

Interview with Nicolas Dosman

Interviewer: Nyasha Warren

Interviewee(s): Nicolas Dosman

Year of Birth: 1927

Location of Interview: Almirante, Bocas del Toro

Language of Interview: English

INTERVIEWER: I am going to read through this. Thank you again Mr. Dosman for agreeing to participate in the Voices From Our America Project. It will surely benefit the community now and in the future, especially with the work Mr. Halston will be putting together. The goal of this questionnaire is to produce as detailed and coherent a narrative of your story. In like of that I encourage you to feel free, not to worry about providing an answer that is too long or too in depth. That is exactly what we want. And we realize that you already signed the consent form when we came earlier in January. However if there is anytime you want to change anything, add something or remove something you can contact us at any time whatsoever and we will honor your wishes. As you know, we'll be putting this together in educational, exhibition, and presentation materials, based on your interview. And like I said, feel free to keep in contact with us and we will be calling you as well. Alright, so let's start with the first set of questions. Let's start with the first set of questions.

Tell me about your place of birth, and what was going on there as you were growing up. First of all where were you born?

DOSMAN: I born in 4th Street Bocas, the city of Bocas Island, in 1927.

INTERVIEWER: Mm hmm 1927, okay. What was it like? What do you remember as a child?

DOSMAN: I couldn't remember because I didn't grow in Bocas. I was transferred to Changuinola when I was six-months old. So, I grow in Changuinola between... Baseline, and other, other places. Then I was transferred here to work in 1943. I came to work when I started work in the hospital but that was cool between Bobito, Baseline, things like that.

[Interviewer speaks to third person in Spanish]

INTERVIEWER: Tell me a little bit about your fondest memories as a child. Do you remember any of your best friends? What did you used to do? What were their families like?

DOSMAN: Well, most of them all...Stevenson and I think he died. Lance Stevenson and the brother, Ernesto. The whole family they went to the States and when they came back, he died. I had a next friend, Ivan West. All he die already.

INTERVIEWER: And they all grew-up there.

DOSMAN: In Changuinola...My father live in Almirante. And he left here in 1940 and never come back. So, in Almirante when I came here I was alone. I stayed by a cousin. Almirante was different, we just...We were in the train three-days a week, and go to the dock and certain things. Then I started a life when I was 15-years leave home and start on my own and never to return. I don't say I don't go back to the mother at home but I have my own until today.

INTERVIEWER: What year did you return to Almirante again?

DOSMAN: No, I never leave Almirante from I... I always go and come back. And I work in Changuinola and then I was living here...after administration I decide to make this a final thing. I used to go to Panama and Colon every year until '58. Then my father was, he was working on the Canal Zone, and he was patient going to the United States. We left in '58 and from there I forget about Panama and Colon until my dad said I have to go to school. They went and study and they graduate and two stayed here, and one is here, two is here. She is a professor in the school here, the other here. That's Rosanna and Nathalia, she's a great person [Spanish]... My son, he used to practice with me. He left for the States in 1979 and resides there and he has one son up there, born up there and one here. One is in Philadelphia, and one is in Miami in professional music.

INTERVIEWER: How many children do you have?

DOSMAN: Five, by my wife, with my wife. [Laughter.] I don't play on the outskirts.

INTERVIEWER: Tell me what you remember about your parents and your grandparents. What were they like? Where did your grandparents and parents come from? Where were they born and how did they come to Panama?

DOSMAN: Well, my mother and my grandfather on my mother's side. My grandmother they're from San Andres and they came here in 1908. My mother came here when she was three-years old. And, they never go back. They came when Bocas was...before they dump it. He used to, my grandfather Horacio Hudson. He used to fish in turtle and rubber ...I used to go down the lagoon Greenvale ...and when they come, they sold those shell, turtle shell, [company name] they had a business, Germany, they used to deal with German. And they had, German was most of the founder of Bocas Island because you have up to now German Point and those places. Then after that, my, I went to Guabito...the first time and they were going to a Spanish school. So, they come, well all the children go to Spanish school and closed most of the English schools. And there I started my new life because I was considered a black *Pana*. Under the import language, you know how they speaks and don't play with him because he might have lice, and he, well, crab louse and all of those things. They discriminated against me completely. So, I decided to make my life, pick my life, that they weren't going to tell me what to do.

