Finding a narrator to interview for the project was somewhat challenging. A few professors came to mind instantly after first hearing of what the project consisted of. Also, I knew of a few alumni that would make interesting subjects who had interesting lives, but I chose rather to use a professor or staff member, somebody who has seen changes occur to the City College campus over a significant period of time.

I asked an English Professor who I took in the Spring 2014 semester. Her name is Rosiangela Escamilla and the English class I took with her changed my life and influenced me in numerous ways. I asked her one day after class after all students had gone if she would be open to being interviewed for an Oral History Project and I may have been I little unclear so she asked if I would send her an email to clarify the exact goal of the project. I then emailed her and let her know what the project would entail and she responded saying that she would help. I really appreciated Professor Escamilla’s assistance and genuine enthusiasm for the project. Next, I emailed the Biographical Worksheet to her and some general questions about her background. The communication between myself and her was made easy due to my taking her English course. Anytime I had a question or needed a signature I could just wait around for a couple minutes after everyone left the class and then clarify any inquires that I had or follow up questions that
needed to be asked. I was very relieved to find a reliable person who wanted to be part of the project and who was very helpful.

In order to get a better understanding of where Rosiangela spent her early years which was in the Mexico, I had to learn about the State of Nayarit where she grew up; until she was 7 years old. I utilized sources online mostly consisting of maps, articles and a few YouTube videos, which was highly unexpected. I learned through my research much like every other poor country today the place is being exploited by big business, especially the tourist industry which exotifies every aspect of the location and culture. Originally the state was founded by two groups of Indians known today as the Huichol and Cora Indians. There are festivals where the Indian people dress in the ceremonial attire of their culture and this I believe is used as a business gimmick to draw in more tourists; who then buy into a concept of traveling to an exotified land, despite the whole time still clutching to the hotels’ first-world accommodations’ they so desperately need. Also, there was an article that argues for a place called “Riviera Nayarit” to be a place for tourism and North American investment due to the nice, “lagoon’s, beaches and low crime rates” (Hyman). Another notable fact about the state is the fact that most peoples’ “religion is predominately Catholic, as it is throughout most of Mexico” (Hyman). Despite this fact the Cora people have a religion mixed with their own pre-Colombian encounter religion and Catholicism. The state sounds like one of the better states in Mexico as far as violence is concerned and besides all the neo-liberalist’s trying to make profits off the people; the land is very beautiful and is worth seeing in one’s lifetime.

Rosiangela Escamilla is a big influence in my life for all that she has accomplished and all that she has been through. Professor Escamilla is a very accomplished person and is striving for social change in her lifetime. I share in the sentiment and through taking her class she has
opened my world to new authors such as Aime Cesaire, Frantz Fanon, and James Baldwin who also saw the wrongness in human society and strove to write about changing it. I believe Rosiangelia Escamilla shares some of the very characteristics with these influential figures in history. Rosiangelia was influenced by many factors in her life that have led her to becoming a success both as an educator and community organizer.

The strongest influence as far as family is concerned are both her grandmother and mother. Rosiangelia was born in Tijuana, Mexico and later moved into the state of Nayarit. The state is surrounded by Sinaloa to the north, Durango and Jalisco to the east and on its western coastal border is the Pacific Ocean. The state, 1 of 32 (including federal district of Mexico City) in total that make up Mexico, is one of the safer in terms of violence and crime. Professor Escamilla lived here until about seven years old with her grandmother while her mother was here in the United States working trying to earn a better livelihood. During her time living in Nayarit, Rosiangelia attended kindergarten through second grade and one great aspect she loved about her early childhood was running around mango and tamarind trees. Also she recalls and enjoys just the overall healthy lifestyle she lived as opposed to city life where people are detached from the environment. She was raised in a rural small village and I believe being raised in this environment had a positive lasting effect on the way Professor Escamilla views the world and people. She is very compassionate and she has a very humanistic way of seeing people. Rosiangelia was separated from her mother for many years of her early life due to her mother working in San Diego. As a result of not seeing her mother for so long she viewed her grandmother as a mother and thus has formed a very matriarchal perspective. Her grandmother has led Rosiangelia to have a strong example of a powerful woman and in turn I believe is a matriarch herself due to her confidence, patience, and understanding. More influences are the
authors and books she read while at City College. Of which include great names such as Angela Davis, Fidel Castro, Ernesto “Che” Guevara, James Baldwin, and Pablo Neruda just to name a few. The most influential books though were prison literature like the book written by Angelo Herndon entitled *Let Me Live*. The book was written by a Herndon who was inspired by the Communist Manifesto. He was active in organizing people of all colors to stand up against the oppressive bosses and unfair labor practices. The next book was written by George Jackson and was called *Blood in My Eye*. George Jackson finished writing the book just a week shy of being murdered by police while incarcerated. I recommend these authors to all, not just certain people. We must look at what this country has done in order to prevent such ugly atrocities from ever occurring again.

After coming to San Diego and reunited with her mother Rosiangel moved around a lot and as she grew up, lived in areas ranging from Barrio Logan, Golden Hill, Southeast San Diego, and Chula Vista. Growing up Ms. Escamilla would hang out at public parks, libraries and as a teenager during the 1990s she was listening to rhythm and blues’ famous TLC and very politically conscious and arguably greatest lyricists/hip-hop artists of all time Tupac Shakur. Just to get gravity of the situation on how big Tupac became, there was a hologram of the man that performed with producer/rapper Dr. Dre at the Coachella Music festival in 2012 and the event made headlines across the globe. Another note, this hologram performance was held 16 years after the man’s death in 1996. It is quite an experience to witness the rise of such a grand figure; it must have been something like witnessing the Beatles rise to stardom in their heyday.

