

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA CHINESE AMERICAN ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

Interviewee: Herbert Leong Interview Number: 141  
 Chinese Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Number of Tapes: 4  
 Date of Interview: 12/22/80, 1/14/81 Length: 3 Hours & 24 Minutes  
 Interviewer: Jean Wong  
 Others Present: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Language: English  
 Summarizer: Eugene Moy

Contents

Time Segment	Counter Number	Summary	Tape No.:	Side:
			<u>1</u>	<u>A</u>
1	001-009	Mother born in San Francisco before turn of the century.		
	010-011	Father born in Scaramento area in late 1870's.		
	012-018	Mother told of experiences in San Francisco before and during the 1906 earthquake.		
	019-022	Grandparents passed away when Herbert Leong (HL) was very young.		
	023-028	Parents' early residences not known, but did come to Los Angeles early on, as father was one of the founders of City Market.		
	029-031	Father was one of the secretaries to City Market in 1910. City Market founded in 1909 by Louie (Quan), father of (Kwong) Louie.		
2	032-039	HL's family -- brothers and sisters were matched off with children of Kwong Louie.		
	040-045	Father may have arrived in Los Angeles before 1909. Did own a truck farm on Alameda near the 200th Street area, near Torrance.		
	046-052	Knew Ung family who also had a farm down in that area.		
	053-055	An uncle used to go down in that area, hunt squirrels, brought back to cook medicinal soups.		
	056-059	Seven in the family 6 still alive -- two girls and four boys.		
	060-067	Father passed away when HL was five years old, caught pneumonia during an operation.		
3	067-068	Mother was a housewife, did not learn much English until HL passed Elementary School.		
	069-077	Mother later worked in various unskilled jobs, such as a downtown jewelry store.		

## Contents (cont'd)

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Time Segment	Counter Number	Summary
3	078-083	Family's market continued short while after HL's father's death, then sold it.
	084-095	At the time of HL's father's death, oldest sister left high school to go to work, but could not find good jobs. Found job waiting on tables in Hollywood, got lots of tips, better than working in Chinatown. She was able to help the family.
	096-103	Oldest brother was sent back to China to study, but lost out on American high school education. Therefore had to go to work when he came back.
	104-109	HL was born in Los Angeles in 1922.
4	110-112	HL attended 9th Street School, Lafayette Junior High School, and Jefferson High School.
	113-119	HL went into the service, then went to USC, UCLA, studied pre-med, pre-dental.
	120-122	Advisor told him that ten thousand people were applying for med school at UC Berkeley at that time (post war).
	123-127	Graduated from UCLA with Bachelor's Degree in Zoology. Attended USC and obtained teaching credential a year later (1951).
	128-134	Not too many Chinese studying education at USC at the time, mostly in sciences, medical, dental, and engineering.
	135-140	HL sees this as a limiting factor in the political scene.
	141-144	HL sees Japanese have greater involvement in politics.
5	145-150	HL sees Chinese lack visibility at Los Angeles City Hall, community input is very limited.
	151-157	After graduation, HL had no trouble finding jobs. Taught at 118th Street School in South Los Angeles; wanted to quit and enter medical school in second year. Was accepted at Osteopathic School of Medicine, now in Irvine.
	158-162	But first child arrived, HL went back to teaching.
	163-166	HL ended up at Holmes Avenue School for five years.
	167-168	HL then went to Ivanhoe in 1959 for four or five years.
	169-170	HL left on sabbatical, went into counselling for seven years, became a director of projects for one year, 1970-1971. Came to present office in 1972.
	171-177	HL did not feel there was discrimination against Chinese in hiring, but probably there was in promotion, but very subtle.
6	178-186	HL usually worked at small schools. Principal would appoint a vice-principal. Was vice-principal at first school for two years. Then at Ivanhoe was acting principal for two years.

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Time Segment	Counter Number	Summary
6	178-186	HL was going to take assistant principal test in 1963, gave another teacher the opportunity to be acting principal, who happened to run across HL's file.
	187-198	HL's principal had written that "Mr. Leong is a nice Chinese gentleman," which HL feels would have influenced the examination committee. This acting principal, a good friend of HL's, informed him of the situation.
	199-216	After HL took the test, the principal told him that it was good to take the test for the experience, did not show full support.
7	217-243	Promotional system in schools dependent on "who you know, not what you know."
	244-252	HL has made his own recommendations for promotion for assistant principals.
	253-259	HL was upset, asked for evaluation with personnel.
	260-273	Evaluation form based on many categories, HL could see on the form prepared by his principal that he did not receive "Outstanding" check marks in a few categories, which would hurt his chances.
8	274-311	Did not think of this as discrimination at the time, just upset that he did not receive better check marks.
	312-320	HL's present office is the direct representative of the Board of Education, Advisory to the Board.
9	321-347	HL's role is to support teachers with special talents when the superintendent makes assignments from the hiring list.
	348-369	Great deal of competition among minorities for positions. Generally dominated by the two largest minority groups.
10	370-395	HL attempts to discover particular areas of expertise of teachers on the hiring list.
	396-408	HL has served on the Asian American Commission since 1972, Commission begun in 1970.
	409-423	Asian American Commission deals with anything involving education and Asian American students, including health, welfare, staffing, parent concerns, etc.
11	424-450	HL lived mainly near 9th and San Pedro Street until after World War II. After marriage he moved to South Los Angeles approximately one year. Moved back to family home, on 9th and Towne, then moved to Crenshaw area for 12 years.
	451-470	Then to Monterey Park 12 years ago, still there now.
	471-481	At home, mother spoke only Toisan Cantonese; HL's mother began learning English 10 years after HL's father died.