INTERVIEWER: What was school like and how were your teachers that you remember? You tell me a little bit about...

DOSMAN: They were Jamaicans, teachers. I remember one teacher, Edward, teacher Campbell and the teacher I got they speak English. And they were very good because they learn English the right way, everything, grammar, everything that they teach you was very good. I went as far as fifth grade, arithmetic everything. And after that, I went to the Spanish school. I went in '41. In '42, my aunt died in '42, and the Spanish finished for me because I had to come back to Bayside with my mother because my uncle wife, my aunt was, she was Irlina Hudson and her husband was George Stevenson, who works for the railroad. And there was this, my other aunt was in Salamanca. She was a stock master. Thompson. Panama used to rule up to....and those places. And all of those things happen. That was the turnabout. 1921 when Tico came in and invaded Almirante, they took my mother she was a young girl and carry her up to Macca Hill and they was in the house, and they didn't know that a horse was tied on the post. So, in the night when they horse has move, they started to shake the house, and everybody started crying. Tico is pushing down the hill to come and invade us. And somebody looked through the window and saw that was a horse tied on the post. That was 1921. They tell me about that. My mother used to go around with...truck man and all of those people. She was, they was, they was a Methodist minister, surgeon and all of that. She was Carl Freda wife, Mae... You hear about Carl Freda? Guillen, Guillen, she was Guillen's aunt.

INTERVIEWER: Ok, who was Guillen?

DOSMAN: Guillen wife, Guillen aunt was Carl Freda wife.

INTERVIEWER: Alright, and what was their position in the community?

DOSMAN: They are the founders of commerce in Bocas. They put the first electric plant, the first bank... I was in Bocas.

INTERVIEWER: Wow.

DOSMAN: It's our history.

INTERVIEWER: Yes, it's just amazing. So, your mother worked for a...?

DOSMAN: A maid.

INTERVIEWER: She worked for the son, or the actual family.

DOSMAN: Carl Freda wife, because he fought in the Second World War.

INTERVIEWER: Okay wow. What year would that have been when the first electric plants and so forth would have been put up?

DOSMAN: Ah 1906 or '08 or something like that, and before they built Palacio

INTERVIEWER: Before they built it.

DOSMAN: They put the first electric plant in Germany. And that would be until...

INTERVIEWER: Do you remember the name of the electric plant, the electric company?

DOSMAN: He has a personal business.

INTERVIEWER: Like a personal business that...

DOSMAN: Business that he...in 1928, my mother told me when, before '28 when she had came to Bocas to check the water business... There's a spring in Bocas. He looked at it and said very nice but chombo, the chino, is delivering and he wouldn't spend that money, then he went and he didn't put the water until his son came and put the water in the 60's. They didn't go to the [Name Inaudible] they went to the Big Creek.

INTERVIEWER: Where is the Big Creek?

DOSMAN: In Bocas. It is running dry now.

INTERVIEWER: Wow. So, Big Creek would have been done when? What year, 60 something you said.

DOSMAN: In '60 something in Roberta.

INTERVIEWER: Do you remember any stories that you mother told you about with them, for them, things that she saw, experienced?

DOSMAN: Well, that's why she went in. She was working with them. Bocas was in boardwalk. So, on Sundays when the Colombian was in charge, what they used to dress in white suits and work on the boardwalk. My uncle, Davis, Foster Davis, from San Andres. He would stand in the middle of the boardwalk, and whoever wants to cross have to wait until they decide. One Sunday they pitched the governor and the authorities in mud and they went to get him and fled away in a ship. When he came back for the first time when the railroad was built in 1909, he came here in the ship and asked for my mother. My granny she was in Salamanca... They told him where the train will go there, but comes once a week. It's better to go to Limon. So, the ship went to Limon. When he get to Limon... And when he get old he went to... Nicaragua and that...business. When it failed, he went back to San Andres. He died there at 109 year old.

