

Elizabeth Nozicka Pennisi: My name is Elizabeth Nozicka, and I come from a fishing family out of Monterey.

Male Speaker: What I am curious about is that your husband was talking about the boat that your family was using, probably around the same time he was born or even before he was born. I do not think he is that old.

ENP: Yes, I guess before he was born.

MS: I am just trying to be polite here. [laughter]

MS: Did he come into fishing through you? He met you. Because you have this fishing family, he got involved, or did he get involved with your family fishing and meet you that way?

ENP: Yes. My husband came from the Czech Republic. He and his brother were in (Florida?), and his brother went home. He traveled across the country by himself first, so he could see the country. Then he was going to go to Florida and go home, but he actually came to Monterey and met my father. So, he was able to work. So, he worked for my father. He was trying to think he was just going to get a job to get more money to go back to Florida and leave. He ended up being introduced to fishing that way, and then I met him. We really didn't get together until several years later, a year and a half later.

MS: Did your family do trawling? Is that what the type of fishing that they did?

ENP: It is. We still do, yes. My grandfather came from Sicily and he fished all over the world. He was in Pittsburgh when sardines became very popular, and people were coming down this direction. He came down this direction as well. He was by himself. My grandmother was in Sicily still with the children. That's what a lot of the fishermen did back then. They sent the money home. Then during the war, he was here. My grandmother was there with my father and his two older sisters. There's two younger sisters who were born here. So, there was a separation there. My grandfather actually had to become a carpenter because he was put in one of the concentration camps that they have for the Italians. He wasn't allowed to go four blocks to the water. He had to work on land somewhere. So, him and his partner never boat, and they couldn't even go down to the bay. They had to actually have friends go down there and check on it and make sure it was okay.

Female Speaker: I am just curious about your family's background. How was it that Sicily seemed to have fishermen all over the world? I noticed when I went back east just a couple of weeks ago, (Gloucester?), which is the longest working harbor are owned by Sicilians, and Boston also. I even heard from all of the people over here, from Sydney, Australia says a lot of them are from Sicily. So, how was that tradition?

ENP: I think Sicily is an island. If you're not from England where they have a lot of farming, everyone is from the water. That's what they do for a living. The people near the ocean there just be able to go fishing. People we know, there's family we have in Australia and there's people we know that are in the East Coast, too. We have family there. Gloucester actually is

amazing because they've actually traveled, they're lost at sea. They have [inaudible].

FS: Ten thousand names.

ENP: Ten thousand names of fishermen lost at sea. I have some very good friends there. Actually, I have a brother that bought a boat in Boston, brought it all the way back to Monterey. This was many years ago now. But it's an amazing town as well, fishing town. Although, I'm told by my friends there now, it's not the same as it was before either. I think there's a lot of, on some aspects, over regulations on the fishermen, and that is actually contributed to the demise of the fishermen. Like here on the West Coast, we always hear about overfishing, but we really have no overfishing on the West Coast here. So, when people say overfishing, it starts that word around – I always get really cautious when they say, "Show me where, what are you talking about" because people a lot of people start to just think it's everywhere, but it's not. I think that the organizations that do talk about it really need to educate people better and be more specific.

FS: Now, I would like to hear about a monument for the lost.

ENP: The lost at sea, yes.

FS: The lost at sea. I did see one at Gloucester.

ENP: Yes.

FS1: I see one in Petersburg, Alaska.

ENP: Yes.

FS1: I think that is really cool. It looks really good. Someday, we'll see that, too.

ENP: Yes.

FS1: That really touches the heart. So, I think that would be nice one here, too.

ENP: Thank you. They have one in San Francisco as a result. My brother's name is on the one in [inaudible] Bay because he did fish out of there a lot. They've kind of adopted him. So, they put his name on there. We believe he was hit by a ship. He was on his way in from fishing. He wasn't out fishing. He was on the fishing lanes, the shipping lanes to come in. So, we know that his gear was up and everything was up at the speed he was going because they have satellite tracking devices on the boats. So, the speed he was going and the direction he was going to where his location was, he was on his way in. So, San Francisco actually put his name on there for memorial as well because he was actually killed in San Francisco. He was my oldest brother. I actually have six brothers and I have one sister. My mother is not Sicilian. My mother is Irish, French, and American Indian.

