
Descriptive Summary

Title: Elaine K. Miller Oral History Collection,

Date (inclusive): 1966 - 1972

Collection number: 25

Creator: Miller, Elaine K.

Extent: 5 linear feet

Repository: University of California, Los Angeles. Library. Chicano Studies Research Center, UCLA
Los Angeles, California 90095-1490

Abstract: The Mexican Folk Narrative project was the result of Elaine K. Miller's PhD dissertation. With the aid of the distinguished scholar in the field of Hispanic folklore, Dr. Stanley Robe, Ms. Miller developed a dissertation proposal that involved collecting, annotating, and analyzing folk narrative tales and legends from the Mexican American community in the Los Angeles area. With the support of a National Defense Foreign Language (NDFL) fellowship, Ms. Miller's study was furthered by her initial contacts made with the Guadalupana Society. These initial contacts grew into a network that eventually became the unique set of narratives that comprised the publication of *The Mexican Folk Narrative from the Los Angeles Area*.

In addition to this project Ms. Miller has produced a number of illustrated presentations on the Chicano murals in the area, based, among them are: Charles Felix (Estrada Courts project in Los Angeles), Judith Baca (The Great Wall in Burbank), and Manuel Unzueta (the Quarantina Street Mural in Santa Barbara).

**Please note that accents have been eliminated in order to accommodate and facilitate the use of all types of web browsers.

Researchers who would like to indicate errors of fact or omissions in this finding aid can contact the research center at www.chicano.ucla.edu

Physical location: Currently located at the Chicano Studies Archive, 180 Haines Hall, UCLA. In the future the collection will be stored at the Southern Regional Library Facility, UCLA.

Language of Material: Collection materials in Spa, Eng

Access

Access is available by appointment for UCLA student and faculty researchers as well as independent researchers. To view the collection or any part of it, please contact the archivist at archivist@chicano.ucla.edu or the librarian at yretter@chicano.ucla.edu

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Preferred Citation

[Identification of item], Elaine K. Miller Oral History Collection, 25, Chicano Studies Research Center, UCLA, University of California, Los Angeles.

Acquisition Information

Collection was donated by Professor Elaine K. Miller to the Chicano Studies Research Center at UCLA. Deed on file at the Chicano Studies Archive, 180 Haines Hall.

Biography

Elaine Miller completed her BA in Spanish and French at Millikin University in Decatur, Illinois, and her MA in Spanish and Latin American Studies at Indiana University. She completed her PhD in Spanish Language and Literature at the University of California at Los Angeles. Her fieldwork resulted in the publication of *Mexican Folk Narrative from the Los Angeles Area*, a Memoir of the American Folklore Society (Univ. of Texas Press, 1973).

For the past 30 years she has taught at various colleges, most recently at the State University of New York, College at Brockport, where she

was Dean of the Alternate College, Director of Women's Studies, Chair of the Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures, and directed a Peace Corps/College Degree Program that trained math and science majors for service in Latin America and Francophone Africa. Ms. Miller retired in 2004, and continues to do presentations and workshops and produce videos on editorial cartooning, through e k miller Productions (www.ekmillerproductions.com). Her first video, "Running Mate: Gender and Politics in the Editorial Cartoons" (1993) is based on portrayals of Geraldine Ferraro from the 1984 Vice Presidential campaign. Her second video is titled "Drawing Conclusions: Editorial Cartoonists Consider Hilary Rodham Clinton" (1998). Both are in distribution with First Run Icarus Films. Her most recent video production is "Trailblazer: The Editorial Cartoons of Etta Hulme" (2004), is on Ms. Hulme who is the editorial cartoonist for the Ft. Worth Star-Telegram, one of the very few women in the field.

Scope and Content

The Mexican Folk Narrative project was the result of Elaine K. Miller's PhD dissertation. With the aid of the distinguished scholar in the field of Hispanic folklore, Dr. Stanley Robe, Ms. Miller developed a dissertation proposal that involved collecting, annotating, and analyzing folk narrative tales and legends from the Mexican American community in the Los Angeles area. With the support of a National Defense Foreign Language (NDFL) fellowship, Ms. Miller's study was furthered by her initial contacts made with the Guadalupe Society. These initial contacts grew into a network that eventually became the unique set of narratives that comprised the publication of The Mexican Folk Narrative from the Los Angeles Area.

In addition to this project Ms. Miller has produced a number of illustrated presentations on the Chicano murals in the area, based, among them are: Charles Felix (Estrada Courts project in Los Angeles), Judith Baca (The Great Wall in Burbank), and Manuel Unzueta (the Quarantina Street Mural in Santa Barbara).

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This collection consists of sixteen volumes of audio tapes and their transcriptions. The collection was originally recorded on open reel audio tape. The collection has been updated with cassette transfers of the original tapes.

