

A Latino Presence in the Heartland: Challenges and Opportunities



Western Historical Manuscript Collection
Kansas City

Charles N. Kimball Lecture

Andres M. Dominguez

April 21, 2003

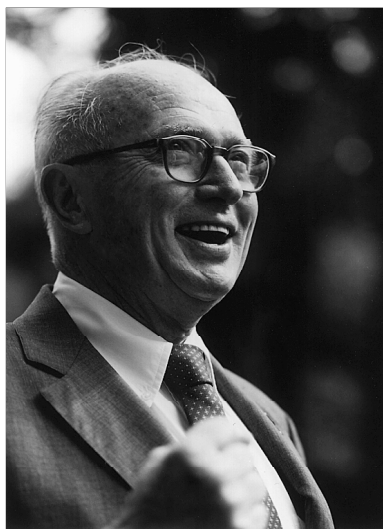
The Charles N. Kimball Lecture Series

is a tribute to our late friend and civic leader, Dr. Charles N. Kimball, President Emeritus of the Midwest Research Institute, to acknowledge his support of the Western Historical Manuscript Collection-Kansas City and his enduring interest in the exchange of ideas.

Charlie Kimball was a consummate networker bringing together people and ideas because he knew that ideas move people to action. His credo, “Chance favors a prepared mind,” reflects the belief that the truest form of creativity requires that we look two directions at once—to the past for guidance and inspiration, and to the future with hope and purpose. The study of experiences, both individual and communal—that is to say history—prepares us to understand and articulate the present, and to create our future—to face challenges and to seize opportunities.

Sponsored by the Western Historical Manuscript Collection-Kansas City, the Series is not intended to be a continuation of Charlie’s popular *Midcontinent Perspectives*, but does share his primary goal: to encourage reflection and discourse on issues vitally important to our region. The topic of the lectures may vary, but our particular focus is on understanding how historical developments affect and inform our region’s present and future. The Lectures will be presented by persons from the Kansas City region semi-annually in April, near the anniversary of Charlie’s birth, and in October. Additionally, presentations may occur at other times of the year, if opportunities present themselves.

WHMC-KC appreciates the substantial financial underwriting and support for this Series provided by the **Charles N. Kimball Fund** of the Midwest Research Institute and by other friends of Charlie Kimball.



1911-1994

INTRODUCTION

to the April 21, 2003
Charles N. Kimball Lecture

David Boutros

Associate Director, WHMC-KC

My name is David Boutros, Associate Director of the Western Historical Manuscript Collection-Kansas City, host of the Charles N. Kimball Lecture Series. I am most pleased you are here today. Last week I experienced one of those nightmares that anyone who plans an event most dreads. I found out that the invitation for this lecture inadvertently got mailed to someone else's mailing list—we think it was the Medical School alumni. Regardless, there was no time to do another mailing and we instead put our faith in people noting the time and date on the attachment to Carol Mickett's lecture booklet, on the news releases we sent out, and on the hurried emails.

If you are here, you got the word somehow. If you are a medical school alum, know that you are welcome. To any of you who are not on our mailing list and would like to be, then leave me your business card or your name and address on the tablet on the table. We do publish the lectures and mail them to our mailing list.

Today would have been Charlie's 92nd birthday. This lecture is the 14th we have hosted since 1995. Its purpose is to honor Charles N. Kimball for his friendship and his contributions to the community, the University, and the Western Historical Manuscript Collection. To give you an early heads-up—though I promise you will get a mailing on it—our next lecture will be given Monday, October 27, 2003, by Landon Rowland on Arthur Stillwell's legacy.

Lastly, I wish to note Mrs. Mary Louise Theis Kimball's passing on Saturday, April 12, 2003. Mary Louise was born in Topeka but grew up in Kansas City and graduated from Southwest High School. She received in 1936 a Bachelor of Journalism from the School of Journalism at University of Missouri, Columbia. She hoped for employment at the *Kansas City Star* but instead worked a year or so for the Southwestern Bell Telephone Company as service representative. She married Robert Elliott in 1939 but they divorced in October of 1942. A few weeks later, Mary Louise joined the United States Navy WAVES and was detailed to Alameda Naval Air Station near San Francisco as a communications and cryptographic specialist. She served three years, advancing to the rank of senior lieutenant. While in the service she met John Guthie, a well know navy pilot and graduate in mechanical engineering from Purdue. They married in 1946 and moved first to Seattle

and then to Philadelphia where Guthie was an engineer for Westinghouse's Gas Turbine Division.

After Guthie's untimely death in an automobile accident in 1950, Mary Louise returned to Kansas City with her two children, John and Susanne. Here she met Charles Kimball shortly after his appointment as president of the Midwest Research Institute. They married in October of 1951 and he adopted her children. To quote Charlie's biography of his wife, "Mary Louise's activities during this period included helping Charles materially with advice and counsel on MRI and board of trustees' matters and serving as a board member of Children's Mercy Hospital and chairwoman of the Women's Division of the United Way." Charlie also noted to friends that given the Mary Louse's talents that the arc of her life would have been much different had she been born later when opportunities for women were greater. Mary Louse had the mind of a journalist, with an astute interest in people and a lifelong passion for words. Most importantly she was knowledgeable about Kansas City and Kansas Citians, and Charlie would readily admit that his marriage to Mary Louse, for a variety of reasons both personal and professional, contributed significantly to his success in this city.

It seems appropriate then that today's lecture also be in honor of Mary Louise Theis Kimball.

Thank you. To introduce our speaker today is Mrs. Esther Wolf....

Esther Wolf

United States Hispanic Leadership Institute

In the Kansas City Region, the Latino presence has a long history and considerable impact upon the evolution and development of our area. The Charles Kimball Lecture Series addresses and encourages reflection and discussion on issues important to our region.

This afternoon we have Andres Dominguez who will speak on “Latino Presence in the Heartland” Challenges and Opportunities” (*La Precencia Latina en El Corazon del Centro de los Estados Unidos – Desafio y Oportunidad*).

Andres Dominguez graduated from St. Mary’s College in Leavenworth, Kansas, with a Bachelor of Science in Public Administration. He then completed his Masters of Arts in Education at Kansas State University with emphasis in multi-culturalism. His thesis was on “Analysis of Latino Parents and Their Role in the Education of Their Children.”

Andres Dominguez has worked with Dismas of Kansas City which is a refugee resettlement program. He also developed the youth program for In-Roads/Kansas City. He has worked with the Hispanic Leadership Organizations which now numbers around 66 different non-profit organizations in the Kansas City area. His emphasis has been to promote Latino issues, empower youth, and in civic involvement.

In 1993, Andres Dominguez joined the Ewing Kauffman Foundation, initially working for Project Choice, their innovative dropout prevention program. In 1996 his responsibilities expanded to the role of Program Officer and his grant focus became the local community with the goal of strengthening neighborhoods and building collaborative partnerships.

He is co-chair of the Midwest Chapter of Hispanics in Philanthropy, a national Member of Hispanics in Philanthropy, Grantmakers for Children Youth and Families, Neighborhood Funders Group, National Community Builders Network, and Smart Growth Funders affinity groups.

