

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA CHINESE AMERICAN ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

Interviewee: Victor Quan Interview Number: 26  
 Chinese Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Number of Tapes: 5  
 Date of Interview: 3/17/79, 7/16/79, 10/20/79 Length: 3 Hours & 6 Minutes  
 Interviewer: Jean Wong & Beverly Chan  
 Others Present: None  
 Language: English  
 Summarizer: Stella Ling

Contents

Time Segment	Counter Number	Summary	Tape: <u>1</u> Side <u>A</u>
1	003-014 015-022	Introduction. Victor Quan's (VQ) maternal grandfather was from China. He came to the United States in the 1800s along with the railroad workers and people that came for the gold rush. These people needed someone to write letters and also to organize the family associations.	
	023-031	VQ's grandfather was a Wong. He was very successful in San Francisco. VQ's grandmother was much younger than VQ's grandfather. VQ knew his grandmother but not his grandfather. He was very active in community affairs.	
	032-039	VQ's father came to the U.S. in the late 1800s. He was a Chinese herbalist. He lived in the same building as VQ's mother.	
2	040-044	Even before VQ's father was married, he was quite successful. He helped start the Chinese hospital in San Francisco.	
	045-053	VQ was born in 1908 in December. VQ's father already had a family of two girls and two boys. VQ was born in Oakland. VQ's family moved to Oakland after the earthquake in 1906.	
	054-066	VQ's family adhered to Chinese traditions. They had tutors sent from China to teach the children.	
	067-084	VQ's mother and aunt were very scholarly. VQ's mother was totally Chinese. She was born in San Francisco. They were so old-fashioned that they even had bound feet in those days. VQ's mother was very educated in Chinese but not very in English.	
3	085-091	The tutors from China taught both VQ's aunt's family as well as VQ's family. VQ's family had ten children -- six boys and four girls. VQ's aunt's family had eight children.	

## Contents (cont'd)

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Time Segment	Counter Number	Summary
3	092-095	As the children grew up, they started attending the Chinese schools.
	096-101	There was a great jar and since VQ's grandmother did not speak English, if anyone spoke a word of English in front of her, they had to pay a nickel.
	102-113	This was in the 1920s. They went to grammar school at Lincoln High in Oakland. It was very near Chinatown.
4	114-115	VQ always spoke Chinese at home.
	116-130	VQ's father invested in businesses. One of the businesses was an import and export company which had branches in Hong Kong, Canton, and Mexico. When VQ's older brother finished high school, he was sent to the office in San Francisco. In the summertime, the kids would go over there and do translations.
	131-140	In the late 1930s there were people working in the importing and exporting store who had been in San Francisco for ten years or more and they had not even been down in Market Street. Chinatown was really a little China.
	141-146	After school, VQ also went there mainly to do translations.
5	147-156	The Chinese wrote very often to their family in China. They always talked about making enough money so that they could return to China.
	157-169	The businessmen would call VQ "toh gee" or "chok gin" which meant that he was lazy and empty-minded. VQ got mad at them even if they did it in fun.
	170-174	VQ began to take over writing the big Chinese signs.
	175-181	VQ did not only do community singing in the American school but also knew all the Chinese operas.
182-190	During that time, their store was selling some Chinese records. Each disk cost four or five dollars. It so happened that the star who was on record was in San Francisco.	
6	191-202	The records cost a lot. they were recorded by German and French companies. The equipment was sent to Hong Kong to record. Then the record would be shipped back to Germany to be manufactured and then shipped back to Hong Kong. From Hong Kong it would be shipped to San Francisco.
	203-217	VQ went to see if the records could be made in San Francisco. VQ signed a contract with Brunswick Records. They had to buy three thousand records a year, for thirty cents a record.

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Time Segment	Counter Number	Summary
6	218-222	VQ recorded it and it was a huge success. Instead of 3000 records, they were ordering 100,000 records. They were shipping the records back to Hong Kong.
	223-232	Within a few years, Brunswick dropped their contract and went to Hong Kong to record. The Japanese were also going over there. Columbia Records started a factory in Shanghai.
7	233-235	About the same time, the Japanese were invading Shanghai and the whole thing went down the drain.
	236-253	The gentleman with Brunswick, Mr. McGregor wrote a piece of the action for himself into the contract. He then started his own recording company and asked VQ to join him. They did not think that the war would last too long.
	254-264	In the same time, the radio became very popular. Mr. McGregor started a record network. It was the same time Warner Brothers began to have sound.
	265-281	Each disk in the recording network played for fifteen minutes. The business was very successful. This was how VQ got interested in American music. VQ went to Cal to take music classes and also studied music privately.
8	282-291	At Cal, VQ took a class in harmony. He also took acting and poetry classes. It was difficult for VQ because he was working full time.
	292-306	Besides recording, VQ became an assistant director. In the studio, there is a control room where the mixer is mixing music. Inside there are the actors and an assistant director that had to make hand signals to the director.
	307-316	San Francisco was doing a lot of daytime soap operas. The motion picture industry was just getting big. There was a transcontinental program called the Lux Radio Theater. Cecile Mill was the narrator on that show.
	317-341	Hollywood was getting very big so there was no choice but to move the entire company to Hollywood. By then, VQ knew the craft pretty well so he became a producer for this program. They were producing script shows such as "The House of McGregors," "Mutiny and the High Seas," "Lady Courageous," and "Cecile and Sally."
9	342-349	The equipment in Hollywood were better equipped than those in San Francisco because the studios were brand new. They were able to function much better.