Indexing Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the library's online public access catalog.

Subjects

Mexican American Folklore

Mexican Folklore

Murals

Mythology

Oral History

Box 1

Elaine K. Miller Oral History Collection March / May 1966

Physical Description: Audio tapes and papers

Scope and Content Note

Three oral histories:
Hugo Massa, Rafael Gudino, and Lorenza Rodriguez.
Includes 18p. t.ms. transcript
original 1/4 inch open reel tapes
And audio cassette transfers.

Note

Synopsis:
The three interviewees give short narratives of various Mayan figures and culture. Some of the narratives include La Xtabay who seduces men who are out during late hours. When they approach her she becomes a venomous serpent. Chilam Bilam is a Mayan priest that foresaw the conquest of the Americas. Tutul Xiu walked out towards the ocean and turned himself into a ball of fire and rose upwards to the heavens during the Spanish conquest. The Midget of Uxmal is about a midget who lives with his mother, the witch (hechicera). Includes various other narratives of Mayan figures and culture.

Box 2

Elaine K. Miller Oral History Collection May / December 1966

Physical Description: Audio tapes and papers

Scope and Content Note

Two oral histories:

Josefina Marquez and Candelario Gallardo.

Includes 21p. t.ms. transcript

original 1/4 inch open reel tapes

And audio cassette transfers.

Note

Synopsis:

Josefina Marquez recounts narratives of miracles she has experienced. These include

la Virgen de San Juan, who cured her cancer.

Another miracle narrative is of the

Santo Nino de Plateros, who restored her vision.

After a discussion about faith and miracles

the discussion turns towards the appearance

of the Virgin Mary in various places.

Afterwards, Josefina Marquez talks about

la Llorona [the weeping woman],

duendes [goblins], and other figures.

Candelario Gallardo recounts a narrative

of a widowed man and his daughter.

A woman appears to the man and pleads

with him to take her to his daughter so she

can be the daughter's guardian/step-mother.

The woman/step-mother gives the daughter

impossible tasks and, when the tasks are

not done well, beats her. The narrative

includes a magical bird that

aids the daughter in her tasks. Finally,

the daughter runs away and encounters

a lost boy named Antonio Malverde.

Box 3

Elaine K. Miller Oral History Collection May 1966

Physical Description: Audio tapes and papers

Scope and Content Note

Five oral histories:
Isaura Benicia, Amalia Hernandez,
Elisa Contreras, Lola Cruz, and Luis Cruz.
Includes 37p. t.ms. transcript
original 1/4 inch open reel tapes
And audio cassette transfers.

Note

Synopsis:
Isaura Benicia tells stories about appeals
for help to the santo Nino de Atocha and
la Virgen de Talpa. The last two narratives
involve the devil in San Jose and also
his appearance in the form of a dog.
Amalia Hernandez recounts narratives of
buried treasures guarded by animas [souls]
and other ghosts. Elisa Contreras recounts
the story of a treasure in a cave called
la cueva de la fabrica, which belonged to thieves
during the Mexican revolution.
Lola Cruz recounts narratives of animas [souls]
taking her cousin away and another version of la Llorona [the weeping woman]
Throughout these two tapes there are
various narratives of animas [souls] that
make appearances and frighten people.

Box 4

Elaine K. Miller Oral History Collection May 1966

Physical Description: Audio tapes and papers

Scope and Content Note

oral history:
Alicia Salinas.
Includes 38p. t.ms. transcript
original 1/4 inch open reel tapes
And audio cassette transfers.

Note

Synopsis:
Alicia Salinas recounts a story about
smoking a charmed cigar that caused
her to be bedridden for days
and lose her memory. Then she recounts
a story about an anima [wandering soul]
that informs an old man about a large
buried treasure left behind by guerrillas.

Box 5

Elaine K. Miller Oral History Collection October 1966

Physical Description: Audio tapes and paper

Scope and Content Note

Oral history:

Ismeria Garay, Alfonso Dominguez, Inocente Rocha,
Padre Jose de Jesus Madera, Tecla Rocha.

Includes 38p. t.ms. transcript
original 1/4 inch open reel tapes
And audio cassette transfers.

Note

Synopsis:

Ismeria Garay recounts narratives about
different statues or appearances of the Virgin
and of la Llorona [weeping woman], ghosts,
and goblins (duendes). Alfonso Dominquez Franco
recounts narratives of Christ apparitions.

Inocente Rocha recounts narratives
of a hungry man who encounters various
figures, god, the virgin, and death,
while walking in the woods.

Padre Jose recounts narratives of diabolic possession.

Tecla Rocha recounts experiences about
ghosts (espantos), and sightings of
la Llorona [the weeping woman].