It is with great honor that I present Mr. Andres Dominguez.

A Latino Presence in the Heartland: Challenges and Opportunities

Andres M. Dominguez

Senior Program Officer, Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation

April 21, 2003

Thank you Esther. It is always endearing when a friend and colleague provides the introduction. Thank you to the University of Missouri-Kansas City for acting as our host and to Western Historical Manuscript Collection. Your mission of preserving the written word is inherent in leaving a rich tradition for future generations. As part of my work at the Kauffman Foundation I was able to execute a grant to the University of Houston's Arte Publico Press *Recovering the U.S. Hispanic Literary Heritage Project*. Letters, manuscripts, and other printed articles that were forgotten and lost are being rediscovered and restored for future generations.

We have a rich oral tradition within the Latino heritage, but seldom are these historical vignettes written and documented. As a community we don't have a repository that can collect Latino history.

I hope today's lecture encourages reflection and discourse on issues that are vital and important to our region.

When I was approached a few months back about providing this lecture, I immediately thought what an incredible opportunity to write some thoughts down so that others 20, 50, 100 years from now could reflect back to see the state of the Latino presence in Kansas City. I also thought about the strong and vibrant Latino leadership in this region. Leaders that could equally communicate with the audience a passion and concern for this topic.

As I first wrote the title of my lecture I struggled with the term "presence". The term lacks a certain level of excitement and energy. However, that "presence" is rich and dynamic. When you leave today, I trust that you will take with you a greater sense of pride knowing that rich cultural traditions are being shared and experienced by many in our community. I hope too that today's lecture motivates you to explore some of the challenges and opportunities and further add your imprint that will enable community solutions. And I hope that you will inquire within your own family about your own ethnic history.

I would like to initially share with you an understanding of the word Latino. I will use Latino and will intersperse Hispanic, and you will also hear the term Mexican-American. I will be speaking from a Mexican-American tradition. As a first generation immigrant—I was born in Mexico—my personal experience comes from that cultural connection.

The term Latino came into fruition rather recently. As voices of displeasure were critical of the bureaucratic term "Hispanic", Latinos searched for another descriptor. "Hispanic" was coined after a group of Hispanics, in partnership with federal government agencies, approved its usage as a means to collect research and data primarily for the U.S. Census Bureau.

Latino became popular during the 1990's as people searched for a new term that more closely described a diverse population that was connected through language and roots, but still with deep cultural differences and traditions. For instance, within Mexico itself a diverse culture exists separated by geography, social demographics, and even faith rituals. The same is true of Latinos in the United States, since some descendants can trace their family's heritage in this country to prior to the Pilgrims landing at Plymouth Rock, while new immigrants may have only arrived today.

For Latinos in the U.S., "*Latino Issues*" are American issues. Latinos are just as concerned about the same issues that mainstream communities are. We are concerned about the high cost of healthcare and the fact that we have one of the highest diabetes rates in the nation. We are concerned about transportation and the fact that access to employment is redesigned by urban sprawl. We are concerned about the same issues that affect all families: violence, poverty, and injustice. However, there are specific issues that need to be addressed. Issues so profound that they affect the Latino community and, therefore, have a direct correlation to the non-Latino. Our lives are intertwined.

Let me share with you some historical context.

Kansas City Latino History

My family first settled in the Kansas City area in the 1920's and helped build the rail yards in the Turner area of Kansas City, Kansas. In the late 20's the family migrated through Nebraska and settled in Wyoming. In the 1930's my grandfather moved back to Mexico and my father at the age of 17 returned to the U.S. in the late 40's. He met my mother in Mexico, thus I and four brothers were born in that country.

It's worth noting that at one time this region of Missouri was part of the Santa Fe Trail. Trade with Mexico was just as significant as trade with the East Coast. This is noted at Arrow Rock, Missouri, in the state historical museum. Trade and communication with Mexico was important for the regional economy. One can even argue that early Spanish explores like Francisco Vasquez de Coronado and others from the New World explored this region, before Lewis and Clark.

To help meet the shortage of workers during World War II, Mexican immigrants were brought to the U.S. and the *bracero* (meaning *brazo*) program was created and operated through the 1950's to address the farm worker shortage. This region became the home of many migrant farmers.

Like those many immigrant families my family settled in the Argentine/Armourdale area of Kansas City, Kansas. Historically these were the areas where families settled because the rail yards and meatpacking plants were a draw for new immigrants. Likewise just to the east, the Westside also was an ever stronger community. Its location proved to be a protective harbor from the impending floodwaters of the Kansas River. When the floods devastated the Kansas communities, many families relocated elsewhere, but many continued to settle in both Armourdale and Argentine, with the Westside being a vibrant

host for newcomers. The Westside had its own harbinger of literal division as the construction of I-35 bulldozed homes and separated the community.

Why did and do Latinos chose Kansas City? The same reasons we all like this community—employment, family, and opportunity. New immigrants know where the employment venues are; word travels quickly. Kansas City has always been a good place for Mexicans to settle. In the 1980's and 1990's, we began to see a change in the Latino segment of Kansas City—a population surge occurred and not all Latinos were of Mexican descent. We began to see more from Central and South America and the Caribbean. We also began to see more emigration from the Southwest. Kansas City is perceived as being affordable and it provides a safe place to raise a family. In fact, *HISPANIC* magazine labeled Kansas City as one of the top communities for Hispanics.

New immigrants settled according to employment availability. During the same time period we saw tremendous growth and transformation in Johnson County, throughout Kansas City, Kansas, and in the eastside of Kansas City, Missouri. We saw Olathe begin to change and emerge as a new immigrant community as well. At a recent conference, *Cambio de Colores*, hosted by Alianzas here at UMKC, Olathe was described as Little Mexico. Once all white, suburban churches now serve a growing Spanish-speaking congregation. We can no longer point to a specific geographic area in Kansas City and say, "this is where the Latino community resides." The Census reports a Latino community in the metropolitan area at around 95,000. However, the under count and new waves of immigration places that number closer to 150,000. That increase in Latino population made up 23 percent of the total metropolitan area's increase from 1990 to 2000.

The Mexican experience in America is documented in one of the more challenging readings I have ever explored. In the early 1980's in his seminal work, *Hunger for Memory*, Californian Richard Rodriguez explores the dichotomy of being Mexican-American. Rodriguez eloquently describes his personal struggles of being raised Mexican in his home, but yet feeling a strong urge to learn everything about the U.S. and its Western thought. He states in his introduction that the pyramids in Mexico meant nothing to him. As one who has visited the ancient Aztec, Toltec, and Mayan temples, I found that opening comment disheartening to say the least. Rodriguez distances himself from his own culture and argues that you cannot be Mexican and American in the United States. That you must chose. He rails against affirmative action and bilingual education. Rodriguez became the poster child for many advocates of such ideas. William F. Buckley and George F. Will wrote editorials applauding Rodriguez' success. Buckley by the way is Latino as one of his grandparents was of Mexican descent, and he is bilingual as he is fluent in the Spanish language.

