

Interview with Dorothy Martin

INTERVIEWERS:

Interviewee(s): Dorothy Martin

Year of Birth:

Location of Interview: Panama

Language of Interview: English

**INTERVIEWER 1:** Dorothy Martin. October 10, 2008. Thank you so much for agreeing to participate in this project. It will surely benefit the community, now and in the future. And the goal of our questionnaire is to produce as detailed and coherent a narrative of your story as possible. In light of that, I encourage you to feel free, and not to worry about providing an answer that is too in-depth or too long. That is exactly what we want. And we realize that you have already signed the consent form; however, we want to let you know that you should feel free to tell us if there is any particular things that you say during the interview that you'd like us to keep out of the educational exhibit or presentation materials that we're creating with these interviews. So you're pretty much—it's up to you whether you wanna change something later on.

**MARTIN:** The only thing, the only thing—well, you know in those days in Mochapelli, it's too... So I went to sixth grade, and I go back again from first to sixth. So that could be, maybe—

**INTERVIEWER 1:** Okay. No problem. Yeah, we don't even mention that part. That sounds good.

**MARTIN:** Because I've been to... school. I came over here when I was 19. (in Spanish) Then whatever you learn, you learn on your own, after.

**INTERVIEWER 1:** Thank you for saying that. We'll definitely respect your wishes there. Yeah. All right. Well, we'll start with the first question then. Tell me about your place of birth, and what was going on there when you were growing up. Where did you grow up? Where were you born, first of all?

**MARTIN:** I born in Gorgas Hospital.

**INTERVIEWER 1:** Okay. And what was going on there, when you were—as a kid? Where you – in your neighborhood where you grew up?

**MARTIN:** I grew up in Mochapelli. My mother died in childbirth. Yeah, my mother died. I was born the second of March, and she died the fifth of March, three days after I was born. So you know life wasn't that easy, you know. Then my grandmother raised me, right near Mochapelli, and then until I was 7 years old. She died when I was seven, then my father married to somebody else. And then that. And then I met my husband when I was 20 years old, and we got married when I was 21. Until he was twenty-six when he died. So when he died it be after just five years of marriage. So that picture right there in

the corner? Right there. You see that brown-eyed groom? You see it right there? I was 21 when I got married. And then I raised—married and had three daughters. I had three daughters, and seven grandchildren, and one great-grandson. But you know, you lose your parents that early age, you know? Even teenagers learn that it's nice to bring up your own mother, you know? But thank God, he bring me this far, then. He brought me this far. It was, I was—it was not easy road. And that was...I wanted to be, the only work I could really do, because my father married anew. But then my aunt, she helped raise me too, you know, and my mother's mother. And that was it. But I grew up in Mochapelli. I think I was about—I think I left there when I was 8 years old, and then I moved from one place to another. You know, we moved like to really different places. But then, automatically I'm living here from 1951. Not here in this residence. In Corazon. When I got married to Thomas, I lived in Ratones. You know Ratones, right? Then from Ratones to Paraíso, and then here. So all my life I've kinda said, no, I live in Corazon. You know? 57 years. It's a lot of time, you know?

**INTERVIEWER 1:** How was Mochapelli when you were growing up? What do you remember about Mochapelli?

**MARTIN:** Huh?

**INTERVIEWER 1:** What do you remember about Mochapelli?

**MARTIN:** Wasn't like now. It was okay. It was okay. Well, it was run by... around that area. But it was nice. It was a nice environment in those days. You know. Not like now. It was all right. But now I don't around there because no bueno. When I came out of the hospital I went straight there to my grandmother, you know, because my mother died. You know.

**INTERVIEWER 1:** Now—

**MARTIN:** Yeah, but that school year, but the Baptist school year here. I used to go to a private school. Teacher Williams, right here.

**INTERVIEWER 1:** Tell me a little bit more about your childhood. What might be one of your fondest memories of your childhood? I know you said you had a difficult time without your mother, of course, but maybe was there anybody that really made a difference in your childhood, that made you kinda keep going? Made it a little easier? Gave you hope?

**MARTIN:** Like when I was growing up?

**INTERVIEWER 1:** Mm-hmm.

**MARTIN:** Well, I had a—when I was about 13 years old, you know in the city of my birth, and I used to love to play—it is a thing for bingo, you know? And I used to live upstairs. They were living upstairs. And I used to go downstairs in the living room. So

I'm downstairs, no? And when I go outside, you know he locked the door. Yeah, he locked the door. Locked me out. But I say if he wanted, if he opened the door and looking to see me outside, you know? And I was about 13 years old that time. And an old man, he was like a bachelor, and he used to be like—I think he was from Barbados... And in the morning when he'd get up to go and work, you know... (Spanish) And he saw me outside, and he wanted to know, he saw me sleeping and I explained to him that my father locked the door, you know? And he said, "You shouldn't do that." And then he took me from when I was 13, to when I got married at 21. And then he got sick, and he came and he was right by me there kind of in the, right by those churches. I was living right there. He got sick. I took care of him. And he died right in my house. And I buried him in Corazon, and that was it.

**INTERVIEWER 1:** So he helped take care of you.

**MARTIN:** Huh?

**INTERVIEWER 1:** He helped take care of you.

**MARTIN:** Yes, he helped take care of me.

**INTERVIEWER 1:** Who were your best friends, and where were their parents from?

**MARTIN:** My best friend, well she, her name is Earnesta Apollo. You mean when I was growing up, right? Earnesta Apollo. She was living right there Mochapelli, where I was living. Earnesta Apollo. She did not have a...I should call her now.

**INTERVIEWER 1:** Where were her parents from? Earnesta's parents?

**MARTIN:** In Barbados. Mother and father were Barbadian. And California that she would give me a call, and I would give her a call. Earnesta.

**INTERVIEWER 1:** She's in California, you said?

**MARTIN:** Earnesta Apollo.

**INTERVIEWER 1:** Apollo. Where does she live now?

**MARTIN:** California.

**INTERVIEWER 1:** All right. Well now, tell me, I'm gonna ask you about your parents and your grandparents, and where were they from, and how did they come to be in Panama. But let's start with your father's origin. Where was your father from?

**MARTIN:** My father born in Panama. He was born in 1903.

**INTERVIEWER 1:** And your mother?

**MARTIN:** My mother, she—Barbados. She was from Barbados. But my mother, my mother's mother and father came from Barbados also. But my father is from back in Panama.

**INTERVIEWER 1:** Okay. And what about your father's—

**MARTIN:** Mother? I think my father's mother; I think she's from Jamaica. See her right here? See?

**INTERVIEWER 1:** Okay. Okay. Oh, wow.

**MARTIN:** That's my father's mother. That's when he was young.

**INTERVIEWER 1:** And her—

**MARTIN:** He was the only child, you know? She had him alone and he come and left me alone.

**INTERVIEWER 1:** And what about your father's father? Your grandfather?

**MARTIN:** I don't know my grandfather, no. My father didn't call. I never even talk about my father.

**INTERVIEWER 1:** Do you know how your mother came to Panama?

**MARTIN:** No. Nuh, uh. He never tell me. When she came to Panama she was like, maybe 20. I think maybe she was 21. I saw one of her papers. That's how I know. I knew she came from Barbados. And then my father see her and he fall in love with her. You know that kinda way, and then you know after he fall in love with her you know what happened after that. That's... (speaks Spanish). And I look everything like my father, you know? Well, I mean you saw him there in the picture with the hat right there. He's right here in the hat.