INTERVIEWER: Wow that's pretty long. Okay. Let me ask you some of the culture questions. This is music now so talk as much as you want. What was the music that you grew-up hearing? What were the favorite songs? I don't know if you know any lyrics that

you'd like to share with us. You have quite a collection here. So, before you even got into radio I guess I would say, what kind of music did you grow up hearing.

DOSMAN: It was during the war. It was American. I studied music in the United States. ...so I decided to go into electric. The boss told well we need young blood for the electrician. So, I took a course, and I took a course in radio in 1946-'47 I was graduating in 1951, United States, music in California. I decided well, that Almirante needed communication because the only communication was tropical radio and there was no newspaper, nothing like that. So I decided, so I went to the company and I told the manager, you know I have the ability to do a radio. If you use me, I could start one and use the profit. They said no that is not their vision, and they give me a hard time. I told the manager that this is the last thing I do before I die, I put a radio station here. He said get out of my sight. Run.

So, I went and I started to write and the first Cooper, that's... Cooper was... and Tito La Guardia was President. And Arrocha guy was the Minister of Communication and he wrote and told me well they could give me a frequency but I would have to do what is necessary. From '54 until '57, '56 before I could get it. And every time they told me *no vale la pena* because Bocas is a bush and... nobody was going to listen to it. I went there and I haven't been, I've been a good while as a mad man. You get out of my sight you is a mad man!! Roberto Prescott he was the man that cut the communication at independency, became a lifetime radio operator and engineer. So, when I went to the office and he said you are a mad man in the town and I don't have time to speak to mad men. I said I paid my passage from Almirante to Bocas, take the launch... the white shuttle to Colon and from Colon take the train to Panama... Taxi fare. No mad man is not going to all that trouble.

He was an American/Puerto Rican Coronel... He wasn't paying attention to me. So, when he came back, about half an hour time, you're still here? When he said, "You're still here?" I said, "Ah you speak English?"... "That don't mean anything to me". Is said that mean a lot to me. That is my ability and to show that I'm a Panamanian and have my rights. No madman would go to so much trouble to come to you. And after I speak to him. We stopped speaking in Spanish. I started to speak in English. It was in my field because I show him my diploma is American... Signature. So he said to me, "all right I will give you a shot". "You can take any"— I said "I can't take a frequency". You have give me it. He said if you see it on the wall take it and go. I said no... He look on me and said— I said to him by the way, how a guy like me could get a letter to you? "I saw a letter end up in the wastebasket"... "The letter that I wrote to you they all end up in the wastebasket. "What could a guy like me could do not to get his letter in the wastebasket? " "If you are putting a stamp paper, he will have to register that and you can't throw that in the wastebasket." From then I started buying stamp paper. About six-months after he answered me, I said, "you know I wrote you a letter and I was sick, and my secretary was on vacation so I couldn't answer before, but whatever you ask for is *factible*...until today." And when I

finished, ...I wrote him and I said I... my investigation and come in and check me... I don't need to go there, I don't have no value to go, so do what you feel like. Not what I feel like what the law says. And I book him [Laughs] until today. When I finish the station and started, I didn't have no repertoire. I am doing everything until today. So I have two fellows in Bocas, Javier Peñalosa..., he's retired now, and Lorenzo Contreras. They used to come every Sunday and when they came off the dock, they go and..."What! You stupid! You come to Bocas, to Almirante to practice radio and we have a... here, ...was Eduardo Thomas." He came in and told me I have to break the station down, and carry it to Bocas because Bocas is the capital of the *Corregimiento*...And I...so, I said to him, and I didn't get permission from him. I said I didn't have to get permission, he is the governor. But the Minister is your boss. He gave me the permission. He said "well if you don't decide to come to Bocas, well, I have to come back to you." He went and got a frequency and built a station in Bocas; didn't last three-months.