END OF SIDE A

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Time Segment	Counter Number	Summary
1	001-007	Spoke both Toisan and English at home.
	008-013	Mother grew up in San Francisco Chinatown, did not need to know English.
	014-021	Area at 9th and San Pedro really like a Chinatown. Had all services, Chinese grocery store -- Ying Chong Lung (英昌隆) restaurants like Man Fook Low (萬福樓), Market, bank run by Hiram Kwan's father had Chinese tellers, didn't need much else.
	022-023	Occasionally went to shopping area at 9th and Broadway.
2	024-036	Mother used to take him to Chinese opera, north of First and Central at Jackson Street. There used to be a big auditorium, didn't always understand the language because of voices used.
	037-040	HL's older sister and brother went to Chinese school, younger members of the family did not. After father passed away, mother could not afford expenses.
	041-061	Older brother and sister enjoyed Chinese school. A lot of social activities. They had friends like Chung Tong of Drum and Bugle Corps, and his brothers. Also Archie Quan who grew up on 10th Street.
	062-064	Another friend was Clara Quan Woo, who married one of the San Fernando Woos.
	065-066	Still see Archie Quan in Chinatown every once in a while. Does not know what he is doing. Both went to Chinese school with HL's brother.
3	067-074	HL's sister and brother went to Chinese school for about five or six years. Then went to China for education for several years.
	075-080	They did not oppose all this schooling, followed traditional values such as filial piety.
	081-082	City Market area was a close community, many Chinese but also many Japanese. Certain streets, like 10th Street and 9th Place, had mostly Chinese.
	083-086	But HL's family lived on Towne Avenue and Crocker Street, only several Chinese families lived there, had mostly Japanese neighbors.
	087-088	Originally lived on 10th Street, family moved when HL was one year old, to Towne Avenue but not for too many years.
	089-099	Moved to Chinatown, down "by the stables."
4	100-106	HL's friends were both Chinese and Japanese. Japanese later came to be involved in athletic teams, Chinese did not have any.

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Time Segment	Counter Number	Summary
4	107-110	HL was active in sports, joined a Japanese group; played football, basketball. No Chinese groups active in competition. Was not until after war that there were basketball, softball teams in Chinese leagues.
	111-120	Japanese continued to be active in athletic leagues. Chinese have only a small league at Alpine playground.
	121-126	Outside of home, HL spoke only Chinese. His brothers and friends spoke English.
	127-136	Older brother stayed in China for three or four years. Went to Sun Wui (新會) because father owned some property there. Temple there may still be standing, Temple walls have history of family, possibly includes brother's name, to indicate oldest son's return. Does not know if village is still there. None of the family has returned since 1949. Brother came back in 1930's.
5	137-150	Felt some bias when growing up.
	151-163	At that time not all this was fully verbalized, thus somewhat accepted.
	164-167	HL's elementary school was better. David Lee's mother (a Caucasian) was teaching there.
	168-174	At reunions at Jefferson High School five or six years ago, 400 people came.
6	175-186	At that time, taught values were based on Anglo-Saxon tradition.
	187-196	Pressure from family to succeed in school, but toward success economically, rather than just academically.
	197-206	Great deal of parental and peer pressure within the ghetto at 9th and San Pedro.
	207-213	Was important to get out of school, go to work, especially in period after Depression.
	214-226	Many of HL's peers were able to go to universities and succeed after the war (World War II), because attitudes towards Chinese improved after the war. Before World War II many of his friends graduated from college with degrees in fields like engineering, but found the doors closed to them. Ended up working in places like fruit stands, alongside Japanese.
7	227-229	There were blatant examples of racial bias in hiring. HL's wife, after completing high school and college in San Diego, was told that she should not go into teaching because she would not be hired.
	230-236	HL himself applied for a job in Hermosa Beach, after

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Time Segment	Counter Number	Summary
7	230-236	having taught a few years in Los Angeles, but felt that he was brushed off at the interview.
	237-240	Whether there was real discrimination or not is not always known, but an individual may think that there was.
	241-249	Harry Young, a good friend of HL's older brother, worked in a county office and gave HL several job leads (and supported him with recommendations) which did not work out possibly because of discrimination.
	250-252	HL did not have many American friends where he lived. At Jefferson High School most of his friends were Chinese, Japanese, Black and Hispanics.
	253-256	His friends were mostly Asians: Chinese and Japanese. They often ate lunch together. The students usually stuck together by ethnic group or grade level.
	257-265	HL belonged to the Chinese Club at Jefferson High School. Frances Ho Wong, Charlie Quan, Frank Quon, Wilbur Woo, and Young Jew were also there.
	266-274	Chinese Club used to meet once a month or so, which met some of their social needs. They used to have "record hops" at various members' houses.
8	275-290	HL feels that his generation benefitted from not being as affluent and privileged as the current generation of kids, who may not be able to face hardships.
	291-296	HL's generation had fewer opportunities, no cars.
	297-304	For recreation, HL was involved in athletics, and because the Chinese didn't have many athletic activities, he joined the Japanese team at their invitation.
	305-307	After HL left the service, there was a Chinese league.
	307-308	HL joined the bowling league at the old Angeles Bowling, which no longer exists, which was at 9th or 10th Street and Olive. HL bowled there a couple of years.
	309-313	HL went to the bowling alley on Saturdays. Before he went into the service, he went to work after getting out of high school, and used to bowl every Saturday, and all of Chinatown [seemed to be out there].
	314-315	There was a bowling alley on the next block called The Vogue, but the Angeles was the main one.
9	316-326	HL did go to Chinese movies. However they were in Cantonese and HL spoke Toishan dialect, and there were differences. He did enjoy the action.
	327-339	HL's family did play mahjong, but they never gambled. Not much more in the way of Chinese games. Most of his games were in playing with the neighborhood kids.

