

Interview with Amarilies Lopes Dos Santos  
Conducted by Maria Zeco  
Spring 2003

A: [Amarilies] Gonsalves Correira Lopes

M: And where were you born Amarilies?

A: I was born in the Island of Cape Verde

M: Ok

A: In the west coast of Africa

M: Can you tell me a little but more about ... Cape Verde

A: Well, Cape Verde Islands is a group of islands that only nine are inhabited ... our climate can be very dry and it's poor there's you either have it or you don't have it there so that's about it

[a little laughter]

M: ok and

A: I mean there's a lot more but that's it

M: Ok, in which of the islands where you born?

A: I was born in the island of Fogo, Fogo meaning the volcano island

M: Ok

A: The volcano has actually become active since I was born probably twice or three times

M: Were you there when it was active?

A: No I wasn't, thank god [laughter]

M: Ok ... Ok Amariles what year were you born?

A: I was born August 25<sup>th</sup> 1968, Right now I'm going to be 35 years old

M: That's good. And ... in Cape Verde who did you live with there?

A: Well, I lived with a variety of people, I lived with my mom, I remember just you know moving, living with my aunt. I eventually ended up living with some people that were related to our family but I didn't really know them that well, I just remember moving around not living with the one parent for a long amount of time. My mom you know growing up my mom was sick a lot so I moved a lot but eventually at the age of eleven I was you know fortunate enough to come to the United States.

M: Really and going back to your life back in Cape Verde can you tell me about a typical day for you there?

A: Okay, since I came when I was eleven my typical day, I remember at a very young age had to fetch for myself pretty much, I had to go a couple of miles, I remember to get water. We didn't have none of the luxuries that we have here, no water no electricity we had to go. I remember we had to go to the rugged hills and to go and get water I remember walking most of the time barefoot, most of the time barefoot to get water and I remember having to carry that water home at a very young age I must have been probably six or seven carrying it home. I mean this is 2 miles probably back and forth ... or four miles total. It was hard, sometimes you were in line for a long time to get this water that's just dripping I mean it's hard, it was hard.

M: Was that typical of the children back then?

A: Ohh yes, very typical they... a lot of the chores where from carrying trying to go about the hills to find woods for the fire so you could a meal, to getting water, to cook your meal and drink those were ... basically ...you know keeping your house clean. That was about it.

M: Ok, Once again about your living situation how did you feel about that, having to move around so much?

A: Well I guess it was typical back then for, if there's more than one you know, there's more than a couple children living in the house. Sometimes a parent, a single parent wasn't able to take care you know, of all of you guys so sometimes you moved from house to house, family member will

take you for a while and it's like back and forth actually. I guess it was typical back then you know... that was it, that was the life.

M: Ok and ... going back to a little bit about your family history how many brothers and sisters do you have?

A: One too many  
[laughter]

A: Well, from the maternal side I have,... there are a total of five of us. From my father's side that's another story. We have about, my father have about fifteen children.

M: Really.

A: Counting myself so, I have about probably eighteen brothers and sisters

M: Is that typical for a Cape Verdean family to have that many children?

A: Yes, yes the, the man often had more than one, they would mostly be married but they would have more than one rendezvous, shall we say, and in turn they would have a lot of children you know out of the marriages.

M: ok

A: And I was one of them

M: Were you very close to all your brothers and sisters?

A: Not really because my brothers and sisters we really didn't live together for a long time but you know, I loved my brothers and sister when we got together we always had a good time but it's like I don't remember growing up with my brothers and sisters. If I remember a little about like being together but not too much but, we kept in touch and ... finally now we're all together here in America so.. We're pretty close.

M: That's good, and ... As for the adults back in Cape Verde what was their typical day like?

A: ... as far as mom, I remember her day would be taking care, you know taking care of the, that we had food, we has things to eat. Her job would be taking care of the animals you know, getting milk for us from the animals, feeding the animals and you know, doing crops around the house or just going to the market trying to get us you know something to eat. It was has not all you know, It was hard growing because we did without a lot, we always did have something to eat weather it was leftovers or ... we always shared. We had a lot of family that lived around us when I did with my mother that you know that you know sometimes we cooked and shared and that how it was.