The same fellow that came and got me... stopped coming, and one-day came in and said to him, well I come to let you know build my station and pretty soon you have to, and if not you have to close. I said I'm working now, and you are just start. So, we'll have to see how long it going last. He came back and said to me, by the way how much money do you makes a month? I say, I don't make anything. What I do is pay the station. Anybody wants a song, pay five-cents for a song and they will make a message. And that's what I make money from. So, if I could make a thousand dollar a month he would have to close. I never make a thousand so he close the station... So I end up right there. That would have been in the Early 50's, '56, '57, '58, '62 when he was first... with his mother. He came and I help, and he give me a prize... until today. They do all that they can, but I'm still alive. They give me three-months—now 50-years, 51-years.

INTERVIEWER: Fifty-one-years now.

DOSMAN: They said nothing would last in Bocas more than three-months. I want to show the world that Bocas is Bocas... I don't have no—I don't say I don't receive help from different places,... from the States. But I am the owner, and the technician and everything... I want to show them that as long as I live and I can walk and come here I will keep open even if I have to play the sound one-hour a day without... I used to spend \$150 a month it come to that I was spending... but, now...because it doesn't pay, but I still have the station open everyday.

INTERVIEWER: People were really glad. Do you have any favorite sayings? I'm really thinking in terms of all of these experiences you've had over time. Are there sayings that you find yourself thinking of maybe lessons in life? What would be lessons in life for you from all of these experiences, surviving with the station over what 51-years now? Are there sayings that you say to yourself, like that?

DOSMAN: I tell the youth, study. Prepare yourself for the future. Because with empty brains you can't compete with nobody because to get even a janitor you have to have a certificate. If you don't have education, you are nobody. Education is the key to the world.

INTERVIEWER: Have you heard of Louise Bennett?

DOSMAN: Yeah. Great one-hour program. Louise Bennett she is a great from Jamaica. I have a record of her when she started out and...but...and tell me what...she speaks good English but when she have a program she...

INTERVIEWER: Do you have any favorite sayings of hers or favorite shows that you remember of hers? Anything in particular that she did that struck you more from her performances on radio?

DOSMAN: Well, it doesn't work because most of my program is in Spanish. I don't have any English program except the churches. The Baptist church has an English program. But they turn everything now in Spanish. They nationalize the churches everything and that breaks down, because the Baptist churches have aid from the United States. All of the churches get aid, and now they are national. So, they have... Most of my program in Spanish, States, Baptist, and Mexico. They supply me programs. David Daniel...right now. He was in Panama... He came and almost put a station in but it didn't work. Then I had to deal with Trinidad and Barbados. They sent me a program, and I was to dedicate the station to them, and they would transfer. I said this is a local business. I am not going to give them...and the law says no foreigner can own any station anymore. So, I will still be the owner. If they want to patronize, they can patronize...the Mormons too... they have their own churches here.

INTERVIEWER: So before they have their churches that was a way to disseminate the word right?

DOSMAN: Yes. I help deliver their programs.

INTERVIEWER: The Mormons you said also right? Was that the other group that you said also that used to have their... ?

DOSMAN: The Mormons, the Baptists. All the stations. Hermano Pablo. He's not a, he's is a church with another Baptist... And Maria, I help all the programs... The only local program right now is a Baptist and we used to use program funds... And then we still use programs from outside.

INTERVIEWER: You said Mexico also provides you with some programs?

DOSMAN: Yeah in Spanish. But the Baptist Mission and the Church of Christ. They was in..., but they now in are in Miami.They also move now to...Now they are in, not in Florida, that is Georgia.

INTERVIEWER: Okay in Georgia a little bit more north.

DOSMAN: I used to be with all of the Voice\of Prophecy. When they were in the Canal Zone. But they change now. They shift to the States. From there... Bocas and Chiriqui and the Western Hemisphere, and Western Panama and they decided not to patronize any more programs. So, the Catholic did the same.

INTERVIEWER: Okay. But they used to before.

