



1980

Chan, Sadie interview

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Stockton Immigrant Women Oral History Collection

by Sally Miller

Chan, Sadie (Chinese)

August 20th, 1980

Interviewed by Az

Transcribed by Devon Clayton

[TAPE 1, Side A]

[Begin Tape.]

Az: Okay we'll get started everybody. You know your place of birth?

Sadie Chan: Yes. I was born in...you know the province Canton?

Az: Right.

Chan: Yeah

Az: And how long did you live there?

Chan: I lived there, oh, just before I came about eight years.

Az: And this is out in the country or the city?

Chan: In the country, you know in a village.

Az: Was it a very big one?

Chan: No. It's a small villiage

Az: How far were you from a big city?

Chan: I can't tell...must be quite...it was so long ago we came by a boat or train, I thought about two or three days and then we got on the boat and came. And then we came over.

Az: oh. And your birth date is?

Chan: 1913

Az: Okay. When did you come to US?

Chan: We arrived in San Francisco, May 21st 1921.

Az: Directly from..?

Chan: Well we went to the Angel Island, we stayed overnight and then from there we came straight to Stockton.

Az: From Angel Island that's in San Francisco.

Chan: Yes. San Francisco. Uh huh.

Az: And you said you were 8 years old?

Chan: Yes.

Az: Okay. How many brothers and sisters did you have before you arrived?

Chan: Well...

Az: Or did they all come?

Chan: They were born here.

Az: Okay

Chan: Yeah. My brother was born in 1922. Next to me I'm the oldest.

Az: So you're the only one that came.

Chan: Yeah I'm the only one.

Az: Okay then afterwards your brother was born.

Chan: Yeah in 1922.

Az: And then..

Chan: And then I have 3 sisters after him, and then I have a little brother after that.

Az: Getting a pretty good sized family.

Chan: Yeah, two boys and four girls.

Az: Yeah. Did your immediate family all arrive together?

Chan: Well just my mother and I came and then my father was here with my grandfather and grandmother. They have a poultry store in Stockton with my uncles.

Az: Poultry?

Chan: Uh huh.

Az: Oh meat?

Chan: Chicken!

Az: Chicken!

Chan: Poultry.

Az: oh it's a store?

Chan: A store. A big store, yeah, it's one of the first Chinese poultry stores in Stockton.

Az: Really?

Chan: Yes. That was in 1928. They had around about 1919.

Az: Wow. And how many persons arrived with you? Just two of you?

Chan: Well my uncle and aunt...yeah my uncle and my aunt.

Az: They came with you? And stay with you? With your dad? And went to [?]?

Chan: Yeah well they came over and then we all lived in one big flat.

Az: Flat is like a?

Chan: Well it's just like one of the duplexes or fourplex, you know there's 6 in one building, 6 apartments in one building. It's more or less like an apartment.

Az: And did you all live together? Okay you all lived together in the flat there. And did you ever go to school?

Chan: Yes. I went to school. Well I came in May and I started school in September.

Az: Did you go to school in the old country?

Chan: I didn't go at all.

Az: Didn't start?

Chan: Well I was in a village.

Az: Oh oh.

Chan: And I was the only child, and I was very well spoiled [laughs]

Az: Yeah. And then you started here in the US?

Chan: Yes

Az: After September? Kindergarten?

Chan: No.

Az: No?

Chan: The first grade, I was 8 when I started school.

Az: Oh

Chan: Yeah I was 8 when I started school.

Az: Okay

Chan: Was in the very first grade.

Az: And um parents didn't have kindergarten? Or just that they...

Chan: They did have, but I was too old to go to kindergarten. I was even too old to go to the first grade. The first grade starts when your 6 years old, 5 and half or 6, so I started the first grade. When I came to the 5th grade my teacher wanted to skip me, you know to the 8th I think.

Az: Really?

Chan: And then my uncle said no, the basics, you know, are the grammar and the arithmetic is very necessary, in the you know 6th, 7th grade.

Az: Right

Chan: So I stayed, and I never you know skipped, because they think I know enough to skip, but he said no the essentials are in the 5th, 6th and 7th grade.

Az: Yeah. At least you didn't get to junior high school.

Chan: Well we didn't have junior high at that time; we went straight from the 8th grade to the high school.

Az: Oh.

Chan: Yeah at that time we didn't have junior high or junior college. We just had straight 8-4-4 see. The eighth grade and then four years of high school, and four years of college, so I went to eight years of grammar school, and four years of high school.

Az: Where was that?

Chan: In Stockton.

Az: Oh. Could you tell me the name?

Chan: What schools? First I went to the Monroe School, then I went to the Franklin School, and I went to the Lafayette School, and I went to the Washington School, and then went to Stockton High. That's the last, I graduated from Stockton High.

Az: Was that the only high school?

Chan: In Stockton? At that time, uh huh.

Az: Right. How about your parent's educational background...

Chan: Oh I don't...my mother never went to school. But my father never did either so uh...he self-educated himself in, and knows how to read the newspaper and went into business and he knew how to read the Chinese newspaper and he could read quite a bit and write a little bit. But business he did it, you know...

Az: Just through a...what? Self-taught?

Chan: Well he self-taught himself, you know how to speak English but not a, you know too well but he can get through with his business.

Az: Oh I was just wondering, how was what he did to self-teach himself.

Chan: Oh by reading the newspaper and a...

Az: Did he take classes?

Chan: No, he never went to school at all, he was just self-taught you know, like he came oh...way before I was born and he was here about 8 years and then he went back to China and then I was born and came here. When he first came he worked in the railroad as a cook, way up never Nevada, yeah past Colfax, California. In the, for the railroad, for years, and then after that he came to Sacramento and worked as a cook in a hotel and then he came to Stockton and they opened a restaurant, he and his uncle and then they opened the poultry shop. And he had that until 1947, yeah and then he sold.

Az: But it's still there...?

Chan: It's still there the business is still there. But he sold it, his business, my father.

Az: Is he retired?

Chan: Well yes he was retired. He passed away 1970...1976 November 24th, 1976 he was 95 years old.

Az: What was it from?

Chan: Old age. [Laughs]

Az: [Laughing] You see that rarely. You hear that rarely.

Chan: Yeah 95, he was 95 he had that gallbladder trouble, you know gallstones and he had an operation, he died of a, you know pneumonia.

Az: Yeah. Um, what is your parent's religion?

Chan: Well I think it was Buddhism.

Az: Yeah, and how about your own?

Chan: Mine is Methodist.

Az: You are?

Chan: Yeah I'm in the Methodist.

Az: Has your religious views changed since then?

Chan: No, I haven't. It just the idea I moved so far away from the church and I have children, I have grandchildren now and I live so far away. I was working and that doesn't prevent me from going but just the idea I guess I was pretty lazy not getting ready to go. But I have other activities, I work 5 days a week and then I work in the evenings sometimes. So my..

Az: Busy...

Chan: Yeah so I'm a busy woman. [Laughs]

Az: So part of it is, that you changed because you've been busy.

Chan: Oh yes.

Az: Did your mother work outside the home?

Chan: Yes, she went to work in the cannery. Yeah, just, seasonal work, and she was pretty old so she didn't work too much. When we had the poultry shop, she went to the store to help, just like the children you know. I went to help my father when...

Az: What was it...uh you said seasonal work, which one?

Chan: The cannery, she worked for Flotill, uh huh...

Az: That's uh...what...tomatoes?

Chan: Uh...canned like peaches and yeah and tomatoes...

Az: They did a variety?

Chan: Yes, yes they did.

Az: While you were growing up. Okay, what about when you were in the old country what kind of work?

Chan: Well I didn't, I was too young. My mother didn't do any work. She just, you know, they don't, they work like...they have their own home and they probably do a little farming I guess. She doesn't do anything; my father sent money home, so there is nothing that they do to earn money.