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1 Side A

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Contents (cont'd)

Time Segment	Counter Number	Summary
9	350-359	VQ's job as a producer was to buy the scripts and direct each show. VQ did this through the 1940s until World War II.
	360-365	In those days, when they recorded on disks, they would have to junk the entire disk if there was a mistake.
	366-377	Aside from the dramatic shows, VQ also did musical shows since he could read scores. In those days, the "Standard Oil Symphony" was a big show. VQ's studios could accomodate over a hundred piece orchestra.
	378-396	VQ had a good memory and could remember the musical scores. He knew when the solos would play. At the same time, the record company started. The first ten releases of the Capitol Records were mixed by VQ. "Mixing" means blending the music.
10	397-414	VQ also produced the staging records for Irving Fogel. There were skaters that skated to organ music.
	415-444	The Unions came in by then and so the musicians were paid by the hour. They were losing because the performers would make mistakes and they had to repeat the recording. VQ devised a way to reduce the wasting of time. He used two turntables and switched from one to the other when there would be a mistake. It was tricky because VQ had to know the timing exactly so that the beat would not stop.
11	445-484	During World War II he became a colonel. He told VQ that the civilian soldiers in Alaska and Africa were committing suicide and doing crazy things because they were not interested in the war. There was one island in Alaska where they did not have this problem because one of the soldiers had a little radio station. The Army realized that the soldiers were having a hard time because they were displaced and so they started a radio network.

END OF TAPE 1 SIDE A

Tape 1 Side B

1	018-025	It is difficult to create music. They recorded air channels by recording the entire program. The War and Navy Department did not want the commercials so they had to lift the commercials out and substitute music for them.
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Contents (cont'd)

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Time Segment	Counter Number	Summary
1	026-031	There was a Caucasian man by the name of Chang that went to record music in China.
	032-055	Colonel Fogel told Mr. McGregor to appropriate his facilities once a week to lift these commercials. They were very successful. In three or four months, they had actors, producers, etc.
2	056-058	VQ returned to McGregor after the war but television started then. VQ left McGregor and tried to get into television.
	059-067	When VQ was young, his father taught him calligraphy and VQ was always interested in art. 20th Century Fox was making a new picture called "The King and I" and they wanted a Chinese with the ability to design. VQ did all the designs.
3	068-077	VQ found that working for the pictures was not so good so he went back to the recording business. VQ worked for CBS. VQ knew the vice-president of programs, Harry Ackerman.
	078-089	VQ worked on the "Hollywood Theater of Stars" for Skippy Peanut Butter. That was not so good. The contracts at that time were 13, 26, or 52 weeks but VQ was lucky to get two years. VQ worked in the music department of CBS until he retired.
	090-103	At first VQ worked on putting music to the shows. They then began to have a lot of shows. VQ assisted in assigning a musical director to each of the shows.
4	104-134	In filmmaking, they first shoot the scenes in their entirety in different ways. Then the cutter cuts the scenes according to the script. The shootings had to be cut down to 22 minutes for a half hour show since the rest would be commercials.
	135-159	Only after this process is completed can music be put to the show. Music is a continuous thing so it is the last thing to be done. The low man on the totem pole is the music department because they have to wait until the film is cut to the director's satisfaction.
5	160-181	VQ's knowledge of Chinese music and drama just went to the American side. VQ feels Chinese but he is Americanized.
	182-192	When VQ was a boy, his recreation activities were totally Chinese. VQ loved music and always listened to the radio.

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1 Side B

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Contents (cont'd)

Time Segment	Counter Number	Summary
6	193-206	When VQ was young, the lyrics of the Chinese songs were very important to him. The traditional melodies were similar and just the lyrics changed. VQ analyzed them -- they were basically from the Peking opera.
	207-233	VQ went to Mainland China and then spent two weeks in Hong Kong to take pictures.

END OF TAPE 1 SIDE B

Tape 2 Side A

1	001-009	VQ's mother was born in America; her father came from Canton, China. He was one of the founders of the Wong Family Association. He settled in San Francisco which is where VQ's mother was born.
	010-019	VQ's father came to the U.S. later. He was a Chinese herbalist.
	020-028	VQ's father was much older than VQ's mother. They had ten children. There were thirteen conceptions but only ten lived.
	029-031	VQ's father settled in San Francisco. VQ's parents never came to Los Angeles.
	032-038	VQ was born in Oakland, right after the San Francisco fire and earthquake.
2	039-042	VQ's parents were from Nam Hoi, from a place called Gau Kwa.
	043-070	VQ's father was a doctor. He helped start the Chinese Hospital. VQ's father donated his services to the needy. Beside that, VQ's father had his own practice. His office was on Grand Avenue, between Jackson and Washington.
3	071-100	VQ's mother was scholarly. She had bound feet even though she was born in America. They had servants in their home. VQ's grandfather was very wealthy. VQ's mother did not work. At the fall of the Ching Dynasty, she unbound her feet. They supported the new government.
	101-123	VQ studied a great deal of Chinese. VQ's tutors were of the old school. They taught VQ all the Classics. VQ was tutored in Chinese through high school. They started at the age of five or six. By that young age, VQ's mother already had taught them most of the tang tse and they were able to recite them by memory.