FS: Has most of your family joined in on the family business? Being a woman yourself, have you found that there are a lot of women in the business as well?

ENP: There are quite a few women in fishing. One of them in Monterey is (Jenny Harley?). She is an amazing person. I think she's one of the nicest people on the planet, actually. She's a great fisherman. I know that she partakes in the (fishermen?) classrooms. I'm sorry, what was your first question?

FS2: How much is your family still in the fishing business?

ENP: Well, my brother is still – one of them right now that is still fishing. Several of them have become contractors over the last two years. My father had a hardware store that actually, several years ago when the regulations hit very hard, ended up having to be closed. He has a fish market, still my father does. He has his boat. I have several brothers that have boats. So, although some do contracting, they still have their boats and they still fish. I have actually, right now, one brother and two nephews and a cousin that are in Bristol Bay fishing salmon. My grandfather did that. My father did not do that. But my brothers, when they were teenagers, they went up to Bristol Bay and fished salmon. So, our family has done that for many, many years.

MS: You do not fish?

ENP: I've been out fishing, but no, not for living. I worked for my father and his company growing up. So, I have experience on different levels of what fishermen do. Actually, my brothers even fish. They fish out of Washington. So, I got to do a trip up there with them too. That was fun. They even fish out of Alaska, not just Bristol Bay. They do fish by Dutch Harbor, and they did joint ventures in the nineties. So, there's a lot of joint venturing. They had actually, one of their boats, sink up there. A lot of times with the sailboats and the weather conditions will cause the sail to split, and that's what happened. I had two brothers and two crew members they have on the boat, so thank God, everyone was rescued and saved in that one. Our family kind of had a lot of experience out there.

MS: What do you think about when your husband goes out fishing?

ENP: We'll say I'll try not to think about it when he goes fishing. I pray for husband constantly. We're very strong people of faith and just trust God to bring him home back safely. That's just really all you could do because you could imagine all sorts of things and not really healthy or really proactive. So, I try just to move forward.

FS: Do you have children in the field?

ENP: Well, my children right now, they're upstairs and helping out destroying the place before – [laughter]

FS: Would you like them to go in, too?

ENP: I would. It's been part of my family history. I have my daughter and my two sons. I hope that when they're teenagers that they'll be able to go fishing with my husband and get to experience what's out there. It's a beautiful way to make a living. It's a beautiful heritage to

have. Fishing really is embedded in most families' heritages. When you go to the wharf, you see the many different generations that are fishing and still fishing. The sad part about today is, there's not a whole lot of them that have their children fishing, and it's not being carried on. A lot of fishing have been discouraged and have just decided they don't want to see their kids go through what they have to go through. So, that's unfortunate in my opinion.

FS: Do you see any resolution with that? Is anything being done to get more people into the fishing business or –

ENP: Well, we are currently trying to get some of the regulations that are very – there are over regulations or areas were overregulated to ease up. This way, fishing can be opened more to other generations and that they'll have some hope with it too. We're hoping that it will turn around because the ocean has a whole fish out there. Right now, the water temperature has been off. So, I know the squid fishermen haven't caught too much squid, but the water temperature has warmed up a little bit. So, it's starting to come to the bay. So, last year, we had a lot of sea bass with that. So, I'm hoping (that all of that can resume?). The water temperature plays a really big part on every – if you go to our website, which if you'll open a flyer on our own website, there's – we actually have a YouTube website, which if you go to youtube/poacf, you could see one of our good friends, Dr. Richard Perez. He's a retired national marine fisheries biologist. He actually has a presentation on there and he talks about the water temperature. If I remember correctly, he got water temperatures all the way back to eighties something and how it coincided with the different fisheries. Even the sardines because the sardines, they said was overfished, and they weren't overfished. They actually went to forty to sixty-year cycle. So, you can see how the water temperature affected all of that as well. So, it's a great presentation.

FS: What would you say is one of the biggest challenges to the fisheries that your family is involved in?

ENP: The biggest challenges, I would say our biggest challenge is regulations. Even some of the marine protected areas want to close more areas, which doesn't make sense when you have such an abundance of fish and no overfishing here. Our problem is really, we have a great stronghold of environmental groups in the area that would like to just take fishing out altogether. They have a lot of power. They have a lot of money and they got more time than the fishermen. The fisherman has to go fishing. It's their job. So, they're out there constantly trying to badmouth the fishermen and just try to create laws that will put us out.