Az: You said there was nothing there that they could?

Chan: Well they could if they wanted to, but I guess she has me, so she couldn't do anything. She probably had a little garden I guess, to get some vegetables and rice. So I guess, the only income she gets is from what my father sent home.

Az: Was that a regular?

Chan: Oh yes. Uh huh.

Az: How did you feel about your mother working?

Chan: Well at that time...

Az: That would be when you were here, because she didn't work much at...

Chan: Oh she just worked seasonal. Sometimes she doesn't work, it wasn't until I was after almost before I was married that she went to work. She was pretty old then, you know. She was in her 50s before she went to work and then she worked not too long and then when she was 65 then she retired.

Az: She started working in her 50s?

Chan: Yes. About 50s, she had her children late in life, yeah see we didn't come over until she was in her 30s, you know late 30s, and then she had her children one after another and I think the last child she was in her 40s about 43 when she had my youngest brother...uh huh.

Az: What kinds of things helped you to adjust to this, when she worked?

Chan: Oh, when she worked. I stayed home and took care of my brothers and sisters.

Az: Yeah since you were the oldest.

Chan: Yes

Az: Because you were the oldest to have the most responsibilities.

Chan: That's right.

Az: And did you like having to make sure that your youngest brother was taken care of?

Chan: Yes, uh huh. Well there very well behaved they take care of themselves.

Az: How did you feel when you were leaving the old country?

Chan: I don't know. I was too young, I guess I was spoiled and I cling to my mother and that's about it.

Az: Could you say, did you feel change once you got here?

Chan: Well I never remember my father because I was just a few months old when he came over. And I met him for the first time that I know, that I have a father. You know, that I saw him for the first time, at that time I was pretty shy. And I met my father's uncle and aunt and all the other uncles that was here, and then naturally when you're an only child you're kind of spoiled and you cling to your mother and you're pretty shy.

Az: Was there anything about the old country that you didn't like?

Chan: Well I don't remember too much. I guess I [laughs] there wasn't too much, but compared to now what I hear from other people, that I'm very happy I'm here because

of the ah the disadvantages they have over there, the bathrooms the inconvenience you know, when you..

Az: Sounds like it's still not urbanized out there...

Chan: No no, it's just like outhouses like we have over here in the country you know, and no conveniences.

Az: Well...they probably eventually.

Chan: Oh yes. Even now it's not that modern a lot of places. I'm going to the mainland in last part of September and I'll probably find out a little bit about it.

Az: Trying to go back to where you...

Chan: No. I'm not going back to where I was born, because there's no one there that I know now. See, but I'm going with friends to their village to see, what it's like.

Az: That should be very, how long are you gone?

Chan: I'll be gone 35 days.

Az: Okay. This is what do you remember about what life was like when you first came to the United States? What kinds of things did you expect to find in the US?

Chan: Yeah I was pretty young, I don't remember too much. I remember that it's different from the village, you know. We had different kinds of beds to sleep on, and different things, we don't have to go to the well to get water, you know, things like that more modern.

Az: Bath? What did you do about baths?

Chan: Well we had tubs, and my mother would boil water so we took baths in a wooden tub, but over here we had running water and everything and toilet facilities, you know. We like it very much.

Az: Did you family settle in Stockton when they first arrived?

Chan: Pardon.

Az: Did your family settle in Stockton when they first arrived?

Chan: Oh yes. Well like I told you, they were my father was in Sacramento, all over, but they were here when we arrived.

Az: And did your family settle with family or relatives from the old country?

Chan: Uh huh with my father's uncle and aunt and cousins.

Az: Did you live in a neighborhood with mostly persons from your old country?

Chan: Yes. But in that uh, they were all Chinese.

Az: Can you tell me where that was?

Chan: That was on Market Street. Now that building has been torn down, uh huh there were 6 families living in that building. There were 3 flights on each side, and some of the people who lived in the same building are still in Stockton.

Az: There not, they don't live there

Chan: They don't live there anymore, naturally, they moved up north now.

Az: What other groups were present?

Chan: There were Mexicans, and Italians and colored people in that neighborhood.

Az: [Laughs] you said colored people.

Chan: Uh huh, Negros.

Az: Negros...oh okay. I haven't heard that for a while. Uh is that what you called them is colored people?

Chan: Oh well we called them colored people, Negros, uh huh, blacks.

Az: No, I just hadn't heard that expression colored people for a long time. Did your family encounter any problems when you got here?

Chan: Um no, no problems.

Az: Because they were pretty much set up.

Chan: Oh yes.

Az: Your father didn't have any problems?

Chan: Oh no, he's well known in Stockton.

Az: What did you or your family members do about them, well if there was any problem. You say he was well known...because of his business you might say?

Chan: Yeah uh huh. Because of his business uh huh.

Az: What language was spoken at home?

Chan: Chinese. Cantonese.

Az: Did English ever become the main language at home?

Chan: Not until we were all grown up. Not until my brothers and sisters went to school then come home and then we speak English to each other more or less. Mostly Chinese, Cantonese to my parents.

Az: Did your mother learn English?

Chan: No, but she understand what we're talking about.

Az: Uh, when did this happen, you were...

Chan: What happen?

Az: Uh, when English became.

Chan: When my brothers and sisters were all old enough to go to school and come home.

Az: This elementary?

Chan: Yes elementary.

Az: What language were spoken in your neighborhood?

Chan: Well I told you, there were Japanese, Chinese, Italian, Mexicans and the Negros.

Az: Who lived in your household during your growing up years?

Chan: When we grew up? Well the whole family, my mother, father, brothers and sisters.

Az: Did your uncles stay with...

Chan: Well they lived with us, for a while, and my cousins went back to China for education so after that we bought my father bought a home of our own.

Az: Did uh your father's parents? Did they?

Chan: Well my grandparents passed away when he was a baby. So his uncle and aunt raised him.

Az: You didn't have any grandparents or uncles or aunts, in residence.

Chan: Here

Az: Yeah during your growing up years.

Chan: Yes, my uncles, I have two uncles.

Az: So that made how many in the household, 6 or 7?

Chan: When we were growing up, we had quite a few, more than 6.

Az: Okay there was 5 of you.

Chan: There were 6 children, and my mother and father, my uncle and his family and there's 6 of them. And then my great aunt and great uncle, so that's another 2 so that's 12, 14 maybe more than that.

Az: Did you ever live in home or relatives abroad with another family?

Chan: Where? In China or here?

Az: Here, when you were growing up.

Chan: No, we...

Az: You had your home.

Chan: Yes.

Az: How big was that home?

Chan: Well there's, 4 bedrooms, a living room, a dining room, a kitchen, and the bath and half. [Phone rings] Will you excuse me...

Az: Okay. Um how did your family feel about having other family members living at home?

Chan: Well they can't help it because they, uh, you know in the olden times, they're suppose to be a close knit family, you know, all relatives live together. Like in China, you know, when the father and mother have children, the way all the children live under one roof.

Az: What was the reason of that?

Chan: I don't really know.

Az: Was it because, no housing for...anything?

Chan: No, they just, togetherness I think. It's not like us now, when our children get married they have homes of their own. Before when they have sons, all the sons, after

they're married they are supposed to live with their parents, in their home. That's the tradition.

Az: Oh, did this ever create problems when you have relatives...

Chan: Oh yes. There's differences, the children fight with each other you know.

Az: What about decisions?

Chan: Well the, um of course the oldest in the family like my great aunt and great uncle they make the decisions.

Az: Right. And parents?

Chan: Oh yes. But then they listened to the grown older people.

Az: Okay um. How did you feel about having other people live with you guys?

