and—

**Hester:** If you look back in time, can you remember when that change happened? When was the biggest period of change?

**Martinez:** The biggest period of change and eating up the land? I'd say it started maybe twenty-five years ago. It was right close to the island there at Delacroix. We call Delacroix the island because it really is an island. You got to go over a bridge before you get there. And I guess it would be that long since they dug that ship channel; it was causing plenty of tide. No, the ship channel was more than that. It was started; I worked, digging it with the suction dredges there. But ever since that, it made a stronger tide. Tide ebb and flow, yeah? And the more current you got, the quicker it's going to eat [the wetlands].

**Hester:** Where was the ship channel?

**Martinez:** The ship channel was the Gulf. What they call it? They got it closed now. The Gulf inlet where the ships come into New Orleans.

**Hester:** The MR GO [Mississippi River Gulf Outlet]?

**Martinez:** The MR GO. (0:14:26.8) When they dug that, that started it. That was the beginning of the end.

**Hester:** And what year was MR GO dug?

**Martinez:** Well, I worked on it in [19]63.

**Joy Martinez:** I don't remember (inaudible).

**Hester:** It was right before [Hurricane] Betsy, maybe?

**Martinez:** Yeah. Oh, it was a while before Betsy because I worked on it at the end of the construction. It started in the [19]50s. It took them a while. It was only forty feet [deep] when they did it, forty feet deep, five-hundred feet wide. Now, it's almost a mile wide. And the ships, when they was passing through there, every time a ship passed, the wake would roll down the banks. You could see the mud just falling, and it caused a lot of erosion. We used to trap muskrats before that. (0:15:24.0) (A short portion of the interview has not been transcribed at the request of the interviewee.) But MR GO, [causes the water to rise and fall too fast, which makes it hard to trap]. You had to learn how to do things different all the time.

**Hester:** So did you continue trapping?

**Martinez:** Oh, yeah. We continued trapping until the activists [was against killing furbearing animals]. You know the animal activists, with the fur and killing the animal and this and that? "They got the right to live." But that ate the land, too. That contributed to the erosion, too. Between the rats, the [nutria]—the muskrats eat under the ground. They go underneath and eat the roots of the grass. Because that's how we trap them, we go for where they was eating. And the nutria rat, that's an animal that they brought here from South America. [They] eat on top the ground. But between the two, when they get through, the land is soft; it's spongy. You get a hurricane, the whole thing goes off. And that's what caused the erosion too, the hurricanes. This [Hurricane] Katrina, (0:16:45.6) if you would see before and after, what this thing did, you wouldn't believe it!

**Hester:** Can you explain it?

**Martinez:** Oh, it took eighty, ninety acres away from people that had land. And there was like eighty-acre lots. Some people lost the whole eighty acres for Katrina! It's all water.

**Hester:** Is it like that today?

**Martinez:** Yeah! It's still all water. Yeah, they lost their land completely.

**Hester:** Do you see anybody out here doing anything to change that? To help with the—

**Martinez:** They talk about it, but they [not] going to do [anything] (0:17:26.0) because that money going to go from this one to that one with the committees. They studying this and studying that. They get the money, and they don't do nothing with it.

**Hester:** So you haven't seen anything happening? You've only heard talk about it?

**Martinez:** Just talk. They [not] going to do [anything]. But like I'm telling you with the fishermen, the fishermen are going to need help. I know they are.

**Hester:** I think that it may be, with your knowledge of the wetlands out here and the way that the area has changed, could you talk about—(A brief portion of the audio not related to the interview has not been transcribed.) With your knowledge of the environment here and what's happened over the years, can you talk about the hurricanes? Start with the earliest one, maybe even before the MR GO and so forth, and what you did to prepare for the hurricane. How you evacuated if you did—

**Martinez:** Oh, we evacuated.

**Hester:** Yeah. What would be the first one that you remember?

**Joy Martinez:** (laughter) As a little, bitty kid!

**Martinez:** I can remember [hurricanes] (0:18:39.0 ) when I was just a little, bitty thing. When they first built that new—that courthouse in—over here, the one in Chalmette? We used to go stay in the courthouse. See, St. Bernard wasn't like St. Bernard is today. When I was a little boy, they never had Judge Perez [Drive], no people back there. It was just the old, main road. You'd come out in Arabi [Louisiana], but it was—like St. Claude. You know where St. Claude's at?

**Hester:** Yes, sir.

**Martinez:** Well, that road comes all the way here. That was the main road, and they only had people living there. Paris Road, they might have had maybe eight or ten houses going that way. They never had Chalmette at all when I was little. So the courthouse was the main deal. And the island we was—I think we was like five hundred-something voters of twenty-one years old because now, they made it eighteen, which they don't let the eighteen-year-old kids do nothing. So I think it still should be twenty-one like it was. But we was like five-hundred people at twenty-one years old then. It was a nice, little village. We all family with one another. You got Delacroix, Ycloskeys(?) and Reggio. Those people are all mixed families. Everybody knows each other. And even up here in Old St. Bernard, because that's what it was at that time I'm talking about, before the Judge Perez [Drive]. And that came in later years. But we used to—the one I remember, I was a little—it's in a

little phase in my head. It was in like in 1948 or [19]49, something like that. And it was a big rain job. Man, they had a lot of rain. We left out Delacroix, and we went by—my aunt used to live in Caernarvon. And we went there. And then we left from Caernarvon and went to the courthouse and [stayed] there a while. Then we went back to Caernarvon and went back there a couple of times. But it really never did a whole lot of damage, that one. It didn't even flood that much [in Delacroix], a little bit of water when we went back home. And then [Hurricane] Flossy in [19]56. That one almost put water in our house, my mother's house. Mama's house was like about four feet up, and it was even with the floor. It didn't go in.

**Hester:** And that was in Delacroix?

**Martinez:** That was in Delacroix in [19]56, but it all depends on where the storm comes from. If it comes from the northeast, the people in Ycloskey get it worse than us. And if it comes from the southeast, we get it worse than them. And that's how they was. But the land was good and strong in them days! That was before the channel and before the rats ate too much. But in later years, when I grew up a little bit, the muskrats and the nutria ate the land pretty bad. And then it was worse for Katrina because Katrina was a much, much stronger hurricane.

**Hester:** What about [Hurricane] Camille in between—

**Martinez:** Camille missed us! Camille never put water in Delacroix Island. Camille hit Biloxi, [Mississippi], but Camille passed coming from the west, over the mouth of the river, going like, northeast like that! And it went that way, and we got the northwest side of the wind. So instead of putting in water, it took it out. But it did pass pretty close [to Dooble]. You ain't going to know where this is at, but it's right behind Delacroix Island. It's a double pipeline that brings the gas and goes up north with the gas. And it passed right there. They had water over the pipeline signs, the drift. You know what drift is?

**Hester:** No.

**Martinez:** It's the grass, the grass from the marsh that floats up with the high water, and it gets stuck here and there. Well, it was, like, about that far from the house right there. But that's real close.

**Hester:** And that was in Camille?

**Martinez:** That was Camille. Camille was a powerhouse. Camille would've been as strong as this Katrina, but it was tight, because it did its share of damage over there in Biloxi. It done its share, but it wasn't too big around. [Katrina] was two hundred miles an hour, two hundred fifty miles an hour, when it was in the middle of the Gulf! It could've blew out, *shooo*, like that, and the waves still would've kept a going

because once that big wave built up, it's going to go like a tsunami. And that's what's going to do the damage. The wind—most of it ain't wind damage. But the water's way stronger than wind. So we lived a good life, up and down. Didn't work on jobs, but some of the jobs that the people were doing, going on, and [the job] ended. And then they came back down and fished. I said, "Look. You left. You went up there on a job, and [you] got no more than me, and come back and fish." So it all depends on what you like, and I loved every minute of it. (0:24:21.0) I think I lived a good life. It was poor sometimes, but I was happy all the time, and that matters. That means more to me than working when you don't like what you're doing.

