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Kenneth Flynn

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UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT EL PASO

INSTITUTE OF ORAL HISTORY

INTERVIEWEE: Kenneth Flynn
INTERVIEWER: James P. Moore
PROJECT: Class Project Anthropology 3379
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TRANSCRIBER: James P. Moore
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BIOGRAPHICAL SYNOPSIS OF INTERVIEWEE:

(Director of Planning, Project Bravo) Formerly held several positions, including: Executive Director of the El Paso County Board of Development; Director, Youth Affairs for the City of El Paso; Reporter with the El Paso Herald-Post.

SUMMARY OF INTERVIEW:

Views on problems of the border; the work of Project Bravo; uniqueness of Juarez-El Paso; non Mexican American ethnic groups in El Paso.

45 minutes, 21 pages

June 18 - July 7, 1977
Workshop in the Contemporary Ethnology
of the Borderlands

Anthropology 3379.02 Independent Study
Dr. John A. Price, Instructor/Moderator
James P. Moore

Commentary on interview of the Rev. Ken Flynn, Project BRAVO, and class
on the borderland study in general.

I once read or heard from somewhere: "When a species of animal or
plant--when a culture or language is lost, it is never to be again."
There is a great impact to these words, for they are so true, "never
to be again."

In philosophy there is another thought known as the "Void." This
philosophy goes back to ancient Greece and was asserted by the atomists
philosophers. Aristotle, who admired Leucippus, grasped the signific-
ance of his achievement, "Led by these arguments beyond sense percep-
tion, and disregarding it on the ground that [one ought to follow the
argument], they declared the whole to be one and immovable and infinite
--since any limit would be a limit against the void. . . ." However,
the Ionian philosophers such as Empedocles and Anaxagoras denied the
existence of the void. Anaxagoras, like Empedocles, accepts, "The
Greeks are accustomed to speak of 'coming into being' and 'passing
away'--but mistakenly; for nothing comes to be or passes away. There
is only a mingling and separation of what is. It would be more correct,
therefore, to call coming into being 'mingling' and passing away
'separation.'

From the Ionian tradition came Parmenides' predecessor Heraclitus.
Now, I mention Heraclitus because of Dr. J. Lawrence McConville's lec-
ture on "Ethnomethodology." I like this concept of sociology--dealing

with the individual contribution to culture. This to me, is practical and valid from a humanistic view; thus, my interview with the Rev. Ken Flynn, and the many contributions to the individuals who have made the Oral History Library possible, under the direction of Dr. Oscar Martinez.

I bring in Heraclitus with his, "The World-Order as a Flux." Heraclitus describes change as a way "up and down," and the world-order as coming into being in accordance with it. Here Heraclitus is describing fire and water--the existence of material or physical inabilities. I, on the other hand can hypothesize that Heraclitus could well have been speaking of all existence in the physical world including life and mankind. Heraclitus went on to say, "All things come into being through opposition, and all are in flux like a river." Thus change, for one can never step into the same river twice as the second time of entry into the river it is no longer the same water as before--change, purification, old but yet new (Ethnomethodology).

Along with Heraclitus, the Pythagorean and the Ionians, we must also mention the Sophists.

In the Sophists we can see process (change) at work in the transformation of the word *artē*. The word means "excellence," the *aretē* of a member of the old ruling class was associated with his wealth and family connections; these by themselves brought him influence in affairs of state. Under the democracy all this was changed; power was awarded not on the basis of birth but on the basis of a certain kind of ability.

The Sophist understands the art of persuasion. Protagoras, "Though all are teachers of virtue, some are better at it than others: such a one I claim to be--better than others as helping men to become

noble and good, and worth all that I charge and move, as my pupils themselves agree."

Protagora's answer is simple, "Socrates has the facts right, but he has drawn the wrong conclusions from them. The opinions of all are listened to precisely because all men do have a knowledge of what is right or wrong for the city. Unless this were true, no city would last. We tend to forget this when we see men doing what they know to be evil; but the point is that they do know that what they are doing is evil."

Now, back to the void, I think the above quotations are self evident as to cultures, and can easily be applied to our border situation. Freud could be classified from a philosophical view as an 'Atomist'; things exist for pleasure or pain. There is either pleasure (sex) or pain. What am I trying to say in comparing philosophy to the border situation?