Chan: Well, we take it for granted, we'd just take it for granted, that's all take it for granted at that time.

Az: You know like you see, other friends when you were in school. They didn't have relatives living with them.

Chan: Well because they don't have the relatives with them, because they just have the father and mother here. Others that have grandfather and grandmother they live together too. But my, a lot of my friends, just their parents are here, and their grandfather and grandmother are back in China.

Az: Oh. They didn't, why was that?

Chan: Because, they couldn't come. You have to have money to come here you know.

Az: [laughs]

Chan: At that time, it's you know. Even now, you have to have some money before you can come over.

Az: Uh, did the children have regular chores?

Chan: Yes.

Az: How did you divide that up?

Chan: Oh well. Just...whatever they wanted to do. Different children have different things to do, like nowadays, some take out the garbage, and some make their own beds, and set the table, some wash the dishes, so that the way they do things.

Az: And what was, and can you tell me what was expected of the children?

Chan: Well they expect them to go to school and respect their elders.

Az: And, what about the boys in the family and the girls...

Chan: Well that's what they're supposed to do.

Az: I was wondering if there was a difference between them. Boys in the family and the girls...

Chan: Oh I don't know.

Az: In chores or in...

Chan: Well, there divided evenly.

Az: So your saying that the boys didn't have different expectations than the girls, or...

Chan: Well the boys, the boys they go outside, they help my father in the store. And the girls stayed home and helped the mother.

Az: And chores was, was that, the..boys cooked?

Chan: No. They don't, they just help out in the store and they wait on people, and they do different things that's all. Whatever it is

Az: They weren't expected...

Chan: No, no.

Az: Did you ever work in a job outside the home when you were growing up?

Chan: No.

Az: Um did you work for a person from your own country?

Chan: No

Az: Okay what was it like?

Chan: Well the only thing I helped, or worked was for my father at the store, whenever he needs help I help him.

Az: Well, that's work [laughs] a job. What was it like to be supervised by an adult, that would be your father? Did he treat you...

Chan: He expected it.

Az: How did he treat you as compared to other people?

Chan: The same.

Az: Did you ever have to do something you didn't like?

Chan: Well there's a lot of things I don't like, but we're expected to do it.

Az: So...how did you respond to this?

Chan: Well, you have to obey your parents, you know...

Az: What kind of home did you live in when you arrived in the US?

Chan: Well it's just like uh, well it's a like I told you like a flat, it has 3 bedrooms, a bathroom, a living and a kitchen.

Az: And that was the only place? Did you move anywhere else?

Chan: Well after that, when there was more people, why, my great uncle bought a home that was three stories and my whole family moved there, my great uncle, his wife and my father, mother and our family and my aunt and her family, uncle and the family. So we lived in a big home.

Az: Definitely.

Chan: And after that when the children grow up, then we, my father bought a home of his own, and moved away.

Az: And that's when... you were gone already?

Chan: Uh-huh. Well I was, uh, that was after I was married. When they bought the home.

Az: And where was that at, the new home?

Chan: In Stockton.

Az: Was it, where in Stockton?

Chan: The south part of town.

Az: Who made most of the decisions?

Chan: My father.

Az: Did your parents together make decisions?

Chan: Yes, they talked things over.

Az: Did they both?

Chan: Yes.

Az: What influence did your mother have in deciding things about the family?

Chan: Well...well she has quite a bit to do with it.

Az: Like...can you tell me?

Chan: Whatever there is to decide they decide the two of them, whatever it is they talk it over and decide.

Az: Did your parents ever disagree on things?

Chan: Well like most people, they do...

Az: And how was it handled?

Chan: Well, I'm not at home that much to know, and they very seldom disagree anyway, they very seldom disagree.

Az: Would you say they talked it out, or they...

Chan: They talked it out

Az: Or one of them would run away or [laughs]

Chan: Oh no no no, my father very congenial, they get along very well together, they never have too many you know disagreements. Their very, they agree on almost everything.

Az: What, if any customs or practices for the old country did you observe at home? Religious rituals?

Chan: Well my, my folks aren't very religious, they're not very religious.

Az: Uh recipes or food?

Chan: Well my mother does all the cooking, she doesn't have recipes she just cooked by instinct, uh huh.

Az: What about holidays?

Chan: Holidays. We celebrate the holidays, like New Years, Christmas, Chinese New Year.

Az: Christmas. Christmas here.

Chan: Whatever holidays that here we celebrate, Thanksgiving, Christmas all those holidays.

Az: Celebrate. Do you go to the events like go downtown Stockton or San Francisco to celebrate or?

Chan: No, we celebrate at home, uh huh we celebrate at home.

Az: How about ceremonies?

Chan: What sort of ceremonies?

Az: Um. From the old country did you have any ceremonies? Customs or practices.

Chan: Oh we don't have very much unless there's weddings and things like that.

Az: Tell me about that, about the weddings...

Chan: Well, we don't, well when my brother was married we had the Chinese tradition you know, given those cakes and things and then we have a banquet.

Az: How's the wedding like?

Chan: What do you mean?

Az: Well like uh, do they wear, what kind of clothes do they wear?

Chan: They wear the regular wedding gown and they have the...

Az: Do they have Chinese...

Chan: They have a Chinese robe on top, you know those gold threaded Mandarin coat over the wedding gown, and they have the tea ceremony, by a tea pouring for the bridegroom's father and mother.

Az: That's before or during the wedding?

Chan: That's before the wedding.

Az: And the ceremony's done by the minister?

Chan: No, well the minister performed the marriage ceremony.

Az: How about children's games?

Chan: Children's what?

Az: Games.

Chan: Oh they played their own games, the parents had nothing to do with it, they learned the games from school, and they played.

Az: Could I ask you about any gambling or poker [laughs]?

Chan: Oh, well we don't gamble, at home.

Az: But are there games, like related to that?

Chan: I mean when we were growing up, we didn't have any gambling at home. Like a lot of families had mahjong and things like that my parents never gamble at home.

Az: Is that a gambling game, mahjong?

Chan: Well that's a gambling game...they played for money.

Az: Oh they did.

Chan: Yeah. A lot of them do, play for money.

Az: I didn't realize that.

Chan: But we never had gambling games at home. Probably my father, go out and gamble but we don't know, you know what he did.

Az: How about folklore?

Chan: What do you mean folklore? Stories? Oh yeah my mother used to tell us a lot of stories. True stories what happened in the villages and things like that.

Az: She do that during certain times...

Chan: Oh whenever we were together in the evenings.

Az: Is that a....tradition?

Chan: Oh that's gonna take quite a bit...

Az: Is that something that she did a lot, like whenever?

Chan: Oh whenever we have a chance to sit down and talk in the evenings, yeah she does that quite a bit.

Az: And superstitions?

Chan: Yes. Uh huh.

Az: She told?

Chan: Yes. She told us certain suspicions. You read the uh, the Woman Warrior by Maxine Hong Kingston, that's exactly what my folks tell. Uh huh.

Az: Yeah. Uh even though it didn't relate here she still told the superstitions...

Chan: Yes. She does.

Az: What is the..what are some you know? Because I could understand telling a suspicion back when you were in the old country because it reflected it from the old country, but when you're here...

Chan: Well she just tell, when they were in China, she doesn't tell anything that happens here because there's nothing that happens here.

Az: Was it related to her family?

Chan: Well, it's just hearsay, what she heard from other people

Az: What groups did you belong to while growing up?

Chan: What do you mean?

Az: Groups, uh...

Chan: Oh I belonged to the church, I went to church as soon as I was going through school, I went to this uh, Chinese church here, the Methodist from the very beginning. That was...

Az: That's not here anymore is it?