**Hester:** I understand.

**Martinez:** But the only thing bad about it now is that I don't care to see my grandkids get into this because it's a dying thing (0:24:51.5) with the imports, and I mean, it's nothing but laws (0:24:57.0) and laws and laws against commercial fishermen because it's all through the influence because people got money, and big people got money, and they control the government. You know that.

**Hester:** Could you talk for a little bit about the laws? When did they start really kicking in?

**Martinez:** Oh, they started, the first bad one was the turtles, that TED [turtle excluder device] that we got to put in the trawl. That's all a pile of bull because you see these *National Geographics*, and they show all the islands in the Pacific, all the islands in the Indian Ocean. All of them got turtles. And the only people that's got to respect the turtles is the Americans, but no other country has a TED in they net. But we got to have it, the fishermen.

**Hester:** Did you have a problem with catching turtles prior to the TEDs?

**Martinez:** No. Now, I might have caught two or three in my life, but they didn't die, little ones. In my Daddy's times, he had caught a big one, one time, weighed about five hundred pounds, one of them big, black ones. In fact, that was in the days when everything was by hand down there, and he was friends with some Biloxi fishermen, and they took it out. They took it out to Biloxi. But that time, they used to sell them. That was in the [19]30s.

**Hester:** So when you had to use a TED, how did that change your business?

**Martinez:** Well, it let shrimp get out. The shrimp get out the net, and then it's harder to deal with that thing. It [makes] your trawl want to spin back there and twist up and all kinds of stuff. It makes it harder. A lot of people went with the skimmers, and now they trying to make us put them in the skimmers. It's a different net.

**Hester:** Put a TED in a skimmer?

**Martinez:** Yeah. They want us to put TEDs in the skimmers, but they beat it last year. The judge ruled no. And now, I know, they after it again this year. But that's all on account of the influence. We all know it, but we can't beat them. I mean, we can't beat money.

**Hester:** So how do they get in the mix there? How do the people who, the importers and so forth, get into that conversation about—

**Martinez:** They don't talk to us. (laughter) They don't talk to us. I don't know who's into that, but I think it's some kind of little fishers that's in that boat, that's behind that. I know it's got to be big money because the big-money people don't care about little people. You know that. The big companies don't care about the regular people. To tell you how much they [care] about it, I seen a thing on TV where those big supermarkets is selling you rotten eggs. The eggs is supposed to only be good for forty-one days. After forty-one days, if they don't sell them, they wash them down with a hose and repack them and put them up for another forty-one days. So that's your supermarket. They don't care about you. They care about the almighty dollar. They're not proud like the old farmer used to be. They bought all the little farms out, and now it's all a big monopoly. And it's getting that way with the seafood. China controls us now because a lot of the stuff comes from there. And I hate to say all this, but you actually eating human waste when you eat the Chinese stuff because (inaudible). She don't like me to say all this. (inaudible) I'm going to get in trouble. (laughter) But the Chinese feed the tilapia—you ordered a tilapia, eh?

**Hester:** Yes.

**Martinez:** You eating it in Mississippi?

**Hester:** Right, yes.

**Martinez:** You know what that tilapia eats? Chinese shit. (laughter) So you're eating recycled Chinese crap. That's what you eat when you eat a tilapia, probably the same thing with the shrimps. And you know what that causes? It causes cancer in your bone marrow to human beings. They had it on TV already. But they don't tell the people that. So you're eating all that shrimp, and all that tilapia that comes from China. And the Chinese are laughing! You eating it, and I eat it, too. When I can't get a fish, I'll go to the Chinese restaurant and get that. (laughter) I know that's what they got. You know?

**Hester:** I hear you.



**Martinez:** But we can't win. That's all big money! It's just like with BP. (0:29:24.9) BP got more money than what the United States has. So how are you going to win? Whatever BP says, goes. They made us quit fishing crabs. They didn't let us fish at all for about five or six weeks. They didn't let us go out at all. We had to leave our traps; they didn't even want us to pick them up. And I mean, they come through there one day and said, "Go ahead, fishing." And so we go ahead, fishing. Now they found oil in Bay Jimmy(?), but they say, "That's OK. It ain't going to hurt you." So BP must be paying. I tell it to you like it is. If I get in trouble, I'm seventy-two years old. I don't give a damn if they lock me up forever. I don't want to work no more. I work because I got to work for my medicine.

**Hester:** It can be expensive.

**Martinez:** Oh! The insulin I take, *pshaw*, it's ridiculous.

**Hester:** When did you hear about BP with the oil spill?

**Martinez:** (inaudible) when it happened.

**Hester:** When it happened.

**Martinez:** Yeah. And it was about, maybe two weeks after when they stopped us. About two weeks after the explosion, that's when they stopped us, and they said the oil was coming this way.

**Hester:** Were you having a good year?

**Martinez:** It was looking like it was going to be good because I filed thirty-two thousand dollars for it that year, and that [is not] bad. (0:31:04.2)

**Hester:** You did what? I'm sorry. Would you say that again?

**Martinez:** I filed income tax, thirty-two thousand. And just with the crabs. And I had—the week before they stopped us, I had like twenty-five hundred dollars, I think, or it might have been three-thousand—I don't know—dollars worth of crabs. Of course, you have to take your expense out, but still. And then they stopped us, and they paid us a little bit. But I don't know. They paid me less than they paid everybody else. They paid beauticians. Beauticians got as much as eighty, ninety thousand dollars in one lump sum. And us fishermen didn't get that. They had our grass cutter. I ain't going to mention his name, but he got two trip tickets, and they gave him a hundred and six thousand. (0:32:00.4) They gave me twenty-one, and I been a fisherman since I'm a kid. I got two boats, and God knows how much money worth of equipment I got. I got diesel in one. At the time of BP, I had a thirty-six-foot boat. We got rid of it. It was new, and we sold it for sixty-five thousand dollars,



me and my son. But we got rid of it because we was afraid they wasn't going to have no more shrimp, and we'd get stuck with that boat. What you going to do with a boat if you can't use it?

**Hester:** Were you crabbing and fishing? Crabbing and shrimping?

**Martinez:** I was crabbing. At times, we'd do both.

**Hester:** And in the BP spill, that—

**Martinez:** I was just crabbing.

**Hester:** That was just crabbing? OK. What—

**Martinez:** The season wasn't open for shrimp yet.

**Joy Martinez:** The season wasn't open yet.

**Martinez:** And then they, they didn't let you trawl anyway, so.

**Hester:** Did you participate in the VOO program, the Vessels of Opportunity?  
(0:32:54.0)

**Martinez:** Yeah. But I didn't get that much work. They got a suit going on now for that.

**Hester:** What kind of suit is that?

**Martinez:** We was out for twenty-four hours; we only got paid for twelve. And the boat was out for twenty-four hours, and we got paid for twelve hours the days that we worked. But they was on twenty-four-hour call. So they ought to pay you for the days you on call.