FS: What positives has your family seen in terms of regulations that have been developed? I mean, I am sure after being in the fishing for so long, there are certain positives that have come along with some other regulations.

ENP: Well, there are positives. I mean, we've had a lot of factory trawlers in the eighties, off of our coast. They lived from all sorts of different countries. They just caught a lot of everything. So, the fact that they have stopped that from happening, that's a good thing. Anything positive is wonderful, and that is something that was positive.

FS: Do you think there should be any more regulations put on the people who worked on the

boat themselves like, say, how pilots have to – they go in flight certain amount of hours or something like that to make fishing a safer environment, or do you think that the fishermen are doing whatever they can and looking up for themselves? Or do you think the outside enforcement should be put on?

ENP: Well, outside enforcement already is put on. In our fisheries, we have a national marine fisheries. They have an observer that goes on on every trip with our fishermen. So, not only are we watched with the satellite, we have a guy on board who watches them fish. He takes data of everything that they catch and he records it. When they unload it, he has to watch them and load it and write down all the weights and kind of twice looking at everything. So, we are very much watched. So, as far as regulations for hours and so forth like pilots, I don't think that's necessary. Yes. The skippers lie down and take rest when they can. If they don't have a (great crew?), they always try to have somebody who is experienced, so they can take the wheel for a few hours so the skipper can lie down. That's really a necessity on almost any boat.

MS: So, you actually have somebody on board when you go out that is an observer?

ENP: Yes. An observer goes out on every trip and he or she collects the data. They watch what comes up and they watch what they unload. I mean, like I said, they don't just watch them sort the fish, but they also stand on the deck and – the dock and watch them unload the fish.

MS: Every boat has an observer?

ENP: Right now, trawlers do. I know some of the pot fishermen do. Not every fishery right now has an observer, but they're probably heading in that direction. In Canada, that they have some boats that actually have cameras on their boat that they have to lift fish up to show the cameras what they have. They might actually end up going in that direction in our fishery as well. We're just kind of waiting to see what they decide.

FS: Where does the salary of the observer come from? Is that something that you know?

ENP: That is something the fishermen have to pay for.

FS: It is? Wow.

ENP: It's like \$350 a day. So, if you go fishing and you catch nothing, you still have to pay the observer. Then my parents have fish market. So, several years ago, there was a buyback program where whoever stayed in the fishing industry had to pay for all those who decided to opt out. So, there's a five percent that my parents have to pay for all the fish they catch towards that, and then they pay for the observer. So, it just really takes little bites out of what you're making. Anyway, that's why husband was saying it's very difficult. A lot of people will come out of fishing because they've just been so frustrated with the regulations and the ridiculousness of everything, and even the paperwork. The paperwork is extremely difficult. It's complicated. It's scary because if you do something wrong – we know a guy who went to jail for thirty pounds of fish. That was a mistake that he corrected. When he wrote the note and sent it in, he got swarmed like a drug lab by SWAT teams. He lost his company and he went to jail for, I think,

six months or something like that. So, even for my parents, they don't own a whole lot of boats. They just (owned?) their boat, and they're trying to keep their paperwork (all lined and while – their docks are lined?), I guess you can say. That's very difficult for them because the paperwork is very, very difficult to understand. They call for help and sometimes you don't get the right person, or they bring you to five different people. It's been very challenging. My father as well as – he is in age and he has some health issues. We're just considering getting rid of everything, which would be very sad for our family, but completely understandable at the same time.

FS: Do you have a favorite store that your father goes on his fishing days?

ENP: Oh, gosh. My dad is a great storyteller, so there's a lot of great stores. [laughter]

ENP: I can show you one. Actually, I brought this. We bring this for the kids because one of the biggest question is, the kids always says is, if they caught a shark and if they're really little, they actually can catch mermaids. [laughter]

ENP: So, it's kind of fun. But my father, one time, caught a shark. He caught a huge basking shark and he's actually in the (Sea Monster?) before that. My dad, at one point, had three boats. The (Diana?) that he caught this on was one of the top (first sailors?) in Monterey before my father – and she actually bought – it was bought and brought down to San Pedro. My father bought her and brought her back to Monterey, converted her into a trawler. So, my father is actually here. He caught this huge basking shark. As kids, after we got out of school, my father came in, as our cousins, our aunts, our uncles, everybody we knew was on the boat and we went out and put the shark back on the ocean. It was a lot of fun and it was a fun memory. The kids like to see this when we show it to them. (It's impressive?) with the shark.