I struggled through this book, but it is probably one of the most important books that explore the Mexican-American experience in the United States. At one point Rodriguez sits at the family table and as he listens to the conversation he realizes that he no longer has anything in common with his family; he misses his new family—his professors, his textbooks from Oxford, and his experiences at Stanford. A few years later Rodriguez wrote a second book, *Arguments with my Mexican Father: Days of Obligation*. It wasn't necessarily an apology, but Richard was beginning to understand more his own cultural role and explore further his Mexican side. You can see Rodriguez on the *McNeil Lehrer News Hour*, where he delivers insightful essays.

We Latinos struggle with our cultural identity. Youths become acculturated very quickly, second and third generation immigrants forget the Spanish language and traditions.

Introduction to the Challenges and Opportunities

I am going to share with you today three challenges and three opportunities—all are interconnected—beginning with my challenges: The Philanthropic Vs. The Need, Quality and Relevant Education, and Civil Rights. These challenges are not insurmountable and strong coalitions are already in place and are addressing them. They can be overcome by exploring and building upon the three opportunities: Economic Access, Diversity and New Leadership.

The challenges

I. The Philanthropic vs. The Need

What surprises many in the Latino community is that current culture treats Latino issues as a new phenomenon. Recent statistics state that Latinos are the largest minority group in the nation. In some regions of the country we are the majority. In Los Angeles the two highest rated radio stations broadcast in Spanish.

With that growth though, comes tremendous need. By the year 2050, according to *Hispanics in Philanthropy*, 25 percent of the U.S. population will be Latino, accounting for ninety-eight million people—a 200 percent increase from the present Hispanic population. People of color will compose nearly half of the U.S. population and the economic stability and social well-being of these communities will be increasingly critical for national vitality.

Currently the Latino represents more than 13 percent of the total population. Yet, private philanthropy gives less than 1.5 percent of its grant dollars to Latino organizations. This chasm further illustrates the pressing challenge to Latino non-profits. In this age of downsizing, Latino non-profits cannot afford to, because of the tremendous impact upon the communities they serve. Their constituency continues to grow with pressing needs.

This need forces all non-profits to look at their services and should force their boards to ask the question, “What are we doing to meet the needs of Latinos?” About a year ago Richard Ruiz, Executive Director of El Centro in Kansas City, Kansas, stated that Latinos’ needs should not be the exclusive work of Latino serving organizations, but it should be part of the mission of all organizations.

I am not one who feels that we necessarily need another Latino non-profit to address a specific issue that is already being addressed by a mainstream organization. To create another Latino non-profit is too expensive. However, as long as mainstream organizations fail to meet the needs of the Latino community, the demand on existing Latino non-profits will be even greater, and Latino leadership will be forced to start-up Latino specific non-profits. In this time of scarce resources, more collaborative efforts are paramount.

The same can be said of the for-profit sector. Banking organizations are now actively marketing to the Latino community, yet we don’t have a bank in the Westside. Responding to community needs, Guadalupe Center, Inc. established its own credit union.

Someone recently asked me, “Why don’t Latinos access banks?” Latinos believe strongly in the relationship; we may not access banks, but yet we access payday loans at a tremendous cost to the consumer. It’s about feeling welcomed and encountering someone

who recognizes you, who markets to you, and makes you feel like your business is wanted. That is why several banks in the area have initiated banking strategies towards Latino markets with the backing and support of the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation.

The demographic shift is happening very quickly in Kansas City. We are further seeing this demographic occur throughout Missouri, Kansas, and the Midwest. My in-laws, who are from Nebraska, can attest to the transformation that is occurring in their home state. The new immigrant population stabilized the population in their state. If this had not occurred they would have lost a U.S. Representative in Congress and rural school districts would have been forced to close. In Iowa, the governor included within the State's strategic plan appropriate economic development for the new immigrants to play a vital role in the future of the states viability. To the south, Arkansas is one of the fastest growing Latino states and Northeast Arkansas is one of the nation's booming regions in part because of Latino immigration.

In professional Baseball, the *Kansas City Star* recently reported on the Latinoization of Major League baseball. We celebrate the recent success of the Royals, and we believe along with our new coach Tony Peña, and we see names in the starting lineup like Febles, Hernandez, Lopez, and Carrasco. Yet, we can only be chagrined knowing that Peña is not interviewed on a local popular call-in sports talk show because of his accent.

We celebrate the fact that we do have indigenous media outlets such as *Dos Mundos*, *Kansas City Hispanic News*, and Missouri's *Adelante*, and there are two radio stations that broadcast in Spanish. *The Kansan* in Kansas City, Kansas, recently began including a special Spanish insert and the *Kansas City Star* has one of the nation's best Latino writers in Mary Sanchez.

As more Latinos settle in this region our community has had a history of welcoming. As the numbers increase the demand for services will become greater and the quality of services will have a tremendous impact upon all of us. When I retire in about 30 years the children of these recent immigrants will be carrying our social security system upon their shoulders.

Therefore we have a vested interest that today we must focus on education, our second challenge.

II. Quality and Relevant Education

I grew up in a family of eight in a 2-bedroom house. I didn't realize it back then, but we were part of the working poor. Intergenerational poverty can only be broken through quality and relevant education. Our family proudly produced a Yale graduate. My family was fortunate in that we experienced an educational system, both private and public, that cared about our academic success.

An expectation was placed upon us, that we came to this country for a reason—it was a gift not to be squandered. And like Richard Rodriguez, Irish Catholic nuns played an important role in my early years. I can only attribute our family breaking the cycle of poverty to my parents who worked hard to give us the basic needs, but recognized that a quality and relevant education was essential. They took care of the cultural aspects in our home. Our parents wanted us to learn English, they expected it. Their English was not the best, but they tried to learn. It usually takes a generation or two to lose the mother tongue.

Perhaps one of the biggest myths in this country is that we Latinos do not want to learn English. This is so far from the truth. Because we have a constant flow of new immigrants, the perception is that we don't learn the language. Yet at a recent parent symposium sponsored by LULAC National Education Service Center at Scarritt elementary, I asked the parents how many wanted to learn English. By unanimous show of hands all the parents present said they did. When I asked them how many wanted their children to master English, it was the same thing. When I asked how many of them came to this country to be on welfare, not a single person raised their hand.

These parents realized that command of the English language is part of their child's success. Speak with any Latino serving agency that offers English as a Second Language (ESL) classes and they will share with you that they have a back log of adults who are waiting to enroll in their programs.

Yet as these parents look at their child's education with envy, the reality is that 75 percent of these kids will not graduate from high school.

Unfortunately, Kansas City Latino youth withdraw from school at a staggering rate. The bulk of the students still are within the KCMO and KCKS school districts. This is changing as suburban school districts that just five years ago did not have Latino students are now faced with issues of ESL and cultural awareness.

Data collected by the Mattie Rhodes Center, an agency based in the Westside, identified Garcia, McCoy, Scarritt, James, Gladstone, and Whittier schools in the KCMO School District as having over 50 percent Latino populations and five others with at least 25 percent. In 1994, the Latino student enrollment in that school district was 1,738; in 2002 that number increased to 3,421.