## Contents (cont'd)

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Time Segment	Counter Number	Summary
4	124-134	VQ's family spoke Cantonese at home -- it was demanded by the elders.
	135-149	Outside the home, VQ had Caucasian friends from school. VQ befriended a Jewish boy and another boy of German descent. They would go hiking together. They naturally spoke English together. When VQ was with his Chinese school mates, he would speak Chinese.
5	150-165	VQ's father spoke English. After the fire in San Francisco, VQ's family got all their belongings into a kettleboat and went to Oakland. VQ was born there a few years later. At that time, missionary ladies came and taught VQ's mother English.
	166-169	One of the ladies told VQ's mother about Victor Hugo and that is now VQ got his first name.
	170-180	VQ remembers Miss Jenny, one of the missionary women. He even remembers going to her home.
	181-189	VQ was born on Fifth Street in Oakland. They then moved to a larger house on the same street. VQ's parents never moved back to San Francisco.
6	190-200	At that time, VQ went to many different Sunday schools. VQ's parents felt that Christ was loving but the Christian organizations were all wrong.
	201-207	They were also beginning to have Chinese schools but the method of teaching was not as strict as that of VQ's tutors.
	208-216	VQ's family lived on Fifth Street until his father passed away in the 1920s. They then moved to Ninth Street which is where VQ lived until he graduated from high school.
	217-226	VQ's father had many different businesses. VQ used to visit the importing and exporting business. They would import foodstuffs, porcelain and all kinds of Chinese things.
7	227-235	One of the biggest businesses in those days was the firecracker business. They would export to Mexico, Cuba, Madagascar, Australia, and New Zealand. VQ would help type envelopes to these places.
	236-245	VQ kept working at the company until 1928. Then a group of Chinese actors came. There were troupes of Cantonese dancers from China since 1925.
	246-258	VQ would go to American movies on some Saturday mornings. On other Saturdays, VQ would go to San Francisco with his family to see the Chinese opera.

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Time Segment	Counter Number	Summary
7	259-268	The Chinese instrument, the yung kan, was very popular at that time. VQ's parents bought VQ one and in 1928, he even appeared on stage.
	269-288	There were two branches of their business -- on Canton and in Hong Kong. VQ's older brothers went there to inspect the stores.
8	289-296	At that time, a group of Chinese actors and singers from Hong Kong came over. They were very popular and their records were selling for three or four dollars each.
	297-304	One day VQ asked his uncle why they did not do the recording here since the local records were only 35 to 75 cents.
	305-312	The records from China were made by Becker Records, a German firm. The records were so expensive because they were recorded in Hong Kong, then sent back to Germany to process, then back to Hong Kong, and finally to San Francisco for sale.
	313-320	VQ and his uncle started a recording company called Yui Dong Kong See or the Far East Record Company in San Francisco.
	321-329	VQ did the announcing for the records. The record business did very well.
9	330-361	VQ contacted various recording companies including Brunswick, Columbia, Star, and others. They finally got a contract with Brunswick which said that they had to buy 3000 records a year, at 37 cents a piece. It was such a success that they ordered 100,000 records in the first year. After the first year, Brunswick immediately cancelled their contract, and went back to China themselves. After their success the first year, there were 17 recording firms in China.
	362-369	At that time, the Japanese were invading the Far East. Columbia Records had a firm set up in Shanghai.
	370-382	A man by the name of McGregor was getting 4 cents for each record since it was a business he initiated. The other companies were short-sighted and racists. Mr. McGregor even felt the racism even though he was a Canadian and a Scotsman. He was the only one that agreed to record the Chinese performers.
10	383-410	Mr. McGregor started his own recording company which VQ joined in order to learn the trade. It was a thriving business. They opened a studio on Mission Street in San Francisco called "McGregor and Sally."



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2 Side A  
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Contents (cont'd)

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Time Segment	Counter Number	Summary
10	411-428	VQ realized that he had to quickly learn about American music so he went to U.C. Cal to take music classes. He was accepted as a visiting student.
	429-441	Soap operas flourished in the early 1930s. The recording firms were not affected by the Depression because it was a new business.
	442-465	One popular serial was "I Love a Mystery" on NBC. Another one was "One Man's Family," by the same author. These serials were on five days a week. They were using radio transcriptions.

