

ORAL MEMOIRS

OF

RAMON GARZA, SR.

An interview conducted on

February 6, 2017

Interviewer: Victor Valdez

Angelo State University

West Texas Collection

“War Stories: West Texans and the Experience of War, War World I to the Present”

LEGAL STATUS: The oral memoirs of Ramon Garza are unrestricted. The interview agreement was signed on February 6, 2017.

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Interviewer: Victor Valdez

Transcriber: Victor Valdez

Editor: Carson Jones

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VALDEZ: My name is Victor Valdez. I'm with . . .

GARZA: Ramon Garza, a veteran.

VALDEZ: And we are going to go ahead and start the interview. Um we will start at number two. Uh, it says, "When and where you born? Where did you grow up?"

GARZA: I was born in Sonora, Texas and was raised in Ozona, Texas. That's where I grew up. Playing baseball, working odd jobs here and there until I grew up and finished school.

VALDEZ: Okay. We will go ahead and skip to three.

GARZA: Three.

VALDEZ: The third question. But the third one, it says, "How would you characterize West Texans' relationship to the military?"

GARZA: Well, they are pretty good. They are not bad. I did six months after I got back from overseas, so I didn't get a chance to do much of it here. Mostly overseas. So, I characterized them pretty good . . . good relationship with the military and the people around San Angelo that helped them . . . that helps keep them here.

VALDEZ: Question four, it says, "When and where did you enter in the armed forces? Which branch did you serve in? What were your years of service?"

GARZA: Um, I came into the service in 1973. It was June of 1973, right after I graduated. I went in it . . . was uh to enlist or wait until they drafted. It was when the draft was going on. Hmm, so, I served in the Army. I had to go to Lubbock for my test. Went to basic training in Fort Polk, Louisiana. I went for my school in South Carolina.

VALDEZ: Okay. Question five: "During your years of service, were you primarily in the enlisted ranks, a non-commissioned officer, an officer, a warrant officer? If you served as an officer what was the source of your commission?"

GARZA: Enlisted.

VALDEZ: Okay. Question six: "In which military conflict did you take part?"

GARZA: What do you mean by that?

VALDEZ: It just means like uh which war did you serve in?

GARZA: Oh, in the Vietnam War. I served in the Vietnam War, time it was still going on.

VALDEZ: Oh, okay.

GARZA: Yeah.

VALDEZ: Was there any other wars?

GARZA: No, just the Vietnam War. That's the only time

VALDEZ: Okay. Uh question seven: "Why did you enlist in the armed forces? What motivated you to do so?"

GARZA: What motivated me? Me and my brother-in-law got into it one day. He said I was scared going overseas and I said, "Nope." It's got . . . Five of us are supposed to be going together. And uh one of them rebelled and they decided not to and . . . Well, I had a choice between working a Texaco station or being a plumber . . . sent to school to be a plumber. So, I wanted to get the draft over with and go serve and . . . get it over with and come back and start my new life.

VALDEZ: Uh question eight: "What was your training like?"

GARZA: It was hard but now that I look at it . . . look at it back, I see it was fun. I mean, there was a lot of hard times uh that I think we had to do—which they don't do much now—but uh there was some good times. Real good times.

VALDEZ: It kind of prepared you for . . .

GARZA: Prepared me for the training, yeah. I mean, they did . . . They went over . . . We didn't have . . . I don't want to say that I'm calling it this. There were not such people . . . like parents getting involved . . .

VALDEZ: Oh, yeah.

GARZA: . . . with the military.

VALDEZ: Yeah, it was your own choice.

GARZA: You went to serve your country, not just to wear your uniform and say you were there. You went to serve your country. And the treatment they give you, you have to have it to do whatever you need to do.

VALDEZ: Yeah. Uh question nine: "What were race relations like when you were enlisted?"

GARZA: Hmm, race relationships in the service um was pretty good. It was a good challenge Between . . . Because I learned how to stand up on my own two feet, learn a lot of things that you wouldn't have learned out in the streets to tell you the truth. It did me good. It did me real good. I'm real surprised. I don't recommend anyone not going. If you want to serve your country, go and serve your country but you also got to tell your parents to stay out of it.

VALDEZ: Yeah, it's got to be your own decision.

GARZA: Decision, yeah.

VALDEZ: Not your parents' decision.

GARZA: God damn, now my eyes are going.

VALDEZ: That's okay. Uh question ten: "Did you find your service challenging?" Well . . . yeah.

