

Michelle Herrera transcript

Speaker 1: [00:00](#) Um, so first question, are you 18 years or older?

Speaker 2: I'm 18.

Speaker 1: Okay. And uh, can you state and spell your first and last name for the record?

Speaker 2: [00:22](#) Michelle Herrera

Speaker 1: When were you born?

Speaker 2: I was born on August 22nd 2000.

Speaker 1: [00:58](#) Okay. And where are you from and where did you grow up?

Speaker 2: [01:02](#) I am from Southaven, Mississippi and I grew up in Southaven.

Speaker 1: [01:06](#) Okay. And have you lived in any other places?

Speaker 2: Just Southaven.

Speaker 1: Okay. And why did you move from Southaven to Oxford?

Speaker 2: [01:20](#) I came to school here because I didn't want to be too close to home and not so far. The distance and because I don't know, this counselor just convinced me so I have to come in is really pretty.

Speaker 1: [01:40](#) And uh, is race and important part of your identity and why or why not?

Speaker 2: [01:49](#) I think it is important because I feel like it defines who I am and it distinguishes me from like other people.

Speaker 1: [01:57](#) Okay. And how has your experience been at the university and living in Oxford?

Speaker 2: [02:03](#) So far it has been like kinda hard but fun at the same time.

Speaker 1: What has it been hard?

Speaker 2: I'm just not used to like all those work. My high school was really easy. I had classes every day and that was it.

Speaker 1: [02:17](#) Oh. So it was really more so academic than anything else. Um, what is your major classification and any involvement that you have?

Speaker 2: [02:28](#) My major right now it's biology, but I'm thinking about switching over and classification as freshman. And I'm not involved in anything.

Speaker 1: What are you thinking about switching your major to?

Speaker 2: [02:47](#) Nursing most likely

Speaker 1: Um, and what are the most important aspects of your life right now and why?

Speaker 2: [03:18](#) I guess just to like actually pass all my classes and just be successful to make my parents proud.

Speaker 1: [03:26](#) Okay. And the cool. So now we're going to get into some more questions about race and ethnicity, your identity. Um, so the US Census Bureau considers race and ethnicity as two different things. Um, what is your ethnicity?

Speaker 2: Hispanic. Hispanic.

Speaker 1: Okay. And um, what are your parents' nationality and do you identify with their nationality?

Speaker 2: My parents are Mexicans and yes. Oh yeah.

Speaker 1: How do you identify racially and why do you identify this way? So if somebody, if somebody just says, what is your race, what, are you going to say?

Speaker 2: Mexican

Speaker 1: And why do you say Mexican?

Speaker 2: I don't know. I just feel like that's what I am.

Speaker 1: And do you identify as Hispanic or Latino?

- Speaker 2: [04:26](#) I don't know. I use both. It just depends on what I'm talking to are like, what they say.
- Speaker 1: [04:30](#) Studies show that the Latino population is growing in the United States. Um, how do you think this will affect the way race or race relations is viewed in this country?
- Speaker 2: [04:50](#) Well, from what I've seen on TV, a lot of people don't really want to hear, but I'm guessing that's just for the people who come here illegally. I don't know, I can't speak on that because I just don't know. That really doesn't bother me.
- Speaker 1: [05:03](#) Um, and how do you maintain your Latino culture while being a student here?
- Speaker 2: [05:14](#) I mean I've talked Spanish with my best friend. She's my roommate, so together all the time.
- Speaker 1: [05:20](#) What are some challenges you faced at the university and in Oxford as a Latina student?
- Speaker 2: [05:33](#) **I haven't faced any challenges yet and I hope not soon, but one thing that really bothered me this one time I was in class, so we were discussing about like the first word that pops up in your mind if they say these terms. Right? So the professor said Mexican and somebody yelled wall and that really bothered me. Like really? Anything else? Like food or anything like wall? I just didn't say anything. I just turned around and looked at him.**
- Speaker 1: [06:01](#) And has anyone ever asked about your race and ethnicity and how do you normally respond to these questions?
- Speaker 2: [06:38](#) A lot of people do ask me like, are you Mexican? And I just, sometimes it bothers me because like that's the first thing they assume I could be Puerto Rican, Cuban, anything else in the Hispanic category, but they just assume, oh, are you Mexican? Like that's something that I just know I could be Puerto Rican because there's more Hispanics besides just Mexican.
- Speaker 1: [07:05](#) Okay. And have you ever experienced any assumptions about you because of your character because of your race or ethnicity?

Speaker 2: [07:22](#) No, not really because my high school was like really like diverse, so everybody just like really got along with each other. But then I come to this school and the majority of the people here are Caucasians on. I feel like I just don't fit in as much, but as long as I have my friends from high school, I don't really care.

Speaker 1: [07:43](#) And do you speak Spanish? How did you learn?

Speaker 2: Through my parents.

Speaker 1: Um, and how important is the ability to speak Spanish to the Latino culture?

Speaker 2: [08:14](#) I feel like it's important because I feel like I have an advantage to like communicate with more people and just like no two languages at the same time as that can like also like help translate for my parents and. Yeah.

Speaker 1: [08:27](#) And which language did you learn first, Spanish or in English?

Speaker 2: Spanish.

Speaker 1: When you began learning English and I'm sure you were really young or whatever, but was it like a challenge for you or did it just kind of all flow together or how was that?

Speaker 2: [08:42](#) Well, my parents knew some English so I feel like it was like I learned both at the same time, but I learned Spanish first.

Speaker 1: [09:30](#) how does the university and the community catered to the Latino populations?

Speaker 2: [09:38](#) I mean, honestly I don't hear anything like for Latinos besides that, like since Hispanic heritage month, I haven't heard anything or before that.

Speaker 1: [09:47](#) And um, how does the university and the community omit or forget about the Latino population?

Speaker 2: [09:56](#) Well, I remember when I went to the Hispanic, I mean, what's it called Latinas at Ole miss. Um, they were talking about how like we don't get advertised as much, just like other groups, like they're just everywhere and then we'll,

we'll get like one post are there and then we're not just advertise as much.

Speaker 1: [10:15](#) And um, how do you view race in the US in the south and in Oxford?

Speaker 2: [11:10](#) Well, since I just moved to Oxford, I haven't seen many Hispanics down here, but where I'm from in south haven, I've seen everywhere. And then in the south I feel like there's a lot but I'm not sure about an Oxford. And then the US I'm pretty sure were like everywhere now.

Speaker 1: And um, how do you perceive the Latino population affecting the idea of race in the south? So like for example, in the south, how things are sometimes very black and white. Um, have you ever maybe felt that your presence challenged like race and what it means to live in the south?

Speaker 2: Because a lot of times I feel like things are really narrowed down and a lot of people are overlooked because in the south is still is very much so a challenge between black and white, but there's Hispanic people here and people from all over the world here.

Speaker 1: So have you seen anything or feel anything or do you feel any type of way about the Hispanic population affecting race?

Speaker 2: No

Speaker 1: Um, are there any other points or things that you would like to talk about that she's like, I didn't ask you? Oh, okay. Well that is it.