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Interview no. 188

Dr. Eugenio A. Aguilar, Jr.

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UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT EL PASO

INSTITUTE OF ORAL HISTORY

INTERVIEWEE: Dr. Eugenio A. Aguilar, Jr. (1924-)
INTERVIEWER: Oscar J. Martínez
PROJECT: Bicentennial
DATE OF INTERVIEW: September 3, 1975
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BIOGRAPHICAL SYNOPSIS OF INTERVIEWEE:

Dentist and Civic leader.

SUMMARY OF INTERVIEW:

Biography; the Depression; U. T. Austin; experiences in the infantry; views on the word "Chicano"; early Mexican American dentists in El Paso; political activities; effects of Ciudad Juárez dentistry on the profession in El Paso.

2 hours.
55 pages.

BICENTENNIAL

M: This is an Oral History interview with Dr. Eugenio Aguilar of El Paso, Texas; September the 3rd, 1975. Conducting the interview is Oscar Martínez.

First of all, Dr. Aguilar, could you tell me what you remember about your childhood?

A: Well, I was born on Pera Street, right around Pera and Raynor. Then we moved to Frutas Street, between Raynor and Estrella, one block north of Alameda. That's where I grew up, in that area. It was a poor area.

M: When were you born?

A: I was born September 2, 1924. We started living in a tenement. In fact, I remember it was 3119 Frutas--it's still there. Then we moved to a house at 3125--only a couple of houses down. But that's where I grew up, in that area with all the things that go with that area. In other words, the railroad tracks and the old telephone yard over there, Guardian Angel Church and the school there, and the SP shops on Piedras, and the railroad tracks. Of course we knew that area. We roamed it all over, up and down.

M: Could you tell me about your parents' background?

A: My father was born in Querétaro in México. He was an orphan. His mother died at childbirth and his father died about three months after he was born, so he had no relatives. He was displaced during the

Revolution and he ended up here in El Paso around 1916 or 1917, at about the age of 16 or 17. My mother was born in Oaxaca, and of course, that's quite a ways down. It's about 300 miles south of México City. She was brought to the United States by a family that was supposedly very prominent in Oaxaca in those days. I don't know if you're interested in the name of the family.

M: Sure.

A: Bolaños Cachua was the name of the family. She came here and she stayed with the family for a while. Then, as I understand it, the family moved to Los Angeles, and she stayed here. She got a job and she was working for a Jewish family here in El Paso. She was their nursemaid--she took care of the children. ... She and my dad met each other here and they were married around 1921. My mother was also an orphan, so I had no relatives of any sort. I have an older brother in Los Angeles--he's two and a half years older than I am, and I have a sister. She's about ten years younger. She's in California, so I'm the only one here. My dad is still living. My mother passed away many years ago.

M: You don't have any uncles, aunts?

A: No. Nothing. It has its advantages.

M: That's true! How was your father displaced by the Revolution in México?

A: My father has a very interesting history, really. He's about 77 right now, and I had him write a history of his life. It was very interesting, but I think he got a little emotional. I think he embellished it a little bit--that's why I haven't done anything with it. He was raised by a priest. He was raised by a family that gave him the name of Aguilar, because his original name turned out to be

Zalasua. We had a lot of problems with him when he retired from the railroad because he had no birth certificate of any sort. All he had was the crossing card that the Immigration had given him. But he had two cards, both with different ages on the card. When he retired from the railroad, he had two ages that he had to comply with there, and the Railroad Retirement Board wanted some sort of a birth certificate or a baptismal certificate or something. We had to go to México and go through all those little towns outside of Querétaro. The churches were burnt during the Revolution and most of the records were burnt. The only record they could find was of this child born to the Zalasuas whose godparents were Eugenio Aguilar and María Sarabia de Aguilar. So that's where the "Aguilar" came from. Of course, my brother still signs his name "Aguilar Z." I've never bothered with it because it's too much of a hassle, and my dad never changed his name. He just let it go, he had enough troubles already. He was a young man with no relatives and no attachments of any sort, and he did end up with Villa up here in northern Chihuahua. When he got to the border, being a young 17-year-old, he was pretty scared most of the time. How he got involved with Villa I don't exactly remember. I don't know if he went with Villa voluntarily or was coerced, but when he got to the border he just crossed it. I know that the Immigration later on asked him how he came across to the United States. He says, "I just walked across the bridge." They said, "What do you mean?" He said, "Well, there was nobody at the bridge. People used to just cross over, you know, without any problems." And that's how he ended up over here.

M: Has he talked about his experiences in the Revolution much?

A: Oh, yeah. Well, he used to when we were younger, when we were kids. He used to tell us about fighting the Yaquis in Sonora with the División del Norte with Villa. [He told us] some of the things that went on with Villa up here in Parral and Torreón and all these areas. I'm kind of proud of him because he was the only fellow that fought with Villa that crossed the border and was not a General. He was just a Private. You know, there are so many people that fought with Villa and they're all "generales de división" but he just said he was just a plain soldier and that was about the extent of it. I presume he had a hard time. I kind of admire him because when he came over here he didn't speak English and he had no trade whatsoever. He didn't do anything. The only thing that he knew [was penmanship]. He writes beautifully, his penmanship is just out of this world--old-fashioned, you know. And he can play chess. He learned both of them from this priest that raised him. He started selling records in a record shop here on South El Paso Street. You won't believe this, but he learned English through a correspondence course. Now, how you can learn a language through a correspondence course is beyond me, but he did learn it. When he got the opportunity to go into the SP shops as an apprentice machinist, he took it. That's where he stayed and he became a machinist.

M: It sounds like he had a lot of incentive.

A: He did. In fact, I'll tell you how far the incentive went. When the steam locomotives went out of usage, the diesels came in. And in El Paso they gave most of the old-timers [a choice]. My dad was already an old-timer. This took place around '62, '64, and my dad was only about 2 or 3 years away from retirement. But they gave him the

choice. They said, "Either you go to school and learn about the diesels or you can just spend your next three years and you'll be retired." My dad's attitude was, "If they want to pay for me to learn about the diesels, I'll go learn about the diesels." So he went to school, and he learned about the diesels. Now, of course, the way things turned out, when the diesels came out they laid off half the force. My dad stayed and worked four more years because he knew how to work on diesels, and other machinists who didn't go to the diesel school were let go. I thought that was pretty good of him to go to school that late in life.

M: It might be good to get an interview with him.

A: Yeah. It might not be a bad idea.

M: Let me ask you about your elementary school years. Where did you go to school?

A: I went to Guardian Angel School. The reason, of course, was that it was only a block and a half away from our house. We are Catholics. Guardian Angel Church was half a block away from where we lived, and the school was on the other side of the same block; so that's where we went to school.

M: Was it an all Chicano school?

A: Yeah, that's right. Well, now that I remember, there was one "gringo" and one "negrito."

M: In the whole school?

A: In the whole school, yeah. A fellow by the name of Harry Paine, and the negrito was a fellow by the name of Willie Butler.

M: You have a good memory.

A: Well, I remember them because Harry Paine was a year behind me and Willie Butler was in my class, but he was colored.

M: Did you maintain contacts with these kids? How is it that you remember their names?

A: Well, we all grew up together and we used to do a lot of things together. We roamed the streets together, we went to the ballgames together, we played baseball together. I remember a lot of the kids I grew up with. I know a fellow by the name of Manuel Jacques. Now, this Jacques family lived on Manzana Street. That's the street that disappeared with the freeway, you know. Manuel Jacques came from a large family. The older boy was David Jacques, and he was just the salt of the earth. In fact, a lot of people considered him a saint, he was such a nice guy. I guess he would be about ten years older than me. He was killed by a train on the railroad tracks there in back of the Church. He went to mass every day; he was a real good man. He went to 6 o'clock mass. He waited there to let a train go by. As soon as the train went by, he moved over to cross and there was another train on the other track. That one caught him and it killed him. The reason I'm saying all this is because Gregorio Jacques and Manuel Jacques were brothers of his. Manuel was a year ahead of me and Gregorio was in my class. Manuel ended up at Fort Leavenworth as an addict--not only a felon, but an addict. Gregorio was just as bad. He ended up in, I think, at Folsom in California. So these are the two extremes in that one particular family. And we all grew up together. Now, I remember many of the kids around there. When we grew up there were always what they used to call "marijuanos" around. In those days a "marijuano" was somebody to be

pitied. You would see him laying next to a tenement or against a brick wall or something--just laying there. I remember many times people or my mother saying, "Es un marijuano, leave him alone." Everybody would just avoid him. It wasn't the fancy type of deal that it is now.

M: Was it a tough neighborhood?

A: It was pretty tough. It wasn't as tough as what they used to call "El barrio del diablo"--I'm sure you've heard of that. That's up there on Walnut and Magoffin, Walnut and Basset, and Myrtle; around there. But it was a tough neighborhood. There were a lot of things going on that weren't exactly good. There were a lot of ex-jail birds, people that lived around that area. When I was a kid we used to sit outside at night and listen to some of these guys that had gotten out of La Tuna sing the corridos. They used to play the guitar pretty good and that's where we heard these corridos from La Tuna, you know, and all of those.

M: Did you live in a tenement?

A: Yeah. We lived in that tenement that I mentioned at 3119 Frutas for a year or two. Then we moved two houses over, to 3125 Frutas. That's where we lived since I was about 6-years-old until 1941 when I was 17.

M: That's where you grew up.

A: Yeah, right.

M: Was it a house?

A: It was a duplex and we rented it.

M: The teachers that you had in elementary school--were they Anglo?