GARZA: Yeah, it was because you know, like I said, it showed me how to grow up, you know.

VALDEZ: You had to grow up quick.

GARZA: Yeah, with no responsibilities, you know. So . . .

VALDEZ: Question eleven: "What conception did you have of the United States at the time of your enlistment? What did America symbolize to you? What did you think it stood for?"

GARZA: Well, the way I think is uh . . . I don't mean . . . I'm not saying anything about Trump being wrong or anything, but America was made for . . . to let the people come in and be free.

VALDEZ: Uh-huh.

GARZA: And that's what I think we went there to fight . . . to do that.

VALDEZ: To fight for freedom.

GARZA: To have people on the freedom, you know, not, you know . . .

VALDEZ: So, America is pretty much . . . You, of course, go and fight for freedom and you risk your life.

GARZA: You risk your life for somebody to tell them not to come in. You know, not all of them are criminals.

VALDEZ: Yeah, uh-huh.

GARZA: Like you're saying we got a country right next to us that can help us out and we are putting them . . . you know. So . . .

VALDEZ: Uh question twelve: "Were you deployed overseas? If so, what did you understand about the mission you were being asked to complete?"

GARZA: Yes, I was deployed overseas uh for a couple of years. Um, it was a good mission,

good time, you know. We had to go serve. I mean, we were always waiting to be deployed to wherever we are needed. You know, like the Watergate with Nixon . . .

VALDEZ: Uh-huh.

GARZA: . . . we had to go to Italy to be supporters there for a while.

VALDEZ: Oh, okay.

GARZA: I mean, it was a little danger but . . .

VALDEZ: You just had to go and do it because they had told you so.

GARZA: Ah, I forgot my eye drops. Tell Miranda to get my eye drops.

VALDEZ: Do you need your eye drops?

GARZA: No, no. Go ahead, go ahead. It's just going to do that even with that sometimes.

VALDEZ: Oh, okay. Question thirteen: "What units did you serve in during your deployment?"

GARZA: I served for the 1st Cav. unit.

VALDEZ: 1st Cav. unit.

GARZA: Uh-huh. Then I served also under infantry. Infantry, yeah.

VALDEZ: Oh, okay. Uh . . .

GARZA: Also, in administration . . . I did administration. You learn a little bit about everything, whichever you can get into, mostly. Yeah.

VALDEZ: Oh, okay. Uh question fourteen: "Did you serve in direct combat during your deployment?"

GARZA: Direct combat? No. No. I mean, just the time that we had that Nixon thing that we went on. That was everybody. Didn't . . . It's like I said, the military hides a lot of things and that's what you have to be aware of. I'm pretty sure our mission was not . . . You will probably not even find it around.

VALDEZ: Yeah.

GARZA: Only the people that were there . . .

VALDEZ: That will only know about it. The people that were there will know about it. Oh, okay.

GARZA: Yeah. Uh-huh.

VALDEZ: Uh question fifteen: "Were you wounded in action?"

GARZA: No.

VALDEZ: No, okay. Uh question sixteen: "Did you become a prisoner of war?"

GARZA: No.

VALDEZ: No, okay. Uh question seventeen: "What did you think of the local inhabitants that you encountered?" I guess that's just saying, like, the people you met while you were deployed.

GARZA: Well . . . when I was in Europe, I had . . . I was overseas in Europe. I had lived out in the economy and there was some real good people . . . real good German people. And sometimes, you see some hate ones but most of the time, a lot of them, you see their culture and find out how different it is from our culture to theirs. I mean, when I was there in nine . . . the years that I was there, I saw like a pick-up. And over here, you know, we have dump trucks and dump things.

VALDEZ: Uh-huh.

GARZA: Over there is the bucket.

VALDEZ: Oh, the bucket, yeah.

GARZA: They lift that. So, they were behind about ten years. Ten years behind.

VALDEZ: Ten years behind. Oh, okay.

GARZA: We are not at that point anymore, you know. We had those.

VALDEZ: But at a time, it was like that?

GARZA: Uh-huh.

VALDEZ: Okay.

GARZA: They sure do drink a lot of beer over there!

VALDEZ: Oh, they do? [Both laugh]

GARZA: They do! That's one thing I can't understand about Americans, saying that

beer does that. But you go to Germany, they drink beer in the morning. They drink beer at lunch. They drink beer at break. And yes, the kids can come in and take them to the bar, and sit there and drink beer with their dad.

VALDEZ: Oh, yeah, there is not a drinking age.