Under the guidance of the Hispanic Development Fund, the *Hispanic Scholarship of Kansas City* has supported hundreds of young people in seeking a post-secondary education. The Fund provides a light at the end of the tunnel for both youths from traditional Latino neighborhoods and students of merit. But for so many other young people, college is such a remote possibility, still a dream. Without academic preparation, the success rate is low—less than five percent of all Latino's graduate with a post-secondary degree.

Latino youths don't have teachers and administrators in their schools as role models—the example for them is missing. Successful students who do graduate from college do not pursue the education field because their own experience was a negative one. For those who do pursue an education career, opportunities are unlimited and many do not return to the schools from where they came.

What is being done to help integrate and retain students, counter the high dropout rate, and promote more Latinos into higher education? With the exception of the local LULAC office and other Latino serving organizations that provide tutors and mentors, very little, if anything is being done to address the high drop out rates. This affects us all and it is not just isolated to the Latino community. Quality education for all should be at the top of the agenda.

For the Latino who does graduate from high school, there isn't a local college or university that we can point to that identifies itself as a Latino Serving Institution. Donnelly College in Kansas City, Kansas, is the only two-year college in the area that has received that designation from the Department of Education. The four-year institutions struggle to recruit the few students that are available. The need exists in the Midwest for a college or

university to initiate a Center of Latino Studies and Culture. With the growing population, families will support institutions that create a welcoming environment, endearing itself to the Latino community.

For the undocumented who do graduate, life after high school gets very complicated. The Supreme Court has ruled that all young people in the U.S. are eligible for an education, contrary to what a Kansas State Board of Education official may indicate. Pending federal legislation called the *Dream Act* can have a powerful impact upon this group of young people. If approved it will restore to states the right to determine residency for in-state tuition and higher education benefits, and will provide immigration relief for long-term resident immigrant students with good moral character. This bill, introduced by Senators Orrin Hatch and Richard Durbin, would be landmark legislation providing opportunities for students who have done everything that we demand of our citizenry.

III. Civil Rights

The *Dream Act* lights the way to my third challenge "the public policy of Civil Rights. I cannot deliver this speech today without speaking of immigration concerns. If you have noticed I have avoided the term "illegal or illegal alien". I always cringe when I hear that term. I consider it as pejorative as the "N word". Since when did God create anything illegal? A human being that lives, works, and pursues the American Dream should never be described as "Illegal". This goes against the very nature of how this country was founded on the hard work of immigrants. However, this society tolerates and benefits greatly when the undocumented fix our cars, serve that hamburger at lunch, provide the manicured lawn, and insure that we have safe roofs over our heads. On Thanksgiving we don't question who slaughtered our turkey. The immigration laws that exist today would not have permitted the immigration waves of past U.S. history.

President George W. Bush gets it! Very early in his administration the President encouraged the conversation and policy of amnesty for the undocumented. After the tragedy of September 11th, however, this important piece of legislation was tabled. At public forums though, the President still openly endorses an amnesty plan.

Yet, locally a U.S. congressman has proposed the elimination of all immigration due to homeland security issues. This unrealistic approach is based on xenophobic fears, and a lack of understanding of the issues and the direct cost impact upon our economy.

At the state level the ability to legally drive a vehicle affects us and all of our families when we get behind the wheel. For the undocumented attaining a driver's license is impossible, therefore rendering it impossible to attain insurance. Both legislatures in Missouri and Kansas are trying to address this issue, with Kansas moving quickly to initiate appropriate legislation.

The fact that some Latinos are undocumented leaves them open to exploitation and victims of crime. Undocumented immigrants are less likely to report crime out of fear of deportation. Victims of assault, rape, and other heinous crimes do not report the crime out of fear and mistrust of the legal system. In the aftermath of September 11th, families of undocumented victims who were in the Twin Towers, had difficulty filing for death benefits.

Unless an amnesty or formal recognition of undocumented workers can be honestly considered and approved, there is little hope that the working, undocumented class of

immigrant families will be fully engaged in U.S.-based institutions such as the real estate sector, work, small business, and management sector of the labor market.

These three challenges are not insurmountable, but only with courage and determination can we readily turn them into real opportunities.

Opportunities

I. Economic Access

There are a lot of good things happening in our Latino community. The entrepreneur spirit is alive and thriving. The number of Latino owned businesses are at an all time high. Empty storefronts along Central and Minnesota Avenue are now reopened; the same along Independence and Truman Avenue. The Indian Springs Mall, once an economic powerhouse, has been dormant for years. Within the last few months, under the direction of the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce new life is resurrecting the Mall Azteca.

Pockets of success are visible in the state of Missouri. The small Ozark town of Noel, Missouri, was a community that had lost population only to experience resurgence. New Latino immigrants have kept the local school alive, as well as provided an economic boost to indigenous businesses. Eventually new immigrants create their own economy, foster services, and create new retail outlets. But wealth accumulation is not an easy proposition. As is the nature of an entrepreneur, some are destined to succeed, others fail.

Striving to promote asset accumulation in the heart of the Westside and in KCKS is Heart of America Family Services (HAFS). As part of the *American Dream Demonstration* they are proving that Latinos can save through the Individual Development Accounts (IDA).

An IDA is simply a matched saving program for the working poor. Heart of America Family Services, in partnership with Foundations, the Corporation for Enterprise Development, and the founder of the IDAs, Michael Sherradan of Washington University, has been able to leverage resources to be part of a national effort.

The reasons for a program like the IDAs are obvious. According to the Corporation for Enterprise Development in Washington, DC:

- Ten percent of all families control two-thirds of the wealth.
- One half of all Americans households have less than \$1,000 in investable assets.
- One third of all American households have zero or negative net financial assets.
- More than ten million Americans do not have a bank account. Indeed, sub-prime lenders, predatory lenders, or payday loans are the only form of banking that many communities know, at an extreme financial cost to families.
- A shrinking percentage at the top of the population controls our nation's wealth. The 50 richest families in Los Angeles have more assets than two million of the poorest.

Through HAFS' relationship building, people's lives are changing dramatically. New wealth is being accumulated and families that in the past never had an opportunity to attain a home now live in one, they own their own business, and they are attending institutions of higher learning. A dynamic occurs within the families as they begin to save; their children also learn the concept. Families are transformed. HAFS has implemented this program successfully within the Latino community.

This economic tool in the hands of Latinos, or in any family, offers a foundation for financial stability. In both Kansas and Missouri, IDA legislation has appeared in both legislatures. Missouri has approved it, Kansas has not.

Economic well-being is obviously critical to the well being of families. People all too often do not earn a livable wage; they depend upon two incomes and struggle at becoming economically secure. Economic justice is social justice.

