

Nadja Jauregui transcript

- Speaker 1: [00:00](#) Today is November 29th and I am interviewing Nadja Jauregui in the Student Media Center for my honors thesis research title The Latino South: Race and Racialization. So we'll go ahead and get started. Are you 18 years or older? And can you state and spell your first and last name for the record please?
- Speaker 2: [00:22](#) Yes. Nadja Jauregui.
- Speaker 1: [00:32](#) And when were you born? I was born July 4, 1998.
- Speaker 2: And where are you from and where did you grow up?
- Speaker 2: [00:40](#) I am originally from Lima, Peru and I was there until it was five years old and when I was five we moved to Florida. And so basically I grew up in Florida and Mississippi.
- Speaker 1: [00:55](#) Where did your family move from?
- Speaker 2: Kissimmee, so like by Orlando.
- Speaker 1: Okay, cool. And did you just move to Mississippi for school or had you moved to Mississippi prior to coming to Ole Miss?
- Speaker 2: [01:11](#) Um, I moved to Mississippi prior to coming to ole miss. So when I was nine we moved to Mississippi because my dad's job was moving and they wanted him to move with them. So we moved to Mississippi when I was nine.
- Speaker 1: And so most of your life has been in Mississippi. What part of Mississippi?
- Speaker 2: Southaven.
- Speaker 1: Okay. And um, what brought your family from Lima to America?
- Speaker 2: [01:37](#) Well, my dad, when I was like in my, like one year old, two year old stages, like my dad was working in America but he lived in Peru and so, um, he would fly to America and he stay with his mom who lived in New Jersey and um, because she also moved there for work and so he was just trying to like make a better living in America for me and

my mom because in Peru it's really hard to live comfortably unless you're doing like a really higher up job. And um, so he was moving there or you have working there and when he got enough money he would come back and visit us and bring gifts and stuff. And then although we are awaiting on, was my mom to get her visa approved, which took about two years and then she finally got her approved and that's when we moved to America.

- Speaker 1: [02:28](#) And what type of work? What was your father doing?
- Speaker 2: [02:31](#) Um, I don't really remember, but I know he majored in like computers and engineering and stuff like that. So I think he was doing something with computers.
- Speaker 1: [02:41](#) Can you compare a little bit? You said you moved from Peru. Can you compare a little bit maybe how life was in Lima and compare it to Florida? and even to Mississippi?
- Speaker 2: So I still remember a lot of Peru, like I remember my whole neighborhood, my friends, my school and from what I remember and from what I've been told from my family and stuff there, it's like kind of like New York, but just not as glamorous as people make it out to be. There's more culture in the sense that like people hardly ever go out to eat fast food. It's always like home cooked and the food or on the street is everywhere and it's always like I'm in banana or like tacos or like chicken and it's always like the hustle and bustle, like everyone's always moving. You won't be capturable like walking slowly from place to place and it's a lot more dangerous than Mississippi. In Mississippi, I feel very safe. I can wear nice clothes, like everyone wears nice clothes, but my dad always tells me that if I were in Peru I couldn't be walking around with my jewelry or with my backpack behind my back because there's so many, a pickpocketer years and I'm like, if they see that you're wearing really nice clothes or nice jewelry, they'll come after you or follow you to rob you because it's happened a lot of times to family that I have had living there. Just like friends that we know that like aren't used to that culture. Um, and Florida recently, like when I first moved there, there wasn't as many Hispanics, but now it's almost becoming like them. I did majority and when we first moved there, um, I didn't really feel out of place because I didn't know a lot of Hispanics and like in my school I had a friend who is Hispanic and like first grade or

something and she helped me to learn English and then I learned English through TV and stuff and, but **when we moved to Mississippi it was kind of like a culture shock. Like that was my first time feeling out of place and I just had never seen so many blonde white girls in my classroom until I moved to Mississippi and like I have memories of being in an elementary school and just hating that I was so tan because I was so dark back then.** I've lightened up since I've been in Mississippi. I don't know why, but um, when I was younger I was so dark and **I just remember thinking, Oh, I'm like, I stand out so much. I hate it. I hate being tan. I wish I was white or I wish I had lighter hair. I wish I had blue eyes, blah blah. And that was mainly because I want it to fit in, but no one ever made me feel like I was less than at some points. Like I think I made myself feel like that. But it was just because like, oh, these girls are getting boyfriends and I'm not, it must be because I'm Hispanic. But now I feel like everyone's trying to be darker and tanner.**

Speaker 1: [06:12](#) Were you ever asked you any questions like why you had dark hair or why you tanned skin?