Time Segment	Counter Number	Summary
9	340-362	HL's mother did expose him to various aspects of Chinese culture, such as the greatness of China, the Chinese scholarship, the Chinese leaders such as Chiang Kai-Shek, Dr. Sun Yat Sen. Her world was more Chinese than American.
	363-373	HL's mother, after HL's father passed away, then began to learn more English, learned to become more Americanized; but it would be difficult to establish the exact degree to which she became Americanized.
10	374-388	HL's mother's friends and associates were mostly Chinese. Dr. Lee, the herbalist. She took HL to various places, including the opera, which he had difficulty understanding.
	389-406	There were times when he wished he was American or white, because of the advantages. He would hear about friends from his neighborhood who graduated from college high up academically but couldn't get jobs.
	407-429	When HL went to work, he did get a job right away at a Japanese gas station. But his world at that time was smaller, was to busy working. Did not have time to think about being anything else.
	430-440	He took a class at Los Angeles City College just before the war. Did not encounter racial bias there.
11	441-446	HL did encounter bias in the service, but became angry rather than wish he was Caucasian.
	447-492	HL's responses to the questions concerning race, Americanization, etc., might be typical of the experiences of American born Chinese, but only for those within his particular neighborhood, that is 9th and San Pedro. Those in other neighborhoods, such as Chinatown, might have had other experiences.
	493-END	The only place where he had experiences outside the neighborhood sphere was at the public schools where there was a greater mix from different geographic areas, for example, Poly High School had a majority of Caucasians.
END OF TAPE 1		

TAPE 2 SIDE A

1	001-006	Introduction by Jean Wong
	007-012	HL's mother used many Chinese herbs, bought from an herb store on 9th Street, near San Pedro Street.
	013-017	Herb preparations used for many illnesses, especially colds.
	017-018	Did use castor oil occasionally.

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Time Segment	Counter Number	Summary
1	019-021 022-031	Herbs were cooked with meats like squirrel, beef. Did use some Western medicines, such as castor oil; however does not recall ever going to doctor. Colds, etc. were treated at home.
2	032-040 041-046 047-053 054-058 059-062	Presently HL does not use Chinese herbs. Goes to doctor. HL does use certain over-the-counter products such as "Tiger Balm" (萬金油), and some other products. HL generally speaks English with his children, although all of them were taught some Cantonese. The youngest son also had two years of Mandarin at USC. HL's children did not independently volunteer to take Chinese language classes. HL sent them to a school ran by a church in the Crenshaw area. The oldest children attended for a couple of years. The son became proficient enough to write some letters to HL's mother-in-law in San Diego, who knew very little English.
3	063-074 075-084 085-102	But generally HL spoke English with his children. American born Chinese of HL's generation feel that it is important to learn Chinese, but most of their children feel otherwise. HL sees that his own children, having learned some of the language and tradition, have some respect for certain aspects of the culture. HL's youngest son, Corky, stopped taking [language] classes to concentrate on his graduate studies.
4	103-105 106-109 109-110 111-114 115-121 122-124 125-127	HL's daughter is busy working, now has a fiance, and does not have time for Chinese studies. HL's wife Louise speaks Toishan, and Cantonese also, while HL himself cannot speak Cantonese -- he knows only a few words. His wife says he "butchers" it. HL and his wife, Louise, were married in 1949. They met in San Diego. HL went to San Diego with the Chinese basketball team. There was a social afterwards. HL's father did write to friends and relatives in China. HL's father seemed to be well educated and had a large number of Chinese books among his business papers in a large cabinet. He had a good Chinese [writing] hand. HL's mother could read and write but he does not know to what extent. However, she did speak both Cantonese and Toishan. HL's father did send money back to China. He had siblings and relatives, and also owned property in China.



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Time Segment	Counter Number	Summary
4	128-129	HL does not know status of that property now.
	130-133	HL's oldest brother is now in this country, but he was married in China, and sent money over until she passed away, and to his son.
	134-137	But his brother's son doesn't want to come over here. He couldn't get away during the Communist takeover, they [the Communists] attempted to extort money from him.
	138-141	HL believes that his nephew is presently in Canton.
5	142-146	HL's mother did not join any Chinatown organizations. The Leong family did not have a family association, except for the Sun Wei District Association [Kong Chow Association].
	147-150	HL's father did join associations. He was very active in the community.
	151-154	HL's mother considered herself more as a housewife, seldom leaving the house.
	155-160	HL himself, as a kid, did not join Chinatown organizations. His world was the 9th Street area.
	161-162	HL felt that there was strong territoriality, that Chinatown people did not like "outsiders," that is, from 9th and San Pedro area, coming in.
	162-163	He did not really understand this until he was a little older. When he was younger, he had no need to go to Chinatown except for shopping, taking the streetcar there.
	163-164	After getting out of high school, when he had a car, he went to Chinatown a lot.
	165-169	He did know many of the people in Chinatown however. He got to know many people after he got out of high school.
	170-173	However, he knew people mainly on a pure social basis, not because of clubs and associations.
	174-180	HL's participation in clubs fell by the wayside because he had to go to work. During the period from about 1927, after his father's death, to 1940, his family was in tight financial situation. It was necessary for HL to go to work as soon as he got out of school.
6	181-187	HL went to work first at a gas station, for a year, working with Japanese. Then worked at a market. Began taking classes at night, enrolling at LACC just before the War [World War II] started.
	188-191	HL worked at Chinese produce markets for about a year. One was the 7th Street Market, Wong Kim, and the other was Season Produce Market, now still partly Chinese owned, with Japanese and Caucasians, but originally all Chinese owned.

