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Title: Tonko Doi Interview  
Narrator: Tonko Doi  
Interviewer: Anna Takada  
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<Begin Segment 16>

AT: 01:07:14 Um, let's see. One thing I want to ask is, um, just as far as your own, um, person, personal identity development. Um, would you say that you were like pretty well aware of your, your Japanese, well, how do I want to phrase this? Um, so today, is ,do you identify as Japanese American as a Japanese American?

TD: 01:07:57 Yes, yes. But sometimes I question and at a JACL meeting I said, do we say we're Japanese American? Can't we just say we're American, um, of Japanese descent? And I know that a lot of people come up to you or to me and they say, oh, where are you from? You know, or what are you like, they ask SJ all the time. What are you right? Can't quite see what her ethnicity is so that, um, I mean to being Japanese and being American, it's very important to me. My heritage is very important to me. My history. Um, when I went to Japan for the first time of over 20 years ago, I did not feel Japanese.

AT: 01:08:56 Why is that?

TD: 01:08:57 Why? Because their, their mannerisms, their behavior.

TD: 01:09:05 That's the thing my father said, do not speak Japanese in Japan because your Japanese is not so good. So I said, okay. Uh, so one time, maybe one of our first visits, Paul and I, we got lost trying to find a train station. So we're standing there on the corner looking, you know the, you know how the streets in Tokyo are wind-y, you don't know. We didn't know which way to go. So here comes a lady coming up this way. So I said, excuse me. She goes like this to me, you know, that means no, she doesn't want to talk to me. Okay, here comes another lady. I said, excuse me? I said, oh man. So here comes another lady. So I said, "Chotto matte. So I grabbed her arm, she got scared, she thought I was some kind of an assailant or something. I said, "Densha eki wa doko desu ka?" So she, she didn't want to speak English to me because she felt her skills were not so good. And I

said, mine aren't so good either, but she led us do the train. So I think it's kind of a similar thing, you know. Um, but now I come to admire Japanese people. I don't feel more Japanese, but I come to admire them more to respect them more than I did when I first went and I feel more comfortable because I understand them better.

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