II. Diversity: Tolerance – Acceptance – Transformation – Celebration

In this region, Latinos face economic discrimination. At issue is the region's interest in fostering relationships with the Latino community that promote diversity. We adults may acknowledge that racism and bigotry exist, but as the *CitiStates Report* recently indicated, steps to improve the condition of ethnic populations are slow. Further, this city has always looked at race as a Black and White paradigm, ignoring the Hispanic perspective. We are at a point in our civic direction that progress needs to include the Latino voice. The Westside and Northeast communities provide the closest neighborhoods to our downtown core and the revival of a downtown will have tremendous impact upon Latinos.

We are blessed to have within our city, organizations that promote diversity as their vision. The National Conference for Community and Justice, Harmony, and Project Equality push the right buttons. They promote the dialogue and seek real solutions that will create a better sense of place for all. Larger communities in this country struggle with "managing" diversity, but those who embrace it only strengthen their community.

The youth in our community understand this. It is we adults who struggle with it. Listen to a young person someday and you may be surprised with their approach to life, their ability not just to tolerate, but to accept, transform, and celebrate our differences.

I would encourage you to at some point to visit the community of Argentine in KCKS and you will be graced by one the countries largest murals that spans a city block. This is an art project of Azteca of Kansas City and it captures the rich history of the community, the destructive floods, as well as the wrath of discrimination as Latinos were segregated in their schooling. Finally the mural celebrates the community's unity. Kansas City is blessed with Hispanic art throughout the Westside where young people express their cultural influences through artistic murals. If you ever travel north on the Broadway Bridge over the Missouri River you will see, just to your right, two of Kansas City's tallest murals, with life along the Missouri depicted by a local Latino artist.

In Kansas City, Kansas, that same artist depicts the life of Eastern Europeans as they first settled in their new homeland. The immigrant experience in this country shares a common thread. Look at Irish history in this country and you will see the Latino experience. Those who know Irish history know the level of intolerance that their families encountered. Recently at a family reunion, a great aunt of my wife shared with me the level of discrimination that her family experienced in Nebraska, only because they spoke German and were Catholic.

Our similarities will promote our diversity.

III. New Untapped Leadership

The diversity within Latino organizations will play important roles in the cultivation of Latino leadership and the civic vitality of Latino communities. A civil society is essential

to the health of mainstream American life. We have untapped potential in this community but we are slowly recognizing it. We have healthy non-profits comparable to any in some of the larger Latino markets in this country and they have received national recognition.

A healthy non-profit recognizes this, and through the efforts of the Jewish Heritage Fund, under the leadership of Steve Israelite, a partnership is working with the Midwest Center for Non-Profit Leadership in identifying the next generation of talent that can serve on boards. Harmony and Project Equality have developed board curriculum to help understand these issues that confront us.

Community leadership is further encouraged by the U.S. Hispanic Leadership Institute, which has established a satellite office here and promotes political and civic engagement. We are fortunate to have an advocacy group like the Coalition of Hispanic Organizations. Their vision insures that the Latino voice is heard. Recently the National Society of Hispanic MBAs established a chapter here in Kansas City. This will further promote education and postgraduate degrees and funnel new leadership.

As you leave here today I hope you do a self-analysis and ask yourself if you have done enough to staff Latinos within your organization as employees, as well as on your respective Boards. Leadership that is not tapped is a tragedy.

Closure

I hope I have stirred that fire within you. We live during an exciting time. Technology transforms our daily life and cultural communication and interaction is so easy to access.

If you are in need of more data, that information can be attained through El Centro, Guadalupe Center, Mattie Rhodes, and the Coalition of Hispanic Organizations.

I believe a strong Latino influence throughout the United States is here to stay, and it will become even stronger. Now the rest of society is recognizing this, and it is working towards a stronger and better future with the Latino community as a sincere player.

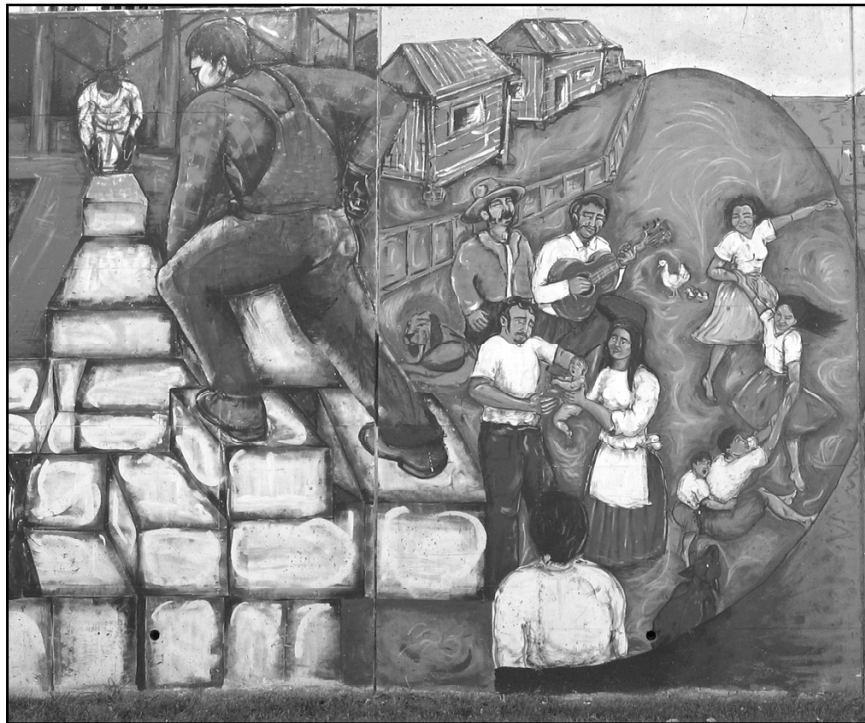
For those of us not born in this country, we have chosen to live here. Not a day goes by when I don't thank my parents for having the wisdom to immigrate to this great country. But citizenship in this country is taken for granted. While the war in Iraq wanes, we celebrate victory, yet we have to ask ourselves, what is democracy? Is it where 15 percent of the voters in our city turn out to elect a mayor? The price of freedom is too costly for us not to relish in the right to vote. As one who had to apply, experience a personal investigation, take a history exam, and then pay an application fee, I often wonder how many Americans would actually become citizens if it were not granted at birth.

We Latinos celebrate our culture but we hold in higher esteem our American values and traditions. I'm sure that you read recently about two young men who were granted citizenship posthumously by our President. Jose Garbay and Luis Gutierrez attained their dream only in death. Sixty-thousand Latinos are currently serving in Iraq. As a child I remember the names of Porras, Mora, and Pacheco"three local Latino Kansas Citians from Armourdale and Argentine who died in Vietnam. For Latinos our patriotism has not waned when duty has called.

In closing perhaps UMKC would consider part of today's discussion as a possible course on Latinos. I would like to thank many of you who helped contribute your ideas to today's lecture. And a special thank you to my wife Amy, for encouraging me to finish the final draft of today's lecture during our Easter break in St. Louis.

This country offers many challenges and opportunities. I have only highlighted a few. Thank you very much.

I understand that if we have the time, you might have a few questions to ask, or comments...



