

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA CHINESE AMERICAN ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

Interviewee: Ora Yuen Interview Number: 40
 Chinese Name: 伍譚同愛 Number of Tapes: 2
 Date of Interview: 1/19/80 Length: 1 Hour & 21 Minutes
 Interviewer: S. Cheng & M. Kwok
 Others Present: None
 Language: English
 Summarizer: S. Cheng

Contents

Time Segment	Counter Number	Summary	Tape: <u>1</u> Side <u>A</u>
1	001-005	Introduction.	
	006-014	Mother was born in San Francisco. Father came from Canton, China.	
	015-019	Father came to the U.S. as a student and was much older than Ora Yuen's (OY) mother.	
	020-025	OY's father studied at USC and majored in medicine.	
	026-031	Father went to San Francisco to marry OY's mother.	
2	032-038	OY was born in San Francisco in 1898. The family moved to Los Angeles after the 1906 earthquake.	
	039-049	Father practices Chinese herbal medicine among Caucasians in San Francisco.	
	050-055	When the family first came to Los Angeles, they lived at another Tom's family house on Pico Boulevard.	
	056-061	Father treated all Caucasian patients.	
	062-066	Father started the business at 7th and Main Streets. The family stayed there too.	
3	067-079	Mother had nine children. OY was the oldest. Many brothers were also born in San Francisco.	
	080-095	OY went to grammar school, then to intermediate school, then to Los Angeles School. After that OY went to USC but didn't finish school.	
	096-101	OY got married and went to Chicago at the age of 21.	
4	102-107	OY met her husband at the YMCA in Los Angeles.	
	108-122	OY went to Chicago with her husband. From there they went to China when OY's first child was three. The baby was sick so they couldn't stay in China. They came back to Los Angeles.	
	123-137	OY's husband was a banking examiner. He examined the China exchange. He started working in Chicago at a bank.	

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Contents (cont'd)

Time Segment	Counter Number	Summary
4	138-144	OY stayed by themselves in Los Angeles although the parents were in Los Angeles.
5	145-148	OY had one girl and two boys.
	149-160	OY helped her father in his business in keeping his books and sometimes drove him around. Father didn't drive. OY started driving at 13 and needed a special license.
	161-179	OY was the first Chinese girl to drive in those days. When the family decided to buy a car the salesperson taught her how to drive.
	180-196	OY was brave. father used to drive a horse and buggy to visit his patients. Later OY drove her father around. Her father had to make appointments to visit his patients after OY got out from school.
6	197-202	Father went to all the places in Los Angeles to see his patients. The patients also came to his office.
	203-216	Father visited patients and the patients would send someone to the office to pick up the medicine.
	217-225	Father was an American licensed pharmacist and was a Chinese herbal doctor before he came to the U.S.
	226-233	Father used both Chinese herbs and American medicine.
	234-249	Father prescribed and hired a Chinese man who would weight the herbs and put all the medicine together.
7	250-252	Father imported Chinese herbs from China.
	253-262	OY was supposed to learn all the names of the Chinese herbs as well as learn to weigh the herbs.
	263-277	After going to an American school, OY and her siblings had to study Chinese at home with a special tutor from China.
8	278-292	OY's family never lived in Chinatown. They lived outside of Chinatown.
	293-300	Father bought a big two story house.
	301-315	The family used to go down to Chinatown with a horse and buggy to eat and to shop.
	316-321	Mother used to love to read Chinese novels.
	322-329	Mother's mother used to teach in China.
	330-334	Mother's name was Lee Tsui Ping.
	335-346	OY noticed that her father would send for different herbs from China.
9	347-358	OY couldn't remember the old Chinatown because they did not go to Chinatown that often.

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Contents (cont'd)

Time Segment	Counter Number	Summary
9	359-367 368-373 374-388 389-400 401-417	Father required everyone to speak Chinese at home. Father conversed with patients in English. Father learned some English in Hong Kong. OY's brothers didn't keep up with the Chinese language. Mother always had help at home, such as a cook and housekeeper. OY didn't have to do any housework.
10	418-426 427-446 447-453	Mother was too busy having children so didn't help father in business. Mother had bound feet. Mother spoke English. She spoke English with the children sometimes. Father never allowed children to speak English at home. Father loved to eat, every Chinese holiday they had good food for the celebration.

END OF TAPE 1 SIDE A

Tape 1 Side B

1	001-007 008-025 026-031 032-035	Blank. Family ate Chinese food at home. Father loved banquet food. Family had a Chinese cook from China who was single. He didn't stay with OY's family. He also did the shopping. The family had a cook, an herbalist, a housekeeper who helped with the children and cleaning of the house. Mother had bound feet so she didn't do anything.
2	036-039 040-044 045-050 051-059 060-066 067-074	In the early days the family used herbs in food. OY didn't remember if she ever got sick. OY didn't learn how to shop when she was young. Mother seldom went out. Grandmother also lived in Los Angeles. Mother used to ride on the Guin Yim Che (horse carriage) to visit her mother. Grandfather went back to China for retirement. Mother stayed in Los Angeles and all of OY's uncles supported her grandmother. Grandfather used to be in the cigar business in San Francisco. Grandmother didn't want to return to China so stayed in Los Angeles with OY's uncle.
3	075-079 080-086 087-090	OY's uncle was a businessman. OY's mother couldn't get around very well. She read a lot and did a lot of embroidery. OY's mother's friends were Chinese. OY felt that children were not supposed to learn what the parents did.