**Hester:** Was this a group of people working on one boat you're talking about?

**Martinez:** No, no. Everybody.

**Hester:** Everybody having their own boats involved.

**Martinez:** Yeah. And that's only here. I believe the ones across the river got it all. They never treated us like they treated over there. But what you going to do? You got to take it like it comes. (laughter)

**Hester:** How long did you do the Vessels of Opportunity?

**Martinez:** Well, I did it all the while it was there, but they put us like seven-and-seven, or three days. I worked one time three days. I took twenty-some-odd days without working, twenty-six, I believe. But they were doing all kinds of crazy stuff that wasn't right. And the whole thing, it was five months. I think it was? I think I worked fifty-two or fifty-three days, which I should've worked the whole five months. Now, they had some people that didn't want to work. They didn't work at all. And BP give them more than what I made at work. (laughter) I'm letting the cat out today. I'll tell it to you like it is with that, because that's the way it is. I can't see a beautician getting more money than me, that I got all my equipment out there. I had nine thousand dollars worth of crab traps sitting out there. And a beautician ain't got nothing on the side of that.

**Hester:** How did the beautician—what was the money for?

**Martinez:** Because the fishermen's wives couldn't go get a haircut because they wasn't making no money. You think that's a lot of bull?

**Hester:** Yeah. (laughter)

**Martinez:** Yeah? (laughter)

**Hester:** I don't understand. Well, let me ask you—

**Joy Martinez:** (inaudible) the restaurants up.

**Martinez:** The restaurants, the same way. And yet the restaurants are getting this stuff from imported. They [not] getting [seafood] from us. All the crab they catching right now at Delacroix Island are going to Baltimore, Maryland, and they're going to Florida. They're not even going in here.

**Hester:** Why is that?

**Martinez:** Because they don't have no good markets here. (0:35:33.4) We never did have a good market. Even when I was a little boy, they never had a good market for crabs. New Orleans never had nothing good for the fisherman! We didn't get [any] money for crabs until Mr. Lou Wolfe(?) came from Baltimore, Maryland, and started buying crabs down there and paying us eight dollars a basket for them. Now they're worth sixty, seventy dollars or better. But at that time, it was eight dollars he give us for the crabs, for a bushel of crabs, forty pounds.

**Hester:** Who was he?

**Martinez:** He was a crabber from Baltimore, Maryland.

**Hester:** What was his name, again?

**Martinez:** Lou Wolfe, he's dead now.

**Hester:** Wolfe?

**Martinez:** Wolfe. And he gave us a good break on the crabs. Of course, in [those] days they had the crabs. You never had that many fishermen because the crab traps, that's another thing, made it easy for them fishermen. When I fished crab, we had to fish with a crab line. (0:36:31.0) You don't know what this is. You've got to stick a pole here, and you put a line out, with a bait, every five, six feet apart.

**Hester:** Like a trot [line].

**Martinez:** Yeah. The line goes over a hook, and you scoop the crabs. And if the crab leave go of that, you lost them. But the crab trap is working twenty-four hours, and it make a fisherman out of anybody. A lot of these young guys—I'm going to tell you how it is—they're full of marijuana. They're full of all kind of drugs, and they catch more crab than me. They couldn't catch crabs like that with a crab line because you had to be alert. And they ain't alert. They drunk! You know? (laughter)

**Hester:** What were they using? They were using a trap?

**Martinez:** Yeah. It's a crab pot. You call it a trap. Well, I'm going to tell you. When they first started with the crab trap, it was her daddy. It was in 1963, the winter of 1963. He bought them in Back Bay, Biloxi. He bought the traps. Lenny Strong(?) used to make them. They was a two-funnel crab trap. They never had made four-funnels. It was a two-funnel crab trap made out of galvanized chicken wire (inaudible). And that's how we started. But it was fine and dandy then. For a few years, we had it by ourselves for a long time. And now the ones in the west got it. They come over here. It seems like the east side of the river got better [seafood] than the west side. I don't know why. But the crabs are better here. They're not full of sand. It's a mud bottom. And the shrimp even taste better here than the shrimp from that way. It's hard to believe, but the shrimp from here is better.

**Hester:** Is that because of the waters coming down the Mississippi River?

**Martinez:** It must be. And that Lake Ponchartrain crab and shrimp is the best out of the whole state. (0:38:26.1) I got to give it to them. I ain't going to take it away from them. They got the best seafood at Lake Ponchartrain. The biggest, the best, and they don't have all that sand in them. The crabs from down the river is sandy. And they got a strong, strong iodine taste to them that's real strong. The seafood caught in the brackish water is better. It tastes better than the ones caught out there.

But that's been my living. Sometimes I make nets for people. (0:39:07.8 ) I made a lot of nets. At one time I was making the shrimp nets for mostly all the people in the Delacroix. Yeah.

**Hester:** Do you know Mr. Pete Floyd?

**Martinez:** Pete Floyd?

**Hester:** He's a net maker in Pascagoula, [Mississippi].

**Martinez:** No. I knew Steve Marinavich(?) that was in Biloxi.

**Hester:** That name is familiar.

**Martinez:** He was a fisherman from here, and he moved to Biloxi, and he made nets over there, Marinavich.

**Hester:** I think his name's come up before.

**Martinez:** Yeah.

**Hester:** Is he still around?

**Martinez:** I don't think so. He must be dead by now because he's from the older group. Not my Daddy's time, but in-between. My Daddy goes back to 1896, my daddy. (0:39:54.0) That's when my Daddy was born. He came from Spain in 1920. When my Daddy came here, they never had trawls. They used [to] seine [shrimp]. And those same seines is what they used to catch fish, what we use to catch fish because they started seining for shrimp, and then they started seining for fish in the winter with them because the rats wasn't worth money all the time.

**Hester:** I want to go back to your dad, but I've got a question about the rats before we go back to your dad.

**Martinez:** Uh-huh?

**Hester:** You were talking about the nutria, and they were introduced to this area. When were they introduced to this—(0:40:35.1)

**Martinez:** They claim they was introduced some time in the late [19]30s or [19]40s. But I can remember when the [Department of] Wildlife and Fisheries brought them, and they had them on Spanish Tavern Wharf. That would've been in the late [19]40s or early [19]50s. They left two off here, two off there, two off there. They were supposed to mix with the muskrat and make a bigger muskrat with the good fur. But

that's just like mixing a German shepherd with a Chihuahua. One needs a stool. It didn't work. And now and then, Thomas [Gonzales] and I trapped together, and we hunted nutrias together, and he—

**Hester:** Thomas Gonzales?

**Martinez:** Yeah. He caught a nutria one time that had the fur of a muskrat.

**Hester:** Really?

**Martinez:** Yeah. He had two or three of them, but they was beautiful with the fur of the muskrat. Muskrats got nice fur. It's silky and silver on the belly. That's the best part of the muskrat, the belly. And they wanted to make a bigger, a bigger thing, but it didn't work.

**Hester:** It just didn't work.

**Martinez:** Unh-uh, no. They was too big.

**Hester:** And so that's when the problems started with one chewing at the top and—

**Martinez:** Ones chewing on the top and one chewing on the bottom.

**Hester:** —on the bottom and destroying the—

**Martinez:** And they destroyed the land. They the ones that really destroyed the land, the nutria and the rat. That's the biggest contributor of it all, I think, because a lot of times, in them days, the old days—and, well, and just like today—(brief interruption) In the old days, it wasn't a whole lot different than now, but the people wasn't quite as greedy, but they still was greedy. And some of them had these two, three lots, like a-hundred-and-sixty, three-hundred acres, and the land would be full of rats. And they didn't want to get [any] trappers to help them catch them, so the rats ate the land.

**Hester:** Oh, my goodness.

**Martinez:** Yeah. And it was all through greediness. My Daddy had one lot of land, eighty acres. And he sold it. When I was a kid, he sold it. But he caught ten thousand muskrats on it.

