Series Title: "Town-Gown Relations in DeKalb, 1950-1981"

Respondent: Aristeo Mancha
Interviewer: George Gutierrez

Accession Number: OH 2.36
Date: March 24, 1981

Biographical Data:

Scope and Content: The Mancha tape spans the years 1967-1980. Major topics include the CHANCE program at NIU and personal experiences as a minority in the community.

Abstract:
**Interview Abstract**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tape Location</th>
<th>Topics Discussed</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Side One</td>
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<tr>
<td>001 - 185</td>
<td>BACKGROUND INFORMATION:</td>
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<tr>
<td>(8½ minutes)</td>
<td>Came to DeKalb from Texas; father was a migrant worker; 1967-worked in Sycamore; 1969 - Gutierrez asked him to settle in DeKalb and helped find him a job and a home; personal feelings about the community.</td>
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<tr>
<td>186 - 230</td>
<td>DISCRIMINATION:</td>
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<tr>
<td>(3½ minutes)</td>
<td>Did not experience any discrimination—particularly if he stayed away from certain places, i.e. bars; citizens of this area are very understandable.</td>
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<td>231 - 263</td>
<td>MALTA HOME:</td>
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<td>(2 minutes)</td>
<td>Purchased with a government loan.</td>
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<td>264 - 299</td>
<td>FUTURE ASPIRATIONS:</td>
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<td>(2 minutes)</td>
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<td>300 - 362</td>
<td>COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT:</td>
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<td>(4 minutes)</td>
<td>Always given a chance to learn or start a business; the CHANCE program.</td>
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End of Interview
ORAL HISTORY DEED OF GIFT AGREEMENT
NORTHERN ILLINOIS REGIONAL HISTORY CENTER
DeKalb, Illinois

I, ARISTEC MANCHA of MALTA, IL, DEKALB, IL,

own and desire to give to the Northern Illinois Regional History Center (Northern Illinois University-Board of Regents) the following described property which was transferred to the Center on ________________, 19__, and which consists of _____ hours of tape time contained on _____ reels of recorded tape.

Description of Property:
Recording tape resulting from one oral history interview sessions conducted on March 23, 1981 at Malta, Illinois as part of the Center's oral history interview series.

Property Rights: Now, therefore, I convey and transfer to the Center the above described property irrevocable and subject to no conditions or restrictions whatsoever, except as may be related to access.

Literary Rights: I hereby dedicate such literary rights to the Center as I may possess in these tape recordings and any resultant transcripts.

Access: The tape recordings and verbatim or respondent edited transcripts shall be available for research to qualified scholars at the Center commencing ________________, 19__.

Duplication: At the authority of the Center additional tapes and transcripts may be duplicated from the originals for the purpose of inter-library loan to scholars and for reference deposit at other research centers. All duplicate copies will be subject to the identical terms promulgated in this agreement.

In full accord with the provisions of this Deed of Gift, I hereunto set my hand,

[Signature]
Donor

3/23/81
Date

The Center, by its authorized agents, hereby accepts the above gift.
Approved:

[Signature]
Oral History Interviewer

3/27/81
Date

Approved by:

[Signature]
Director, Northern Illinois Regional History Center

March 27, 1981
Date

[Signature]
Provost, Board of Regents for the use of Northern Illinois University

March 29, 1981
Date
Mancha, Aristeo
NORTHERN ILLINOIS REGIONAL HISTORY CENTER

Donation Accession Form

Staff Marcia Sommerfeld Collection Number Oral History
Date March 24, 1981 Shelf Location Oral History

Collection Number Oral History
Accession Number OH 2.36

Collection Name Interview: "Town-Gown Relations in DeKalb, 1950-1981"
Date of Transfer March 24, 1981 Phone Number 895-4611

Source Aristeo Mancha Address 440 Park Avenue
Sycamore, Illinois

Collection Size 1 casette

Deposit Conditions (instructions for duplicates, unwanted materials, description of physical condition)

none—deed signed

Access Restrictions none

Casefile X Legal Agreement X Correspondence
[TRANSCRIBER’S NOTE: Mr. Mancha’s legal name is Aristeo; Herriberto is a colloquial name and Eddie is a nickname. Mr. Gutierrez, when called on May 13, 1993, was unsure of the correct spelling of the nickname. Mr. Mancha’s speech pattern and accent make the tape appear disconnected but the original "flavor" has been preserved as much as possible.]