DOSMAN: The open door, the school, the musician, all the denominations that come here. Voice of Prophecy, also...they always here... They consider this, these are the tops. They said we don't need no station, because we have the support. And they don't patronize anything. And they don't like AM anymore. They want FM. And I'm not going, because I am a technician, I know the capacity of the different stations, how far it can go, and how it can work, and in a valley they don't have the capacity to... It will get nowhere.

INTERVIEWER: AM has more coverage.

DOSMAN: Because it goes through waves, land, water and thing... line of sight. If you have a hill in between and the signal dies here. But they don't know that and I said I would spend money that I have right now... Bocas is the best place to put a station and they don't have any station in Bocas. Only the RBC ...the government has one...the station ...commercial.

INTERVIEWER: Right. That is not going to work. They don't have the coverage. Let's go to the next set of questions.

DOSMAN: The Voice of America.

INTERVIEWER: What?

DOSMAN: An affiliate of the Voice of America.

INTERVIEWER: Oh the Voice of America yeah.

DOSMAN: They change over they want to satelite. So, they install the parabolic in places that have more audition. So they change it the...a lot of them used to send me programs. But it doesn't pay. But historically I'm still recognized as one of the most, one of the first.

INTERVIEWER: We recognize that for sure, absolutely.

DOSMAN: I communicate. Any time they want thing from outside... I reorganize this and then I... We send all of that to... and he makes a fool of himself. He goes around using my... broadcasting music... He came here and was a jerk. He was arrogant...

INTERVIEWER: This you said was from whom, this particular one?

DOSMAN: University of Hawaii.

INTERVIEWER: Oh University of Hawaii okay. Oh, Richard Wood. Okay. That is amazing, oh wow. That is because you kept it at AM right?

DOSMAN: I had a program from Columbus.

INTERVIEWER: Columbus, Ohio?

DOSMAN: No Columbus the island in the Pacific.

INTERVIEWER: Oh Columbus Island, wow.

DOSMAN: This is...

INTERVIEWER: Oh Athens, Greece. Oh, it's beautiful. This is getting all over the world practically.

DOSMAN: A radio station... is China and Russia and Sri Lanka.

INTERVIEWER: Sri Lanka as well? So, the music was [background noise] what are they?

DOSMAN: That was music from Germany. This fellow from Greece said he didn't know I was based in Almirante. He went to England and there was a fair. He said he went to the fair and it was having, got an envelope and he saw Almirante... He wrote to me. And we started to change. He sent me letters of animals and things. I told him about Bocas. The history of Bocas, the isles and why... Cristobal Colon. And was welcome.

INTERVIEWER: Tell me a little bit about, we are going to talk a little bit about identity questions. You have family from all over. How would you classify yourself in terms of identity? How do you classify yourself? I know you have German family. You have Panamanian, Bocas.

DOSMAN: Well, I am a free citizen.

INTERVIEWER: There you go.

DOSMAN: I don't take a side.

INTERVIEWER: That's very good, very good.

DOSMAN: I help who I can. Because they want to, when Mr. Pinnel tried to implant the black culture here, he started to make a nuisance. They came from Panama and said we should forget them because we shouldn't be independent. I said no. I took them aside because my wife is Spanish. My parents is black, and my grandparents is German. So, I have to be, help who I can. And it failed. Mr. Pinnel was trying to bring in all the artist, Russell and all of those people. When the museum failed. He wanted us to take the general office to build. And I told him it couldn't be done. So, they gave him a little *kiosco* in Bocas so they decided to leave it alone. I think he's Panama. He had a place in Grand Key.

INTERVIEWER: Wow.

DOSMAN: Because they were interested that Bocas shouldn't have anything. Everything should be ...Because they said they wanted to annex us.

INTERVIEWER: What year was it that they were trying to do the museum that you were talking about?

DOSMAN: In 1968

INTERVIEWER: In '68.

DOSMAN: When he was a representative. That was before in 1990 something.

INTERVIEWER: Okay in '90 something.

DOSMAN: He was their representative. He helped me...with the station. He made doors, and a couple of blocks.