GARZA: Not a drinking age or nothing. So, you can send your little baby to buy a beer. If he can speak, he can buy you a beer.

VALDEZ: Dang, that's crazy! [Both laugh] Okay, uh question eighteen: "When you interacted with local inhabitants, what do you think their conceptions were of the United States? Did you ever engage them in a conversation about what America meant to you?"

GARZA: Oh, yeah. I'm not going to say I didn't date some of the German women up there. And uh some of them think of us as good people and some of them just hate the crap out of us, you know.

VALDEZ: It's just . . .

GARZA: Uh, yeah. But you find some real good people that will give their shoulders off their back, you know . . . on there. And when you find those kind of people, they're good. Because there is sometimes people that aren't worth a crap, you know. They hate America with a passion, you know.

VALDEZ: With a passion, yeah.

GARZA: But . . .

VALDEZ: So, I guess it just depends on where you go?

GARZA: Yeah, whatever you're in, yeah. Because you're going to find a little bit of that everywhere you go, you know. You will see that but they're not as bad as other places where, you know, they burn stuff and stuff.

VALDEZ: Oh, yeah.

GARZA: Yeah, you know, they . . . but the best time . . . like I said, I lived there in Germany. I lived in Heidelberg, Germany in barracks. And uh I lived out in the country and I had a beautiful land. Lord, and they were so nice people. And um that's where you find them, mostly, if you move out away, not where the base is.

VALDEZ: Yeah.

GARZA: Get away from the base and in the little towns.

VALDEZ: The little, small towns.

GARZA: Uh-huh and you will have . . . And if you know how to enjoy Europe, you can see a lot of country by driving. Get your license and go out there and enjoy yourself and just drive.

VALDEZ: Just do it.

GARZA: Yeah. And you will see a lot of places where they uh make their beer, and where they sit and go and eat different kinds of food. You try all that. Like, that's what I did. I used to get up Saturday mornings and get up and go eat breakfast in one . . . and travel to as far as I could go and go buy and drink beer here now, and then and just drive and see the countryside. And you will see a lot of countryside. Beautiful countryside.

VALDEZ: Uh-huh. So, there's just so much just going off-base on your own and just experiencing the country that you're in?

GARZA: Well, let me tell you something about the military. A lot of people—military guys—stay in the barracks.

VALDEZ: Stay in the barracks? Oh, okay.

GARZA: They call them “barrack rats” because all they do . . . All their time they are there, they just go downtown and back. Some of them don't even go out of the barracks, they just live there. And there . . . We used to have uh . . . across the street from where we lived, they used to call it “Pop's Specials.”

VALDEZ: Uh-huh.

GARZA: They used to have sandwiches. Oh, they were beautiful. Good sandwiches in that place. Oh, that man had a millionaire place. Every day it was packed! And that was the only place where the soldiers would go. A lot of them don't go out of the base. They just stay in because they're homeless . . . I mean they feel homesick and all that. They just want to do their time and come home.

VALDEZ: And get out.

GARZA: They don't want to be bothered or want to do, you know . . . So, that's what you see there. So . . .

VALDEZ: Uh question nineteen: “How did your service influence or affect your family at home?”

GARZA: Well, that did affect it because you had to be away from them [blows nose]. Excuse me. You have to be away from them for a long period of time, sometimes a year or two years by the time you ever see them. But it depends on the . . . actually, your wife and how she reacts to that kind of environment, mostly. Because things have to get adjusted to the kind of environment

because there are times that they are going to be able to live with you, and there is going to be times you aren't going to be able to see her . . .

VALDEZ: For a long time.

GARZA: A long time, yeah. So . . .

VALDEZ: Uh question twenty: "What are your most vivid memories of your time in service?"

GARZA: What was my what?

VALDEZ: Your most vivid . . . Like, what's the one thing that uh . . . the things while in your service that you remember the most? Or something that always sticks to you every time you think about it? Or just something that happened—whether it's good or bad—that you can just . . . if you were just to . . . like, say tomorrow, could pull it up, you know, when you wake up or whatever?

GARZA: Well, it's kind of hard sometimes on that because a lot of things happened there. Like I was saying, that not all in the books but what you see. It's just like the old saying says, "What happens in Vegas stays in Vegas." And that's what you have to look at. That's the way it is because most . . . A lot of that is confidential.

VALDEZ: Yeah.

GARZA: You speak out and no telling where you will end up.

VALDEZ: Yeah.