THE BEGINNING OF THE TAPE IS MISSING. [Interviewer is George] Gutierrez. I have a unique opportunity to record Herriberto Mancha, for short Eddie Mancha. Today is March 23, 1981. And this recording will be to formulate some of the history of the people who live here in DeKalb, the ones who are significant in the growth and development of this area. Eddie came from the farm... from one of the migrant farms around this area. But perhaps it would be most significant if he will tell you his story - how he came from Texas in search for a better life, to this area of DeKalb, Illinois. Eddie...

MANCHA: O.K. George. As always Spanish people come looking for a better life. I come from the south of the border Texas like all Spanish people come. We’re looking to do better for your family. We’re looking for a better chance to grow our family, you know, to teach our family is a way out better, you know, to an educations like... Don’t be like us, you know, always never learn how to read and write. Because my father was a migrant worker. Manuel was born back in Far???. And that’s the reason that when I find out... You offer me... You remember when that
first time Mr. Harry Johnson - you remember Harry Johnson, back in 1967 when he offer me the first time to stay. And Mr. Johnson find me a place over in Sycamore. And I work for six months and I’d take off back home to Texas again. That was ??? year for me because I was... My mind it was back here again, you know, back in 19... When I’d return back in 1969 again... I come back in '69 when you find me at a farm about sixteen miles outside DeKalb County. It was ???. You remember Mr. Robert? Bon?? And he offer me again to stay here and my intention was to come back here again. I tell Maria, my wife, "If you will go back again - to that place again - I’m thinking about stay there." And I remember when you find me a job back in... Oh in DeKalb... It was a factory what do you call ???... What’s the name of that place? It was Richardson’s? It was... Remember?

GUTIERREZ: Uh huh. Yeah. Richardson’s.

MANCHA: And later you find me... help me to find me a house here in DeKalb. I never forget about that when you helped me find me a house in DeKalb - 45 Haish.

GUTIERREZ: Yeah. Those houses were for rent from the bank.

MANCHA: From National Bank.

GUTIERREZ: Yeah. National Bank. And they allow us to rent...
MANCHA: For $50 a month...

GUTIERREZ: Yeah very cheap. Yeah.

MANCHA: Very cheap, you know, to help us to... And I think that was the right time period because it was good people. And it was still good people. And it helped us. It give us a chance - to the Spanish Americans - to have a chance to grow our children here. But when we come from the south of the border we come like a little jumpy. It's something... it's not because we are bad people, it's not. It's something that... We never chose education, you know, how you can get along with different people in my area - with black or white. And I remember when the schools teach us here. And we have some problems here, too, with when we used to go drinking' - go to those places around. We have a lot of problems, too, you know. But always there was somebody here to help us. There was you, and some of the migrant workers - the migrant people in the office - to help us to ??? our problems. To go... To ??? our problems. When you have... the problem was... in town, here. But always some good people here. And always helping us get the problems get done. You know, stay away from these things in there. And I always remember, too, when I come here - I mean when I get out of that field was: you help me to get a car. I will never forget it - still the car ???
GUTIERREZ: Yeah.

