**Acceso (acesso.ku.edu)**

Unidad 1, Perspectivas

Forasteros en la ciudad: Un documental

Strangers in Town

0:19

Shelly Le Dinh: My name is Shelly Le Dinh. I was born in Vietnam and we escaped in 1982. We came to the United States. We escaped by boat.

00:36

Basher Khamis: I left my country because there was fighting. The government came to attack people every time.

00:46

Albert Kyaw: We had to do [unintelligible] to live. That’s why we couldn’t live there any longer. That's why we had to flee.

00:56

Amy Longa: At the age of two, we got displaced to Southern Sudan. We came back in the early 90s. However, the part of northern Uganda was at war at the time so we couldn’t go home.

01:07

Angélica Castillo-Chappel : Obviously, I’ll never forget about it. It haunts me off and on. And not knowing what was going to happen on the other side. Because as a 13-year-old crossing the River, as a *mujado,* that actually happened to me.

01:41

Steve Quakenbush: We’re a small town. Some people might say a small town out in the middle of nowhere. But we’re a place that’s different and we’re different because we have people who come from all over the world.

02:11

Steve Quakenbush: Garden City in Finney County has really been a crossroads between cultures for a long, long time. We’re a magnet for people who want to come and work and create new lives for themselves, but we’ve always been that place. The Arkansas River right at the south edge of Garden City, from about 1803 to about 1845 was the border between the United States and Mexico. Even in 1910, according to Census figures, almost 25% of the people in Garden City were born in other countries and had emigrated here.

03:18

Eresay Alcantar-Velásquez: Well, my parents are from Mexico, they were born there, they were both born in Michoacán. I was born here so I’m Mexican American.

03:27

Brian Carrera: My mom was from Mexico and my dad was from Guatemala. And yeah, they both came as immigrants.

03:34

Rem Vargas: My dad was born on an air base in the Philippines and my mom was born in Juarez, Mexico.

03:40

Jasper Partin: My mom is a school nurse and dads a dryer specialist. I don’t really know what that is.

03:46

Javier Cervantes : My father works at Tyson and my mother is currently unemployed, but she has her license in cosmetology.

03:51

Lorenzo Rincones: My dad owns a barbershop, City Cuts, and he’s a barber and my mom is a RN.

03:59

Eresay Alcantar-Velásquez: You know, we all have different stories and we’re all just trying to, like that American dream, my parents came here for that American and they always tell me “We came here so you guys could have a better life” and like that’s what anyone else is trying to do, they’re just trying to better their life.

04:34

Joe Mendoza: My parents came here looking for an opportunity at Tyson. We were living in a trailer until they found a house that was right in eyeshot across the street from Tyson.

05 :07

Joe Mendoza: I don’t know how you were able to work so hard for so many years.

05:14

Joe Mendoza: what was the hardest part about it?

05:30

Joe’s sister: Mom, why did you leave the packing plant to go to college.

05:34

Bertha Mendoza: I started going to college just because I wanted to improve my English and possibly get a degree.

05:53

Joe’s sister: Dad, did you ever think that you’d ever have all the things you have now?

06:11

Joe Mendoza: My dad is a serious worker, someone who isn’t afraid of pushing himself for the people that he lives and it’s all just for us.

06:47

Don Stull: So that plant opened in 1980. This would spawn the incredible growth.

06:57

Sister Janice Thome: They said it’s going to bring people that are in great need, that are poor, that are lacking in education, maybe lacking English, and so, it’s really going to stress all of our agencies, all of our services. So, they said “Okay, are we going to call it a blessing or a curse?” They decided they wanted it to be a blessing

07:20

Don Stull: That town really depends economically on that industry to a very large extent. And so people recognized the value of the people that were coming to work, that they were making an economic contribution. They also recognized that they endured a great deal to get there. I don’t mean that everybody was tickled pink that there were these folks were coming, there were a lot of problems. There wasn’t adequate housing, there were all sorts of difficulties when you have a massive number of people coming in in a very short time.

07:55

Steve Quakenbush: It was a mess for a while until everybody got settled.

08:01

Kevin Richmeier : Just people swarmed here, no place to live, schools were overcrowded, strangers in the town.