M: So based on what you say, do you think that family was a big component of you growing up? Like your closeness and all that.

A: I would say so you know, no matter moving around I was always with family members I mean looking back I mean that was the way it was. I might have liked it back then but I appreciate it now because it's made me what I am. It's made me strong, It's made me want to like, try to do more with my life so, I think you know our family they were very tough. A lot of the women were alone. The man sometimes went out of the country and don't really you know take care of you know of their children. Not I wouldn't say that, a lot of them you know would go but you know they would have too many children I guess to take care of all of them but, they did the best they could, let's put it that way. I mean, I know my dad always took care of us. I mean he always whether it was sending us food you know, monthly or you know clothing whenever he could you know when he was out of the country but, he did took care of us.

M: Ok, so now you had said that you came to the United States when you were ten, I'm sorry, eleven

A: Eleven

M: Can you tell me a little about that when you first came here?

A: Ohh... It's like a kid at Christmas you know with candy all around. It was great when I first came I had to, I had to I lived with my father for a little while then I went to live with my brother for a while... because my father was you know settled in his own way with his family you know he

raised all his children, I am the younger of all the kids. So I think I went to live with my brother and my sister-in-law who was like a backbone. She was you know wonderful to me. She pretty told me I could do anything I wanted to do if I put my mind into it. I think things happen for a reason. I mean it was great growing up over there.

M: Ok, once again going back to Cape Verde, do they have any, did they give you any impressions of what the United States would be like? What did they say the U.S was like when you were there?

A: The impression that I get from the United States they would ... the way they talked about it or when I see immigrants from here um.. going you know Cape Verdeans going back to visit their loved ones. When I see the way they looked, the way they spend money, or the jewelry that they had I had this impression that Cape Verde we would actually find money in the tree. That was actually my impression as a kid, that I would come in and have my own money tree.  
[Laughter]

A: So that was a big letdown when I came into New York

M: How did you feel when you first saw it? Like did it fulfill your expectations or ..

A: I was in awe, to tell you the truth when I first got here you know I was so plane sick that I didn't really pay attention to much, I was really sick motion sickness. But when I first came and saw the buildings and the things that I never seen before like you know the airplanes, the airports you know it was really, I was in awe. It was great.

M: Ok, and you said when you first came you lived with your sister-in-law?

A: My sister-in -law and my brother.

M: And your brother, was it just you and your sister-in-law and your brother?

A: When I came then they they had one child. They had a kid so it was great, it was just us.

I mean like you know I was part of the family when I came, they made me feel very loved and welcomed.

M: That's good. Once again going back to you immigrating here to the United States, was it a hard process for you to come, did you have to go through a lot of steps to get here?

A: Ohh... yeah. I mean my dad was already here so... he sponsored for us to come, it takes a long time to I guess ... His wife had to kind of adopted us you know for affidavit of support she would have I guess be very involved with that, So it took a while to me it took a long time, I guess you know for us to come but it's a long process as far as the paper work I don't remember because I didn't do much of it but I just remember going here and there for you know finger printing, blood test I remember a lot of that physical stuff before you come over here, but it is a long process.

M: So you did realize what was happening. You realized that they were failing [?] for you to come to the United States?

A: I did realize that, yes

M: And were you happy with that, did you want to come?

A: I was very happy yet scared because I had not ever yet lived with my father. I can honestly say I probably I've seen his pictures I've met him probably once or twice before then and I just didn't have much you know a relationship with my father so it was kind of scary too. To leave what I know to come over here and I knew I had a lot of brothers and sisters over here. So when I came I felt very welcomed there were all my brothers and sisters there welcoming me so... it was nice.

M: Ok and when you got here to the United States did you preserve some of your culture from back in Cape Verde like food and language.

