

# The Australian Women's Register

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## Elba Cruz-Zavalla interviewed by Ann-Mari Jordens [sound recording]

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**Repository** National Library of Australia, Oral History and Folklore Collection

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**Reference** [ORAL TRC 5489](#)

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**Date Range** 20-Jul-05 - 20-Jul-05

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**Access** Access open for research, personal copies and public use.

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**Finding Aid** Timed summary (5 p.) and Uncorrected transcript (typescript, 93 leaves)

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### Details

4 sound files (ca. 234 min.)??Elba Cruz-Zavalla, born in 1945 in Chepika, Chile, talks about her early life and her family background; her father's strong sense of social justice, socialist and communist values; her dyslexia; leaving school early to help her mother in the home; at 18 going to Santiago where she worked in a men's clothing factory; participating in union activities; in 1969 marrying Valenzuela Ramirez, a carpenter; how she and her husband worked to promote community development centres in suburbs and country towns under the Allende government; her two brothers who became Allende's unofficial bodyguards; the assassination of Allende at the Presidential Palace in November 1973; one brother being executed after the coup; her other brother being imprisoned and released after four months; her husband being granted refuge in Argentina; following him with her three small children in November 1974.?Cruz-Zavalla speaks about living in Argentina for three years under UN protection; having another child ; the family being accepted as refugees by Australia in 1977; settling initially in Adelaide, then coming to Canberra; her husband working as a carpenter; studying English; working as cook, a cleaner in a hotel and hospital and as a casual worker at the Health Services Supply Services laundry at Mitchell; initiating a successful three -week strike over employment conditions at the laundry in 1987, and subsequently became the union representative there; after six years developing RSI and being forced to seek less demanding work; in 1991 joining the staff of the Beryl Women's Refuge; assisting Chilean refugees settle in Canberra; her involvement in a number of community organizations such as the Chilean Solidarity Committee, a support organization for Argentinean refugees; the Chilean broadcasting program on 2XX and Association of Non-English-Speaking Background Women of Australia (ANESBWA).

### Author Details

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