**INTERVIEWER 1:** I see the wedding picture here. Oh, yeah, there he is. There he is. There we go. Okay.

**MARTIN:** Yeah, Uh huh. My father. That's when he was... he was 19.

**INTERVIEWER 1:** Oh, wow.

**MARTIN:** Um-hum. He was blond.

**INTERVIEWER 1:** And you said his last name was Cole?

**MARTIN:** Yes. C-O-L-E. C-O-L-E.

**INTERVIEWER 1:** And what was your father's profession?

**MARTIN:** He used to work at Gorgas Hospital as a nursing assistant.

**INTERVIEWER 1:** And your mother's profession? Do you know?

**MARTIN:** No, I don't know. Nuh, uh.

**INTERVIEWER 1:** Okay. What about your grandparents? Your mother's—

**MARTIN:** I don't know what—

**INTERVIEWER 1:** You're not sure what their profession, okay. Now, who were your parents' and grandparents' friends? When your parents had friends over, who were they? Do you have memories of visiting them, or them visiting you? What sorts of things do you remember them doing, eating, drinking, or talking about during those visits?

**MARTIN:** Nuh, uh. I'm trying to remember. I don't remember who were my grandparents' friends. I don't remember right now. Nuh, uh.

**INTERVIEWER 1:** Or your parents' friends, maybe your father, if he had friends over?

**MARTIN:** My father's friends (laughs) yeah, my father had some friends but I don't remember them right now, either. I know he had a—he used to have this cousin, anyway, named Steve. I think his name was Steve, you know? Used to also have a good friend around. He was living in Radio City. At that time, you know, when he died, you know. And had a good friend around the neighborhood, like Carlos Pane, and you know, and Irving Small. Regardless, some died and some go on to the street, you know.

**INTERVIEWER 1:** What did they do together?

**MARTIN:** Huh?

**INTERVIEWER 1:** What did they do together, as friends?

**MARTIN:** They used to play at dominoes.

**INTERVIEWER 1:** Anything else?

**MARTIN:** Huh?

**INTERVIEWER 1:** Anything else they used to play together?

**MARTIN:** Uh-uh. And go like picnic, you know? Whenever they have any occasion, like a picnic or anything like that, they go.

**INTERVIEWER 1:** Let's talk about school, then. What was school like? How, and who were your teachers? And what things do you remember about your time as a schoolchild?

**MARTIN:** My teacher was Teacher Williams, the one in English. My favorite one. And then the other one in Spanish. I think she died now, too. Was Margarita de la Cruz. She was my teacher in—my Spanish teacher.

**INTERVIEWER 1:** What do you remember most about those teachers?

**MARTIN:** They were very nice. And I get along very good. And I remember that growing up. And every time I go to school because ... You know... I was a teenager then, you know. And then I said...(speaks Spanish) I used to go to school long in (speaks Spanish) . Actually there's a school (in Spanish). All the places get bad now.

**INTERVIEWER 1:** What was the cultural and racial background of your classmates?

**MARTIN:** Huh?

**INTERVIEWER 1:** What was the cultural and racial background? What race were they, or what culture did they belong to? Were they Latino—

**MARTIN:** They were—de la Cruz was Latin. And Teacher Williams, he was West Indian.

**INTERVIEWER 1:** What about your classmates? Were your classmates all West Indian at Teacher Williams school?

**MARTIN:** Yeah.

**INTERVIEWER 1:** What about—

**MARTIN:** Teacher Williams was Spanish.

**INTERVIEWER 1:** Is teacher Williams, teacher Cecilia Williams?

**MARTIN:** Hmm?

**INTERVIEWER 1:** Is it Cecilia Williams you're talking about?

**MARTIN:** No, teacher—I don't know his, remember his first. The name was Williams, you know?

**INTERVIEWER 1:** Okay. Okay. Okay, now we're gonna go on over here.

**INTERVIEWER 2:** What type of music did you grow up hearing? Who were your favorite singers? What were your favorite songs?

**MARTIN:** Otra vez.

**INTERVIEWER 2:** What type of music did you grow up hearing?

**MARTIN:** What type of music?

**INTERVIEWER 2:** Yes.

**MARTIN:** That I like?

**INTERVIEWER 2:** Yes.

**INTERVIEWER 1:** Growing up, when you were younger.

**MARTIN:** Oh. What type of music I like? I really like dancing. (speaks Spanish)

**INTERVIEWER 1:** What kind of music do you like to dance?

**MARTIN:** I like to dance, like to dance soca, salsa, de todo.

**INTERVIEWER 1:** Good for you.

**MARTIN:** Mm-hmm.

**INTERVIEWER 2:** Who were your favorite singers? What was your favorite—

**INTERVIEWER 1:** (speaks Spanish) Who were your favorite singers? You say you like dancing music, but what specifically, which songs and singers?

**MARTIN:** Like, sorta like Sparrow, and Kenny G or whatever his name goes. Kenny G. But I can't remember right now. It's so many I don't remember right now, but Kenny G, and Sparrow, and I like a lot of gospel. Also, now that they're playing the gospel in the morning, I like a lot of gospel. And I like all these... I like all of those, you know. But some of them, I don't remember the name of them, though. Like when they, the artist, you know.

**INTERVIEWER 2:** Okay, can I get you to sing part of one of your favorite melodies?

**MARTIN:** Excuse me, get me to sing one of the—one of my songs?

**INTERVIEWER 2:** Yes.

**MARTIN:** Ahora? Gospel or what? Ay ya ya. This one is a gospel one. I find myself singing it because this is a song we really need now. (sings) *In times like these we need a Savior. In times like these, we need an anchor. Be very sure, be very sure your anchor is hold and grips that solid Rock. That Rock is Jesus. Yes, He's the one. That Rock is Jesus, the only one. Be very sure, be very sure your anchor is hold and grips that solid Rock.* (in Spanish) Am I right or wrong? In times like these we need a Savior. (in Spanish)

**INTERVIEWER 1:** Thank you.

**INTERVIEWER 2:** What music do you listen to now? What are your favorite songs, and what other things do you like?

**MARTIN:** What music I...say it again?

**INTERVIEWER 2:** What music do you listen to now?

**MARTIN:** I listen to gospel in the morning, as I said before. And I can sometimes to listen to oldies and goodies, too. En la noche. Oldies and goodies. I never have enough time. Salsa. (speaks Spanish) Gospel music. (speaks Spanish)

**INTERVIEWER 2:** What are your favorite songs, and what about them do you like?

**MARTIN:** What?

**INTERVIEWER 1:** Your favorite songs?

**MARTIN:** My favorite songs I like? I like so much. (speaks Spanish)

**INTERVIEWER 1:** If you were to pick one favorite, what would it be?

**MARTIN:** Which one? You mean like the gospel, or whatever?

**INTERVIEWER 1:** Yeah, any one.

**MARTIN:** Yeah, but which one is one. There's so much of them. Oh, "Great Is Thy Faithfulness." (sings) *Great is thy faithfulness. Great is thy faithfulness, O Lord my God. There is no shadow of turning with thee. All I have needed thy hand hath provided. Great is thy faithfulness, Lord, unto me. Great is thy faithfulness.* Okay? You could use. (speaks Spanish)

**INTERVIEWER 2:** Do you like to eat?

**MARTIN:** Do I like what?

**INTERVIEWER 2:** Do you like to eat? Eat?



**MARTIN:** Eat? (speaks Spanish)

**INTERVIEWER 2:** What are your favorite foods?

**MARTIN:** My favorite food?

**INTERVIEWER 2:** Yes.

**MARTIN:** I like everything. I like mashed potato. I like rice and peas. I like couscous.  
(speaks Spanish)

**INTERVIEWER 2:** (speaks Spanish)

**MARTIN:** (speaks Spanish)

**INTERVIEWER 2:** Do you cook them?

**MARTIN:** Do I cook them? Yes, I'm a cook. (speaks Spanish) They say, every year they say the old gray mare what she used to be. The old gray Mary. (speaks Spanish)

**INTERVIEWER 2:** Would you be willing to share your favorite recipe with me?

**MARTIN:** Hmm? Trying to get me to share my recipe?

**INTERVIEWER 2:** Yeah.

**MARTIN:** Which one recipe?

**INTERVIEWER 1:** Which one, whichever one you'd like to share with us.

**MARTIN:** Yeah, and write it down?

**INTERVIEWER 1:** No, you can say it, and we'll record it. Yeah.

**MARTIN:** (speaks Spanish) I like to make empanadas, with the flour, Crisco, water, the ground meat, the seasoning, and you roll it out. It's hard work to do, but I love it. I don't know why people are listening to me.