Early on she had to work and Professor Escamilla had many jobs ranging from the fast food industry to educational ones. Of which some of the jobs included Baskin Robbins, Taco Bell and Harbor House, but none of which came close to her job at O’Farrell Community School.
At this school Rosiangela was a tutor for the ESL students and found such a sense of fulfillment from working here and in actuality this was her favorite job of all. The reason she said was due to the fact that, “the youth were very inspiring and willing to learn” (Escamilla, Interview). I feel this statement will hold true for most if not all children once the child is engaged and properly encouraged to grow and learn. Personally, I have never been a tutor myself, but I have usually helped others when I could, especially in the academic setting and in doing so have felt the sense of accomplishment and elation Rosiangela felt while helping the students at O’Farrell Community School learn. In teaching somebody a task or concept then seeing the empowerment that changes the person, is where true teaching occurs and when this does happen, the instructor will inevitably feel a sense of joy and pride not only for the student, but for taking part in the empowerment process as well. Professor Escamilla eventually graduated as a Point Loma Pointer in class of 1998 and despite hardships was able to enroll into the following City College semester.

While a student at City College Professor Escamilla was able to continue her love for soccer while playing on the Women’s Soccer team. During this time Rosiangela said these were some of the most enjoyable times she has ever had. While playing for the City College team she had a blast on the away games and the fact that she could just play on a team, wearing a uniform with no worries, gave her the most joy she has ever experienced.

Professor Escamilla spent a few years at City College before transferring over to UCSD in 2006, where she received her BA in Literature in Spanish (she is now writing her dissertation for her Ph.D.); but during her time as a student here at City College there were many historical events taking place both locally and on a national level. As far as Professor Escamilla is concerned she has always been involved in organizing and at City College she was able to “build
the tools and paper trail to prove her intellect to a societal structure that runs on paper…”

(Escamilla, Interview). While Rosiangela was here at City none of the new buildings were here and I doubt were even on the drawing board yet. At that time the Learning Resource Center was brand new and with it came new opportunities for those with no computers or internet access at home. The building was opened in 2002 and has been a great tool for the students who attend classes at City College. Two big things that happened during these years while Rosiangela was a student were the events that occurred at the World Trade Organization (WTO) meetings in Seattle Washington and the attacks on September 11th, 2001.

The protests were in response to big corporations meeting to discuss and set trading rules for developing countries. The protests were filled with human rights groups, student movements, and even people from other countries; not just Americans joined in the cause to protest unjust big business policies and practices. In total some fifty to a hundred thousand protestors (“WTO Protests in Seattle, 1999”) showed up on a rainy day and it is speculated that if not for the day being so wet and rainy that thousands more would have showed up for the demonstrations. The media portrayed the demonstrators as leftist radicals who were anti-international trade, but this was not the truth. In fact most of the people protesting supported free trade just did not support the trade policies being guided by corporate interests’, the protestors feared the best interest of the corporations would be met, not the peoples’. During the protest most were peaceful, but some allegedly got violent and the National Guard had to be called in, even martial law was declared for a short period of time where curfews were put into effect. The protestors were repressed with such things as tear-gas, pepper spray and authorities even shot rubber bullets at innocent, non-violent protestors (“WTO Protests in Seattle, 1999”).
The next big historical event that occurred during Professor Escamilla’s time as a student was the attacks on September 11\textsuperscript{th}. During this time the atmosphere of the country seemed to change and the City College campus was no different. There was a sense of fear among citizens of this country and almost directly after the attacks people became so fearful we let our rights be infringed upon with Bush administration policies like the Patriot Act. Oddly enough the Patriot Act’s introduction coincided in a time where the entire country was fear stricken and anthrax attacks were being sent through the mail. The Patriot Act has been controversial and attempts have been made in amending the bill to no avail. Many credible sources have called the September 11\textsuperscript{th} attacks a false-flag operation. “False flag [operation] occurs when elements within a government stage a secret operation whereby government forces pretend to be a targeted enemy while attacking their own forces or people. The attack is then falsely blamed on the enemy in order to justify going to war against that enemy” (“False Flag”). Ultimately the evidence is there and speaks for itself, anybody who knows the first steps to researching can find the information.

Professor Rosianela Escamilla is a great person and is actively involved in community organizing. Just recently (last Saturday) she gave a speech at the graduation of some local students (see: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pIKlk9hVLBO). Unfortunately, for those non-Spanish speakers the speech is given in Spanish, but regardless it is moving and very influential when understood. After taking her class, seeing her in the video and hearing the message she was giving, I really found myself grateful to have met this person. One way she is constantly staying busy is through her blog which is entitled http://azoteafronteriza.blogspot.com/. The blog has pieces ranging from articles, papers, to poetry and has influenced me to create some sort of networking tools to raise awareness. Fortunately for us City College students, we were able to
have her teaching us and encouraging us to question everything just as Frantz Fanon once stated in *Wretched of the Earth*, “O body make of me, a man who questions everything.”
Works Cited


Escamilla, Rosiangela. *Revolutionary Graduation* 18 May 2014

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pIKIk9hVLB0>.


