

Example of research paper on oral history research project

Countries, United States



The oral history is about the Chicano people who lived in the United States for a long time. The research seeks to find out the various diverse experiences of Chicanos in the United States. Some of the topics addressed include Immigration to U. S. A, Work life and Labor Union activities, The Depression period, World War II experiences, Participation in Mexican, American community organizations or community work, Veterans, Civil Rights movement, The Vietnam War or the war at home, Family History, Social Change, Gender roles and sexuality. It is based on the general experiences that the Chicano has gone through while in the United States (Witschi, 08).

History of the Chicanos

The origin of the Latino Americans has the most complex origin in the American's economic growth. The origin of the Latinos in the United States began at the time of the gold rush or rather after the boundary was established between Mexico and the United States in 1846-48 just after the war. Consequently, some Mexicans remained to the northern part of the boundary. Most of the Mexicans went through the U. S for economic benefit, jobs among others. There was an economic growth in the U. S after the development of the rail in the 1870s and 80s. Hence, the labor transportation from Asia reduced while the Mexicans flocked in search of jobs and for business benefit. The demand for labor increased and most of the Mexicans were called upon to work on the farms, industries, mining, and transport services. It led to the migration of the Mexicans by 1900 and was heavily facilitated by the Mexican revolution. It led to the ethnic and the racial discrimination (Vasquez, 23).

In my interview, I chose the Mexican Woman aged 50 years, and had been living in the United States for over forty years.

Working experience

I asked her about the working experiences that the Mexican Immigrants went, though she looked emotionally moved by the question, as she explained how painful and poor working conditions they went through. She said that the salaries were very small to sustain their families they were forced to work overtime without pay. Most of them worked in the rail construction, the mining, industries, farms, painters, plumbers, mechanics and miners as most of them were skilled. They went through abuse and even some of the women and children were sexually assaulted. She added that most of the workers were brutally beaten to work on the hard manual work just for the survival of their family members. There were food shortage and poor living conditions. Some of the unemployed Mexicans were deported as they had gone through a lot of hostility and discrimination being in the U. S. those who stayed back were suffering and depressed since even their land was taken away and they had to stay in the servants quarters of their employers (Gray, 26).

Experience during the Second World War

She explained that the Second World War was the most painful moment to recall. Many people were injured; they were denied their birthrights as well. Their territory was taken away; many people suffered the pain and injury, the brutal treatment that they went through. They were exploited as they worked in their own land that was taken away by the Americans. During this

time the respondent said that women also participated by working on the community work as the nurses and in the administrative places. They also did the men's labor jobs by manufacturing of the plants to replace the men who were not around, but gone to the war (Vasquez, 34).

The civil rights movements and Vietnam War

The Mexicans participated in the Mexican American Civil Rights against the Vietnam War; this was towards the restoration of their land that had been grabbed by the Americans, freedom of the workers, and increase of the wages as well as to improve their working conditions. Improve on education and provide equal opportunities for the education and the jobs to all Mexicans without discrimination. Allow for equal political rights among others. The social movements did not just deal with the Mexican social and political changes, but also helped in the Mexicans attaining personal identity, justice, democracy, gender dominance and sexuality (Gray, 56).

Gender roles and sexuality

The other question that I asked the interviewee was about the social life. That is gender roles and believes in their culture. She said that the Mexicans believed in the gender roles just like other cultures and societies. She also stated that they had a strong believe in, religion and language. They believe that each generation should be similar to that of their men and women. The men have to support their women and the children, whereas the women have to take care of their husbands and give birth. They do not educate their women so much just like other cultures in the society. Their work is to cook and stay in the house. However, the social life changed since they

intermingled with the Americans, their women can now be educated and can support the family if the husband is not there or not in a position. Most of the things have changed and the roles can be exchanged the women are also educated and hold high positions in the job market just like men do (Delgado, 45).

Works Cited

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Gray, Richard. *A Brief History of American Literature*. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011. Print.

Vasquez, Jessica M. *Mexican Americans Across Generations: Immigrant Families, Racial Realities*. New York: New York University Press, 2011. Print.

Witschi, Nicolas S. *A Companion to the Literature and Culture of the American West*. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011. Print.