Speaker 2: [06:27](#) Um, no, I did have a lot of questions about where I was from um, but like I never, I don't know, like I feel like a lot of people have had it worse than me in terms of like maybe they weren't allowed to sit with them at lunch or they didn't have as many friends. But I had quite a few friends. But I did go through like bullying in middle school. And it was where the most stupid reasons. I don't know if it had a lot to do with my ethnicity, but mainly maybe more so with the way that I was raised because my parents were very strict and it was because one, they didn't know much of America and they were more like secure with me. They were more protective over me. Whereas for my younger sister, they let her do whatever the heck she wants and for me like I wasn't allowed to go to sleepovers. That wasn't like a common thing in Peru and they would be like, why do you feel the need to go to spend the night at her friend's house? And I would tell him, I pick my friends that when they would ask me to spend the night and they would just see me like, uh, like I don't know, she's not allowed to go to these things and I have like one time my friend, she didn't invite me to her birthday party and I found out later on and asked her why. And she said, I just figured your parents wouldn't let

you. And like she didn't even ask me. **And I always got questions of like, I have people ask me, are you Chinese, are you Indian? Um, are you Mexican? And a lot of the times when people knew that I was Hispanic, they would automatically assume I was Mexican, which was kind of annoying, not because like Mexicans or less than me or anything, but just because that was the only idea that they had. They didn't know about any other cultures and I'm proud of where I come from** and um, people assumed that I was Indian because I had one of my best friends was Indian and she was dark and I was dark and I just automatically assumed, which is also annoying.

Speaker 1: [08:29](#) Interesting. You're the first interview with a perspective of coming from Peru. So the United States is probably a lot different. I've interviewed a lot of Caribbean, Central American Mexican, but Peru is totally different. Um, yeah. So is race an important part of your identity? Why or why not?

Speaker 2: [08:58](#) **Um, that's kind of like a hard question because like whenever you fill out those forms, race, I almost never know what to put because I really identified by my ethnicity which is Hispanic and then race, it's like white, black, Asian, and most of the time I've put white because I don't know what, like I don't really identify myself as black or Asian, so I just put white because I feel like that's the closest thing. Um, so because I'm not sure where I fall into.**

Speaker 1: [09:36](#) Was it something that your parents ever talked about like the change and how race operated in Peru versus coming to the United States?

Speaker 2: I had into those forums and there's no option for Peruvian. Yeah. Um, that's actually something we never talked about. It I couldn't really give you an answer on that.

Speaker 1: Cool. And um, how has your experience been at Ole Miss and living in Oxford?

Speaker 2: [10:09](#) It's been really good. I'm like, I really, I don't think I've ever had any negative experiences because of my race and I think because of that is **because I've lightened up over the years and so a lot of people think I am American, like I don't look like your traditional Hispanic girl. And I get**

that a lot and because I don't have an accent, it's even harder for them to know that I am Hispanic. Some people can tell that I'm not from here, but most people just think that I'm American, which is fine. But I also wish that I did look more like my ethnicity because I dunno, I really liked the fact that I am from Peru and I would like for people to just automatically pick it up. Like, oh, she's not from here. But um, because of my race I feel like I'm, I'm naturally bilingual and that's helped me out in a few things. It almost like I can just take the CLEP exam and not have to take 12 hours of language that I already know. And um, I feel like I can relate to some people more. Like who are coming here, like international students and stuff I can like help them out and I'm like, I just feel like I have a little bit more of opportunities because I know how to reach out to them and stuff. And