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Time Segment	Counter Number	Summary
6	192-193	HL then joined the Air Force by enlisting.
	194-199	In HL's world, which was mostly in the business field, an important person in the Chinese community was Y.C. Hong, the attorney whom HL's mother talked about. Another was Louie Quan, of the Louie Produce Company.
	200-215	Other important people were Jing Hing, the jeweler who is now right behind Hong Kong Low. He was Bob Lee's father. He used to be on Los Angeles Street.
	216-226	Gilbert Leong's parents were down in that area. When HL's father passed away, Gilbert's parents wanted to adopt HL as one of their sons. HL's mother at that time was saddled with seven children but she "talked them out of it." Gilbert Leong's parents at that time had the Soo Chow Low, or Soo Chow Restaurant, one of the better known places, on Los Angeles Street.
7	227-232	HL was the fifth child and the youngest boy of the family.
	233-240	HL's father's business was the same size as Louie Quan's Louie Produce Company. If his father had lived longer, at least until HL's older brothers came of age, then their business may have taken a different direction. Louie Produce was only a "two-door" place like the Leong's.
	241-252	[Interruption]
	253-260	Before World War II, the types of jobs that most Chinese were engaged in were the produce markets, the restaurants, and the laundries. A few, like HL, worked in gas stations. A limited few were fortunate enough to become engineers. Most were in the three main areas.
	261-270	But at that time there really were a few Chinese. The Census of 1940 showed only 239,000 Chinese in the United States. Los Angeles was not that big, probably not even 10,000, perhaps 5,000 in Los Angeles before World War II.
	271-274	The Chinese became more scattered out, among the three main areas: Chinatown, 9th Street, and 20th Street, and a few out in the Lincoln Heights direction. There really were not that many.
8	275-277	Out of 5,000 there were working adults, with housewives, women who didn't work subtracted. There was a work force of only about one thousand or less.
	278-280	Many of the women worked in restaurants, as waitresses, some in clerical positions, some as seamstresses.
	281-298	A large number of Chinese worked in businesses owned by Chinese. Very few worked in the non-Chinese community.

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Time Segment	Counter Number	Summary
8	281-298	Some worked at jobs like shipping clerks, in warehouses, or driving trucks. Most truck drivers were non-Chinese, unless a Chinese drove for his own business.
	299-300	There are always individuals like a Y. C. Hong, who was an attorney, but even then most of his clients were Chinese. There weren't any Chinese becoming judges.
	301-307	There were very few in insurance, except for Albert Hing or Louie Ong, the late Louie Ong.
	308-310	There necessarily had to be a few who served the Chinese in those areas. But when one stepped into a field serving a broader population, one was not going to become accepted, most of the time. Someone like Albert Hing would get a few non-Chinese clients, but would starve if he had to depend on their business.
	311-319	An average income before World War II, or during the 1930's to 1940's, would be \$15 to \$25 per week, for a Chinese. There was a great deal of competition for jobs during the Depression.
9	320-330	HL felt fortunate to have gotten his first job, working for \$15 a week for a Japanese gas station. Worked there for a year, then worked for another gas station, working for a Chinese, at Adams and San Pedro, Chin Fong Ong (C.F.O.).
	331-333	HL knows Henry Ong, who should be interviewed, who has been in Los Angeles a long time, older than HL. Went to Chinese school with a lot of guys, went back to China.
	334-343	Abraham Chin's father was once the president of one of the Tongs. Abraham once told HL a story about the Tong wars in which his father had a guard in front of their house. Abie Chin is one of the bosses at C.F.O. at Adams and San Pedro.
	344-345	Abraham Chin was [half-Chinese blood], his father was Chinese, his mother was black, but he also went to Chinese school.
	346-353	Abraham Chin's brother, George, used to tell stories of their going down to Old Chinatown, back where the train station is. They used to throw rocks over the fence at the Italians and Chicanos. One day he got hit in the head with a rock.
	354-366	In the beginning, HL got \$15 a week at the gas station. But he found out that other workers were getting \$25 a week and working 12 hours a day. He knew that people in the markets were getting \$25 a week. Just before the war, HL went to work for C. F. O. for \$25 to \$30 a week. Then when he went to the market he got \$40 a week.

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Time Segment	Counter Number	Summary
9	367-375	HL entered night school at LACC, hoping to enter defense industry, which paid better, perhaps learn to be an engineer. However, the war broke out, and he never really got into school.
10	376-387	HL did not have money left over. Because he was young, he tended to spend all his income. HL also charged [bought on credit] for things. While working at the gas station he bought a car, gas, parts, on credit, because he didn't have sufficient money. He did not save too much.
	388-396	HL did not support his mother. She was working at various jobs. She did not ask for support or contributions.
	397-428	HL does not know, but suspects that those who had enough income to have money left over kept cash at home. HL thinks that, while he was not in the same position, many of the early Chinese, being on lower income scale and perhaps being suspicious of other with their money, tended to be possessive or protective of their money.
	429-434	HL was aware, when he went to friends' houses, that there was a lot of money in the house.
	435-445	Chinese also invested a lot in jade and gold. Chinese gold was almost pure. Many spent much of their earnings on gold. Many of their children, daughters, had necklaces and bracelets with gold and jade.
11	446-458	There were four or five restaurants on San Pedro, plus a parlor on a side street off San Pedro, where there was gambling. In the back rooms of the restaurants where people played cards or mahjong.
	459-462	HL's mother used to tell him about the Jong Bue (Keno) games where people made hundreds of dollars.
	463-474	People used to tell HL, when he went to the Chinese Herb Store on San Julian Street, one block west of San Pedro, the men would tell him to pick out some words, and they would mark them on the cards, "for good luck." And then the next day the man would give him a nickel (if he won).