**Hester:** Isn't that something?

**Martinez:** But he had to get a man to help him. So he didn't lose the land.

**Hester:** Let's go to your dad. First of all, we talked a little bit about him before we actually went on the record here. And could you tell us where, what part of Spain he's from? (0:43:21.6)

**Martinez:** He comes from the village of Garrucha(?), which is in the province of Almeria(?), which belongs to Andalusia in the south of Spain. The Coast of Del Sol they call it there.

**Unidentified Attendee:** Coast of Del Sol.

**Martinez:** And it's in the Mediterranean Sea. He was a fisherman over there, my grandfather, too. And I don't know. He used to fish over there, and then he'd get on the steam ships, and then he was in the merchant marines for a while, and then he'd go back fishing. And this time he came here in 1920, and he met my mother, and they got married. And she wouldn't go to Spain, and he wanted always to go back, and she never would want to go. You couldn't get her in a ship, and you couldn't get him in a plane. So (laughter) he [stayed].

**Hester:** Did he ever go back? He never did go back?

**Martinez:** Oh, he never did go back. Forty-three years he lived here, and he never did go back to Spain.

**Hester:** Could you give us his name?

**Martinez:** Philippe Martinez Ortega.

**Hester:** Philippe Martinez Ortega.

**Martinez:** You see, in Spain they carry the mother's name, too. Ortega is my grandma's name, [Antonia Ortega Cano].

**Hester:** And your mother's name?

**Martinez:** Mary Molero Martinez.

**Hester:** And she was actually living here in this area when he came here.

**Martinez:** Yeah, uh-huh. She was living here. My Daddy came from Spain, and he [stayed] in the city for a year before he went [to Delacroix]. He went down there in 1921. And he sailed around, and he had got on a ship while trying to get on another one to go back. But he sailed around here to Cuba and to Mexico and that. He making good trips. He was bringing molasses here. And they had some fishermen, Spanish fishermen, that was down there because it's a Spanish Community, you

know, Delacroix Island. And at that time it was Spaniards, not only Canary Islanders, but Spaniards from Spain. They must have had fifteen or twenty of them down there at that time. And they all, the Spaniards, used to live in a house on—I think it was Charters(?) Street. I don't know about the name. They call it La Gayeha(?), which is Cahlesi(?) is the Callegas(?), but they called her that because that's where she was from, but that's Marquez(?). The Marquezes owned the house there. And that's where all the Spaniards used to get together. And the Spaniards from the island went there. The man needed a crew to go seine and fish. So they asked my daddy to go. My daddy say, "I'll go for a while, while I'm waiting on the ship." So he went down there, and he met my mom, and then they got married. And then that's the end of that story. (laughter)

**Hester:** So when they got married, he went into commercial fishing.

**Martinez:** Yeah.

**Hester:** Did he get his own boat right away?

**Martinez:** Pretty close to right away, yeah. They got married in 1922, my mom and my dad. I'm the youngest out of four. And they never had [any] kids for eleven or twelve years. My mama was a kid; my daddy raised her, too.

**Hester:** How many years between them?

**Martinez:** Almost twelve. My Daddy was twenty-six, and she was fourteen when they got married. Today they put you in jail for that. But that's the way [it] was in them times. The Queen of Spain was only nine years old, I think, when she got married, Isabella.

**Hester:** Amazing. (laughter) So what type of boat did he decide to get?

**Martinez:** Well he ended up—he bought a boat from down there, which was a V-bottom, thirty-foot or thirty-something foot. Then in 1935, he got [a new] boat in Biloxi. He got Cali(?) and Kelly(?), [two carpenters, to build] him a boat in Back Bay, Biloxi, a little lugger, a round bottom. And that's what he had till I was about thirteen years old [when] he [sold] the boat. And then he just [stayed] with a little boat, but fishing crabs. He wouldn't trawl no more; he couldn't trawl. And he died when he was sixty-six.

**Hester:** He had one boat over his career, the one that was built in Biloxi?

**Martinez:** Well, he had one before that, The *Leo*. But it was a V-bottom. (laughter) So when he got in rough weather, he seen the planks moving, and he got a new one built. (laughter) He got a good one.

**Hester:** That sounds like a good move. So when did you—which one did you work on when you were—how old were you when you started working with your dad?  
(0:48:20.9)

**Martinez:** Oh, I was around five or six.

**Hester:** Five or six?

**Martinez:** Just old enough to go. And I used to sit on the cabin. I didn't do nothing. I just used to go with him.

**Hester:** Well, how old were you when you started to do something?

**Martinez:** Not much older, maybe twelve, I started working. But at twelve years old, we had built me a boat already. And when I come home from school, he sold it on me. The guy was sitting on the side of the road, and he said, "This is my boat." I said, "You're full of bull, too." He says "No." He says, "This is my boat!" Because they used to love to tease me because I had a bad temper, I used to get mad. He said, "This is my boat!" I said, "No, it ain't". He said, "Yes, it is. I gave your daddy four hundred and twelve dollars for it." I said, "Four hundred and twelve dollars!" I told him more that he was lying. And come to find out it was the truth. He bought it. (laughter) That was Mr. Manuel Campo(?) bought it.

**Hester:** OK. How'd you get that boat? (0:49:17.2)

**Martinez:** Well, I scrounged up the ribs because everybody used cypress then. And they had an old camp way in Cox(?) Bay out there, close to California Bay, way on the outside. And the camp had a cypress frame on it, and I knocked it down, and I took the frame. And then I bought the lumber. It didn't cost that much like today. Well, my daddy sold the boat. We split the money. He took two hundred, and I took two-hundred and built another one. Him and I built it.

**Hester:** Did it wind up being a good deal?

**Martinez:** Yeah, because then it was my boat. I got the ribs, and he bought some of the planking before. So he got his share, and I got mine. But I was mad at first because the boat was twenty-four foot, and I liked it, (laughter) [the one he sold].

**Hester:** How big was your next one?

**Martinez:** Twenty-three, and then I had that till we got married. And we got married in 1961. So we married almost fifty-one years now.



**Hester:** Congratulations.

**Martinez:** And I built one twenty-six foot. We was building it when we got married. And then after that, my daddy died in [19]63, and then I built it myself. And then I built big ones. I built some forty-five foot. You got a picture of that boat?

**Joy Martinez:** No.

**Martinez:** They got a picture here. No. They got one somewhere. They got one.

**Hester:** Maybe we can check after, and I might take a picture of the picture if I can.

**Martinez:** We got my daddy's picture when he came from Spain in 1920.

**Hester:** Oh, we'll have to take that one for sure.

**Martinez:** We'll get it. It's on the wall there. It got the black in the back. That's the smoke stack of the ship. He took a picture, put it in his passport when he came.

**Hester:** And that managed to make it through Katrina. That's great that you've still got the picture. That's good. Oh, wow, that's a great picture! Yeah. I'd love to take a picture of this when we're finished. And that way we can put the picture with your audio file.

**Martinez:** All right.

**Hester:** That'll be great. How old were you when you decided, "I'm going to do this for—this is going to be my"—

**Martinez:** I decided that when I quit school when I was not quite fifteen. (laughter) I wasn't going to school [any] more. And they was fussing. They wanted me to go to high school. My brother was in the army at the time. And he always told me after, he said, "If I'd have been home, you would've never quit!" I say, "Well, it's the same thing. If you're not going to be a lawyer or a doctor and get rich, you ain't going to (inaudible) life. And why live one that you don't like? Live the one you like!" (laughter)

**Hester:** How did—did your brothers—

**Martinez:** I only had one brother and two sisters.

**Hester:** What did you—

**Martinez:** I'm the youngest.

**Hester:** Did your brother—what business did he—

**Martinez:** He was fishing.

**Hester:** He was fishing, as well?

**Martinez:** Yeah, he was fishing. Then he went to work at Kaiser Aluminum. And then when they shut Kaiser Aluminum down, he retired. And he was a forcible retiree, yeah? And then he went back fishing.