08:15

Levita Rohlman: I was a member of the Garden City Ministerial Alliance and I worked very closely with pastors from the major denominational churches. We had very good leadership, they knew what it took for a city to be progressive. They challenged their parishioners to this fact, that these people are not going away. I do need to give credit to our newspaper. Our editor at the time tried to dispel all the negative rumors, for example, the government gives them a new car, or the government gives them money to buy a new house, our dogs and cats are missing because they’re eating them.

09:09

John Alexander Silva: The fact that my grandfather was an immigrant from Mexico, it reflects on me in a way of knowing that I wouldn’t be here right now if he wouldn’t have worked hard to be here. He risked a lot coming here. If he can go through that struggle, I can do anything. Garden City High School is like a flection of Garden City period. I mean because you have kids that come here from all different backgrounds. There are over 24 languages that are spoken at Garden City High School, that just proves to you how diverse it is here. I don’t think you can say that about any other school in Kansas.

09:57

Amy Longa: I am the side-manager for the International Rescue Committee, a refugee resources agency in southwest Kansas. One of the main challenges that a new refugee faces is cultural shock. Whether you are coming from East Africa or coming from Southwest Asia, you have moved to a community where you may not know anyone.

10:19

Amy Longa: You’re from North Darfur, correct?

10:22

Basher Khamis: Yeah, I’m from Darfur. I have a small village called Kazanuri [sp]. I want to study, and I work, and I want to help my family. I have a big family. No one live with me--

10:36

Amy Longa: I have walked in their shoes; I understand the challenges. And I know that for them, all they need is to be able to be independent. Have shelter, go to work, to obtain the call of what they need for their family. [unintelligible] to come back to the office the following day, despite the many challenges that we face.

11:21

Garang Geng: When we came from Africa, the goal was to go to school and what takes long is that life is sometimes difficult, so you have to make sure how your life is going. But my dream, I’m going to work at Tyson and go back to Africa to see my family. But I have to go to school.

12:07

Ward Loyd: It didn’t take very long for many of these folks that had come in initially to work at the packing plant to start their own businesses. And we had a number of folks that did that very thing, and they're still now busy engaging in their businesses in the community and they're a strong part of the community as well.

12:41

Laura Guevara: My mom said her dream was always to open up a store and she started off selling clothes. My dad was still an IVP. Once it started picking up a little more, they moved into the spot they are in now. They focus more on a Hispanic grocery store. They have their bakery, they sell meat, and they still do have some clothes.

13:26

Laura Guevara: How it came about opening this place was working at Starbucks. Our Starbucks here is in Target and I would notice that a lot of Hispanics would hesitate to go order if they noticed that someone didn’t speak Spanish there. And even then, when they would go up to me, they would just kind of describe what they wanted. Like they didn’t really look at the menu cuz Starbucks’ menu is a little complicated. But one day I just went home, told my parents about it, told my siblings about what I wanted to do: have a coffee shop where everyone felt welcome.

14:34

Denilson Guevara: Overall before this happened, what I wanted to do was just a run a business, own a business pretty much. But then I had the opportunity to jump in on this with her and you know run it and that’s what I decided to go for.

14:49

Malvi Guevara: Growing up here in Garden City, working at the store so much, and having the diversity that we share there, you’ll have like 5 different language's being spoken there at the same time, people shopping there. It’s just the atmosphere that I really love and that’s something that I wanted to bring in a coffee shop setting.

15:05

Laura: It's only been two months and it's just more than I can even picture. And not just only making friends, but some of these people have become family and its awesome, it's honestly been a dream come true and a lot more.

15:32

Steve Nordby: These kids are used to growing up in this diverse culture. These kids look at each other and most of them were the same kids they were in elementary school. When you grow up in Garden City, you’re used to having different folks around and folks that don’t necessarily look like you.

15:52

Justin Partin: At lunch one time, there was this kid, and he didn’t--like he was sitting by himself you know and so in this school, you see someone sitting by themselves you’re going to go ask them to come sit by you. And you know, we asked him to come sit by us, just talking to him and he’s from Uganda. He didn’t really speak English that well, he was just playing on his iPad and he was just like so wowed by like “look at all this technology” and we were like we have it all the time, it's so easy for us. He’s seen this and it's so amazing like he’s happy to be in school. So that kind of just opens up my eyes like “dang” like “you know we take all this stuff for granted”, you know. It makes me want to work harder, to appreciate everything a little bit more.

16:27

Luz Labra: For me, I know it might to apply to a lot of kids who have parents that immigrated here, like when they first got here, they were really like shunned a lot. I feel for outcasts, for people that are different cuz—I don’t know, it's just--.