END OF TAPE 2 SIDE A

Tape 2 Side B

1	013-018	The studio was used only once or twice a week so they tried to find other uses for it. They then recorded playettes that were being broadcast.
	019-028	The two famous serials -- "I Love a Mystery" and "One Man's Family" was being recorded by VQ's studio. VQ was the sound effects man. He would open and close the doors, windows, and what not.
	029-036	The disks were only fifteen minutes long and so the actors could not go overtime. VQ then coordinated the timing with the producer. He was made into an associate producer.
2	037-042	In 1936, because of the talking movies, all the New York actors came to Hollywood. San Francisco was no longer the center of all these dramas. VQ's studio moved to Los Angeles that year.
	043-053	At that time, McGregor's Studios was thriving. VQ's brother came down to Los Angeles with VQ. VQ then became the producer of the soap operas including "Mutiny and the High Seas."
	054-060	VQ went to Los Angeles Conservatory at Ninth and Los Angeles Street to continue his musical studies. VQ was producing five script shows. It carried on until 1942.
	061-067	At that time, VQ was producing a half-hour show called "Hollywood Theater of Stars" for CBS. They would use a motion picture star as the star of the show and then sell the show to Skippy Peanut Butter. They did very well.

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Time Segment	Counter Number	Summary
3	068-076	Around that time, the war started. VQ knew someone by the name of Colonel Fogel whose father was very active in the motion picture business. He was very enterprising.
	077-082	Roller skating was in vogue then. Fogel bought himself a chain of skating rinks. They had organ music to skate to. Because of the advent of the Union, he found it very difficult because the musicians asked for a lot of pay.
	083-085	Fogel wanted to record the organ music on records for the rinks.
	086-089	The recording was expensive too because once a musician made a mistake they had to start all over again.
	090-111	VQ thought of joining two pieces together by editing. They maneuvered two turntables so that they could synchronize from one to the other. VQ worked with another man who knew about the turntables. He was so impressed with VQ's grandfather that he changed his name to Chang Winters.
4	112-126	Colonel Fogel acted as a reserve. When the war started, they needed civilian soldiers very quickly and they drafted anyone. There is a right way of doing things and there is the Army way of doing things. As a result, soldiers in Alaska were committing suicide.
	127-132	In one little unit, there were not problems at all. They found out that this particular unit everyone took part in getting a radio station going and everyone was healthy instead of sitting around brooding.
	133-146	The Army decided that something had to be done. They had air channels which were programs that were recorded right off the air. There were a lot of commercials which the Army did not want because they wanted to have a captive audience.
5	147-158	This was where VQ and Chang came in. They cut out the commercials and substituted other music in there. They were effective in maintaining the spirits of the soldiers in Africa and Alaska.
	159-162	This caught the attention of all the generals who came by to watch what VQ and Chang did. When they saw VQ and Chang, they discovered that they were just little kids so they made them join the Army.
	163-174	VQ got a commission because of Fogel, as a first-lieutenant. VQ eventually became an officer of technical production. At the end, VQ was a major.

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Time Segment	Counter Number	Summary
5	175-179	VQ returned to McGregor after the war and continued producing shows. Television came and VQ felt that he had to get into that.
	180-185	While studying at the Conservatory of Music, VQ also studied art.
6	186-192	VQ wanted to get into the motion picture business. They were doing "The King and I" and VQ got to design the entire sequence. VQ was out of a job when the picture was over.
	193-196	VQ decided to go into the television network and he worked in the music department of CBS until he retired. His years there were wonderful.
	197-213	VQ was the only Oriental working for the company at the time. He worked there from 1957 to 1974. There was another Chinese working there in 1964 -- she was Jane Syne and she worked in the art department.
	225-224	VQ, his brother, and Barbara Jean Wong were the only three people working in radio production in the 1940s.
	225-239	When VQ was growing up he was thoroughly Chinese at home and thoroughly American at school. VQ wanted to be part of the scene. That is why he got into a Shakespearean play in high school.
7	240-249	VQ attended Lincoln Grammar School on 12th Street. VQ attended Oakland High School and graduated in 1927.
	250-273	After high school, VQ went to work in his father's store until 1928. They started the record company in 1928. VQ went to work for McGregors in 1929. VQ attended the University of California at Berkeley in 1930.
	274-289	VQ also learned how to "mix" while he was in the recording business. Chinese learn things quickly and VQ learned about harmony very quickly.
8	290-300	At that time, VQ was also taking private lessons because he was thinking about being a concert pianist.
	301-332	It was Bach who put the scales together to produce harmony. VQ studied Bach avidly. There are many different instruments in an orchestra.
9	333-335	VQ was a very fine mixer when he came to Los Angeles in the late 1930s.
	336-347	VQ monitored and mixed the symphonies for Union Oil. VQ had to arrange the different instruments so that they are properly balanced.

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2 Side B

Tape: 3 Side A

Contents (cont'd)

Time Segment	Counter Number	Summary
9	348-363	VQ sought out a piano teacher because a piano is the only instrument that can do all the voices.
	364-377	VQ studied composition at Los Angeles Conservatory. VQ also studied under Roy Harris at CBS.
	378-385	VQ has an ear for music. It started with Chinese music. He remembers a song after hearing it. He used to sing Chinese songs on stage when he was young.
10	386-420	VQ studied art at the Shinard School. VQ studied under Jepson who later started his own school. He was a fine artist.
	421-446	VQ got into jewelry the year before he retired. VQ's brother, Paul, is very interested in jewelry. VQ was not so interested.
11	447-463	VQ attended a night school in Eagle Rock in order to learn how to make jewelry.
	464-490	VQ then took lessons on how to professionally facet jewels such as diamonds. It is a very difficult skill to learn. In 1972, VQ paid \$8 a lesson and it took many months for him to learn how to cut.

