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Title: Constance Yamashiro Interview  
Narrator: Constance Yamashiro  
Interviewer: Anna Takada  
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- AT: 00:51:45 I want to touch on a specific thing that you had mentioned. So you mentioned the interclub council. Yeah. Can you tell me more about your involvement and that or other clubs?
- CY: 00:52:02 Do you remember? I mean, you don't remember of course, because.
- AT: 00:52:05 Not personally, but.
- CY: 00:52:06 But you've heard of it. I, I have a friend named Miyoko Awakawa, I dunno, she know her, but anyway, she was one of the, excuse me, officers of interclub council and we were all involved in that because of our organization, in sports, especially at where we would all play at a place called Olivet, community center, I guess Olivet community center.
- AT: 00:52:43 Olivet Institute?
- CY: 00:52:45 Exactly, exactly. And they would have meetings. I remember going to the meetings and I actually don't remember what we talked about, but, it was good because it was a, as a way of joining up and having an agenda and making sure that, people all felt included, you know, and, sports was a good vehicle, I feel for getting young people together. You know, it was, besides all the dances and all that, but a sports is a way that people among the Japanese groups felt comfortable. Excuse me.
- AT: 00:53:36 And, so was this something that kind of took place? Because of course they're the Japanese American community in Chicago, sort of in these earlier days of late forties, early fifties, and on, people were kind of spread out?
- CY: 00:54:01 Oh, yes, yes.

AT: 00:54:04 So I'm curious about first something like interclub council. Was this something that was like focused on any particular neighborhood or area or group or like who, who was.

CY: 00:54:16 Reason it was good is it focused on the fact of combining the South Side and North Side teams together so that we didn't feel like, for a long time though the South Side teams, the same would feel the North Siders were like, you know, complete strangers to us and they were our enemies and we were very competitive, you know, but the interclub council was, I think it was a way to have us all get to know each other, which I thought was very smart, you know, now that I look back on it and we all made friends and I think, you know, everything was like North Side, South Side, the North Side had a Clark and Division area as you must have known. And, they had all the clubs as et cetera, so that when we had basketball games, we had the North Side teams versus the South Side teams and, and you know, there are things like we would have a beauty contest. I remember, a Nisei queen and all that kind of stuff going on those days. It was, it was always attempts to try and enjoy all the different, Japanese groups, you know, not to keep them so separated.

AT: 00:55:49 And what, if there were like a greater reason, or intention behind this kind of.

CY: 00:55:55 You know, I really don't know. I wasn't part of the organization as such, I just participated in it. But I do know that, people were all, you know, you have to be at the time, you have to be joining things because that's the only way, you know, your life is filled with some kind of, you know, enjoyment. You know. It was a time when I, I, when I remember going to high school and at time that I went to change later, I will, they said, you know, a girl want to get into a try high wide club. They had these high wide club and try our clubs. And, they told her because she was Japanese, she was not allowed to get in. And, I mean those, complete discrimination at that time. And, I heard that changed later of course. But, when we were younger, we were told we can't do this. We can't do that because, you know, that's for the white people, and this is for the, you know, this is the Japanese, you know, because they don't want you there and they don't like you. So why do you push the button, you know, so to speak. And, I think we're always trying to, it was a, it was a hard time in the sense that it was postwar. It was postwar but, a lot of people still had strong memories of the war time. And, because of that, it's very hard to figure out, you know, how you can tread on this kind of a problem. You know, people, you know, some people just said, oh, I don't care. You know, it's fine with

me. You know, I don't care if the, I get discriminated against or what. But I think the Japanese people were very frightened, especially the ones that were in camp. The ones that were a little bit older than me that already been tossed around, locked up behind barbed wire. They were very, very careful about not rocking the boat. Now, you know, my daughter came along and, you know, my, the younger generation, I don't think they quite understand how, how, how, we are so bogged down by the environment that we were in because I think a lot of people say, well, you could have just, you know, fought back. You could have done this or you could've done that. But, you know, it wasn't, it wasn't like that. It was very, it's very hard to explain and I'm sure people wiser than I am, can figure that out some day. But it's one of those, it's one of those things. It's like how the Jews walked into the concentration camps or, you know, how you just follow orders, you know, you figure, well, everyone's going to be good to us if we just, you know, behave. And I think that, that was a big point among Japanese people who were there. They knew how to behave. Then you how to take orders. They knew how to not rock the boat, but that's no longer the way it is. That's why when I read about the march, that's something that would never have happened in our days. See, it's, it's almost, you never want to put the spotlight on you. You always avoid that since those days are gone. Thank goodness.

CY: 00:59:57 Hmm.

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