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Title: Keiko Shinmoto Interview
Narrator: Keiko Shinmoto
Interviewer: Naoko Wake
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<Begin Segment 15>

NW: I asked you many questions, I'm sure you're getting tired . . .

KS: Oh, no!

NW: . . . but is there anything that you feel like you didn't have enough time to tell me about? I'm sure, you know, no one can talk about his or her life stories in the matter of an hour, I understand it's impossible. But is there anything in particular you like to tell me or something you think was an important part of your life?

KS: *Uun, betsu ni*. Um, I don't think. I know, sometime, people, some of my friends say, hey Keiko, you are from Japan, and up to today's [?] you went through a lot of things, why don't you write down, that way. Later on your kids might enjoy to read or your grandkids might gonna do it. Well, I think it is a good way to, I have been thinking about it, too. But I don't know where to start, or how to, you know. That's the kind of . . . I don't have the knowledge to. So, maybe someday, I think about it. Yeah, I told them, too.

NW: If you were to write about your life history, with what episode would you like to start your book, if it's at all possible, to think about it now?

KS: Well, probably, probably, of course, I went to *syūdan sokai*. That was my good, good experience to become, um, independent. You know, I had a lot of sisters like that, and [I was] the youngest. So I am always, I was depending on them for this and that. But when I went to there, my God, 8 years old, still baby, I was never away from my parents, but I had to do that or this, that. But *syūdan sokai*, only one hobo-san, that's your care person, and the class teacher, from Hiroshima, the group teacher. And they can't take care of 15-20 people. So, we learned this and that. That was a good experience. Independent, yeah. If I don't have that, probably. Of course, I was young, I don't know how to, I did it. Someone nighttime, someone lonesome, someone start crying and next crying, this one crying. You know, like that. But to me, I just don't want to cry. I am going to make it. I'm gonna make it through. That's the kind I went through. That's why I came to this country, all by myself, away from my sisters and brothers, although they were in LA, I married to, away from them. But I think I made it. That's the way I think, too. And even after my husband passed away, I cannot cry right now, I got to take care of all the stuff, too. You know, so, in a way, I was young at that time. 60 years old, I did it myself. Well, kids say don't worry about [leaving] anything to us, just that whatever you want to do, do it. So, are you sure that you guys don't want it, [they say] oh if you don't want it just give it to Salvation Army.

Things like that. Easier for me, too. I can make decisions myself. So that's the kind of independent. I learned from that point. Yeah.

NW: That's a wonderful story.

KS: Of course I came to this country, and went to live with this Caucasian family, oh, they were very, very nice to me. That one I never forget, too. Yeah. So, that's why even if someone may be suffering or need something, I always give my hand to help. You know, yeah, that's good, too, I went through, yes. Otherwise, I don't think anything else.

NW: Do you think of yourself as Japanese American? By which I mean, a minority American? Ethnic American? There are different ways of referring to it. I mean, I guess what I'm trying to get at, is if you think about history of minority Americans in this country, you know, you always run into matters of prejudices or social movement that came out of this prejudice against minorities. Do you see yourself [as] part of that history or do you think that your experience was more or less an exception or what do you think of yourself?

KS: I always think I am a Japanese, too, you know. I don't, I am not going to say I am an American. Of course, it's always Japanese American. But I don't [go] against American. You know that. I am, in a way think of myself I am an easy person, probably. I am never against it, never prejudiced.

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