END OF TAPE 2 SIDE B

Tape 3 Side A

1	001-013	Diamonds have thousands of little grains. VQ made jewelry for a while but he could not afford the large equipment. One needs a very large workshop because it is a dirty process. VQ also gave it up because he believes that breathing the dust is not good.
	014-022	When VQ was very young, he used to play Chinese games such as tiap yin gee for recreation. It was like a badminton birdie which they would kick.
	023-045	When VQ was young, he would get up at 8:00 in the morning, eat breakfast, and hurry on to school. He was given 25 cents to eat spaghetti or macaroni at one of those places by school. They went home at 3:30. Then they went to Chinese school from 4 to 8.
2	045-055	After Chinese school, they had to memorize a whole page of gu wen. The next day, they had to face the wall and recite the whole thing. On Saturdays, they would have shiou how which were small examinations. He would start at a middle of a phrase and the student would have to continue.

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Time Segment	Counter Number	Summary
2	056-064	VQ had no time to play sports or do other things. They used to listen to a troller which is how they learned Chinese music.
	065-084	VQ was taught calligraphy during his leisure time. He was very deft at it. VQ would write those four character sayings for New Years and people would buy them from him because he was "tong gee" or "uncontaminated by adulthood."
3	085-105	VQ's father taught VQ calligraphy. VQ's original tutor taught VQ how to write as well.
4	106-117	After VQ's first tutor passed away, all the Chinese families hired another gentleman to teach the children.
	118-136	VQ worked for McGregor from 1929 to 1936. He did not go to Cal until 1932 because from 1929 to 1931 they were organizing all the equipment.
	137-149	VQ was unable to distinguish between a violin and a viola. VQ then went to school to learn about music and musical instruments.
5	150-161	VQ's family was upset that VQ could no longer do things with them because of his work. They did not want VQ and his brother to go to Los Angeles when the company moved.
	162-167	VQ and his brother stayed with their sister's in-laws.
	168-179	VQ had a lot to do at that time. He had to buy plays so he would read plays at the library, go to musicals, subscribe to theater arts magazines.
6	180-191	There was a great deal of discrimination. He was able to overcome it by confronting the people, being polite, and not giving ground. He also worked at being the very best in what he did.
	192-203	In those days, people would still call Chinese "chinks." When the general came, he was surprised that VQ was getting \$100 a day. VQ replied, "General, what I can do is what counts, what I look like doesn't matter." He said this with a smile.
	204-227	The records were made out of shellac and would warp if they came in contact with heat. They would send these records to Southeast Asia. They would fly the records over by plane and drop them off using a parachute. When they got into warm water, they would warp.

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Contents (cont'd)

Time Segment	Counter Number	Summary
7	228-275	Being a technical director, VQ went to the company to ask for a harder material to use for the records. They conducted various tests. VQ reported to the general who said that the tests were fine but the records still warped in the South China sea. VQ said that he could not conduct any more experiments because he only had the Southern California sea to drop the records in.
8	276-284	It was a difficult thing to do. They did very well. VQ worked with many Jewish people who were not prejudiced. It was always the non-Jewish people that were prejudice.
	285-295	VQ also felt discrimination outside of the Army.
	296-231	The writer was Bill Jones. They would have many different writers and use the script they liked the most. Bill Jones was very grateful to VQ because he bought his script which guaranteed him to write a certain number of episodes.
9	232-340	Bill Jones was so happy that he decided to treat VQ to dinner and then to the Palamar Dance Hall. Palamar was located at Vermont and Beverly Boulevard.
	341-351	When they went to the door of the Palamar, they were turned away. They were very embarrassed.
	352-397	VQ likes to keep active. He belonged to the Hollywood YMCA. He used to swim there. When he was taking a shower after his swim one day, he was about to be harassed by three big men.
10	398-406	VQ has been to restaurants, even in uniform, which refused to serve him. They were very polite about it.
	407-416	VQ would voice his opinion about being refused service. One time, a man and his wife asked VQ to join them as their guest and so the restaurant had no choice but to serve him.
	417-474	Another time, VQ was advised to buy his own socks in order to pass the vigors of the hiking expeditions in the Army. VQ went to the May Company and some people pushed him off the curb just outside the store because they thought he was Japanese. A car just barely missed hitting VQ. The next day, VQ was commissioned and when he walked out everyone was saluting him.

