

# Title Page & Abstract

An Interview with Veronica Luz Espina

Part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library  
*Immigrant Stories* Oral History project

Interview # IM-A-L-2011-052

Veronica Luz Espina, an immigrant from Chile arriving in the United States in 1999, was interviewed on the dates listed below as part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library's *Immigrant Stories* Oral History Project

Interview dates & location:

Date: August 2, 2011                      Location: University of Illinois Springfield

Date: August 5, 2011                      Location: University of Illinois Springfield

Interview Format: Digital audio

Interviewer: Carol Esarey, ALPL volunteer

Transcription by: Pam Bruzan, ALPL volunteer

Edited by: Betty Workman & Janice Culp, ALPL volunteers

Total Pages: 53 pgs                      Total Time: 0:50 + 1:30 + / 0.83 + 1.5 + = 2.33 hrs

Session 1: Veronica's life and education in Chile

Session 2: Veronica's experiences in the United States

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The interviews are archived at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library in Springfield, Illinois.

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# Abstract

Veronica Luz Espina, *Immigrant Stories*, IM-A-L-2011-052

**Biographical Information Overview of Interview:** Veronica Luz Espina was born in Rancagua, Chile, a small city near Santiago, Chile, on March 20, 1970. She is the third of four daughters to parents, Eduardo Espina, a chemical engineer and Monica Ubilla, a pharmacist. Veronica's parent's professional and family life was directly affected by the Chilean coup in September, 1973, which placed them under a military dictatorship ruled by Augusto Pinochet. Veronica describes her family's personal, social, financial and work related experiences during this time. The Pinochet regime ended in 1988 with a return to a democracy, after 16 years of dictatorship. Veronica transferred from Catholic schools to an alternative school her junior and senior years of high school. After high school, she entered the University of Chile (*Universidad de Chile*) with a scholarship to the School of Journalism in 1987.

Veronica embraced the civil rights movements as an activist and completed a Bachelors Degree in journalism and social information in 1994. She began work as a postgraduate in aesthetics and arts at the School of Philosophy, Pontificia Universidad Catolica de Chile with a focus on music and film critique. Estranged from her family at this time, she supported herself as a journalist for a conservative newspaper in Santiago. Veronica's daughter, Alemendra Rodriquez (father, Maurice Rodriquez) was born in 1993. Maurice, a jazz musician, immigrated to the United States on a student visa in 1999 to attend a school of music and earn a living in Chicago, Illinois. Veronica obtained a Rotary International Scholarship and immigrated to the United States with Alemendra in 1999. Veronica stated that she encountered racism as a Latina in the United States.

Veronica has continued her studies, completing a Master's Degree in community arts management at the University of Illinois Springfield (UIS). She was hired as an instructional communications programmer in 2010 at UIS and has recently accepted a new position at the Illinois Department of Human Services. Alemendra, now 18, is a college freshman at UIS.

**Subject Headings/Key Words:** Chilean Coup, 1973; Augusto Pinochet regime, 1973-1988; family life under Pinochet dictatorship; civil rights and education for women in Pinochet government; racism issues for immigrants in the United States.

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