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Title: Kathy Yamaguchi Interview
Narrator: Kathy Yamaguchi
Interviewer: Naoko Wake
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<Begin Segment 11>

NW: Hmm. Do you think that, that kind of struggle, difficulty that you had might have had something to do with your engagement this Socialist doctor's group? Because it looks like . . . were you active as a student?

KY: As a student, yeah, a little bit. There was . . . I, I don't know that I was so active but I hung around on the fringes, you know. I found roommates who were active. And I was interested in it, so. But I don't think I spoke. We did, I did help out on one publication that came out, you know for a national health plan, I mean I did . . .

NW: Right

KY: I knew the people. I knew people I would help out, but I, I don't think I was real active.

NW: You know, 1970s, '80s, that's when feminist movement . . .

KY: Right

NW: . . . became really established

KY: Right

NW: And also Asian American civil rights movement was huge.

KY: Right, right, right, right, yeah.

NW: Were you aware of that as you go through your . . . ?

KY: Yeah, no, I was, but I wasn't, I didn't feel like I was a part of any of that.

NW: Why not?

KY: The women's, I'm, I'm very grateful to the women's movement because I think if it hadn't been for that, I would not have thought of going to medical school. I, you know, I was gonna be, I was gonna go to graduate school in science and be a scientist. I, I wouldn't have thought of being a doctor. And, like, the, all the ethnic id . . . stuff, I also stayed away from because I think at that time I prob, I remember, and it was the same Floyd, Huen. I remember he and Jean were leaders of the movement at Berkeley. And I remember going to some meeting during the Third

World Strike and Floyd saying something about “All you Asian women with your white boyfriends,” and I had a white boyfriend then. So,

NW: Ah.

KY: I felt, like, oop, you know [mumbles]

NW: Interesting.

KY: I’m not, you know, euheuh [phonetic], and . . . so I was on the fringe once again. I was on the fringe. And . . . but now because of the Sansei Legacy Project, which was started in about nineties. I now have Japanese American friends. I always had Asian friends, a, a few, but they tended to be Chinese, rather than Japanese because there aren’t that many Japanese around, and I didn’t feel like I had anything in common with them. They were too straight, I don’t know. I didn’t, I didn’t know! I didn’t, I didn’t, you know . . . they were either really political . . .

NW: Right.

KY: . . . and I wasn’t that. Or they were too straight, you know, so I didn’t.

NW: What do you mean by straight?

KY: They didn’t do drugs, they weren’t into the hippie movement, they weren’t into politics, or they just . . . you know, nice girls.

NW: Ah.

KY: Nice girls, boring men. The men would be intimidated by me because I was doing something that hadn’t, that wasn’t being, that wasn’t common.

NW: Right.

KY: Women didn’t do this. Women didn’t go to medical school, but you know, so they were, you know.

NW: The Chinese Americans or the Chinese or they were different then?

KY: A little different. Little bit different. They didn’t have the experience of the internment.

NW: That’s true.

KY: You know?

NW: So you mean there was no fear or no . . . ?

KY: Yeah, I think they felt more, I think they felt like they were, not entitled, but they were, they could do more.

NW: Interesting. Hm.

KY: And I think that, and it was all non-verbal, but I was expected to do well in school, but I don't think I was expected to achieve a whole lot. I don't know, but, 'cause we never, my family didn't talk.

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