Section from *Anthology of Argentine*. Mural located at 31st and Metropolitan in the Argentine district of Kansas City, Kansas. A project of the Guild of Latino Fine Arts: A program of Azteca de Greater Kansas City. Artists: Jesus Ortiz, art director; Alicia Gambino, assistant art director; Jose Faus; Martha Elvia Vivanco; Virginia Delgado, Tadeo "Tito" Franco; Ardis Peterson. WHMC-KC Picture Collection (KC026), WHMC-KC.

Questions and Answers

Question: Mr. Dominguez, in your introduction you mentioned that your father came to the U.S. and then went back to Mexico. You were specific in saying that it was in 1930. Did he go back on his own or...?

Dominguez: Yes and no. Actually it was my grandfather. In the 1930's it was a rough time for everybody in this country and employment was not readily available. My grandfather was in Wyoming which is not necessarily a bastion of diversity to begin with. The sugar plantations—sugar farms—were not producing the amount of work needed for the family. At the same time Lazaro Cardenas, the Mexican nationalist, became president in Mexico and he started expropriating land from the wealthy and redistributing resources. The word got back to a lot of immigrant families and my grandfather saw an opportunity to become a farmer on his own land and decided to move back to Mexico. It is my understanding from some old stories in the family, Wyoming was first of all a very desolate and very cold environment to them, both geographically and personally. I had an opportunity to visit recently the little historical museum there and they had photos of all these families that had lived there at one time. My father being born in the United States chose to come back at the age of 17 because of the lack of work in Mexico. So it's always about work that moves us back and forth. And my brother when he graduated from Yale couldn't find a job. Here he was a Latino with a degree from Yale and couldn't find a job and had to go where the employment was. That's what motivates us as people in this country. We go to where the work is and for my grandfather in Wyoming the work situation had diminished.

Question: The reason why I asked this is because during the depression—the Great Depression—there was a move by public officials, even here in Kansas City, to send people back to Mexico because they did not want them taking the jobs and also filling the welfare rolls. I think there was a repatriation and also a book on the unwanted Mexican. And I was just trying to...

Dominguez: Yes, you know it's also possible that they were part of that attitude that was paramount.... Poverty was poverty and unfortunately in many cases the new immigrant is blamed for poverty.

Question: And just to quote Francesco Ruiz, the author of the *Greater Kansas City Needs Assessment*, in his historical introduction he writes about how the Chamber of Commerce here in Kansas City paid for a carload of Mexicans to go back. That in itself was almost a civil rights issue of the day and that's something that we have to be vigilant about in our current history.

Dominguez: That's the reality and it's a very sad reality. People will share with you that the theaters were of course segregated for Latinos. Of course, we all come in all complexions. Somebody like me probably would not have been allowed to sit in the lower levels and others were forced to

sit upstairs. In the Argentine community in Kansas City, Kansas, we have a historically Spanish church which was the German church. My aunt was baptized in the German church because there was not a Mexican church but I remember my father saying that she was not baptized during the church services. Mexicans were baptized after the Mass. And it's our church!

Question: How do you feel we can resolve the issue about undocumented immigrants getting drivers licenses?

Dominguez: You know that's an issue that affects everyone—the minute you get on the road it affects you. Talk to your representative, talk to the governor, talk to the senators, lobby. It's an important issue, attaining a driver's license for all. There are questions around... those who object to issuing a license object because of issues of homeland security, which is really ridiculous. This is about people who really need licenses to get insurance—and if I have a car wreck out there, I want to make sure that the person who is in the car has insurance—so it affects us tremendously. You're also talking about access to employment. Kansas City does not have the best transportation system that would encourage people to go to where the jobs are. In the suburban communities, where a lot of the undocumented work—actually they work throughout our community—it is an issue and Kansas has a bill before them right now—I don't know where it's at. I understand that it was moving forward very fast.

It's a very complicated issue—bottom line. The policy just needs to be changed. Missouri isn't... I have a personal friend, Scott Lakin who is the Director of Insurance in Missouri, and he agrees 100% that this should be changed but he's not doing enough to promote the change. Until we have Latinos elected and are there in Jeff City and in Topeka and all the other state capitols pushing the issues, it's going to be very hard to change public policy. And to change something as simple as drivers licenses...

Police chiefs have testified on behalf of changing the law—they understand we're talking about driving a vehicle. One document that immigrants—undocumented immigrants—should seek is called the *matriculas* which they can attain through Mexican consulate offices. That allows them some documentation to open something like a bank account and to purchase a home.

Question: What is that?

Dominguez: It's called a *matricula*. It's basically a Mexican issued identification card and it is being recognized by a number of institutions within the U.S., such as banking institutions. FDIC is pushing the banks to take a look at the *matriculas* as a form of documentation so that families can open bank accounts, buy a house, and not be subject to predatory lenders—all these “contract for deed” homes, where families get into situations where they buy nothing but code violations.

Question: I enjoyed your lecture very much. You mentioned that a Hispanic magazine referred to Kansas City or claimed Kansas City was one of the top communities for Hispanics. Could you elaborate on that a little bit? When did that appear? What were their reasons?

Dominguez: Yes. It was about five years ago and I think it surprised a lot of us here in the Kansas City area community when that came out. They had the top ten cities in America—Honolulu, Hawaii; Las Vegas, Nevada; Sacramento, California; New York City; Chicago—and there was Kansas City. “Kansas City? Is this a misprint?” But basically as I recall they just said that it was relatively affordable, jobs were readily available, that it was a pretty safe community, and that we had had a history of Latino immigration. So we had a Mexican presence and it mentioned the fact

that we had organizations that were advocating for Latinos—it just said that it was a wonderful place. And we had something called *La Plaza*, which you know we still wonder whether or not that is Mexican. [Laughter.]

Question: I want to thank you for your lecture, which was fantastic. One of things that they mentioned—the driver’s license... up until July of 2000 there was no problem. You could come from any part of the country, if you could pass the test, you would get your license. But in Salina, Kansas, we had one representative—who I think has died—who put a bill in the last hour, the 11th hour of the last day, and attached it to the transportation bill. The representatives were not able to examine the bill and now we have to fight after the bill has passed. This is what happened: there was a Mexican lady married to an Anglo man from Colorado bringing people in buses all the way to Salina, Kansas. A \$16 license cost them \$500. Now because of the greed of those two individuals, people—masses of people—have to go through what we’re seeing now to get a the driver’s license. It’s been two years and a correction hasn’t passed. I am currently talking to some lawyers in Washington to see if we could go back to that date, July 2000, when the change happened because the people who were getting licenses for \$500 instead of \$16 are now still victims by the system. In Tennessee they just passed a law—they brought in \$618,000 of revenue when everybody seems to be broke. That would be new revenue coming in. Once they pass the test and they know the rules of the road it will be a lot safer for everyone of us. Two of my friends last week—American citizens—got in car accidents with “undocumented” people who didn’t have insurance, didn’t have licenses and my friends have to pay the whole expenses through their insurance company. So again this is what is happening and they have become victims twice. The two people who started all this got caught and got 18 months in jail but there’s a lot of people right now—masses of people, families—that have to sacrifice and have to suffer because of the greed of two people. And another thing that you mentioned that was real...