When we deal with people we must consider both 'Formalist' and 'Materialist' needs. When we take away from a person or group of people a part of, or all of their culture we must replace it with something as valuable or even more valuable. We can blend both U.S.-Mexican culture, using the good of both cultures and disregarding the worst. Or, we can accept one culture over the other. Ken Flynn speaks about the two cultures as, "It's a blending, not a melting and that's a big difference." Ken also speaks about, "And, as a person gets up the social ladder he drops those Mexican customs that are inconvenient for him, and picks up some good American customs--like making money and working hard and living in the suburbs and so forth."

These are materialistic of course; but, we should also consider the formalist ideas. Education, politics, religion and social acceptance, and family ties. Both the intermediate and extended family are a part of

both these fundamental structures.

When I heard the young ladies from Juarez from our class give their paper on the Mazahua Indians living in Juarez under such deprived conditions it was easy for me to identify with philosophical thought every cultural group through out world history. Every stronger group preys on the weaker group. Dr. Price exemplified this process with his lectures on the 'Charter' culture. It is said, "might makes right," which may not be true in an ethical sense; but, it's most definitely true in an applicable reality.

Only with the concept of justice and respect can we approach border problems in true proper perspective. This may, or may not be possible, but as Dr. Price has said, "It will have to be done through education."

June 18- July 7, 1977
Workshop in the Contemporary Ethnology
of the Borderlands

Anthropology 3379.02 Independent Study

Dr. John A. Price, Instructor /Moderator Department of Anthropology,
York University Downsview, Ontario, Canada.

Interview of the Rev. Ken Flynn, Project BRAVO, Director of Planning
Formerly: Executive Director of the El Paso County Board of Development;
Director, and Mayor Assistance on Youth Affairs for the City of El Paso,
Texas; Reporter with the Harold Post, El Paso, Texas (Series of 10
Articles on South El Paso).

Ken: Thank you Jim. I don't think I have ever had a Polly Anna view of
the situation here on the border. I know we have lots of problems, its
not an American problem, nor is it a Mexican problem, and it's not a
Mexican American problem. It's a very complicated international Economic
problem that we all face.

One of the things that I feel, and in the past let me just go
back and say in the past eight years I have been directly involved on the
'Front Line' of problems we face here in the city of El Paso with these
Economic problems. My office was bombed when I was Director and Mayors
Assistant on Youth Affairs in the South El Paso as a protest because we
were not able to deliver enough jobs to (young people) during the Summer
months.

During the past four years, with Project Bravo as Director of
Planning, I have become very aware of all the Economic problems that face
the poor in the entire county of El Paso, and so I am familiar with all
the problems that poor people face and still with all this knowledge I am
reluctant to say that any one particular group is a problem. I think
that if there is a problem in the border area it's because systems are
not meeting the needs of individuals. I think that the people who live

in El Paso and Juarez, and Texas and Chihuahua, who live along the border are our greatest resource. And I feel their basic needs of food, clothing and shelter are not being met, and it's not their fault. I am not pleased with all the articles that stereotype the commuter and the illegal alien. I am not pleased with the tagging of the Mexican American being a problem-- I just don't like the idea of putting people in a little box and say that they are the cause of a economic problem. However, we know that our economy is not as good as it should (be). We know that we have the highest unemployment of any metropolitan area in the country. I know that there are people who are not getting the basics of food, clothing and shelter. But, it's not a time for us to sit back and point our finger at the Mexican American because of his cultural difference; or, the mexican alien because he just happens to be here and he makes a convenient scape-goat for all of us.

What we need to do; I feel, here on the border, to improve (the) situation is to have some more dialogue, much-much more dialogue than I've seen in the past, on the government level (national) on the university level, on the city level, there are meetings, there are confereances, there are joint plans and there is a great deal of coordination. But, it stops at the border, and we do not have what I feel is a strong enough international planning committee. A committee with enough clout to really cross the geographic lines that separate us. And to bring about some real dialogue as to how together we can bring up the economy of the entire border area. Ok!

When we talk about border problems, mostly it's economic. I think if we had a situation where the both countrys were equally prosperous, like the United States and Canada--and maybe Canada is more prosperous than we are--there would be no problem at all; or at least (if there)

were we wouldn't be aware of it. And so it's an economic problem, not a problem of two people not wanting to live together. I think that we ought to kind of look a little more on the positive side of things. Here we have in this area, say a million and a half people, many of them from very different grades of culture and different degrees of culture--subcultures within the two cultures--who are living together very peacefully. And who in spite of everything that is written about them get along. I don't feel here any of the kind of animosity that people paint. In other words, people paint you the picture of the Mexican alien as being the enemy, that the illegal alien is the enemy of our people, and I don't think that the average person in El Paso considers the illegal alien as someone who is a serious threat to his well being.