**INTERVIEWER 2:** What are your favorite sayings?

**MARTIN:** Hmm?

**INTERVIEWER 2:** What are your favorite sayings?

**MARTIN:** What are my favorite sayings? I have so much sayings to say, whatever, and you want to know—my favorite sayings are peace and love. Paz y amor. Peace and love. I know of a new one now. (speaks Spanish)

**INTERVIEWER 2:** (speaks Spanish)

**MARTIN:** (speaks Spanish) Everybody know me like that. Yeah.

**INTERVIEWER 1:** Where did you first hear them, or learn them?

**MARTIN:** Huh?

**INTERVIEWER 1:** Where did you first hear that saying, or where did you learn it from?

**MARTIN:** Oh, you mean like peace and love? It's something I love to say, because there are some people that like to argue and everything to make a problem. I'm a peaceful person, you know, so when you come with the foolishness, I say, "Listen, no. Peace and love." You know? That's why I does it on my own. I like to say "peace and love". Everybody knows me as "peace and love". And now, like this thing on the TV... everything and they're talking foolishness. (speaks Spanish)

**INTERVIEWER 2:** Have you ever heard of Louise Bennett and the Mighty Sparrow?

**MARTIN:** Louise Bennett?

**INTERVIEWER 2:** Yes.

**MARTIN:** And the Mighty Sparrow?

**INTERVIEWER 2:** Yes.

**MARTIN:** No. I've heard of Mighty Sparrow, but I don't remember Louise Bennett.

**INTERVIEWER 1:** What thoughts do you think about when you hear her name?

**MARTIN:** When I hear the names?

**INTERVIEWER 1:** Mm-hmm. When you hear the Mighty Sparrow, what are the thoughts that come to your mind?

**MARTIN:** Nothing. I just like to listen because his songs, he has some nice songs, you know? And I like the—I enjoy his music. His songs are good, you know? (speaks Spanish) And he had a show going. (speaks Spanish) And the people were dancing, you know? It's okay. And like I said, "Age Is Just a Number"... "Age Is Just a Number." I think that's what his song's named.

**INTERVIEWER 2:** Have you ever seen in person?

**MARTIN:** No, I no see him in person.

**INTERVIEWER 2:** What religion are you?

**MARTIN:** What religion?

**INTERVIEWER 2:** Are you?

**MARTIN:** I'm Episcopalian. Episcopalian.

**INTERVIEWER 2:** What role do religion play in your life?

**INTERVIEWER 1:** Life.

**INTERVIEWER 2:** Life.

**MARTIN:** What did you say?

**INTERVIEWER 1:** What role does religion play in your life?

**MARTIN:** What role it play in my life, like—

**INTERVIEWER 1:** Religion. Yeah. What is the role of religion in your life?

**MARTIN:** You mean my religion? Oh. In my religion, I work on altar. I take care of the altar. I belong to the ECW. To the ECW, and then the treasurer for the ECW, also.

**INTERVIEWER 1:** What does ECW stand for?

**MARTIN:** Hmm?

**INTERVIEWER 1:** What does ECW stand for?

**MARTIN:** Episcopal Church Women. ECW. And I'm the treasurer for the Episcopal Church Women, and I'm the coordinator for the United Thank Offering. That is a special program they have every year at the church. You know? They call it United Thank Offering. That was the first, the first one that been—the second one that been—May. The first one that been May. It's why I say you have it, and I'm the coordinator for the first one in May. And the next one is in November. And they take up a special offering, and they send that offering to the states to help the poor.

**INTERVIEWER 2:** Okay. Would you mind describing your favorite part of the worship service? Favorite part of the worship service?

**MARTIN:** What is my favorite part of the worshipping service?

**INTERVIEWER 2:** Yes.

**MARTIN:** I like the singing, and I like to listen to the sermon of the priest, preaching to us in the morning. And I like to go to church early.

**INTERVIEWER 2:** Did you play a sport, as a child?

**MARTIN:** Hmm?

**INTERVIEWER 1:** Did you play a sport?

**MARTIN:** Did I play sports? Sports?

**INTERVIEWER 1:** Um-hum.

**MARTIN:** No. (speaks Spanish) Bingo and pokino. (speaks Spanish)

**INTERVIEWER 2:** What is pokino?

**MARTIN:** Hmm?

**INTERVIEWER 2:** What is pokino?

**MARTIN:** (speaks Spanish)

**INTERVIEWER 2:** Okay. Did you have any contact with United States culture, as a youth? What do you remember about that?

**MARTIN:** Contact United States?

**INTERVIEWER 1:** With the United States culture, meaning American things that were here in Panama.

**MARTIN:** My culture, they laugh about them, that they're always on time. If they, whatever they say, 8:00, whatever it is. I love that. 8:00, they start at 8:00. Or when you start the graduation, and if you remember on Corazon time, yeah, 8:00, it is fifteen here. You start to wonk, wonk, wonk, wonk. What I like about Americans, they're on time. (speaks Spanish) I used to work with them, you know. I worked with a company for 17 years. And so I learned, I learned that thing, when I say they're really on time. I mean it's six minutes to 8:00, everybody's leaving. "I'll see you later." You know.

**INTERVIEWER 1:** All right. We can move to the next set of questions. Tell me about your view of your West Indian ancestry.

**MARTIN:** My view?

**INTERVIEWER 1:** Mm-hmm. What do you think about it? How do you think about your ancestry?

**MARTIN:** I like my culture very much, and I will set down and unite together, you know? Like right now, like in my neighborhood here, you have unity. And even the church where I go to, we are like one family. And I like that. In any church, you have a community. But I like the unity that we have. You know, like for instance, I live by myself, but I've got Jesus with me, and the neighbors are with me. And you know, they take the phone call or anything like that, you know. So that is important, too.

**INTERVIEWER 1:** Okay. What is the first word that comes to mind when someone says, "West Indian?"

**MARTIN:** What's the first word that comes to my mind? That's my root, because I'm West Indian. That's my root.

**INTERVIEWER 1:** What qualities, cultural behaviors, or other things do you associate with West Indian-ness? What would be a list of different things that you just associate with West Indians, with your roots? With your culture?

**MARTIN:** I think with the Latin and with the American, whatever. I associate with everybody.

**INTERVIEWER 1:** Yes, but what, when you think just about West Indians, what are certain qualities, or things that you think about, that are very particular to West Indians?

**MARTIN:** Living with West Indians, some of them, to me like don't wanna be here. They just, they don't—I'm quiet. I don't talk. You know? They don't know how to talk. That's my, too loud and combustibile a word I'm saying. And I think they talk all over the world. They don't want people to be too combustibile to talk to you and, nuh, uh.

**INTERVIEWER 1:** Any other qualities that you can think of?

**MARTIN:** Uh-uh, uh-uh.

**INTERVIEWER 1:** Okay. Do you believe the people in Panama view, or treat you differently, based on either your race, or being West Indian?

**MARTIN:** No. To me, as I go around, to me they treat me the same. And I go around to a lot of Latin people and so, and different, the offices in Panama, different places. They treat me very good, you know.

**INTERVIEWER 1:** Okay. Have you ever lived outside of Panama, for an extended period of time?

**MARTIN:** No. I'll go to the States and visit, you know? I'll go to the States and visit. I've never lived outside.

**INTERVIEWER 1:** Tell me, how has knowing English affected you, whether positively or negatively?

**MARTIN:** English?

**INTERVIEWER 1:** Um-hum.

**MARTIN:** Positive.

**INTERVIEWER 1:** How so?

**MARTIN:** When you said "negative," you mean like what?

**INTERVIEWER 1:** It depends on how you perceive it. If you feel that it has always been a positive thing for you to know English, then you can describe—

**MARTIN:** No. No, I—no. It's a positive thing, for I, to know English. And I don't really know all the English well, but I know a lot of them. Like certain things, other people say good afternoon. I know, really and truly, it's not afternoon. It's not evening. And things like that. You know?

