

Bioautobiography

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I am, Where I'm From: My Socioautobiography Cosme Ramos SOCS185 W5
Socioautobiography Abstract Who am I? Born in a small island, raised in over populated city, now living on the opposite corner of the nation, traveled all over the world, seen cultures and places most only dream off. How where my morals, views, and opinions shaped by my surroundings as child, and how have they changed as I matured? What influenced those changes? These are just a few of questions I look to explore as I write my Socioautobiography. I am, Where I'm From: My Socioautobiography

My name is Cosme Ramos, Born in Ponce, Puerto Rico on the 31st January 1976. Parents are both Puerto Ricans (which in reality means mixed, Indian, Black African, and European). Not until third grade did we migrate to the United States, in search of opportunities and a more stable future. Being of a Hipic decent made familia very important role, thus it was my primary group the only thing that was constant throughout or moves first from Puerto Rico to New York, and eventually to New Jersey where my immediate family still resides to this day.

As a kid the change was drastic, life in Puerto Rico was more of the rural type, big yards, vegetation everywhere, smiling faces and friendly people. In the states, things were a bit different, now we co-inhabited with family we barely knew, in a small condo like apartment with no yard, and the only vegetation we would get to see is that on the highway mediumscultureshock does not even begin explain the disorientation felt as a kid under those circumstances. Not to mention the language barrier that was by far the biggest hurdle.

If it wasn't for the strong bond and close knit Hipic community the adjustments would have been ten times harder. Within months we were settled in Newark, N. J. parents had good luck found stable jobs enrolled in school now my biggest focus was that of going from a straight " A's" student, to not even speaking the language. I had 6 months to learn and master the English language to the level that at the end of the school year I would be proficient enough to not be set back.

With the aid of my third gradeteacher I was scored on the top 10% of the third graders in the district and graduated third grade as if I was no different than anyone else in my age group. These changes and conflicts that I had to endure were not as big of an impact on my younger brother who was barely starting preschool, and was able to adjust at a more lenient pace and to him English might as well be his first language and my sister the youngest was born years after in New Jersey. (TCO 4 and TCO 6).

Let's fast forward to end of middle school, early high school years, being a teen ager in the inner city of Newark N. J. (Brick city as referred to by many) day to day life was a struggle against the stigma that if you were African American or Hipic, from Newark, and lived in lower income part of town, then you are, were or will be a criminal. Remember back in Puerto Rico, we lived in an environment where one could leave the house and car open, not worry about thieves, vandalism or anything of that sort.

Now I couldn't walk to bus stop from my house without being hassled by drug dealers trying to add you to their payroll and have you work for them, or addicts trying to see if you were a dealer, not to mention having to dodge stolen cars being chased by the cops, and the ever seldom shoot outs. It is

now apparent to me that gender role and ascribed status was what drove the stigma mentioned above. As the women or even the girls were not normally out and about around the neighborhood, they were homebodies per say.

Everyone just assumed it was who we were, based on where we lived, and many of those who lived there just accepted such fate and found it easier to conform and fulfill their role in the society they were expected to. (TCO 5 and TCO 6). Now in high school, a very impressionable adolescent, (remember this was before the computer age) the mass-media primarily consisted of television and movies, neither of which at the time were attempting to lesser the negative views of the society I was ascribed to.

Soon I had a choice to make, do I too conform to the same as my peers, or do I dare attempt to make break the mold as they say by trying to conduct vertical mobility in the stratification system that many felt entrapped within. Being that I had gone thru so much, from seeing the state of poorness that lead my parents to give it all up in Puerto Rico and pursue a better, un-guaranteed and un-certain future, or maybe it the feeling that I could achieve anything I put my mind to (proven to me by my third grade teacher as she thought me not just the English language, but did it by making me learn how to think in English and ot Spanish) these factors and seeing how the economical state of the city I grew up in was deteriorating I decided to be deviant not accept my place in a decaying society and that I would join the military. My decision was sustained with the thought that, if anything, I would at least do it for the collegemoney, and to explore the vast world that intrigued me so much. (TCO 5 and TCO 6).

September 6 1994, not 3 months after graduating high school, I was en-route to boot camp, the Navy was the poison of choice many thought, some including my parents never thought I'd go thru with it, being a shy, quiet, smart, nerdy type I was told after the fact that " they never thought I'd last". Growing up in very multi-racial city environment, I grew up with I'd say about 90% African American kids, maybe 5% Hipic and the rest white or other, racialdiscriminationto me was as foreign and alien as anything could be.

Not long after being in boot camp, did I happen to run into it though. Even took me a while to recognize what was going on around me. Racial inequality has ever since been something that has fascinated me, the fact that some people can be so ignorant and or closed minded that this age and time still feel are better or more privileged than others solely based on race. 18 ? years later, here I am, still in the Navy, to the shock of many.

I saw the challenges and glass ceilings imposed on me by my peers, supervisors, coworkers and even at some point my parents, to fuel mymotivation. I see now using mysociological imaginationthat they made a functionalist out of me. To this day, I deal with discrimination, not just race, or gender related, I deal with discrimination in many forms, and stigmatized in just as many also, from being a bike rider, to the rank I wear on my collar or the current job description or being from the east coast to mention a few.

But now I view such acts as positive influences that fuel me to achieve that which I'm told, or insinuated I can't. (TCO 1 and TCO 5). In conclusion, I am, Where I'm From.. I'd like to think even though I am no longer the shy, timid, quiet, in-experienced child that once struggled in understanding those around him, or that had to accompany his parents translating for them as

they applied for subsidiary assistance . I do remember the strong cohesiveness of my family, and the dedication to each other through times of struggle.

Giving up was never something I witness my elders doing, and it's something I am not well at doing either. Life has, more often than not thought me lessons the hard way, but some say those are the lessons you never forget. I have mostly learned leaving home at 17 years to travel abroad with the Navy, that even those who think they have it bad here in the states, still have it much better than many in other countries. Even if you are held down, or even put down by others, it is only ones' self that can limit what we can achieve.

Do others have it easier than some, yes, but that is life and it's up to the individuals to either make best or worst of the situation they are dealt. As an adult I still strive to be better today than I was yesterday, and even if it's a small minute difference, it just might be enough for some kid to see, and think I too can become anything I want, I don't have to live in a 20 mile radius of where I was born, I don't have to become a criminal just because I'm thought of as one.

If all I make is a small impression in someone to fuel their drive, then I'd like to think it was all worth it. As my friends say, " from the old broken down brick city, the strong survive". References Schaefer, R. T. (2011). *Sociology: A Brief Introduction*, 9th Edition. McGraw-Hill Learning Solutions, New York, NY Lewis, P. (2013). *Introduction to Sociology and the Study of Culture*. Retrieved from Lecture Notes Online Web site: <http://www.devryu.net>