MANCHA: But it was something good in this town because we was decide to stay, you know. And we don't want to go. I have tough find a job. I work there in Turner for a while, and I work, later, find a job over on Barber Greene. And I stay there for a while. And after I get out of there for a while I was jumping off factory work for another place. And I was too... I was a drinking problem - always drinking here and there, never make up my minds on really what I want. So one of these days I come around to know people. You know people really... there were some people care for the Spanish people here. But we never have our chance to... The Spanish people's you know we've got that thing inside like, uh, too much macho man, you know? But we had to surrender things, but let it aside. But really we care for our family you know. And I decided one is that... one thing... what happened to me: a man in with the Church of the Nazarene come one time. And he told me, he told me something - love - I never was teached before. And they teach me something - love, you know, I really... Therefore we really more we need. And that's the reason I make my time and come here with you and help you out to tape this thing. So it can... So maybe some more Spanish people come one of these days, here, you know, or some people who need advice or a friend what really - what is life without Christ. That's one miserable lifes, you know. And that's what I make my time to... to make my time and tell my
testimony about my life: what I come here, how I come here, and all this stuff. And that's a life... Migrant work is a really miserable life. Because really you never learn nothing. All you ever learn is: work like an animal, work in the fields, you know. But thanks God I'm not that kind of a man no more - working where... I'm stay here and my children like it; they like the schools. I've got a girl who's 14, almost - 13 years old now, and a boy 11 - I mean 12 and 11 and 9. And I got a new baby that's born about 9 months ago. And I got my home here in Malta, Illinois, now. I've got my residence here now. I've got a good job where I work in A. O. Smith. I'm really happy and satisfied, really. And the church is really - the church where we're going now - is a wonderful people - a lot of us. They like us, and love us, and give us support and love, and we get along good. And we're in fellowship together with everybody. And we're really... I thanks God, I say again, for people like this to give us a chance to everybody ... to show us love, to have some times... show us a little bit of love. For those really never grow with ??? in life. I mean I was one of those guys. Nobody taught me love, you know. And my children, where we live right now, and the school where we - in Malta - it's really satisfied. We like the school, you know. And we got friends all over there in town. And we get along pretty good with everybody.

GUTIERREZ: Well it seems to me, Eddie, you have a good experience in the community. Is there anything that actually
bothers you or perhaps any people treat you differently? Is there any feeling of discrimination that you had within those years, beginning in Sycamore, and then in DeKalb, and now in Malta? Is there anything you want to tell us about the people in DeKalb? Or perhaps it's all wonderful like you mention. But is there anything that we could think as discrimination? Could you tell us?

MANCHA: No, I don't think there's discrimination. Like I say, if you stay away from those places, you know, like a drinking bar, you know, people. You find problems all over, not only in American white people. You find any kind of a problem if you hang around those places there. But if you hang out on the right side, and look for the good people, really, and a wonderful life... No, I don't say it's discrimination. Because really, if it was discrimination it would never give us a chance from the beginning - to give us some room to live here. And I thinks DeKalb County - DeKalb town and DeKalb County - that's pretty good, really. I'm satisfied and I am happy. And everybody we happy. And if we was not happy where we was live? But I think we're in the right spot.

GUTIERREZ: Well, thank you very much. It seems to me that when you decided to stay you had a good experience. Well perhaps I will say that the people around this area, the citizens of this area - the residents of this area - are really very
understandable people. And I think we ought to give credit for the community here. I will say both the DeKalb community and perhaps the university community, because you lived among the peoples in here - especially the experience you're talking about with this church. That church is here in DeKalb, I understand, and they are showing you a tremendous understanding. They're showing you love, as you mentioned, and perhaps they encouraged you more. I understand the reason that perhaps a year ago you bought this house in Malta. Could you tell us who or how, or perhaps the bank or how do you finance your house to buy it?

MANCHA: Well, George, like I say, I know it was a way in to find opportunities to find loans and to help the Spanish people in this area. And there was a... One time I heard about this place over in Marengo about the low income people, and especially when you've got five children, six children.

GUTIERREZ: Lending? Or the bank? Or...

MANCHA: It's the farmer/workers administration.

GUTIERREZ: For they will lend you the money, right

MANCHA: Lend the money to me, you know. So it's kind of a deal like through the governor, you know. And I fill out... put one application in. And a few weeks letter they send me a letter
back to me I was approved. And I give thanks to God because I really I was after a house. You know my children was really grow up and I want to feel... My children didn’t want to go back south; they really like it here. You decide to stay here for a while. I better get me a home. And these people really – the officer in Marengo – approved the loan... My application was approved. And they say I can buy me a home. So I was looking in DeKalb for a while and I can’t find what’s my kind – kind I can afford. And I look in Sycamore, too, and I can’t find it. So find a little nice house in Malta and now we’ve got a nice house. We live there – the whole family. Everybody’s happy there.