**Hester:** So he's fishing now?

**Martinez:** No. He got cancer, and he died.

**Hester:** I'm sorry.

**Martinez:** He died seventeen years ago, I think, 1995. He was seven years older than me.

**Hester:** When you were fifteen, you started commercial fishing for a living. Can you tell us about the equipment you used? First, what kind of fishing did you do? (0:53:02.3)

**Martinez:** I was trawling crabs. They never had crab traps in them times. I fished crabs with a crab line or either nets. In Spanish, they call them callesees(?). They round, and you throw them down, and then you pick them with—you catch the cork. You might have seen people fishing off the bridge with them type of nets. But we put a cork on them when we used it. Some people used as much as two hundred. I used to use about a hundred and fifty.

**Hester:** A hundred and fifty, what does that mean? Is that a measurement?

**Martinez:** A hundred and fifty each one of them, a hundred and fifty nets.

**Hester:** A hundred-and-fifty nets. Oh, OK.

**Martinez:** Yeah. And you run them with the boat, and you catch them with a stick with the fork on it. You catch the cork, and the net comes to you. You catch it, and you shake the crabs out, and you let the net go back. But you always keep a few on the boat. So like if one come up without no bait, you'd throw one with bait in the same place. You don't lose the spot. You always keep fifteen or twenty on the boat, baited already. And then with the line, if you used a crab line, it's a long line, like a trot line with baits on it. And you pass it over a hook the side of the boat, and you run

slow. And you scoop the crabs as they come, when they come, if they don't let go. You always got to fish, with that kind of fishing, you always got to fish with the side of the boat that—if you're right handed, you got to fish with the sun hitting you on the right side because the shadow of the boat chases the crabs, and you can't catch them.

**Hester:** Interesting.

**Martinez:** If the boat, if you going like that, and the crab is coming on a line, and he sees a shadow, the shadow chases the crab. You don't catch him.

**Joy Martinez:** He just lets go.

**Martinez:** He just lets go. That's why when we started fishing with the crab traps, when we first put them out, put them out there upside down. Nobody knew because everybody sees the crab swimming. Nobody think the crab was on the bottom, walking! And they, "Well, the crabs are going to come swimming. He going to swim right in the pot; you got to put the funnel up." So I put the funnel up, and I caught nothing. Then you turn them over, oh, Lord, you filled it up. (laughter) But when we first put the traps out, put them out wrong. Nobody knew. And I used to trawl shrimp with my little boat in the bayous and lakes and ponds, not in the Gulf. I still ain't going in the Gulf. I don't want to go out there.

**Hester:** Did you ever go in the Gulf?

**Martinez:** Yeah. I don't like it, too rough. The inside fishing is better here. Well, (inaudible).

**Hester:** Could you tell me a little bit about how the fishermen establish territories? I mean, I can't imagine you can just go out anywhere and put your nets out. You must have some—

**Martinez:** Yeah. You can go anywhere.

**Hester:** Oh, you can? OK.

**Martinez:** You can go anywhere. The first come, first served. Now they respect you. My daddy used to always fish right in the mouth of the bayou, the Club Bayou, Bayou Leary(?), where it comes out into Lake Leary(?) on the right. Right in the mouth of the bayou, my daddy used to stick his pole and go straight to the beacon. And that's where he fished, right there.

**Hester:** How do you tell the difference between the nets?

**Martinez:** Well, that was a crab line he fished with. And the nets—they paint the cork different; do something different on the cork, like the red or green or blue or two colors or put a little crown on the top, cut a cork in half and nail it on top of the other cork, or something like that. But we didn't have much trouble with the nets like we do with the crab traps. The crab traps, you let them out. And by letting them out, they got thieves that go before you. They'll run your traps, take your crabs. And anybody that—

**Joy Martinez:** Sometimes take the whole trap.

**Martinez:** Sometimes they take the whole trap. You ain't got no trap. And then they got plenty of sports that do it. I ain't going to knock all the sports. There's some people that, they looking for recreation, and they looking for a place to have a good time. I ain't going to say they do it all the time, but they got bad ones in every group. Like I said, the fishermen steal from themselves. And then they got everybody else out there. If they want to eat a few crabs, "Oh, that ain't nothing. I'll go run ten or twelve." But if you go run ten or twelve, if you go running ten or twelve, that's all my profit. I got the same expense all the time, no matter what. If three or four people decide to take a few of my crabs, well, then that's all my profit. That's clear sailing. That's pure profit that they're taking because I'm going to pay my expenses no matter what.

**Hester:** Can you tell me a little bit about the expenses of crabbing? (0:57:46.7)

**Martinez:** Expense of crabbing is expensive now. Well, between that and the shrimp, the shrimp is going to be a hard thing this year, on account of the fuel price because if we don't get what we should get for the shrimp, we ain't going to be able to go out. And if you don't go out, you don't make nothing. I ain't going out right now, crabbing because they ain't making it nothing! If they make forty, fifty dollars a day, they make plenty. Then they got to wait two, three days before they do that. They ain't got enough crabs. The expense of the crabs, it all depends on how many crab pots you got—traps or whatever you want to call them. I use, if I be by myself, be healthy enough to be by myself, the most I use is from a hundred and fifty to two hundred. But right now I got two hundred and thirty because I take a deckhand with me. I had three hundred before, but I got to get more if I take a deckhand. But with three-hundred traps, you got about six boxes of bait, or seven. That's twenty dollars a box, so that's around a hundred and forty bucks. So then you got, with the gas down the road, if you buy it down there in Delacroix, (inaudible) grade, four dollars and ten cents a gallon. It takes, my outboard motor, I got a four-stroke; it don't burn much, maybe ten, twelve gallons. But you looking at four dollars a gallon here again, today. If it takes like fifteen gallons, fifteen gallons at four, that's sixty dollars, and you got a hundred and forty dollars of bait. That's two hundred dollars when you leave the wharf; that's without you eat. That's two hundred dollars that day is going to cost you, so you got to catch something. And you go out there, and right now the crabs is

fifty-five cents, straight (inaudible). So [if] you go out there, and you catch a thousand pounds of crabs, which is a very good catch, that's five hundred dollars worth of crabs at fifty-cents, a thousand pounds. All right? So you take two hundred dollars off that; that leaves you three hundred. Then you got a deckhand with you. You're either going to give him half the catch, because I'm an old man, and I just drive. I give him half the catch, which is bad because I can't hardly keep up with the other half. I got to buy all the equipment and the breakdowns and all of that stuff. I'm just doing something to help me buy my medicine. And anyway, so you don't stay with say, a hundred and fifty dollars apiece. But that hundred and fifty dollars, if you get there, if somebody cut off a trap that they run, and they don't see you, tried to cut the cork, it costs forty bucks a piece. That's forty dollars you lost there. And you can almost count it that every day you'll lose one.

**Hester:** Really?

**Martinez:** Yeah. You could almost count that every day you'll lose one. And you better not go put them on the outside where they dredge oysters or they trawling at night because they don't see the traps because the traps are there twenty-four hours. If they shrimping out there, them big boats, *pshew*, you may never see half of your traps again, in one night. So I don't go out there.

**Hester:** They just run them over?

**Martinez:** Oh, they run them—they take them! It goes in the net, and they drag them all over, and they somewhere else. And then the oyster boat, if he picks it up and it passes over that roller and that dredge, it smashes it like a pancake. You can't straighten it out and catch crabs with it again. It won't work. Once they bend a trap real bad, you can throw it away. [It's] no good. It [won't] work.