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Contents (cont'd)

Time Segment	Counter Number	Summary
3	091-100	OY remembered her father's friends, Chew Bao Kwong (趙寶光) and Lee Shou Pon (李壽朋), they were herbalists.
	101-114	OY also knew Tom Leong, another Chinese herbalist, and his family. OY's family stayed at Tom Leong's house for a short while when they came down to Los Angeles from San Francisco.
4	115-124	OY went to school with one of the Leong daughters. they lived pretty close to the Leong family.
	125-127	OY associated mostly with non-Chinese.
	128-138	OY got along very well with her classmates. She didn't know any Black friends.
	139-145	OY felt more American because she associated with more American people.
5	146-150	The children were not supposed to agree or disagree with parents.
	151-159	Father was a good Christian man.
	160-181	As a child OY started going to Chinese Presbyterian Church. Father helped to move one church outside of Chinatown. The church had a Chinese minister. OY went to Sunday school there.
	182-189	OY now attends Pasadena Covenant Church.
6	190-195	Children were not supposed to go to American ballgames, etc., but OY sometimes went with her girl friends.
	196-205	OY never talked about recreational activities with her parents.
	206-213	Mother didn't go to church, but she did believe in God.
	214-222	Grandmother used to worship ancestors.
7	223-235	The family celebrated Chinese New Year just by having good food.
	236-250	Mother would prepare special foods for the new born baby, such as vinegar pigs feet.
	251-270	Husband's name was Ung Sin Yuen. He was an insurance man. OY and her husband lived in Chicago for three years. Husband had an office near Chinatown. The laundrymen and restaurant men would buy foreign exchange from him to send back to China.
	271-280	OY's family was in Los Angeles, so she didn't want to stay in Chicago. Husband had a sister in Los Angeles.

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1 Side B

Tape: 2 Side A

Contents (cont'd)

Time Segment	Counter Number	Summary
8	281-291	Husband came to the U.S. for schooling. His uncle was in Chicago.
	292-321	Husband didn't do as much foreign exchange business in Los Angeles as in Chicago. In Chicago, because of her husband's banking business, they had American watchmen to protect the money they accumulated during the week.
	322-339	OY's mother always took care of OY's children so she could join some church activities.
9	340-370	OY helped sell War Bonds in both Chinese and American communities. The restaurant people usually chased her out when she tried selling them the bonds. They had gambling in the back of their businesses. OY sold the bonds to Chinese families.
	371-377	OY didn't know much about China Relief.
	378-405	OY participated in church activities once a month and helped raise money for the American church.
10	106-418	Since OY moved to Pasadena, she has not been in the Chinese church.
	419-431	Because her daughter lived in Pasadena, OY moved there.
	432-472	OY owned an apartment building in Los Angeles near Normandie Street. She didn't have a difficult time purchasing property.
11	473-485	OY didn't know if her father belonged to any family associations.

END OF TAPE 1 SIDE B

Tape 2 Side A

1	001-002	Blank.
	003-018	OY's son is in the insurance business. OY never asked what her children were doing. Her son-in-law was in the furniture business. He is now practicing law.
	019-023	OY gets \$244 a month.
	024-026	OY didn't know her husband's income. It was her husband's business so OY wasn't supposed to know.
	027-031	OY didn't know whether the family saved money.
	032-035	Father didn't send money back to China.
2	036-051	Husband sent money back to China to his mother. OY never asked how much her husband sent back to China.
	052-058	In the old days, some people got married through a matchmaker but not OY.

Contents (cont'd)

Time Segment	Counter Number	Summary
2	059-062	The family tried to make a doctor out of OY and never tried to arrange a marriage for her.
	063-074	OY was the oldest. What OY did, all the siblings followed. People used to return to China to get married, but not OY's family members because they didn't have any relatives back in China to make the arrangements.
3	075-087	OY had no preference for sons. Parents had a preference for sons but OY was born first. Later several brothers came along.
	088-103	In the old days, people were against interracial marriages. OY's brother married a white girl. Mother didn't seem to mind it. Father was against it but couldn't do anything about it.
4	104-118	OY used to pick up her children from American school and sent them to Chinese school. They were in Chinese school for five to ten years.
	119-129	OY had about ten years of Chinese education. OY's grandchildren didn't go to Chinese school.
	130-134	Children always said that they were not going to China so why should they learn Chinese.
	135-150	OY was planning to take her mother to China but never did go.
5	151-156	OY's grandfather returned to China.
	157-170	Mother had bound feet. In the old days she wasn't supposed to complain.
	171-187	Most Chinese worked in the restaurants. Chinese parents always educated children.
6	188-205	None of the siblings learned Chinese herbs from her father. OY felt that the children should be free to choose their own career.
	206-223	OY didn't feel that she was much of a housewife.

END OF TAPE 2 SIDE A

END OF INTERVIEW

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