However, to certain groups in El Paso, the illegal alien is very much a threat because the person with whom he is directly in competition, the unskilled laborer, finds that the illegal alien may be competing for a job that should be his. And so there is, where there is a little bit of a conflict; but, even there it's a superficial animosity, it's not a real hatred. We don't have any hatred here that I know of, or that I've felt on the border because of the economic situation. So, I think that's a plus. You know we have basically a large population of different cultures who in spite of all the problems are getting along, we are getting along fine. Now there are groups who are interested in--labor unions for example who are pressuring a certain point of view. There are certain Chicano militant groups that are pushing for a certain improvement. And all of them are good. Every pressure group has it's good side or else it wouldn't be in existence.

But, looking over the border over all I think it's a real fine place to live and has a great future. One of the things I see as a major problem is that we are still trying to (see or) consider El Paso as an American city. And, it is geographically; but, it ends there. El Paso cannot be compared with any other metropolitan area in the entire country. It is the largest American city on the (U.S.-Mexican) border. It's the only American city who's boundry is contiguous, with the boundrys of the Republic of Mexico. El Paso and Juarez are siamese twins joined together at the cash register. They are welded together you cannot do anything in El Paso that does not affect Juarez. And of course when we talk about El Paso and Juarez--and I have just done it, just then--we talk in terms of economics. There is much more to it--there's much more to it than economics.

In El Paso and Juarez we have people who are inter-married, who have relatives in each of the (two) citys, who are very close (with) dear life-long friendships. There is a daily contact of, daily flow of, back and forth. It's a family--it's a family of people who are living in the same particular area. And it cannot be treated separately, El Paso cannot be treated as a separate city, the city of Juarez can't be treated as a separate city--it's one international community.

The problem of course is that politically and to some extent socially we don't think internationally, we think very much (or) we are very much provincial in our thoughts, both on this side and on the other side (El paso and Juarez). And in the past there have been strong organizations that try to overcome some of these differences; but, it seems in the last ten years that these efforts have declined as El Paso and as Juarez both have grown in number; the civic life of the two citys

has kind of diminished instead of increased because we are becoming bigger, and with the size and increase in population we have become more impersonal. So, it's not the running across the border to have lunch with the ... a member of the Rotary Club from Juarez and Juarez Rotarians coming over here, and the various other civic groups exchanging guests at lunch, and just having a lot more dialogue that we use to have in the past. It's declined, it's declined considerably in the past ten years, and that's a factor--a negative factor. There seems to be more activity in Juarez. Juarez has grown a great deal, and El Paso has grown a great deal, but yet in this very important area of civic exchange there just isn't that kind of feeling there use to be ten years ago. There is still a great deal of family ties and friendship ties between the two cities that must be taken into consideration as far as problems are concerned of course.

Back to Project BRAVO; of course we are a private organization-- a non profit corporation, trying to overcome the problems of poverty within El Paso county. We are funded by a number of Federal Agencies, the main one being the Community Services Administration, the inheritor of the old OEO. And, we been in business now for--going on our eleventh year.

I have been the Director of Planning Research Evaluation and Training at (project) BRAVO (for the) past four years and as such I am directly involved in trying to come up with proposals to meet the needs of the poor community. And I cannot honestly say that the cause of poverty in El Paso County is because we are a border city I can't say that, "you know." There are many cultural problems. But, these cultural problems are both assets and liabilities. I can say that a great deal of our poverty is caused by our citizens not being atuned to the American system. And so therefore it is not the citizen of El Paso County who is

the cause of the problem. It's the system--it's the system that's is not meeting that persons need. Whether a person speaks English, or whether a person speaks Spanish has nothing to do with his innate natural need to have food, clothing and shelter. It's got nothing to do with it, it dosen't matter if he spoke Chinese, he would still need these basic needs. So, to say that El Paso's problems are caused by the border is to me a gross untruth.

Now, the reality of it is if we are to live in this American system of ours, we've got to know how to beat it, we've got to know how to join it of course, and that eliminates about half of our international community, and that is the half that lives over in Juarez--Juarez, Chihuahua, Mexico.