A: Well, yes and no. In other words, the Guardian Angel School was run by the sisters of Loretto, and we had some Sisters that were Anglo.

But there were two sisters and one of them I still see. Her name was Sister Martillana and she's from New Mexico, from Bernadillo. In fact, she was here last year and we saw her. She looked the same. But anyway, she was a sister of Loretto, but she was Spanish-speaking from New Mexico. The others were all Anglo. There were some lay-teachers. One of them is a Mrs. Orozco. She taught me when I was in first grade and she's a patient of mine. They live up there by Our Lady Guadalupe Church. I remember also a teacher by the name of Solís, her last name was Solís, and they used to have a funeral home at the corner of Frutas and Raynor. They moved and left town, but she was another of our teachers at that time.

M: So you had some Spanish-speaking teachers, too?

A: Yeah, yeah. Of course, I learned Spanish at home, and we learned English in school. I don't agree with the modern day philosophy. To me, I still think that when we're in the United States we should learn English, because that is the language that's going to serve us in good stead. That's the language that we need, that's the language of business, that's the language of our daily life and our making a living. I think that Spanish should be taught by the parents at home. Now, I know what the objections are. First of all, there are a lot of parents who don't know Spanish. Well, fine, I know that. Then, of course, you're talking about a different situation. But in our case, for example, my mother never learned English; she always spoke Spanish. My dad spoke Spanish and learned English through a correspondence school. He didn't speak it very well, but he used to speak it all the time. We used to get a Spanish newspaper and we used to get magazines from Juárez. We used to get a Continental way back

there many years ago. He would bring magazines such as Sucesos and some of these old Mexican magazines. He had--I would call it a library, but it wasn't really a library in that he didn't have a formal bookshelf with books; but he had a lot of books. My dad loved to read--he still does. In fact, those books from the Governor, he's got them because he's reading them. But, by the age of twelve I had read all the books of Alejandro Dumas like the Three Musketeers, Veinte años después, El vizconde de la Babelona, and all of those. I had already read them in Spanish. I mean the good Spanish. So I learned Spanish at home from talking to my mother; I learned Spanish at home from reading El Continental; I learned Spanish at home from reading the books, las novelas, that my dad used to have. In fact, during World War II--and I remember this very vividly--I used to be on Okinawa. I would write home and I would get the letter back on the next mail from my dad with all the corrections of where I missed an accent and this type of thing. But, of course, I was lucky that they taught me Spanish because I learned it the right way.

M: How much education did your parents have?

A: My mother had very little. She could barely write. She could sign her name and I remember that her signature was very shaky. She never went to school from what I understood. My dad went to school about four years. Everything else he learned, he learned from this priest in Querétaro.

M: That's where he got his influence, then, about education.

A: Yes. And that's where he learned his penmanship and how to write.

M: In school, were you prohibited from speaking Spanish on the school grounds?

A: Yes, right.

M: Were you punished if you did?

A: Well, no, not necessarily punished. I mean, we never got spanked or stood in the corner or anything like that. It was just that we weren't allowed to speak Spanish. If we spoke Spanish we might have to stay after school and write something in English. I still make a lot of mistakes in my pronunciation even now. This is part of the problem, like with my kids. My kids speak excellent English and their Spanish has suffered a little bit. We try to speak Spanish at home and I get books and magazines and newspapers at home in Spanish, but they don't read them as much as they should. I don't know if it's because they're just not interested or they've got other interests that take up more of their time. When I went to school, once you stepped inside that front door of the school, all you spoke was English. I like it because, for example, for the Anglo it doesn't make any difference. For the Spanish-speaking kids who are trying to learn English, well, that's the place to learn it. They're not going to go home to their mothers and fathers who may or may not speak English and try to learn it at home. Then as soon as we went out and went home, when we got home my mother didn't speak English so we started speaking Spanish all the time.

M: Were your parents in agreement with the policy of the school, all English?

A: Oh yes, definitely. My dad was very, very strict. He didn't believe in any leniency at all because he was brought up in a very, very strict environment; and he was very strict with us. Boy, he was tough. He was tough on us and I remember he was also tough on my mother.

M: Was elementary school a pleasant experience for you?

A: It was very pleasant. It was *not* unpleasant at all. I enjoyed it.

I had a lot of fun because we learned things and we had a lot of activities. Actually, I think that our whole life centered around our church and our school. I used to also be in plays when I was in grammar school. We were obligated to come out in school plays. Our last year in grammar school we put on this big production "The Valley of the Mohawks"; you know, Indians and the whole bit. I didn't want to be in the play and the Sister Superior decided that I was going to play the lead role and I had to sing. My brother--we were in the same class--he's the guy that had the voice. He knew he had the voice and he wanted to sing. So, anyway, I ended up doing the singing and sang the Indian love-call and all this sort of stuff. But, there was a lot of that type of activity. Afterwards, when I was in high school, at night there was a group of people. You could call them amateurs because we never got paid. But Guardian Angel was the center of culture many, many years ago. We used to have two groups putting on plays--dramas and operettas--and I mean they were great. They were really good shows. The Guardian Angel Theater--I don't know whether it seats 1,000 people or 900 people or something like that--would be filled every time one of these plays was put on. We used to get reviews in El Continental on a Monday after a Sunday play. We were so good that I remember we went to Albuquerque to put on plays, we went down to Chihuahua. In the old Zaragosa Theater in Juárez we used to put on these plays.

M: This was when you were in high school?

A: When I was in high school; but I was one of the youngest ones in the

group. There were older people. We had a fellow by the name of Mr. Eustacio Macías. He's dead now, but he was the director and he was a tremendous director. Now, talking about operettas, we put on Carmen, Cabellería rusticana, El soldado de chocolate--The Chocolate Soldier-- and all of these plays. Some of them were put on by "el Profesor" Rechy. Did you ever hear of him, Roberto Rechy? He was the father of Ivan Rechy, who's the ball player who now works for the Popular. Well, his father was "el Profesor" Rechy and he was a piano teacher. He would put on these operettas and he was quite a man, I'll tell you. The only thing wrong with him--he swore and cursed like nobody's business, but he knew his music. I remember a couple of the plays that were put on were combined between Mr. Eustacio Macías directing the acting part of it and "el Profesor" Rechy directing the music. We put some on at Liberty Hall and they were under the sponsorship of the association in those days called "La Buena Prensa." Now, there was also the group from San Ignatius. There was another group there who used to put these plays on. And also, Mr. Velarde, Al Velarde, who passed away. He used to put on plays, too. They were good. A couple of times we all got together and put on these plays. Now, which brings me to something else. About three years ago my wife got invited by the Madrinas del Teatro de los Pobres for us to go to a play here at the Festival Theater. It's a bilingual theater. We went, and, of course, I saw the play. Well, let me back up. I think that I came out, I would say, in somewhere between 40 to 50 plays. Now, I'm talking about dramas, comedies, sainetes. You know what a sainete is, don't you?

M: No.

- A: A sainete is a short comedy; it's not a three-act comedy. It's, say, a one-act or a two-act comedy that's designed to make you roll in the aisles. And they really work. Anyway, we went to this thing. I'm not trying to blow my horn, but I consider myself a connoisseur of plays in Spanish. In fact, some patients of mine, the Señoritas Muela, who have lived around Guardian Angel all their life--they still live there--[told me] the other day, "¿Se acuerda, doctor, cuando salió en El burro corto?" That was the title of the sainete--El burro corto. I said, "Sure I remember." Anyway, we used to have a lot of fun. We went to this Teatro de los Pobres, and they were terrible. I mean they were really terrible. In fact, they had a girl there that couldn't speak Spanish, she was so terrible. She spoke Spanish like this: "Es hablar usted poquito por mí" [with an Anglo accent] and that type of thing. To me, that was just horrible. Anyway, after the play, you know René Díaz who used to own the Barrel Houses? René Díaz and his wife Reva Díaz--her maiden name was Lizarrga from the Lizarrgas in Juárez--they had a little party at their house after the play. A lot of people went to the party; for example, Pancho Salas-Porras and Pipina Salas-Porras--Josefina [Acevedo de] Salas-Porras. You know them?
- M: The family of the girl who became a beauty queen locally?
- A: Yes. They're the parents of the present Sun Queen--Marta Salas-Porras. Anyway, we went over there and we had this party; and then one of them comes up to me and he says, "What did you think of the play?" I'm trying to make a point, huh? I said, "Do you really want me to tell you?" He said, "Yes." So I told him that they were lousy. Boy, that just spread a damper on the whole party because they all thought they were great and I didn't; I thought they were lousy. But I

wasn't being critical, because I told Josefina Salas-Porras, "Look, I will be glad to help these kids, I will be glad to get a couple of other people that I know to help them. I will be glad to go down to Guardian Angel to the hall, to the theater, and get all the telones down there." I bet you they're gathering dust, all these things; and I will be glad to get them and help them fix all of these things up. Now, a fellow by the name of José Domínguez, Joe Domínguez used to come out in these plays. He's older than I am and that time he used to play the hero all the time. He's a very goodlooking man--or he was. Anyway, he's been here. He had an attack, he walks with a crutch and all this and all that. He has all the plays in Spanish that this Mr. Macías used to own, and they're tremendous plays. Like I say, they're serious dramas, comedies and sainetes--all kinds. One of his daughters got involved with this Teatro de los Pobres and he told her that he would be glad to give them all of these plays so that they could put them on. Well, she told whoever was in charge, and, of course, he said, "Well, we don't want those old plays." But these old plays are tremendous plays. Somebody should get those plays and duplicate them before they're lost, because these are plays [that are] originally from Spain--almost all of them--and they're tremendous. At UTEP they used to have a book in one of the Spanish courses--Lecturas . One of the stories in there was "Las codornizas" and "El sombrero de tres picos." "Las codornizas" is a play that has been put on by the Teatro de los Pobres. Well, he has all of these over there. He's got some over there that are even better than that. I kind of hate to see these things die, because these things are just tremendous dramas and comedies that should be made available to these kids.