- Speaker 1: [13:16](#) And um, what is your major classification and some notable involvement?
- Speaker 2: [13:22](#) Um, I'm on NewsWatch. I'm a news correspondent and right now that's like all I did because that's all I have time for. Um, but I was involved in lens collective last year and I work. Oh, I also work, well this is not on campus, but I'm a freelance photographer for the Batesville magazine.
- Speaker 1: Cool. And what is your major and classification?
- Speaker 2: I am a broadcast journalism student and I'm a junior.
- Speaker 1: [13:55](#) And um, one of the most important aspects or parts of your life right now and why?
- Speaker 2: [14:01](#) Um, right now it's just getting all of my classes done, like I want to graduate on time. There's no option for me to graduate a year later. Um, that's like right now, classes in grades are my most important thing and just like trying to balance that and my relationship with my friends, like my boyfriend, like those are like the most important things to me because they keep me grounded and I love like just having like a good group around me because I also go and say and like I'll just be depressed all the time.

- Speaker 1: [14:42](#) And um, no questions about your identity ethnicity. Um, so the US Census Bureau considers race and ethnicity as two different concepts. What is your ethnicity?
- Speaker 2: [14:53](#) Hispanic or Latino.
- Speaker 1: [14:56](#) And uh, what are your parent's nationality? Do you identify with their nationality?
- Speaker 2: [15:02](#) Nationality is when they're originally born from. So they're both Peruvian and yes, I identify as Peruvian because I was also born there.
- Speaker 1: [15:11](#) And how do you identify racially and why?
- Speaker 2: [15:17](#) **White most of the time. And that's just because I'm, I feel like that's the closest that I am only because of the way that I look and the way that I act maybe, um, I feel like the other ones are so like I don't really know much about it to even classify as them. Whereas I know a lot more, more about white people than I do about black people and I feel like it would almost be like unfair if I classified as black.**
- Speaker 1: [16:55](#) Do you identify as Hispanic or Latina?
- Speaker 2: [16:59](#) I'm Hispanic because when I think of Latina, I think of people who are from like Spain or Latin America, but like Hispanic, I feel like it's more so like South America or Mexico and stuff like that.
- Speaker 1: And so studies show that the Latino population is growing with you is how do you think this will affect the way race and race relations is viewed in this country?
- Speaker 2: [17:29](#) **Um, I feel like maybe if the Latino population gets big enough, they might have to add a new category into race. Um, or yeah, I think that's pretty much all I had to say.**
- Speaker 1: Um, and how do you maintain your Latino culture here at each while being a student here?
- Speaker 2: It's really hard for me to like maintain it in a conscious way, like on campus. Um, mainly I guess what the way I cook, like at home I try to cook traditional foods that I cook

at home and I called my parents as much as I can and we always talk in Spanish and so that's how I like I remember the language so quickly, um, and I try to keep, like my morals I guess my parents raised me because their morals are different than a lot of parents that I know who are in America. And so I just try to keep those with me.

Speaker 1:

What are some of those, what are some foods that you cook and then what are some of those moral differences that you notice in your parents versus American parents?

Speaker 2:

So some foods that I cook this, it like goes back and forth on like where it originated from, but I cook a roast which is like basically fried rice, but people classify that as an Asian food. But, um, I don't know if this is correct or not, but one of the very first places that it did originate was Peru because the Asians that come over and then they, like, there's all like a whole story behind it, but that's like one of our main dishes and I cooked that because it's super easy. And then, um, my mom cooked a lot of squash soup and so I cook a lot of that. And then I'm trying to think of what else we cook. We cook tallarines verdes where this, which is basically like Green Spaghetti and I'm with some chicken and uh, was one other dish that I cook a lot. I forgot what it was. But um my parents are very big on like manners. I mean, that sounds like Americans. So manners but not what I mean. It's like, um, it doesn't matter. Like if they're young or older than me, like I'm always going to thank them for inviting me to their house or I'm saying sorry if like, you know, I did something that might've been offensive and um, then like if they feed me to say thank you for lunch or dinner because I've just noticed that like a lot of friends when I go to their house and stuff, it's usually just like, you know, we're done and then we just pick up our food and stuff. Like every time I'm done, even at my house I say thank you to my mom and dad for cooking and um, then I'm just like blanking right now. But um, my parents also another thing, they are very big on work ethic. Like doesn't matter whether you're at school or at home, like my dad is just like, you have to like do your best or else you're going to be lazy in one area and then that's going to translate to the other areas. So like even at home, like I'll always have a clean room. He'll always like, you know, try my best at school and like, just like everything I like translates into everything in that I do and I'm cleaning has become like a big thing. Like my mom used to make us clean at least like

