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Title: Paul Satoh Interview  
Narrator: Paul Satoh  
Interviewer: Naoko Wake  
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[Mr. Satoh's son Gordon Satoh was present at the interview, and when he speaks, he is denoted as GS]

<Begin Segment 13>

NW: Yeah, so maybe you can tell me a little bit about how—did you get married before you came to the States in 1960?

PS: [Laughs]

NW: Or, did you get married afterward? I'd like to know what brought you here.

PS: Well, I'll tell you. Um, I came to the United States in the 1960s. Because they, um . . . they had the um . . . I was actually—when I entered the um, Rikkyō [University], I was an English text major. In the first two years. And then I had a girlfriend and said well, maybe if have—if I was serious about this girlfriend, I don't think I can really support this woman just being an English teacher. So I thought . . .

NW: You were thinking about becoming an English teacher then?

PS: Well, the linguistics was it, but then . . . uh, maybe I should do something serious about it, so I changed my major into chemistry. That was a big mistake. [chuckles] I turned my major into chemistry. On the second day I got—you see the whole equation partial—the partial differential equations and the integral—double, triple integral equations, and uh, I miserable—miserably failed thermodynamics the first round. I took about the exam for seven times and I finally got B—That wasn't very good.

NW: [Chuckling]

PS: Uh . . . As a matter of fact, the thermodynamics is my favorite subject now, even. But why are you doing that? I mean, you haven't even dated anything, so. That—that girlfriend went away. I have nothing else to lose, so what the heck is it? So, by that time, the um—my professor, that was actually my chemistry professor was working with American universities. And he said, why don't you go to Wayne State? There's a Professor Chan who's a very well known in uh, lipid metabolism. I said okay, fine. But, you don't really have the good—the uh, actually the uh, honor points enough to get the Fulbright, but I think you can probably get some grad monies. So, you can only take 200 dollars in your pocket. 200 dollars in those days was a really big issue. Uh, the, one yen was 306 . . . you know, 360 yen per dollar. So, uh, I came here with 200 dollars in my pocket. And I thought when I landed in Seattle, August 27, 1960. Gee, wait a minute. If I

don't succeed, I'm going to die on the street somewhere. And I—I thought—but I wasn't so worried because I started—our family started from zero many times, so um, I can start something. But then my English is not really good so it was a big issue. But that's why I went to the Wayne State and um . . .

NW: Was there anybody in your family who opposed to your coming to the States?

PS: They did. But anyhow, my mother is—you'll never come back. Well sure I'll come back, I'll keep—I promise you, I said to my mother. But you know, ahh, no. Actually it came true because I never went back.

NW: [Chuckles]. Yes.

PS: So the [?], that I was in the graduate school. Um . . . the and, in my same class—my wife was in the same class. And uh, if you look around the graduate school in the 1960s, most of the graduate school students have wives and kids. You try to find the single women—it's almost impossible. Anyhow. But then we'd been studying together and then we, you know, fell in love and try to marry, 1964. We married—a Polish-American woman. That's why Gordon doesn't look like Japanese.

NW: [Laughter]. They are from you and your wife?

PS: Yes.

NW: What's her name.

PS: You—her name is Geraldine.

NW: Geraldine. And they are from?

PS: Geraldine. Yeah. And I can say . . .

NW: From different backgrounds? Yeah.

PS: . . . the particular Polish name. And um . . .

GS: It's funny because I ended up marrying a Polish wife too. [Laughing]

PS: He married a Polish wife. And so if he had the kid, he'd become a [?] of Polish wife. Ok, anyhow, um. That was a kind of interesting time. 1964 . . . or the year after the state of Michigan uh, approved the interracial marriage. And uh, the—when we married, about seventeen states were still, you know, the—in seventeen states they were illegal to have an interracial marriage. And uh, we didn't know that. And uh, we went to Chicago on the honeymoon but the state of Illinois wasn't, and we had a really hard time trying to get the hotel rooms. And uh . . . so that's one of the things that we experienced. But, my wife, uh, actually did have—and I have seen lots of those covert discriminations. Um, but . . .

NW: How about finding a house to buy? Many people talk about that.

PS: Why talk—You know it's interesting because we were in an apartment in Boston and we—shortly after I got my degree, I had to go back to Japan for two years, so we were Nagoya. And lived as *gaijin*. But uh, the um, Nagoya the . . . cancer research center. And then we came back to Boston and lived in an apartment and we didn't really have much of problems . . . in academia. And then I had this very particular technique to make uh, peptide—solid phase peptide. Most of the pharmaceutical companies did not have that in those days. So having that technology uh, Upjohn, in Kalamazoo, was very—they're eager to hire me. So, I came to Upjohn in 1972. That was the time when my daughter was born. And he was born in Boston. And um Upjohn . . .

NW: So when you get married, did it—did you think about you being a survivor and possibly having affect on either the marriage itself or maybe if you decide to have children, and . . .?

PS: We think about it, you know, but we can't do much about it. So you know, I told my wife and saying, when you think about it . . . you know, with a kid may have some defective genes, but you have a good genes, so you can repair any defect that I have. Whether we sit laughing about it, but we didn't really think about the effect of uh . . . um, you know, the kind of the nuclear bombs—atomic bomb on the next generation. Indeed, in Hiroshima that was a big issue of uh, being, you know, segregated, and so discriminated against. So that the uh—most of the people don't even talk about who is *hibakusha* and who isn't. Um . . . only our kids' friends—high school kids, unless somebody tells me, we never talked about it. Never asked about it. You know, it's not—It's—We somehow knew that we should never ask that question to friends. And uh, so, we never talked about it. The same way uh, my wife knew that I'm from Hiroshima. And I'm from from—the uh, the, under the atomic bomb. But . . . um, I think we didn't make a big issue out of it. Maybe I shouldn't have had this kid. [Laughing]

GS: Gee.

PS: Geez.

NW: [Laughing] Yeah, but people vary about that. It's not as though just because somebody's a survivor they always have the same answer when it comes to things like marriage and, you know, child bearing. So that's the reason why I asked you.

PS: Well I had it from the beginning. I said about my background. So, you know. That—that was not a big issue on that. Although, for my wife.

NW: Mhm.

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