M: Well, maybe we can arrange for him to contribute these things to the library at UTEP.

A: I think that he may not give them away because he doesn't want them lost; I think he feels towards these things like I do. I love these things. But they can be duplicated. These kids that come out in these plays now-days--it's very commendable that they come out in plays; it's very commendable that these are in Spanish, but they need a lot of guidance. You cannot take a play like they did, an American play, and translate it directly into Spanish and expect a success like it was in English. See? Now, I may be wrong and I may be way off in left field, but I cannot see it.

M: It's a big problem.

A: I know it, I know it.

M: Let me get back to your school years. Is that the only elementary school that you went to--Guardian Angel?

A: Yes. There were only seven grades then--you got out in seventh grade, or eighth grade.

M: Where did you go to the eighth grade?

A: Well, in those days all schools had seven grades. Then your eighth grade became the high school. I was differentiating that now there's an eighth grade in grammar school. In those days there were just seven grades. Then I went to Cathedral; I spent four years at Cathedral.

M: Both at Guardian Angel and at Cathedral, of course, you had to pay tuition.

A: Right.

M: How did you manage to do that?

A: Well, in Guardian Angel, my parents paid it. I don't remember what the tuition was at Guardian Angel. I know it wasn't much because there wasn't much money in those days, but it was a big school. I would say they had over 600 or 700 students. The average person over there didn't have that much money. Now, when I went to Cathedral it was \$4.00 a month and I used to work with this NYA project watering the plants. When I got that NYA check, I would just sign it and give it to Brother, and that paid my tuition. So I know that the tuition when I started was \$4.00 a month. I would guess that probably they had a \$2.00 charge per month per child in the grammar school, or maybe a \$5.00 a month for the family, or something like that.

M: Was that the first job that you had--with the National Youth Administration?

A: No. Well, of course, if you're going to say "a job" it depends on whether you're talking about a regular job with a Social Security number and the whole thing, or just something to help you out.

M: Well, any work that provided you pay.

A: I worked helping deliver milk. The first job that I had was during the school year, when this guy would pick me up about 6:30 in the morning and he would already have the truck loaded with milk. We used to go deliver the San Antonio Dairy Milk. That San Antonio Dairy was the Návars'. Now, just as an aside, I know the whole Návar clan because we all grew up at Guardian Angel together. Right now there are three generations of Návars--the original old gentleman and Mrs. Návar passed away some years ago. All the other Návars-- I didn't know the oldest one who's Luis--but Mike and Tomás and Juan Manuel, all of them are contemporaries of mine. Now, their children are already married with children, so I know all of that group, see?

The old people were the owners of the San Antonio Dairy, and that became Farmers Dairy. That's the first job I had--delivering that milk. Afterwards, in the summertime I worked with a fellow by the name of Tony Corona who used to work for Price's, and I would help him deliver milk. This was a horse of a different color, because he'd get me up about 4:00 in the morning and we'd drive up to Piedras in back of Price's plant over here, and load the truck. I remember we used to deliver all around White Oaks Avenue and end up at the Standard Oil Refinery. Then I'd come in. That was in the summertime.

M: What other jobs did you have up until the time that you graduated from high school?

A: Well, I don't really remember, to be honest.

M: These were the main ones?

A: These were the main ones. I'll tell you one thing--and I just thought of this. The atmosphere of Guardian Angel School and that barrio or that area around Frutas and Copia and Alameda to Cathedral High School on North Stanton in those days was a completely different world. I had never seen a swimming pool until I walked into the basement of Cathedral High School, which was the old Catholic Community Center. That was the first time I had seen a swimming pool. I had never seen [one], not even the old one at Washington Park. I remember I didn't even know how to swim, but that was the first time I had seen a swimming pool. Also, that was the first time I had been thrown into contact with Anglos. It was a little hard because I had no Anglo friends. I guess that it wasn't until I graduated from high school that I could consider one or two of my Anglo classmates as friends.

M: Why was it hard to make friends with the Anglos there?

A: I think that it was probably for two reasons. Now that I look back on it, I think they were a little clannish in the first place. Most of them--now, I'm talking about a Catholic group because most of the students at Cathedral were Catholic--grew up around St. Patricks Church, around Cathedral High School, up around Kern Place, and up in this area. In those days, there were no Mexican people living up here; there might have been about one or two. I can give you an example--Judge Robert Galván. He was born and raised up here on Nevada Street. He speaks excellent English, but we considered him more of a "gringo" than a "mexicano" in those days. He would never go around with the "mexicanos" in those days. But he had a very good rapport with the Anglos at Cathedral High School. The reason he had it was because he grew up with them, so it was natural for him to have that rapport. I never really got to know him or consider Judge Galván a friend of mine until after World War II--after he was an attorney and I was a dentist. He remembered me from high school, but in high school we could have passed each other in the hall and he wouldn't have said "Hi" to me because we weren't that close. With the Anglo students it was just the same thing--I never knew them. I never really did. The other thing that you have to realize is that Cathedral High School, being a Catholic high school, would get so many kids from Guardian Angel that would move to Cathedral, so many kids from Sacred Heart, from St. Ignatius, from San Javier, or Holy Family, or where have you, and so they tended to gravitate to those they knew from their old school. It wasn't until later on that you made other friends. But it was easier to make friends with the other Mexican boys than to make friends with the Anglos.

M: Roughly, what was the ethnic split between Anglos and Mexicans at Cathedral [at that time]?

A: I would say from 60 to 75 [%] Anglo. We were definitely a minority.

M: Did most kids who graduated from your grammar school go on to high school?

A: No. I would say that probably about half of them did not go to high school. I would say that maybe 10% or 15% of that 50% that's left went to Cathedral, and the rest of them went to Bowie. But I would say that fully 50% of them never went to high school.

M: From your high school years that you remember, then, there wasn't much mixing between the Anglos and the Mexican students?

A: Not from the Mexican students from South El Paso or East El Paso. In other words, I'm making the clarification here, like with Robert Galván. I remember Robert Galván had a brother who was a year behind me in school at Cathedral. He died while he was in high school.

M: Were the Anglos there at Cathedral treated any differently than the Mexicans?

A: No, not really; except in athletics. Of course, now we're getting into personalities. You've heard of Bob Carson, Robert Carson?

M: I've heard the name.

A: He's in the El Paso Hall of Fame. He died about six, seven months ago. He was a wonderful man, but he had definite favorites. He played favorites. If you were an Anglo and you went out for football at Cathedral, you were going to get to play whether you were good or not good. If you were a Mexican and you went out for football, he either had to like you or you had to be an exceptional football player to stay on that team. Consequently, if you take the annuals from Cathedral for those years, you would see very few

Mexican football players at Cathedral. It wasn't the Brothers and it wasn't the school--it was him. Yet, he was a nice man in that he didn't go out of his way to be ugly; but that's just the way it was.

M: Some people would point out that Anglos are bigger physically, and this is one major reason that there would be less Mexicans on the football team.

A: It could be, it could be. Of course, I'd have to just judge it on my own experience, and most of the Anglos were bigger than some of us were. They were bigger.

M: But from what you recall, there was a definite preference on his part toward Anglos in making choices about athletics?

A: Very definitely. In other words, if you were to ask me whether Mr. Bob Carson discriminated between the Anglos and the Mexicans I would say "Yes" definitely.

M: Is that a common opinion with others who were at Cathedral at that time?

A: I think so. Of course, you also have to look at it in those days. Now, I'm talking about the years '38, '39, '40 and '41; '38 to '42 actually. What I'm thinking of is the fact that they were years when he gave out seven or eight letters a year for football. Now, the team is eleven. So, you've got to stop and say, "Well, why?" And you say, "Well, maybe they just didn't have the money to give a letter or a sweater," which was the big deal in those days; they gave sweaters. It could be, it could be. Those were tight years, but I can give a very good example. One of my brothers-in-law was a tremendous football player. His name is Rudy Valenzuela. He played three years for Cathedral as a starting guard and got one letter after three years' play.

M: Let me backtrack just a minute here and ask you about recollections that you might have about the Depression in El Paso as you were growing up. What do you remember about that?