twice a week. And so now like as much as I can, I will, but at least once a week I'll clean. Um, and just like the music that I listened to, I listened to like a lot of Spanish music and when I, I just know that like when I get older and have my own family, I'm definitely going to try and raise them the way that my parents raised me. Maybe not as strict because I know how America is now, but I feel like I'll still wait until they reach a certain age to have sleepovers and maybe not as long as they waited for me, but just, you know, younger and still have like a limit on that. And then, um, my parents limited how many times I could go out with my friends when I was in middle school and high school. Um, and I'm definitely going to have that with my children because they don't have a limit on my sister and she's not trying as hard in school and she's having trouble and I school was so easy for me and I think a lot of it had to do with the fact that I hardly ever went out.

Speaker 1:

And um, what are some challenges do you face any challenges as a Hispanic student? Um, any challenges?

Speaker 2:

[23:33](#)

I don't really know about any challenges that I faced through like the school, but there some people that I have met I could never tell if was because of my race or maybe there's just something about me that I just felt like I couldn't really, really like fit in or I just felt like I had to look a certain way to be part of the group. Like I had friends in the past who I thought were friends and then like I would be asked to hang out with their friends and then I just like be with all of them and just felt like everyone was connecting with each other except me. And I just couldn't tell why. I couldn't tell if it was like a grade difference, like because I was older or I was new to the group, but that's usually never been a problem with like my other friends who are like, uh, like when I hang out with that group, there's different cultures. Like there's black people, there's Hispanic people, there's agents and so I just like, we all connected and I didn't know if it was because of that and the people that I hung out on, the other group that I didn't connect with, they were just mainly like white sorority girls and I don't know if it was because I wasn't in a sorority or what, but there's just something and I just remember that one instance that I just couldn't tell why they weren't really wanting to get to know me. I might've just been like the situation are, they all knew each other except me. I didn't know what it was, but I guess like if I were to have faced

any challenges, it might have been relating to certain categories of friends.

Speaker 1: And has anyone ever asked you about your race or ethnicity and how do you typically respond to those questions?

Speaker 2: [25:24](#) **Usually people ask me like where I am from and I just say that I'm from Peru most of the time. I'm very surprised at how many people don't know where that's from. Like they are like, where is that? Is that in Spain? I'd be like, no, it's in South America. And um, I mean, I really don't mind at all to tell them where I am from because I would much rather them ask me than assume that I'm from a certain place. One instance that was very like a culture, not a culture shock, but just like a slap to the face was when I went to the DMV to get my license and I had forgotten some paperwork at home or something. I forgot what it was, but I had my birth certificate. And um, we were there. And I don't remember if this was before, this was after, I think that my dad had already become a citizen. And so, because I was under 18, that naturally made me a citizen and we went to the DMV and the lady was like looking in my documents and she goes, um, I need to see her green card. And my dad was like, why? Like, um, she's a citizen, I'm a citizen, so she's a citizen. And then the lady said, yeah, but she's from Mexico. Like I had my birth certificate in front of her. She didn't even read it, but she just saw that I wasn't from here and she just initially thought he's from Mexico and my dad got so mad and he goes, that says she's from Peru and she doesn't need a green card because she's a citizen and it just like we're going back and forth. And we ended up having to go back home, get my green card that wasn't even, like, you know, relatable. Like they, she didn't need it and we gave it to her. And then, um, she like let us like take the exam or get my license or whatever. But it just like made us both so mad that she just assumed that I needed a green card and that I was from Mexico, like she wasn't really listening to my dad. I was just like so disrespectful and I've never had that occurrence until then.**

Speaker 1: And where was that?

Speaker 2: That was in Mississippi. That was like in Olive Branch or Hernando.

Speaker 1:

And have you ever experienced any assumptions or stereotypes about your character and who you are because of your perceived race?

