

Name of Interviewee: Hilda Ochoa Brillembourg

Date of Interview: January 20th

Name of Interviewer: Bill Yeingst

Length of Interview: 98 minutes

3rd: This is your mother handwriting on [unintelligible]

HO: Not this, you know what I'm finding is this. She must have been a young girl here, because her handwriting is bold.

3rd: Oh, that's interesting.

HO: So this is her handwriting, and I wasn't seen these at dates. And you see [unintelligible] and then in the other books is different.

3rd: Oh yeah. Beautiful handwriting.

HO: So, is tilted to the back. No, it's a very weird handwriting.

3rd: I loved it.

HO: Is tilted to the left, but you see the difference here versus, versus here.

BY: Was she left handed?

HO: No, I am left handed. And this is written in German, 1935. Is when she's started this book, ok? She spent 3 years of her life in Germany because my grandmother married in German and he took the whole family to live there.

BY: Let's begin. We are here today at the National Museum of the American History. Is Wednesday January 20th. We're conducting a family of voices interview with Hilda Ochoa Brillembourg. Welcome to the museum.

HO: Thank you.

BY: We're going to begin by learning about some of the objects that you brought to share with us today. Some cookbooks.

HO: I brought cookbooks, I brought some books written about my father, and I am also brought some pictures of the family.

BY: Good. Why don't you tell us a little bit about them? Are these thing that you brought with you when you came to the United States? Or have it there? [unintelligible]

HO: I brought some cookbooks when I came to the United States. I also brought all of my economic textbooks in case I would not understand English textbooks, so that I could study in Spanish. This was the first or sec.. first year and a half of my studies here. I had to...I still was translating in my mind between English and Spanish and Spanish and English. So I did bring some cookbooks. The cookbooks I got here, the cookbooks that were sent to me after my mother died, along with a series of photo album so that I could keep them for future generations. So they have a lot of sentimental value for me.

BY: So are these... So these cookbooks and recipes allow you to remain connected to your Venezuelan heritage and...

HO: They do, and although I have remain connected through the Venezuelan cooking for all of my life because I learn to cook practically. I learn to make, since I was very little, I learn to make *ayaka's* which is, which is a sort of Venezuelan tamale and it's, it's , made during the Christmas season and it becomes a family enterprise. Everyone sets up a whole production table of *ayaka's*, so I was a very good *ayaka* maker since I was a little girl. So *ayaka* is something that actually made here, not every Christmas, but whenever I find the time to make *ayaka's* I find. And whenever I don't find the time, I buy. Now you can buy *ayaka's*, and very good *ayaka's* in the United States.

BY: So, this is one of the ways you remain connected to your mother also maybe your grandmother? It's these recipes probably go back several generations?

HO: They do. They do have recipes here from... clearly from my grandmother, from my grandmother's best friend who became my mother's best friend, a wonderful woman born on the western part of Venezuela. And, and you can see the evolution of the handwriting. So, clearly these recipes started when my mother was a very young girl. And she grew up her handwriting changed, as everybody's does, and... but I have not used these books to cook, and I'm going begin using them. Now, I told you I've used my practical experience growing up in Venezuela, to cook Venezuelan, Venezuelan foods. And we do cook once a week, once or twice a week, we cook a typical Venezuelan set of meals. I usually on weekends, I share that with friends. Friends who come spend the weekend with us. When we have a home on the Eastern Shore of Maryland and typically these Saturday and Sunday breakfast are a typical Venezuelan breakfast. And in Thanksgiving we usually get a whole group of family and friends to spend the long weekend together and I think it's important to find where an American tradition and a Venezuelan tradition blend together. So, Thanksgiving Day is Thanksgiving Day, American tradition. But then on Friday we usually have a big Venezuelan, typical Venezuelan, breakfast. We did *arepas* which is a cornmeal. You can now have *arepas* by the way in this Union Market. Because a Venezuelan food truck won the contest to occupy one of the stalls in Union Market, and they served the typical Venezuelan meal. I'd would like take you there at some point. So you have *tequeños* which is... it's a bit of like a mozzarella stick but much better, and less fattening. And it's essentially white cheese surrounded by corn dough and fried, and it's delicious. And they serve it there. And those you can now order through the internet too, but I don't have to make them anymore, and now as of three weeks ago I moved from making them to ordering them online, and they're very good.

BY: So, food is one of those parts of life that connect us to the past and... Could you talk a little bit about, you know, when and where you born and what it was like growing up in this community in Venezuela?

HO: When I won't say. But where? I was born in Caracas. I was born a long time ago, thank goodness I lived now a long life. I was born in Caracas, Venezuela by the way that's a typical Venezuelan trade of woman will never confess to their date of birth. I was shocked when you would read in a magazine or a newspaper that after the person named that would be a number and it was not a shoe size, it was their age. I said this is so disgusting, this is immoral if not illegal, and it's certainly abusive. Come on, what kind of discrimination is that? So to each day I haven't, I haven't, I haven't accepted that as and American cultural trait, because they used it mostly on women and not on men. So I think it's a way of finding your date of expiration or something like that. I don't like it. Anyway, I was born in Caracas, Venezuela. And I grew up in Caracas, although I visited my mother's friends in other parts of the country. But I grew up there. And I came to... I was sent to the United States in what must have been a huge sacrifice on my parents' part because they were upper middle class and did not have excessive income, but I was sent to learn English in my sophomore year at a nun school, a Catholic School in Upstate New

York. I did not learn much English, because part of my challenge was not to speak English, and get away from the police, student police, who was very fined that the Latino kids who were there to learn English were not speaking Spanish. But I did learn some English. Problem in the last month of my stay when I got panicked. I said I'm supposed to go back speaking English, and I'm not speaking a word of English. And then, so, I went back to the country after that to continue my studies. But my parents never wanted, and many Venezuelans would send their kids to College. I think they probably didn't have the money to send me to college in the States. But the excuse they used is they were concerned that if they send me to the states, I would never go back. That was probably true, because that's what happened. When I was 20, I graduated. I studied economics and I worked at a public utility in Venezuela. And after 3 years, became its treasurer. I progressed very quickly, I think I was well-trained and I was smart and I was determined to succeed as a woman. I was completely determined to be a successful woman. And be financially independent and I mentioned that, because I think that's critical, in any kind of minority or any kind of class of people who really want to overcome the circumstances in which they live if they don't like them. To be determined you have a very clear objective in life. And that's what I was determined to do, to be financially independent.

BY: Where did that spirit and that drive come from? Did you see that in your mother or in your family members?

HO: No, no my mother would be... victimize herself and that probably is where it comes from. She would complain that because of my father's controlling personality, she never went to medical school, which is what she would have liked to do. And I would tell her you can't complain about that just do it. I was a little girl and I said you don't complain, just do it. Like I give you information to go and she would not do it. In my young age I said you don't no one is, ever, going.... I'm never going have that excuse of not achieving something because someone else did not let me. I must have thought that's baloney. You are free to choose your destiny and you need that kind of a belief system to overcome all the kinds of hurdles that are thrown at all of us, both men and women. Everyone gets thrown hurdles along the way. Some are thrown by other people, some we kind of throw ourselves, because we're afraid of taking on certain initiatives and responsibilities with all they entail. So the determination came early. I probably at the age of 11 or 13, I was already determined to be financially successful.