A: Ohh definitely, definitely. Definitely the food and the language ... I still speak very much Creole I came when I was eleven but, my mother doesn't speak English and you know my father you know I have to speak Creole with him so you definitely have to keep the culture. The food is the best

part because it...

M: Can you tell me a little about it, about the different foods?

A: Ohh... our foods ... a lot of it is like we have a special dish that's one of my favorites it's called cachupa it's made of hominy which is corn, basically it's like a stew you basically put anything that you want to put in there you can make it with fish, beans or a different variety of stuff and we have there's so many, one of my favorites' ... probably is cuscus. We call it cuscus. Um.. C-U-S-C-U-S. That's it's almost like a corn muffin you know you basically bake it, it's one the tradition breakfast you know stuff back home... we have one other thing that we have which is popular among my America friends whenever I make it's like ... fried dough with tune inside it's called pastel and it's very popular you know with as I said with my friends so they really enjoy that.

M: That's good and ... like you said when you came here do you think that your cultural practices did they get stronger or weaker now you know that you were living in the United States?

A: I thought it would get, you know it would be weaker but I mostly the activities that I do attend they are Cape Verdeans, we do have a social club here that was open when I came from Cape Verde by the Cape Verdean community here in Bridgeport... so it's a social club and basically they keep the tradition we, we go in Cape Verdean games or dances you know the music it's mostly Cape Verdean. Cape Verdean foods ... and pretty much that's basically that's when we and get together the Cape Verdean community which is wonderful you know and we're kind of support for one another, weren't always pretty much there if one needs you know, especially in times of ...You know if there's a death in the family or something there's a strong gathering in helping as far as taking care of each other's children and food and preparations and all that so...

M: So you do feel that it important that you do preserve your culture now...

A: Ohh definitely, very important to preserve your culture. You always have to know where you come from, always.

M: Going back when you first came here how did you deal with the language barriers?

A: It was a lot, me I was a one determined young lady I.. I remember going to school I would ask my peers, my teachers whatever they told me in English or I had to attend a Portuguese school because Portuguese is our native...language. We speak Portuguese, we speak I dialect of Portuguese which is Creole, but going to Portuguese school ... I remember that everything that he would tell me in Portuguese I would have to tell him to repeat it in English and I would kind of repeat after him. You know I watched television I picked up pretty quickly, as a young kid it's easy to pick up English then coming as older adults so...

M: So how long did you think that it took you for to you know ...

A: Pick up English, I would say months, I would say within five months I could speak English and understand and read and write a lot because I was really determined ... I would say within six months I has pretty good, pretty good in English.

M: Ok that's good. And can you tell me a little bit about your neighborhoods here in the United States when you first came? Where did you live and what kind of people lived around you?

A: When I first came I lived in the hollow of Bridgeport,... mostly Cape Verdean community, Cape Verdean Portuguese community and some Hispanics.. I think back then compared to now we were very close you know ... When I first came I really felt the closeness of the Cape Verdean Community, they were all pretty much, we were houses down and blocks away from each other ... within walking distance... I feel now that everybody pretty much you know I would say "made it" or "making it" there're kind of you know dispersed, they're all over they're in different towns. We're not as close as we were but as I say in times of ... let's say a New Year's party or something like that we get together but I don't think that we're as close as we used to, now but when I first came here the community was very tight nit.



M: Ok and going back to the places where Cape Verdean people get together are you really active in like you said in the Cape Verdean Club?

A: I'm pretty, I'm very active.. I pretty much I participate as far as I whenever I can I try to do as far ... preparing for the dances or helping cooking, cleaning and things like that very active in that department and like as far as doing children's activities sometimes ... it doesn't always work out. We try to get the American children to try to do more of their Cape Verdean ways but a lot of them are so much Americanized now that it's kind of a hard to get through to them that this is their heritage this is their culture.

M: Ok and is there a place of worship that a lot of Cape Verdeans go to?