GARZA: You know, its politics. Politics always going to be involved. And there is going to be stuff that you're not going to like and you see . . . and all you can do is just . . . because you can come out here in public and you can tell the news . . . You can tell anyone what you want to do. But we're real . . . Actually, we are just peons. The big people are up there. They are going to cover every little step they can, so it don't matter what you say, it's going to come back and hit you in the face.

VALDEZ: Uh-huh.

GARZA: Because you can't say what we did or what we didn't did.

VALDEZ: Yeah.

GARZA: The only way you're going . . . is if everybody got together and said, "Well, we were there." You know, that's the only way you're going to win. Because like I said, a lot of it is cover carpet.

VALDEZ: Yeah, they sweep it under the carpet and they don't want you to know. The history

books pretty much tell you what they want you to know but they are not going to tell you all the stuff . . . all the crap that happened.

GARZA: No.

VALDEZ: Now, unless you go and talk to somebody that actually served that . . . They will be able to tell you what actually happened, you know?

GARZA: You see it in the news a lot. Like I don't know if a lot of people don't listen uh . . . story of Tillman from . . . I think it's the Oakland Raiders, that football player. He stopped playing football to serve his country. All the sudden he got shot. And how can anybody say everything was hush up? Well, for a minute it was a big thing and all the sudden it was all hushed up.

VALDEZ: Yeah.

GARZA: You never found out . . . I don't even think the family found out how he died or . . . somehow he got killed. They're not going to tell you. Like I said, it's always better for you to keep your mouth shut and not look like a fool because that's what they are going to make you look like, you know.

VALDEZ: Uh question twenty-one: "What sorts of technology did you use in the service?"

GARZA: Well, what do you mean by technology?

VALDEZ: Like, technology. Did you use any uh . . . ?

GARZA: We used all kinds of weapons. We used them, yeah. We used all kinds.

VALDEZ: Was there any like . . . ?

GARZA: M60, M16s, 45s. I can't remember what they called them . . . shotguns, you know.

VALDEZ: Like the radios.

GARZA: Yeah, you . . . them radios, you use your knife. I mean, you have . . . you know, you have . . . you have so much. It depends what they give you.

VALDEZ: Oh, okay.

GARZA: Some of them have 45s, some of them have M16s. Other ones have . . . bazooka.

VALDEZ: Bazooka.

GARZA: Yeah. Other ones will have the uh shotguns. It depends on what you're qualified for, actually.

VALDEZ: Oh, okay.

GARZA: Say you have to qualify for each weapon, you know.

VALDEZ: You're not just given a weapon?

GARZA: You're not just given a weapon, no. No, that's why they have marksmanship, experts, and uh . . . I can't remember what the other one is because you have to go to a firing range and you've got to . . . when you go through basic training, you have to go through that and they . . . they . . . going by points.

VALDEZ: Uh-huh.

GARZA: You shoot each weapon because . . . you have to learn how to use all the weapons because you're going to be in the ground. So, you have to learn each one of them. So, they will put you in there and they'll score you and see where you score so you can be marksman, expert, or . . . can't remember all three of them.

VALDEZ: Yeah, uh-huh.

GARZA: There are three of them. And that's where you get who is the best sharpshooter.

VALDEZ: Oh. So, it's pretty much like there's uh the sniper?

GARZA: Not everyone . . . like the snipers are with a star on where they are expert shooters.

VALDEZ: Oh, okay. There is like the close-range people, you know, that, you know, are good at shooting close and there is other people . . .

GARZA: Yeah. Well, it depends. Like, are you talking about experts and snipers? And . . . that . . . they go through a different kind of exercise . . .

VALDEZ: Oh, okay.

GARZA: . . . than we would go, see. We're trained to a certain degree. We are not trained like they are, hopefully, where they go to more training and they learn more about the weapons and stuff. More than what we do. We learn how to shoot them and that . . . because not everyone makes experts. Some of them are on the low grade but they made it up . . . I mean they passed, in other words.

VALDEZ: Oh, okay. Uh question twenty-two: "Did you expect to face any challenges when you returned to civilian life? If yes, what challenges?"

GARZA: Well, I didn't expect . . . When I got out the first time, I didn't expect . . . the civilian life started to get rough because, man, I couldn't find a job. I had to work out in the fields. Uh

that's when they had those jug things. You called them . . . You had to carry it. And we had to go out to this mountain and roll it down and stick it with your foot, down. I mean, it was hard work to do. But I had to end up leaving my parents until I could get enough money to move until finally, I got sick and I ended up going to the VA. And I got lucky. I was supposed to go in there . . . I went in there for surgery to be circumcised and I ended up with a job while I was there. So, I became a nurse's aide. I worked with them for about two years then I went to Florida. Then went back into the military in 1978.