GUTIERREZ: O.K. It seems to me that you’re happy now in the new house over there in Malta, Illinois, not too far from here – about six miles from here. Maybe I should ask you about the future. It seems to me that everything is going fine for you and you have decided to stay. Tell me about your children: their aspirations. I understand they are talking about ... you know, the big things that they are dreaming. Could you tell me a little bit about it?

MANCHA: Well like I say, George, I keep my... I grew up in a really strong family, and believed we stick together. And I teach my family a lot about God, you know, about a good Christian life. And I’ve got one girl – the oldest girl, you know – who always got that dreaming, always have to... ’Bout a couple years
ago she was telling me she wanted to be a doctor. And I say, "Well, fine. So you like to be... You want to take that school you want for a doctor. I'll be support, you know, behind. 100%." Because really I never have the support. I never have a chance at my life, you know. Nobody give me the chance when I was a kid because my father was died when I was a kid. And my daughter, now, she mentioned to me really. And it really make me happy - make me proud. I guess somebody good dreams, you know... Good things coming to my family. And I got another boy named Rudy. And Rudy's 12 years old. And Rudy's after something else, there, too. But she no talk too much. And I got a next girl, who named Rosalinda. And she be after to be a big nurse. That what she got in mind. And I got one, Suzanna, and she recept?? or something in the school, you know. The whole four of my oldest kids really... They got the good dreams and want to be out there. And I got a little girl, named Veronica Delores, you know, the baby. But she only ... nine months ago. She not talk yet. All they gotta do is cry and ask for their milk.

GUTIERREZ: O.K. Eddie. I'd like to ask you also about your involvement as related to the life - perhaps the political life - of the community. Have you learned a few things? You know, how the American political life is? Perhaps also the business life? Could you tell us about your involvement with the community in a sense - some kind of political involvement.
MANCHA: Well, George, like I say, I learned a lot of things in this town. About the people here - the wonderful people, how it give a chance to everybody to learn, to get into business: what do you want to be? I have a dream, too. One of these days when my kids grow up a little bit we want to be after... I want to be after... My mind is a restaurant, too, you know how you say? But it's a thing we gotta wait. One thing at a time, first. For me it's a town, like I always tell again, you know, that's a pretty good chance for the American people in this town here in this area. I think it's a chance for everybody... everybody's chance. I say there's a chance for everybody; everybody want to do something.

GUTIERREZ: O.K. I'm glad you are very positive. Perhaps to end this interview I might just briefly tell you that if those are the dreams of you and your children, this university here in Northern offers a very good opportunity for the minorities. If by that time when your children finish I'm still around the university I will be glad to inform you that you could be admitted through the CHANCE program, which is a special consideration. And perhaps through them your dreams or the dreams of your children might be fulfilled. And again I'm very thankful for the university that they have that type of open door for the minorities within the university. Well, Eddie, thank you for your contribution, giving us this opportunity to listen to your life story. Just before we close, Eddie, do you have any
other things that you want to say to us?

MANCHA: Well, yes, I want to give you thanks, again, for giving a chance to the minority people here. And like I say I'm a Christian man and I be praying that this town be better for everybody.

GUTIERREZ: O.K., Eddie. So at this moment we like to conclude this session and like I told you, Eddie, before, this recording will be placed in the Northern Illinois University libraries and they will be for all the peoples to listen. And in some way you already contribute this to the history of this area. And as some other people, within twenty years from now, will listen to this story of Eddie Mancha, they will know that you came here and by being positive within the community you accept the willingness and the goodness of the people. And you grow also and you prosper. And like you say, now you have your own home and your children are growing. And they are very strong with a dream that one day they will have the chance that you are thinking, to become someone in this community. Thank you once more, Eddie.