MS: There are two pictures?

ENP: Yes, this is the one. Not that one. This one, yes. That's a different situation. This is my dad and these are my two brothers when they were – my older brothers when they were younger. I had another brother, but he got scared of a shark, moved his tail and he took off running. [laughter]

ENP: That's kind of funny. The kids like to hear that.

FS: Does your family fish anywhere else besides Monterey?

ENP: Well, I have my brother in Alaska right now, fishing. I do have one brother in Washington, fishing. He's actually a contractor. He's one of the ones that was a contractor and the construction has slowed down and he went up to Washington. He does have a boat in Monterey, but he wants to start fishery up there for the season. My family in Monterey, they fish. Not everyone trawls [inaudible]. A couple of my older brothers had their trawl boats, but they have smaller boats that they've been focusing on.

FS: Do you find the paperwork more expensive in California or it is just the same everywhere?

ENP: Well, we don't have to really deal with the paperwork in the other states because they're just employees. My brother actually owns his boat in Alaska, but he doesn't have to hassle with all of that because he's not in the fish market. But my parents here, being in the fish market and a boat owner have to deal with paperwork.

FS: There must be some really joyous times in the fishing industry as well, like when there is a really big catch. Can you describe what it feels like when your husband or one of your family members comes home and they are really pleased with the day's outcome?

ENP: Oh, you just get happy for anybody when they get to make money especially after they – because this can be feast or famine. My brother's right now, he's fishing salmon. A couple of my brothers have salmon in the bay. They're doing really well, and I'm happy for them. When my husband does a good trip, I get really excited because that means I get to pay our bills. Yes. When they're catching squid – it's just nice. You go to the wharf and – like last year, squid was in the bay, and you just had boats from all over the place. We had those Morgan Washington. We had boats everywhere. The more fish, it's alive, like it's supposed to be. People are down there and people are happy because fishermen are actually very generous, and they do. People come and they'll give you buckets of squid. People bring their buckets down and they'll take it home and you think they have gold in that bucket. People take the fish home and they're so happy to have it. It really is a fun place to get to have gotten to grow up in the fishing industry and the wharf.

FS: So, what happens if you have a bad year? Do you need to go to and get a loan, or what do you do to survive?

ENP: Yes. My father has had several bad years. He's had to get several loans and then he had a boat end up in [inaudible] and stuff. Everybody has that kind of situation or story. So, you do. If you're going to survive, you usually have to find some funding somehow. It's depending on how bad your year is, too. They had El Niño's that came in years and years ago. My dad had, not just his fish market and his boats, but he had a freezer plant. He's eighty-two, they came in and all the squid was gone for a very long time. The boats all went down south, so they could fish down there. But if you're a packing plant, you really had a situation. Those are my employees. Here's my brother-in-law.

FS: Perfect.

MS: I am a teacher of science in one of the topics that is hot, and that subject is global warming, life changing. I am curious as a member of the fishing community. Have you been observing a trend in the way the oceans are behaving or the way the fishes that is changing and progressing your year after year that would indicate that?

ENP: Dr. Perez, as I said, if you go toward the youtube/poacf page, you can see his presentation and he could answer that a lot better than I could because he really explains it better. He has gone back to a lot of temperature change, and they said he found some dates back in the eighties something. He kind of brought it all kind of circle. It's a really great presentation to see. That's why I don't want to mess up and say something long because I'm tired right now. But if you see

his presentation, you'll get more accurate data.

MS: Has your family been surprised that the migrations of the albacore and salmon seemed to be coming a lot closer to shore in the last few years.

ENP: Well, salmon wasn't around for a few years. Everybody thought they were overfished, and they really weren't. That was a water issue. They had a lot of problems with some of the rivers and the lakes. If the water in the river isn't a certain level, then their eggs cannot incubate correctly. So, when the water was being overused, they didn't have the salmon season for years because of that. So, the effects on fishing have been a lot more than just the ocean itself. So, the salmon has always come to the bay. Monterey Bay is amazing because it is such a huge bay. You can get whales right there by the wharf and they've scratched their backs on the pilings. I mean, you get everything that comes right in because there's such a depth there. You've got the canyon. You've got the squid there. You've got the salmon there. I think this last year, we have a lot of sea bass there. It came in with the squid. They had a giant squid last year, too, which was interesting.