16:47

Eresay Alcantar-Velásquez: Cuz your parents like, they went through it, like your parents are your family, they're your home. And why would you want to make someone feel like unwelcome?

16:59

Luz Labra: Even if your parents aren't like immigrants, or anything, those stories are shared with you, and you carry that moral around and it changes you.

17:12

Grace Schmidt: And I think that, that’ll prepare us for the future. You know, were not going to go out into the world and judge people based on their race because we’ve sat next to pretty much every race there is in English class or in math class.

17:46

Whitney Kinney: I grew up on Sinner Street. It’s a really quiet neighborhood, you see kids out, you'll see people out walking their dog, you really felt like you know everyone, partially because I was related to half the town it felt like. The Mesa clan is really really large. So, my family is kind of a Garden City story in itself. You know, my grandpa moved from Oklahoma, this red-haired, red-faced cowboy and he married my grandma whose dad was an immigrant from Mexico. And my mom married an African American.

18:29

Whitney Kinney: We were known for having one of the largest free pools and originally it was a white only pool.

18:39

Dennis Maya: During the day, when my parents lived here, they weren’t allowed to go swimming in the world’s largest free municipal swimming pool so at night is when they would have to jump over the fences.

18:54

Whitney: Kinney Same thing at the movie theater, they had issues with that. A couple of my great aunts, very different complexions, had to sit separately.

19:01

Gloria Mesa: I was a little kid, as we paid for our tickets and we walked in, the gentleman at the door wanted to separate my sister and I. And directed her upstairs where the African Americans the Hispanics sat, and I was to go downstairs and sit with the Anglo-population and I refused to be separated from my sister so I called my dad.

19:28

Whitney Kinney: My great grandpa was a big advocate for civil rights there. He fought to make sure that everybody was treated fairly and that anyone could go to the movie theater and the pool.

20:20

Male news caster: Three men are due in court on Monday after federal investigators say they broke up a right-wing militia plot. The plan was to blow up a mosque and an apartment complex in Garden City, KS.

20:34

I thought “What in the world somebody want to blow up an apartment complex for?”

20:40

Female news caster: The small militia group referred to itself as The Crusaders. They're antigovernment, they’re anti-immigrant, and they’re anti-Muslim. They met up once a week to brainstorm ways to attack those groups in their community.

20:50

Michael Utz: One of the hardest moments too was reading that affidavit and seeing the hatred these folks had toward the human beings, the shooting of a 1-year-old, an infant child that were talking about.

20:04

Mursel Nalaye: I just started crying that time when I saw the news. First, I was trying to hold myself up, but I couldn’t stop it. I get very emotional.

21:13

Female news caster: They plotted to surround this apartment complex with four cars packed with explosives and then detonate.

21:20

Angélica Castillo-Chappel : It wasn’t just attacking them; it was attacking Garden City in so many ways.

21:30

Matt Allen: Our community really stepped up and really wanted to do something to show support for that apartment complex and the people who lived in it. Candlelight walks and vigils and services, you know there probably wasn’t a pulpit in Garden City that didn't have some message about coming together as a community.

21:53

We’ve come too far to allow any kind of a setback or any kind of regression. This community is a very diverse community and is stronger for it.

22:03

Mursel Nalaye: When I saw that people were coming to show us that they really love us and that they really want us to be here and they would try to be with us, it was very exciting. I feel a lot of emotion too because of these people that love me, and I want to show them that I love them too.

22:20

Matt Allen: The signs said things like “We support our Muslim friends” and “We love our Somali neighbors” and I drove by and I saw that I’ll tell you what, I have never been more proud than in that moment to be somebody who is from Garden City, Kansas.

22:42

Michael Utz: So, what makes Garden City work is we work together. I or my officers cannot police this community by ourselves but working together, playing together, and grasping the diversity that individuals bring to the community as a positive rather than a negative makes us whole as a community. There’s really no room for divide on where you came from, the color of your skin, sexual orientation; there's no room for hatred.

23:46

Kimberly Loya-Enríquez: In Ms. L’s drama class, we’ve started discussing lately how sometimes you see discrimination, racism, prejudice...

23:55

Ms. L: ...that maybe can sort of get to the heart of what Garden City is and how you experience life in Garden City.