END OF TAPE 3 SIDE A

TAPE 3 SIDE B - BLANK

## Contents (cont'd)

Time Segment	Counter Number	Summary	<u>Tape 4 Side A</u>
1	004-017 018-028  029-041	Introduction. VQ's father had eight children in his family and VQ's aunt had seven children. VQ's grandfather wanted his grandchildren to learn Chinese so they hired a Chinese tutor from China. He taught in Cantonese. VQ learned Mandarin very recently. VQ was working in the music department of CBS at the time. They wanted VQ to translate the Chinese for them but VQ could not understand Mandarin. VQ started to attend Mandarin classes at night at a church.	
2	042-057  058-070	VQ had a very good Chinese background and the only difference was the pronunciation. VQ then attended Mandarin classes along with some children. It was relatively simple because VQ already knew how to read. In grammar school, the area was predominantly Chinese because it was next to Chinatown. About 20 percent of the students were Chinese. There were many nationalities but no Blacks.	
3	071-074  075-099  100-106	VQ then attended Oakland High School which had a few Blacks. Jack Linden went to VQ's school. VQ was treated well in school. They would go to school in the morning and then return home for lunch. After school was out in the afternoon, they had to go to Chinese school four 4 to 8 o'clock. Then they would have dinner when they got home. Thus they did not have a chance to play with the other boys. VQ played with Chinese and American kids but he was not invited to the American kids homes.	
4	107-118  119-144	VQ knew someone named Horowitz. His parents had a shop right beside Oakland High School. VQ would go there to buy cookies. In high school, VQ would go to work for their store over the summers. VQ remembers typing envelopes to people all over the world. The letters would be to people that came from the same Chinese village.	
5	145-173	After VQ joined the recording business, he started taking classes at the University of California at Berkeley. He went there to study music in order to keep up with his business. VQ did not go to college formally.	

Contents (cont'd)

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Time Segment	Counter Number	Summary
5	174-204	In 1927, after high school, VQ went to work for his father's business. There was a very famous Chinese star. His records were selling for three or four dollars. VQ tried to make the records himself and that is how he got started in the recording business.
6	205-208	VQ has even gone on stage himself. He participated in the Chinese operas.
	209-215	VQ's grandfather was an entrepreneur. He was a proprietor.
	216-254	When VQ first came to Los Angeles, he was working for McGregor. He was the man VQ contacted at Brunswick Records. They were supposed to buy 3000 records a year and they ended up buying 100,000 records which is why the business mushroomed in the next year. There were 17 recording companies in China. Because of the war, the business fell.
7	255-265	McGregor got a five cent commission for every record they sold. He got mad because they cut him out. VQ then went to work for McGregor to learn the recording business. He was recording transcriptions of radio programs.
	266-276	They came down to Los Angeles to record radio plays. They moved down to Los Angeles in 1936. Los Angeles was the center of show business which is why the company moved down here.
8	277-279	VQ went to study dramatics and music at the Los Angeles Conservatory.
	280-287	VQ then became a producer and director of radio programs. In radio, the producer and director were combined.
	288-295	It occurred to VQ that all his Chinese education was of no use to him whatsoever. It did not bother VQ because his Chinese education provided him with a philosophy of life.
	296-305	At CBS, the people that work under him have doctorates and masters but VQ only has a degree from the Los Angeles Conservatory of Music.
	306-333	VQ got along wonderfully with his American co-workers. VQ simply tried to be the best in his field.
9	334-354	VQ started as a music synthesizer for "Gunsmoke" but he was then put in charge of the music department. VQ was not discriminated against at this job. Most of his co-workers were Jewish and they treated VQ very well.



Interviewee: Victor Quan

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4 Side A

Tape: 4 Side B

Contents (cont'd)

Time Segment	Counter Number	Summary
9	355-368	General Fogel, a Jewish, owned a skating rink. He had VQ record for him and VQ figured out a way to avoid repeating the entire recording process whenever a mistake was made.
	369-397	The Army refused to hire VQ for the position. VQ was working and getting \$100 a day. One day, the general came by and told them to throw VQ into the Army.
10	398-426	VQ would go to Washington to clear the various raw materials that they needed for the records. One time, on his way home from Washington, VQ sat beside one of the GI's on the Army plane who got up and walked away.
	427-442	General Fogel was the man who recommended VQ to be a commercial officer of the recording business.
	443-450	After coming out of the Army, VQ went to work for television.
11	451-482	VQ did not feel sorry for being Chinese even when he encountered racial discrimination. From the Chinese Classics, VQ learned that he had to overcome every difficulty.

END OF TAPE 4 SIDE A

Tape 4 Side B

1	015-020	VQ felt sorry that he was trained in all the Chinese Classics but was totally unprepared for the career he pursued.
	022-036	VQ is very Chinese at home. VQ jumped into show business completely. VQ's daily social life was with the people he worked with.
	037-040	Once a month, VQ and his brother would drive home to Oakland. VQ and his brother lived together for a while until his brother got married.
2	041-047	VQ was married once but he got a divorce. She was Chinese. They had no children.
	048-053	VQ feels like the man in the motion picture "Shane" played by Alan Ladd who is totally free.
	054-069	VQ was not married for very long. They found out that they had barriers. Not only did VQ's American ways conflict with her Chinese ways, but their personalities were not compatible.

