

U.S. Latino & Latina World War II Oral History Project
School of Journalism
University of Texas at Austin

Interview Topics Index

The purpose of this index is to tease out and mark the themes that have emerged in the interviews conducted so far. From these indexes we will develop an extensive guide of the areas to be covered in the second level in-depth-interviews—and where the viewer/listener can find them.

*We ask you to watch the interview and to give descriptions about what the interviewee has to say about the issues listed here. We ask you to note any **NEW** topics that you find in the interview -- issues that are not included in this index. **YOU MUST INCLUDE COUNTER OR TIMES**. At the end of the index you will find a section for your comments of the interview in general, the interviewer and your suggestions for improvements in further interviews. We also ask you to give us your opinion on whether this interviewee is a good subject to be contacted for the second level interviews.*

Lastly, we appreciate feedback on this index so that we can revise future forms.

Interview Subject: Ramon Galindo

Interviewer: Marta McGonagle

Interview date: 9/27/00

Interview length: 59:18

Number of tapes: 1

Language: Spanish: English: Both:

Reviewer: Kelly Tarleton

Date of review for index: 9/28/04

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PREWAR PERIOD

Place of origin (i.e. U.S., Mexico, Puerto Rico, Cuba; brought up in a different location)

Time/Counter:

(0:28) born May 29, 1921 in Mexico; he grew up in Austin after moving there in 1922

Family composition (i.e. nuclear, extended, brought up by other than parents, etc.)

not in tape

Socioeconomic Background / parents' occupation (working class; middle class; upper class; family had own business)

(2:00) his father made \$.10/hour

Community (i.e. urban, rural; inhabited mostly by Mexicans, Anglos, Puerto Ricans, etc.)

not in tape

Education (i.e. segregated schools, integrated schools, no formal schooling; forced or voluntary drop out; work at the same time; punished for speaking Spanish; participated in National Youth Administration Program; involved in extracurricular activities; etc.)

(1:07) went to school up to Jr. High and then quit

Language (Spanish, English, bilingual –at home, work and school; sense of Spanish being useless out of home; learning Spanish not a concern)

not in tape

Work (i.e. family business; at the fields; while studying, Civilian Conservation Camps, etc)

not in tape

Recreational activities (i.e. fishing, hunting, dances, movies, boxing; etc.)

not in tape

Great Depression Experiences/Memories (i.e. drop out school to work; worked selling newspapers, shinning shoes; subject's family fed neighbors or other people; fishing or hunting to bring food home; repatriation stories; family did not experience hardship)

not in tape

Courtship (i.e. chaperonage; interracial dating; whirlwind; meeting partners in dances/"bailes")

(41:39) he met his wife in Elgin where they would go to dance

Religion (i.e. specific practices and celebrations; role in upbringing; being among few Mexican/ Mexican Americans in protestant church)

not in tape

PREWAR PERIOD

Particular experiences as a woman (i.e. not allowed to go to school; among first in school or job; deferred to men; new experiences opened in preparation for war)

not in tape

Communications (i.e. listened to local radio stations in Spanish; listened to radio stations from Mexico)

not in tape

Celebrations/ fiestas (i.e. 16 de septiembre; 5 de mayo; others)

not in tape

Discrimination (*At work*: i.e. lower wages for Latinos, lowest positions. *At school*: i.e. not allowed to join certain clubs, play certain sports, or chose certain courses; taunting/verbal abuse. *In public places*: i.e. restaurants, swimming pools, dances; church. Did not experience discrimination; integration in public places)

not in tape

Others

WAR PERIOD

Recruitment process (i.e. became familiar with military even before enlisting or being drafted –military dances, relatives in the service, etc; joined National Guard even before US went to war; war as something remote –did not know where Pearl Harbor was; enlisted or drafted; dropped school to join military; got exemptions to delay enlistment; parents did not want subject to be in military; did not get signature for permission; suggested/wanted to go to Mexico to avoid service; Mexican citizen volunteering or drafted; enlisted as a way to overcome poverty; military considered as good chance for Latinos to improve economic situation; **personal relationships**: i.e. marrying before leaving for service)

- (2:59) he decided with his friends to join the National Guard
- (6:26) he later went with his brother to enlist for service and was told that they could take his brother but not him because he was not a U.S. citizen
- (7:24) he went to find out why he wasn't being drafted and then volunteered into the service

Training and battlefield experiences (i.e. transported by bus or train to and from different bases/training camps in US; [did not] experienced segregation or discrimination during training; belonged to predominantly Hispanic/white units; sense of war unifying Americans [including Mexican Americans, Puerto Ricans, etc;] overcoming prejudices towards white people –sense of equality; good/problematic relationships with superiors/other soldiers; personal relationships, i.e. engaged in romantic relationship overseas; friendships that lasted lifetime)

- (3:12) he got his basic training with the National Guard in Austin at Camp Mabry
- (4:34) he took flying lessons because he wanted to be a pilot, but he didn't complete the course; he did however take enough lessons to fly solo

- (9:03) when he entered the service, he had training at Camp Wallace
- (9:50) he transferred to Camp Edwards in Massachusetts for automatic weapons training; he received more training in Kentucky and Georgia before returning to Massachusetts
- (11:56) he was shipped to England with 11,000 soldiers; he stayed there 6-8 weeks before being shipped across the channel; they went through Belgium, and Holland and right into Germany
- (14:53) he fought in Frankfurt and Nuremburg and traveled to Czechoslovakia
- (15:42) when they were at the Rhine River, his Captain read to them a letter from the president of the U.S. and a letter from England thanking them for their service; he then told them to turn to the guy next to them and tell them a special message to send to their loved ones if they wanted in case they didn't make it home; they were attacked not long after
- (30:00) he finished his service in 1946
- (31:00) there was talk that they would be sent to Japan; he went to radio school and welding school in England
- (32:05) he went back to Munich after being in Czechoslovakia and they occupied buildings that had been used by Hitler; they had a series of tunnels and there were paintings there that were still there 27 years later when he returned