24:03

Alondra Fuentes: I think Garden City’s still trying to get used to the fact that like we’re super diverse and like that we’re just trying to mesh together in like this tiny city.

24:10

Shelby Espino: My parents, they came here for a better place, for a better future but they still get like demoted because they don’t speak English.

24:22

Emily Zermeno: I feel like Garden City is diverse but we’re more like a salad bowl than a smoothie because, I mean, I’m sorry I’m kind of hungry, okay we all like together in this bowl but we don’t blend together to where we accept each other fully but we just know that we’re here.

24:44

Monica Aguilar: We’re proud of what’s ours but I feel like we should also be proud of the ones around us because they are the ones that pull us all in together and make us unique.

24:54

Hunter Manley: It’s a small town, everybody knows everybody. Being diverse and everybody knows everybody, being diverse in it, just makes it a whole lot better because you get to learn about different parts of the world, right possibly in your own living room.

25:15

We also tell real stories about our lives, like Fernando, he finally agreed to tell us his own personal story.

25:23

Fernando Metamoros: What can I say? I grew up with no parents, I kind of grew up on the streets, lived with my grandma. It's just hard, remembering all the stuff I went through. Every day was dangerous when I was going to school cuz there were shooting and something dangerous always happened. Dang it, it's just hard for me. This one day when I was going to school, my friend got shot and he was next to me. And I just remember that day cuz we were both talking then [imitates gunshot] and he like got all quiet and I was like... I’m sorry. Well, the gang saw me there, they wanted me to join them and if I didn’t join them, they were going to kill me or they were going to kill my grandma, so I got scared and I told my grandma and she got scared too so--.

26:30

Fernando Metamoros: When I got here, I found that piece that I had been looking for and whenever I went to sleep, I was like “Whoa. I made it! I’m finally here.”

26:56

I want to go play on that one! Come on!

26:59

Fernando Metamoros: I want to go on that one.

27:19

Hey look, there’s my family! Hi!

27:52

Old film narrator: It takes a lot of people to make a world they say, but our little world is found right here at home in Garden City. It’s a pleasant place to be, among pleasant people.

28:06

Matt Allen: Garden City built a welcoming community in a place that most Americans would think is kind of an anomaly.

28:14

Tim Regan: My father came out in ‘34, in Frankfurt, Kansas and started with a single carat of jewelry and as we all know, there turned in a various influx of immigrants and nationalities coming to Garden City because of the packing plants. And I’m okay with it.

28:39

Rafaela Solis: I’ve seen many students be successful. One student I can recall coming in at kindergarten and she went through high school, was the valedictorian, the first to give her speech in Spanish and English at Garden City High School. And so that’s a success story of a student who comes from El Salvador.

29:07

Debra Bolton: I don’t like the word melting pot. It means that we all come together and we’re just one, we have the same identities. We have this thing with gears, you know, I show a gear working, all the people who they are, they come together to move the gear forward but when they go back home, they get to practice whatever it is they practice.

29:33

Troy Unruh: When the beef plant was built, a lot of people started in the trailer parks and—but now we are integrated; there’s people of every race, color, creed in every neighborhood now. As people established, as they grow roots here, they really fan out into the community.

29:53

Grace Schmidt: America’s becoming more diverse and that’s pretty much anywhere you go so you’re going to have to learn you’re going to have to be more accepting and--

30:02

Eresay Alcantar-Velásquez: Because, regardless of where you go, you’re going to be with different people so you’re going to run into it regardless of what you’re doing so it's better to start when you're younger and grow up with it.

30:18

Lee Reeve: Well, the problem we have with immigration, we always seem to be at loggerheads. One side wants to be citizens and the other side wants to send them all back. You know, these people are stuck, most of ‘em are as American as we are. We can’t open the doors to everybody in the world but the people that are here, you know, we need to kind of help them assimilate into society.

30:45

Eresay Alcantar-Velásquez: There's this thing called “bombillo” it's just like, it's like a piece of bread. My dad had multiple siblings and they would cut in eighths and share it between each other, and he lets us know that because of that, he wanted something else and something different for his children.

31:11

Matt Allen: You know, on the lawn of the Finney County courthouse, if you drive by, you’ll see a couple of statues. One of those is a replica of the Statue of Liberty placed there in 1950. We’ve had people coming from all over the world, just like people came through Ellis Island. I see Garden City as kind of the Ellis Island of the plains.

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