**INTERVIEWER 1:** And in what environments, and what situations, has it been very positive for you to know English? Has it been helpful for you to know English here in Panama?

**MARTIN:** In what environment?

**INTERVIEWER 1:** Um-hum.

**MARTIN:** More or less, what do you mean by that?

**INTERVIEWER 1:** Like, say, for work, or school, or where was it an advantage to know the language? Since in Panama, you know, we speak a lot of Spanish. However, knowing English, you say, has been positive for you. So are there any particular situations where you were really glad that you could speak English, because it helped you—

**MARTIN:** When I was growing up I was living in Panama, with the Latins, and I used to speak more Spanish than English. But now, since I've come down this side after I got married, I learned, I talk more English in this area.

**INTERVIEWER 1:** I see. All right. Okay.

**MARTIN:** Were there three?

**INTERVIEWER 1:** We're almost there. I'm gonna ask you some questions about family.

**INTERVIEWER 2:** Are you married?

**MARTIN:** If I'm married? Yes, I was married. Yes, I am married, but my husband died.

**INTERVIEWER 1:** How did you meet your husband?

**MARTIN:** How did I meet my husband? At a concert. Well, let me tell you how I met my husband. I met my husband going to my aunt, in Paraíso. And he saw me, he saw me going to my aunt, and he fell in love with me then. Just when I visit my aunt. And then his mother was living on one side, and he was—his mother was living on one side; my aunt was living on this side. So when I go with my aunt, and he go by his mother's, he see me going up the steps. You know, so that's where I met him, then.

**INTERVIEWER 2:** All right. How would you characterize the cultural background of your spouse?

**INTERVIEWER 1:** The cultural background of your spouse. What was the cultural background—

**MARTIN:** My cultural, my spouse was West Indian. West Indian. I think his mother and father were Jamaicans. He born and grew up in Panama.

**INTERVIEWER 2:** Do you have children?

**MARTIN:** Yeah, three daughters. Three daughters.

**INTERVIEWER 2:** Tell me about them. They living, dead?

**MARTIN:** Yeah, they're alive. Yeah, they're alive. They're alive and they're living in the United States.

**INTERVIEWER 1:** And tell us about, about their lives, and about their jobs. What do they do?

**MARTIN:** One of them is, one of them is—the one at...she was a nursing assistant. And the other one, the last one, she's a social worker in Houston. And the big one, Acinta, she work in an office at computer, whatever. Something like that.

**INTERVIEWER 2:** Do they consider themselves Panamanian, West Indian, both, or something else?

**MARTIN:** Oh, well right now they're Americans. They're naturalized Americans. Because they're there for years, so they're naturalized Americans. But they're still up in America. They come to Panama often. You know. But you know, what you're born, you'll be.

**INTERVIEWER 2:** Do your children speak English?

**INTERVIEWER 1:** Do they speak English?

**MARTIN:** Do they speak English? Oh, yes. Yes. Yeah.

**INTERVIEWER 2:** Do your grandchildren?

**INTERVIEWER 1:** And grandchildren?

**MARTIN:** My grandchildren speak English. Yes.

**INTERVIEWER 1:** Why do you think they speak English? I guess it's living in the U.S., they—

**MARTIN:** No, they've been born and grow in the U.S. That's why they speak English. I don't know, I think and Spanish.

**INTERVIEWER 1:** So do you have family who live overseas, in addition to your daughters, and if so, where do they live?

**MARTIN:** I have cousins. I have cousins living in Virginia, in New York, and California.

**INTERVIEWER 1:** Okay.

**INTERVIEWER 2:** When they come to visit Panama, do you think other Panamanians see, or treat them as Panamanians, or more U.S., American?

**MARTIN:** They see the Americans as Panamanian. Because they were born and grew here, you know?

**INTERVIEWER 2:** Thank you.

**MARTIN:** You're welcome.

**INTERVIEWER 1:** Okay. So, you'll continue?



**MARTIN:** Wait, you're not finished?

**INTERVIEWER 1:** Not yet. We're rotating.

**INTERVIEWER 2:** Have you ever been, ever or living overseas? Where?

**MARTIN:** Yes, I've visited—I've been to overseas. But I like here. I've visited the States, but I love here.

**INTERVIEWER 1:** Where did you go, and when did you visit?

**MARTIN:** I go to Norfolk, Virginia; Virginia Beach; and Houston, Texas. And the last time I travelled was in 19—not 19. The last time I travelled was 2007. January and July. One of my daughters, they had a heart attack, and then for another birthday in August. So I've been twice in 2007.

**INTERVIEWER 2:** What was your experience there...in terms of what people tended to know, or did not know, about Panamanian or West Indian people?

**INTERVIEWER 1:** Your experience, in general.

**MARTIN:** Hmm?

**INTERVIEWER 1:** When you visited, what was your experience like?

**MARTIN:** Oh, my experience is that they have a different culture, living there, than in Panama. In Panama, there's a different way of living and, obviously, a different way of living. (speaks Spanish) You see what I'm saying? I mean I like there to visit. You go, and you do shopping. But here, I can...(speaks Spanish) Am I right or wrong?

**INTERVIEWER 1:** Yeah.

**INTERVIEWER 2:** What specific messages do you want to communicate to the older people?

**INTERVIEWER 1:** Younger. Younger people.

**INTERVIEWER 2:** What specific messages do you want to communicate to the younger people of the community?

**MARTIN:** Of this community? Well, right now there...remember, what I'd like to ask them to be close to Christ, and have Christ in them, no? Because everything's going now, everything—just live close to Christ, and have Christ in them, and walk the walk. So you have that much balance...

**INTERVIEWER 2:** Are you involved with any community clubs or organizations? If so, what role do you play with the group?

**MARTIN:** Organizations?

**INTERVIEWER 2:** Yes. Or clubs.

**MARTIN:** Do you mean like what organizations I'm in?

**INTERVIEWER 2:** Um-hum.

**MARTIN:** Like at church and so? I think you asked me that already. Was it something else like that?

**INTERVIEWER 1:** In the original? Yeah.

**MARTIN:** Yeah, I am. I go to church, and I'm involved in the ECW, Episcopal Church Women. Altar guild. United Thank Offering...And that's it.

**INTERVIEWER 2:** Is there any other information you want to include, that we have not yet asked?

**MARTIN:** No. I don't want to add anything more.

**INTERVIEWER 2:** Okay. Thank you, Dorothy Martin, a lot for participation. Please feel free to contact you if you have any questions, or wish to add to your interview.

**MARTIN:** Okay.

**INTERVIEWER 1:** Thank you.

**MARTIN:** Thank you.

**INTERVIEWER 1:** Are we good? Okay.

Interview with Dorothy Martin

INTERVIEWERS:

Interviewee(s): Dorothy Martin

Year of Birth:

Location of Interview: Panama

Language of Interview: English

**INTERVIEWER 1:** Dorothy Martin. October 10, 2008. Thank you so much for agreeing to participate in this project. It will surely benefit the community, now and in the future. And the goal of our questionnaire is to produce as detailed and coherent a narrative of your story as possible. In light of that, I encourage you to feel free, and not to worry about providing an answer that is too in-depth or too long. That is exactly what we want. And we realize that you have already signed the consent form; however, we want to let you know that you should feel free to tell us if there is any particular things that you say during the interview that you'd like us to keep out of the educational exhibit or presentation materials that we're creating with these interviews. So you're pretty much—it's up to you whether you wanna change something later on.