**Hester:** Can you tell us about the expense of fishing when you were young? To compare what it is today with what it was before? (1:02:08.3)

**Martinez:** (laughter) Well, when I used to fish crabs without the crab traps when I was young, with the crab line—you [not] going to believe this. I had a nine-horsepower, Briggs and Stratton engine. It's a air-cooled motor. I used to only use a gallon [of gas] a day. And it was because you're running dead idle, chug, chug, chug, chug, chug, like that. And you scoop the crabs, yeah? A gallon a day. By that time, it was middle of the day. And I used to fish in Lake Leary. And the crab line, I used to use fifteen pounds of line, a number sixty. And that was about a mile, maybe a little more than a mile, the line. And I used to get sixty pounds of bait, which cost six dollars. And the gasoline was thirty cents a gallon. And if my daddy got it, with the oil company, it was twenty cents a gallon that we used to get four cents back at the end of the year on each gallon. But you had to put that blue dye in it where—I don't

know; the farmers must have to do that, too, to get refund, that they not going on the road with it, that road tax, and stuff? You get that back.

**Hester:** I never heard that before.

**Martinez:** Yeah. Yeah, you get that back. Now, I didn't get a whole [lot of refund]! They got so many taxes on it now. But it's supposed to be off at the pump, but I don't think so. You could file it on your taxes. But they do it different. Before, you had to fill a paper every time you got the gas, and you send that to Baton Rouge, [Louisiana]. And they would send you a check for so many gallons, you'd get so much back.

**Hester:** Like a refund.

**Martinez:** Yeah, a refund. That's what it was, a refund check. But [the gas] was way cheaper. But I'll tell you; that loaf of bread was two for fifteen cents, and now it's three dollars. We living in a different world today than what we did then. And we're living in a greedy world, which you got to be greedy because if you're not greedy, you [not] going to have [anything]. She never did work on a job. I worked. I supported the family. But nobody can do that now. You got to have two people working; then you catch up. Things [are not] better now. [Some people think times are better.] You got more modern conveniences. [There's] air-conditioning for when it's hot, and you got central heat when it's cold. You never had all that before. We never had that. You got the modern living. You got cars. We never even had a car, her and I. We used to catch a bus. She had two kids. She used to catch a bus and go to Canal Street to buy clothes, hanging on with one in the arm, and one on toe. It's just a different world.

**Hester:** What about the price that you got for the product between now and then?  
(1:05:14.5)

**Martinez:** Never got much for it, but everything else was cheap, like I'm telling you. [There was] Sunbeam Bread at one time. It was a little small loaf; you get two for fifteen [cent]. The ham was thirty cents a pound for luncheon meat. Now, it's four or five dollars, seven or eight dollars for good ham. (A short portion of the interview has not been transcribed at the request of the interviewee.) They only had like Southern Shell across the river; [it] was the factory. They never had that out-of-state shipping. That's what I'm telling you. They never did have [anything] good here for the fishermen. This is the best state for fishing. They never had no flash-freeze to freeze the fish and distribute the fish to all over the country. Never did have that here. They still don't have that here. So it's bad for the fishermen! You can't sell your product! The shrimp factories used to buy crabs, and they'd get these pickers. But when shrimp season was coming around, they would say, "The boiler broke. The crabs went down." They didn't want to buy the crabs no more because they wanted

to get the shrimp. You see? So everybody would quit fishing crabs and go shrimping. And then the season would end. And then you'd go crabbing again, in between seasons, because you got July. July, it closed for six weeks, and most of the time it was like the third Monday in August that the fall shrimp season opened. So they say the crabs is good; they can sell the crabs. But then right about a week or so before the season would open, the boiler burnt again. (laughter) Yeah. Yeah, then the guy shedding crabs, where we used to sell crabs, they used to give us a dollar a dozen for the crabs that are going to shed. And right before the trawl season because he was going trawling, too, he'd start taking the crabs three-for-two and two-for-one. They'd force you to go trawling. (laughter)

**Hester:** So they regulated? (laughter)

**Martinez:** They regulated everything! The shrimp factories regulated even the day when the season was going to open (1:07:51.5) in the May season. (A short portion of the interview has not been transcribed at the request of the interviewee.) And the Wildlife and Fishery did what [the factory said].

**Hester:** I understand.

**Martinez:** And that's the way it still is. Like right now, the sportsman's organizations, (1:08:10.5) they control the Wildlife and Fishery. So the Wildlife and Fishery listen to them before they listen to us because they're the ones putting the money. They got us buying a license for everything. We got a commercial fishing license. Then we buy a shrimper's license, a trawl license. Then we got to buy a shrimp gear fee license that they put on us. [That] was supposed to be for one-time deal only. That's about ten years now. And then about two or three years ago, we buy the crab trap license. Then we buy a crab trap gear fee license. Yeah. Got to have all that! And it was supposed to be a one-time deal only.

**Joy Martinez:** And your skimmer license.

**Martinez:** Then the skimmer license. That's separate from the trawl, now. (A short portion of the interview has not been transcribed at the request of the interviewee.) Now we got a vessel license. That's more money, more money, more money. [We have to reregister the boat every three years.]

**Hester:** Sounds pretty expensive.

**Martinez:** It really [isn't] a whole lot of money, but it's a pain in the neck. They ought to give us [a] commercial fishing license. Let me pay two hundred dollars for it, and I could do what the hell I want. And they ain't got all this other bull because if you lose one of them, it's a three-, four-hundred-dollar fine! They want to hook you.



**Hester:** Sounds like it would be more efficient, too, if you just had the one.

**Martinez:** Had just the one.

**Hester:** You wouldn't have all the people you have to go through.

**Martinez:** Give me that one license. Let me go fish shrimp or crabs or fish or whatever I want to do. I'm paying a commercial license to sell my catch. I'm telling you; you got to have all them license! They rough. And you better have them on the boat, too. Don't leave them by your house! I got them on the boat and ready.

**Hester:** So you have to carry all these licenses every time you go out?

**Martinez:** Oh, yeah. Oh, yeah.

**Hester:** We were talking about laws and restrictions, and we talked about the TEDs, but we didn't go any further than that. Were there any laws and restrictions, regulations, after the TEDs that you can tell us about?

**Martinez:** No, just that they took all the nets away from us, all those nets to catch finfish; we can't do none of that. And for a while—I don't know if we still can do this—because when you shrimp, you catching other species. You catch some good-eating fish. And I don't know if we allowed to keep any of that redfish and stuff like that.

**Joy Martinez:** You were for a while, before it changed.

**Martinez:** We wasn't allowed to keep any for a while. Now, I don't know if it's changed or what. They sent a book to read. And I don't like to read no more. I used to love to read, but I don't like to read no more.

**Hester:** Well, right now you're just doing the crabbing anyway, right?

**Martinez:** I'm crabbing now, till in May. I don't know when they going to open [the shrimp season]. But I don't have no whole lot of hope because they got that siphon running too much. And when you pass back that, you go through Violet, when you go over that canal, there where they got them boats? Look in there and see how that freshwater's coming from the river. That's a siphon they got [opened]. A long time ago when I was a kid, they used to have a bridge there, that was a locks. That used to go into the river. They had a set of locks that closed there to keep the river out, and they opened it when they want. But now that they opened that siphon, they think they're going to restore [the wetlands]. In fact, they're just hurting the people. They're hurting the state because [we're not] going to catch those [brown shrimp].