END OF SIDE A

TAPE 2 SIDE B

1	001-011	HL was not aware of any Chinese from his generation who became involved in politics.
	012-025	HL believes that the Depression probably did affect many Chinese, but probably not as hard as upon general Anglo

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Time Segment	Counter Number	Summary
1	012-025	population because Chinese tended to be more frugal with themselves, spending money on the family overall instead of on oneself. Rice and other foodstuffs that comprised the Chinese diet cost less than Anglo diet.
	026-028	It seemed to HL that his family was pretty bad off. They did not have any income, in a sense. HL's mother was unskilled, there was no father, all of HL's siblings were too young to go to work, and when they did go to work, they had only menial jobs.
2	029-034	HL's family was definitely affected by the Depression. They did not have much clothing, and when HL's clothes were worn through with holes, he had to put cardboard in them, until they could be repaired or replaced with new ones.
	034-035	There was a shoe repair place two blocks from his house.
	036-037	HL's family never accepted any financial aid from the government.
	038-042	However, when HL was in elementary school, his name was put on a list of needy families sent by the school to the Shriners for receiving Christmas aid.
	043-050	There were other Chinese on the list [of needy] but the school was mostly non-Chinese, non-Asian. HL noted that there were many more Hispanics on the bus that took students from his school to the Shriners Christmas Event. HL felt that the Chinese were relatively poor compared to people on the west side, for example, but that they were a shade better off than the Hispanics.
	051-059	HL feels that some Chinese have not done as well as other minorities over the years. For example, Census statistics through 1970 show that Chinese women have had a lower income than Black women. There may be many who are doing well, but as a group, the average is pulled down by those on the bottom rung.
	060-063	As for the men, if World War II and the Civil Rights Movements had not come along, they would still be trying to find their way.
	064-066	HL feels that generally, Chinese on their own, men and women, are capable of achieving. But there also are some constraints.
3	067-074	HL sees that in affirmative action programs, because of the goals set based upon population ratios, sometimes there are people accepted for jobs who are less qualified. However, HL also believes that affirmative action rights

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Time Segment	Counter Number	Summary
3	067-074	some wrongs and prevents some wrongs. HL's main goal is effectiveness.
	075-083	Through his office at the Board of Education, HL is able to express some of his own viewpoints. He makes many recommendations in hiring.
	084-088	HL has a list of all employees in school district who are Asian. Two-thirds of those Asians are Japanese. Only 15-20% are Chinese.
	089-096	Chinese employees in the district do not seem as eager as Japanese to be promoted out of the classrooms. HL does not know why. He finally got seven Chinese women on the hiring list for Assistant Principal.
4	097-110	At one point, Bill Chun-Hoon, principal of Castelar School, took a one-year leave of absence, and a temporary replacement was needed. HL called up many Chinese, ten men, who were qualified, but they did not want the job.
	111-116	As a group, the Chinese tend to be less aggressive than other Asians. The Koreans, Filipinos and Samoans are aggressive. The Indochinese, their kids are very aggressive because they have gone through a lot.
	117-128	At City Hall, for example, the groups that have all the "ins" are Japanese, Koreans, Filipinos. They have a lot of political things going on over there. They give dinners, which HL has attended. All these activities politically help the community and the group. Politically they are very knowledgable. The Koreans are "tops" in City Hall circles now.
	129-132	HL went to a Governor Jerry Brown fundraising a year ago to help reduce Brown's Presidential campaign debt. It was very hard to fill thirty tables at \$50 a person, ten people per table.
	133-138	The Koreans had a fundraiser a few weeks ago, and they only wanted twenty people at \$1,000 per person. Thirty people showed up, and some had to be turned away. It was held at a private home. The guy [owner] gave all the money, \$30,000, to Governor Brown, and footed the food bill himself.
5	139-149	At the school district, HL has to badger people to get on the promotion list. People "blame" HL for getting them their assistant principal positions. People need the impetus [from HL's office].
	150-157	HL sees all the opportunities available, especially for women. The district is under court order for 40% of all promotional placements to be women.

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Time Segment	Counter Number	Summary
5	158-159	HL is currently talking to the superintendent about three people on the bottom of the promotional list. The people on the list have to have been somewhat aggressive. Many other people are sitting back, not doing anything toward promotion.
	160-163	HL believes that perhaps the lack of aggressiveness in Chinese is that the Chinese have historically, in California, have been "put in their place." Chinese were prohibited from many activities. The Koreans, on the other hand, have not had that experience.
	164-165	A Korean told HL that the Koreans (in Korea) were first dominated by the Chinese, then the Japanese, and there was always a lot of fighting, and that was why the Koreans are as aggressive as they are.
	166-167	HL finds that among the new group of Chinese, such as from Taiwan, many are very aggressive.
	168-171	But HL does not see that in American born Chinese, nor in their children.
	172-180	Just as the parents of Japanese American kids do not tend to talk about their relocation camp experiences, and just as HL himself followed tradition while an officer in the military service, a lot of people tend not to be outspoken but accept the rules as they are.
	181-190	HL has heard comparisons between Chinese and Jewish, but only recently. In the business area, with the new money coming in, especially in Hawaii, people say that the Chinese control a lot of the money.
	191-196	Filipinos have told HL that the Chinese control [their country], but that they have a better attitude toward the Chinese than the Japanese, because of Japan's actions in World War II.
	197-200	HL has heard references to Chinese as being the "Jew of the Orient," and believes that is attributed to their aggressiveness in business.
	201-208	Because HL lives in Monterey Park, he has seen a lot of conflict, such as hostile KKK [Ku Klux Klan] activities against the Chinese, due to Chinese taking over a lot of businesses, theatres, moving into housing, etc.
6 & 7	209-244	[General discussion of ethnic confusion by Anglos].