Box 6

Elaine K. Miller Oral History Collection November 1966

Physical Description: Audio tapes and papers

Scope and Content Note

Three Oral histories:

Inocente Rocha, Sandy Franco, and Candelario Gallardo

Includes 31p. t.ms. transcript
original 1/4 inch open reel tapes
And audio cassette transfers.

Note

Synopsis:

Inocente Rocha recounts a story about
pacts made with the devil.

Candelario Gallardo recounts various tales.

One is about a couple deeply in love.

They decide to make a pact that binds them
through death. When one of them dies,
the other will also die. Another tale is about,
a man who encounters a snake. The snake is trapped
underneath a rock and the man decides
to unburden the snake. The snake returns
the favor by trying to bite the man.

Other tales are about Blancaflor,
Juan del Oso, and Juan Tonto.

Box 7

Elaine K. Miller Oral History Collection December 1966

Physical Description: Audio tapes and papers

Scope and Content Note

Three oral histories:

Ana María Romero, Sandy Franco, and Lola Cruz

Includes 36p. t.ms. transcript

original 1/4 inch open reel tapes

And audio cassette transfers.

Note

Synopsis:

Ana María Romero recounts tales from her childhood.

They concern a bear that kidnaps a woman

from a town. Another tale concerns

a mysterious man that is seen

sitting on a rock, apparently guarding

a treasure, while children play

at night. A third tale is about a ring that

brings poverty to a wealthy woman.

Another is about an old snake that

attempts to devour a man's foot.

Sandy Franco narrates a story she read

as a small child. The story is about

a convent where a bell would ring whenever

the nun's were lacking food.

Lola Cruz narrates stories about Juan Tonto,

a tale about a Queen Isabel, a story of

the good fisherman, and finally,

a narrative about a city mouse

and a country mouse.

Box 8

Elaine K. Miller Oral History Collection December 1966

Physical Description: Audio tapes and papers

Scope and Content Note

Three oral histories:
Lola Cruz, Candelario Gallardo, Angel Flores
Includes 45p. t.ms. transcript
original 1/4 inch open reel tapes
And audio cassette transfers.

Note

Synopsis:
The tape opens with a song, apparently
sung by Lola Cruz, titled Granada.
Afterwards Lola Cruz recounts narratives
about kings. The first narrative is
about three kings who marry three
princesses that make grand promises
if the kings will marry them.
Another narrative is about a king
with three daughters. The king
questions the daughters about their
love for the king and the queen.
Candelario Gallardo recounts two tales.
The first is about a peasant
and a princess and three magic rocks.
The second is about a good boy
and his flock of sheep. Angel Flores
tells the story about two travelers.

Box 10

Elaine K. Miller Oral History Collection July 1967

Physical Description: Audio tapes and papers

Scope and Content Note

Oral history:
Candelario Gallardo
Includes 18p. t.ms. transcript
original 1/4 inch open reel tapes
And audio cassette transfers.

Note

Synopsis:
Candelario Gallardo recounts two
tales in this tape. The first one is
about a husband and wife mired in poverty.
To unburden themselves, they decide
to rid themselves of their children
by taking them out to the woods
and abandoning them. The children
encounter a seven headed serpent. Another tale
concerns two travelers and their adventures.

Box 12

Elaine K. Miller Oral History Collection February 1970

Physical Description: Audio tapes and papers

Scope and Content Note

Oral History:
Lola Cruz
Includes 23p. t.ms. transcript
original 1/4 inch open reel tapes
And audio cassette transfers.

Note

Synopsis:
Lola Cruz recounts the narrative
of the birth of Jesus.
Afterwards she talks about the
development, over the years,
of her nativity scene display.

Box 13

Elaine K. Miller Oral History Collection March 1970

Physical Description: Audio tapes and papers

Scope and Content Note

Oral history:
Lola Cruz
Includes 22p. t.ms. transcript
original 1/4 inch open reel tapes
And audio cassette transfers.

Note

Synopsis:
Lola Cruz comments on a series of
photographs of her nativity scene
displays over the years. The photographs
are not provided but Ms. Cruz
discusses the photographs in detail.

Box 15

Elaine K. Miller Oral History Collection December 1970

Physical Description: Audio tapes and papers

Scope and Content Note

Oral History:
Lola Cruz
Includes 10p. t.ms. transcript
original 1/4 inch open reel tapes
And audio cassette transfers.

Note

Synopsis:
The interview is with Lola Cruz discussing her nativity scene. Ms. Cruz presents the nacimiento yearly during the Christmas season. Ms. Cruz recounts various narratives in relation to her nativity scene, such as the Original Sin narrative, Jesus' crucifixion, his burial and resurrection. Ms. Cruz also talks about the various children that she has known and helped to rear. At one point she recounts the story of the Original Sin. The interviewer asks Ms. Cruz about changes, over the years, in the nativity scene and Ms. Cruz recounts some of the changes. Throughout, she recounts aspects of Jesus' crucifixion, his burial, and his resurrection, incorporating objects in the scene as part of the narrative. Later in the interview there is a discussion about a 'mysterious' glass boat. Luis' old boss, a Mrs. Hickler? (the exact name is never stated), gave Lola a glass boat six days before she died. the last part of the interview is a recital of a verse that is embroidered on a sheet, "Quien lo Sabe," a verse about the birth of Jesus and the mystery of Jesus as savior of the world.