Speaker 2:

And I don't know if there were anything else. Um, I have had just a lot of people would just think that I'm from Mexico or Puerto Rico, but um, this one instance, it didn't hurt my feelings as much. It more so made me laugh because he's my roommate and I've known her since middle school and she knows where I'm from. But like one time, like a couple weeks ago, she was introducing me to one of her friends and she's like, yeah, she's from Puerto Rico. And I was like, Haley, I'm not from Puerto Rico. And she's like, oh my, you should, um, what's it called? The. And she's like, I was like Peru. And she goes, I knew that, I swear I did. And it's fine, like, because she felt bad, but other people they just assume and don't ask and just categorize me into a certain culture. And I haven't really had any people be like, oh, I bet that you could sing Mariachi all day long or anything like that. But, um, I feel like I'm trying to remember some instances when I worked at a Mexican restaurant. Oh. Um. So I worked at a Mexican restaurant over the summer and I didn't get this all the time, but the few times that I did it, like annoyed me and triggered me, I would go up to a table and ask them, hi, how are you doing today? What can I get for you? And some people would try to speak Spanish to me even though they didn't really know it. So they'd be like, Ola Como Se dice, um, and just kinda like butcher it. And I could never tell if they were thinking that I couldn't speak English very well and they were trying to help me. And that annoys me because I have, you know, obviously worked really hard to learn English as well as I do and for them to kind of almost, I don't know what it's called, like put me down a level and be like, oh, let me help you out because you need it, like I don't need it. And they're not even, you know, they're just assuming that I need the help. And other times they're doing, like I have had a customer once who, um, was a learning Spanish in college, so she wanted to practice their Spanish, which was totally fine with me and I like converse with her in Spanish too. Like she thought it was like fun and that was fine with me. But other times like people will like laugh as they're like speaking in Spanish and then I would just not like I'm using, I just keep wanting to begin in English. We're like, okay, so do you want beans and rice with that? And then they were just like laughing pat me on

the back and like, I don't know, it just annoyed me for some reason and I can't really explain why. I don't know if it's because I thought they were making fun of me or because I thought that they were like putting me down, but it's just like instances like that where they think that I don't know enough and I'm like, sometimes I, this hasn't happened to me personally, but I have had friends who have been working in restaurant industries. And one time I had a friend get tipped or something, I forgot how it went, but she was basically like, oh no, like, um, you really didn't have to. And they were like, no, trust me, I know that you need it. Like, I don't know, it's just stuff like that.

Speaker 1: [31:47](#) And do you speak Spanish?

Speaker 2: I do speak Spanish. Um, I learned it as my friend first language. So my parents taught me. And wait, I think I just said my friends taught me that. I say that my parents taught me, my parents did teach me and that Tyler and basically Spanish was your first language. Yeah. And when did you start learning English in Peru or not certainly. Um, I knew very little English in Peru, like in kindergarten they teach you a little bit like they have books with English and so you learned that as your second language, but I mean kindergarten English isn't gonna get you far. And so really I learned a lot from Dora, like when I moved to America I would have watched you all the time and I learned a lot from her and I had a friend who is Hispanic, um, when I was in kindergarten and first grade and she already knew English very well and so she helped me a lot and then my teacher knew a little bit of Spanish and so because of her she helped me a ton.

Speaker 2: [33:02](#) But if I hadn't had them, it would've been so much harder on me to understand the material. Um, so just through like classes and TV that's helped me out so much, like worth learning English. What language do you speak English for sure. Because I live in America and all my friends speak English. Um, me and my sisters speak English to each other and I don't really know why, but we just do, you just feel more comfortable talking in it and I know a lot of people who are Hispanic and they have brothers or sister sisters and they speak English with each other but speak Spanish with your parents and it's so interesting to me because obviously they both know Spanish but they choose to speak English with each other and I choose to speak English with

my sister because it just feels so formal and almost like two real when I speak English.

Speaker 2: [33:58](#) I mean when I speak Spanish with my parents, but when I speak English I just feel much more comfortable now because I know so many adjectives and I can express myself a lot better in English than I can in Spanish. I had to like think about it sometimes or how to make sure that the words are in the order that they supposed to go and stuff. Um, and sometimes I wish I knew Spanish just as well as I did English because since I spent more of my life learning English, the level of Spanish that I know now, it's just like, it's enough to like fluently talk day to day, but if I want it to like sit down and write a book, I definitely have to look up some stuff. And how, how is the ability to speak Spanish to the culture. I'm like not just myself but like the culture which you've seen within your own family.