A: The first thing I remember [is] my dad getting laid off from the railroad because that went strictly on seniority. They had a seniority list for apprentices, a seniority list for helpers, a seniority list for machinists, a seniority list for painters, and a seniority list for boiler makers. They would start from the bottom and lay them off. I remember my dad was always being laid off. I remember we had a compadre, in fact, my godfather--my father's compadre, Don Luis Valencia who used to live on Rivera Street. He had a lot more seniority than my dad, and he was never laid off during the Depression years. The reason I mention him is because we used to get this meat--cans of meat. When you opened them up there was meat and water. It wasn't soup, it was just plain water, and there was some stringy meat in it, chunks of stringy meat. That's all we used to get during the Depression. I remember that my padrino, Mr. Valencia, since he was working, would go and buy Carnation milk, and he would give my dad so many cans of Carnation--say, five cans of Carnation--for 15 of this stringy meat, see? The reason we used to get the Carnation milk is because my sister was born in 1934, and so '35 and '36 were the tough times. That's how we used to get the milk for my sister, who was a baby at that time. But I remember that stringy meat, I'll never forget it. There was nothing but water in the can. So, those things I remember. I remember my dad working at various places. He worked with the WPA making Scenic Drive and fixing that road. I remember we

had some friends by the name of Valdiviez who lived on El Paso Drive. There's still some around. Max Valdiviez used to be the gardner for Harry L. Hussmann. Now, Harry L. Hussmann used to own the Hussmann Hotel. If I'm not mistaken, he's the grandfather of Tom Hussmann who used to be with the Southwest National Bank and is now the president of the Montwood or one of these banks. Anyway, this was his grandfather. Max Valdiviez took my dad to see Mr. Hussmann. Mr. Hussmann had two homes. They're still out there on Pershing Drive. One of them was that big white home as you make the turn on Pershing before you get to Dyer. It's [got] a high metal fence, it's got a tennis court on one side, and the house sits high. That was or is Mr. Hussmann's house. About three blocks before you get there, there used to be some two duplexes that sat up high. Well, Mr. Valdiviez used to take care of the gardening in both of these places. My dad and he went to Mr. Hussmann and asked him for a job; and he made him an assistant gardner. That was real great because I think my dad was earning about \$5.00 a week as an assistant gardner. It helped a lot, it helped a lot. So, my dad worked for Mr. Hussmann as a gardner. He did that during the Depression and the Scenic Drive. Then, of course, there were times when he didn't do anything and there was no work. In the meantime, I remember we used to try and grow vegetables and stuff in the back. It was always a problem.

M: Do you remember how it was for other families in the neighborhood?

A: I think that there were a lot of other families that were in worse shape than we were because when my dad worked for the Southern Pacific Railroad we were in good shape. In other words, my dad's job as a machinist or an apprentice machinist was a very good job, and we

used to be in better financial shape than most of the other people around there. I think that most of those other people were in even worse shape than we were.

M: Did you experience any discrimination because of the fact that you were Mexican up to the time when you were in high school?

A: No. To be very honest and fair and frank, I think that the first time I felt discriminated against or that I felt that I was outside the center of activity was when I started going to Cathedral. In other words, I left East El Paso and came up here to what was then North El Paso, and that's when I felt a difference. Prior to that, no, because we all grew up there in East El Paso. In fact, there used to be a lot of colored people living there on Estrella. On the corner of Estrella and Frutas is the Shiloh Baptist Church; that's a colored church. We grew up with a lot of "negritos", colored people, and we didn't pay much attention to the fact that they were darker than we were. That didn't have much of an impression on us. I don't know why, but we weren't aware of that.

M: How did the Chicanos and the "negritos" get along?

A: Oh, we got along fine. We used to play baseball together, we used to play football on Estrella Street all the time. In fact, we used to go into the services at Shiloh Baptist Church.

M: When you went to Cathedral you say that you did sense that difference. How was it that you came to sense that?

A: I think it's because most of the Anglos wouldn't speak to the Mexicans, and they would, of course, tend to gravitate each one to his own group. I think that's where I first noticed the difference. It might also have been something on my part; I was shy. I think we were all mostly shy [because] we were sort of displaced. In other words,

we were away from our familiar barrios, our familiar surroundings; and we were in a strange area of town, in a strange building, with strange people we had never seen. On the other hand, most of these kids that lived around there would go swimming to the Community Center every day or every Sunday and they would play and play tennis up on the Roof Garden all the time. They were used to the building and they were used to seeing each other, and to them it was home grounds. To us it wasn't. I think that was another factor involved.

M: Of the Mexicans who graduated from Cathedral, what percentage would you estimate went on to college at the time that you graduated?

A: Well, I would say that not more than 25%. About 3 or 4 of them were from Juárez, and, of course, I think they were at Cathedral because they could afford to pay the tuition. I don't know if they paid more tuition than we did--I assume they did--but by the mere fact that they were coming to Cathedral meant that they were better off than most people in Juárez. So they were coming over here, so then their parents could afford to send them on to college. For example, Panchito Baca--you know, Dr. Baca--was from Juárez originally. He's an Obstetrician here in El Paso now. He was a classmate of mine at Cathedral. I'm sure that he also had to work because I don't think he came from a well-to-do family, but I know a couple of others that went to college who did come from well-to-do families from Juárez. So, if I say 25% [went to college], you have to understand that maybe about four or five of those were Spanish-speaking, but they were from Juárez. So, the percentage is small. The other thing is that we graduated in the middle of World War II and that created a disruption of the normal pattern.

M: Did you go into the Service right after graduation?

A: When I graduated from high school I was 17 years of age and I wanted to go to college. I knew that I wanted to go to college. So, what I did, I got a job as a bartender. I went up to Logan Heights and I got a job with the PX and I told them I was 18. They gave me a job, and the only job they had open was as a bartender; so I took it. I worked for one year and I saved my money. I graduated in May of '42; and the following year at the end of May of '43 I went to U.T. Austin. I enrolled for both summer semesters at Austin. I took Chemistry and another course--I forget what it was--but anyway, I spent the whole summer going to U.T. Austin. At the end of August I came home. The 2nd of September was my birthday and I got drafted on the 4th or the 3rd of September. So, I had one year after high school during which I worked, and spent two summer sessions at U.T. in Austin; and then I was drafted.

M: To what do you attribute the desire to go to college?

A: Well, when I went into high school, my grades were excellent. In those days they had what they used to call exemptions. Cathedral was set up on the basis that you went to the same class five times a week. On Monday there was no quiz of any sort. On Tuesday before the lecture began, they gave you a ten-minute quiz on the previous day's material. On Wednesday they would do the same thing. On Thursday the same thing. Then on Friday they would give you an exam on the whole week's material. Now, if you got a 90 or above in every Friday exam, you would be exempt from taking the 6-week's exam and you would automatically get an "A." If you got an 89 in any one of those exams, then you would have to take the [6 week's] exam. Well, for 2 1/2 years I didn't take any exams at Cathedral. I still have

the report cards--they're all straight "As." So I had no problem; I was just blessed. I had no problem with grades, I had no problem with keeping up with my school and I just enjoyed the courses. I had no problems with them.

M: Do you attribute that to encouragement that you got from family--your father perhaps--or school itself?

A: No. To be very honest with you, I think that those good old Sisters from Loretto that taught us at Guardian Angel were very good teachers. On the other hand, when I got out of Cathedral then I went to U.T. Austin [and took] that Chemistry course, I didn't do very good on it. I didn't flunk it. I think I had a "B" or a "C+" or something like that, but it wasn't that the course was difficult. I remember that the Brother that taught us Chemistry in school at Cathedral was an excellent teacher. The reason I didn't do better in U.T. Austin was because I was out of my stomping grounds again. I was lost and I had a hard time. But it wasn't an overwhelming course for me. The Brothers in those days were good educators. You've got to hand it to them. They are good educators.

M: It was highly unusual for a Mexican in those days to go on to college, especially to U.T. Austin, wasn't it?

A: Yeah. Well, I wanted always to go to college ever since I was a freshman in high school because I wanted to do something and get an education. But one of my very close friends was one of my other brothers-in-law--Ray. He's the pharmacist downstairs in the drug-store. He and I grew up together; his family, my wife, and my family all grew up in the area. His father was in better shape financially, even with a large family, than my father. So when Ray got

out of high school, his father could afford to send him to U.T Austin right away. He was going to go to Pharmacy School. Of course, my father couldn't afford to send me. Ray was going to go to Pharmacy School and I wanted to be a doctor of some sort--I hadn't determined yet what kind; but, I did want to go to school. I said, "Well, since my father can't afford to send me, then it's up to me to do it one way or another." That's where I got the idea that I had to go to college and I had to get a job. That's why I took off a year to work.

M: How was the experience at Austin? Once again, as you put it, you were out of your own milieu, in a different setting.

A: Actually, it wasn't too bad. When I went down there, I stayed in this boarding house that was run by two sisters; they were Spanish-speaking. This house was on Guadalupe Street. The house was torn down many years ago. But there were a lot of Spanish-speaking students there. They were very friendly. They were from Laredo and Zapata and Corpus and everywhere, and we all kind of fit together. The only thing that I remember, or that made an impression on me at that time, was the size of the classes. Of course, going to Cathedral at that time we had a class of 30. I remember a Chemistry course [at U.T. Austin] that was held in a theater atmosphere where you had 200, 300 students. I'm sure it's worse now, but in those days they had 200 or 300 people. That made an impression on me because you were really just a number--you weren't a person any more. But I really didn't venture too far from the University. I never had the money to do anything so I was confined to going to school and just being there.

M: Then you got drafted?

A: Yeah, I got drafted.

M: You went into the Infantry?