A better aproach to solving the problems of the border--it seems to me, would be to handle the entire international community of El Paso-Juarez as one entity, and try to look into some of the problems that the people face in Juarez. And, we know some of the problems in Juarez. We know that they have the problem of the poor and the unskilled coming up from the interior of Mexico, and living in little squalid huts, trying to make a living in Juarez /in/some unskilled area; or, waiting for the opportunity to cross into the United States.

Again the problem is not with the individual, it's with the Mexican system that's not taking care of their needs, and it's with the American system that's not able to handle it because we have problems of our own.

If Project BRAVO--who we have a number of community organizations--we have about thirty-five--anywhere from thirty-five to fourty neighborhood based organizations, and these organizations are comprized of people from the economic disadvantaged neighborhoods themselves--and they, themselves

are poor. As part of our planning process we contact these organizations and we ask them to tell us in their own words what their principle problems are. And this past year they voted in these different organizations that the number one priority, the priority problem for El Paso County is employment. And then the number two problem as they see it is community development. They feel that are not organized enough to help themselves. The third priority was health and because they feel the system is not working, that we need more clinics, we need better service at Thomason General, and so forth--so that was their third priority. The fourth priority was housing, that there is not enough of it, and what is available is too expensive. There need to be improvements in the public housing authority. And in their fifth priority was Senior Citizens, the Elderly.

These groups, these neighborhood based groups, are themselves poor, as I said, and for the most part are Mexican-Americans. And so, they are expressing their own particular problems. It is our job at Project BRAVO and other social services agencies to make the public aware of what these problems are, and to try, to try to bring programs to meet their specific needs.

I know very little about the problems that effect the people in Mexico, or, how they are handling it. I do know that they have a social security program, it's a health plan that is far superior to anything we have over here. And from what I've been able to gather by observation and by conversations their public health plan is much better than the plan we have for our citizens. I know that they have the ISSTE, which is a breakfast feeding program, that is very effective. Mexico is beginning a housing--a public housing program where they are going into small, prefabricated houses that are being built up, and as a result of it

you are seeing nice suburban communities all throughout the major cities of Mexico, and this is a government backed program, and that is solving many of--a good deal of Mexico's housing problems. So, Mexico is making progress and there is a great deal of effort in Mexico to meet the needs of their people. Their land reform programs have received a great deal of publicity. However, over all--I really don't know enough of what Mexico is doing. And I think that for me to work effectively as a planner in solving the problems for the poor, I really need to know what's going on in Mexico and what's available for their people over there.

The twin-plant concept; and, I'm sure you've had speakers, Jim, in this program who have given you a pretty good up-date as to how that's going. I think that's a magnificent program from all I've been able to determine, and I think it's making a great deal of progress and it's a step in the right direction. This is the kind of thing we need to do more of, again--I don't know too much about the twin-plant concept, and I think by its very nature, I think that it is for instance a business oriented program that we won't hear very much about it. But I would like to know what's going on from a government level, and I think that there ought to be a top level--a top level government planning agency strictly for the El Paso-Juarez border area. I say El Paso-Juarez because I know that, Tijuana is a border area too, and I know that San Antonio considers itself a border area; but really, no metropolitan area has the problems or can be compared to the uniqueness of El Paso and Juarez. In size, in actual location, in history--and in everything else--in every other way. So, I think that we need a separate planning international--an international planning commission with a lot of clout that would help us to solve some of these problems before they come up.

From a strictly cultural standpoint Mexico has a tremendous influence on the border area. I would say it's one of our major assets, our major attraction. People come to El Paso because it's uniquely different, it's a little bit of Mexico in the United States. You know, it's a border city, it's a Mexican town, you can notice it in the art, in the architecture, in the food, in the language--in the culture in general. We're very much influenced by Mexico. Likewise Juarez and Northern Mexico is very much influenced by the United States, more than we realize. American movies, American clothes, American fashions, American ideas--everything, no matter where you go in Northern Mexico and to some extent throughout the entire Republic --it's pretty much of an American colony. And, I shouldn't have used that word colony, but since I have let me explain a little bit more.

Wherever you go in Mexico, you can't get away from BankAmerica Card and Master Charge. Mexico depends a great deal on American tourists. And American tourists go to Mexico in droves. I personally love it, I love travel in Mexico. Mexico's tourist industry--Jim, I think you said was 52 percent, 52 percent of their economy is based on American tourists.

Jim: That's right.