BY: Can you talk a little bit about your socio-economic environment that you grew up in?

HO: I grew up in a socio-economic environment in which people, a little bit what I have heard about communities in the United States 50 years ago. In which there was not that much difference in wealth, and the rich person in the town would connect equally with

the poor people. And they would all go to similar schools and they would all have similar educations, intelligence was also not a differentiator. In what schools you were accepted into. The life was less fragmented, let's put it that way. I would describe my family as probably middle to upper middle class. My father lost his job in his early fifties, because he was opposed to. The powers that be in his firm taking advantage of some government contracts and he decried that, not that he became a whistleblower but I did learn that whistleblowers never end up with a good fate. You have to find other ways of working that out at that tender age.

BY: Who was he working for in that time?

HO: He was working for the Venezuelan, he was the founding general manager of the Venezuelan International Airlines, Viasa. Now this is a guy who my father, very smart, wonderful guy with great sense of humor and that's his picture there. You can see the twinkle in his eye in that picture, and he was very loving, egalitarian, practical man. He started as a mechanic and eventually got training as a pilot, by... with the help of one his mother's uncles, I think, who gave him the money to come to pilot school in New York. and then went back, and he actually, at some point, joined the Air Force in Venezuela, and as part of the Air Force he crashed. He apparently was flying a plane that tended to crash all the time, I don't know what plane it was but he was one of the first to survive the crash. So he was kicked out of the Air Force and that's when he trained as a mechanic, and after that, he had trained as a pilot with the help of his relatives, and he trained as a mechanic to get a job at one of the Venezuelan domestic airplane companies. My father was a mechanic at heart. He loved being a mechanic, and there's stories I could share of how he would love having multiple cars that were hard to find and he would have the cars as spare parts for the other cars. And he would be working on the cars all the time himself, to his death. When he died we had a cometary burial BMW Use which you could not find parts for in Venezuela. But part of his joy of coming to visit me here was to get parts for the BMW he's repairing. And they were old, 20 or 30 years old. So anyway, he was a mechanic at heart, but a practical man, and probably a reasonably ambitious man, not as ambitious I think, as I was. But I do share with him a sense of, my life has been drive by projects. I cannot be without a project, or two or three, and that I think is very helpful in helping you, and moving you forward, there is always some project. And I say that because I married a wonderful guy who is a more contemplative personality. And he loves reading and he loves thinking and he loves having opinions. And when I look and say, so what project are you working on, and sort of vague. So I guess opposites attract. But anyway, my father was project driven, and when he came back, he was the mechanic for many years. Then he became the head of the mechanics in that airlines. The domestic airlines called Avensa. He loved his boss, he loved the family. The head of the family who was in charge of that airline, it was a family owned airline. He was not part of the family, he was a mechanic there and then when that airline, there was a joint project between the government and that airline to form the first international airline for

Venezuela and my father, who after becoming head of mechanics had become head of the pilots became a mechanic then a pilot and then head of the pilots. Those are the stories that appear in this For Pilots Eyes Only, there are two or three chapters on my dad which are very touching for me to read, written by a Pan-American Pilot, who went to work training Venezuelan pilots for 6 months, and ended up staying a few years there. But...

BY: Were your parents both from Caracas?

HO: Yeah. My father was born in Caracas. My mother was born in Maracai, on the Western part of the country. My mother was born of a German father. Who knows why ended up in Venezuela. The story goes that he was headed for Brazil. The ship stopped in Maracay when somehow he met. At my grandmother and fell in love with her, and my grandmother as the story goes who had left two or three different fiancés at the altar changing her mind, she was a runaway bride. By then she was an older woman, and this was kind of her last chance, I guess, to get married to this poor unsuspecting German, and that's the story of how he died young. I never met him. My brother I think spend a year of his life with him, that's it. So he died very young, so that was it. On my mother's side a German Father, grandfather to me and a Venezuelan mother of English descent three generations before, but also Venezuelan descent, and on my father's side, my father's family, the Ochoa's, came to Venezuela with the Bolivar's. They were the same family. I actually read a newspaper article, which I've been able to find it, I know I have it like my mother's cookbooks. In which it said Bolivar's last name was actually Ochoa. But in Spain to this date a child can take either the mother's last name or the father's last name. And in the case of believers, ancestors, they had somehow fought with the father and decided all to choose the mother's name which was Bolivar. But all their cousins were Ochoa's. They all went together, I don't know why. Or with what intent they went to Venezuela from the Basque Region in Spain. So I've actually looked at my genetic makeup, my DNA. And I am about 9% Black and Indian, and 91% a Northern European Basque of that Region of Europe, and German, and English I guess.

BY: So can you talk about your siblings?

HO: I have one brother whom I loved all my life. He was my hero and he was my hero because might not have been my hero because my mother clearly preferred my brother. My brother was like, she always preferred men to women, and that's something that also marked me from very little. I said, I'm never going to do that. How can you think that men are in some way are better, more complete, more truthful, more everything. And not have a high opinion of yourself when you're a woman. You have to. So I departed from my view, I love women, I love men too, but I'm feisty regarding women's rights. But my brother was 5 years older and he died of Parkinson's young. Probably because the treatment for Parkinson's in Venezuela was not as fine tune as well developed as here. I

brought him here to seek treatment for him and we did look into alternative ways of treating him. I would have kept him here, he could have become my project, but he had a family, wanted him back there. So he died, actually he died before my mother died. He was a lawyer and successful Venezuelan lawyer, he was actually The British government gave him an Officer of the British Empire medal and when I asked them, why did they do that? Like, why you and not me? Probably because I was competitive. And he said probably because I built them too little when I was working for them.

BY: So, You're growing up in this household. At the time, did you see cultural markers that led you to acknowledge that you have this German heritage or you have this particular heritage, or anything or, did you just see yourself as a typical Venezuelan, young woman who...?

HO: No. I always felt different. When I was blonde and had blue eyes, but that did not make me feel better. That, in fact, made me feel different in a weird way. I did not particularly like that. I wanted to be like the rest. Like all kids, you want blend with the rest and I always felt that I was destined to be great in some way and I think that's important for a kid to feel that somehow you're destined for something great. I don't know I'm not quite what it would be and I think I explored in my mind that I could be trapeze artist because there was a broken door in my neighborhood, a metal door, without the wires because they were long gone. I would go and practice the trapeze on that broken door. So I learned that maybe I should be a trapeze artist, maybe I could be a singer, because I actually had a good voice, and had tune, could carry a tune. And, of course, those were professions that a middle class girl would not contemplate, unless you were coming from, more or less, like here. Unless you were coming from an environment in which show business was your business. My mother was a home maker and my father was a pilot in fact, so not part of it. But then I ran into another woman at a little party and someone asked her to sing. So I was saying, I was kind of second in line they're going ask me to sing too and when I heard her, I said: "My God, forget about singing." She was fantastic. And she became a very well-known folk singer. In Minnesota. So, thank God for eliminating that. But other than those unquote passions, what has driven my life and this is important, I think, for me. Is... you know, you hear all the time here that you got to find your passion and I've always thought that's a load of baloney. You've got to develop excellence and you got to find was is it you could be excellent at. Not because you love it but because you're good at it, because you've skills that make you good at it. And then if you develop excellence at anything, passion will come and that has actually determined every choice I've made in life, including the choice of husband. I've never let passion or romance determine anything I like. It has come, and I have waited for it to come. When there is excellence in the process by which I have engaged to a profession or a human being or the family, then passion comes as a result of that. So, I've always led my life on the basis of three action verbs. And I share them when I give leadership classes or talks to young people, like the members of the Youth Orchestra of the Americas or people like...