A: Well a majority of the Cape Verdeans are Catholic so... they pretty much either attend ... there's some Portuguese churches here that they attend that they're able to understand or Hispanic churches ... and most of the Cape Verdean community here in Bridgeport probably Saint Augustine's which... you know they helped us a lot when we first came to this country as far as you know, we used to get together on the basement in the Cape Verdean Saint Augustine's ... their I think their rectory that's where we used to get together in the beginning before we even had a social club as far as history with you know that's where we first got together as a community there so.

M: So as long as the ... for the time that Cape Verdean started to migrate here to the United States do you feel that they've always been like you know a tight knit community, have they always you know bounded to one another?

A: I would think so yes. They're always there to help each other as far as one will come I mean, the other one will go out of their way to try to find them a job or ... or finding them a place to live, even putting them up I mean I remember, some of us would be in the household with probably ten people that only probably had only two or three bedrooms. We would you know just you know sleep in one room would have three beds or we would sleep on the floor or just you know when they first come you know they can't afford to have an apartment or anything so we always

like put them in or something until they do get on their feet with a job and things like that.

M: Is there any other organizations that you belong too?

A: Right now I belong to the, it's a Cape Verdean scholarship for the young children that want to advance their education in college. It's a group of women that try to raise money and when the teenager graduated high school and wants to go on to college they are able to provide them with some kind of financial assistance to go to college and they can reapply pretty much every year. So I do participate in that one as much as I can.

M: So do you think that education is important to Cape Verdeans?

A: Ohh very important, ... very important I don't think that a lot of people take advantage as much as they should I mean this is the land of opportunity, I really think there's so much out there ... So many things that they can ... do to further their education

M: Ok and now that you're in the United States have you gotten married?

A: I married, I have two children and I married a fellow Cape Verdean to keep the tradition going.

M: Did you feel that that's important or to, is that common among Cape Verdeans to marry...

A: It is very common but so many like the young people from here ... You marry whoever you fall in love with... They do, I tend to look toward my Cape Verdean community to keep the roots going I think you lose your... a lot of them lose their roots by ... I'm not saying by marrying different ... let's see, not a Cape Verdean. But it has happened there's I mean there a lot of people that I know that have married a Cape Verdean I have not seen for years I mean have not married a Cape Verdean that ... moved away and have not been in the Cape Verdean community and totally lose their you know ability to speak they no longer can speak proper Cape Verdean when they did before then I mean I've seen it a lot that's the only reason I say that I mean you can still marry outside your community and heritage and still keep you know your heritage but some people I do see that they

loose it.

M: Ok, Can I ask you were your children attend school?

A: Madison school in Bridgeport

M: Is there a large Cape Verdean Community there?

A: Not much as far as I know there's about ten other children that do attend the school that are Cape Verdean

M: And when you first came here to the United States did you find it difficult for you to find ... work?

A: For me no, when I came here I was little but for me it wasn't ... back then it was easier to find a job then now. Now with the Cape Verdeans, I know when my mom came it was hard for her to find a job because they wanted someone that could speak English and read and write and she couldn't really do any of that because ... education back home for women it was almost a no-no, the women stayed home and you know cooked and cleaned for the men to come home. Men were the ones to be educated back then when my mom was growing up. But it's hard when you come over here to find a job you don't know the language you don't know the ways you can't express yourself so a lot of them found a job in cleaning things like that that they don't require for you to speak much I guess.

M: Ok and what skills do you have now that you're here in the United States?

A: Well... I'm still thinking about going back to school ... I just recently started going back to school but I put it on hold for w while. Right now I'm a licensed nurse. Right now I work with the elderly, which I enjoy very much. I've been doing that for a lot of years ... I'm a nurse.

M: Ok... and can you tell me any other jobs that you're had since you've been here in the United States besides being a nurse.

A: I remember one of my first jobs , I was a waiter. I was very bad at it. I was a waiter in a pizza place ... I didn't really like the job needless to say I didn't last there very long because I really didn't like it, it was not my

job. So my, the second job I think that I had I went , I worked as a volunteer per say with the elderly and that's actually where you know I found my passion. I always liked working with the elderly so I worked as a volunteer in a nursing home and that's where I liked working and they just enjoyed, they were just, I found them to be so lonely and they just enjoyed the conversation with you and everything I felt that you know I can contribute to that so... You know when I finished my nursing school I went to, first I worked as an aide, a nurse's aide and I worked at a nursing home and I furthered my education I went and got my nursing degree and I stayed at the nursing home.