END OF TAPE 2

## Contents (cont'd)

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Time Segment	Counter Number	Summary
1	001-006	Introduction: Second Interview, February 2, 1981, at HL's office.
	007-012	Before World War II, there were three major areas for Chinese: 9th and San Pedro, 20th and San Pedro, and Chinatown.
	013-023	Most of HL's peers at that time were not looking into careers in professional fields. Many did go to college, but also had to work at the same time to cover expenses. Many were not looking beyond their four years of college because of the current bias, limited opportunities for Chinese.
	024-032	Japanese also faced same problem. Most of the families on HL's street were Japanese. They did not look toward any jobs beyond working at fruits stands, the wholesale produce market, or similar types of employment, such as gardening, service stations, but not at higher, professional levels unless one went through college to become a doctor or a dentist.
2	033-038	Opportunities were very limited, for women also. HL's sister and many of her peers went to work in restaurants, some took clerical, department store sales positions. And sewing factories too.
	039-049	Some women went to work in houses as maids. The 1970 Census showed that Chinese women had lower average than their Black sisters. This shows that in the three decades or so since World War II, Chinese women have not progressed as much as women of their ethnic groups.
	050-052	HL and peers, before war, then were not looking forward toward opportunities. There were Japanese on his street who had graduated in engineering from UCLA but unable to find employment because of discrimination.
	053-055	There were Chinese working in the field, as engineers, but their numbers were limited. There were also some in business, and insurance, but so far as working for private industries or civil services, the numbers were very limited. There was a lot of job bias.
	056-066	Chinese women may not have made as much progress as other women, because the other ethnic groups were helped by the civil rights movements. Historically, there have been more black women teaching than Chinese women.
3	067-071	HL's wife, in San Diego in the late 1940's, early 1950's, was advised by the college not to go into teaching, as San Diego would not hire Chinese.



## Contents (cont'd)

Time Segment	Counter Number	Summary
3	072-084	After HL's father passed away, their market was owned by the family for a while. HL's oldest brother was still in high school, too young to run the business. Several of HL's uncles took over running the business. HL was too young to remember the details.
		HL's mother did not speak English, did not know first thing about business, was precluded from being involved. HL's brother, because of young age, was also shut out of the business by the uncles.
	085-089	The uncles were HL's father's younger brothers. The family got rid of the business because the economics were not feasible.
	090-097	HL does not know how the profits were distributed among the various families involved.
	098-101	HL's father may have been one of the founders of the market. In 1910, several years after founding of the market, HL's father was the secretary of the Market Association.
4	102-105	HL believes that after the war, when many produce houses enlarged due to the Japanese leaving, that his father, being aggressive, could have expanded his business.
	106-117	In 1970-1971, HL was Director of project called KEYS, acronym for Knowledge of English Yields Success. Project was based on premise that knowledge of English was necessary for success in school.
	118-119	KEYS project was originally proposed for kindergarten through high school. Because of size of proposed budget, negotiations with state resulted in program for elementary level only.
	120-123	In following year, budget negotiations allowed early learners, pre-school classes for children from non- and limited English speaking families. Materials being developed actually covered extended into elementary grades, but actual project participation was in pre-school area.
	124-131	Program initially covered five schools, in Carson, Gardena, Chinatown, by City College, and Solano Avenue by Dodger Stadium.
	132-140	In second year, just before HL left, proposal was expanded to add on several other schools -- two of the schools had Korean children. Program has subsequently been expanded, with more materials, kits, teachers. Materials now available in Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Samoan, and Filipino.
5	141-165	[Discussion of improvement of student test scores because of the program].

## Contents (cont'd)

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Time Segment	Counter Number	Summary
5	166-172	HL began his career at 118th Street School around 1951 or 1952.
	173-180	HL then went to Holmes Avenue School, beginning 1952, for five years, then in 1958 or 1959 went to Ivanhoe School until 1964. Took off on sabbatical leave, came back to work as counselor in 1965 to 1970, roughly.
	181-182	HL then went into KEYS project for one year.
6	183-187	HL's counseling period involved individual and group counseling, home visits.
	188-201	HL viewed the Chinese Club at Jefferson High as being mostly socially oriented, involved in planning events such as "record hops" at various homes. The students generally car pooled to these events due to economics.
	202-205	The club members would sometimes get together to go bowling. The basic goal in getting together was to get to know each other.
	206-209	Only Chinese were in the Chinese Club. There was a club for the Japanese at Jefferson High also.
	210-214	HL does not recall any non-Chinese at Chinese Club other than the faculty advisor.
	215-217	There have been three reunions of the Chinese Club. Last one, held five years ago, was the largest. It drew about 400 people who went to school during his period.
7	218-235	It included not only Jefferson High School alumni, but became a gathering of Poly High School alumni, and of all other Chinese students from the period. The reunion brought together people who had not seen each other in 20 to 30 years. The reunions were discontinued because of the great amount of work involved.
	236-247	HL did not directly experience overt discrimination in the service. HL was a pilot, an officer. All the officers in his bomber crew were Chinese. The other three members were Caucasian enlisted men. The crew was very close, working and flying together, taking weekend trips together.
	248-262	But the crew was then assigned overseas to the India-Burma Theater. The commanding officer, a major, read their names prior to their arrival. The names included Kin Foo Lee, who passed away five years ago, Stanley Lee, and HL. The major remarked to his fellow officers that there were three "brown bodies" coming, and appeared to enjoy using those descriptive terms.
	263-267	When HL's crew arrived, the commanding officer was not present to welcome them, as was customary when a new crew arrived. Instead an administrative assistant, or adjutant, was sent to welcome them.

