

Saludos, hola, mi nombre es Consuela Francesca Barbara Lopez. So what you see before you today is a sexy nerd... libraries... I love libraries [laughs]. I am an American, but I'm also Afro Latino, so my significant story starts when Detroit started to bus to integrate the schools in the late '70s and '80s... and my first experience with racism at the time, I think I was like third grade. And I remember us being on a bus and getting to the school... and it was a lot of White people outside and they were protesting... and like, no niggers here, and nigger this... nigger that. And I just remember thinking like, I don't know who nigger is, but I don't think this should come to the school. So I shared a classroom with an African American boy and a Native American girl. The reason why all these things are so pivotal is that it was the first time I realized that the word nigger was referring to me. The trauma that we received because of the hate, and our understanding of what was going on or why it was happening, really set the precedents on who I am today.

My father worked at *Henry Ford Hospital* and he was still in school. My mom went to school for commercial art. And so, in our home there was a lot of music and art – and we did a lot of things by hand, all the time. Our family was the only family to actually build igloos in the wintertime and ice sculptures. You know what I'm saying... we were weird. Both of my parents were educated and so, what I was taught at home versus what was happening at school was a clash. And so I remember in that room thinking like, Why is this person hating me? So I learned more and more about European history. Everything... I learned so much. So this helped me to understand more about why people do things, how things can change and what can make those things better. And that's really pivotal in the work that I do, because I don't just serve African American kids or Latin kids. I serve everyone.