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Interview no. 1665

Tony Esquivel

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THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT EL PASO INSTITUTE OF ORAL HISTORY

Interviewee: Tony Esquivel

Interviewer: Patricia Kerns

Project: Terlingua Oral History Project

Location: El Paso, Texas

Date of Interview: June 25, 2002

Terms of Use: Unrestricted

Transcript No.: 1665

Transcriber / Summary: Mayra L. Avila

Tony Esquivel was born in El Paso, Texas and grew up in Big Bend, Texas; his father was well educated and was a teacher, business man, and grocery store owner; he attended school in Castolon, Texas where they had a single teacher for all the students; he learned to read and write in English; he was raised by his maternal grandfather while his parents lived in El Paso. Additionally, he remembers his mom being given deeds to the mines by her father who discovered them and made a claim. The mines were stolen through legal manipulation. At an early age, he worked in his grandfather's farm alongside ten to twenty cowboys; he was paid thirty dollars a month; he raised cattle and horses in his grandfather's ranch; he recalls meat was dried and food was stored in underground caves; he recalls his uncles getting him intoxicated and having him deliver love notes to their girlfriends. Mr. Esquivel remembers a lot of racial discrimination; he details an incident between his uncle and Rangers that caused his uncle to go into hiding, his uncles died in the hands of Rangers. According to Mr. Esquivel his uncle's livestock was stolen by an Anglo farmer. Additionally, he recalls signs stating "no Blacks, no Mexicans, no dogs," in Anglo businesses. the court system was faulty as judges and juries in Terlingua, TX., were composed of only Anglos. He additionally, recalls people and life stock drowning in the river when it flooded or they tried to pass. To conclude he emphasizes that the people of Big Bend National Park were tough people that many feared.

Length of interview 70 minutes

Length of Transcript n/a