A: I got drafted in September of '43. That was a bad time there. The Battle of Guadalcanal was taking place, the South Pacific and all that. When I got drafted I never got a furlough of any sort. They took me in and I don't know who got assigned where or how, but I just got shipped out. I stayed a week here at Logan Heights and I got shipped out. The next thing I know, I ended up in Camp Roberts, California, which was an Infantry Replacement and Training Center. I remember that they told me that I had a very high IQ at that time. I don't remember exactly how those IQ tests were, but I think it was 128-- the IQ that I had on that test. That didn't seem to make any difference because I think the procedure was that they put all these names in the box, and turned the box, and out you went because that's the way they needed them. So I ended up in Camp Roberts, California, where I got 17 weeks' training as an Infantryman. From there I was shipped directly overseas. I never got to come home. I ended up in Hawaii in a Replacement depot and I spent about 5 months there. Then I got assigned to the 96th Division--to an Infantry Regiment. Somehow or another the Division left and I was left behind; and then the next time they assigned me I ended up with the 27th Infantry Division. This is kind of funny because the 27th Infantry Division is the New York State National Guard; that's what it was. And the Infantry Regiment that I got assigned to turned out to be the 165th Infantry Regiment, which was the Old Fighting 69th. Even though it was war-time and we went through a lot, it was still a very interesting and pleasant experience for me because it was an Irish Regiment. They had a lot of tradition behind them and there was a lot of elite

feeling about the Regiment. They had this green regimental flag and the staff was higher than the United States flag. All the Irish were in there and all this sort of stuff. It was very, very interesting. It was really funny though, because every morning at reveille they would call out the role, and they would go down the line: "Murphy, McMechon, McIntyre and McGough" and all of this. Then at the end they'd come to "Aguilar" and everybody would turn around to see who that alien was. But, it was real funny. I was reading the paper while I was on my vacation. They had an article about a custodian that retired from Lomaland [Loma Terrace] School and he had been in the 27th Infantry Division. He was with the 105th Infantry Regiment. What is his name? Selso Romero or something like that. He retired as custodian of one of the schools. In the Battle of Saipan the 105th Infantry Regiment was overwhelmed by the Japanese, and there were very few people left alive. After the Battle of Saipan, the Division went to the New Hebrides, and that's where I joined them--the New Hebrides Islands at the Island of Espiritu Santo. Then I saw action on Okinawa. We were on the front lines for quite a while. You don't want me to go into all of that, do you?

M: Well, interesting experiences that you recall at that time.

A: Most people can't understand it unless you've been an Infantryman. Like the fighting in Europe, for example; if the Infantry outfit got to a town, they would find homes or houses or stores or a fountain in the middle of the square. In the Pacific, you would never find that because the Japanese were fanatical. By the time you took a town there was nothing left. Any prisoners taken by the Japanese were killed. I'm not saying the war in the Pacific was any rougher than the war in Europe, but it was an entirely different type of war.

It was an island type of thing--from one island to the other. Now, I first used to carry an M-1, then I carried a BAR; and actually I was also trained as an end-to-tank gun crewman--37 mm. But the only time we ever used an end-to-tank gun was when we fired a smoke shell at one of these caves in Okinawa; and we got smoke out of about 27 different holes coming out of that mountain, just to show you the interconnection that they had. They also had artillery pieces on railroad tracks that they would open a door on the side of the mountain and bring out the piece and fire and pull it back in and close the door. But, the Infantrymen--and, of course, I got the Combat Infantryman's Badge--we would go somewhere and dig a foxhole. You had to dig it before it got dark, and you had to dig it undercover. If you got a piece where there was a rock, you were in trouble. You dug a foxhole and then you set up a perimeter, and then you wait the night out and hope nobody comes through or charges at you. Then the next morning you stick the helmet up first and then your head. If you don't get fired upon then you can get out and start advancing again. Then you start getting fired upon. So, the life of an Infantryman is a pretty rough thing. You don't get to shave; you don't get to take a bath; you don't get nothing. I slept in a foxhole full of water. We lasted in Okinawa from April 1 to the end of August, and how many times I slept in water I couldn't tell you.

M: Did you ever get wounded?

A: No, I never did. I came pretty close to it, but I just lucked out.

I came close to getting killed. I had an artillery shell hit so close to me that not only did it knock me goofy but it almost covered me with dirt and they had to dig me out. Another time we advanced on a mountain top and took this mountain. It was foggy, and when

the fog lifted we were in the middle of a Japanese outfit. Everything broke loose. We all ended up rolling down the hill. We also took another mountain one time. This was on a mop-up operation where supposedly it had been taken. I was sitting in a foxhole that had been dug--a slit trench. This guy was sitting next to me. He was from New York. They used to put little hard candies in the C-ration cans, and I had the habit of always taking one of those little candies and putting it in my mouth, but I would always chew them. Therefore, I would chew the candy and I would eat it right away, and I'd bend down and pick up another one. One of those times when I bent over, we heard this rifle shot and of course everybody threw themselves on the ground. The sergeant--Sergeant Peers was his name--yelled, "Anybody hurt?" And before I could say anything I heard this gurgling sound. This guy, Mazola, from New York City that was sitting with me was gurgling. I turned around and, sure enough, there was blood coming out of his mouth. There was a sniper up in the tree, see. We had taken the top of this hill and we thought it was clear, but there was a sniper up there. He was aiming at either me or [Mazola] but since I kept bending down I wasn't giving him a fixed target. So I don't know if he aimed at me and when I bent down he hit him or [if] he was aiming at him. That's, I guess, about the closest that I've come [to getting shot]. When the Battle of Okinawa was going along, it was going bad. In those days a company had 125 men. Our company had 32 men left. General Buckner or somebody up in headquarters made the decision that, instead of replacing our men, they'd pull the 27th Division off the line and put in another Division. On Okinawa you ended up with quite a few--I think there's 4 or 5--Marine Divisions and the 96th and 97th Division, and quite a few of the Army Divisions.

Anyway, then they sent us to mop up the northern side of the island. They started us across like this--almost, you know, you could see. The next guy down's on your right and the next guy on your left. That's the way we were going to mop up the island. Well, we ended up in the northern part of the island, single file, through a little dry creek, or walking in the creek. That's how we ended up mopping up that island. The thing is, they told us that the Marines had already cleaned up the northern end of the island and we didn't have anything to do except just go up there and check it. Of course, I've seen Marines dead on a two-by-two truck piled like logs. Every objective they attempted they did. They killed a hell of a lot of them needlessly. But, anyway, there were two roads, one on the east side of the island of Okinawa and one on the west side on the northern part. The Marines went up the roads and there was no resistance, so they had taken the northern part of the island. Then they came down to the south where all the resistance was. But when we started mopping up, the first time we came to a mountain it took us about almost 3 weeks to get it--with the aid of tanks and airplanes--because it was full of Japanese.

M: I'm curious about the role of other Mexicans that you may have been associated with in that outfit. Did you stay with that outfit all the time? Were you the only Mexican?

A: There was another Mexican there. He was from Laredo. But he was the Medical Corpsman. So actually, he was assigned there by a regiment; he wasn't a part of the Infantry. He had as hard a time as we did. He was a boozier. Nobody blamed him. I had been overseas about 18 months and I was the rookie of the outfit. Most of these guys had

been overseas by that time 42 months, that type of thing. Of course, when they were not fighting, like between the battles of Taragua and Saipan and Okinawa, there's nothing to do in the Pacific. There's no recreation. By that I mean no place that you can go and water ski or that type of thing. So these guys used to drink a lot and they used to make their own booze, too--the old Jungle Juice. But anyway, this guy was from Laredo and he was a nice guy. I got to know him fairly well, but he was a Medical Corpsman and I didn't see him too much because I was thrown in with most of the others. There weren't too many Mexicans in that outfit.

M: How were you treated personally by the outfit?

A: Well, there was no problem there. In those days, in the situation that we were in, discrimination was the least of anybody's thought. So I never encountered any discrimination of any sort in the Service. Not in an Infantry outfit. Actually, I never encountered it anywhere really during my Service career. I guess it was because I dealt mostly with Infantry men whose main concern is staying alive.

M: What difference in your life did being in the Service make when you came out?

A: The way I've always looked at it is, first of all, I lost three years of my life because I went in just about the time I was 18 and I came out by the time I was 21. So I really lost 3 years of my life. But, on the other hand, I was entitled to the GI Bill of Rights. If it hadn't been for that, I couldn't have gone to dental school. I came out in February of '46, and in June of '46 I enrolled here at UTEP as a pre-med or a pre-dental student. By then I had decided I was going to be a dentist. I saved my GI Bill and I paid my way through

UTEP. Now, how did I pay my way through UTEP? Well, it was a lot of fun. I worked as a Private Eye, I gave blood, I worked as a bartender at night. I'd work at whatever I could find. That's how I paid my way through UTEP. In those days, you used to get \$25 for a pint of blood. Every seven, eight weeks I used to sell a pint of blood. I worked as a Private Eye for a Private Detective agency here, and did some following and the usual type of thing. I worked as a bartender. I also worked at a produce company during the summer. I used to get up at 3:30 in the morning and work till 2 in the afternoon and earn \$24 a week. So, anyway, I paid my way through UTEP, because at that time the tuition was \$50 a semester. I could swing that, see. I got accepted to three Dental Schools. The first one that accepted me was St. Louis University in St. Louis, Missouri; and then afterwards Baylor and Texas accepted me. But St. Louis University sent me the acceptance notice and they wanted a \$50 acceptance fee, which I didn't have. So I went and borrowed them from a friend of mine and that's what I sent. Well, by the time that Texas University-- which was the next one that I heard from--accepted me, I couldn't afford to let the \$50 go. So, that's why I ended up at St. Louis University. The tuition was \$500 a year over there. In St. Louis I used the GI Bill, and the maximum they paid was \$500 for tuition. So that took care of that. Then with the subsistence check that I would get every month, that's how I lived. Then I got married after my first year. OK. My wife worked. She graduated from UTEP; she has a major in Chemistry with a minor in Mathematics. She worked for Drs. Mason, Boverie and Black. She used to do blood chemistries and spinal fluid chemistries. So when we got married, she got a job at the St. Louis University Medical School doing research. She got