Ken: Yea, so they are very--so you know, we are very much in evidence in Mexico, and they very much depend on us. To some extent among the intellectuals in Mexico, and among some radicals, this is a sore point. They feel that Mexico is just another colony of the United States and that they are really dependant on us economically.

However, I found in my travels in Mexico that the people are very hospitable; given a choice between traveling anywhere in the United States and in Mexico I would choose Mexico everytime. I'm not putting in a plug

for Mexican tourist industry; but, I really love the country and I love the people. I find they are genuinely hospitable. Go to a hotel in Washington for example and you know, you don't get any service from the bell-hops, and there is no friendliness, and you are not made to feel welcome. You go to Disneyland and it's strictly business, and all they want is your money. But, go to Mexico, go to Guadalajara, go to Chihuahua, go to Mexico City even to some extent, and you will find a genuine interest in what you are saying and what you are doing, and they show you around--and it's easy to make friends. I have some of the very best times in my life in Mexico as a tourist.

What I like about Mexico is it's a good way to get away from it all, that's what I look for in a vacation and I want a complete change of scenery and a complete change of pace.

And to give you a little illustration of how far out to go to do this-- I spent two weeks down in the Barrancas, in the Barrancas de Cobre, I got off the train and went down into the canyons, the Copper Canyons, where nothing but Tarahumara Indians and little small, little ranchitos, and I was really feeling like, like Dr. Livingston, like I was really getting away from it all, you know. And I was remarking, you know, how beautiful this is. Here it is, only it's really only three or four hundred miles below the border, and yet I'm so totally away from it all. And then I come up to this little old log cabin. A log cabin store, general store, and it just ruined my whole trip. A great big sign "Tome Coca Cola", you know, you can't get away from America, and you can't get away from the United States--we are a tremendous influence. Out in the middle of the Sierra Madres, with the Tarahumara Indians, there you've got Coca Cola--you know--you just can't get away from America. So we have a tremendous influence on Mexico no matter where you go.

One of the most successful programs that we have at Project BRAVO is that of job related education, we call job related education where we're teaching basic English skills to people who do not speak English at all. To give them a fighting chance in the market place hustling for a job. We have a very good success with these classes, and we've helped a lot of people, we've helped a lot of people find--find employment--as a result of our classes.

BRAVO's motto is a-"a hand up, and not a hand out". We feel that our main mission is that of organizing the people so that they can help themselves. And what we do in these neighborhood improvement associations, is we--we give them the opportunity to decide for themselves what they want to do about improving their neighborhoods, and improving their own economic situation. And we at the central office--we the professional staff are merely there to serve as technical assistants to write the proposals and to bring the money in to--to try to solve some of the problems that they face.

One of the areas in which we are working right now is that of weatheration of homes. We have a number of substandard dwellings which are very drafty and don't have vented heaters. And we have a program whereby we're going into these different homes and caulking and repairing broken windows and stopping some of the infiltration so that we can cut down on consumption of fuel, keep the fuel bills down, and make homes a little more comfortable to live in. We're...about half our community based organizations are in housing projects themselves. And so Project BRAVO serves as a kind of mediator for the tenants, and between the tenants and the manager, and we try and help in that way.

Head Start, which is one of the programs that is sponsored by Project BRAVO, is working with 1,220 preschool children, teaching them a basic vocabulary of basic and certain number of English words, so they will be prepared to compete with other kids when they go into the first grade, and it's also a program that takes into account their medical needs and dental needs, as part of the program and is funded by the Office of Child Development.

Most of the teachers in this Head Start program are Mexican-American of course, and this is a plus for the program.

We operate two medical clinics. One at Ysleta to cover the lower valley, and one in Canutillo. And the reason why we got into this business was because the lines at Thomason were too long. The clinics have been very successful, we have an average monthly patient load of 600 to 650 a month at Ysleta and about 300 a month at Canutillo. And since we've installed the clinics the lines at Thomason have decreased; so, as a result of the people not having to travel so far we cut down the congestion at Thomason General Hospital, and we've felt we've helped a great deal in this way.

We are also sponsoring some nutrition programs, we have a nutrition program at Canutillo that we spun off to the City-County Nutrition Program.

We have a contract with the Department of Public Welfare to provide transportation for Medicaid patients on a non-emergency basis, transporting them to doctors appointments and to other medically related appointments.

