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Title: Keiko Shinmoto Interview
Narrator: Keiko Shinmoto
Interviewer: Naoko Wake
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<Begin Segment 14>

NW: Well, as I told you earlier, I teach American history to American students, and I wonder, let's say, let's suppose that you are the teacher for them and then you are invited to talk about you experience. What would you like to tell them given your own life experiences?

KS: Hmm. I was so busy when I was young so I never think about that. But, um, of course, each one's life style is different, too. But . . . I never think my past life I spent as sad or you know, I was, maybe, before, I told you, I was maybe the lucky one. Everything comes to [went?] smoothly, and I never went through tough times, only that's during the war. Of course as a child I go to the *syūdan sokai*, that was a kind of, I miss it, my childhood with my family, so I don't remember my family, you know. Then I always think nowadays, I was born under this star or, I mean, I am always away from my family. From *syūdan sokai*, and after that, you know, I came to this country, away from my family. I guess that's my life, that's the way I was born, probably. But I never felt sad, or, you know. I have to make it, I have to live. That's the way I think. Of course I am lucky, I have [my] own two children, yeah, that's why I feel I am lucky. Some time I feel of course lonely, I miss my family, too. I feel I want to rush back to see them, you know. Brothers and sisters luckily, I still have them. So . . .

NW: Do you keep in frequent touch with them?

KS: Yeah, I call them over telephone. Nowadays, you know, telephone is easy. That's why I don't have a computer. My son says you've got to have a computer. That way I could send you email, you could send me the email. [So I say,] Roger, I don't want that. Because I dial, in telephone, I could hear your voice. You know, that's better than the email. Well, nowadays, I could have picture in computer but, oh, no, no. I don't type, that's why. But of course, you know, one by one I could do that. But you understand my English is not perfect, just I learn it from hearing. Sometimes watching television "Oh what does that mean" and I rush to and open a dictionary, you know.

NW: Do you still do that?

KS: I still do that. I like that, I like to do. Sometimes I couldn't understand, and I call my friend, oh, yeah, that's what she's telling me. She is a *Nisei* girl, *Nisei*. Four years older than me. But she is like my sister to me. She is really good for me.

NW: So she lives nearby?

KS: Yeah.

NW: Oh, that's nice. Yeah, to have a friend like that.

KS: Yeah. I don't know. Um, luckily, I get to know her [because] we both worked together at a grocery store. I worked at the grocery store, taking care of business, my husband's business, book-keeping. Besides, I worked at the grocery store. I think I worked 16 years. Well, that time, too. Because my insurance, health insurance is very high. You know, that . . .

NW: That's a problem.

KS: Private only, own business, and expensive. Insurance. And, in fact, yesterday, at the church, one member told me, I pay for my husband and me, \$1,100 a month. That's what he said. Oh my Gosh. But being work in the grocery store, of course money was good, too. And I got to send two kids to college, too. So. But the most important was the health insurance. My husband opened our own business, we don't carry, we can't afford to carry four mechanics, that's why I think I had to get up and do it. And lucky I got a job, too, in a union shop. So, that's . . . today, this union, if I don't have it, I know I am going to be done. I mean, broke.

NW: So, thanks to the union, you have a decent health insurance. Are you retired now or?

KS: Yeah, I am retired. But still the same cover. Which is good. Yes. My husband said, I never worked to [at] the grocery store, *hakujin*, you know and everything, but. So I thought if it is too tough, I'd quit it. But the first time I saw the check, Oh, I cannot quit. [laugh]

NW: [laugh] That was good!

KS: You know how that goes. Since I worked there for 16 [years?]. Time goes by fast too, sometimes, all paycheck goes to sign and it goes that way.

NW: That happens too! But still, you can pay. That's important.

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