young people in the global leaders program at Georgetown University or the American Enterprise Institute, or my colleagues at work the new entrance into the job and I've always tell them I've always felt life in my life should be driven by three action verbs. One is excellence and then I explain to them through excellence is how you develop passions and loves in life that are worthy. So my first action verb is excel. The second one is connect, make sure that you are emotionally engaged with everyone you touch, with your coworkers, with your friends, give of yourself emotionally and that emotional charge will establish a connection that makes that relationship meaningful. And I teach that to every young person who doesn't know whether they should be disconnected or connected. I said: "Connect, connect." And when you feel disconnected find the trigger, the catalyst that connects you again. I can tell you stories about my daughter and what I told her to do at one point in time in which she was feeling disconnected. So excel, connect, and the third verb is transform, Make things that you touch, better. There's transformational ability in everything that we do. That of course places me in situations in which I'm trying to change people around me, and I slap myself, I cannot change people who do not want to change but then I tell myself, but how would they know that they need to change if you don't tell them? If you don't try to transform them? So that's something I struggle with. The other two I struggle less with, but transform is something that I feel it that we do have a responsibility and I think it's a very important component of joy in life, that you feel some relevance at every level. And if I remember, and I try to remember, for everything I do in life, I'm trying to both excel, connect, and transform the environment around me.

BY: So, excel takes me to education.

HO: Yes.

BY: You came to the United States originally to learn English, and then you went back to Venezuela and you worked for a while but then, how did you end up coming to the US? Can you, you know, why did you leave Venezuela?

HO: Yeah, yeah. I left because I discovered, well there is a cute story there. I saw the movie Love Story and Harvard looked so fantastic. Because I'm a romantic also. So, boy this is a place I want to go to. And that's one observation. The other observation is I graduated as an economist and I did very well and became the treasurer of this very large electric utility in the country at a very young age and did a really good job, no need, no need to knock me down I really did a good job. And because I've can always been, I've always been able to figure out what needs to be done to make things better and I focus on that. I don't focus on me, on my remuneration, I only focus on what can I do to make this process better, more successful. And in that point in time... I had gotten married to an

artist, and the marriage was not working, and I decided you know, I need to break with my environment. And I had marry another young man who became the love of my life, who was an economist, he had been trained at Berkeley and he knew a lot more about economics than I thought was possible, or was not part of what I had studied. So I figured out there is a whole mass of knowledge that I have not even be gone scratching. So, I asked him: "Where did you learn that?" and he said: "Well, I got a Ph.D. in economics in Berkeley or all but dissertation Ph.D., and said, I want to do that too. What is that? What is the Ph.D.? I had no idea. What's a PhD? well it's a doctoral program. I said: "So, where should I get it? Which are the best Universities in the United States?" And he mentioned Harvard, MIT, Berkeley, and Chicago. So I went to the American consulate to find out more, this was not the age of Internet. And I looked and they had something on each of those universities. And by the way and that I met one of the angel in my life, a woman who worked for the State Department for the cultural side of the consulate. And she became my angel because she kind of mentored me through that process of applying to Universities and all of that, her name was Mrs. Fisher. Extraordinary woman, I wish I could find her again, I hope she's still alive and I could find her again, but the State Department does not keep track of any local employee. That... and she was a Holocaust survivor because I remember seeing a number on her arm, okay? So the...and I figured out that that was a Holocaust survivor okay? Anyway this woman helped me out when I went through the process of applying to four schools and all the things they required and the recommendations and the essays. There was no universal application form at the time so I said: "Forget it." So I could travel free because my father was a general manager of an airline so I flew to New York and to Boston and visited Harvard and MIT. And I said: "No, MIT forget it, it was dry and scientific, and Harvard was love story." So I said: "This is the one I want to apply to." I had no idea it was hard to get into it, this was it. So I started to going into different professors, they were open like the congress is open here. You know you go into a congress building and you can stop in any one of those congressmen and you see them there. Well that was Harvard professors had offices and they were open, students could pop in even non students, let me could pop in. So I remember, I would see names of famous economists like Duesenberry, or Harberger, or Hirschman. And I said [unintelligible] so I would go into his office and said: "I've read your books." and with my choppy English it was not that good then, and so how do I get into this University? And they would look at me like with compassion. This girl from Venezuela, this young women from Venezuela, no Venezuelan ever went because Venezuela was a country that would go through rags and riches to rags, when riches were hitting the country everyone felt they didn't need to do anything but just wait for the *piñata* to fall on them. So there I was, first Venezuelan woman looking to study at Harvard, no idea. And they would recommend that I apply to the University of Michigan, or that I apply this, or those are good schools, go and get a Masters there and then apply. I said, no. No, no, no, no, no. This is where I want to come! How do I come? So I remember I went through a list of students, of international students by alphabetical who were in the Ph.D. program of economic. And I started calling alphabetically until I hit one, to this day he's a very good friend of mine, and he's the president of a bank in Bogota, Alejandro Figueroa, so I called

him up and I said, I'm such-and-such, I'm from Venezuela, I want to know how you got into Harvard? Can I come over? He said: "Well, I'm studying for my general exam." No, no, no, I won't take more than 15 minutes. I went there, and [unintelligible] says: "What did you have that I don't have? Tell me." So to this day, he reminds me of that conversation. I've forgotten. Anyway, I got in, I got in... I did everything, but of course couldn't have done that effort for four universities. So I just focused on Harvard and I got in. But what's interesting is I got in and I figured if I get in to Harvard, I'll find ways of financing it. My parents didn't have the money forget it, but I'll find a scholarship and it turns out that in Venezuela there were no, this is a good story. There were no scholarships in Venezuela for people in the private sector and I had worked at this public utility. There were scholarships for people who work in government but not for private sector. And I tried to get a scholarship from my firm, they said we don't have a scholarship program for you, are you going to leave us? I said: "No I can see it. And it wouldn't make much sense." So I, and the day for coming in and paying my tuition was coming. And I said: My God. I'm going to have to sell myself in the streets of Caracas." You know, they said you're not going not go to Harvard because I don't have the money to pay tuition I was running out of alternatives, it was really, I was getting stomach aches and so I arrived in the consulate because I have to fill out something for to get my, whatever it is, the I-20 that you get there. I don't know, I forget and Mrs. Fisher was there and as I'm filling out the form, she sees that I'm crying and she says: "Why are you crying?" I said: "Mrs. Fisher, I thought it would be easy to get a scholarship if I got in but I've not been able to find a scholarship. I don't know how I'm going to pay for this." So she said: "Well I didn't want to tell you until it had actually happened but I applied on your behalf for Fulbright Fellowship, and I think you're going to get it, and that would pay for your tuition and your travel." And it supposed I will know in two days. So I came here on a Fulbright. And I mean it brings tears to my eyes because I said this is an incredible government. That when I cannot find scholarships in my country to go to Harvard, they will pay for me to go to Harvard to study there. So Fulbright to me has always been like a, a miracle door, a door to heaven and so 3 years later, I'm at Harvard. I am working by then, I had found other scholarships, because a Fulbright did not cover everything. I did all the things that were very imaginative, but I will not take your time to take you into that to find the financing but it goes to show that when I have a project [unintelligible]. Who's uniquely imaginative? But what was meaningful about this Fulbright, one it gave me the first image of a country that was larger than life, okay? And second, when I started helping writing speeches for a candidate from the opposition party who won the elections, and the guy whom I would write the speeches for, I've never met the candidate but he would ask me to write speeches because I was at Harvard so I had a perspective of the world economy right at the time when all process were tripling and quadrupling, that made an impact on how this candidate was projecting himself on the political arena. And so I was writing these speeches. I was turning him into a citizen of the world, unlike the other candidates and when I went there in December, he had just won the election, and I went to meet with the guy who had been my, I had met during the time I was working at the electrical company because he had a company that trained executives on all kinds of courses, which I was taking all of them. So I get... got to meet the head of the academy,