FS: So, families that are in fishing, it is typical or is there a typical number of – do they usually have one boat that they primarily go out on or do they try to have a bigger fleet? Today and with the current economics and everything like that, do you see most families have one fishing boat or –

ENP: Most families do and they'll have – two families have a couple of boats and some of them will have one boat. It depends on who in the family is still fishing. In our case, we have the three boats and my father was actually in the process of selling the Diana when she was hit by a ship. She just was incapacitated after that, so she had to be demolished. My father had a smaller boat that actually – the person who was going to purchase that as well didn't go through in that boat. It was neglected, so it ended up being demolished also. My father still has his father's boat, and that's what our family fishes on. Honestly, it's hard to find [inaudible] a crew as well, either skippers or boats. If you come up on one fishery and you go to another fishery, it's not the same. That's what happened in the case of Diana. The gentleman came from out of the town, even from a different fishery and he thought he could handle it, and then they got hit by a ship right there at (Point Surf?). So, it didn't go very well for him.

FS: Have you seen Monterey changed over the course of your lifetime just living the life of a fisherman essentially?

ENP: Monterey changed a lot from when I was a kid. I mean, when I was a kid, the boats come in – my dad would go fishing and he sometimes would be out two, three days. Sometimes, he could go make one trip and come in. They leave around 2:00 a.m. and then come back that evening. Just being there on the wharf and seen more fishermen down there or seen more – the markets, all the different markets that were there. They just were constantly hustling and bustling and busy. They had a lot of fish cutters down there or squid packers down there. I had to grow up with all that. So, to see it now, sometimes it looks just desolate. It's very sad. There's a lot of changes. I always drive through town. I feel like my mother I tell my kids all the changes, and I'm like, "Wow." [laughter]



FS: Do you see it going back with more of that, kind of farm to table mentality that is coming back? Do you see that Monterey is being rejuvenated itself in that same kind of way?

ENP: Well, it can, and I think it will. Like I said, right now, the squid is coming back through the different seasons. We fish all-year round. But the squid fishermen, they fish for their squid. During squid season, they go for the sardines. Then the guys go for their different this and thats. Right now, we have salmon out there. They all kind of mesh together at some point (on their?) season, so that's when it's my favorite time to be down there because you have everybody unloading all the different stuff.

MS: Your husband fishes primarily with the trawl, right? I am still fuzzy on what kind of fish that as other the bottom-dwelling fish, or close to that?

ENP: They bring in the rock cods and black cods. They have the cod fish or all the flat fish.

MS: The sole, yes.

ENP: The soles. All the soles are flat fish, sandabbs. There's an interesting market that has opened up. We catch now a lot of Dover sole, which is not one of the fish that you would imagine people making a living off of twenty years ago. Now, that's one of our big catches.

MS: Does he ever sell from the ship or from the boat?

ENP: Well, we unload from the market, and then my parents sell out of the market and –

MS: Oh, so your parents are the receivers from the stuff that he catches?

ENP: Yes, yes. My parents own the boat and then they own the fish market. So, they do sell out of their market. Yes.

MS: So, you go through this whole process of the – what we are learning about today, the person who receives it and then they will prepare –you do all that yourself?

ENP: Well, yes. We used to own a bigger scale. My dad had a lot of employees. Now, the boat comes in. Honestly, due to a lot of the miseducation out there on our fish and the different fishes and the way the fisheries work, most of our fishes goes on a truck and goes out of the area. It doesn't even stay local, which is really unfortunate. But that's a whole another bag of politics I won't get into. [laughter]

MS: So, if I wanted to go down and buy some of your husband's fish, I could do that?

ENP: You could. You go right into Royal Seafood in the wharf there, Wharf 2 and they'll sell you a fish.

MS: Is that Royal Season?

ENP: Royal Seafood.

MS: Royal Seafood?