Chan: In Stockton, well it started with the Methodist, that's the same church we have on Clay Street now, but its uh that's the beginning, it's called the Methodist church, and it started on Market Street and then we moved to Hunter, and then we went to Lafayette Street near the Confucius Church, and then we finally ended up at Clay Street.

Az: It's not that big I didn't think...

Chan: Oh no it was a little storefront, you know a little bit of a place. So I went to church ever since I started school, about 1922 I think I started going to church. But I wasn't baptized until I was married.

Az: But you said that you went to school, Chinese school?

Chan: I didn't go to Chinese school, I went to the American school and I went to the great school all through from the 1st through the 12th grade, high school.

Az: But you were saying that the Methodist was the Chinese...

Chan: Yes. It's a Chinese church.

Az: Um, was your family mostly of same religious or ethnic background?

Chan: Well they're mostly Buddhist, but we never practiced it.

Az: Well I was wondering about the groups, grew up with the family that's the same.

Chan: Yes.

Az: And did you and your friends often relate to, play with, or teach of other backgrounds?

Chan: Oh I played with the Japanese people, children mostly and Chinese, yes.

Az: So did your parents object?

Chan: No.

Az: Would they have objected if you played with Mexicans, or blacks?

Chan: No, they're, if I go to school with them and bring them home, they don't object, we just, we were very race, you know that, we played with children we want as long as they are the right people. At that time, there aren't groups like now, you know, where you object to a lot of religions and the gangs...we didn't have gangs before we leave our doors open when we go to bed. This is not like, the uh you know, like this now.

Az: So you didn't have problems like when people first moved here, like in San Francisco a lot of the gangs are from, because um...

Chan: They're from Hong Kong...

Az: Because of the kids that came over here.

Chan: No, we didn't have no problems at all before.

Az: Did you, did you ever bring friends into your...

Chan: Uh huh...

Az: How did your parents feel about friends, with other cultures?

Chan: They don't mind.

Az: Uh did your parents set any rules about dating?

Chan: Well that at time, as long as we came home at a certain time.

Az: Did you talk about that or did you just agree?

Chan: We just agreed. We'd go out and I'd bring friends in, and they stay overnight and I'd go to my friends and stay overnight.

Az: Did your parents had anything to do with who you married?

Chan: No...at first they wanted to make a matched marriage, but then I said, my father didn't object when I picked my one husband.

Az: Your mother have that strong...

Chan: Well, she didn't care either as long as we're happy..

Az: No I just say at first she wanted a matched marriage...was she a matched marriage?

Chan: She was.

Az: From way back?

Chan: Oh way back, well when she was, well my father and mother were both 18 when they married. But then they had nothing to do, to pick their own husband.

Az: Why was that kept? What do you?

Chan: Well I don't know. That's the tradition; even now some people are matched.

Az: Yeah, it's a I would think, I guess it isn't the strongest tradition.

Chan: As before.

Az: Do you think it's because you moved?

Chan: No, well this is Americanized; when they come to the United States they do as the Americans do now.

Az: But don't you want to keep your own?

Chan: Well, sometimes, well it's what the children want too. I never forced my children to marry whoever they want. But they have picked their own husbands.

Az: But if this is like a tradition of being matched married, then you didn't keep it...?

Chan: No.

Az: That was just part of being Americanized?

Chan: Yeah. Oh we think differently now.

Az: If you were back at home what would you think?

Chan: Well lot of people they don't match in China anymore.

Az: That's died out so much.

Chan: Yes, uh huh. More or less its, they don't do that anymore, they pick their own in Hong Kong.

Az: I wonder what the reason is, that a lot of it has died out...

Chan: Everything is modernized now. You know how people live in China now.

Az: [laughs] They can hold hands in public so...that's true.

Chan: Sometimes, they are more and more modernized than we are.

Az: Think so?

Chan: Yeah, when I went to Hong Kong, I was so surprised to see so many modern things there.

Az: That's come from the US or?

Chan: Well no, from people living in Hong Kong.

Az: Was it every difficult for kids from your country to grow up in Stockton?

Chan: No.

Az: Were these especially good things about growing up?

Chan: Oh yes, we always liked Stockton.

Az: Do you have any difficulties with kids?

Chan: No

Az: Was it helpful to have brothers and sisters when you were growing up?

Chan: Oh yes, it's nice, to have a family, big family. Yeah, we get along real well, we love children, my folks love children, we all love children, my brothers and sisters.

Az: Oh its 4:00.

Chan: Oh my gosh we have 10, and not even halfway.

Az: It's okay we are on page two and a half. This is did you go to school in the US?

Chan: Yes I did.

Az: Did you and your classmates have the same ethnic backgrounds?

Chan: Well, we have all different kinds. We have the Italian, Japanese, the Spanish, the Negro.

Az: Did most of your classmates speak English?

Chan: Well, they have to when we go to school.

Az: Did you?

Chan: Well I didn't in the beginning, but I learned.

Az: This was back when, back where?

Chan: 1921

Az: You went to school, where was that?

Chan: Here in Stockton, at the Monroe school.

Az: Right. And how about other children from your country, did they speak English?

Chan: Well when we go to school we have to. [laughs]

Az: Right. Well you were saying you went to a Chinese...school...did you say you went to a Chinese school?

Chan: No I didn't.

Az: Oh that's right, that's right. Did the teachers appear to come from different backgrounds than yours?

Chan: Over here? Yes they come dif-there American born teachers, uh huh.

Az: And how did you learn to speak English?

Chan: From school, from the teachers, and speaking with other children.

Az: And when was that? So that was when you started.

Chan: Yeah when I first started school.

Az: Did the teachers seem able to handle language differences among the children?

Chan: Well that was so long ago they must because they, we get along real well.

Az: Or difference than stemming from background did they have any difference?

Chan: What do you mean?

Az: Stemming from backgrounds, besides language what about backgrounds there...

Chan: Well of course their different, we're Chinese, and they're the American people. They have different, uh...well they do things different from us.

Az: Did the teacher seem like she was able to handle...

Chan: Oh yes.

Az: Did you recall any funny incidents while in school?

Chan: Well that's so long ago and there's so many, I just couldn't remember what.

Az: Anything that you remember?

Chan: No.

Az: Was there anything that bothered you about going to school in the United States?

Chan: No.

Az: What was your families attitude towards school?

Chan: Well they take it for granted, but the children should go to school and learn how to speak English.

Az: And what was your own...?

Chan: Well I, do the same, I just go because we suppose to go school.

Az: Did your parents try to help you with problems at school?

Chan: Well there are hardly any, because we just get along and the teachers teach us, and the parents, at that time they don't bother unless we have problems in school. Whereas I didn't have any problems.

Az: Did you have any brothers?

Chan: Yes I do, but they're younger than I am, their about 9-10 years younger than I am.

Az: Did they get involved with any of your problems?

Chan: No.

Az: Did your parents go to school?

Chan: No.

Az: Oh that's rights you said that.

Chan: They couldn't help me with my school work anyway.

Az: Right

[TAPE 1, Side A]

[TAPE 2, Side A]

[Begin Tape.]

Chan: [tape begins mid-sentence] uh...my brother went into the Air Force, the older one, and the younger one continued, went through two years of college, and then you got married.

Az: If so why was that?

Chan: Why?

Az: That he continued? Did you continue?

Chan: No I didn't. Well it was during the depression, uh huh, and my brother went because he went into the army, and after the army he has the GI Bill so he went to school and he graduated from college. My younger brother he went, he got married after he graduated from the junior...uh college, so he didn't continue and my sisters went to work. It was during the war years and they were wanted in the offices, you know, so they went to work.

Az: Um, did your parents ever stress education as important?

Chan: Oh yes that's why we all went to the high school, but we, they can't afford to send us to college because of the depression years.

Az: What did your parents expect you to learn in school?