M: Ok and ... The people that you work with are they people from your ethnic background or... not?

A: No ... I work ... it's a variety of backgrounds I mean, where I work, I work with Haitians, ... Jamaicans , Jewish people. I work for the Jewish Home so mostly Jewish background so... It' s It's a variety of people over there I mean different nationalities and cultures and ethnicity.

M: Ok is there in Bridgeport?

A: Yes, ... Fairfield

M: Fairfield, and how do your wages here ... compare to the wages that you would have gotten if you still were in the Cape Verdean Islands?

A: To tell you the truth if I was still in the Cape Verdean Islands I don't think I would probably be , I mean I don't think I would be making any wages right now. because when I went back this is just a comparison to a friend's to a friend's that I left behind I mean, they are pretty much you know at home, they're probably having five to six kids, and their lives are you know very different from mine, I mean they've aged you could tell from their hard work I mean they work hard I man these women are providing you know for their family, they're working around the house, they're working away from the house tending to the animals, to the farm like, it's it's very hard I probably would be in the same boat if I was there. I probably would not be making any wages I probably be depending if I had a husband depending on that or depending on the family back here to take care of me.

M: That was going to be my next question. ... do you regularly send wages home you know to help out your other family ?

A: ... before my mom came definitely pretty much every month I would .. my sister and I would send ... her money .. Back then when we first came we would send her I remember in the 80's when we first came we would send her five dollars at a time I remember that because we weren't working so I remember we would get together and send her five to ten dollars and back then that would help her probably to buy things that she wouldn't necessary have money to buy you know like rice, and sugar and flour things like that so that did help. Once in a while we did help as much as we could. So once we got jobs we did send regularly we would send money to her.

M: Ok: Do you see that that's something that most Cape Verdeans do once they get used to America or settles in?

A: Oh definitely , definitely Cape Verdana are very you know especially with their loved ones back home, there're very close and ...either they would send barrels of goodies of clothing and food or monetary they would send money to them and they were very good with that ?

M: Ok going back to what you had said that ... the women working ... taking care of the animals is that how the land like sort of like the landscape is over there in Cape Verde, is it mostly farmland?

A: It's mostly farmland but the one problem that we do have is drought we don't have there not much rain overt here so there's you know times, there's hardship times so they do rely on their crop and a majority of their time and animal for their daily you know food intake they would, if they didn't have money to buy it they would .... That's what they would depend on you know mostly corn and vegetables and ... potatoes and things like that what their you know their main thing is.

M: Ok and now that you like you said come here and your mother has also come to the United States?

A: Um. Hm..

M: Do you still communicate with other family back home in Cape Verde?

A: Ohh we still .. From time to time ... you know we send we have uncles and aunts that are still in very poor back home that we send money to or barrels of other stuff to, matter of fact I'm packing one right now but ... we have a lot the family is just so big it's like you can't really take care of any you know , you know all of them together you do as much as you can for you know them you do as much as I can for the immediate I mean the family is very , it's large we have a lot of extended family so as much as you can for the closer family I guess.

M: So do you only have family only here in Bridgeport and Cape Verde or are there other areas that you have family ?

A: Oh they're all over I have family in all over in Portugal , in Massachusetts and Florida I have family everywhere, there's some family that I haven't even met. I do have aunts and uncles that live in Portugal that I have never met before they moved there before I was born and I never met them so... all over the place really.

M: Ok and now that you've been in the United States have you ever gone back to Cape Verde ?

A: I went back twice. I went back to Cape Verde after my graduation from high school, that's when I realized that you know that God has put me here for a reason I came back ... my sister and I got together and you know we decided to work very hard trying to get our mother here because ... when we went back you know we felt you know when I went back I thank that was seven years later I'm think that life would be much changed then , the life looked that same to me. I mean the poverty was still there you know you either have it or you don't have it so when I saw my mom and .. My siblings living that kind of ... situation I just had to do something so I think going back you know was a very wise decision for me to go back.