VALDEZ: Mm. Okay, let's see. Uh question twenty-four: "Did being from . . . being in Texas shape your years in service in any way?"

GARZA: What do you mean by that?

VALDEZ: Like being uh born here in Texas, did it shape the way that . . . ?

GARZA: The only thing about shaping the world is being . . . was when we were raised here in uh . . . being raised and stuff, the thing is the prejudice um and all that discrimination between the Mexicans and whites at the time. We didn't have much blacks. I think about two families . . . black, so we didn't have too much. But we had a border way, a draw, where you couldn't pass through there. No one crosses that. Nobody leaves on that side. All the Mexicans on that side and the whites on this side and you can't move from there, you know. You can come to school but that's about it.

VALDEZ: Oh, okay.

GARZA: And when we were in school, they stayed by the band hall on that side—on the other side of the high school—and we had to be on the front side or at the theater across the street. That's how it was. We ended up getting into conversations and arguments and we would go down to that bridge. And under that bridge that is where we would get into it. Everybody fought there and everybody be on each side and nobody got in it. And that's how . . . that's part of growing up. So, you know, most of my life was speaking Spanish. When I started learning more English when I went into the military . . . which I don't regret because I mean, I learned a lot of things.

VALDEZ: Uh-huh.

GARZA: Because there is no telling what I would have done without that, you know. So . . .

VALDEZ: Uh question twenty-five: "After your time in the military, has your conception of Texas changed? Why or why not?" It's just pretty much saying has your view of Texas changed?

GARZA: Well, it changed because there was a lot of different things that life . . . you know, generations coming up. And seeing it coming from the years that we were growing up to now to where I got out, it was a lot of difference. I mean, it was more harder. It's getting more harder nowadays to live, you know. It takes two instead of one.

VALDEZ: Yeah. Times are just changing.

GARZA: Uh-huh.

VALDEZ: Yeah. Okay uh this one is pretty much the same thing. Uh question twenty-six: “After your time in the military, has your conception—view—of the United States changed or has it stayed the same?”

GARZA: Mm no, not really. It’s still the same. I’m just not agreeing with a lot of . . .

VALDEZ: Politics.

GARZA: Politics, yeah. Trump . . . Trump is saying that . . . Because, like I said, we went in there for one reason and we believed in United States and America. That’s the reason we’re protecting it. And, yeah, I agree with a lot that they are taking our jobs and that but the man upstairs, that’s why he puts us on top because he wants us to accept everybody and give them a chance. You have to give them a chance.

VALDEZ: Everybody deserves a chance.

GARZA: Chance . . . and see, that’s why I can’t understand why he is pushing against Mexico. Which Mexico is right here and we can all relate good and close. And I mean, I know there’s a lot of drugs coming through this and that. And these kind of people should understand that we are bringing you in but also you have to respect our flag, you know. Just don’t think that you can come over here and want to take over, you know. Because the situation . . . Then go back and see what kind of life you’re going to see over there. Then what you’re seeing here . . .

VALDEZ: Yeah.

GARZA: I’m not saying you have to give up your culture or anything like that but give America a little respect. Because we’re here and there is some of you all that are serving with us, some of your family members, and are grown here . . . now serving America. So, we have to respect that too.

VALDEZ: Uh question twenty-seven: “How do you feel about your military service looking back?”

GARZA: Looking back at it now . . . on the day that I was there. I think sometimes sitting here in my recliner . . . and just laugh. It was so much fun. It was a lot of times that it was hard because of the training, because of what you had to do. But you had to learn those things because it’s either going to save your life or somebody’s life. So . . .

VALDEZ: Yeah.

GARZA: You have to be on top, so . . . But, if you looked at it, there were a lot of moments where . . . like at one time, we went on a maneuver and we had to go at two in the morning. It

was dark out uh . . . some place out in the wilderness in Louisiana. We had to go from point A to point B but, in the middle of that . . . between, there is a POW camp. And you had to get there without being caught.

VALDEZ: Ah, I see.

GARZA: Uh-huh. Because if you get caught, oh, boy! [Laughs]

VALDEZ: Yeah.

GARZA: You . . . I mean, well . . . something. They put you in a hole.

VALDEZ: Risky, yeah.