a very good job and she helped me. Then, she got pregnant and our first boy was born in May of '51, which was when my mother died. Of course, I didn't see her when she died. Then that summer I got a job working in a brewery in St. Louis. I worked in two breweries in St. Louis and I worked for the Post Office. I worked at Falstaff Brewery one summer and at Budweiser another summer. That was an experience, too, because of the fact that you can't get a job unless you belong to the Union, and you can't join the Union just by going up to Union Hall and trying to sign in. You can't do it like that. You have to have somebody sponsor you; and even when they sponsor you, that doesn't mean that you're going to get a job unless you know somebody else. Fortunately our landlady had a friend who was a brewmaster at Falstaff, and that's how I got the job. Of course, it turned out to be the 2:00 AM to 10:00 AM shift. That's what I was working in the summertime. The job at the Post Office was during the school year, and we would work nights. I would get to the Post Office about 5:30 and work till about 11:00, 12:00, 10:30, depending on how much mail there was. The last year I ran into trouble, because that's when I ran out of GI Bill. So, I was going to have to pay. By that time, tuition had gone up from \$500 to \$625 a year. So my father-in-law, Mr. Angel Valenzuela, was a very good friend of Mr. J.C. Machuca. Mr. J.C. Machuca was a very good friend of Judge T. Canales from the Río Grande Valley. Judge J.T. Canales lent me \$300 and he sent it to me up there, and that's how I helped pay for the tuition. Anyway, I got a job at a Sears Warehouse. I would get out of school about 4:30, go home, pick up a lunch, and get out to the Sears Warehouse in St. Louis at about 5:15. At that time, the workers were leaving;

then I would sit and answer the emergency telephone at the Sears Warehouse. That was taking care of freezers, refrigerators, heaters, and that type of thing. I'd work til midnight, and at midnight I would close up the place and make sure the burglar alarm was on. I would do that every Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday. You want to know how much I earned?

M: Yes.

A: \$24 a week. At that time, my senior year, my wife and I had two children--we had our two boys--and we were living in a housing project in St. Louis where the rent was \$24 a month. We would take \$6 out of the \$24 for rent every week, and we would live on \$18 a week.

M: Were other students doing this?

A: Most everybody. There were a lot of students that were from well-to-do families. I remember one of my classmates starting school with a yellow convertible with leopardskin seatcovers, that type of thing. But on the other hand, there were others that were just struggling. I had a classmate whose father had a wheat ranch in Endale, Kansas, and the way he financed him, he said, "One year you can have this whole crop." That financed him for more than 4 years I'll tell you.

M: Were there any other Mexicans there in Dental School?

A: No.

M: During Dental School, since you were the only Mexican, were you looked upon as someone unique, exotic or were you just accepted like anybody else?

A: Accepted just like anybody else. The only thing I remember is that everybody wanted Josephine to cook Mexican food. Everybody loved

Mexican food. But, no, it was no problem. It was a very comfortable period of my life, really, in spite of the financial hardships.

You want to know about my school books? Shall I tell you about my school books? Well, it was the middle of my Junior year and I was working in the Clinic. I heard through the loud speaker the voice of the Dean's secretary saying, "Mr. Aguilar, please report to the Dean's office." In two and a half years I had never been up to the Dean's office. So I walked up there and waited. Then he finally saw me. This was Dr. Leroy Main, who was a very wonderful gentleman. He was a Baptist minister, by the way, and a dentist. Anyway, he said, "Let me see. You're in the Art School aren't you?" I said, "No. I'm in school here." "Oh, oh, yeah." Then he remembered who I was, see. Then he says to me, "It has come to my attention that you are in the middle of your Junior year and you have not bought a textbook." He says, "Is that right?" I said, "That's right." He says, "Well, I would like to know why and how you've done it." I said, "Well, the reason I have not bought a textbook is because I really can't afford it." And I said, "If you want to know how I do it, I just take good notes." So he had me go down and get some of my notes and bring them up to him. I used to print my notes--print them as the professor was speaking. He was very impressed, but he gave me an ultimatum. He gave me a list of about eight books and said that I better get those books if I expected to graduate. So I had to borrow some money. I borrowed about \$200 and bought those books, and those are the books that I have now. But, now that I think of it, there were very few Mexican people in St. Louis at that time. I remember there was one store over there. [The owner's] brother had a store here on Cotton Avenue; and that's how I met him. But he had a store in St. Louis,

in South St. Louis. But there were very few Mexican people in St. Louis.

M: Let me backtrack to your time at UTEP. What was the situation with Chicanos at UTEP?

A: Well, it wasn't the best, to be honest with you. In those days no Mexican students were allowed in the fraternities. I don't think there were any Mexican girls in the sororities. The "in group" was all Anglo. By that, I mean Student Association, the Year Book, the dances, the queens, whatever you want to have, were all Anglos. The Mexican students were not really accepted, except probably some of the athletes who were doing good. Like, I remember the year that they had Ivan Rechy and Mike Izquierdo, and all of these Mexican basketball players. I'm sure that they were accepted very easily by the so-called elite of the school because they were doing a good job and that type of thing. But as far as us belonging to anything, no, we were not accepted there. My wife and I talk about it once in a while and I say, "Even if we had been asked to join a fraternity or a sorority we couldn't have afforded it anyway." On the other hand, you have to visualize it as far as I was concerned, and this was the attitude of most of the veterans when we went up there to school. We had lost three years of our lives, we were behind, and we had to make up time. So we were not interested in the icings and the little things of the school. We were interested in getting our courses and getting our grades and going on to the professional schools that we had in mind; and that's what we did. You could have said that there were two groups: the veterans, who were there only to study and get their education and get out and go on to what they were going to do; and the young kids, who were there for a typical college good time and

education.

M: Do you recall any comments being made by professors or administrators that were derogatory in any way toward Mexicans?

A: No. I really don't. At that time I spent most of my time in the Chemistry and Biology Department, and those two departments were run by two persons that, in my opinion, were some of the best people in this world. They were Dr. Burkman and Dr. Lake. They were fair. They were strict and tough, but very fair. It didn't make any difference who you were. If you did your work and you did good, you got good grades and that's the way it was, regardless of who you were. They tolerated no baloney. In other words, they were there for a certain business and that's the way it was. Now, I don't know how it was in the other departments like Business Administration. A lot of these people in the Business Administration field, for example, had more time to get involved in extracurricular activities than we did, so I really can't tell you about that.

M: Let me move into the final phase of the interview. This is regarding your professional life. Have you practiced here in El Paso all of the time that you've been a dentist?

A: Yes. Now, let me tell you something. I had a classmate by the name of Jack Callahan from Syracuse, New York. Over the period of four years when we were in school he used to ask me a lot of questions about El Paso and Texas, just like I would ask him about New York and Syracuse. We discussed discrimination many, many times, because he was a graduate of Annapolis. We used to get into a lot of arguments, because he was an officer and I was a private in the Infantry, and this type of thing. When we got through school, he told me, he said,

"Fred, why don't you come with me to Syracuse? Let's you and I set up an office in Syracuse." And I said, "Well, Jack, I appreciate the offer, but I want to go back to El Paso." And he says, "Well, why? You tell me about the discrimination that takes place in El Paso, and the low salaries and all of this. Why do you want to go back? Why don't you come up to Syracuse and then you don't have to fool around with this?" And I told him this: I said, "Jack, I have to go back to El Paso because whether I like it or not, I have to set an example." And I believe this very sincerely. When I opened my practice here in El Paso, I felt that I was setting an example for the rest of the kids in South El Paso and East El Paso [to show] that they can become dentists or physicians or bankers or what-have-you. It can be done if they just apply themselves. What I mean when I say "apply themselves" is for them to continue their education--not to drop out of school. Now, of course, when a kid sees the name of Lee Trevino in the newspaper, anything that Lee Trevino does is great news. So a kid in South El Paso and East El Paso will see that in the newspaper and Lee Trevino, whether he's known it or not, has already communicated with that kid. He has already presented an image and that kid already has something that he can see and visualize and say, "Well, I want to be a golfer," or "I want to be a tennis player when I grow up" because here's this guy doing it. On the other hand, a physician or a dentist--we don't get in the newspapers. We don't advertise, so how do we go about telling these kids in grammar schools in South and East El Paso that they can become successful dentists or successful physicians? How do we go about it? Well, the only way to do it is to come and live

here and get involved in our community activities, and go down there and talk to these kids in the schools--which I've done. I've lectured to them in the schools, brought them here to show them the office, and let them know that there are various ways to achieve what they want in life. Now, I'm not a radical and I never will be, just like I'm not a Chicano. I'm sorry. Maybe you're a Chicano, but I'm not a Chicano. I'm an American of Mexican extraction, and that's what I'll always be. When I grew up, the word "Chicano" was a bad word. It was a slang word that nobody liked to use, and that's the way my dad brought me up. So I still don't consider myself a Chicano. If you want to call me a "Mexicano," that's fine--but don't call me a "Chicano." So, getting back to these kids--we have to set an example. And because I want to set an example is how I get involved in these things. For example, I was the first Spanish-speaking president of the El Paso District Dental Society. People in other walks of life told me, "You're going to run into discrimination in that Dental Society." I never did. I never did. I've been involved in a lot of things. Right now there's three Spanish-speaking directors in the Chamber of Commerce: Arnold Peinado, Melo Jacques and I. We are the first three Mexican American directors. Well, maybe not the first ones--there have been some others but they haven't made much of an impression. But we want to make an impression. There are some things that we are working upon that will make an impression in the next year or so. That's why I get involved in all these things. That's why I serve on the Housing Authority and the Board of Health. I'm a director of the United Way and all this stuff. It's money out of my pocket and it's my time, and it involves a lot

of commitment on my part. Yet, I give it willingly. I wish that I could quit practice and go every day to a school and tell these young Mexican kids what they can achieve, and that there is a better way of achieving it than by being a radical. You can achieve it just through education. I'm not telling you anything new.