**Joy Martinez:** And what about all that grass and stuff?

**Martinez:** And then that grass that they [planted]. You see, they [planted] the grass. (1:12:28.1) They think that the siphon is putting the grass. But then we know that they're planting it. And by planting grass, they make it harder for us to fish, *real* hard for us to fish. I worked like a slave at one time. They had so much grass getting on the jugs and the traps. You had to stay there five minutes, cutting with a knife and pulling grass before you get to your crab pot. And then you couldn't—(A portion of the interview has not been transcribed at the request of the interviewee.) Grass, big miles of grass on it, and we have to work through all of that in that heat.

**Hester:** Yeah.

**Martinez:** And they got me worn out, pretty much.

**Hester:** What kind of grass is it?

**Martinez:** I can't even name it.

**Hester:** It's not anything like what's here?

**Martinez:** No, no, no. Before a long time ago here, we had what we used to call a gray duck grass.

**Hester:** Say it again?

**Martinez:** Gray duck.

**Hester:** Gray duck?

**Martinez:** Grass. It's green, and actually it helps the shrimp. The shrimp get in there and stop the fish from eating them, and the baby crabs get in there. But then the heat during the summer rots this grass. Then the grass disappears. And then it's all clean, and it's all right. But this grass here? [This grass that was planted don't die.] You can't trawl all over because the whole bottoms of all the lakes are full of it. You can't work the lakes. (A large portion of the interview has not been transcribed at the request of the interviewee.)

**Unknown Voice:** And the lakes, you look at a lake, which you think it's mud under there, and it's just grass at the top.

**Martinez:** Oh, they got grass that comes from the bottom and that comes to the top of the water some of it, like little vines. And I read a thing from California; they

called it a Godzilla grass. You see, if you cut it, it grows on both ends. It keeps a growing. You can't get rid of it! And Katrina got rid of it all. And we had couple of good years after Katrina. We could work peacefully without no grass. And they planted it back. I knew they were going to do it. The state done that.

**Joy Martinez:** They think it's helping the land, but—

**Martinez:** They think it helping the land! They fly from plane and say, "Oh, look at what the freshwater built back!" You better not jump, because your hat is going to float. I guarantee you; you going down.

**Hester:** The grass is just floating on top of the water?

**Martinez:** The grass is just floating on top of the water. The grass is on top the water, and they think it's land. They tell everybody, "Look at the land! Look at the land!" But there [is] no land.

**Hester:** Do they ever talk to the fishermen and say, you know—

**Martinez:** They come and talk to us, and they don't write nothing that we say. They turn everything upside-down. They had some people that came and talked to me by the wharf one time; I [ran] them away. I said, "Get the hell out of here. I don't want to talk to you." And he said, "No, man. I want to ask you." I said, "I ain't answering your questions. Get the hell out of here because whatever I tell you, you're going to turn it against me." I said, "Get out. I don't want to talk to you." And I [ran] them out.

**Hester:** And these are people from what, the Wildlife and Fisheries or something?

**Martinez:** I don't know where they're from, but I didn't want to talk. It happened two, three times. I put them off my land. They wasn't going to say what I said. They come and ask us questions; then they turn it around. I said, "I seen it on TV. You never put nothing of what I said, or what I'm going to tell you. Get out of here."

**Hester:** We talked a little bit over the course of the interview about the changes here, but I just want to see if we can get all of the pieces together and maybe an answer to one question. Over the course of your career—and you've had a long, fruitful, and good career here in St. Bernard Parish—could you describe the changes that you've seen over the course? I mean, is it possible to say, "This is how the wetlands have changed," or, "This is how the industry has changed"?

**Martinez:** The wetlands changed. (1:17:20.3) Like I said before, the hurricanes, the rats and nutrias, all of that contributed to eating it all up and disappearing. Between the nutrias eating it, and the rats eating it, and the hurricane come and taking it, and

then the fast-moving current of the water, the MR GO causing the tide to ebb and flow faster, all of that contributed to the erosion of the wetlands. And the fishing, I seen the price of shrimp go down months before Katrina. It had already—something was happening. I don't know what. I can't answer that one. But the shrimp was already losing the price. Our shrimp was losing the price big-time. I got three dollars and sixty cents for shrimp in 1972, for shrimp, counting sixteen/twenties. You can't get two dollars today. In 1972, I had a gasoline engine in my boat. I had a 454 Chevrolet. That was before they made the diesel small enough for us with the little boats because diesels was a big, bulky engine, big, lot of iron, and heavy, and we wouldn't put them in Lafitte skiffs. We wanted smaller motors. So finally, the senators and [manufacturers] got together, and they got these people to make these smaller engines. So now we got diesels. (A short portion of the interview has not been transcribed at the request of the interviewee.)

**Hester:** Well, you were talking about the price of shrimp, price of—

**Martinez:** Oh, the price of the shrimp. The crabs, the price of the crabs, is less now than what they was last year, and the year before, and the year before. And the shrimp is worse and worse, the prices of it. It seems like the middle people because by the time you get your sandwich, you're going to pay ten dollars for your sandwich. Now, I don't know. (laughter) I told it to the restaurant. I said, "Boy, that bread must be high because the shrimp is so cheap." I said, "That bread is expensive. It might be the tomatoes on." (laughter) Because you pay ten dollars for a po-boy, and what you got in there? A half a pound of shrimp? That's only worth a dollar. And you paid ten dollars for the sandwich. Somebody's making the money. I'm telling you; the shrimp in 1972—that's the first time I went to Spain. I had the books. I used to have books at my house that I used to keep track of everything I caught, where I caught it, how much it was worth. And that hurricane took everything. But anyway, in 1972, I got three sixty for sixteen/twenty count shrimp. And today, if you got a few? They're not even worth a dollar and a half. If you catch a cup? You can't even get a dollar and a half at the wharf down there. (A short portion of the interview has not been transcribed at the request of the interviewee.) I fill my freezer every year. That's the cheapest thing we got to eat! Do you realize that potted meat is more expensive than shrimp? Did you realize that?

**Hester:** No. I didn't.

**Martinez:** Yeah. Potted meat is fifty cents a can. You got one ounce of meat. That's all you got.

**Hester:** It's amazing when you think about it. That is amazing.

**Martinez:** You got sixteen ounces in a pound. So potted meat is worth eight dollars a pound. (laughter)

**Hester:** Well, I'm going to ask you this. Since you have so much shrimp in your freezer, what is your—well, first of all, I guess I should say, what is your favorite seafood, how do you fix it? What is your favorite seafood dish? (1:21:24.5)

**Martinez:** Well, if my nephew would've come a little bit earlier, you would've got some of the dish because he brought me a redfish, and he brought me two drums. And I didn't clean them because I didn't want to get stinky with fishes. I knew you was coming.

**Joy Martinez:** His favorite is fish. He could eat fried fish every, every day.

**Martinez:** I love fish!

**Hester:** Oh, that's great.

**Martinez:** Yeah, fresh fish. Not in the freezer, fresh. I don't usually put it in the freezer.

**Hester:** How would you fix your fish? Fried, then—

**Martinez:** She fries it with cornmeal, sometimes fish-fry, sometimes nothing. You take a little olive oil and put it in a pan, and you put a layer of onions, some green onions, and you put the fish on top with salt and pepper; that's all. And you smother it down, and then you flip it one time. And then you get you a can of pork and beans.

**Joy Martinez:** (laughter) He loves pork and beans!

**Hester:** (inaudible) does, too.

**Martinez:** And that's the best eating. Not even the president eat that good, with fresh fish like I got in that icebox. I guess not! And the shrimp, with fish you could eat it all kind of ways. You could bake it. We got a little bit of the juice and potatoes in the icebox now, from the other day that she baked a redfish. And I like it like that. I like it fried, in [a] fish soup. That's what she was going to make, fish soup. It's like a cubillon(?) but it [is not] as thick of a gravy, with rice and potatoes.