Speaker 2: [34:51](#) Um, it's very, very important, especially if you're wanting to speak to older people because most of the time with my experience, they don't know English as well as their kids because their kids, when you're younger you can pick up languages so much faster when you're a kid then when you are an adult. So obviously they still have accents and they have to think more when speaking English. So naturally they just speak Spanish when we're all together. Um, and my boyfriend, he is American and so he speaks English and little to none Spanish, only what I've taught him. Um, so when we have family gatherings or were with, like our family, my family and our family friends who are all Hispanic, everyone's speaking Spanish and he sometimes feels left out of the jokes that they're saying or just really wishes that he could speak and just, you know, relate more.

Speaker 2: [35:47](#) They do speak English sometimes, like, you know, when they're talking to him or we're all talking together. But like, my mom doesn't know English as well and a lot of the times when she wants to ask nick something she make, she asks me if I can ask him the question and I wish that she knew English more or nick knew Spanish more so that they could communicate better because I have a super close relationship with his mom. That's because one, I'm just more outgoing and I, uh, like I exerted myself, like I want it to get to know her better. But nick is a little more reserved and shy. And on top of that he doesn't know Spanish. And so his relationship with my mom, they both really like each

other, but they probably haven't, like all combined that they've spoken with each other. It probably couldn't last more than an hour and 22 and 23.

Speaker 2: [36:51](#) Basically the same question. How does the university and the community cater to and omit the Latino population? Um, they had, if I think it's correct, they had like a Latino Hispanic heritage month. Um, and I thought that was really cool and they showcase like movies and books and then they have like a few lectures and stuff. Um, I wasn't able to go to most of them because of my classes in my schedule, but I thought it was really neat for them to offer those things for people who may not know about the culture as much and who want to know for them to just go and find out. And then, um, I don't know if this was a old miss thing. I know there's a lot of scholarships for Latino students and I think that's really cool. Um, and other than that I really don't know of any other resources that they have for Latino or Hispanic students.

Speaker 2: [38:00](#) And how do you view race in the US in the south and in Oxford. I'm like the relationship of I'm totally open ended the relationship or maybe like how race operates or what you kind of understand where it used to be. Totally open ended question. I feel like race is still a problem. Like we've definitely progressed a lot over the years, but racism in particular is still an issue. Um, we just had a protest yesterday on black lives matter and stuff like that. I feel like the two main racist that are always getting pointed out is white people and black people. And those are like the main issues. Like I always, when I think of race, I always just automatically think black and white. I never automatically think Asian or Pacific islanders or anything like that. And it's because not many people talk about it and really identified those as issues even though they are issues. Um, just because they're not as vocal about it doesn't mean that there aren't any underlying issues within those cultures or races. Um, so I think sometimes race can also mean,

Speaker 3: [39:30](#) um,

Speaker 2: [39:33](#) like people discriminate or just have these stereotypes of certain races.

Speaker 3: [39:40](#) Um,

Speaker 2: [39:44](#) just yeah, like I just feel like race is a touchy subject for a lot of people, but when it comes to identifying your race informs and stuff, it's, you know, most of the time it's not a problem, but for like Hispanic Latinos it becomes like, what do I put and when it comes to like verbally talking about your race,

Speaker 3: [40:06](#) um,

Speaker 2: [40:08](#) I feel like some people are not as comfortable to talk about like their race or I just wish it wasn't a topic.

Speaker 3: [40:19](#) Yeah.

Speaker 2: [40:19](#) And then I was leaving so it was 40 minutes after the hour. Um, yeah. This is the last question. How do you perceive the Latino population affecting the idea of raising this out?

Speaker 3: [40:33](#) Um, hm.

Speaker 2: [40:39](#) I feel like the Latino population with its growing, we'll probably open new doors to race on like different categories and stuff. Um, and then it Latinos get big enough like they'll have to like obviously like be considered their own race and as in like numbers not like important or anything, but um, yeah, I feel like that's what's going to have to happen and it, I feel like at the beginning just because people are the way that they are, it's going to be like very controversial. And so that was the last question. Do you have any other points or things that you'd like to talk about that I didn't ask you on? Yup. Cool.