GARZA: It's risky because a lot of people got caught. And they tortured you. You will be tortured, you know, because that's what you're going to be facing. When you were going through that maneuver, they would throw flyers, and you had to hit the ground because that lights up the place and that's how the enemy comes and finds you.

VALDEZ: Ah, I see.

GARZA: And a lot of people would do that. But, like, when I did, I ended up in poison ivy . . . plant of poison ivy at the time. But it saved my neck, you know. I made it to point B without getting caught but when I saw some of them that were caught after the maneuver was over, [laughs] I was just happy because, you know. . . .

VALDEZ: Yeah.

GARZA: Because now that I think . . . Nowadays they don't do that because there are so many families getting involved because they think that just to put the uniform . . . that's all their kids . . . that makes them proud.

VALDEZ: Yeah.

GARZA: Yeah, they don't want their kids to go to do the training because they will go running to the president like how they did over here with Bush. Hey, that's why you went into the military, you know? You make it, you make it. If you don't, well . . .

VALDEZ: At least you know that you tried.

GARZA: Yeah. You're saving the people here but I don't know why your family is going and griping about it. They shouldn't. That's something about the old days, when the draft was going on. You know, we didn't have this. We didn't have parents or mothers crying and going over to the presidents, throwing a fit, throwing a protest about all this in the old days. When Vietnam

and all this was going, we were not . . . Also, they didn't bring us like how they do now with Iraq and all this. You know, giving these soldiers everything. When we were in, we didn't have none of that. You came from wherever you did your time. You did. It was normal.

VALDEZ: Yeah.

GARZA: All this you hear now is a lot different.

VALDEZ: Yeah.

GARZA: So, see, you have to look at that too.

VALDEZ: Uh question twenty-eight: "Do you have any advice for the young men and women who are just entering the service?"

GARZA: No. Uh the only advice I give them is that I hope they enjoy them because you will see a lot of country. It was like I was telling you: if they would put their heads up when they go overseas or wherever they go, they should take the . . . the opportunity to see as much as they can because there is a lot of beautiful country out there overseas that a lot of people have not seen. And that's one thing I did. I saw some of it . . . not all of it but I saw some of it. And being a barrack rat is not very good. People . . . that's what caused them to have all these problems of anxiety and . . . or mental problems because they just sit there and listen and think about what went on or what happened or something that they can't deal with and they don't. You need to block it off, what happened. You see a person that's dead, that their head blowed away or whatever. You have to just deal with it but also stop and say, "Okay, this stays here and it's over with. We are now home. Let it go. Stop dreaming."

VALDEZ: Stop dreaming.

GARZA: Stop dreaming, because that's only going to bring you down. The same with the people in the military who are still going through all that war. They go and still sit in the barracks and just sit there. And a lot . . . that's hard, you know.

VALDEZ: Uh let's see. Do you have any items, objects, correspondence that you wish to share with the project?" No, I don't think that there is anything for that one. Uh let's just go to question thirty. "Would you like to share anything else about your service or do you feel like there is anything else you want to say?"

GARZA: Hmm, not really, but . . . I think we covered everything pretty good. Like I said, I mean, the young kids nowadays just got to understand to . . . They have to learn how to cope with it, you know, or ask for help. I'm not going to say much about the veterans VA hospital because, I mean, my experience with them has not been real good, you know. And to me, I think that the president should give us the opportunity to choose our doctor instead of having him bring in doctors from all over . . . Not discriminating anybody or anything but bringing them from all over . . . And they only last for . . . some of them . . . sometimes a year. Some of them will only be there three or four years and then they leave and then we have to start all over.

Giving them what's wrong with our health and learn all our stuff and then they leave. And then we got to go all the way again.

VALDEZ: Go back all over.

GARZA: We should be able to get one where we are in our station or wherever we live and let us get to that. And it should just be approved one way or another just to keep track, and not no fraud going on to keep us, so we can go and be with this doctor and always be with us. And we can make an appointment and we won't have all these delays and all this other stuff, people waiting there for hours in the emergency room. I was there in the emergency room for almost twelve hours for a cold. Now, that is ridiculous. I mean . . . no. I mean . . . or let's just say even if it's a cold, bronchitis or whatever, ten hours is too long to be sitting in an emergency room because they take the people that are more sick than the other. That's not right!

VALDEZ: That's not right, yeah.

GARZA: And the way . . . Sometimes you will find people at the VA who are good people. And there are some that you meet that you wish you could choke them. So, that's what I got. So . . . that's it.

VALDEZ: Okay, that's it. That concludes our interview. Thank you.