**MARTIN:** The only thing, the only thing—well, you know in those days in Mochapelli, it's too... So I went to sixth grade, and I go back again from first to sixth. So that could be, maybe—

**INTERVIEWER 1:** Okay. No problem. Yeah, we don't even mention that part. That sounds good.

**MARTIN:** Because I've been to... school. I came over here when I was 19 imáginate...eso para mi no valió la pena. Then whatever you learn, you learn on your own, after.

**INTERVIEWER 1:** Thank you for saying that. We'll definitely respect your wishes there. Yeah. All right. Well, we'll start with the first question then. Tell me about your place of birth, and what was going on there when you were growing up. Where did you grow up? Where were you born, first of all?

**MARTIN:** I born in Gorgas Hospital.

**INTERVIEWER 1:** Okay. And what was going on there, when you were—as a kid? Where you – in your neighborhood where you grew up?

**MARTIN:** I grew up in Mochapelli. My mother died in childbirth. Yeah, my mother died. I was born the second of March, and she died the fifth of March, three days after I was born. So you know life wasn't that easy, you know. Then my grandmother raised me, right near Mochapelli, and then until I was 7 years old. She died when I was seven, then my father married to somebody else. You know...And then that. And then I met my husband when I was 20 years old, and we got married when I was 21. Until he was

twenty-six when he died. So when he died it be after just five years of marriage. So that picture right there in the corner? Right there. You see that brown-eyed groom? You see it right there?

**INTERVIEWER 1:** wow

**MARTIN:** I was 21 when I got married. And then I raised—married and had three daughters. I had three daughters, and seven grandchildren, and one great-grandson. But you know, you lose your parents that early age, you know? Even teenagers learn that it's nice to bring up your own mother, you know? But thank God, he bring me this far, then. He brought me this far. It was, I was—it was not easy road. And that was...I wanted to be, the only work I could really do, because my father married anew. But then my aunt, she helped raise me too, you know, and my mother's mother. And that was it. But I grew up in Mochapelli. I think I was about—I think I left there when I was 8 years old, and then I moved from one place to another. You know, we moved like to really different places. But then, automatically I'm living here from 1951. Not here in this residence. In the Canal zone. When I got married to Thomas, I lived in Ratones. You know Ratones, right? Then from Ratones to Paraíso, and then here. So all my life I've kinda said, no, I live in Canal zone. You know? 57 years. It's a lot of time, you know?

**INTERVIEWER 1:** How was Mochapelli when you were growing up? What do you remember about Mochapelli?

**MARTIN:** Huh?

**INTERVIEWER 1:** What do you remember about Mochapelli?

**MARTIN:** Wasn't like now. It was okay. It was okay. Well, it was run by... around that area. But it was nice. It was a nice environment in those days. You know. Not like now. It was all right. But now I don't around there because no bueno. When I came out of the hospital I went straight there to my grandmother, you know, because my mother died. You know.

**INTERVIEWER 1:** Now—

**MARTIN:** Yeah, but that school year, but the Baptist school year here. I used to go to a private school. Teacher Williams, right here.

**INTERVIEWER 1:** Tell me a little bit more about your childhood. What might be one of your fondest memories of your childhood? I know you said you had a difficult time without your mother, of course, but maybe was there anybody that really made a difference in your childhood, that made you kind of keep going? Made it a little easier? Gave you hope?

**MARTIN:** Like when I was growing up?

**INTERVIEWER 1:** Mm-hmm.

**MARTIN:** Well, I had a—when I was about 13 years old, you know in the city of my birth, and I used to love to play—it is a thing for bingo, you know? And I used to live upstairs. They were living upstairs. And I used to go downstairs in the living room. So I'm downstairs, no? And when I go outside, you know he locked the door. Yeah, he locked the door. Locked me out. But I say if he wanted, if he opened the door and looking to see me outside, you know? And I was about 13 years old that time. And an old man, he was like a bachelor, and he used to be like—I think he was from Barbados... And in the morning when he'd get up to go and work, you know... (Spanish no se entiende) And he saw me outside, and he wanted to know, he saw me sleeping and I explained to him that my father locked the door, you know? And he said, "You shouldn't do that." And then he took me from when I was 13, to when I got married at 21. And then he got sick, and he came and he was right by me there kind of in the, right by those churches. I was living right there. He got sick. I took care of him. And he died right in my house. And I buried him in Canal zone, and that was it.

**INTERVIEWER 1:** So he helped take care of you.

**MARTIN:** Huh?

**INTERVIEWER 1:** He helped take care of you.

**MARTIN:** Yes, he helped take care of me.

**INTERVIEWER 1:** Who were your best friends, and where were their parents from?

**MARTIN:** My best friend, well she, her name is Earnesta Apollo. You mean when I was growing up, right? Earnesta Apollo. She was living right there Mochapelli, where I was living. Earnesta Apollo. She did not have a...I should call her now.

**INTERVIEWER 1:** Where were her parents from? Earnesta's parents?

**MARTIN:** In Barbados. Mother and father were Barbadian. And California that she would give me a call, and I would give her a call. Earnesta.

**INTERVIEWER 1:** She's in California, you said?

**MARTIN:** Earnesta Apollo.

**INTERVIEWER 1:** Apollo. Where does she live now?

**MARTIN:** California.

**INTERVIEWER 1:** O.k All right. Well now, tell me, I'm gonna ask you about your parents and your grandparents, and where were they from, and how did they come to be in Panama. But let's start with your father's origin. Where was your father from?

**MARTIN:** My father born in Panama. He was born in 1903.

**INTERVIEWER 1:** And your mother?

**MARTIN:** My mother, she—Barbados. She was from Barbados. But my mother, my mother's mother and father came from Barbados also. But my father is from back in Panama.

**INTERVIEWER 1:** Okay. And what about your father's—

**MARTIN:** Mother? I think my father's mother; I think she's from Jamaica. See her right here? See?

**INTERVIEWER 1:** Okay. Okay. Oh, wow.

**MARTIN:** That's my father's mother. That's when he was young.

**INTERVIEWER 1:** And her—

**MARTIN:** He was the only child, you know? She had him alone and he come and left me alone.

**INTERVIEWER 1:** And what about your father's father? Your grandfather?

**MARTIN:** I don't know my grandfather, no. My father didn't call. I never even talk about my father.

**INTERVIEWER 1:** Do you know how your mother came to Panama?

**MARTIN:** No. Nuh, uh. He never tell me. When she came to Panama she was like, maybe 20. I think maybe she was 21. I saw one of her papers. That's how I know. I knew she came from Barbados. And then my father see her and he fall in love with her. You know that kinda way, and then you know after he fall in love with her you know what happened after that. That's... (speaks Spanish). And I look everything like my father, you know? Well, I mean you saw him there in the picture with the hat right there. He's right here in the hat.

**INTERVIEWER 1:** I see the wedding picture here. Oh, yeah, there he is. There he is. There we go. Okay.

**MARTIN:** Yeah, Uh huh. My father. That's when he was... he was 19.

**INTERVIEWER 1:** Oh, wow.

**MARTIN:** Um-hum. He was blond.

**INTERVIEWER 1:** And you said his last name was Cole?

**MARTIN:** Yes. C-O-L-E. C-O-L-E.

**INTERVIEWER 1:** And what was your father's profession?

**MARTIN:** He used to work at Gorgas Hospital as a nursing assistant.

**INTERVIEWER 1:** And your mother's profession? Do you know?

**MARTIN:** No, I don't know. Nuh, uh.

**INTERVIEWER 1:** Okay. What about your grandparents? Your mother's—

**MARTIN:** I don't know what—

**INTERVIEWER 1:** You're not sure what their profession, okay. Now, who were your parents' and grandparents' friends? When your parents had friends over, who were they? Do you have memories of visiting them, or them visiting you? What sorts of things do you remember them doing, eating, drinking, or talking about during those visits?