BRAVO has thirteen organizations of senior citizens and we provide a number of services to them, getting them again to help themselves by organizing and socializing and trying to cope with the problems of the ageing. In addition we have a contract with the city of El Paso to provide

in-depth counseling to senior citizens in the areas of ageing and how to cope with the problems of ill health and so forth, with professional counselors. And we have five counselors in that particular program. We've had that contract with the city for a year and look forward to getting it renewed for another year of operation.

About a year ago, BRAVO had a program to assist migrant farm workers on an emergency basis when they needed food--when they found themselves without food. And it was an interesting program. We also have a similar--where we're undergoing a survey we've been contracted by the Governor's Office of Migrant Affairs to do a survey on a number of migrants in El Paso County. And we found that the migrant worker in El Paso is totally different than the migrant in South Texas. We have a situation here where our migrant is a seasonal farm worker; but, he doesn't follow the crops like they do in South Texas. He doesn't go from Laredo to the mid-west, then to California. Our farm worker lives basically in the South Side (El Paso), in the heart of the innercity area. And he lives in a slum tenement, and he works in the fields of New Mexico, or in the Pecos Valley when work is available, and comes back. He's kind of commutes, we don't have the problem of the migrant worker living in substandard housing on the farms; because he comes back and lives in the substandard housing in the innercity. And it's a strange--he's kind of an urban--an urban seasonal farm worker. And it's a total--totally different situation than the migrant farm worker anywhere else...anywhere else in the country for that matter.

Our farm worker is so different that he even has a special nickname, he's called a Liebrero. A liebrero, meaning Tiebre--coming from the Spanish word that means rabbit. And he kind of jumps from job to job, I guess. There is a regular tradition--at any time--at any time of the week during--

in the South Side (El Paso) on certain street corners there'll be lots of people lined up while waiting to work, and the farm contractor--the farmer, will just come down with a pick-up truck and just load the Liebrero and take them out to the fields. Of course he'll (the worker) come back in a day or so and he'll join his other friends there on the street corner.

Some of these people work for only a day at a time. Most of them are illegal aliens; but, some of them are United States citizens--and some of them have been doing this for generations, which is kind of unusual.

Basically the person (Mexican National) who lives in the innercity area of El Paso or Ysleta, or any other portion of El Paso County is here temporarily. This is kind of as I have said in other reports, and it really hasn't changed very much in the last fifteen years. It's kind of a training ground where the person from Mexico comes in, gets adjusted, goes into public housing, from public housing goes into private home. It's a evolution that takes anywhere from seven to fifteen years, and the family is (then) out (of the barrio) and becomes kind of settled as a part of the middle class Mexican American population.

During this evolutionary process one of the things that hinders any real assimilation into the American culture is the fact that there is no ocean between the United States and Mexico. We all look back with a great deal of nostalgia at the European immigrants and how the Irish came over and had their battles, and were discriminated against--and made it. And how the Italians came over and lived in--in their little Italian sections, and so forth, and had difficulty assimilating into the (American) culture. And the Polish and so forth.

But it's totally different with the Mexican American. The Europeans had to make it, because there was no going back. You just don't cross the Atlantic

every day. But, not so with the Mexican American, with the Mexican who comes over to the United States, there's nothing between the two countries to keep them from just going back and forth, back and forth. And so there's been a blending of sorts of the two people. It's a blending, not a melting and that's a big difference. With the melting pot of the European immigrants, all of them--the German, the French and the Polish somehow melted into Americans. But there's none of that kind of process going on. Our Mexican people here come from Mexico, in a Mexican culture into El Paso which also has a Mexican culture all of it's own. And so there really isn't any--melting, but a lot of blending, a lot of just kind of moving in. And, as a person gets up the social ladder he drops those Mexican customs that are inconvenient for him, and picks up some good American customs--like making money and working hard and living in the suburbs and so forth. But, doesn't really lose any of his identity or his culture. And I think that's good, because that's what--what makes El Paso a very unique city.

I would say that the average Anglo has a good attitude about Mexico, and has a good attitude about Mexican Americans. And, accepts Mexican-Americans just exactly as they are, and gets along to the very best of his ability. I don't--I don't see or feel feelings of hatred or animosity as we--as we have in other parts of the country with other ethnic groups.