INTERVIEWER: Put it together yet.

DOSMAN: He works a lot. He was the representative of... After he finished the blocks out in...and they shifted, they gave him the same deal as they gave me. The guy told me if I had to keep the station, I couldn't work anymore. After saving I get rid of it... I tell him no... They give me a hard time but I didn't.

INTERVIEWER: Good for you. Let me talk a little more about the West Indian identity. I know you described yourself as a free, I liked the term you used when I asked you about identity. You said you were a free—you are open to all people right?

DOSMAN: Yeah.

INTERVIEWER: Let me ask you in general about West Indians. What does come to your mind when you think about West Indian culture or West Indian people? Whether it's with your family, or just your community around, surrounds you.

DOSMAN: Well, West Indian. They wasn't come here on their own, were brought here, because the first move were Africans and the Colombia, before Colombia when the Spanish came here and discovered it they used the Indians until they killed them, all died out. Then, Jeronimo... they said let's go and bring Africans and they used them as slaves. Then after plenty of them, mixed that's why you see mulatto, and you have zambos... Well, this Spaniard say Mestizos. Creole... Creole is not black alone. Creole is a mixture of a European with an American. The island, the whole continent is American. So, the Indians, they say Indian, we're not Indians. West Indian is because, a mistake because Columbus thought he was in India, The guy didn't know... So, the Spanish came here they mix with the Indian and they have the mestizo. Then Creole is those that from... That a Creole state. The zambo is the Indian with the black. Buccaneers like what in San Blas, part of San Blas and Darien also, Portobelo, they are zambos, black and Indian mixture. They are still have pure black in Portobelo. They are not mixed. Pure black. Then when they started, the Gold Coast between the Pacific and the Atlantic, they had to do a new trail from California to New York. And Fargo Wells was the trail and they leave six-months from the Pacific to the Atlantic. And they raid sometimes, 50 cargo, sometimes only two reaches. So after they found out that Peru was the Gold Coast they used to bring the gold to Panama, transferred over there to Portabelo, no not Portabelo, Nombre de Dios, and then they go to Portabelo, of course cause they could defend it, and they scattered.

So, then they decided to take the Canal, the railroad now, they brought Chinese, Indian, and Brazil. So, they brought in West Indian. Not really West Indians, but they call them West Indians, Barbados, Jamaicans, to build the railroad. After the railroad finish, they didn't repatriate them. That was a big mistake. They left in Colon and Panama, and some travel to Bocas because Bocas were just in the state of free culture, cultivation, banana, cocoa and things like that. Some went to Limon and the others, when they was building the Canal now, the same thing happened. These people that they brought to do the work, they never repatriate them and they left them so they mixed with the Panamanian, mixed, and they can't do anything about it now. That is why I said they have colored people in Colon, Bocas and Limon. Through the Canal works and the railroad works. I know, now they have in Panama, in Rio Abajo, ... Wachapali and all those place, those are the history that people don't like to hear, they don't teach it in school anymore, but it's the truth.

INTERVIEWER: Are you married?

DOSMAN: Yeah.

INTERVIEWER: How did you meet your wife?

DOSMAN: Well, that is a big story. She was working in the club and I was in the electrician... Well, we met accidentally. She was staying in the *Aarons*... You hear about the *Aarons*?

INTERVIEWER: Tell me about it.

DOSMAN: He has a son in... And a baseball diamond in Panama. He is a coach for the—he died about a month, two-months ago. He was a coach for the Yankee. My wife was staying down there because his mother was my wife's godmother. She used to work, then she used to go to the raffle, and thing and when I was leaving she used to work on Sundays... speaking until we get together.

INTERVIEWER: What year did you get married?

DOSMAN: A long time. My oldest daughter is 60-years-old.

INTERVIEWER: Quite a while ago. A long marriage, beautiful.

DOSMAN: We're still together... Diamond. My daughter completed 60-years in October, fifth of October this year.

INTERVIEWER: Wow.