okay? And so he asked me. Oh, I say: "Did you realized the opportunity the country has with this quadrupling of oil prices to do something really, really great." And so he said: "What would you do?" And I said: "I know what I would do. I would create a massive scholarship program to send out every Venezuelan, I don't care if they're a good student, bad student, it doesn't matter." At that point in time, the country was facing an enormous threat of Communism supported from Cuba. Just take them out of the country so that they see other cultures and other places. And yes, pick better one among them if you think you have to. But just take them out of the country and educate them outside. Send them to every grade university in the world. Establish a scholarship program so that universities know they can count on Venezuelan students to come there and be fully financed. Six months later, the government and I... I went back to Harvard and six months later, the government announces the Fundación Ayacucho Program to send thousands of Venezuelans to study abroad. And I said: "My dream, okay?" But I was here. So I never knew whether this was a coincidence or whether it was my idea that someone had picked on. Years later, but I mean 20 years later, I... the President of Venezuela at the time, the one for whom I had written speeches, but had never met you know, is visiting Washington D.C., and I have a chance to actually sit down and talk to him, because I'm inviting him to the Eastern Shore to spent a weekend at the behest of someone who wanted to take him out there. And I said: "Mr. President, tell me something, how did you... I tell," I don't remember what came first, either his answer or my story. And he said: "[unintelligible] that is exactly what happened. This guy, with whom I had spoken, we were looking for ways to celebrate the victory of Ayacucho which sealed the independence of South America from Spain that was it. And the President of Peru was coming here, and we were looking for some big gesture to celebrate his coming here, and we were looking for what to do, and this guy said we should create this massive scholarship program and call it Ayacucho Program." [unintelligible] have never been able to find the number of Venezuelans, the actual number because I guess Venezuela doesn't keep numbers, but I understand that it's at least 100 to 150 thousand Venezuelans who were educated, who received high level education because of Fulbright, because it was such a miraculous gate to heaven for me. And because I said [unintelligible] this is what Venezuela has to do.

BY: That's a great story. So you were at Harvard and you were there and you completed your, your degree. Then what happened?

HO: Well, I first completed my Masters in Public Administration and Economics. And then I went to the Business School to get a Doctorate, because I loved learning, I loved Harvard. Everything that I expected it to be it was and more. It was like a factory of brains, I was just, never in my whole life has I been as happy and I would have stayed there forever if I could have afforded it, which I couldn't. So, then I finished all of my doctoral requirements, except for dissertation, and I said, well, I'm going to go to Venezuela now that the country is so wealthy. Go back there, write my thesis from there, but actually

start making money, because I have to pay some of the debts I have acquired in financing my studies in the United States, and I did that. I went back to Venezuela in 1975. Essentially to write my dissertation and stay in the country. One of the consulting studies that I sold to the Venezuelan government was... The Venezuelan government had created Venezuelan investment fund to sterilize some of the surplus of the oil exports, which they should have done. That was the right thing to do. And I sold to the government a study to calculate large would that surplus become and how should it be managed. More or less how would you manage an endowment for the country? And they bought it and it was a funny story behind that they, I think I had quoted \$25,000 for the study. And they came back to me and said: "You're quoting too little. You have to triple that." I said: "I'm happy to." But I'll have to expand then. They couldn't care less. They just wanted me to [unintelligible] because every other study, they were, they were asking for was much more than that. So mine was looking like it was peanuts. So I charged, I think 75 or \$85,000 for the study, expanding the contents of the study but that was very significant because that is what triggered my determination to leave the country. When I did that [unintelligible], one of the first things I did would do stress-testing and scenario analysis, so what could be the best case and the worst case for the surplus and out of that study came out something that shocked me which was that the surplus would end in the best of cases by the year 1981 and in the worst of cases, by the year 1978 or 79, and your sort of midpoint on an arc is where you have to worry, because it's now declining, the surplus, and Things are becoming tougher and more competitive. When the surplus ends, of course, its chaos. But, we have to worry about the midpoint. So I conclude that the midpoint of the three scenarios is, at best, near 78 or 79. I can't get wealthy. I came here to create financial base for me, so that I can be financially independent. He says, I can't do that. In two or three years, we thought becoming just as corrupt as everyone who's different levels of corruption among all my friends. I didn't go to Harvard to just yield to, to the opportunism. So, I said: "I have to leave the country. I have to leave the country to strengthen further my character to put to work the education I received at Harvard, to give back the honest way, to the world, and to give back to myself." I cannot sell myself, my soul, to the devil. And right in about that time I was contemplating three possibilities. One was to go and work at the North-South Conference in Paris. One to go and teach at Harvard because they had offered me a teaching fellow position at the Business School. And three, to join one of the international organizations in D.C. And at the time I met my husband, now, of almost 40 years since we met. So that cleared the path to Washington, D.C. and I came here to see what, who would hire me, and the World Bank hired me on the spot. To work on think tank. He had a group of people within the World Bank who were thinking of big issues at the bank. So I was assigned a project which was fascinating, very difficult project, which was to come up with a formula that would allow the World Bank to price its loans, outside of political compromises with the different people, because different borrowers from the bank were ending up with completely different conditions, because you could pick the currency at which you could borrow, so most borrowers would actually pick the currency that had the lowest interest rate, and of course within 10 years of the loan, that would likely be the currency with the highest interest rate and possibly one that has revalued the most, so the range of interest rates that

different World Bank borrowers were paying, the range was in some cases 15 % points, and the bank wanted to find a way in which it was a fairer way of distributing the load on all borrowers. So I worked on that.

BY: So, what was your impression of this new home you were creating here in Washington?