Interviewee: Victor Quan

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Tape: 4 Side B

Contents (cont'd)

Time Segment	Counter Number	Summary
3	070-073	VQ's family felt very positively about VQ's career.
	074-086	VQ's father was an herbalist. When someone at home was sick, they were given Chinese medicine. VQ still uses Chinese medicine for minor ailments.
	087-097	VQ went to China for the first time last year. He found many things that he enjoyed.
	098-108	VQ had a tonsillectomy when he was around 16 or 17 years old.
4	109-122	VQ's recreation in his teens was very Chinese. He belonged to the Chinese Music Association where he would sing and play. He was in the Chinese Literary Club. From his childhood to the year 1929, VQ was totally Chinese.
	123-140	In 1929, VQ went to work for McGregor. VQ was hired in hopes that he could work on the Chinese recording business. The Chinese market did not open but the radio was flourishing.
	141-146	At that time, VQ felt like he was learning a completely new way of life, while still retaining the old culture.
5	147-154	According to VQ, the Chinese way of doing things looks imprecise from the surface but in reality it is very precise.
	155-180	A lot of the Chinese here were uneducated. There was an elitist Chinese group. The people treated VQ's family differently. There were "ba ja" in those days. It was not democratic at all. VQ knew all about the corruption of the rich Chinese.
	181-187	Both the Chinese and the Americans hold on to an idea of the way to do things.
6	188-191	Today the Chinese are competitive but before they could not afford to be competitive.
	192-198	The seventeen recording companies that went to China were not all Chinese business firms. There were a lot of Japanese.
	199-201	While in Los Angeles, VQ did not join any Chinese organizations. He did not have the time.
	202-216	Aside from his family in Los Angeles, VQ had some Chinese friends. VQ met people in the restaurants.
	217-219	There was no Quan Family Association here -- they were part of the Four Family Association.

END OF TAPE 4 SIDE B

Interviewee: Victor Quan

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Tape: 5 Side A

Contents (cont'd)

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Time Segment	Counter Number	Summary	<u>Tape 5 Side A</u>
1	006-015	Introduction.	
	016-029	VQ knew Wilbur Woo, the president of Cathay Bank. VQ's sister married into the Woo family.	
	030-040	VQ also knew Jack Lee. James Wong Howe was respected in those days. Barbara Jean Wong was a very fine actress at that time.	
2	041-042	In show business, you are only as important and successful as your last picture.	
	043-047	VQ felt lucky because his hobby and his work were the same thing.	
	048-052	Before World War II, the Chinese in Chinatown were store owners or laundrymen.	
	053-065	VQ would go to Chinatown to eat about once a week. In the beginning, he was there frequently. That was during the 1940s. At that time, the Old Chinatown was already demolished.	
	066-085	At that time, Chinatown was very sparse. Everybody knew everybody else. There were about 15 to 20 restaurants in Chinatown at that time. There were about 8 to 10 shops.	
3	086-094	When VQ first came to Los Angeles in 1937, he stayed with his sister's in-laws on 26th Street near San Pedro. There were a lot of Chinese people there. There was a Chinese Church as well.	
	095-101	After living with VQ's sister's in-laws, they moved to the USC area. It was an American neighborhood. They did not have any trouble getting housing because they were moving into an university area.	
	102-109	After that, VQ moved to Hollywood in 1940. VQ was the only Chinese in the entire neighborhood.	
4	110-115	At first, VQ shared the apartment in the USC area with his brother. VQ stayed in the living room and his brother occupied the bedroom. After VQ's brother got married, his wife's sister also came to stay with them which is when VQ moved out.	
	116-142	VQ moved to Hollywood because it would be closer to his work. VQ looked at two places. One of the landladies checked up on VQ's employment.	
5	143-148	VQ's landlady and the neighbors all treated him very well.	

## Contents (cont'd)

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Time Segment	Counter Number	Summary
5	149-156	VQ had no connections with China. VQ had relatives in China but they did not keep in touch with them after VQ's father died. VQ's mother frequently sent money back to China.
	157-163	VQ did not keep up with the events in China. VQ reads the Chinese newspaper. VQ's mother was very enthusiastic about the drive by Chiang Kai-shek. They would buy bonds.
	164-167	The Chinese mothers in Oakland went to picket against sending scrap iron to Japan. They were very patriotic.
	168-173	VQ was very much aware of the change in government in China in 1949. They were pro-Chiang Kai-shek.
	174-187	VQ always read Chinese newspapers. When VQ retired, he started to subscribe to Chung Sai Bao and Ni Wei Bao.
	6	188-196
197-208		VQ does not know what the Chinese did with the money they saved. When VQ came to Los Angeles, he was very single-minded in setting up his own career.
209-213		After the war, VQ returned to the radio business. VQ knew that radio would not exist so he had to get into pictures.
214-225		VQ designed the set for "The King and I." VQ designed Uncle Tom's Cabin and all the other sets. This was in 1967. Once the movie was through, the employees had to start looking for a job all over again.
226-230		Because of VQ's war records, he knew all three networks so he was able to get a job at CBS.
7	231-240	VQ was a director and producer at that time. He decided that music was essential to show business so that is what he went into.
	241-252	In the music department, VQ at first selected the music for the different programs. Later on, he ran the music department until he retired.
	253-258	VQ did not encounter any discrimination while working for CBS. People would make some small remarks.
	259-272	While at McGregor, some people referred to VQ as a "Black boy" who was a terrific director.
	273-280	VQ was in a position where he was hiring people so people were nice to him.