**MARTIN:** Nuh, uh. I'm trying to remember. I don't remember who were my grandparents' friends. I don't remember right now. Nuh, uh.

**INTERVIEWER 1:** Or your parents' friends, maybe your father, if he had friends over?

**MARTIN:** My father's friends (laughs) yeah, my father had some friends but I don't remember them right now, either. I know he had a—he used to have this cousin, anyway, named Steve. I think his name was Steve, you know? Used to also have a good friend around. He was living in Radio City. At that time, you know, when he died, you know. And had a good friend around the neighborhood, like Carlos Pane, and you know, and Irving Small. Regardless, some died and some go on to the street, you know.

**INTERVIEWER 1:** What did they do together?

**MARTIN:** Huh?

**INTERVIEWER 1:** What did they do together, as friends?

**MARTIN:** They used to play at dominoes.

**INTERVIEWER 1:** Anything else?

**MARTIN:** Huh?

**INTERVIEWER 1:** Anything else they used to play together?

**MARTIN:** Uh-uh. And go like picnic, you know? Whenever they have any occasion, like a picnic or anything like that, they go.

**INTERVIEWER 1:** Let's talk about school, then. What was school like? How, and who were your teachers? And what things do you remember about your time as a schoolchild?

**MARTIN:** My teacher was Teacher Williams, the one in English. My favorite one. And then the other one in Spanish. I think she died now, too. Was Margarita de la Cruz. She was my teacher in—my Spanish teacher.

**INTERVIEWER 1:** What do you remember most about those teachers?

**MARTIN:** They were very nice. And I get along very good. And I remember that growing up. And every time I go to school because ... You know... I was a teenager then, you know. And then I said...(speaks Spanish ) I used to go to school long in La Barrasa por alla . Actually there's a school en la Barrasa. All the places get bad now.

**INTERVIEWER 1:** What was the cultural and racial background of your classmates?

**MARTIN:** Huh?

**INTERVIEWER 1:** What was the cultural and racial background? What race were they, or what culture did they belong to? Were they Latino—

**MARTIN:** They were—de la Cruz was Latin. And Teacher Williams, he was West Indian.

**INTERVIEWER 1:** What about your classmates? Were your classmates all West Indian at Teacher Williams school?

**MARTIN:** Yeah.

**INTERVIEWER 1:** What about—

**MARTIN:** Teacher Williams was Spanish.

**INTERVIEWER 1:** Is teacher Williams, teacher Cecilia Williams?

**MARTIN:** Hmm?



**INTERVIEWER 1:** Is it Cecilia Williams you're talking about?

**MARTIN:** No, teacher—I don't know his, remember his first. The name was Williams, you know?

**INTERVIEWER 1:** Okay. Okay. Okay, now we're gonna go on over here.

**INTERVIEWER 2:** What type of music did you grow up hearing? Who were your favorite singers? What were your favorite songs?

**MARTIN:** Dime otra vez.

**INTERVIEWER 2:** What type of music did you grow up hearing?

**MARTIN:** What type of music?

**INTERVIEWER 2:** Yes.

**MARTIN:** That I like?

**INTERVIEWER 2:** Yes.

**INTERVIEWER 1:** Growing up, when you were younger.

**MARTIN:** Oh. What type of music I like? I really like dancing. Hasta ahora me gusta bailar.

**INTERVIEWER 1:** What kind of music do you like to dance?

**MARTIN:** I like to dance, like to dance salsa, de todo.

**INTERVIEWER 1:** Good for you.

**MARTIN:** Mm-hmm.

**INTERVIEWER 2:** Who were your favorite singers? What was your favorite—

**INTERVIEWER 1:** (speaks Spanish) Who were your favorite singers? You say you like dancing music, but what specifically, which songs and singers?

**MARTIN:** Like, sorta like Sparrow, and Kenny G or whatever his name goes. Kenny G. But I can't remember right now. It's so many I don't remember right now, but Kenny G, and Sparrow, and I like a lot of gospel. Also, now that they're playing the gospel in the morning, I like a lot of gospel. And I like all these... I like all of those, you know. But some of them, I don't remember the name of them, though. Like when they, the artist, you know.

**INTERVIEWER 2:** Okay, can I get you to sing part of one of your favorite melodies?

**MARTIN:** Excuse me, get me to sing one of the—one of my songs?

**INTERVIEWER 2:** Yes.

**MARTIN:** Ahora? Gospel or what? Ay ya ya. This one is a gospel one. I find myself singing it because this is a song we really need now. (sings) *In times like these we need a Savior. In times like these, we need an anchor. Be very sure, be very sure your anchor is hold and grips that solid Rock. That Rock is Jesus. Yes, He's the one. That Rock is Jesus, the only one. Be very sure, be very sure your anchor is old and grips that solid Rock.* Mas o menos en estos tiempos necesitamos a Jesus. Am I right or wrong? In times like these we need a Savior. Eso que estoy cantando es lo que necesitamos ahora.

**INTERVIEWER 1:** Thank you.

**INTERVIEWER 2:** What music do you listen to now? What are your favorite songs, and what other things do you like?

**MARTIN:** What music I...say it again?

**INTERVIEWER 2:** What music do you listen to now?

**MARTIN:** I listen to gospel in the morning, as I said before. And I can sometimes to listen to oldies and goodies, too. En la noche. Oldies and goodies. I never have enough time. Salsa por la tarde por la manana me gusta mi musica de la iglesia, Gospel music.

**INTERVIEWER 2:** What are your favorite songs, and what about them do you like?

**MARTIN:** What?

**INTERVIEWER 1:** Your favorite songs?

**MARTIN:** My favorite songs I like? I like so much. Me gustan bastante.

**INTERVIEWER 1:** If you were to pick one favorite, what would it be?

**MARTIN:** Which one? You mean like the gospel, or whatever?

**INTERVIEWER 1:** Yeah, any one.

**MARTIN:** Yeah, but which one is one. There's so much of them. Oh, "Great Is Thy Faithfulness." (sings) *Great is thy faithfulness. Great is thy faithfulness, O Lord my God. There is no shadow of turning with thee. All I have needed thy hand hath provided.*

*Great is thy faithfulness, Lord, unto me. Great is thy faithfulness.* Okay? You could use.  
(speaks Spanish)

**INTERVIEWER 2:** Do you like to eat?

**MARTIN:** Do I like what?

**INTERVIEWER 2:** Do you like to eat? Eat?

**MARTIN:** Eat? Do I like to eat? Si pero no como antes. Yo antes comia pero ahora no tengo ganas de comer. Yo como asi pero moderado, moderate. No como usted que se compra ...ella come asi y despues no cabe en esa puerta. Es asi...(risas) Hay que comer moderado.

**INTERVIEWER 2:** What are your favorite foods?

**MARTIN:** My favorite food?

**INTERVIEWER 2:** Yes.

**MARTIN:** My favorite food?. I like everything. I like mashed potato. I like rice and peas. I like couscous. Tu sabes eso?

**INTERVIEWER 2:** emmm..la comida cuscus es una comida antillana.

**MARTIN:** Si pero yo como moderado.

**INTERVIEWER 2:** Do you cook them?

**MARTIN:** Do I cook them? Yes, I'm a cook. Me gusta cocinar, desde los 13 anos me gusta cocinar. Yo hago empanadas. They say, every year they say the old gray mare what she used to be. The old gray Mary. Hago empanadas para fiestas. (speak Spanish)

**INTERVIEWER 2:** Would you be willing to share your favorite recipe with me?

**MARTIN:** Hmm? Trying to get me to share my recipe?

**INTERVIEWER 2:** Yeah.

**MARTIN:** Which one recipe?

**INTERVIEWER 1:** Which one, whichever one you'd like to share with us.

**MARTIN:** Yeah, and write it down?

**INTERVIEWER 1:** No, you can say it, and we'll record it. Yeah.

**MARTIN:** (speaks Spanish) I like to make empanadas, with the flour, Crisco, water, the ground meat, the seasoning, and you roll it out. It's hard work to do, but I love it. I don't know why people are listening to me.