M: I'm curious about how the word "Chicano" was used when you were growing up.

A: The word "Chicano" was very seldom used, really, when I was a kid. It wasn't a good word. Now this is my own personal version from my own personal experience: the word "Chicano" comes from the word "Mexicano"--it's just an apocopation; they reduced the word. That's what it is. But it is like saying "troca" or "breca"--although that's the English influence there. My parents never used it.

M: Did your parents ever comment upon the word?

A: Well, yes. I remember them saying that it wasn't the right word to use. No era una mala palabra--not a swear word--but you just didn't use it. I'm trying to think of an example, but I can't.

M: A corruption of the correct word perhaps?

A: Right, right.

M: You mentioned the word "radical," and somehow I sensed that you're associating it with the word "Chicano" now.

A: Well, not really, because there are radicals of all shades and colors and attitudes. The radicals--and by that I'm talking about the Brown Beret type of thing--have adopted the word "Chicano." Now, these are my own personal opinions, I may be completely off, you may not agree with me. The reason they adopted the word "Chicano" is not so much because of what it means but because the media likes it, you

see. The newspapers, the television--they started to use the word "Chicano" because they liked it and therefore any group that called itself "Chicano" is going to get the exposure that otherwise they wouldn't get. So, therefore, they gravitate towards using this word because they know they're going to get the exposure. It's just like the guy that goes down the street and creates a demonstration. Is it really going to accomplish the purpose that he wants? Maybe, maybe not. We really don't know. But what it will accomplish is to gather the attention of the fourth estate, or the media. The media has a lot of responsibility and they owe a lot to the society because they make situations, they break situations, and sometimes they're very irresponsible.

M: Getting back to when you first started practicing in El Paso, where did you set up your first office?

A: I started at the First National Bank Building. I got a little office up there on the twelfth floor. I think that at the time it was the only office that was available. It was very small and I went ahead and took it. I had no problems because there was a lot of rapport amongst us dentists. I would say that I consider about 35 to 40% of the dentists not just my colleagues, but my brothers. We look at each other like hermanos, you know. They look towards me in the same way. This has been proven many, many, many times. We had a young dentist who died of cancer of the kidney here about 8 or 10 years ago, and about 12 of us kept his office going for about three months until the widow sold the office. We went out there and worked. Every one of us took one day out of our offices and we kept that thing going, like I said, for three months, and there was no problem.

When a new dentist comes to town and he opens his office, he sends notices out to physicians and dentists. Well, when I get one we put it up there on our counter. Whenever I'm really busy and somebody calls up with a toothache and they need the tooth out right now, and they can't stand the toothache and I can't see them, we refer them to these young dentists. That happened to me when I first opened my office over there. I got a lot of support and a lot of help from the other dentists in town--Mexicans, Mexicanos or Americanos, it didn't make any difference. Now, just as a matter of record, the first Spanish-speaking dentist here was a fellow by the name of Cortés or Cortese, I forget. He was in the Caples Building; he really was Portuguese. The first really Mexican dentist in El Paso--native born--is Dr. De la Torre, A.A. de la Torre. He's still practicing. Of course, he's very well-off. He practices as a hobby and he's got his office at the Stanton Medical Building. But he was the first one. The second Spanish-speaking dentist that came to the town was Víctor Hugo Vigil. He was born and raised in Sunset Heights and he was a wonderful person. He was in practice five years and died of a heart attack over night, like that. [He was a] tremendous person. Then the third one was Joe Torres. Joe Torres has his office out there on North Mesa at that new building across the street from Penrod's at 3901 North Mesa. Joe is one of the best (you're not going to publish this?) dentists in El Paso and I mean it. He's a great dentist with his hands. He's an artist. Dr. De la Torre was the first one, and then Dr. Vigil, and then Dr. Joe Torres; and then I was the next one after that. Now, after that I've kind of lost

track because so many of them came in. Dr. Roger Ortiz, Dr. René Rosas, Galván, los Mápula and some of these others. But like I said, those were the originals: De la Torre, Vigil, Joe Torres, and then I came in. I got out of school in '53, Joe Torres got out in '52, Víctor Vigil got out in '51, but Dr. De la Torre got out in 1938. So, he's the "dean," so to speak.

M: And he's Mexicano?

A: Sí, es mexicano. Es de los De la Torre, de A. de la Torre and Sons. They have that wholesale food supply business down in South El Paso.

M: So, when you first came in, you did receive help from the Anglo community?

A: Yes.

M: You implied that you haven't had any reason to believe or felt that you have been treated any differently within the profession. Is that true?

A: Yes. Now, within the profession I have not had, that I know of, any discrimination of any type, shape or form. This is something you might be interested in. Supposedly I occupy a certain position in this community through my professional standing, through my community involvement. I occupy a certain position. Nevertheless, I still run into some covert discrimination. It's still here; it will always be here I presume. I'm sure that it will be less and less, because I think the younger generations have a lot less discrimination in their minds than the older generations. For example, I belong to the El Paso Country Club, and once and a while I'll meet somebody who doesn't want to talk to me or be near me--I've never met them before. You and I can understand it and we can recognize it right away. They

don't have to draw us a map. I still see it on certain occasions, but it's mostly from older people. Now, I've been at cocktail parties or dances or what-have-you, where you meet a certain group of people or a lot of people; and you will always get somebody who will right away come across and you'll notice their attitudes. You know what I'm talking about, and you recognize it just like I recognize it. But I still meet it.

M: It seems like you're characterizing this behavior as a subtle individual sort of prejudice and not an institutional, overt kind of discrimination.

A: No. Just as an example, let's take a person, an Anglo person, who was born and raised here from a well-to-do family, who has never had anything to do with the Mexican people, except maybe [as] gardeners or servants of his family. Therefore, he grows up with this attitude, and he continues to have it. This is what I'm referring to.

M: But that's an individual prejudice.

A: Right. It's an individual that's doing it and he would do it to anybody, any Mexican person there. For example, I'm not going to mention any names but--we have a bank president here in El Paso who came in from some other city. Now, I don't know where he came from, but in my community projects I had many, many chances of running into him and being at meetings with him. By the time they introduced me to him the eighth time, I was not interested in meeting him the eighth time. Well, it just happens that I also know the Chairman of the Board of the bank, and he and I are very good friends. This is a gentleman--an Anglo person, by the way--of the old school. By that I mean very courteous, personable and just a wonderful person. In the course of the conversation he was telling me about the new

president, and I said, "Well, this has been my experience with him." We knew each other well enough and we think of each other well enough that I went right ahead and told him what was going on. I found out later that he had been doing it to all the Mexican American people that he would run into. He just wasn't interested in Mexican American people. So this old gentleman called him in and talked to him and, of course, he's changed--a complete reversal of policy. But I find [these people] in the United Way, I find them in the Country Club, I find them in the Chamber, especially among the ex-military which are some of the worst, and you find them all over. They introduce you to them or you meet each other and you introduce yourself, and two weeks later you go by and you know who they are but they don't know who you are. It becomes a little old after a while, meeting them over and over and over. What does it mean, what does it connote? They could care less.

M: Are there any derogatory comments that any of these people have made?

A: No, I've never heard any, really. In the Yucca Boy Scout board of directors I heard a man here in El Paso who's been here many years, who's held a responsible position with one of the big businesses here in town... We were having dinner where there were about five Spanish-speaking people, including myself, and maybe eight Anglos, and he refers to himself as "we white people." [Laughter] Yet, this is a man who helped with the Boy Scouts and he helps a lot with the Boy Scouts in South El Paso. So, what's wrong with him? Is he really discriminating? Doesn't he like Mexican people? No, I think he likes Mexican people--that's why he worked with the Boy Scouts, that's why he worked with them in South El Paso. Well, what is it then? It's the way he was brought up. He'll always continue to

refer to himself as "us white people" until the day he dies. But, now, his son and his daughter will not.

M: You've been active in the community for a long time.

A: I've also been that active in politics.

M: What activities have you been involved in, in politics?

A: Well, the most important one that I did, I was campaign manager for Ben Barnes here when he first got elected Lieutenant Governor, and then when he got re-elected Lieutenant Governor. We campaigned for Lloyd Bentsen. I've contributed and campaigned for Tati. I've campaigned for some of the others like Raul Muñiz, Jim Kaster. I got involved in the School Board race. Do you want to hear about that? I was on the other side.

M: Go ahead.

A: Joe Piñón was running for the School Board. Joe Piñón is a very good man and he and I were at UTEP together. He's a pharmacist. He runs the Bank Pharmacy with Frank Mapula, so I've known him for years. Well, Harold Wiggs, who's the president of the El Paso School Board, I've known for years also. Well, Harold Wiggs and Ted Karam asked me if I would help in Harold Wiggs' campaign. And I said, "Well, I've known Harold for twenty years. I'll be glad to help." So then they asked me if I would be the Treasurer for his campaign. So an ad came out in the paper supporting Harold Wiggs and it said, "Paid for by Dr. E. A. Aguilar, Treasurer." In the meantime Joe Piñón had been advocating all these changes in the school system. Now, Joe Piñón isn't completely wrong. Don't misunderstand me. But where I disagree with Joe is, for example, when he wanted the El Paso School Board to declare the 16th of September a holiday here in El Paso for schools.