## Contents (cont'd)

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Time Segment	Counter Number	Summary
8	268-275	Furthermore, they never did become acquainted with their commanding officer. HL never officially met him. HL saw him drinking at the officer's club, but he never came over to say hello.
	276-290	The commanding officer did not make any unfriendly remarks about the Chinese officers, but his actions were otherwise overt in his avoidance of them, in his lack of courtesy.
	291-309	HL's crew knew that there was bias, although no one ever directly told them there was.
9	310-326	During the pre-war period in Los Angeles, HL and his peers, due to the economics, did not have the means to often go to other areas. Therefore the opportunities to encounter racial hostility were limited.
	327-328	HL and peers used to go swimming at a pool in a mostly Black area, around 22nd and San Pedro.
	329-332	Some of the guys once went to the Bimini Center near First and Vermont, which had a dance hall and a swimming pool, but were not let it.
	333-341	This ban occurred even though a white, from the 22nd Street area, was trying to take his two friends, one Chinese and one Japanese, to Bimini Center, and had pleaded that they were his friends. This occurred just before World War II, in the late 1930's.
	342-351	Some of HL's group tried to go to the two ballrooms out in Venice and Ocean Park, where the "name" big bands such as Glenn Miller, Tommy Dorsey, Harry James, Benny Goodman, often played. However, the Chinese were turned away.
	352-358	Even though HL was never directly involved, HL knew of confrontations between individual whites and Chinese, wherein the Chinese might be called a "chink" or some other expletive.
10	359-389	Nowadays, due to ethnic confusion by non-Asians, racial bias intended for other groups, such as Indochinese and Koreans, may be misdirected toward Chinese.
	390-392	Racial hostility was definitely experienced in the past at dance halls and swimming pools.
	393-398	As for theaters, HL and friends generally went to movie theaters in nearby downtown, but also went to places like Grauman's Chinese Theater, the Pantages Theater, or the Warner's on Hollywood Boulevard.
	399-403	HL himself did not encounter hostility, but did hear from people who had had problems in restaurants.

## Contents (cont'd)

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Time Segment	Counter Number	Summary
10	404-429	A friend, Hank (Henry) Ong, one of the owners of the CFO Service Station, was once driving back from a basketball game down in San Diego in the late 1940's. He went into a restaurant with some friends, in Oceanside, and was told "Sorry, we're full," even though most of the tables were empty. Hank Ong, who had been in the service, responded with a remark about what he had been fighting for, and walked out.
11	430-466	HL did not directly experience discrimination in the period before World War II, because he was young and still in school. But by word of mouth he learned of incidents of job hiring discrimination, or of being refused service in restaurants, etc.
	467-476	There were some who did find jobs, but not until after World War II. Some found jobs in the Department of Water and Power, with the city, but only after years without jobs following their graduation.
END OF SIDE A		
<u>TAPE 3 SIDE B</u>		
1	001-032	HL found that most of the Chinese lived together because of the circumstances of the times. Because of the language barrier most people worked in jobs where there was little contact outside of the Chinese community. And in the Chinese community, most of the business could be conducted in Chinese. Most needs were met within the community. When one tried to go outside of the community, such as moving to another neighborhood, they were stopped. Therefore, there was no "need" to move out.
2	033-044	Certain individuals who had a lot of money were able to move out to certain exclusive neighborhoods, perhaps because of the distance separating the larger homes. It was not possible to move into blue collar or lower income neighborhoods.
	045-055	HL has seen that many Chinese cannot move out because of their financial condition. Others have moved when the neighborhood around them changed, particularly if they are victimized by crime, such as in the Crenshaw area.
3	056-083	Many Chinese will move, given the opportunity.
	084-094	Nelson Moy, of United Poultry, owns a "Taj Mahal" residence two blocks up the street from Castelar School. He would

## Contents (cont'd)

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Time Segment	Counter Number	Summary
3	084-094	not move because it is accessible to work and he likes the area. His house cost about \$250,000 to build, fifteen years ago.
4	095-109	The Chinese generally choose where they live based on the economics of the area. As people move up in financial condition, they begin to look out toward other areas.
	110-117	The stability of a neighborhood depends on the economic stability and ethnic stability of the people. The changes usually occur when new arrivals of lower economic class move in.
	118-126	HL knew some Chinese laundrymen who had a hard time meeting women. HL did not know at the time that this was due to the dearth of women.
	127-130	Some of them went to Hong Kong and found wives, although HL did not know how this was accomplished while the Exclusion Act was still in effect.
	131-133	Some men went out of town, to places like San Francisco, and somehow located brides.
	134-137	Most of the Chinese men who went to high school here were fortunate to have a [social] nucleus that had Chinese women.
	138-139	HL himself did not become involved with a local girl, perhaps because of his involvement with sports, and with starting school.
5	140-147	Some of the fellows met women at school, or at record hops, or through the churches.
	148-153	HL saw that, generally speaking, Chinese would marry within the same generation. But this was not necessarily always true.
	154-166	It was important to HL's parents and other parents that Chinese marry Chinese. However, it was more important that the partner be economically stable, for example, having a job.
	167-173	Most Chinese parents discouraged interracial marriages, but there were some that did occur, such as Chinese with Japanese.
6	174-208	HL shares view with many Chinese that the Chinese are culturally superior to other groups, including Europeans, and should be proud of the fact.
7	209-240	HL feels that, because of the close character of the Chinese community of his generation, many traditions, such as the desire to have sons, have been retained by his generation.

## Contents (cont'd)

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Time Segment	Counter Number	Summary
7	241-245	HL has his desired son, but also has a daughter. He is not prejudiced against her. She is capable of talking things out with him.
	246-271	Some of the generation of the sixties moved away from their families and traditions. However, some have moved back and become conservative, seeking security in jobs. Mario Savio, a student leader of the sixties, now teaches in the Los Angeles City school system.
8	272-307	HL and his children have a mutual understanding in the approach toward Chinese social tradition.
9	308-331	The attitude of today's children toward tradition depends on the parents. Some will take Asian American Studies classes to learn about themselves.
	332-340	HL sent all three of his children to Chinese school. However, their peers did not speak Chinese, and not much Chinese was used at home.
	341-343	HL's wife used to speak some Cantonese or Toishan to him and the children would catch it. However, the children do not have any practical need for Chinese language.
	344-352	If the kids were in Chinatown, going to Castelar School, or going to the CCBA Language School, there would be more utility of the Chinese language.
	353-358	HL's oldest son attended a couple of years of Chinese school, HL's daughter attended less than a year. His children resisted, and HL could not realistically force them to go further.
	359-367	HL's youngest son became interested on his own and took Mandarin at USC for two years. He learned to write well, and even wrote a letter down to HL's in-laws in San Diego, but has now probably forgotten 90% of what he learned.
10	368-392	While many Chinese came to America hoping to make money and return to China, HL believes that most did not. Those who were successful would prefer to stay, while those who were marginally successful could not afford to go back to China.
	393-409	Most of the older generation tended to have menial, low-paying jobs, and therefore could not afford to move back to China.
	410-415	Most American born Chinese did not have a desire to return to China or to become educated in China. Most that did go, went because they were sent by their parents.
	416-422	Charlie Quan was one of those who went to China. His wife grew up on HL's street, the only Chinese families on the