HO: There is the United States, and there is the World Bank as impressions go. The United States to me has always been the... an extraordinary place, I love this country and that means I get mad when the country's not going in the right direction or when I see leaders misbehaving. I got really mad no one gets as mad as an immigrant, I think, when they see their leaders misbehaving because he's likely going to break this miracle place where everything is possible, where there is a meritocracy, where there is every opportunity for a woman, a man of any extraction to find a place to make a difference and so that to me a Fulbright it's Harvard to me, it's possibility. But there are certain things about the country that I've always found in fact 2 days ago I had a conversation with someone in my office about that same thing. It hasn't changed. This is a country in which intimacy is forbidden between people. It's just not kosher. And then you go into all these reality shows or interview shows. So you go from having no intimacy and no group of close people with whom you can share your innermost secrets. And they will guard them and they will love you and they will help you sort out things in life. And then you go on television and you see people spilling their horrible secrets to millions of viewers and I said, there's something wrong with this picture. So, to this day, there's something wrong with that picture. In Venezuela, and I'm sure that's true of many Latin American countries, but certainly that is true of Venezuela If you got a problem, you always find two or three people could be your manicurist, it could be the guy selling at the pharmacy, you know, you've got an allergy, go you talk to the pharmacist, you say I've been complaining about this and that, and this medicine is not working out, and he gives you advice that is as valuable if not more valuable than a doctor's advice and you go to the manicurist, this I never forget is I was at the manicurist, and she was doing my nails, at one of my visits to Venezuela and a woman is waiting for her turn to have her nails done and she sits down and the manicurist is evidently a friend of hers because she goes there every week that was not my case, because I did not live there and she starts telling her that she's caught her husband in an infidelity, okay? And the manicurist says, you're not the first one. There's at least ten of my clients that have caught their husbands in infidelity and this this that, and this did the other and there's this whole exchange that goes on of why the infidelity might have occurred. What she could to, to fix it, short of divorce, okay? How should she behave differently to stop the man from being unfaithful? And out there with my nails like this, I said, God, I miss this. And it really doesn't happen in the United States and I was telling someone in my office who had come into my office a week ago and was trying to talk and I was trying to tell him of my life I said [unintelligible] and after this because a monologue, for a life like this because, this guy was just standing in there, looking at me like a deer in headlights and after I finish...

I mean I couldn't cut the monologue saying, I'm going to cut here, I had to finish it. But, I spent the weekend thinking, I wonder what that guy was thinking? That I was telling him all these things about my life, and why was I telling him all these things about my life? Well, I know why I was telling all these things about my life because we've worked together for 18 years, and he knows nothing about me and I know nothing about him. So on Tuesday, I went to his office and said: "Do you have ten minutes?" He said: "Yes." I said: "What did you think when I engaged in that monologue in which I was telling you all these things about my life?" He said: "You were saying nothing." I mean, I honestly don't know what to do, should I apologize that I spilled all those many beans about my life and you said nothing. Let me tell you why I did it, but I'll apologize if I need to, if I broke into some kind of intimacy clause here that is just not broken into in this country, because to this day this befuddles me. I said, we've lived together for 18 years. We've spent ten hours a day together and you know nothing about my life, and I know nothing about yours. Well I know little things that are irrelevant, or maybe not irrelevant. But not... they haven't taught me anything about my life, the things I know about yours and all of a sudden I feel that there's a point at which we're not going to be together and you won't know anything about me and life is not about that. So, he laugh and he says: "Well, I did go uncommon to my wife. One of the things you had mentioned to me" and I said: "What was that?" He says: "Well, I was telling him of the story that someone has sent me a YouTube from a Dominican woman of lower extraction, very vulgar, but I was just watching this and my God, this is the extreme of sharing okay? And are looking at this YouTube which I have in my phone, and the woman is just simply saying how women don't know how to manage their lives and then in most instances in life, we just have to do a reality check and part of that reality check is to medicate themselves. But it's very funny, vulgar, but funny. In one of the monologues on one of the subject matters, she's talking about women never being satisfied with the husband or the mate they have. A woman will always think there's someone better out there, whereas the man, she says, I'm telling him this story, the man, because I'm checking with him as a man, the man are kind of happy with what they've got until something comes up and erupts into their lives, okay? and all of a sudden, boom! Surprise. But the woman everyday of their lives who are faithful and married to their husband are thinking, I could've done much better than this, or if such and such would have been much better for me." And I'm telling him, is that true? And I was telling this guy, is that true? Well, it turns out he's not answering by the way. He's just sitting there like a deer in a headlight, listening to this monologue. So he says he actually took that to his wife to check whether. He knew she was always thinking that there might have been someone better out there than him. So intimacy is one of those cultural shocks. The fact that people hesitate so much before they tell somebody they love them. Or that they're very fond of them, that they actually show an emotional connection to them. They were mortgaging their lives when they do that so that's shocking, to this day that is shocking.

BY: So, I want to go back and so you came here to work at the World Bank. Were you married at that point?

HO: No. We married after I had been at the World Bank for a year and a half.

BY: Okay, and where then you were establish a home?

HO: In D.C. We were renting a house in D.C. Until the heat in one of these very cold days. Really, record cold days, the heater broke down. And the landowner, the homeowner, would not fix it. This is one of those encounters with contract law. And I said, but you have to fix it. We're, no, because it turns out that the heater, it was an oil thing. And it had been, it was 30 years old. It had broken because He had gotten cold and then when it brushed again, it broke. He wanted us to pay for it, and of course we didn't have the money to pay for it, period. If I would have had the money, I would have paid for it. So led us to buy a little house in Chevy Chase district which but I always dreamed of going back to Georgetown, that's kind of a dream place for me. So, 14 years later my firm was already in the firm that I started with other colleagues. Was doing well and we had barely enough money to buy this house in Georgetown at a low cycle and real estate values here. The year we moved in, the day Clinton, President Clinton moved into the White House, same day, rainy January, cold.

BY: Do you have children?

HO: Three, three children. A boy from my first marriage who lives in L.A. and he's in the entertainment industry and a daughter and a son from my second marriage and the three of them are fantastic kids. Andres, Clara, and Arturo.

BY: So talk a little bit about you've created this new life here for yourself in the United States. In Washington you've got family, you're... How was your household similar of different to the household you grew up in Venezuela?

HO: Yeah. The similarities is as the working full time, working mom because I was a mom from the start, okay? I knew I needed help so immediately although I could barely afford it, we hired a maid. That is similarity with Venezuela it doesn't matter how poor you are in Venezuela, you have someone who's working for you, who's helping you with the cooking and the tending after the children and in the United States, women tend to want to do it all themselves. You can't. So, you have to hire help. I always believe that you have to hire help and help becomes part of your family. It's not something that is somehow precluding your intimacy at home. It is part of that shared intimacy. Which is

raising a family with help that was what was similar. The food we cooked because our maid was a Central American had... was very healthy, had a lot of soups which Latina American cooking includes a lot of soups. They're called boils, *caldos* and so we always have to this day there's always a soup when I go home at night there is soup in the fridge that I warm up and we actually take that soup, and the soup may contain all kinds of other things inside. It's a full meal, essentially, that soup that's similar, we always made *arepa's* which is the Venezuelan cornmeal bread. Always for weekend's I would eat them every day but I would eat them on weekends. They would be ones at a week, there would be the typical Venezuelan dish. And since my maid was sort of Central America once a week there would be some Central American dish. So I remember my children growing up, and the younger boy, who had American friends in the neighborhood would say, why can't we cook normal food? Such and such. So I would said, what is normal food? Well, it is macaroni and cheese and pancakes and hamburger. We never had macaroni and cheese or pancakes or hamburgers at home or peanut butter and jelly sandwiches, which is clearly an acquired taste which my American kids have acquired. So that was the similarities.