**Joy Martinez:** And (inaudible) in it.

**Martinez:** And (inaudible) and we call it fish soup.

**Joy Martinez:** I call it fish soup because it's drippy. I'm a soupy person. I like soup.

**Martinez:** And the shrimp, I like it sometimes smothered with green onions, just plain, just salt and pepper, the small ones. The big ones, I like a little pannéed. Sometimes I like to fry them whole with the peelings and the head and everything on it. And then you wait to leave the shell with olive oil, salt and pepper. That's it. And she makes—

**Joy Martinez:** —gumbo.

**Martinez:** Gumbo with shrimp, and she makes shrimp and spaghettis. Shrimp and spaghettis are good. And oysters and spaghettis, too, it's good.

**Hester:** You're making me hungry! (laughter) That's great.

**Martinez:** Shrimp is good almost any kind of way, usually. It's kind of hard to ruin it.

**Joy Martinez:** We cook them all kinds of ways.

**Martinez:** And the crabs—

**Joy Martinez:** Omelets, with eggs.

**Martinez:** Yeah, shrimp in a omelet, with eggs! Ooh, that's delicious. And the crabs, softshell crab, plain fried, salt and pepper, that's it. And sometimes she puts them in the gumbo when I get plenty. When we get tired of the eating them, make a gumbo with softshell crabs. And the fish was, like I said, any kind of way you fix the fish. The best fish you got to eat is the one that you got. It don't make no difference what kind it is. And the oysters? I eat the majority of oysters raw. If they're salty a little bit, then I doctor them up. If they ain't—

**Joy Martinez:** I got a recipe [from] Spain.

**Martinez:** You can give her a taste of it. They got a little bit in there, yeah? Just put it in the microwave and give her little taste to see if she like it. No, just to see if you like it.

**Hester:** I got to tell you that we, my husband and I, before we came here, went to Charlie's Diner and had a wonderful meal. So we're a bit full here, but that's tempting.

**Martinez:** That don't compare to what they got there; I can tell you that. Ain't nothing you could eat by Charlie's as good as that fish!

**Joy Martinez:** It's a baked fish, like it's normally baked over here. Over here, most people put tomato gravy and stuff in it. This doesn't have that in it. It's just got olive oil and butter and bay leaf and oregano and basil, and all that in it.

**Hester:** And that's the way they do it in Spain?

**Joy Martinez:** Yeah, that's where he got it. When they went that way, that's the way the aunt [cooked it].

**Martinez:** My cousin, my first cousin.

**Joy Martinez:** And you put potatoes in it. And you put that saffron in it, to give it the color.

**Hester:** You stayed with family when you went to Spain.

**Martinez:** Yeah.

**Hester:** So you really got to see some of the cooking that they were doing up there.

**Martinez:** I [stayed] there; I went three times.

**Joy Martinez:** He's been three times.

**Hester:** Oh, really?

**Martinez:** I [stayed] a month each time. I went in [19]72, in [19]95, and in [20]06. That's the last time I went.

**Hester:** Well so, do you see a lot of similarities in the way that they had the cooking here?

**Martinez:** Yeah. It's the same really, yeah. They got better cooking oil than we got. The olive oil they use is way better than the one you buy here. I think they keep the good stuff for [themselves]. It got Spain written on it, but that ain't what they using. They keep the good—they got tomatoes, too, delicious!

**Joy Martinez:** They're delicious, their tomatoes!

**Martinez:** Their tomatoes are better than our Creole.

**Hester:** Did you speak with any fishermen in Spain?

**Martinez:** Oh, I went!

**Hester:** You went fishing in Spain. (1:27:01.3)

**Martinez:** Yeah.

**Hester:** With the commercial fishermen over there?

**Martinez:** Yeah.

**Hester:** Can you tell us about that?

**Martinez:** Well, I went. Well, I got some cousins that trawl with a shrimp trawl, too. But this cousin here, he was catching shrimp like in a crab trap, like a shrimp trap. And I went with them. They called them nassa(?). And they only got one hole for the shrimp to get in. And we never caught a whole lot, but it was something. And they pick them all up, and then they put them all back out in the same day. But it was nice, deep water, very deep. It ain't like here. Right off the bank, like from here to the front, you looking at three, four hundred feet deep. And then when you go a little further, it gets to the thousand foot. We went in pretty deep [water].

**Hester:** Now, which waters were you in then?

**Martinez:** The Mediterranean. It was nice, blue, blue water. And we caught a couple of shrimp, and a couple of fish.

**Joy Martinez:** It's different over there, too! They have a market.

**Martinez:** Yeah, they auction.

**Joy Martinez:** And they auction all their [seafood].

**Martinez:** It ain't like here. They go in this—it ought to be like that here. They won't have none of these deals like we got here. We got the wharf deals. But over there, they got this big shed. Oh, it must be a hundred feet. And all the fishermen bring their seafood in that shed. And at five o' clock in the evening, the auctioneer comes. And all the people that want—the highest bidder get your seafood. And over here, you're stuck with the dealer. And if the three [dealers] get together down here, and they say, "We're only going to pay this. We could get them shrimp or those crab cheap," they'll do it! But I guess they do that, too, but it looks better, anyway. They get that auctioneer; they're making you think you're getting real good because (mimics auctioneer), and they sell them. And they get more money for their shrimp than what we get. The last time I was there—no, the second to last time. I think it was when [we] went in [19]95. They was getting, like, about forty-six, forty-seven dollars a pound for their shrimp. But they don't catch as much as us. They don't

catch as much as we catch. And I think it dried up on them. They claim the Mediterranean dried up, and they ain't got nothing.

**Hester:** So are they going to other waters, or are they just—

**Martinez:** They overfished.

**Hester:** Are they fishing somewhere else now?

**Martinez:** I don't know what they're doing. Spain's passing it pretty bad right now. But I think that—you see, they got it a little worse than us because [if] they go a little bit too far out, they're in some other country's waters. They start getting in them African waters, and then it's just once you're there—

**Hester:** Yeah. What'll happen? Did they tell you?

**Martinez:** They got to run if they go too far! (laughter)

**Hester:** Oh, that's not good. (laughter)

**Martinez:** No. No. We fortunate here. Look like we control the whole Gulf of Mexico. And we control two hundred miles out. They go two hundred miles out, in some places they in Africa. (laughter)

**Hester:** Oh, my goodness. Well, this has been a very interesting interview. Thank you so much. And before I turn off the tape recorder, I'm going to open it up to you. You're making your record, and like I said before we started, it's going to be archived at the Oral History Center [at The University of Southern Mississippi] and also with NOAA [National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration]. And so if there's some statement, or something you'd like to talk about or describe, or something that I've just overlooked in my questions, it's open to you.

**Martinez:** I don't think I said nothing wrong about nobody. (laughter) Huh? I didn't hit Wildlife and Fisheries like I usually hit them. (laughter)

**Hester:** Well, it's still open, so if you want to—(laughter)

**Martinez:** No. I don't want to hit them too hard. They might get tired, and they might treat me bad out there.

**Hester:** I'm just teasing about that. But maybe you might want to just talk about the future of fishing, the commercial fishing.



**Martinez:** I hope they try to help us out, that they keep everything honest and straight. You know, that's the whole trouble with most of the country and the world. There's no more honesty left. If people stay honest, then you ain't got to worry about nothing. It's true.

**Hester:** I think that's good final words. Do you have anything you would like to say, Ms. Martinez?

**Joy Martinez:** No.

**Hester:** Well, thank you so much. I really appreciate it. And I'll go ahead and turn the tape recorder off now.

(end of interview)