Dominguez: Let me just make a quick comment on what you said. Somebody hit me in St. Louis. They didn’t have insurance and they were documented, but nobody raises questions about them. The question is just one of fairness, it’s a question of justice, and it’s a question of “why not”. As a citizen of the United States it’s to my benefit that drivers be issued licenses. I have nothing to lose by that and I have everything to gain. It does not make any sense.

Question: And I am glad that you brought up that point. I saw a Channel 5 report where there were American citizens coming out of court—they lost their license, their privilege to drive and they drove out of the parking lot with the news camera running behind them. They were just told that they could not drive anymore and they drove out of the parking lot—American citizens. One man had ten convictions for driving while intoxicated and they caught him still driving without a license. But the other point that the people from the United States need to realize is that this problem of people coming here is because of American companies and the NAFTA Treaty. I was born in Laredo, Texas, and we have American companies all along the border. Right now General Motors, making cars in the United States, pays its people \$22 an hour because of union rules. In Mexico they pay 13 cents an hour—the same product. The only thing is they are not paying taxes when those cars come back and the money goes to one of their banks. Now that’s what’s hurting us—if General Motors pays 13 cents in Mexico when they pay people here \$22 then would you leave a 13 cent an hour job for General Motors to come here and make \$300 or \$400 flipping burgers? This is why the people are here—because of the American companies that are down there.

I just found out last week that now they are forgetting about Mexico and they're going to Africa. A textile company in Tennessee closed shop there and went to Africa where they make brassieres for \$7.95. They pay the people \$3.64 for a twelve hour shift and this is what...

Dominguez: Its exploitation, it's about economics, it's about... a conversation I was having with a gentleman earlier... Capitalism gets a bad rap in some segments of our community and it deserves to get a bad rap because of examples like this. It's also that capitalism is the engine that has provided an opportunity for Latinos and other immigrants to come to this country. But there is a certain... just ugliness to what you describe. I see that also within the meat packing industry where many Latinos work and it becomes a very large challenge for them to continuously recruit more and more. I'm hearing that they are actually going to African countries with U.S. approval to secure workers. And you know its just about paying people what they deserve. It's a just wage.

Question: Andy, I have about a 2 hour question so I don't know if I should ask it or not.

Dominguez: Good, I have about a 3 hour response.

Question: I think a critical importance to Kansas City is why our children are not making it through grade school and high school. What are we doing about it?

Dominguez: Not enough, not enough. You know it's... Why did I make it? Why did my family make it? Why did immigrants who came to this country, given the conditions that we experienced, make it? Look at any of the historical information about the experiences of the Irish community that was just really, really horrible. I just saw 'The Gangs of New York' so it's vivid in my mind right now. But not enough is happening. We as Latinos need to do more. I've talked with a number of people: we need more mentoring, we need more...

Yvonne Vazquez-Rangel. Yvonne, can you raise your hand up please? The Director of LULAC [Educational Center], it's her and her organization that are doing a lot of that but they are very small. It's about funding. What are the school districts themselves doing? Well fortunately the Kansas City, Missouri, School District has somebody like Ined Marcus out there who knows and understands the issues and is pushing it, but that can be very overwhelming. I love what's happening around parenting in some of the schools like Scarritt, the kind that you're involved with, and going in to talk to the parents. It's amazing when families talk to you that they want their children to have an education. Something happens between that point in grade school and a point in high school time that we lose our students. And that's where organizations like YouthFriends—and Pam Kotelov is with YouthFriends—that is where an organization like YouthFriends can play an active role in keeping these young people in school. I was at Longfellow School and I saw these young Latina girls who were excited about their education. How do you continue that through the middle school years when you look at all the societal pressures that are placed on these young people to work, to do other stuff that unfortunately are not things that we want to see in the newspaper? I really think that we as a community—as a Latino community, as the community as a whole—really need to come to some serious decisions, working with the school district. How many Latinos do we have currently on the school boards in Kansas City, Missouri, and Kansas City, Kansas? We don't have any and we've had them in the past. So what does that say? And how can we promote the John Rios's who is over at Argentine Middle—the principal there—how can we have more of those examples and encourage Latinos to be thinking about that? You know it's about role modeling, it's about mentoring, and it's about tapping them at a very early age. It's not easily done. But it is more

than Kansas City, Kansas. Right now we need to be talking about Belton school districts, talking about Olathe, and we're going to be talking about all the suburban school districts that in the past never had to address this issue. All of a sudden the *No Child Left Behind Act* raises some serious questions about what the federal government is doing. On paper it looks wonderful—describes a wonderful process, no child left behind. Who wants to leave a child behind? None of us do. But what are the resources that the Act actually provides for schools to do something so children aren't left behind? The resources aren't there. It's left up to the individual school districts to do and they are all struggling right now.

Question: I like that comment at the end. And I'd like for you to elaborate a little bit more on what you were thinking about that we could do because there are representatives from the Hispanic community here. I'm sure that there are some from UMKC. At some point we need to come together or something because the need is tremendous and we just can't let it go.

Dominguez: We've met with representatives from the Chancellors office; we talked about what UMKC can do... I mean here it is an urban campus, what can it do to recruit more Latinos here? You have to look at issues of culture here: how many Latinos actually graduate from UMKC? Look at the alumni—how can you get the alumni involved? What would I like to see? Currently the Coalition of Hispanic organizations is housed here at UMKC and so is *Alianzas*, which is a statewide effort to address Latino issues. But there needs to be a—may he rest in peace—Agapito Mendoza. We need to have more Agapito Mendoza's at this university. We need to have more faculty. But how do you get there when we don't graduate from high school? And so that is the challenge. Before we can even start talking about having that kind of leadership we need to think about how we can create these young people to move into that pipeline—and we need it now.

Question: We need to get UMKC people involved in the community so that they know the problems... Yvonne has a wonderful program and I'm sure she needs some of the resources that are available out there. The school system and UMKC need to come to us because we're here. I don't remember... I go by UMKC all the time and I don't see anything going on. It's Hispanic Heritage Month in September and I've never seen it. I see Black History Month but they ignore the Hispanics.

Dominguez: You're a taxpayer, you support this institution. I think it's just a part of the history of this city where everything is seen in the black/white paradigm but, you know, you'd be shocked at how powerful a letter can be. Perhaps we need to do that but we also need to engage in more conversations with leadership. Elson Floyd is that his name? You know, the new president of the University of Missouri system. I mean, have we had an audience with him? We need to do that.

Question: I know that UMKC is having an event for freshmen, Latino freshmen students, to encourage them to stay in school. So they are having some things taking place here at UMKC for our young people.

Dominguez: A lot of times they probably distribute information to the counselors. You know we're talking about UMKC because we're here today and they are our host, but there are other institutions in this community that aren't doing enough. You know, what's William Jewell doing? What's the University of Kansas, only 30 miles down the road, which is pretty close to us, what are they doing? Kansas State is not too far from us. All these state institutions... what are they doing to be partners in addressing some of these issues?