Chan: Well, English, and uh...whatever we uh, want to learn, at first I wanted to go to college, but there is no money to go then.

Az: How about your sisters and your brothers?

Chan: Well they did go to school. Go to college.

Az: Was that the expected?

Chan: Yeah, yeah, well they did.

Az: I asked what your parents expected you to, what did your parents expect them to learn the same or different or what, with your sisters and brothers?

Chan: Well they want them to go through college so they get a better education and get better jobs.

Az: Did you participate in any school activities?

Chan: Well, no.

Az: Did you ever take classes at YMCA or...?

Chan: No, I didn't.

Az: Did you tend to participate in neighborhood or church activities?

Chan: I do, in the church activities.

Az: Were there special activities for your age group?

Chan: Uh huh.

Az: Were these activities helpful to you?

Chan: Oh yes.

Az: And how were they helpful?

Chan: Oh helpful, in learning to uh love with your friends and get along with people.

Az: Uh how far did you go uh...

Chan: High school. Graduated from high school.

Az: Is this the amount of education you...

Chan: No, I wanted to go to college but there were no money.

Az: During your years in high school did your family give you some independence....in certain ways?

Chan: Yes.

Az: How did you feel about your family those years?

Chan: Well we get along fine.

Az: Did your parents speak English?

Chan: My mother doesn't but my father does.

Az: Was it ever difficult for you when your friends were present?

Chan: No huh uh, we're very friendly.

Az: Uh did you have any special hopes or ambitions when you were in school?

Chan: I wanted to go to college.

Az: And go to any specific college?

Chan: Yes I was going to school for engineering.

Az: Did the school help you achieve them...oh

Chan: Yes, but we had no money to go.

Az: Did they have any trade school or anything like that?

Chan: No. Well there might be but I didn't go into it, see there's no money, how could you go to school? It's not like now.

Az: Grants, there's grants to help you...

Chan: Well there's not that much then.

Az: Did school help you to understand life in the US?

Chan: Yes

Az: Was there ever anything you felt confusing about what you learned?

Chan: No.

Az: Can you think of any difference between your life when you came to the United States, and growing up now?

Chan: Oh yes there's a lot of differences the custom is different; the way of living is different than when I came. The children are more aggressive and their..

Az: That you were saying the customs celebrate your home when you were a child, celebrate your children's home...

Chan: Well now, well we celebrate now more than when I was a child, we're more Americanized.

Az: You celebrated what?

Chan: Well celebrate the holidays, children's birthdays...

Az: Are the foods the same?

Chan: No our foods are different. Now that I'm Americanized I cook the American style food, and I also I cook whatever we like, sometimes Mexican food , sometimes Japanese food, we eat all kinds.

Az: Are the same holidays, that you celebrate?

Chan: Well yes, plus some more. All the holidays that the United States has and Chinese holidays.

Az: Do you have like a, well I know the Chinese New Year's, do you celebrate...

Chan: Yes we do.

Az: And do you uh do so still?

Chan: Yes we do.

Az: And do you fix the...

Chan: Oh yes a few things, not all.

Az: Do your children come here during that time?

Chan: Yes they do. Their very...we're a very close knit family, my family comes in, comes to see me every week, every other week if their out of town.

Az: Do your children help each other with home responsibilities?

Chan: Yes, uh huh.

Az: Sharing....

Chan: Yes uh huh.

Az: Does this resemble your mothering and sharing of various responsibilities?

Chan: Well, it's about the same, same more or less. Well like uh, they share the cleaning of the house, they share cooking, and uh when we have company they share in preparing the meal and cleaning up.

Az: And you felt that your children did that?

Chan: Oh yes they all do.

Az: Is it different in some ways?

Chan: Oh not very much, not very much, their almost about the same. We were raised the same way my mother raised me and I follow my mother's example of how to tell my children what to do and they see my sisters doing it so...

Az: Do your children have anyone living in the household beside their spouse and their children?

Chan: No.

Az: Do your children assign their children's chores or tasks similar to what you and your siblings had?

Chan: Mm hmm they do.

Az: Do your children have husbands and wives with the same background?

Chan: Yes they do.

Az: That is just...

Chan: My daughters, I have daughters; their husbands are from the same background.

Az: How do the younger people born in the United States in your ethnic background generally feel about having their parents or other family members living in the home?

Chan: Well you know we're always one family after I was married. So we feel that we should have just the family living together, instead of having outsiders live with us.

Az: How do you feel about this?

Chan: I prefer to live my own life, I have children now. One of my daughters was to come and live with me I wouldn't mind, but I wouldn't want outsiders to come and live in my house.

Az: Would you mind, if at some point if you couldn't take care of yourself, would uh, how would they feel if you came to live with them?

Chan: If I can't take care of myself I would want to go to a rest home.

Az: You wouldn't want to go to your daughters.

Chan: Well, then my children, I would be a burden to them, if I can still help myself I would stay with them.

Az: Stay with them?

Chan: With my children. If I can take care of myself...

Az: Okay

Chan: After my husband pass away, I would go and live with my children, if I'm physically able to do my own. I wouldn't want to be a burden to them, if I'm helpless and can't take care of myself I would rather be in a rest home so I won't be a burden to them.

Az: You know the one question of 60 your children have husbands or wives of the same background, was that something they chose or is that something that they were kind of brought up to think?

Chan: Oh they picked their own friends and their own husbands. I have nothing to do with it.

Az: You didn't encourage them?

Chan: No uh uh.

Az: How do..okay..would you be prefer to..okay I you just answered that...

Chan: I answered that.

Az: Do your children have children?

Chan: Yes.

Az: How do you feel about them having friends not of your own nationality?

Chan: It's okay. They all do, they have different nationalities, even my own children, they have Japanese boys and girls, the uh, let's see they have Pilipino girlfriends come and they have colored boys. Uh you know the Negro and the Spanish ones, they come congregate in my home.

Az: How do, u, they feel about this?

Chan: Well if I told them it's okay for them they feel the same.

Az: Do you think that's part because you were raised up as to having lot of...

Chan: Oh yes. Well I'm in contact with all these people; I come into contact with them. And if my children pick those friends, I know they have a very good judgment of them.

Az: Think of the kind of lives our children are now living, think of some of the best things about their lives now?

Chan: Well they have a good profession, they're teachers and um, they have a nice home, car and I think it's wonderful. They had a good education in the beginning so they pick a nice profession. They're teachers.

Az: Is that?

Chan: That's what they picked. That's what they wanted to do; I have nothing to do with it. I just give them the education.

Az: Now see you are able to let them go to school...

Chan: Oh yes.

Az: Was that important to you?

Chan: Oh yes. That's what I want. When I couldn't go to college I said when I have children I want to bring my children up to go through college. And that's what they did, uh huh.

Az: Uh what are some of the less desirable things? Would you say?

Chan: Well, they couldn't have a job, that's less desirable isn't it? But they all have jobs so I don't think there's anything not desirable.

Az: That you would say, okay. What is life here like for people from your country? Have you felt close to the old country?

Chan: Well I, I'm not very close to the old family, the old country because I have never been back, see. Back to the old country, so I don't remember too much about it, so I'm more or less a citizen of the United States and I support this country.

Az: You plan to go back right?

Chan: Well I'm going there for a visit.

Az: Relatives or?

Chan: No relatives, just for pleasure.

Az: Sightseeing?

Chan: Yes.

Az: Do you have relatives back there?

Chan: No I haven't.

Az: Are you in contact with relatives or friend from...

Chan: No, I'm not.

Az: Do you feel you are affected by what happens there?

Chan: No. I don't feel affected at all because I'm a citizen of the United States.

Az: You've been here since?

Chan: 1921. This is my home.

Az: When you first got here to the United States did you still think of yourself as Chinese?