## Contents (cont'd)

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Time Segment	Counter Number	Summary
8	281-297	VQ feels that the Chinese way of doing things is very close to the Jewish ways of except that the Chinese are much more refined. The Chinese that VQ associated with at work were all scholars. The top Jewish people were refined but the ones in between were very crude. They were very aggressive.
	298-304	The Chinese do not seem to be aggressive but they are underneath. The Jewish are pushy.
	305-312	Other people would also compare the Jewish with the Chinese. VQ's co-workers told VQ that they liked him -- they were the minority and VQ was the sub-minority.
	313-331	VQ was involved with his relatives in Los Angeles. They did not understand VQ's job although they respected him.
9	332-335	VQ's sister had two sons. She had already passed away when VQ came to Los Angeles.
	336-341	All VQ's sisters and brothers had very fine Chinese schooling.
	342-345	VQ's mother had interests in the meat packing market.
	346-361	VQ's sister did not prefer to have sons rather than daughters.
	362-370	One of VQ's sisters has only one daughter. she does not mind not having sons. VQ's family was not that old-fashioned.
371-413	One of VQ's sisters had an American husband. She married after VQ's mother passed away. No one protested against the marriage. He was the manager of a clothing store and VQ's sister was a very fine dress designer.	
10	414-419	VQ's sister got married in the 1950s.
	420-422	VQ's nephew married an American girl. Another nephew married a Japanese girl.
	423-433	VQ did not know of any interracial marriages in the 1930s and 1940s. People used to say terrible things about interracial marriages.
	434-449	There was one family that the Chinese ladies would condemn saying that "Even animals, you would want a thoroughbred and not a mongrel."
11	450-467	VQ's cousin married a grocery store owner. Their daughter just married a Mexican. There was a big wedding complete with the Chinese banquet and everything.
	468-470	In the 1930s and 1940s, one did not hear much about interracial marriages.
	471-484	VQ does not think that the Chinese in Los Angeles had good schooling.

Interviewee: Victor Quan

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Tape: 5 Side A  
5 Side B

Contents (cont'd)

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Time Segment	Counter Number	Summary
11	485-486	VQ's sister's family, the Woo family, sent one of their children back to China.

END OF TAPE 5 SIDE A

Tape 5 Side B

1	013-016	VQ's sister's family, the Woo family, sent one of their children back to China to study.
	017-018	The Chinese here felt it was important for their children to attend Chinese school. Mr. Woo was the first Chinese banker in Los Angeles.
	019-040	VQ thinks that a lot of the Chinese did return to China. In the meat packing store that VQ's mother handled, there were three men that returned to China to find a wife. Some of the older Chinese returned to China to retire.
2	041-044	The American-born men were more exposed to Western ways and usually married the American born girls.
	045-051	In san Francisco Chinatown from 1926 through 1934, VQ knew people who had been in America for 20 years and had never been down to Market Street because they were so contained.
	052-055	At that time, VQ was involved in many Chinese clubs.
	056-061	VQ's first Chinese tutor was an opium addict. VQ only had him for one or two years. He was sent back to China.
	062-066	Another tutor came from China and he started the school. It became like a public school.
	067-074	VQ knew of some Chinese that returned to China to retire.
3	075-089	VQ has two nephews in Oakland that went to Chinese school but the education was useless.
	090-094	VQ loved Chinese school.
	095-097	VQ felt that the portrayal of Chinese in American movies was bad and stereotypical.
	098-107	While at CBS, VQ offered his services to the producer to help with the portrayal of the Chinese in "Hawaii Five-O."
4	108-114	In the 1930s and 1940s, VQ was in the radio business. Some Chinese were portrayed in radio shows.

Interviewee: Victor Quan

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Tape: 5 Side B

Contents (cont'd)

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Time Segment	Counter Number	Summary
4	115-135	In the 1930s and 1940s there was an American casting agent in Chinatown.
	136-143	VQ has never heard anyone say that they were unhappy to be Chinese.
5	144-160	VQ hates the Fu Manchu shows. In the 1940s they started to have anti-Japanese movies. In the 1930s they were very big on musicals.
	161-177	In the 1930s, VQ made \$130 a week. He was working for McGregor at that time. Later on, he made \$200 to \$250 a week. VQ felt that he made more than the average American.
	178-188	In 1946, VQ was making \$250 a week. At that time, the average worker made about \$150 a week. When VQ was in the Army, he was getting double pay.
6	189-192	VQ felt that his job broke him away from the stereotypical jobs held by the Chinese at that time.
	193-198	VQ feels that the key to his success was hard work and a positive attitude. VQ owes a lot to the Chinese concepts.
	199-217	VQ felt that he was accepted by his fellow workers. VQ's social circle was about the same as his working circle. Being helpful has also been important in his success. One's attitude must be positive in order to get over inevitable crises.

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## VICTOR QUAN

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