Birth in southwest Guatemala in 1961
Parents and family; Mayan and German ancestors
Migration to Guatemala City; living and working conditions in Guatemala City
Migration to US to live with aunt in Los Angeles, CA
Aunt's life in US
Central American conflicts of 1980s
Life in Los Angeles as home and office cleaner
Learning English
Develops relationship with woman with Iowa roots
Work as security guard
Marriage
Mother-in-law moves to Ottumwa, IA (c. 1987)
Merida and his family move to Ottumwa
Acclimating to Ottumwa; “Uncle Porky”
Starting work at Excel (pork processing plant)
Working as only “Hispanic” in the plant; Merida’s role in initiating chain migration of Guatemalans to Ottumwa
Works as translator between Spanish-speaking migrants and work, community, and government agencies

Legacy of labor conflict of 1980s

UFCW 230

Relative place of Excel/Cargill in Ottumwa economy

Work in Hambone department; using a whizard knife

Move to Loinbone and cut floor

Work as trainer

Various groups of workers in plant

Display of national flags in plant

Job competition

Assistance with Hispanic immigrant settlement in Ottumwa

Bosnians and Africans

Positions in union

Ethnic racial tensions between whites and Hispanics

Interrmarriage as cultural bridge between communities

Union’s relationship to immigrant workers

Second-generation Hispanic Ottumwans

Hispanic mutual-aid organizations in Ottumwa

Undocumented workers; crackdown on survival strategies

Tensions between documented and undocumented workers

Former union members taking management-side jobs

Points of conflict between union and management

Bathroom breaks
01:34:00 Impact of increased line speed since JBS bought plant
01:43:00 Relationship between local and UFCW international
01:47:00 Local union politics