Box 16

Elaine K. Miller Oral History Collection December 1970

Physical Description: Audio tapes and papers

Scope and Content Note

Oral history:
Lola Cruz
Includes 24p. t.ms. transcript
original 1/4 inch open reel tapes
And audio cassette transfers.

Note

Synopsis:
This tape continues Lola Cruz' reading from the verse embroidered on a sheet. The narrative includes the birth of Jesus and Mary and Joseph's subsequent flight towards Egypt. The angel, Saint Gabriel, guides them away from danger. The interviewer asks questions about the embroidery on the sheet. Lola Cruz recounts how she learned the verses of "la posada" and the significance of the various figures in the embroidery (she recounts that the embroidering took a month working every day to finish). Lola Cruz tells the story of Lucifer, who wanted to rule the world, and the hermit who believed in Jesus' birth as the birth of the savior. She then recounts the story of Isabel and Simon who gave birth to John the Baptist. The conversation of the different figures and objects in the nativity scene continues. Figures discussed include sea gulls, San Pascual (Santa Claus), Japanese houses, and turtles. The interviewer continues with questions about the nativity scene, how long it has taken to construct, who brings figures to add to the scene, etc. Ms. Cruz continues with narratives about King Melchor and John the Baptist.

Box 17

Elaine K. Miller Oral History Collection December 1974

Physical Description: Audio tapes and papers

Scope and Content Note

Oral history:

Lola Cruz

Includes 21p. t.ms. transcript

original 1/4 inch open reel tapes

And audio cassette transfers.

Note

Synopsis:

Ms. Cruz recounts details of her life

growing up in the 1910s in Mexico.

Ms. Cruz talks about her experiences

during difficult times of poverty

and homelessness growing up in Mexico City.

Ms. Cruz then recounts her experiences

immigrating to the United States.

Ms. Cruz talks about her marriage

to an American citizen (by force) and her

subsequent travails after his death.

Afterwards, there are more conversations

about the nativity scene and the yearly

rituals that take place.

Box 18

Elaine K. Miller Oral History Collection December 1974

Physical Description: Audio tapes and papers

Scope and Content Note

Oral history:

Lola Cruz

Includes 12p. t.ms. transcript

original 1/4 inch open reel tapes

And audio cassette transfers.

Note

Synopsis:

The conversation is about a haunted house in Mexico City when Lola

Cruz was 10 years old. Lola Cruz

talks about the old large house and

a miserly old man who lived

there, died, and remained as a spirit

to guard his belongings.

Another story involves a husband

his lazy wife and their three children.

After the wife dies, she returns

to care for the children.

During the conversation,

children arrive to sing and

to see the nativity scene.

Afterwards, the interviewer, Lola

and Luis open the presents

brought by the children.

Box 21 **Elaine K. Miller Oral History Collection January 1975**

Physical Description: Audio tapes and papers

Scope and Content Note

Oral history:
Lola Cruz
Includes 18p. t.ms. transcript
original 1/4 inch open reel tapes
And audio cassette transfers.

Note

Synopsis:
In this tape, Lola Cruz recounts
the story of "Santa Rosa de Lima."
The story is about a husband (Spaniard),
a count, and a wife who have a child.
The couple argue over the child's name.
The Count's wishes prevail and
the child is named Rosa. After going
to Lima, Peru, the maid comes running
to the wife to tell her that the child's
face has turned into a rose.
Afterwards, Ms. Cruz recounts various
miracles performed by Saint Rosa de Lima
and the subsequent conflicts over
the meaning of these miraculous acts.
Afterwards, Ms. Cruz recounts the
narrative of La Virgen de los Remedios.

Box 22, Folder 1 **Elaine K. Miller Oral History Collection 1966 - 1967**

Physical Description: Papers

Scope and Content Note

Binder 1
t.ms. tape transcripts for tapes 1 - 8

Box 22, Folder 2 **Elaine K. Miller Oral History Collection 1966 - 1967**

Physical Description: Papers

Scope and Content Note

Binder 2
t.ms. transcript of tapes 10 - 21

Box 22, Folder 3 **Elaine K. Miller Oral History Collection 1967**

Physical Description: Papers

Scope and Content Note

background notes on Informants

Box 22, Folder 4 **Elaine K. Miller Oral History Collection 1966 - 1967**

Physical Description: Papers

Scope and Content Note

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