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Title: Donald K. Tamaki Interview  
Narrator: Donald K. Tamaki  
Interviewer: Naoko Wake  
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**<Begin Segment 7>**

NW: I find it just, very fascinating that uh, um, the way you describe this Asian American history, not something that happened, only something that happened during World War II, but also something that continued on as anti-Asian or anti-Japanese sentiment in U.S. society, especially on the West Coast, even long after the war was over. And that was an environment that somebody who was a Japanese citizen at the time of the bombing stepped into as they became, uh-uh, immigrant of this country. Um . . . one thing that's also very interesting to me is that um, a majority of U.S. survivors are women an, uh, not only in U.S. society in general, but also within Asian American community, women are often silenced or made invisible, and I think that's one interesting aspect of U.S. survivors' history that they're majority of women. And so you mention Mariko Lindsey for instance. Um, did you feel that there's an interesting, um, dynamism at work? I'm not sure if I'm using the word, the best word here. Between men and women, both among survivors, but also among, uh, people like yourself, who contributed to work for survivors.

DT: I—I don't know if this answers your question at all. Um, you know, I wasn't particularly aware of that demographic statistic that most of the survivors were women. Uh, looking back, I guess that's true, you know. Um, I, I thought that, again, in general they were courageous to . . . to put themselves out there. Um . . . I think one of the interest—the good things about um, America in the late sixties and early seventies, is that there was a social transformation of the country as the culmination of the Civil Rights movement, which was, of course, led by African Americans from the fifties.

NW: Mhm.

DT: And that created an environment, that, um, women . . . and other, um, minorities, uh, began to, uh, assert, you know, their rights. So . . . when we talk about the late sixties, early seventies, the women's movement toward equality in America was pretty much new. You know, they were . . . in, not in the sense of um, you know, basic rights, which, of course, was a problem in America and a problem in every other country. You know. But, like, the right to vote, for instance. That goes way back. But, you know, the um . . . you know, Sandra Day O'Connor, Supreme Court Justice, uh, Stanford Law graduate, started out as a secretary. Couldn't get a job as, even though she's brilliant as an attorney. And so . . .

NW: I wasn't aware of that.

DT: My class was at Berkeley was the first time that there were 50 percent, half the class, the entering class were women.

NW: Mm.

DT: So that's a—it's common now. But that was a big deal.

NW: Yes. Yes.

DT: And very few women lawyers.

NW: Uh-huh.

DT: And very few minority lawyers. Hardly any Asian American attorneys.

NW: Right.

DT: So, the whole country went through a huge change, and um . . . the fact that, that at least when people became active in this area that there were women A-bomb survivors who were willing to speak out. That's good timing. It was good timing. Uh, um . . . because it was . . . just right after—Well, and the Civil Rights movement is an ongoing phenomenon. But um, after the laws began to change, in particular, and the focus was on, um, affirmative action and then also being conscious of um, excluded people.

NW: Mhm.

DT: That that, I think that was good timing. And, um, in Japan it's probably very different. You know. And, and, uh, very male-dominated society, obviously.

NW: Mhm.

DT: And um . . . Uh . . . so America's changing faster than Japan. So that sense that they're here . . . allowed them to be able to stand out more without getting hammered down.

NW: Right. Right.

DT: So . . .

NW: So the environment was, in some ways, historically reaching a right point to be able to hear, at least, survivors who wanted to speak out. Yes.

DT: I think so. And I think people were more, um, the war was now, we're talking seventies or eighties, so. It was well after World War II and people were more receptive to . . . um . . . and these were, you know, in the middle of nuclear arms treaty talks. So, so it was quite relevant.

NW: Right. Right.

DT: And, um, the importance of, uh, limiting the proliferation of nuclear weapons. And so who do you go to? I mean, well, some of the main . . . people that can deliver the message are people that actually lived through the only nuclear warfare.

NW: Right.

DT: Ever. So, I think timing-wise, politically, and timing-wise for, you know, sort of, equality, women being heard, uh, was good.

NW: Mhm.

DT: Yeah.

**<End Segment 7> - Copyright © 2015 Densho and Naoko Wake. All Rights Reserved.**