Enlisted women (i.e. WAC; WAVE; SPAR; war nurse in US or overseas)

not in tape

WAR PERIOD

Home front (i.e. soldiers working in food production; women: volunteer work; participation in letter writing campaigns; collected tin/grease for war effort; work with Red Cross; USO Sale of war bonds; member of women's club devoted to help with war effort; wrote newsletters for servicemen and families; etc.)

not in tape

Family (i.e. women went to live with parents or parents in law while husband was in military; women living with their husbands in military training camps in US; parents aging / deceased due to worry; communication with family)

not in tape

Language (i.e. seeking other Spanish speakers; Spanish knowledge as an advantage; use of media in Spanish; learnt/improved English during service)

not in tape

Relations with other ethnic groups (i.e. African American, Native American; Asian Americans; European -Americans descendants from Axis)

(25:05) when they got into Czechoslovakia, the people there were very happy to see them; there was a dance and celebration in the square

Media (i.e. movies as source of information; news on war through newspapers; use of media in Spanish; use of radio/music/magazines)

not in tape

Experiences of discrimination or racism (i.e. called "chico" or other nicknames; segregation; not being promoted because of ethnicity; did not experience discrimination/racism – sense that unit was "colorblind"; knew of Zoot suit riots; discrimination experiences in European / Asian Pacific theater)

(26:09) a 1st Lt. called him a "black bastard;" a couple other soldiers stood up for him and demanded an apology and the 1st Lt. apologized

Patriotism, identity, citizenship (i.e. for 1st time sense of being "American" or "full citizen of the US"; considered by others to be an American citizen for fighting in war; enlisting in order to get citizenship; etc.)

not in tape

Other:

POST WAR PERIOD

Returning home & adaptation to civil life (i.e. welcoming celebrations with peers and family; changes in barrio life; enlisted in service again; traumatic experiences making it hard to go back to civil life; skills learnt during war as advantage in civil life; raising a family; statements of how war changed subject; etc.)

(38:45) he returned to Austin

(40:57) he married in November 1946; he had seen everything and was ready to settle down

(53:11) he practiced magic under a mentor; he had been inspired by his father who did magic tricks when he was younger

(54:59) he has 2 daughters, 7 grandchildren, and 5 great-grandchildren

Education (i.e. use of GI Bill for college; technical school, finished studies that were interrupted by war)

not in tape

Work (i.e. better job opportunities after war; started own business; no big changes in job opportunities; returned to old job, etc.)

(39:21) he worked for a tailor when he returned

(43:05) he felt he needed a trade because he didn't have a lot of education

(44:18) he made \$35/week working 6 days/week as a tailor

(44:51) he went in search of loans to open up his own tailor shop; he has been with the same bank since 1948 because they had faith in him and gave him his loan

(50:02) he opened his own tailor shop in 1948

(51:09) he retired in 1991

Role of women after war (i.e. continued working outside home; changes in roles in family; went back to home activities)

not in tape

Courtship (i.e. more freedom compared to prewar period; no chaperonage)

not in tape

Language (i.e. sense of Spanish being more valued than before; Spanish knowledge as an advantage in jobs, discrimination or rewards for speaking Spanish)

not in tape

Changes in the lives of Hispanics --expectations & what did [not] happen (i.e. expected less discrimination and racism towards Mexican American/Latinos; greater consciousness of rights and of how to exercise them; more respect in public places towards Latinos because of participation in war; job opportunities in government positions; was able to buy own house; no improvement in discriminatory practices; continued discrimination in real state/neighborhood; continued segregation)

(30:00) in Austin in 1946, he went to get a haircut downtown and was refused service because he was Mexican

POST WAR PERIOD

Religion (i.e. participation in church activities; fighting for the rights of Latinos through church; sense of church unifying community)

not in tape

Activities pro Latino community (i.e. getting existing organizations be more responsive to Hispanics; involvement in Civil Rights Movement; joined or created organizations for/of Latino participation; LULAC; [benefiting from participation: scholarships from LULAC] MEChA; GI Forum; etc.)

not in tape

What they taught their children (i.e. what they passed on to their children based on their experiences during the war/wartime, what mothers taught their daughters about being women and how that may have changed from past generations, what fathers passed on to their sons about having participated in the war, etc.)

not in tape

Where Hispanics are today... (i.e. better educational and job opportunities for younger generations; sense things have not improved [discrimination, lack of equality])

not in tape

Post-Traumatic Stress Syndrome... (i.e., nightmares after returning, problems of adjustment, anxiety, alcoholism, current problems?)

not in tape

Comments / evaluation about interview; suggestions for improvements in the next interviews. *What specific questions or areas would you like the next interview with this person to address?*

The interview didn't include many details, and skimmed over the subject's childhood years and only briefly discussed the subject's life after the war. It would have been better if there was more info from these time periods and even more details about what the war was like.

In your opinion, is the interviewee a good subject for the second level interviews?

Yes, he seems to enjoy talking about his life and experiences and is articulate.

What are the interviewee's experiences that you consider of special interest for further exploration?

Being in Czechoslovakia during the war, doing magic, and his life before the war in general.