When ever we talk about feelings on the border I think it's essential to kind of divide into certain categories. And again, and I hate to do this--I'm contradicting myself, I hate stereotypes and I hate people to be putting other people in little boxes. However generally speaking let's say that the--that the Anglo who is not from El Paso, who is from some other part of the country is more open minded about Mexico and the border situation than someone who was born here and grew up with a lot

of privileges. The same can be said for the Mexican who was--who was not from here--that is the Mexican National. The Mexican American obviously has a lot of hang ups about his relations with Anglos because he has gone to school and he has been subjected to Anglo teachers--for good or for bad, and this has affected his attitudes toward Anglos, and so he maybe feels a little bit different-different, sometimes inferior to the Anglo because of the cultural differences. However, someone from Mexico, who was born and raised in Mexico has no such hang ups unless he develops then when he comes over here; but, for the most part a Mexican National--from Mexico, can come over to the United States and relate very well to an Anglo who is from some other part of the country, any other part of the country, it doesn't matter. Because, they're free of all of the--of the economic pressures and so forth that people here on the border go through, and so that there is a real good rapport and a good feeling with them.

There is some fear in competition and economical rivalry between the Mexican-American and the--and the, the Mexican national, and some bad feelings. The Mexican national refers to the Mexican-American as a 'Pocho', you will more likely hear the Mexican-American call the Mexican national a 'Wet Back', than you would hear an Anglo use that kind of term-terminology. Basically though it's--I get good feelings between the two cultures--the two principle cultures here.

There are three little subcultures in El Paso that we--we haven't mentioned, that perhaps we should, and because they're--they're important of course. And--one--one of them is the Tigua Indians who have been here since at least 1680 when they came down from New Mexico, following the revolt of Popay, and were faithful to the Spanish Franciscans, or so the story goes, and they came down and built the Ysleta Mission and settled in the Ysleta

area. And for centuries they just kind of assimilated into the predominate Mexican culture; but, retained just enough of their Tigua Indians' background to qualify them as Indians, and so we now have a-a revitalized growing Tigua Indian Community in El Paso.

The Chinese who came here working on the railroad. You know the great cross country railraod was built by the Chinese coming from the west and the Irish-thick headed Irish coming from the-from the east, and some where in the west they meet I suppose. But, there was a Chinese colony in El Paso for sometime. There was a strong colony (Chinese), even had-and celebrated the Chinese New year and celebrated-they had these big dragons parades and so forth, and they, you don't seem to hear much of what happened to the-to the Chinese in El Paso. But, there is a bit of a subculture, and that may be the subject for some extensive research as to what happened to the Chinese and how many of them are still around. We do have a little Chinese colony of merchants in ah--in Juarez, who are prominate merchants, and who own grocery stores and meat markets and so forth. And who have managed to retain some of their culture, but you don't hear very much of them.

And of course there are the Blacks, the Blacks have made a tremendous contribution to the history of the Southwest. They were called 'Buffalo Soldiers', because they were-they were tough and when the Apaches cut off their scalps it reminded-their heads reminded them (Apaches) of the hair of the buffalo. And so the Apaches labeled them (Blacks) 'Buffalo Soldiers'. And they had a great contribution to-in the history of the conquest of the West. The town of Vado in New Mexico, I'm sure you're familiar with was an almost Black Community. They number, oh-a little less than three percent of the population; but, some of the Blacks have a very-very interesting history, and have made an interesting contribution to this part of the country, and should not be overlooked in any talk on-on the cultural contributors to the border.

The Apache Indians of course have-pretty well known in these parts because of the Apache Indian-Indian Reservation in Cloudcroft and Ruidoso (area) [Mescalero]. But, we don't hear very much any more of the Monso Indians in Mexico, or the Senecu. Their kind of cultures again that have sort of faded out. The Apache of course-they're-they're going strong, but the Mexican Indians have kind of faded out of the picture.

However, as a very distinct part of El Paso's religious culture the Indian dancers-everybody calls them Indian dancers, but they're really not as such. The Matachines that we see on the feast day of Our Lady of Guadalupe on the 12th of December and on other festive occasion at church bazaars and so forth, Catholic church bazaars. These Indian dancers were actually dances that were brought over from Spain during-from middle age Spain. They were part of the passion plays of the middle ages. And when the Spaniards brought them over to the New World, well the dances went kind of a-a metamorphoses, and the old clown costumes of Europe became the feathers and the Indian costumes of the-of the local tribes. And the devil became the 'Chamuco', the devil playing the clown role in these particular dances. And they're very interesting, part of our culture. This is a custom over at the time of the conquest in the 1500 and 1600, and you can still see Matachines to this day in El Paso in Juarez at the - some of the larger Mexican art and congregations.

