

Jose Flores, interviewed by Charles L. Todd and Robert Sonkin.

Library of Congress, American Memory: Voices from the Dust Bowl: The Charles L. Todd and Robert Sonkin Migrant Worker Collection, 1940-1941, available online as a Quicktime audio clip at: <http://memory.loc.gov/afc/afcts/audio/514/5145a1.mp3>:

This audio file has not currently been transcribed. Instead, you can find an audio clip of the interview at the address above.

The file contains a relatively brief interview with twenty-year old Mexican-American Jose Flores recorded by Charles Todd and Robert Sonkin. Between 1940 and 1941, these two instructors in the Department of Speaking at the City College of New York visited Farm Security Administration (FSA) or government-funded agricultural camps in California to record the cowboy songs, ballads, stories, conversations, and council meetings of the camps inhabitants. Although most of their recordings were of Exodusters, migrant workers who left the southern plains that were decimated by dust storms during the 1930s, a few, including the interview with Flores, were recordings of Mexican Americans. In this interview, Flores considers gender dynamics in a Mexican family and defends the FSA's government-funded camps for migrant workers. The bulk of the interview, however, describes the discrimination and segregation experienced by Mexican and Mexican-Americans in public schools, the labor market, and even movie theaters. This interview illustrates the obstacles Mexican-Americans faced, the existence of racial tensions and divisions beyond the black and white story, and the ways that Mexican-Americans resisted such discrimination.