Chan: Yes I do.

Az: How about your children?

Chan: Well that's my children, they're Americans. Chinese-Americans they call themselves.

Az: Why is that? Because they're...

Chan: Because it's their background. That's how we're taught, that's how we taught them. It's very important to be Chinese-Americans, because our color is yellow and our background is Chinese and they respect my mother and father, and they respect us. And they're Americans because they were born here and they went to school here and this is their country and home.

Az: You know when you say color is yellow, I think...isn't that labeled on part of the Chinese....

Chan: Yes they do, the yellow race.

Az: I mean like putting black they're not really black, [laughs] people, I mean they are...

Chan: Well they are, to an extent, don't you think they're black? Ebony? There's some real real dark ones...right yeah.

Az: Right. That's true.

Chan: Well the reason you see some of them are light is because they intermarriage.

Az: That's right. Now I thought that was just a label to put on Chinese was the yellow.

Chan: No, no. See Japanese, Chinese, Koreans they're the yellow race, uh huh.

Az: How have your attitudes towards the old country changed over time?

Chan: No, it's the same, it's the same.

Az: What makes a person Chinese-American?

Chan: Well, if your parents are Chinese and you live in the...I mean I became a citizen, so I'm American. So it's Chinese-American.

Az: Anything else?

Chan: No. I think that's all, and then I was raised as an American, when I went to school here.

Az: And you?

Chan: And my mother is Chinese, so I speak Chinese and we lived in uh. You know even my mother changed a little bit. She loves to eat American food, before she died, so that's Chinese-American also.

Az: What is that you feel...that you have the Chinese culture still engrained in you? You know kept?

Chan: Well there's still some in the background, you know but we don't...

Az: But I mean practicing it or keeping it?

Chan: Well we're practicing it, we like, I told you we celebrate the Chinese New Year.

Az: But that's just something that's come over the years, that you, like thanksgiving.

Chan: Well that's the Chinese culture. That's Chinese culture. And we read about the Chinese people in school, and we still do.

Az: But certain things you...

Chan: What do you mean by certain things?

Az: Oh like, practices...

Chan: What practices, practice what for instance?

Az: Maybe wearing the clothes or having to keep the long hair or um...

Chan: Oh even the American people wear long hair....see that's not practicing it because the American people wear long hair, the Chinese wear long hair, what's the difference does it make. There's no difference.

Az: Okay.

Chan: [laughs] Don't you think?

Az: Um, I...I always considered Chinese hair straight and long hair as something that's part of their, their...

Chan: Oh I don't think so...

Az: Their characters as being Chinese...

Chan: There's a lot of people wearing short hair now. This is modern, this is the modern world it's not ancient any more, you don't see Chinese wearing, Chinese men wearing braids any more. Well that's been abandoned years and years ago even before I came to the United States. I have never seen one.

Az: Probably when you go back to China...

Chan: No, no. There's nobody ever wear, wears braids now, no man has real long hair. You see the long hair on the men here now, but when you go back to China you hardly ever see any. When I went to Hong Kong last time they're about the same as the United States, they're very modern back there. They're just like...when you go to Hong Kong, it's just like when you go to Stockton, San Francisco, it's the same there's no difference. You're amazed to see that they're more fashionable than some of the people here.

Az: They want to be that way. Is it part of the...?

Chan: I don't know it's because it's the world and its changing as it goes from year to year. Just not backwards it's going forwards.

Az: I don't know why you'd keep the backwardness. Um, when did you return...okay, when did you return to the old country for a visit?

Chan: I didn't go back there.

Az: But you plan to?

Chan: Yes.

Az: How long are you planning to go back for, you said a month?

Chan: Yes. I'm going for a month.

Az: Did people from your country tend to live in the same neighborhood?

Chan: They used to but now they're all over, you know their separated, they're all over the city.

Az: You say you went to Hong Kong?

Chan: Yes but that's not, that doesn't belong to the Chinese, it belongs to the British.

Az: And where is your, your town was in?

Chan: Hong Kong

Az: It was Hong Kong. So you don't consider that?

Chan: Well that's not the old country, that's the British.

Az: The old country is where you used to live...

Chan: Well yeah, old country is the China where I was born. I did not go back there. Yet I will be going.

Az: Oh, okay. You were saying that now people do not live in the same neighborhood...

Chan: Not anymore, they all separated.

Az: Does...what was life in the neighborhoods like?

Chan: Well, it's the same, we see each other. If they move away, we visit each other.

Az: What caused them to be separated?

Chan: Well, as you make your money you don't want to stay in the neighborhood, then you buy a better home. You see its progress.

Az: What did you like less about these neighborhoods?

Chan: You mean where I'm living?

Az: Where, back in Hong Kong, you were saying?

Chan: Oh I can't say that, because I'm not, I was only there for a little while.

Az: What kinds of things did the parents and grandparents in your neighborhood friends do for a living?

Chan: Well, I, uh, go work for other people, go to the ranch, they have stores of their own, or they have restaurants.

Az: Were there anything about these neighborhood ever that were not so good for the people living there?

Chan: Well yes, there were, some others...well it's not too well, because its coloreds...Negros living there together, and there's always fights and things, you know so that's why people are moving away.

Az: Did your neighbors ever try to do something about these things?

Chan: Well yeah by moving away.

Az: How about yourself?

Chan: Well I, we moved away too.

Az: Was that hard for you to move away from your neighbors and friends?

Chan: No, no. I made new friends.

Az: What else of your old country and culture do your children maintain?

Chan: Well, I don't think they...well that's hard to explain because uh, I mean we always do the same things what we've been doing. I don't know what uh you know old aspects we have of the old country you know we just follow the same routine. I mean I do what I've been doing my whole life and they follow what I'm doing. The old customs, some of the old customs that we have.

Az: Like what...customs?

Chan: Respect your elders and rise when the older people come into the room.

Az: Your children do that?

Chan: Oh yes.

Az: How about their children?

Chan: Their children are real young, they don't understand it yet, see that have to be a little older before they do, they are still under the teens you know real young yet. But their very mannerly.

Az: Respecting the elders is, what is that, I mean to the culture?

Chan: Well they don't talk back to their elders, that's another thing, not like some of...

Az: What's the importance of respecting the elders?

Chan: What's important? Do you respect your parents?

Az: To a certain extent.

Chan: Well then, we're uh pretty strict about. We have to obey what your parents tell you, and they do that.

Az: How long does that last?

Chan: Oh, forever. They listen to what we tell them. I should hope forever, because the children have to obey their parents. Just like the American people, they respect to a certain extent they have to respect their parents, like in the bible.

Az: Right. What aspects have disappeared from your family's life?

Chan: I don't think there's very much, that uh that disappeared. I tried to keep as much as possible in the family.

Az: Are you very demanding of your children? So that...they are respecting?

Chan: No, no, no. Oh I just we just talk to them, and they're very uh, they respect uh that's how they're taught, whatever I say they do. I don't demand, they do what they think is best.

Az: Have you often as an adult related to neighbors or others whose background is different?

Chan: No.

Az: Have you ever felt discriminated against on account of your background?

Chan: No.

Az: In your opinion why did this...

Chan: Well nothing happened. Uh huh, we're very congenial.

Az: Have you participated in any organizations...

Chan: No, I haven't.

Az: What kind of recreation activities do you enjoy?

Chan: Oh I enjoy all kinds of sports, I'm not into it, but I enjoy all kinds of sports. Like football, basketball, baseball and I enjoy walking.

Az: What do you like about the football?

Chan: Well that's the sport.

Az: You like watching.

Chan: Watching it. I don't participate in it.

Az: Do you walk a lot?

Chan: Oh yes. Uh huh. We just came back from a walk in the morning. We usually go out in the morning and talk walks.