Well, to me that's ridiculous. I would like to see Joe go to Juárez and try and get the mayor over there to declare the 4th of July a holiday over there. It's not going to be. This is ridiculous, and this is one of the things that I disagreed with him on. Now, some of the other things--the discrimination that exists in the El Paso Public School System--it exists, there's no question about it. It has existed, it's getting better and I have no quarrel with Joe over that. But, anyway, Joe Piñón calls me and he's all upset. "What are you trying to do?" And, of course, the other guy that was running for the school was Cleofas Calleros; may he rest in peace. Now, Cleofas Calleros was a very good friend of my father-in-law, and I've known Cleofas Calleros for years. When I was courting my wife, I used to go to their house on Arizona Street and Cleofas was there.

M: I knew him.

A: OK. Well, you know what kind of a man he was. He had an attitude, he was very aloof. He was the "Great Cleofas Calleros" and you better listen to what he had to say and he was not interested in your opinion. His opinion was the one that counted. Well, I used to see him all the time at the Valenzuelas', and I would go say "Hello" and he wouldn't even answer me--this type of thing. So, anyway, when this thing with the School Board came around they got all upset with me and I got all kinds of calls. Joe Piñón says one day, "We want to come and talk to you." And I said, "Fine, you come and talk to me." So, they showed up in my office--Joe Piñón, Cleofas Calleros, Sam Duke and about five or six other people. Well, the first thing that Joe and I discussed is this thing about the ad. And he says, "Well, why are you helping him?" And I said, "Because they asked me." He

said, "Well, why?" I said, "Well, I've known Harold Wiggs for twenty years and I like him and I think he's doing a good job and that's why I'm supporting him." And he says, "Why aren't you supporting me?" I said, "Because you haven't asked me." He says, "I didn't call you?" I said, "No, you didn't call me. If you had called me before they did I probably would have supported you, even though I don't agree with some of the things you're trying to put across." Then Cleofas Calleros comes around and boy, may he rest in peace, but I blasted him. I had been waiting for him for years. I told him, "Usted ni los 'buenos días' me da." He started to tell me, "Pues, que un amigo, que los Valenzuela, que mi compadre Valenzuela y como usted que es el yerno y es..." "¿Desde cuándo somos tan amigos?" dije. "Pues, si nos encontramos tantas veces y ni los 'buenos días' me daba." But anyway, I got involved in that thing. Of course, I got involved with Sal Berroteran. I helped Sal Berroteran when he was running for politics. I also helped Brisco; not that I particularly liked Brisco, pero between Brisco and Sissy Farenthold, I'd rather have Brisco. Of course, that's the way politics is. I guess you'd have to classify me as a conservative. I'm not a radical.

M: Are you a Democrat?

A: Yes, I'm a Democrat, no question about that. But I get along fine with them. It's just like [this:] we had a party at the Country Club and Williams and Woodrow Bean [were] there talking to each other. Now, how much of a spread do you want in the Democratic party?

M: You've also been very involved in voluntary community activities. What positions have you occupied--appointed positions--locally?

A: Well, I might also tell you about this Community College. I was one of the original people that ran on that Community College and I've been a Trustee of it. I was just re-elected to a six-year term last year. It was very funny that Héctor Bencomo decided to file against me. He ran against me in this election. Now, somebody advised him to run against me. He would have been better off running against Joe Foster. Joe Foster and I ran for re-election last year for the Community College. Now, don't misunderstand me; Joe Foster has done a good job and he's worked a lot for the College. But, when you're looking at terms of an election, if I had been Héctor Bencomo I wouldn't have run against another Mexican. I would have run against Joe Foster. But he was advised to run against me. The reason he was advised to run against me is because of the same thing--going back to the El Paso School Board. By the way, I got some threatening phone calls during that School Board election. I got some obscene phone calls and we got some at home. In fact, my oldest boy answered one of them and they thought he was I, and they proceeded to give him all this sort of stuff. I also belong to the Development Board up at UTEP. I've been on there for, I guess, four years now. I'm a Director of the El Paso Rehabilitation Center and, of course, I'm on the board of the Yucca Council. I've served on the El Paso Boy Scout Board of Directors, but that was before it became fashionable to work with the Boy Scouts--many years ago. I've served on the City-County Board of Health for two years and the reason Pete Dewetter didn't re-appoint me to that was because he wanted me to go to the Housing Authority. He moved me over and I served two years as the Housing Authority Commissioner. Bert Williams would

not re-appoint me to that. Right now I'm on the Child Treatment Center Board of Directors and I served on this Building Board of Adjustments and Appeals of the City. Now I'm on the Finance Committee of the City of El Paso.

M: From all your involvement in local politics and your vast knowledge about the community, how do you see the position of Mexicans in El Paso right now, and what do you think the future is?

A: Well, I'll tell you. I think it's getting better all the time. We have come a long way since I was a kid. But you know what the trouble is with the Mexican people? I don't have to tell you this. If we would quit fighting each other and unite our efforts, we would be in a tremendous position. We could accomplish everything if we would just work together; but we don't. Todo el tiempo nos andamos peleando. I don't know why it has to be like that, but it always is.

M: How do you assess the future then?

A: I assess it the same way. If we could just get together we could accomplish a lot. A lot can be accomplished. You know the old saying: You can catch more flies with honey than you can with anything else. Let's suppose something. Suppose there's an election in two months and suppose that a good man presents himself as a candidate for office--a Mexican man. And he is a good man. Now, I'm not talking about a perfect man because there's no such thing. I'm talking about a good man. He will have his good qualities and his bad qualities, just like the rest of us--but a good man who has tried and who you know will do his best. If all of us would support him, that man could be elected anything he wanted in this city. But

the trouble is that there's always many, many, many ways in which the so-called Mexican vote can be split. Of course, we suffer from the old disease that we don't really care what takes place. Look how many people register to vote. How many people register to vote and don't take advantage of it? They don't vote. De nada nos sirve. It's no use of us having 59% of the population if we have only 30% of the voters. What difference does it make? What good does it do? This is where you have to make people see their one little vote does make a difference. We have [that problem] throughout the whole country, but it's worse here in El Paso. Not this past election, but two years ago [we had] 800, 900 people registered in a precinct in South El Paso and 132 voted; that's ridiculous.

M: Dr. Aguilar, I want to ask you a question regarding the effect of the dentists who practice in Juárez near the bridge. What effect has that had on the dentistry profession in El Paso?

A: Well, if I were to tell you it has no effect I would be lying to you. It does have an effect. Unfortunately, most of the time it's a very negative and poor effect. Now, let me give you some background. First of all, there are 90-some dentists in Juárez. I should say 90 "so-called" dentists in Juárez, because out of those 90-some there's about 45 who are graduates of a school. Well, what about the others? The others are ex-taxi drivers, ex-bartenders, ex-carpenters, you name it. They have not gone to school. They're bushwhackers, whatever you want to call them--that's what they are. Well, then how do they practice? They practice through the courtesy of the "mordida." And I'm being very honest with you. Now, they

will come down from México City from the Department of Procuraduría Federal and they will close them up. They'll stay closed for four, five, six days and then they open up again. Why? Well, because somebody got a pay-off under the table. These people don't have a license. They're not graduates of a school and there are laws in the state of Chihuahua that control the practice of dentistry, but nobody enforces them, much less where there's a mordida being given. OK. Now, the dentists who are graduates of a school who belong to the organization have come over here and asked us many times to help them. Well, we can't do anything. Actually, it's their problem. It's their law and their country and they're the ones that should enforce their laws. They don't. OK. But the problem becomes this-- and this is our biggest problem here in the United States or in any country--educating the public. The average person does not know what good dentistry and bad dentistry are. People go to Juárez to save money, and I don't blame them. Fine. They should go to save money if they get their money's worth in return. But they don't. That's where the big problem comes in. Now, if you have a good dentist in one corner of an intersection in Juárez, and by that I mean a graduate dentist who's a good dentist, and you have a bushwhacker on the other corner, the good dentist cannot afford to take the time to do a good gold crown because he has to take a certain amount of time. Across the corner is the bushwhacker who can make one of those tin can crowns that they used to make here way back in 1910. He can do it in 15 minutes and charge 1/3 of the fee over here. Well, the average person doesn't know the difference between a good gold cast crown and a tin-can crown. All they know is there's two

crowns being offered--one at so much and one at one-third of that price. So they go over here. So then the good dentist in Juárez is obliged to start doing crummy dentistry like this other guy so he can make a living. OK. So the people from El Paso go over there to save money. And like I say, I don't blame them. When people come in here and say that we're too expensive and they want to go over there I say, "Fine, you go right over there." But one of the things you have to take into account, and this is just an example, a dental technician in Juárez will earn from 100 to 150 pesos a week. A dental technician in El Paso has to earn at least \$125, \$150, \$175 a week or he can't make a living. Well, there's just one facet of the difference. Now, I make more money out of taking care and repairing and redoing the Juárez dentistry than I thought, because people go over there and they get all this sloppy work done and then they have to come back and have it done over. I just wish that they would get good dentistry so they don't have to pay twice.

M: In your own practice over the years, what percentage of your patients have been Anglos?

A: I would say around maybe 35 to 40%, somewhere in there. The rest are Mexican people.

M: Is there any preference on the part of the Anglo population to go to an Anglo dentist and make a distinction between one and the other?

A: On a general average, no, although I know of several instances where it does happen. For example, I had an Anglo friend of mine who worked for the El Paso Natural Gas Company. He told this fellow worker of his to come and see me, and as soon as he told him my name the guy said, "Well, no, I don't want to go see a Mexican dentist." So he didn't come. But this is one instance, and I'm sure that there are others that I don't know about.

END