Question: May I make just a quick announcement since we were talking about education? Tomorrow the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education is going to have a panel here at UMKC at six o'clock. It's a town hall meeting and they are going to discuss some of the challenges of education, and the Assistant Commissioner is going to be here. So it's a good opportunity for everyone to come and... [What time is this again?] Six o'clock. Right here.

Question: When you were going to school and I was going to school there were no mentors as far as Mexican-Americans or Hispanics. There were people who loved to teach and they didn't care what color you were and that's what's missing. We can't wait until a new leader or the new generation comes up to be able to fill the position. There are a lot of good people—the Irish, the Croatian people—there's a lot of good people who are here, who love to teach and we need to tap into those resources for them to come aboard and help us with this. Seventy-five percent dropout rate in the Hispanic communities is tremendous. I went to a meeting the other day in Missouri where they told me that in kindergarten through middle school they've started with 450 children, but by high school—and this was just last year—only 56 Latinos graduated. So while we're waiting for the leaders we have to get relationships with a people that love to teach and want to teach the kids and are excited about it and tap into that resource.

Dominguez: I didn't have a Latino instructor until my senior year in high school and it was always the Spanish teacher [laughter] and in college it was the same experience. You know, I had some really passionate people who were not Latino but who really wanted to help me understand what was ahead for me. And the culture it didn't matter to them. They probably weren't very sensitive to my culture but they were passionate about making sure that I learned. That is what's important: that we do have people out there who—and I always say this—people who are not Latinos but are enamored with the culture and enamored with trying to help and be part of the solution. I cannot say what it means to me as a Latino because as Latinos we become our own worst enemy. You know Proposition 187 in California—part of it passed because a large number of Latinos voted in support of it. Yakov Smirnoff, the comedian in Branson—I saw his show a couple of years ago—and he said, “I am now 100% American. I now hate immigrants too.” [laughter] And you know it's a joke but you know we forget that this nation is a nation of immigrants.

David Boutros: Thank you, Mr. Dominguez, for your presentation and thank you, the audience, for your attention and participation. I want to remind you too that we will be publishing this lecture and mailing it to those people on our list—we have a list of about 2000 individuals who are very thoughtful and some very important—all of whom have an interest in Kansas City. If you want to get on that list make sure I have a card or that you fill out your name and address on the tablet on the table near the door. We will be more than happy to mail to you the publication. Thank you again for coming and I hope that you'll have a chance to attend another Charles N. Kimball lecture.

Lastly, as an aside, I would like to offer that the Western Historical Manuscript Collection-Kansas City is a repository that can, and does, collect Latino community history. Our mission is to collect, preserve, and make available for research materials from organizations, businesses, and individuals that document the events and people of Missouri and the Midwest. We would welcome the opportunity to assure the Latino history is preserved and available.

Previous Charles N. Kimball Lectures

The Charles N. Kimball lectures may be found on the Western Historical Manuscript Collection-Kansas City website at www.umkc.edu/WHMCKC/. Also located there is the full text of the Midwest Research Institute's *Midcontinent Perspectives Lecture* series from 1974 to 1993.

- April 20, 1995 - Robert A. Kipp, *Crown Center: an Emerging Vision for Urban Development*
- April 22, 1996 - Albert P. Mauro, *The Realization of a Dream: the Development of Hospital Hill*
- April 21, 1997 - Dr. Robert H. Freilich, *To Sprawl or Not to Sprawl: A National Perspective for Kansas City*
- April 21, 1998 - Mr. James M. Kemper, *Community Banks and Their Role in Civic Planning*
- October 21, 1998 - Mr. Donald H. Chisholm, *The Philanthropic Philosophy of Arthur Mag*
- April 21, 1999 - Ms. Vicki Noteis, *Visions of a City: Kansas City's Planning Legacy*
- October 21, 1999 - Mr. John A. Dillingham, *It's All About Eating: Kansas City's History and Opportunity*
- April 24, 2000 - Mr. Gerald W. Gorman, *Ilus Davis: Exemplar of "The Greatest Generation"*
- October 23, 2000 - Rabbi Michael Zedek, *One man views the Heartland: a Critical study of Character and Community*
- April 23, 2001- Dr. Kala M. Stroup, *Kansas City and Higher Education: A Partnership for Prosperous Citizens and Cities*
- October 22, 2001 - Mr. Robert R. Wheeler, *A Review of Education in 2001: And a Look Forward*
- April 30, 2002 - Dr. Charles J. Carlsen and Dr. Wayne E. Giles, *The Peoples College: Community Colleges in Kansas City*
- October 22, 2002 - Dr. Carol A. Mickett, *History Speaks: Visions and Voices of Kansas City's Past*

WHMC-KC

The Western Historical Manuscript Collection, a joint collection of the University of Missouri and the State Historical Society of Missouri, contains primary source materials for research and welcomes use by scholars, students and the public. Our network allows for the full resources of the Collection—the holdings of all four branches in Columbia, Kansas City, Rolla, and St. Louis—to be available to researchers throughout the state.

The Kansas City office opened in 1980 with a mission to collect, preserve, and make available for research, documents relating to the history and culture of Kansas City, western Missouri, and the Midwest. Since that time approximately 10,000 cubic feet of documents has been acquired. The Collection owns the papers of important **civic and political leaders** such as Charles Kimball, Ilus Davis, Charles Wheeler, Oscar Nelson, H.P. Wright, Lou Holland, William Volker, and L. Perry Cookingham; the records of **businesses and industries** such as the Kansas City Board of Trade, the Kansas City Stock Exchange, and the J.C. Nichols Company; a very large collection of materials relating to **Kansas City's built environment**, including the records of the architectural and planning firms of Hoit, Price and Barnes, Wight and Wight, and Hare and Hare, among others; the records of **not-for-profit civic and social organizations**, including the Chamber of Commerce of Greater Kansas City; the Kansas City PTA, the Woman's City Club, and the National Council of Jewish Women; the papers of **scholars and historians** who have researched and written on Kansas City's history, including materials from the Kansas City History Project, and the papers of Bill Goff, Lyle Kennedy, A. Theodore Brown, and James Anderson; and a variety of other collections dealing with such diverse topics as labor unions, the Battle of Westport, music and cultural arts in Kansas City, neighborhood development, civil rights, Kansas City school desegregation, and the overland trails.

Questions about the use of or donations to the Collection should be directed to David Boutros, Associate Director of the Kansas City office. (816) 235-1543; WHMCKC@umkc.edu

www.umkc.edu/WHMCKC/

Cover photo: section from *Anthology of Argentine*. Mural located at 31st and Metropolitan in the Argentine district of Kansas City, Kansas. A project of the Guild of Latino Fine Arts: A program of Azteca de Greater Kansas City. Artists: Jesus Ortiz, art director; Alicia Gambino, assistant art director; Jose Faus; Martha Elvia Vivanco; Virginia Delgado, Tadeo "Tito" Franco; Ardis Peterson. *WHMC-KC Picture Collection* (KC026), *WHMC-KC*.

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