

8-15-2000

Interview no. 1663

Rogelio Carlos Jr.

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarworks.utep.edu/interviews>



Part of the [Oral History Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Interview with Rogelio Carlos Jr. by Dr. Monica Perales, 2000, "Interview no. 1663," Institute of Oral History, University of Texas at El Paso.

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Institute of Oral History at ScholarWorks@UTEP. It has been accepted for inclusion in Combined Interviews by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks@UTEP. For more information, please contact lweber@utep.edu.



THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT EL PASO INSTITUTE OF ORAL HISTORY

Interviewee: Rogelio Carlos Jr

Interviewer: Dr. Monica Perales

Project: Smelertown Oral History Project

Location: El Paso, Texas

Date of Interview: August 15, 2000

Terms of Use: Unrestricted

Transcript No.: 1663

Transcriber / Summary: Vanessa Pantoja

Mr. Rogelio. was born and raised in Smelertown. He recalls swimming in the river, hunting, and hiking with other neighborhood friends as a child and details the layout of Smelertown. He states there was a strong sense of community in this small town among the older residents. The problem was with the younger children who created gangs, especially in the Calavera neighborhood. Rogelio discussed his education as a young boy, he attended a Mexican school in Smelertown; there were only two schools in this area during the 1950's. He discusses vocational education and extracurricular activities such as basketball. He then details working at ASARCO in 1964, he began as a laborer. Having generations of people working at ASARCO was very common. Rogelio discusses daily operations of ASARCO, such as divisions of labor. He discusses the asbestos case as well, he said workers were unaware of the damage done to their health. He credits the union for better working conditions, wages, and benefits. Production would halt when the union would strike which brought attention from the company. Rogelio's father was part of the workers union as well, he believes that about 99% of workers were part of the union. He describes the strike of 1967 as one of the longest strikes, lasting about 9 months. He recalls the majority of workers being Mexican while supervisors were Anglo. There was a wage inequality between Mexicans and Anglos, this was addressed by the union as well. Due to the unions, more Mexicans would be promoted into positions of management. Rogelio discusses the relationship between ASARCO and the union. He also discusses the importance of benefits to the workers. They would not receive holidays or vacation, they only had one day off a week as well. The union worked with ASARCO to fix all this. Over time, Rogelio became familiar with operations at ASARCO and was able to move to different departments. He saw this as a great experience because he was able to travel. Rogelio stood with ASARCO until it shut down production.

Length of interview 75 minutes

Length of Transcript n/a