DOSMAN: And we're still together, and we're always together. One thing I can pledge about we never curse each other and work out and tell me this and tell me that. I'm a free agent. I goes out and I respect my home and things like that, and she do the same, and we're together. We never have no problem that our children would give us, quarrelling and boxing and cursing each other, no no. I used to play a lot of dances...Colon, Panama, I used to play around but I never go home staggering. Because I said in my home none of children going to see me vomiting. What happen to you Papa, you sick or something? I respect that until today.

INTERVIEWER: Very good. You tell me your wife is Latin right? She is Spanish lady.

DOSMAN: Yeah she is Spanish.

INTERVIEWER: Tell me about your children now? How many children do you have? What was their childhood? Where did they grow-up and where do they live now, and what kind of work do they do?

DOSMAN: Thanks to God, all of them graduated.

INTERVIEWER: You told me about one that lives in Delaware correct.

DOSMAN: He is in Delaware.

INTERVIEWER: What is his name again?

DOSMAN: Rolando.

INTERVIEWER: Rolando...

DOSMAN: Rafael Rolando Dosman

INTERVIEWER: What are the names of the other children?

DOSMAN: Brunilda. She works in Panama as an independent electrician, they have problem... She does sub-contracts with the contractor CUSA.

INTERVIEWER: Okay for electricity.

DOSMAN: ...and she lives in...Then Lillian she was the professor in the Instituto National. She was pensioned from December but she left there from she finished third year and she went to Panama and now reside there. She is *soltera*. She is the one in the hospital here with me... She works in the hospital. Rosanna she graduated, all of them graduated from the Institute National. Patrick he is from the one that makes the most in Panama, Artes y Oficios.

INTERVIEWER: Well it's a thriving business now.

DOSMAN: Thank God, all of them never failed me.

INTERVIEWER: Excellent.

DOSMAN: I never got no secondary schooling because there was none in those days. But I make myself, I studied through International. I went as far as fifth grade in English and those fifth grade in English is like second grade in Spanish. In the English school, you also do geography, and algebra, and all of those things, and now you have to go to university...

INTERVIEWER: Tell me you said you said you went outside to study a little bit.

DOSMAN: No, no I do it international. I studied in..., which I was living there. But my studies is through correspondence.

INTERVIEWER: Okay correspondence studies. Have you visited another country, or lived in another country for a small period of time.

DOSMAN: I don't live when I visit the United States. I've been here five times. I've been in New York, old Manhattan Square. I've been in New York because that is where my son was working for many years. I've been from there to pass through Washington. I go to the Shrine. I go to the White House. I go to the whole thing. From Miami to New York I visit in 28-hours, traveling day and night always taking I-95.

INTERVIEWER: I-95 I know that one.

DOSMAN: Houston, I goes through Houston and I goes...

INTERVIEWER: How would you say that your experience has been in the U.S. when you go do people recognize you as Panamanian? Do they know about West Indian Panamanians or do they know about Almirante, Bocas?

DOSMAN: Well, plenty of people there because, from Almirante in New York, and Brooklyn is the home, cause my other sister lives in Brooklyn two sisters, my son, my family living three streets from Yankee Stadium, 68th, and Yankee Stadium is 65 I think. That little part there. And then I goes to Washington. I goes to the museum. I went to different places.

INTERVIEWER: That's good.

DOSMAN: I went to Philadelphia. I went to the bell of the freedom. All those places.

INTERVIEWER: The Freedom Bell, yes.

DOSMAN: I travel good. By the time I spent there, I go on the circle line... I went up when they were repairing the Liberty Statue.

INTERVIEWER: Yes, you take the boat and circle.

DOSMAN: Yes, I went there and we donate something to the rebuilding. My daughter went high enough to where the hand is.

INTERVIEWER: To where the torch is.

DOSMAN: The torch yeah. Its 300-feet.

INTERVIEWER: Pretty high, wow.