Az: Yeah. You go around where?

Chan: Oh around the neighborhood.

Az: Do you have any activities in the church like in the past, today?

Chan: No. I haven't. I'm sorry I'm not but the reason I haven't gone, we moved from the neighborhood and I haven't started. I go over occasionally, I'm not a church goer.

Az: How about community organization?

Chan: No, I don't.

Az: When you grew up, did you ever work in a job outside your home?

Chan: No. I did not, until after I was married.

Az: And, what could you tell me...okay, did you work part time?

Chan: I worked full time.

Az: When did you have your first paying job?

Chan: Oh when I, when my youngest child was 7 years old.

Az: That was what?

Chan: That was well let's see...

Az: No I mean doing?

Chan: Oh I was at the public library, I was working there.

Az: Did you work before marriage?

Chan: No.

Az: Did you give up your job to get married...no...right. Did you enjoy working?

Chan: Yes I did.

Az: Would you have liked to have held a job for a longer time?

Chan: Well it was time for me to retire.

Az: So how long were you there?

Chan: I was there 23 years.

Az: What did you find most satisfying about working?

Chan: Oh I enjoy working with people, I love people. And I liked my job.

Az: Was about less satisfact?

Chan: There's nothing least satisfying.

Az: Would you have worked if you stayed in the old country?

Chan: I don't know.

Az: If you worked after marriage, did you have any help at home with children?

Chan: Yes I did, my children.

Az: When you first held jobs, did it seem that only certain types of jobs were available to you as a woman?

Chan: Well, uh no. There's other you know, all kinds of jobs, but uh I don't this is the kind of job I'd like, because I've always loved books. Always loved to read.

Az: Or because of your ethnic group seemed to be certain types of jobs or industry? Why is this?

Chan: No, well I, I this is what I wanted, and I got it. I passed the civil service test, and I got interviewed and I got it.

Az: Was it possible...Okay you didn't...Did you ever join a union?

Chan: Well, no. Because this we didn't have a union, in this job.

Az: Did you take on a job after the children were in school?

Chan: Yes.

Az: Was there anything difficult about going back to work?

Chan: Well this is the first one, so yeah at first this one was difficult because of leaving the children.

Az: Did you do anything about these difficulties?

Chan: My mother was around the block so she came to help.

Az: How long was she...?

Chan: Well, there's not too much help because their grown, the youngest was 7, yeah so there's not much work, except to come and take a look and see that their not in trouble.

Az: Did you work during the time they went to school or?

Chan: Oh yeah, after everyone went to school, I worked all day.

Az: So you say your child was 7...

Chan: Well that's what I mean, when they're all in school that's when I worked.

Az: Oh okay.

Chan: [laughs] you know I didn't go to work when they were babies.

Az: Oh yeah no...I was just saying when they went to school, period of time.

Chan: Yes, see, when they go to school I go to work.

Az: So that, that you really didn't need a babysitter. Um, did you marry in this country?

Chan: Yes.

Az: How did you meet your husband?

Chan: Oh I met him through a friend.

Az: What was it is like, um are his parents from the old country?

Chan: His father was from the old country but his mother was born here.

Az: And they've been here most of...were they here most of his life?

Chan: Oh yes.

Az: Were you still living at home?

Chan: Yes I was.

Az: Could you describe the courtship?

Chan: Well we just met and we became friends, and then we were going around together for about 4 or 5 years before we married.

Az: How old were you?

Chan: I was 22.

Az: Was your decision to marry influenced by your family?

Chan: No. It's what I asked, that's my decision.

Az: What did he do for a living when you married him?

Chan: He was uh working at the Bazaar, you know one of those boutiques.

Az: Store you mean?

Chan: Art good store.

Az: Did he ever change jobs?

Chan: Yes he did, he became a, after we were married, we opened a grocery store.

Az: Together?

Chan: Yes. And then after it didn't turn out real well, we lost money then he became a butcher.

Az: And how did you feel about him working in these jobs?

Chan: Well that's what he wants so that's his lifeline so I can't do anything about it, and it is a good living.

Az: Was he a butcher at your fathers?

Chan: No, he go to work for different butcher shops.

Az: How did your husband's jobs compare to thing that other men from your country did in their work?

Chan: Well...there about the same, either in the grocery store or a butcher or a restaurant owner, or you know waiters or this and there about the same.

Az: What about other men working in Stockton?

Chan: Well that's what I explained.

Az: Oh their about the same. After you married how did the two of you make decisions?

Chan: Well we'd talk together and make our decisions talk things over.

Az: How did you resolve your differences?

Chan: Oh I don't think we have too much. We talk it over, the differences, and then we don't like each other's doing, then we just dissolve that decision.

Az: You dissolve?

Chan: Yes, we did, well just won't go into it.

Az: Then you pick it up later on, another day?

Chan: Um hmm.

Az: How did the two of you divide responsibility?

Chan: Well he goes outside to work and I took care of the home.

Az: Who made most of the decisions concerning the children?

Chan: I do. Because I'm with the most of the time, he's working, you know he works all the time. So he let me make the decisions unless it's something very important.

Az: Did that ever happen?

Chan: Not very, not very many.

Az: How many children do you have again?

Chan: I have 5 daughters.

Az: Are your childrearing practices different from your mother's?

Chan: Yes quite a bit. Well you know my mothers, at the time we were growing up, when I was growing up there wasn't very much money. And then when I was growing up I'd learn a lot of things in school and of course I follow those practices. But...

Az: In school...

Chan: Well when I went to school, they teach you home making, and of course you learn things. Where of course my mother learned these things from her mother, but I learned from school and from my mother. So I put those two together and practice it.

Az: Did you sew much?

Chan: Oh yes, I used to sew all my children's clothes, and knit all their clothes.

Az: Um, where your children very demanding of you?

Chan: No.

Az: Did you sometimes help your children with problems they had at school?

Chan: Yes.

Az: Uh, can you tell me about some of these problems?

Chan: Well there's not too much, when they come home and their, I help them with the school work or sometimes they go to their dad. [Phone rings] Excuse me.

Az: About helping your children in school. And can you tell me some of their problems, what you did about them?

Chan: Well there's not too many problems, only when sometimes their sometimes their schedule is not what they wanted so I went and explained to the teacher why they don't it. That's about all there's not too many problems. They can take care of themselves.

Az: Did your relationship with your family members change after you got married?

Chan: No.

Az: Was this good or?

Chan: Well it's good, because there's nothing changed. You know were in good terms.

Az: What was your greatest satisfaction as a mother?

Chan: Because my children went to school the way I wanted them to do. You know I want them to continue with their education. And they abide by my rules, well they wanted to themselves and that's what I wanted from them.

Az: So they wanted to go?

Chan: Yeah they wanted to go to school. Of course when they want to go to school with one person providing the family need it's not possible when you have 5 of them. So I went to work to help put them through school.

Az: What were your greatest concerns as a mother?

Chan: That my children will grow up to be good citizens and make good wives for their husbands.

Az: How did you handle these concerns?

Chan: By just talking it over with them.

Az: What were you especially proud of when running your home?

Chan: Well I'm proud of running my home, to have a nice home to live in, that my children grew up the way I wanted them to and I have my grandchildren to be proud of also.

Az: What ages did your children really begin to be independent?

Chan: When they went to high school, yeah they were pretty independent. They do, well even after I started working, they clean the house, they make their own beds, they help me cook dinner and independent by taking the bus to school instead of relying on me to take them to school.

Az: In what ways were they independent?

Chan: I just told you they take the bus going back and forward, by busing them instead of taking them in my car and they make their own sandwiches when they go to school. I used to make all their lunches before I go to work, but as they grow older they make their own sandwiches, their own lunches and wash their own clothes and iron their own clothes. So that's independent.