BY: What about holidays? Did you continue to celebrate Venezuelan holidays?

HO: Well the Venezuelan holidays are really Christmas and carnival. And the other holidays are kind of patriotic holidays that are not celebrated the way they are celebrated in the United States like The 4th of July equivalent is our 5th of July and there is no 5th of July celebration there. You get a free day, you don't work and the government throws tanks and things on the streets and shows, but it's not like here. So we've ended up celebrating both U.S. and Venezuelan holidays. Christmas is not that different except for the fact that we have the typical tamale Christmas dish called *ayaca*. Then, other than that, it's ham and turkey and stuffing and potato salad with the ham, and they're not that different from here. Less vegetables, I guess. Thanksgiving is a holiday that has become my favorite holiday because it is a holiday to excel, connect, and transform, and they've turned it into that kind of a holiday. So we typically invite many families, three or four families, to share it with us we spend the weekend together and then Thanksgiving, we ask the younger children to begin training to be public speakers by standing up and giving thanks. Not for their mother and their father, and no. Giving thanks for something that happened in their lives that year which was not good, but in some way showed them that there was some silver lining coming out of disappointment. You have to think. Then the following day, there is always an event that is organized by the younger kids around some topic that we're going to discuss all the ages of the families. So, topics like I've been for example, why do we give? Why does it you make feel good to give to others? And one of the kids, usually my younger son. Would pick up some readings of why it's so good to be good. And may also be what would have been the achievements of the millennial challenge. How have had the millennial challenge have actually achieved something. And someone would do some homework. And this is reading is distributed a

month before. So you're supposed to, not much, it's mainly 30 pages of readings and you're supposed to, or it may be the difference between men and women, or what do they see in their parents that they would like to imitate and what things they would not like to emulate and why or they question, so there is always some discussion topic that includes all the ages after lunch, and was it that one year we had a holocaust survivor who is a violin teacher and had been in one of the movies that my son made about the Youth Orchestra of the Americas called The Legacy I'll send you it because you might want to take parts of that movie for grading. It's beautiful, and this Holocaust survivor has this beautiful scene, in which at around four, the day's ending and there was a Holocaust survivor with 18 kids of all ages around him, and the bay behind and the sun setting, that picture and he's telling the story of what it meant for him to be caught when he was 13 years old in Poland and brought to a concentration camp and what that was like, and you'd show him his number on his arm and he was a violinist and he was saved by playing the violin, because the couple in the camp had a girlfriend and he wanted to have music for the girlfriend but how close he was to actually being shot and what happened after that and how that permeated his perspective on life. He was a very cheerful guy. He says, the sun is always out, you might not see it, there may be clouds there, but the sun is always there. Beautiful guy, who's still alive, by the way.

BY: So, what was the language spoken in your household when you were growing up?

HO: Well, growing up it was Spanish.

BY: How about when you came here and with your children.

HO: When the children, we started being bilingual, because my husband came to the United States when he was 10, so he was less Venezuelan than I was, but still, very Venezuelan and he speaks with more of an accent that I do, which is, I don't understand why, but he does okay? So we started trying to bring up our two children by my second husband bilingual and the children, the fourth children were three years old and 2 and a half years and did not speak a word of anything. I remember applying to nursery schools and taking them to nursery schools and they would be interviewed and there was like silence. I said, Oh my God. Finally, the tenth nursery school for my daughter a local nursery school. I've said: "Clara you have to say something in Spanish, in English, in anything" nothing. She goes in and immediately she looked at a fish tank and turns to the fish tank, she's not paying any attention to the headmistress as interviewing her, she's just obsessed with the fish tank and the headmistress says, you liked the fish? And Clara turns to her and says, fish, her first word in English. She got in, thank God. Now this is the girl who I thought was really going to be dumb and ended up, you knowing National Merit Scholar and enter Harvard at early decision and then, Yale law school. So it is a really extraordinary

girl so never ever think as an immigrant that because your kids are not speaking anything at the age of 2 and a half, they're doomed, they're not. So, we moved to English because we said she can't take two languages. She might not even be able to take one you know, and the school actually insisted that we move to English, because she was behind in her verbal skills. There was less understanding at the time that yes, bilingual kids are delayed in their verbal development, but they more than catch up after the fact.

BY: I'd like you to talk about your sense of identity and what do you consider yourself? Are there times when you particularly feel Venezuelan? Are there times when you really feel that you're American? What does it mean to be American?

HO: I consider myself a determined woman, a woman entrepreneur. I am immensely grateful that this country gave me the opportunity to become a successful entrepreneur. I am both. I grew up Venezuelan, and very Venezuelan, with Venezuelan values, with Venezuelan hopes, with, with I think as Venezuelan sense of possibility, because there was possibility every time our prices would quadruple. But, I'm very American in my sense of ethical values, the power of education, meritocracy, the... your sense of responsibility towards yourself and others, the self-reliance, part of our American culture. So I'm both, I'm both, and I have not gotten rid of my Latin American accent when I speak English. So, I like my accent.

BY: Were there times that you tried to fit in or that you felt that you really stood out and faced challenges as a result of it?

HO: Yes. But I would not say, the way I view as discrimination challenges, hardships that are thrown at you, is that every human being faces them I do not feel singled out for them. I think whether you're pretty or ugly, smart or stupid, efficient, inefficient, lazy or industrious, the world always will try to punish you for your traits, or take advantage, put you at a disadvantage because of who you are. Because we are in a Darwinian world in which we're all trying to compete for space and limited space to progress it's actually much larger than we give it credit for but when a push comes to a shove there are times when you are competing and whatever makes you different within that competitive field people will try to use it against you, sometimes you can use it against you, against yourself too. Feel diminished because somehow you're not up to the standards. Sometimes I feel ridiculous because of my willingness to show more of my deeper self. None is customary in the United States and I kind of why do I do this? Why do I have to do this? Why can't I just be, keep it to myself like my, other people I see here who are more cautious or more strategic about what they give of themselves. I'm less guarded about what I give of myself particularly, because it's part of my learning, multicultural learning, what is it that people respond to? Or not respond to? I see myself as an

experiment. So yes, there are hurdles, but I've never taken them personally and that's the first advising I give to young people. Is that never take the hurdles personally, they're thrown at every human being and there are opportunities for you to learn new things and to find different ways of doing things. Life is not set in its ways, you might be more set in certain ways in certain circumstances, but there is always a side street and there is always an opportunity to change the environment around you and you and be better for the fact that you have been able to overcome whatever it is that was standing in the way. Not a very precise answer, but it's the real answer.

BY: What are you most proud of?

HO: I'm proud to be an American. I'm very proud. You have no idea how proud I felt when I became an American. I felt really proud when I was sort of raising my hand and the vote of allegiance [unintelligible]. And I was sworn in by Justice Breyer, wonderful Justice Breyer. I was very proud of that he was swearing me in because he was a close friend of a friend of mine and he accepted. I said he had never sworn in an immigrant. So he became a district court judge for one day to be able to swear me in and that was one of the most proud moments of my life. In his chambers with his friend, my husband and Justice Briar and his clerk swore me in and then for the first time I had to Pledge the Pledge of Allegiance and for the first time I heard it. And then I started hearing all these horrendous things that I pledged that I will go fight in wars against foreign princes and I... and I'm going like he's going like this [unintelligible].

