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Title: Sharon Seeder Interview
Narrator: Sharon Seeder
Interviewer: Anna Takada
Location: Chicago, Illinois
Date: September 29, 2017
Densho ID: ddr-chi-1-5-10

<Begin Segment 10>

AT: 00:40:40 And did you in any time in your education, did you ever learn about it in school or class?

SS: 00:40:49 No. Nothing. They made a movie with them. Van Johnson, many years ago called Go For Broke. And that's probably the closest I ever saw.

KS: 00:41:02 They're remaking it.

SS: 00:41:02 Are they?

KS: 00:41:02 It's coming out soon.

SS: 00:41:04 Yeah. That was the only thing. And uh, you know, he was telling Kelly, it still bothers me as far as prejudice goes. Like we were walking inside the building and there was a Caucasian man and he started to speak Japanese to me and I said, I don't speak Japanese. And he continued to speak Japanese to me in, it's like, it just made me, so it made me angry. And I know, you know, people would always do this, like, "Where are you from?" This happened to me last month, a friend's answer, where are you from? I said, "Chicago." And they could tell I have no accent whatsoever for anything. I have a Chicago accent. And she says, "No, where are you really from?" I said, Chicago. And then she says, well, what's your nationality? I said, "Japanese, but I'm, I'm fourth generation" and my mom was born in here, my, my grandmother's born here. And she says, well, where's your husband from? And so I just said, I'm divorced, you know, it's kinda like let it go.

KS: 00:42:10 Welcome to the Hapa experience.

SS: 00:42:14 Yeah. I honestly,

AT: 00:42:16 I'm sorry you had to

SS: 00:42:16 Well, you know, with not it's just people, right? And they still, they see, they see you or, and they make certain assumptions. And, you know, I'm not, I had to hold myself back from being self righteous because my family had a pecking order of prejudices that I still feel now. And I have to think about. So we're all, we all have our, well, we all have our biases and our prejudices for whatever reason. Nothing very logical. Some not based on fact at all. It's just,

AT: 00:43:01 If you don't mind me asking, um, could you, um, describe that a little bit more?

SS: 00:43:10 How embarrassing!

AT: 00:43:13 I'm bringing this up a little bit selfishly, just because I think, um, in the Japanese American community, there's a lot of work to be done. You know, and it can be, not to like bring my own opinions and thoughts into this too much, but, um, you know, I think so often we return to this story and this experience because this was a huge example of uh, racism and um, just all kinds of prejudice, um, in which our community was targeted. And yet there's a lot of

KS: 00:43:54 Our last trip to Hawai'i, astrophysical, I remember she wouldn't go into any of the stores.

SS: 00:43:58 Yeah. So some of the Japanese that obviously are the top. And I would say there's probably a tie between Caucasian and Chinese. Probably a tie. Neither one of them very acceptable. Um, and then there's probably Filipino, Korean, absolutely. I mean, they wouldn't even go into Korean restaurants. I just totally not Korean.

AT: 00:44:32 So like not even, so it's very much like ethnic prejudice that you've experienced.

SS: 00:44:38 Yeah. And then everybody else was kind of equal, whether you're Muslim, Indian, Black, those are all kind of like at the, I hate to say it, but that the lower tier. But, uh, I remember my, you know, of course I married somebody Caucasian that was just not, that was just not good. And my sister, she was dating somebody at Senn High School and they were so afraid that she was dating cause she was very mysterious. They were so afraid that she was, uh, dating, um, a Hispanic person that they were relieved when he was Cauasian. So she got off, she got kind of good because I was married to somebody and then she. And then my brother was dating as a several, my youngest brother who was the favorite. So they definitely wanted him to marry somebody. Japanese American, he's dating his series of Japanese American women. And then he dated a Filipino girl

that, and she was really nice, but that was my parents made his life miserable. He ended up marrying a Japanese American woman and they only were together for a year. And now he's been living with a Caucasian woman for, I don't know, twenty some years, a long time, but they won't, they won't marry.

- KS: 00:46:09 No one in their generation married Japanese.
- SS: 00:46:13 No, and actually we had a great big family reunion in July of, um, of my mom's side and really no one married any other Japanese Americans. We all married Caucasian people and we all had children who uh Caucasian people. And yeah, so a lot of, I don't like to use the word hapa, but that's what they were. And then so there was like this, this family, they're joking around. It's like there's this core Japanese Americans and then Caucasians and you know, half Japanese, half, half Caucasians.
- AT: 00:46:58 And uh, and is this like cousins and so, but it sounds like, um, they're probably also from Chicago?
- SS: 00:47:05 Yeah. All Chicago.
- AT: 00:47:10 Which the Japanese American community is pretty, it's not huge here.
- SS: 00:47:12 No, no.
- KS: 00:47:15 You probably know some connection.
- SS: 00:47:17 Yeah. Yeah. We were just lamenting the demise of Japanese homestyle Japanese restaurants in Chicago and Japanese grocery stores and things like that. There used to be, you know, a few and now they're all like disappearing
- KS: 00:47:32 [inaudible] Sunshine.
- SS: 00:47:33 Oh my gosh. That was a sad one.
- KS: 00:47:41 One of our family friend's owned. That's like our spot.
- SS: 00:47:41 Danny, Daniel.
- AT: 00:47:42 Oh yep, he's great.
- KS: 00:47:42 He's my uncle's best friend. They live in the same building.
- SS: 00:47:48 They live in the same building
- KS: 00:47:48 He helps take care of my grannie.

AT: 00:47:52 Well, I'll ask you about how he's doing.

SS: 00:47:54 Yeah.

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