Az: Busing how far?

Chan: Well like over here there's a bus waiting for them just around the corner from here, to pick them up.

Az: How did this independence compare to you when you were young?

Chan: Well when I was young, I'm not as independent. Well I'm independent in the way I walk. We don't have cars to take us places, we have street cars but then you know when like my children, we had cars, as my children grow older we have and they ask us if they can use it and they use the car. But well my father has cars, but at that time there was only one and we hardly have a chance to use it. Because he uses it in his business.

Az: Is there anything else you want to say?

Chan: No.

Az: How do you feel about this independence?

Chan: Well I think it's wonderful, they can go about and do their own things instead of relying on me and their father.

Az: Uh what were your concerns as they begin to grow more on their own?

Chan: Well I trust my children, I'm not too concern about them, because they seem to be good children and they ask for our and advice and ask for our permission before they go out anywhere. So I'm not too concerned.

Az: Would your interests have been different if you had not married?

Chan: I don't know.

Az: Do you feel you gave up your own interests while you were raising your own children?

Chan: No. I don't think so, because I have friends that come in, and we as a group we, my children enter play with the other children of my friends so...

Az: Now that your children are on their own how often do you get together?

Chan: We get together quite often, there's so many of my children. There's 5 children and 7 grandchildren that we always celebrate birthdays together, father's day, mother's day, and all so we were together were together you know there's not very often that we're not together.

Az: You have sisters, are you still in touch with them?

Chan: Uh huh. We're very close.

Az: Do you share problems and tasks while raise your children?

Chan: Hm mm.

Az: Where's your sister at?

Chan: I have 2 sisters in town and I've just been talking to one. They have problems with their children they talk it over with me.

Az: Did your children activities involve you in different activities with people from your own ethnic background?

Chan: Oh yes, when they would go and I would go with them you know and they belong to the choir.

Az: The same church?

Chan: Yes, St. Mark's Methodist Church.

Az: Where these people of your own ethnic groups, neighbors?

Chan: Yes.

Az: Think of your family over all. How did it compare to other families of people from your country...You can't really say?

Chan: Well we're about the same I think. We're about the same, all my friends have the same interests that we do I mean at least my friends do, and my children go with their children and they belong to the same church as I do.

Az: Other families in Stockton?

Chan: Yes. Well that's talking about them.

Az: Is your husband still living?

Chan: Yes.

Az: Taking all things together would you say you are; happy, pretty happy, or not too happy with the way you're married?

Chan: I'm very happy.

Az: Can you explain?

Chan: Oh yes. I have my children, my grandchildren and my husband and I we think the same way, and we enjoy the same things. He was a football player and he enjoys football, we like sports, we like to go see ball games, all kinds, you know and we really enjoy the same things.

Az: Did he pass that on to any of his daughters?

Chan: Oh yes. Yes, they're interested in sports, but not as we are. They have their own other interests.

Az: Think of your life after you first married, what did you expect to get out of life then?

Chan: Well, I think it's...well of course I wanted to be very rich but I never got that way. But we're very healthy and I think that's rich, you know.

Az: Did your expectation change?

Chan: Oh yeah. What I wanted to do when I was young was marry a millionaire. But I didn't.

Az: Is that something you thought...?

Chan: Oh no, it was just fantasy.

Az: From TV [laughing]?

Chan: [Laughing] Yeah! We didn't have TV then.

Az: Were the goals you had for your family different from those of your parents goals?

Chan: Well in a way, because my parents at that time didn't care whether we go to college or not, of course they would if they have the money. But uh, like me since I didn't have the education I wanted for myself I wanted it for my children, and I want other things for my children. Better than what I have had, what I had was just humble things, like we have enough to eat, we have enough to wear, but like other things like traveling we never had. Like when my children grow up we take them on vacations, we take them to see historical things, historical cities, we take them to the mountains, to you know everywhere. Whatever time we have, we take them. But when I were young, my father didn't have the time, he worked 7 days out of the week. See so that's why, and when I couldn't have all those things, I want more things for my children. That's why the two of us worked together to see that what I didn't have my children would have.

Az: And your husband was that...?

Chan: Yeah he's the same. He came from a big family too.

Az: What did you expect...oh wait...other person from your country get married? Goals we're talking about goals.

Chan: I don't know what their goal is. But you know, we never talk about it.

Az: Okay. What things happen in Stockton that affects you and your family the most? Have you become a US citizen?

Chan: Yes I have.

Az: When was that?

Chan: 1953.

Az: How do you feel about the United States?

Chan: I think I like the United States very much.

Az: Consider your life what is the best age to be?

Chan: [laughs] For me? Well I like what I am now. Because after I retired, my retirement age I enjoy very much, because I was tied down when I was first married with the children, and then working when they were growing up. You know to achieve what I didn't have so my children will have, and then after I retired, my husband and I we can do whatever we want. We travel a lot, and we go visit our children a lot, enjoy our grandchildren very much

[TAPE 1 END]

[TAPE 2, Side A]

[Begin Tape.]

Az: What is the worst age to be?

Chan: Well...I guess the age when you're struggling. When you have children I think, and then you love your children of course, but you have to struggle. You know when their sick and you worry about them, and when they're going to school you worry about their schooling and what, you know and different problems they would have, of course they don't have them, but when their sick you worry. So that's the, probably, the worst age, when you have children, after you have the children when their growing up.

Az: What makes it worse, I mean?

Chan: Because of the, well when the children are sick you worry about them, and then probably when their sick they have to go to the hospital and then you don't have the money, you know you're struggling. When you're first married, you know you're happy but you're struggling and the children are sick and you worry a lot. But the best age is after the children grow up [laughs].

Az: What makes that best? You were saying retirement is the best age...

Chan: Because I don't have that much to worry about. See we're retired, we should be independent now. We shouldn't be worrying about the children but we still do, but it's not that bad, they have their own husbands. But uh, I think we're enjoying ourselves a lot more, and then we're, all the bills are being paid for and we don't have that many bills. All we have is our PG&E bill, telephone bill, water bill, garbage bill, and our food bill that's about all.

Az: The main ones [laughs].

Chan: Yeah. Those are the main ones, but we don't owe anybody any money. Except when the taxes come on the house, so that's it.

Az: Looking back on your life now, can you think of sometimes when great changes happened that really changed your life or that give it new direction?

Chan: I can't think of anything, I can't think of anything that you know, that happened.

Az: Did the depression affect you or your family?

Chan: Yes. It affected my family because my father lost his money in the stock market and I couldn't go to college. Not enough money. But we had enough to eat, that about, you know he has his store, but he lost his money in that stock crash... so there won't be enough money for the children to go to school, college. They went to high school, but no money for me to go to college.

Az: Did he ever talk during this about that?

Chan: Oh yes. He says always about losing that money.

Az: How about World War II?

Chan: Well it didn't affect us; my husband didn't have to go to war.

Az: Did any purchase made by your family change your life in any major way?

Chan: No.

Az: Are there government programs you particularly enjoy having?

Chan: Well I wouldn't know anything about that, I don't think I have.

Az: Have you ever heard of the women's liberation movement?

Chan: Yes.

Az: What do you think of it?

Chan: Well, I'm old fashioned. I think the woman is a little too liberated now. People like the woman going into news jobs, and the priest women, all this and that I don't, I think they should stick more or less, too the more, you know to their own lines, like being teachers or secretaries or other things, other than doing the men's job.

Az: Men's job like?

Chan: Uh, being manual labor, like the, being a soldier, they can be background but, being a priest...woman, uh, I don't know, it's just a little too dangerous for a woman I think.

Az: Have any other Stockton events really affected you and your family?

Chan: No. I haven't.

Az: Okay.

[TAPE 2 END]