**INTERVIEWER 2:** What are your favorite sayings?

**MARTIN:** Hmm?

**INTERVIEWER 2:** What are your favorite sayings?

**MARTIN:** What are my favorite sayings? I have so much sayings to say, whatever, and you want to know—my favorite sayings are peace and love. Paz y amor. Peace and love. I know of a new one now. “He dicho... caso cerrado”.

**INTERVIEWER 2:** (speaks Spanish)

**MARTIN:** (speaks Spanish) Everybody know me like that. Yeah.

**INTERVIEWER 1:** Where did you first hear them, or learn them?

**MARTIN:** Huh?

**INTERVIEWER 1:** Where did you first hear that saying, or where did you learn it from?

**MARTIN:** Oh, you mean like peace and love? It's something I love to say, because there are some people that like to argue and everything to make a problem. I'm a peaceful person, you know, so when you come with the foolishness, I say, "Listen, no. Peace and love." You know? That's why I does it on my own. I like to say "peace and love". Everybody knows me as "peace and love". And now, like this thing on the TV... everything and they're talking foolishness. Caso cerrado..y done...Caso cerrado.

**INTERVIEWER 2:** Have you ever heard of Louise Bennett and the Mighty Sparrow?

**MARTIN:** Louise Bennett?

**INTERVIEWER 2:** Yes.

**MARTIN:** Louise Bennett and the Mighty Sparrow?

**INTERVIEWER 2:** Yes.

**MARTIN:** No. I've heard of Mighty Sparrow, but I don't remember Louise Bennett.

**INTERVIEWER 1:** What thoughts do you think about when you hear her name?

**MARTIN:** When I hear the names?

**INTERVIEWER 1:** Mm-hmm. When you hear the Mighty Sparrow, what are the thoughts that come to your mind?

**MARTIN:** Nothing. I just like to listen because his songs, he has some nice songs, you know? And I like the—I enjoy his music. His songs are good, you know? ..que tiene la cosa grande... And he had a show going. Y esta grande pero todavia tiene la cosita andando...yAnd the people were dancing, you know? It's okay. And like I said, "Age Is Just a Number"... "Age Is Just a Number." I think that's what his song's named.

**INTERVIEWER 2:** Have you ever seen in person?

**MARTIN:** No, I no see him in person.

**INTERVIEWER 2:** What religion are you?

**MARTIN:** What religion?

**INTERVIEWER 2:** Are you?

**MARTIN:** I'm Episcopalian. Episcopalian.

**INTERVIEWER 2:** What role do religion play in your life?

**INTERVIEWER 1:** Life.

**INTERVIEWER 2:** Life.

**MARTIN:** What did you say?

**INTERVIEWER 1:** What role does religion play in your life?

**MARTIN:** What role it play in my life, like—

**INTERVIEWER 1:** Religion. Yeah. What is the role of religion in your life?

**MARTIN:** You mean my religion? Oh. In my religion, I work on altar. I take care of the altar. I belong to the ECW. To the ECW, and then the treasurer for the ECW, also.

**INTERVIEWER 1:** What does ECW stand for?

**MARTIN:** Hmm?

**INTERVIEWER 1:** What does ECW stand for?

**MARTIN:** Episcopal Church Women. ECW. And I'm the treasurer for the Episcopal Church Women, and I'm the coordinator for the United Thank Offering. That is a special program they have every year at the church. You know? They call it United Thank Offering. That was the first, the first one that been—the second one that been—May. The first one that been May. It's why I say you have it, and I'm the coordinator for the first one in May. And the next one is in November. And they take up a special offering, and they send that offering to the states to help the poor.

**INTERVIEWER 2:** Okay. Would you mind describing your favorite part of the worship service? Favorite part of the worship service?

**MARTIN:** What is my favorite part of the worshipping service?

**INTERVIEWER 2:** Yes.

**MARTIN:** I like the singing, and I like to listen to the sermon of the priest, preaching to us in the morning. And I like to go to church early.

**INTERVIEWER 2:** Did you play a sport, as a child?

**MARTIN:** Hmm?

**INTERVIEWER 1:** Did you play a sport?

**MARTIN:** Did I play sports? Sports?

**INTERVIEWER 1:** Um-hum.

**MARTIN:** No. nunca yo ...Me gusta lo que me gusta a mi..te digo la verdad me gusta mi Iglesia, y de sports me gusta el Bingo y el pokino esas cosas si me gustan.

**INTERVIEWER 2:** What is pokino?

**MARTIN:** Hmm?

**INTERVIEWER 2:** What is pokino?

**MARTIN:** Es con Barajas con unas tarjetas y con Barajas. Me gustan todas esas cosas. Me gusta bailar también ..me encanta...pero como tengo la pierna mala. Y si pongo yo mi bastón al lado...el usa bastón..porque cuando me entra la cosa ay ay ay... (Risas)

**INTERVIEWER 2:** Okay. Did you have any contact with United States culture, as a youth? What do you remember about that?

**MARTIN:** Contact in United States?

**INTERVIEWER 1:** With the United States culture, meaning American things that were here in Panama.

**31 19**

**MARTIN:** My culture, they laugh about them, that they're always on time. If they, whatever they say, 8:00, whatever it is. I love that. 8:00, they start at 8:00. Or when you start the graduation, and if you remember on Canal zone time, yeah, 8:00, it is fifteen here. You start to work, work, work, work. What I like about Americans, they're on time. Con los Americanos me gusta porque siempre están. Los panameños como nosotros dicen a las 8 y vienen en a las 9 y media, esa es la verdad. Y una cosa cuando los Americanos tienen su fiesta dicen de 6 a 8 y algo para las 6 llegan y algo para las 8 ellos van ya. Pero nosotros ve hay que esperar que la botella termina y se quedan horas tomando, es así o no es así. Quedan ahí hasta las dos de la mañana hasta que se acabe la botella. Los Americanos de 6 a 8 ahí se... (no se entiende). I used to work with them, you know. I worked with a company for 17 years. And so I learned, I learned that thing, when I say they're really on time. I mean it's six minutes to 8:00, everybody's leaving. "I'll see you later." You know.

**INTERVIEWER 1:** All right. We can move to the next set of questions. Tell me about your view of your West Indian ancestry.

**MARTIN:** My view?

**INTERVIEWER 1:** Mm-hmm. What do you think about it? How do you think about your ancestry?

**MARTIN:** I like my culture very much, and I will set down and unite together, you know? Like right now, like in my neighborhood here, you have unity. And even the church where I go to, we are like one family. And I like that. In any church, you have a community. But I like the unity that we have. You know, like for instance, I live by myself, but I've got Jesus with me, and the neighbors are with me. And you know, they take the phone call or anything like that, you know. So that is important, too.

**INTERVIEWER 1:** Okay. What is the first word that comes to mind when someone says, "West Indian?"

**MARTIN:** What's the first word that comes to my mind? That's my root, because I'm West Indian. That's my root.

**INTERVIEWER 1:** What qualities, cultural behaviors, or other things do you associate with West Indian-ness? What would be a list of different things that you just associate with West Indians, with your roots? With your culture?

**MARTIN:** I think with the Latin and with the American, whatever. I associate with everybody.

**INTERVIEWER 1:** Yes, but what, when you think just about West Indians, what are certain qualities, or things that you think about, that are very particular to West Indians?

**MARTIN:** Living with West Indians, some of them, to me like don't wanna be here. They just, they don't—I'm quiet. I don't talk. You know? They don't know how to talk. That's my, too loud and combustible a word I'm saying. And I think they talk all over the world. They don't want people to be too combustible to talk to you and, nuh, uh.

