



# **Mosquito Hall: Ethnic Labels and Social Injustices Within the Public School System**

# Daniel Moses

- ◉ Department of Sociology
- ◉ College of Public Affairs and Community Service

# Dr. Mariela Nuñez-Janes

- ◉ Department of Anthropology
- ◉ College of Public Affairs and Community Service

# Oral History Description

- This was a class project where 10 interviews were conducted. I and my partner conducted this particular interview through digital audio recording and transcription
- This project is an attempt to capture a small part of Latino life through the spoken word.
- An interview was conducted with a Latino Graduate student. The questions covered general background information to educational background.
- These questions were designed to engage the informant to dive deep into how they experienced race in their own life.

# Informant

- ◉ Age 25
- ◉ Female
- ◉ 2<sup>nd</sup> Generation American
- ◉ Parents were migrant farm workers. After pursuing higher education they are now, regional director of makeup company and mortgage lender.
- ◉ Career Goals
  - Work in Medical Anthropology ex. CDC, NIH, non-profit organizations, refugee groups, or local hospitals

# Labels

- ⦿ Uses Mexican-American instead of Latina
- ⦿ Problems with identity
  - Father's side: "Apache" which meant "indio"
  - Mother's side: From Vera Cruz, not considered "criollo" because they had African indigenous ancestry.
- ⦿ "***Too white to be brown and too brown to be white***" equals.....OUTCAST!
  - Defending identity: no accent, spoke Spanish, no dark skin, but was Latina.

# Social Injustices Creates Passion for Education

- ⦿ Advocate for her peers during high school
- ⦿ Low Scoring school, poor community equals no funding
- ⦿ “*Mosquito Hall*”
- ⦿ Believes that system can be changed

# Conclusions and Implications

- ◉ Identity: Informant had multiple backgrounds with a preference towards Mexican – American
- ◉ Ethnic Labels suggest strong feeling of being an outcast
- ◉ Informant experienced extreme differences with the social injustices within the infrastructure of her school and school district
- ◉ All this generated a passion for education instead of a dispassion.

# Further Research

- Social Injustices: Betterment of the school infrastructure
- How these differences occur within public school system and how schools get to the point where their structure cannot support its student population?
- What are students doing to change the educational system?