## Contents (cont'd)

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Time Segment	Counter Number	Summary
10	416-422	street. She never spoke to HL's family, possibly because she was stuck up or HL was too bashful.
	423-425	Henry Ong, Young Jew, were sent to China by their parents.
	426-427	Charlie Quan ran away from his school for awhile, because he didn't like it back there.
	428-430	Wilbur Woo, now of Cathay Bank, was sent to China also. Wilbur was one of the older students, and had more privileges [at the school in China].
	430-431	Henry Ong was another of the older students.
	432-436	Henry Ong is part of the C. F. O. gas station. Henry's father owned a grocer in a Black neighborhood.
	437-439	His brother, Eddie Ong, had a grocery store until about sixteen years ago. It was also in a Black neighborhood.
11	440-450	Most American born Chinese did think about going to China. However, very few were well off enough to actually go. Those probably numbered less than one percent of the Chinese American population.
	451-456	HL did not see too many movies while growing up, and therefore did not have many opportunities to see how Chinese were portrayed in the movies.
	457-463	HL saw Charlie Chan movies, but never recalled seeing Fu Manchu movies until after World War II.
	464-484	Actors such as Anna May Wong and Keye Luke who portrayed Chan's Number One Son, were looked up to by Chinese mainly because they were individuals fortunate to have gained employment in the movie industry, and because they were well known.
	485-492	HL did not know how much remuneration such actors received. However, HL learned later that Keye Luke acted only as a side occupation, having to hold another job in between acting assignments.

END OF TAPE 3

## Contents (cont'd)

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Time Segment	Counter Number	Summary
1	001-005	Introduction.
	006-022	While most Chinese in films, such as Anna May Wong and Willie Fung, played stereotyped roles, Chinese American audiences did not consider the negative implications of such stereotyped portrayals as would contemporary audiences. Rather, the actors were respected for their jobs in the film industry.
	023-030	A similar attitude existed for the blacks in the movies. Blacks always played certain roles, Chinese always played certain roles, such as servants, cooks, laundrymen.
2	031-033	Most people did not object to those occupational portrayals, because those were the actual occupations of many of the Chinese.
	034-038	The civil rights movements did not exist at the time. The Chinese, the Japanese, all accepted their limited conditions. There were no government commissions or agencies to protest their problems.
	039-057	Monroe Leong used to write letters of protest. He is an artist who now works in his home, and now lives down the street from HL.
	058-064	A large number of women from HL's generation did not finish or go beyond high school. Many became clerical workers, bookkeepers, etc.
3	065-069	Some of the men of HL's generation went to college, some went to Junior college as HL did, before the war (World War II). Some got jobs working at gas stations, produce houses, driving trucks, etc. They were limited in what they could go into.
	070-091	Of those who continued to college, most of the Chinese went into engineering, because it was a field that did not require strong language skills. Most of HL's neighborhood contemporaries grew up in a Cantonese or Sze Yup environment, did not fully develop their English, and thus did not feel confident in going into other fields.
4	092-104	Additionally, many Chinese felt more secure in going into areas that did not require constant interpersonal contact. Chinese went into science and engineering because math was the most important skill.
	105-110	Today the young people are not limiting themselves to only a few areas. They are branching out, into teaching, sociology.
	111-122	HL himself encourages his children to honestly do the best they can. He does not believe in forcing them to finish college.



## Contents (cont'd)

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Time Segment	Counter Number	Summary
4	123-129	HL went to Church off and on. HL played on Japanese teams, most of the guys he played with did not go to Church, but they were good people. Their parents went to Church.
	130-131	HL went to Church once in a while. He went to the Congregational Church for a while. Then later on went to the Presbyterian Church on Adams and San Pedro, which has now become the True Lite [Presbyterian Church] at another location [near Chinatown].
	132-133	HL spent most of his time on weekends with other kids in sports.
	134-137	HL's family has been active in Church. HL's wife was a Deaconess in the Church in San Diego. When she came to Los Angeles, she joined the Congregational Church.
5	138-146	HL's three children all went to church. The oldest, when he was about fifteen one day went to another church, got into a disagreement with the minister, and never went back to church.
	147-151	HL did not go to Church together with his kids, except on occasions such as Christmas or Easter -- about three times a year.
	152-157	HL's children still go on their own. His [youngest] son, who graduated from college, has been an advisor to the T. E. T., a high school group. He recently completed his finals at USC, and then went to a retreat at Big Bear.
	158-159	HL and his wife do not now go to Church regularly.
6	160-185	HL believes that each individual should live by his own code, but also know the Bible and Christian doctrine.
	86-188	HL believes that a large number, over half of his friends, of American born Chinese, went to Church.
	189-194	All the Chinese in this area went to Lincoln, Poly, Belmont, and Jefferson High Schools.
	195-198	The Chinese population in the United States in 1940 was probably less than 50 or 60 thousand. Perhaps at the most, 100 thousand.
	199-201	If there were ten thousand in the greater Los Angeles area, and half, or five thousand went to Church, there were not too many.
	202-206	Los Angeles Chinatown, with probably four to five thousand Chinese, was probably one of the larger pockets of Chinese next to San Francisco.
	207-211	HL saw New York Chinatown during the war, and thought that it was a little smaller than San Francisco Chinatown then, perhaps even smaller than Los Angeles Chinatown.

END OF SIDE A

END OF INTERVIEW

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