M: So ... with you going back did your views of home changed now that you're here in the United States?

A: My view as far as ... I think that I kind of woke up when I went back home. I was here for a while and I kind of

forgot what the situation back home was so it was like a blessing for me to go back home actually it was like a wake-up call for me that I needed to, that I have all this opportunity that if I didn't jump on it and you know get an education and help my family back there ... I think yes it did change when I went back and see the situation and see those some children you know, you know walking around you know without clothes... you know it was sad but yet the close knit family was there. I just had to do something about it, so when I came education was like a priority for me because I knew without education I was not going to go anywhere you know as far as helping them to come here. Now years later my whole you know my sister and I work together my mother and my three sisters and my two nephews are here so I think we've accomplished you know what we set out to do.

M: Ok do those sisters that you've brought from Cape Verde, so they live in close proximity to you?

A: They live right upstairs from me. When they first came they lived with me, ... then we lived in an a apartments two of them when they first came. Then finally we bought a two family house ... mainly so they would live in one house and I would live in the other. So right now they still live upstairs from me ... with all three of my sister, my nephews and my mom. So they're all very close.

M: So all of you all currently live all in Bridgeport?

A: Yes

M: Ok and ... Can you tell me a little about the second time that you went to Cape Verde, was it, did you feel the same way as you did the first?

A: ... the second time I went... because the majority of my family was over her I didn't really go to my island. I went to my husband's island to meet his ... I met his mom before because she came to the United States but, I went to see her primarily because she was ill at the time but, when I went back it was, it's similar. The islands are similar to one another I mean I saw what I had seen ... when I went to the island of Fogo. It was pretty much the same ... but I'd seen the advancement a lot of people had come ahead you know . They do believe, a lot of then over there, their education is very important to them. Lot of them feel that

education is not going to get them anywhere because if they don't have money to go you know they just need the knowledge that there's help out there but...

M: So do many of those people back in Cape Verde also have the dream of coming to the United States or...

A: Ohh yes, very much ... they think they think, they know this is the land of opportunity , they know it. So that's probably of their goals that they're working on. You know that's probably one of their wish you know to come to get out of there. Especially the young people they want out.

M: Ok ... and as for those back in Cape Verde how are the different ways in which they could get here to the United States, do they have to have a sponsor or...?

A: Ohh definitely, .. Well you have to have someone that's going to take full responsibility for you ... as for as you know housing , money and to you know give you things that you're gong to need to when you come over here and it takes, they process is a very long time I mean we're taking about years here and if it's a close sibling it can be you know probably a year or so .. I know from my sister depended on the younger siblings it took them ... a little over a year. But if it's older it takes a while. I don't really recall how long it took but it seemed like a long time. Another way is you know hopefully you'll catch somebody's eye and you know you fall in love and marry and come over here or a lot of them would .. What other ways are there. If like I said if they had somebody to sponsor them to come here.

M: Ok you had mentioned that you had two children.

A: I have two very active boys the age right now is six and nine. They're a handful but they're my joy.

M: That's good, and is there anything that you would like your children to know about your ethnic background?

A: Oh definitely, ... I take them with me and I show them where mommy came from and how fortunate that they are .. And I always tell that whenever they are wasting something I always tell them that I wish that I had that when I was their age back home. A lot of times they're responsible to be "well bring it to them". If they're wasting food "well bring it to them or send it to them". But they



will see for themselves they've been there, they did see for themselves and their questions is a lot of them why doesn't they have clothes on, or what they doesn't have shoes. They will be going back and that's going to be a big part of them growing up going to see where life is like there.

M: So you do feel like, that it is important for you to expose your children to your culture?

A: Ohh definitely, I think that would make they ... more responsible I hope because I know it did me. ... as far as to be fortunate that you do have the things you have and thankful so yes I would definitely bring them back and show them all that.