DOSMAN: I have another experience in the United States. Not as a liver there but the first time I went to New York I went in a store to buy... Chinatown....A Korean man, an American, she had to be American or something because she was white. She came to me and said what can I do for you? I not want to buy I am looking. So, when I leave some... I didn't want to take up her time because I didn't want to buy it the first day... A Jamaican man, I didn't know Jamaican but he was a colored man. He was taking care of somebody and he hustled and finished. And he said, "Son what does Jamaica mean to you," just like that you know. I said Jamaica means nothing to me. He said I surprised you, your very eyes deceive you. I said no. Why? You speak like a Jamaican. I said I have three Jamaican teachers where I come from and they teach me what they could in English. Oh, I see. I am a Panamanian. I born in Panama. My parents are Colombian, and German, and Panamanian and I born in Bocas. So, I have to be Bocas...your mother or father, or are local. You have three choices if you have foreign parents. My son born here and he goes to States, he lives up here up to 25-years. He is naturalized. His wife is naturalized. His first son born here and he does naturalize. And one, Nicolas born there, and he came to Panama, because you

can take your father and mother... So, he is a Pan-American. So he comes and take us and he make his thesis in Panama.

INTERVIEWER: Good we are almost done. I was wondering if there is any message that you would like to send to the younger generation. You talk about education. Would you like to say something in addition to what you said?

DOSMAN: What I would say --make it a must, education. Not only they call it the *wild boy*, but it's not *wild boy*, it's broken English, broken Spanish, patois. We have mix of a lot of things there but I can't do much about that. They say the people of Bocas speak *wild boy*. No, it's not correct. Broken English or broken French or Spanish. Spanish the same. One thing that I don't agree with is mixing the Spanish, Spanglish. In the United States, they have, talking about Spanglish. If you want to speak English, speak English. If you want to speak Spanish, speak Spanish, but don't mix it. But now, they're, oh it's very nice, *esta bien pero nice*. I don't agree with that. And the pronunciation of the English is very poor. If you listen to the radio, and that should be censored. They are speaking in English and their pronunciation is very bad. I was taught by a Jamaican teacher, never translate *apellido*. If your name John is Juan. If your name is Stevenson, say Stevenson. Don't say Esteban, Esmie and all of those things....All of those pronunciation is wrong...They want to translate the words in Spanish to bring it to their mind... I know a friend, he was my neighbor his father was in charge of the machine shop. His father was from Jamaica. His name was Sharif. His son came one day, told me I used to play with your son. What is your name? I'm Sheba. Sheba, I don't know Sheba. You remember my father was in charge of the machine. I said Sharif. We pronounce it Sheba. He wanted to make it Spanish, no, no, no. I didn't say nothing to him, but I leave it alone because you never translate a title... If his name is Steven, you say Steven. You have Steven or Stevenson. But in English, they don't say Stevenson, they say Stevenson. Adamson, they don't say Hadamson. But if you say Adamson, them criticize you but that's the Spanish. Baker they don't say Becker. They say Baker, because that is Hispanic.They say Baker.ER is pronounced as RA in English but they don't know that because...they don't have any secret....

INTERVIEWER: Educate yourself but also learn language correctly.

DOSMAN: That's right.

INTERVIEWER: The very last question is do you form part of any community, organizations, any groups that meet regularly with?

DOSMAN: I assist with the churches. I'm Anglican. And the... I give the Lions Club. Our community is welcome here for what they do is... at the station is not up-to-date... I'm not in the group, I'm not going to belittle myself, calypso is good but not what they use today.

INTERVIEWER: That might be Sparrow and so forth you like those?

DOSMAN: Yeah good Spanish and good English. But those I use not in words, but not in words, not Latin words but they use words that is not correct... it's not right. If the people who knows English feeling are hurt...Why, you can do better than that. You can't do business like that. We try to correct them as much as we think... It doesn't work in the Latin communities. It works with the Latins.

INTERVIEWER: Right. Well, we are done. Once again thank-you so much for giving us your time to do this interview once again. As you know, we will be in touch with you. Before I leave, I will be leaving you a CD with your interview and Mr. Helstrom will be putting together some materials that I think will be really, really nice. I know you will like it.