**INTERVIEWER 1:** Any other qualities that you can think of?

**MARTIN:** Uh-uh, uh-uh.

**INTERVIEWER 1:** Okay. Do you believe the people in Panama view, or treat you differently, based on either your race, or being West Indian?

**MARTIN:** No. To me, as I go around, to me they treat me the same. And I go around to a lot of Latin people and so, and different, the offices in Panama, different places. They treat me very good, you know.

**INTERVIEWER 1:** Okay. Have you ever lived outside of Panama, for an extended period of time?

**MARTIN:** No. I'll go to the States and visit, you know? I'll go to the States and visit. I've never lived outside.

**INTERVIEWER 1:** Tell me, how has knowing English affected you, whether positively or negatively?

**MARTIN:** English?

**INTERVIEWER 1:** Um-hum.

**MARTIN:** Positive.

**INTERVIEWER 1:** How so?

**MARTIN:** When you said "negative," you mean like what?

**INTERVIEWER 1:** It depends on how you perceive it. If you feel that it has always been a positive thing for you to know English, then you can describe—

**MARTIN:** No. No, I—no. It's a positive thing, for I, to know English. And I don't really know all the English well, but I know a lot of them. Like certain things, other people say good afternoon. I know, really and truly, it's not afternoon. It's not evening. And things like that. You know?



**INTERVIEWER 1:** And in what environments, and what situations, has it been very positive for you to know English? Has it been helpful for you to know English here in Panama?

**MARTIN:** In what environment?

**INTERVIEWER 1:** Um-hum.

**MARTIN:** More or less, what do you mean by that?

**INTERVIEWER 1:** Like, say, for work, or school, or where was it an advantage to know the language? Since in Panama, you know, we speak a lot of Spanish. However, knowing English, you say, has been positive for you. So are there any particular situations where you were really glad that you could speak English, because it helped you—

**MARTIN:** When I was growing up I was living in Panama, with the Latins, and I used to speak more Spanish than English. But now, since I've come down this side after I got married, I learned, I talk more English in this area.

**INTERVIEWER 1:** I see. All right. Okay.

**MARTIN:** Were there three?

**INTERVIEWER 1:** We're almost there. I'm gonna ask you some questions about family.

**INTERVIEWER 2:** Are you married?

**MARTIN:** If I'm married? Yes, I was married. Yes, I am married, but my husband died.

**INTERVIEWER 1:** How did you meet your husband?

**MARTIN:** How did I meet my husband? At a concert. Well, let me tell you how I met my husband. I met my husband going to my aunt, in Paraíso. And he saw me, he saw me going to my aunt, and he fell in love with me then. Just when I visit my aunt. And then his mother was living on one side, and he was—his mother was living on one side; my aunt was living on this side. So when I go with my aunt, and he go by his mother's, he see me going up the steps. You know, so that's where I met him, then.

**INTERVIEWER 2:** All right. How would you characterize the cultural background of your spouse?

**INTERVIEWER 1:** The cultural background of your spouse. What was the cultural background—

**MARTIN:** My cultural, my spouse was West Indian. West Indian. I think his mother and father were Jamaicans. He born and grew up in Panama.

**INTERVIEWER 2:** Do you have children?

**MARTIN:** Yeah, three daughters. Three daughters.

**INTERVIEWER 2:** Tell me about them. They living, dead?

**MARTIN:** Yeah, they're alive. Yeah, they're alive. They're alive and they're living in the United States.

**INTERVIEWER 1:** And tell us about, about their lives, and about their jobs. What do they do?

**MARTIN:** One of them is, one of them is—the one at...she was a nursing assistant. And the other one, the last one, she's a social worker in Houston. And the big one, Acinta, she work in an office at computer, whatever. Something like that.

**INTERVIEWER 2:** Do they consider themselves Panamanian, West Indian, both, or something else?

**MARTIN:** Oh, well right now they're Americans. They're naturalized Americans. Because they're there for years, so they're naturalized Americans. But they're still up in America. They come to Panama often. You know. But you know, what you're born, you'll be.

**INTERVIEWER 2:** Do your children speak English?

**INTERVIEWER 1:** Do they speak English?

**MARTIN:** Do they speak English? Oh, yes. Yes. Yeah.

**INTERVIEWER 2:** Do your grandchildren?

**INTERVIEWER 1:** And grandchildren?

**MARTIN:** My grandchildren speak English. Yes.

**INTERVIEWER 1:** Why do you think they speak English? I guess it's living in the U.S., they—

**MARTIN:** No, they've been born and grow in the U.S. That's why they speak English. I don't know, I think and Spanish.

**INTERVIEWER 1:** So do you have family who live overseas, in addition to your daughters, and if so, where do they live?

**MARTIN:** I have cousins. I have cousins living in Virginia, in New York, and California.

**INTERVIEWER 1:** Okay.

**INTERVIEWER 2:** When they come to visit Panama, do you think other Panamanians see, or treat them as Panamanians, or more U.S., American?

**MARTIN:** They see the Americans as Panamanian. Because they were born and grew here, you know?

**INTERVIEWER 2:** Thank you.

**MARTIN:** You're welcome.

**INTERVIEWER 1:** Okay. So, you'll continue?

**MARTIN:** Wait, you're not finished?

**INTERVIEWER 1:** Not yet. We're rotating.

**INTERVIEWER 2:** Have you ever been, ever or living overseas? Where?

**MARTIN:** Yes, I've visited—I've been to overseas. But I like here. I've visited the States, but I love here.

**INTERVIEWER 1:** Where did you go, and when did you visit?

**MARTIN:** I go to Norfolk, Virginia; Virginia Beach; and Houston, Texas. And the last time I travelled was in 19—not 19. The last time I travelled was 2007. January and July. One of my daughters, they had a heart attack, and then for another birthday in August. So I've been twice in 2007.

**INTERVIEWER 2:** What was your experience there...in terms of what people tended to know, or did not know, about Panamanian or West Indian people?

**INTERVIEWER 1:** Your experience, in general.

**MARTIN:** Hmm?

**INTERVIEWER 1:** When you visited, what was your experience like?

**MARTIN:** Oh, my experience is that they have a different culture, living there, than in Panama. In Panama, there's a different way of living and, obviously, a different way of living. Estamos en Panama encerrados You see what I'm saying? I mean I like there to visit. You go, and you do shopping. But here, I can...(speaks Spanish) Am I right or wrong?

**INTERVIEWER 1:** Yeah.

**INTERVIEWER 2:** What specific messages do you want to communicate to the older people?

**INTERVIEWER 1:** Younger. Younger people.

**INTERVIEWER 2:** What specific messages do you want to communicate to the younger people of the community?

**MARTIN:** Of this community? Well, right now there...remember, what I'd like to ask them to be close to Christ, and have Christ in them, no? Because everything's going now, everything—just live close to Christ, and have Christ in them, and walk the walk. So you have that much balance...

**INTERVIEWER 2:** Are you involved with any community clubs or organizations? If so, what role do you play with the group?

**MARTIN:** Organizations?

**INTERVIEWER 2:** Yes. Or clubs.

**MARTIN:** Do you mean like what organizations I'm in?

**INTERVIEWER 2:** Um-hum.

**MARTIN:** Like at church and so? I think you asked me that already. Was it something else like that?

**INTERVIEWER 1:** In the original? Yeah.

**MARTIN:** Yeah, I am. I go to church, and I'm involved in the ECW, Episcopal Church Women. Altar guild. United Thank Offering...And that's it.

**INTERVIEWER 2:** Is there any other information you want to include, that we have not yet asked?

**MARTIN:** No. I don't want to add anything more.

**INTERVIEWER 2:** Okay. Thank you, Dorothy Martin, a lot for participation. Please feel free to contact you if you have any questions, or wish to add to your interview.

**MARTIN:** Okay.

**INTERVIEWER 1:** Thank you.

**MARTIN:** Thank you.

**INTERVIEWER 1:** Are we good? Okay.