ENP: Yes. There is a smaller fish market that my father is – another gentleman is running for him, and they have a lot of the salmon and the sea bass and the different stuff that little boats go out and bring in. But most of the fish that my husband catches is sold through Royal. If you come there when the boat is unloading or the next day or so, you can catch what they have left behind for a few of the local customers. Everything else goes on a truck and goes out.

MS: If you want seafood for your family, where do you go to get it?

ENP: [laughter] Well, my husband brings it home. [laughter]

ENP: Or I'll get it from my brother. We just had some squid that a friend gave us. So, yes. We don't buy any farmed or anything. That stuff just isn't really as good as they like to promote it to be. So, yes. Anything wild out of the water is the best thing.

FS: What did you say about the Dover sole that surprised you that it is popular now, or was it at the time?

ENP: It just wasn't a fish that was targeted much. People loved the sand dabs and they loved the Petrale. Those were much more popular. Now that they really don't allow you, due to regulations, to bring in larger quantities like they used to, they readjusted to Dover sole. That's what the big markets are ordering.

FS: So, it is actually changing our eating habits?

ENP: It is changing your eating habits, and you probably didn't even notice. Yes. A lot of things out there have changed. Like I said, there's plenty other fish out there. There's just no need to really regulate the way they do. In our fishing grounds, we fish out there. With the marine protected areas, they took out a lot of our fishing grounds. I don't think people even realized that. So, the same fishing grounds my grandfather fished out are the same grounds that my husband fishes at, only at a very small window now.

MS: Being the cook in my family, one of the concerns I have is variety. If I have the same thing every night for the two next weeks, I would wind out being divorced. [laughter]

MS: I am thinking, okay, your husband is fishing with the trawl and you are getting a certain kind of fish, but what about other kind? Is there a kind of a relationship among fishermen that they can share different types of catches, like from longline and trawl and things like that?

ENP: They do, actually. But with regulation, you have to have everything documented. If we give a fish away – and even us, we have to have a tag mate with the receipt that we have, and everything has to be documented and received.

MS: Really?

ENP: Yes. In the old days, someone came down as your buddy, "Oh, here, take the fish home." You just gave it to them. So, we have a lot of people – actually, it's almost funny because when my husband comes in, there's just a group of people you can count on that seemed to – even in the middle of the night, they just sense this boats comes in and they show up at the wharf when they're unloading and because people love their fish. So, they just come down here for the fish. They actually complain when he's not fishing if he has a breakdown or if the weather is bad. It's really funny. In the old days, yes. I mean, we can still do it, but everything has to be tagged. You have to have a receipt that you can't get away with.

MS: Really. Wow.

ENP: Yes.

MS: I will never [inaudible].

FS: [laughter]

FS: I forgot what is the regulation is for squid, how far you had to go out and is there a certain number of hours, days, or season that you catch the squid?

ENP: Well, we're not in the squid fishery, so I probably couldn't answer all those accurately. My husband could do a better job. But I do know they don't go out on Friday and they don't – they used to not fish during the day with the – because they fish with the lights, but they do now. I don't really know how far they can go. But they're right there off the coast. I mean, they can wherever the squid is. They can go fish pretty close.

FS: Because I had learned today that there are a lot of squid in this area.

ENP: Yes, lots of squid. Yes. Like I said, the water temperature is getting warmer. You see all the jellyfish in the water, and now you see the squid coming back up. So, they're starting to catch them over the last few days.

F: So, does he use a GPS? Because you were saying that the ground has to be fairly sandy or muddy or whatever. So, how does he know the area where it has a nice ocean floor for him?

ENP: Well, in the old days, as he said, they used landmarks. They say they fished the exact same grounds that they have for generations. So, you just know because of what's passed down. Nowadays with modern technology, you can see what the bottom of the ocean looks like. They have all the machines and so forth.

FS: Do you know whether your kids will get into fishing in the future?

ENP: I hope they'll get a chance to. I hope we'll still be in it and that they'll get a chance to, at

least, experience it. We'd love for them to go fishing on my grandfather's boat.

FS: Do you have any advice for young kids as far as fishing goes, as fishing as a career?

ENP: Advice.

FS: Yes.

ENP: I would just always be careful who is teaching you and just learn it well if that's what you want to do and be safe. That's just the biggest thing out there.

FS: Well, if you guys are done, I think that was a great way to end it. We are actually out of time. [laughter]

[end of transcript]