

Repository

LGBTQ Religious Archives Network
<https://lgbtqreligiousarchives.org/>

Title

Nickie Valdez Oral History Interview and Transcript

Date

2017

Extant

1 hour 33 minutes interview and 1 transcript

Abstract

In this oral history, Nickie Valdez, a founder of Dignity San Antonio in 1976, discusses forming a faith based group for LGBT people in contrast to the bar scene, which evolved into the Dignity chapter, with the goal of building community after working with an LGBT clinic. She discusses protesting for LGBT and women's rights, as part of her involvement in NOW, and being one of the first lesbian couples to raise a son in her community.

Biographical

Nickie Valdez, a native of San Antonio, came out in the early 1960's and has always been inclined to the spiritual aspect of life. Her early involvement with the LGBT community began in the early 70's, at the San Antonio Free Clinic (a city wide clinic funded in part by the United Way) where she volunteered for the switchboard (a hotline for the LGBT community). At that time, the bars were the only convening places for the community in San Antonio. Through her involvement with the Free Clinic and NOW, she met others who formed the Forward Foundation which organized the first conference in San Antonio for the LGBT community in 1976 called "A Sense of Belonging." She had also began gathering with other lesbians and gay men to talk and share about their spirituality as it related to their sexuality. The group would gather, pray, discuss scripture and its meaning in their lives as gays and lesbians. Then the group discovered the national organization of LGBT Catholics, Dignity, Inc. She along with about 10-15 others, about half women and half men, started the local Dignity Chapter. Dignity San Antonio is the oldest LGBT organization in San Antonio.

Nickie has been a vital and active member of the Dignity community for its 41 years of service in San Antonio. She has also been a founder of other organizations in San Antonio, including San Antonio Equal Rights Political Caucus and PRO SA (Progressive Religious Organizations of San Antonio) and worked hard to build bridges across communities and groups. She and her spouse of 31 years, Deb Myers, were legally married in September of 2015.

Scope and Content

In this oral history, Nickie Valdez, a founder of Dignity San Antonio in 1976, discusses forming a faith based group for LGBT people in contrast to the bar scene, which evolved into the Dignity chapter, with the goal of building community after working with an LGBT clinic. She discusses protesting for LGBT and women's rights, as part of her involvement in NOW, and being one of the first lesbian couples to raise a son in her community.

This interview was conducted by Heather White, a specialist in American Religions with a research focus on sexuality, gender, and twentieth century social movements and author of *Reforming Sodom: Protestants and the Rise of Gay Rights*. She has served on the advisory board of the LGBT Religious Archive Network, and is visiting Assistant Professor in Religion and Queer studies at the University of Puget Sound.

Access

Open to all researchers.

<https://lgbtqreligiousarchives.org/oral-histories/nickie-valdez>.

Reproduction and Use

LGBTQ Religious Archives Network does not own the copyright to this interview.

Languages

Collection material is in English

Cite as

"Nickie Valdez | Oral History", LGBTQ Religious Archives Network,
<https://lgbtqreligiousarchives.org/oral-histories/nickie-valdez>.

Digital finding aid created by Sarah McCall, 2023

Tags

Catholic (Roman)

Dignity

Latinx

Women and Religion

San Antonio

Texas

Valdez, Nickie

Activist (religious institutions)

EXHIBIT Rolling the Stone Away