M: What would you like outsiders to know about your ethnic background?

A: .. About Cape Verdeans ...

M: Yes

A: Cape Verdeans are a very loving bunch of people, they're outgoing ... they're ambitious ... they're just friendly they you know most of the Cape Verdeans I know they just have big hearts ... you know they... I mean they're good people. There's... that's about it that just says it. They're just a bunch of good people. And they work hard for what they have.

M: And now that's you're here in the United States what do you miss most about Cape Verde?

A: Ohh the closeness I know with .. when I go back the closeness, the party. We are a party people. We love to have a good time. We don't have much parties around here ... but I remember pretty much in the evening in our house, my mother's house we always have dances. We would, when everybody's home we always get together and we have a good time.

M: Ok, And Now that you've been to the United States and you've seen all that it has to offer you and you know that you've accomplished. Do you consider yourself to be American or do you consider yourself to be Cape Verdean?

A: I'm Cape Verdean -American. Cape Verdean would be first, I always going to be Cape Verdean.

M: So now that you've come here , did you acquire your American citizenship?

A: Yes, yes I have there's ... I did that I think that was years ago before I was married. That was one of the goals which a accomplished. ... I was very happy to be an American and still am.

M: Do you feel that a lot of Cape Verdeans come here and hope to get their American citizenship?

A: A lot of them do because ... because .. What comes with what comes with being an American. I mean you're an American, that just says it all. I mean it's a big thing to be an American.

M: Ok, What were your biggest obstacles you had to face you know?

A: My biggest greatest obstacle, I don't know I, whenever I put my mind to do something I do it. Well, my biggest obstacle, right now my biggest obstacle that I'm trying is just finishing school , if that will ever happen. It's very hard to have a career, a family too, go back so whoever is listening to this you don't ... do it now before you're married, before you have children get your education, that's primary. That's very, very important.

M: You said you're going back to school, and you're currently a nurse ?

A: ...Uh huh...

M: What else do you want to accomplish in your education, what are you looking to get? What kind of degree?

A: Hopefully , I'd like to learn different times ... I wanted to get my degree in RN , but I also love language, I speak different language and I'd like to probably pursue a more career in that department as well.

M: Ok ... do you have any regrets coming here to the United

States?

A: None whatsoever.

M: So you think everything worked out for the best?

A: I surely, I really do think it really worked out for the best. I don't think I would be who I would be if I didn't come here. I think everybody has their destiny and this was my destiny to be here and do what I've got to do.

M: Ok what are your plans for the future either for yourself, your country, or your children?

A: What I see myself in let's say ten years from now, I see myself going back to my community in Cape Verde and giving back ... I plan on ... helping you know my people back home. As far as what, I'm not sure yet but, help there's so many variety of ways to help people so ... I've actually been thinking, one of the projects that I've been thinking of doing going back and helping with.. Their housing. A lot of them, their housing is very poor back home, just to help them get on their feet and maybe build houses or something like that. That's one of my goals an hopefully God willing it will come true.

M: What are your hopes for your children?

A: My children, just to be happy and healthy and to follow their dreams, never give up. Just to be good to people.

M: Is there anything else that you'll like to share with me about either yourself or your ethnic background. About Cape Verde itself?

A: ... there are so many things but most of all is to ... well in conclusion I would just like to say being a Cape Verdean had made who I am today ... because it taught me to be strong , being a Cape Verdean taught me to be strong, never give up that's there's always something at the end of the rainbow.

M: Ok, a question that I forgot to ask you earlier is ... was there any political turmoil in Cape Verde, while you were there do you recall?

A: I do not recall, then again I was not privy to that because we didn't really have a television, we didn't have

a radio. You know being a kid that wasn't really, I wasn't really into that but, that's about it.

M: Ok, ... thank you very much , it's been my pleasure to interview you.

A: Why, thank you.

M: And I wish you the best of luck now and the future.

A: I wish you lot's of luck and I hope that you get an "A".  
[Laughter]