BY: So, how would you? Would you say your experiences immigrant has been typical or atypical, and why?

HO: Both. The way is typical about it is that when immigrants come in with a sense of I can, I can overcome, I can do better. And I'm going to do better and that's typical of an immigrant and I see it in people I work with at home, whose children now have masters, MBA and because I make sure they get a very high level education and they're very proud of those educational achievements. So that I think is typical, that to the extent my life has been a typical, has been a typical, same degree of differentiation with some other American women I have been a mother and a wife and a full time interpreter and worker. I have been very ambitious and not everyone is very ambitious. So to that extent, and more power to them. I mean, you can be content with it, like my husband. It's ambitious in other ways. So that maybe atypical. I am atypical in that I probably make up part of that one famous 1% of American wealth and I'm proud of having achieved financial success. I give back a lot of what I've made, not just in taxes, but in philanthropic work. I have created. I've given a lot, I've given 10% of what I've ever made back to the community in actual financial support and I have derived pleasure in doing that so the

atypical is not just the immigrant versus it's what we each are relative to other people around us.

BY: Immigration is a very hotly debated topic in our culture today as it always has been.

HO: Yeah.

BY: Do you...Would you like to say anything about [INAUDIBLE]

HO: It's debated in every country in the world. There's some countries that are smarter about it and set in place very constructive policies to deal with the immigration issue, and then they forget the best of their immigration policies, like Canada for example or Singapore, very smart about immigration. Australia has been very smart about immigration so, I think Germany potentially being very smart about how they're handling this, this immigration issue that Europeans are contending with. I have strong views, I think immigration is great. I think when we were talking before, I said it is turning a dead pond into a spring-fed pond. I believe very much in the power of diversity. I think out of diversity comes creativity, connectivity and the conditions by which you allow diversity to live in a place, and flourish in a place, a diverse culture are also to the same conditions that forced you to manage societies and processes and family lives in a most constructive way and that is respecting differences and respecting similarities, feeling that you're one with the world regardless of how different you might appear to be, inviting participation of different points of view, views. So, all of those conditions are what makes you a very good manager, makes you a very good company, makes for a very good family life. A family life in which the family member flourish. So, I think diversity forces you to be better, even if you were not inclined to invite it into your life, because the only way to manage is by doing the right things.

BY: I want to go back just for a moment and pick up with when you left the World Bank. Can you talk about founding your company and how that unfolded?

HO: Yeah. I had been successful at the World Bank, managing their pension fund. It had been labeled as the best managed pension fund in the United States, knock on wood. Therefore, I was getting job offers to go to work elsewhere, a very good job offers which I would looking to. And I would tell my bosses of the World Bank I'm getting this job offers, I don't think I'm going to accepted but how do I learn about what's out there from not doing this because I've always been quite open about what's going on? So, it was the time when I had three kids, life was beginning to feel constrained. Not long... I was no

longer thinking that everything I wanted to do was possible. I was beginning to hit the, the limits of what one can do in a day and not feel overly stressed by it and so I couldn't take the job offers and I did not know whether I was afraid of starting in a new corporate culture, they were all bankers when I knew and I knew how to maneuver through it with all the problems and hurdles and issues. I did not feel I could start again. So I said, boy I've become a wimp. I've lost my sense of adventure, the woman who would leave alone with a child no money, to go to Harvard, would go back to Venezuela, would leave Venezuela, go to the World Bank. I changed homes 18 times in a period of 4 years I was no... nothing would stop me, okay? And all of a sudden I am nest bound. I said Oh my God. I have become a wimp. I have lost my bravado. I'm never going to be able to achieve what I set out to achieve in life if I've lost my bravado. So I said well maybe I'm not a wimp, maybe I am an entrepreneur, and what I really want to do is start a new firm. Well, that was better than being a wimp, okay? So, I said, I'm an entrepreneur, if I'm an entrepreneur, I'll have to develop a business plan. A business plan has to be based on some kind of a competitive advantage you have developed, a proof of concept, a plan on how, and then how are you going to finance the business. I still had no money. We were living from hand to mouth, even though we're two people working with three kids in upper middle class in Washington, D.C. So, I barely took me 3 years to develop a business plan and market it and find the financing for it and I did, it was very tough and I didn't want to do it alone. I wanted, because I've never felt I could do anything alone so that's a failing I think, but also it's what forces me to connect, that I feel I would need a group to succeed. But I got it done and we started the firm in November of [19]87, right after the crash, the major crash, the devastating crash. I was in a state of panic. I've always said that I discovered at the time that fear is a much better motivator than frustration. So when in doubt, look into the [unintelligible] and take a step forward.

BY: So we risk, taking risks [unintelligible].

HO: Well, they were calculated risks, yeah. I have never taken uncalculated risks.

BY: You have been very generous to support the Youth Orchestra of the Americas. Would you like to talk about that a little bit?

HO: Yes, that's a major love child. It's entering its 15th year. The concept came out of the New England Conservatory they wanted to see, they wanted to explore whether we could create a Youth Orchestra of the Americas followed the pattern of the European Youth Orchestra, the Australian, Youth Orchestra in the Asia, Youth Orchestra The Soviet Union, he had orchestras all over the place. But there was not one for the Americans and they came, someone at Harvard suggested the David Rockefeller Center, which we supported, suggested they contacted me because we have funded the chair for arts at the

center. Meaning endowed a place so the David Rockefeller center for Latin American Studies can bring poets and artists, because that's what Latin America has to offer. Great artistic initiatives and there was none at Harvard. So they obviously thought of me as someone to talk to, to see how this could be done and those conversations started. I started helping them like I help anybody who comes to me asking for help and the... and he would fall flat and he would not take off. Eventually, within after months of these conversations that would go nowhere. They offered whether I would be willing to be the chairman of a non-existing board for this orchestra and I thought about it and it was a time when the last of our children have gone to college. So I must have been suffering from a bit of the emptiness syndrome and I said, why not. It was not my dream and but I think in life, sometimes you have to fulfill other people's dreams and that's important, very important to do and just as satisfactory. Someone fulfilled my dream of creating a major scholarship program in Venezuela, so why not? The... So I started working on it, and actually incorporating it from scratch and it was obvious that in my lack of experience, when I first heard the word venture philanthropy it was in the mouths of a corporate foundation who said we do not fund venture philanthropy. I said [unintelligible] Well that is what I was embarking on, a startup. Not for profit world which obviously requires that the person who's leading it has to foot a lot of the bills, at a time where I, 15 years ago, I didn't have that much money. There was a time when we actually had to go and increase the mortgage on our house. I had an income stream, and I had a successful firm but there was and the Orchestra had no money, and we were in the middle of a tour and we had to go and increase the mortgage on our house so that I could pitch in the money that was needed that's when I said, my god, what have I gotten myself into? So, now it's manageable, and now it's a very successful enterprise and it's composed of two initiatives. One is the Orchestra itself, we got this year 5,000 applications for 80 spots. 5,000, we're beating Harvard. 5,000 prodigious musicians from 26 countries in the Americas, from Canada to Patagonia, are applying to be a part of this program, because it's so unique and so transformational for the applicants. Now, that's unique about it? What's not unique is that we give fantastic classical music training with incredibly good teachers, that many festivals may do that. What is unique about it? Is there are 26 nationalities comprising this Orchestra, 4 languages, they all kind of converge into a sort of English. But, they're 4 languages and everyone ends up learning the other 4 languages in five weeks at least you know, communicate which is great French, Portuguese, Spanish, and English. What is not unique about it? What is unique about it? Is that the very quickly we discovered that what was unique about us was to transform the places we were visiting by engaging our musicians into teaching very poor communities in the countries that we were visiting and imparting a degree of quality of teaching coming from young people. Very motivated to give to the less able among them, and with enormous love. And, I will see you the film so that you see them. I haven't sent you the films, right? Because, they're so moving. They're just amazing. So, the Orchestra has become in the five, six weeks in which it meets in the summers, July and August. An instrument of excellence, connection and transformation and then the other part that we have become clear to us that many of our musicians were destined to be community leaders, political leaders in their countries. If you prompted them to go the