We got a good tourist promotion program sponsored by the Chamber of Commerce and the city of El Paso to bring visitors into the city. But the greatest magnet for visitors from other parts of the country is the United States Army. When Uncle Sam sends you an invitation to visit El Paso, there isn't much you can do about it and you are here. And most of our-many of our military people have come to El Paso found the border as a totally different life style and have stayed, and so we owe a great deal to the military for their contribution to-

to the community. And they're brought in a lot of people from different parts of the country, which again makes El Paso unique; because, although we're a Texas city, we have a lot of people who have come here from somewhere else.

I think that one of El Paso's greatest attractions, by far is Juarez. I've always believed this and I've always felt this. I've always felt that El Paso is a fun place to live because it's so close to Juarez, and because there's so many things to do in Juarez that we can't-you can't do anywhere else in Texas. Our location in that respect is very unique; right smack on the border with a-with Juarez. And Juarez has a race track, greyhound racing and dog racing-I mean dog racing and horse racing in season. Lots of very nice night clubs. Right across the border in New Mexico, almost-only five minutes from downtown El Paso is the Sunland Park Race Track. And because of the quirk in our geography, we have racing, and nowhere-we have horse racing and nowhere-nowhere else in Texas do they have this. So this is where we are blessed in that respect. And of course Juarez is known for-a some of it's brothels, and some of it's other seedier attractions. But I think that is kind of declining, I think that I-I can see a decline in-it used to be Mariscal Street where the red light district-and it was a very busy place; but, with the sexual-sexual revolution in this country prostitution is I think-are going out of style. Nobody pays for that sort of thing any more. I don't know whether that's a blessing or a curse. Those activist in Mexico who are socially conscious and fell embarrassed about it would probably consider it a blessing.

There are many charitable and church related organizations in Juarez that-they do a lot of work with the poor, and the problem of prostitution is a problem if poverty. These people work very quietly and very effectively in trying to fight some of these social problems that exist in our sister-city, and they don't get very credit.

I think that the church as a whole is kind of over looked when we talk about the border. And that's a shame, because it is a major influence in the lives of people on both sides of the border, both in (El Paso and Juarez-what is now two nations was one New Spain, not U.S.-Mexico). The church has made a tremendous contribution to the South West.

The original colony in-in Juarez was founded by the Franciscans and the Monso Indians and it was called "Nuestra Senora de Guadalupe de los Indios Monso's del Paso del Norte." And, that was the first name of Juarez, back in 1659. The Ysleta Mission was founded in 1682, it's the oldest building in Texas. And that community is one of the oldest communities in Texas. Some of the communities that were founded around the churches in the lower valley were the only real civilization in this area for-for-centuries. And so the Church (Catholic) has a long history in this area.

And to this day church leaders have played an important roll in helping the poor. I think our Catholic Bishop Sidney Mathew Mitzger has been very courageous in his stands in favor of organized labor. And he's recieved a lot of critism because of his direct involvement in the Faran strike. But he's very diffently known as a man of the poor, a man of the people.

Bishop Talamas of a-of a-a Juarez who is-is also a man who has been very activly engaged in-inaddressing problems of-of social justice.

And the individual parishes through out the-the Southwest-there are many dedicated priest who provide their parishners, their people with the opportunity to organize and to come together, and to-to join together in communities. And so, the Churches is-is playing a very important roll.

The Protestant Churches to have-have made-have made and are making a great contribution to problems of the poor. We in Project BRAVO are very grateful to-to the churches for their assistance, the assistance that they have given us in trying to overcome some of our--our problems.

And I can't leave out the Jewish Community either their very-the local Jewish Community is very social justice oriented, and does a lot of good work.

To kind of summarize I really don't think that there's any other place in the United States that can be compared with the El Paso border. And I don't like to talk about problems of the border, in terms of people; because, I think classifying people and categorizing people is a mistake. I think that what ever economic problems we have are problems that we face because our systems are not working. And in order to get these systems of the United States, and the systems of Mexico to work together, to help to fill the needs of the good people who live in this area-I think there needs to be a real powerful top level planning commission, a commission with "clout" that could get into areas-that could be possible, economic problems-and solve them before they get out of hand.

I think that it is wrong to put the finger on any one group of people as causing the problem. People are our greatest assest, and our greates: strengthand people built up this area. This area wasn't built by buildings or by corporations-it was built by people. Good people who felt that their place in the sun was here in El Paso and Juarez. And it's up to the system to make sure that everyone has their rightful place in the sun.