next step, not just be an orchestra musician, but kind of change the world around them, be entrepreneurial about their lives. So, 4 years ago we formalized the YOA Global Leaders Program, which is composed of an academic component, which is now certified by Oxford University and McGill University, and a practical component. The academic component is Skype lessons. You're invited to participate in them, by the way. Skype lessons that are given twice a week for an hour and a half, two hours Mondays and Wednesdays and they all participated, you have this Skype lesson going on with 20 musicians that are from South Korea or Chile or I mean from sometimes 20 different countries connecting through Skype. [unintelligible] for technology and with these great teachers. We have recruited, free of charge professors from Harvard, MIT, Nobel Prize winners, Stanford, New England Conservatory, and Georgetown University. They're all coming in to teach because it's an hour and a half they give us a year and to this, fabulous global leaders and these leaders have now created over 30 missions, teaching missions. The practical component of the Global Leaders Program which goes through the years but they're in their own home countries studying there and they don't have to leave their countries. They get a certificate both from Oxford and McGill as well as the YOA. The practical component is they have to go on three missions of five to ten days to communities that need, artist's teachers to give teaching, and we are developing now a work market, a labor market for them because these communities need them, so they engage them for longer. So, we have now these incredible community leaders who are creating missions in their own countries and are now funding work not just in orchestra, which is very hard, particularly in the United States to find work in an orchestra because it's unionized and they really protect those that have Join the orchestra for life. It's sort of life employment. But these musicians are now becoming great social entrepreneurs, and that I'm very proud of.

BY: You brought a few cookbooks, recipe books with you today. Those were sent to you, I think, years later after you came to the United States.

HO: After my mother died.

BY: Yes.

HO: [Unintelligible] she hung onto them.

BY: Do you remember, was there anything that you brought with you from Venezuela when you came to the United States?

HO: Yeah, I brought my economics textbooks because I was sure I was not going to understand the same textbooks in English. I brought that. I brought the recipes I had memorized because I told you I would cook as a little girl. So I, pound cake I would know how to make a soup, I would know how to make a salads, I would know how to make typical, I would know how to make *ayaka's* and *arepas* and *tequeños* and so I brought the memories with me other than the books, I didn't bring anything else.

BY: Do you still have any of those books?

HO: Yes, I have them all. Yes, I have not had the heart to give them away. There is [unintelligible] economics in Spanish.

BY: Well that's something we can talk about, might be a nice thing to illustrate on the website.

HO: Oh, you bring, bring the book.

BY: [Unintelligible]Yes.

HO: You want me to bring those books. Okay, I will. I'll have to find one.

3rd: Just one.

HO: [Unintelligible] economics in Spanish.

BY: Yes.

HO: Yes.

BY: I think we've covered a lot today. Is there anything else you'd like to add?

HO: You know, one thing we did not cover. Yeah, I'll leave this with you.

BY: Sure.

HO: Because this is the story of our firm and you might want to, it's very readable and the chapter that I think is most interesting is the chapter when I discovered I was a good strategist, which was when I was 4 years old and that, because that determined. There are moments in life, like the Fulbright story, there is one *piñata* I attempted. I bring *piñatas* of my children. Here is a *piñata*, sort of pictures of a *piñata*. This was carnival in Venezuela and my grandmother had sewn that dress and the hat and everything for me she was a great seamstress but the story of the *piñata*, I... I... and this is the beginning in the beginning I discovered I was competent by attending Venezuelan *piñatas*. That was first time I discovered I felt different and it was because the *piñatas*, there's a strategy, there is an optimal strategy for *piñata*, but I did not know what it was. The boys would want to be first and hit it very hard. The girls would want to be last because it would take time for them and I narrate that there and I tried every one of those strategies. Be first, be in the middle or be among the last. The people in the middle are neither here nor following and I ended up being in the middle, by the way, to allow the boys to begin cracking the *piñata*. But, I did not want to be the last, because the people that were last were the last to actually be able to access the candies. The *piñata* will start swinging from one place to another, and you were the bat, and you had your eyes covered. You had no idea, but then the *piñata* broke because you broke the *piñata*. Boys would love that and I tried whether I would like that, and I didn't like it because then you couldn't get any candies because by then a flock of kids would be all over and you were the last to jump in. So I said, no, no. What is my purpose in this part of this party? Is to get the most candies. Now, how do you get the most candies in a *piñata*? You go in the middle and then you let the boy break the *piñata* at the end it's swinging, you don't know where it's going to end and you actually see where there is the least number of kids and see where the *piñata* is swinging and the mothers are opening up the field because they don't want you to get hit by the by the stick, okay? [unintelligible] so I would watch carefully, and I would go with this big organza dresses that my grandmother would make for me, which were itchy, they were horrible. They really put you at a competitive disadvantage or led you to the boys who could run everywhere, okay? It was mortifyingly itchy. So, I would see the *piñata* swinging and then all of a sudden I'd say okay, I know what to do. See where most of the candies are about to fall, don't position yourself stand away from the field, look at where all the candies are falling, and jump in that direction and spread your skirt widely, okay? And starts scooping in the candies under this okay? And then I would sit there like a hen on a nest and then all the kids would get whatever they could get. There were no plastic bags at the time. Whatever you could, even if it was not much, a few candies here and there and the kids would leave to go eat cake, okay? I would say they are sitting with all these candies and then when everyone would have left I would pick up all the candy and all the little toys, party favors, and put them inside my skirt and go with my skirt like that, okay. Then I would real, this is an important part of the story because I discovered what really makes me happy. Well it made me very happy I had beaten them all at their game, yeah. But second, as I was leaving there would always be

one kid who was crying because they had caught nothing and there were out of 2 or 3 kids, so it made me really happy to realize I could go and make that kid happy and put some of the candy and give it to them. So, that was... you have no idea how that image, when I was write in the book, I said: "When, when did I get a sense that I could?" and it was at that particular *piñata* party, where I cracked the optimum strategy for how to get the best of the *piñata*.

3rd: Beautiful story. Is fantastic.

HO: Anyway, thank you very much. So what you want to do with this cookbook, do you want a photograph or should I leave them with you?

[END OF AUDIO]