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An Interview with Dr. Percy Poon

An Oral History Conducted by Lisa Gioia-Acres

The UNLV @ Fifty Oral History Project

Oral History Research Center at UNLV

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The following interview is part of a series of interviews conducted under the auspices of the UNLV @ Fifty Oral History Project. Additional transcripts may be found under that series title.

Claytee D. White, Project Director
Director, Oral History Research Center
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Preface

Dr. Percy Poon was born in Hong Kong in 1958, the oldest of four children. He attended Catholic school through junior high and high school, but decided to work after high school instead of going on to college. After working in banking and police forensics for a couple of years, he decided to continue his education.

Percy studied economics at a university in Hong Kong, graduated at age 25, and then applied to Southwest Texas State for an MBA. Having earned his degree after only a year and a half, he applied and was accepted to a PhD program at Louisiana State. He interviewed for several jobs as he was approaching graduation, but decided to follow one of his professors, Mel Jameson, to UNLV.

In August of 1989, Dr. Poon moved to Las Vegas to take on a visiting professorship, and the next year was promoted to tenure-track assistant professorship. In 1994, he met and married his wife, and they make their home in the southwest valley.

Percy recalls the different styles and contributions of university presidents Robert Maxson and Carol Harter. His memories of first arriving in Las Vegas include the marvel of the volcano at the new Mirage Hotel, the oppressive heat, and the smaller size of the city.

Currently, Dr. Percy is dean of the College of Business and Finance, and feels that the program is working towards competitiveness with other well-established university programs, such as UCLA or Arizona State. He feels that progress has been made in pushing for academic exams, but that increased funding will create better programs and opportunities.

Dr. Poon became a U.S. citizen in 1998, and makes occasional visits to his family still living in Hong Kong. He and his wife socialize occasionally with colleagues and church acquaintances, and also entertain family members when they visit from Hong Kong.

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UNLV Oral History Project @ Fifty



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Signature of Interviewer Date

Today is Monday, February 5th, 2007. This is Lisa Gioia-Acres conducting an oral history interview with Dr. Percy Poon, faculty member at UNLV.

Hi, Dr. Poon. May I call you Dr. Poon?

Sure. Or Percy. That's fine.

Whatever you prefer. We're going to just do a little bit of historical background on you personally. So when did you come to Las Vegas?

August 1989.

What brought you here, this job?

The job, yeah.

Let's talk a little bit about your childhood, where you were born and what you remember about your early years.

I was born back in Hong Kong, back in Hong Kong in my childhood.

What year were you born?

1958.

And how long did you live in Hong Kong?

I came to the States when I was 25.

Tell me a little bit about your family -- mom, dad, siblings.

I have two younger brothers and one younger sister. My dad passed away a couple of years ago. My mom is coming actually in a couple of days to visit me. In terms of jobs one of my younger brothers is an M.D. He is a pediatrician. My younger brother, the other one, he is now a judge on the high court. It's like a supreme court in Hong Kong. My sister is an executive secretary of a trust investment company.

Does all your family still live in Hong Kong?

They're all in Hong Kong. I'm the only one who is here.

How often do they get to visit you here?

I would say more often I went back to visit them. I went back last year.

Does your mother work?

No.

And what kind of work did your father do?

He was in the construction business. He basically did wall paintings.

I'm kind of curious how their children became to be such professionals.

Well, back in Hong Kong in the Chinese community children's education is the top priority. So even though our family was poor, when it comes to education they spend whatever. We kind of grew up on this hill in like a shack, a hut. And that's how we grew up.

Very interesting. Tell me what kind of childhood you had as far as your activities. You said that education was very important. What did you do for your hobbies or for your fun time when you were a child?

A couple of things when we were younger. Our biggest thing was sometimes over the weekend my mom would take us to see a cartoon movie. That was like the biggest thing when we were really young, and we would go eat outside and then see the cartoon. When we were a little bit older, each of the siblings had their own friends. My number one hobby is to play soccer. And so when I'm not studying --

You were playing soccer. Was soccer big in China or Hong Kong?

Yeah.

Do you still retain contact with some of the friends that you had in Hong Kong?

Yeah. E-mails most likely now these days.

What was your school life like, your early education?

From junior high to high, I was in a Catholic boys school. And that occupies all your life. Study, that's the only one thing. You've got to study because in Hong Kong in those days there was a series of exams you had to pass to move on. For some (indiscernible) school, you need to take like a topic exam. Every student had to take it in order to move on to junior high. And after that -- the system in Hong Kong was a little bit different. There are 13 years, K through 13, so five years of junior high and high school. After that you have to take another exam to get onto the final two years of high school, years 12 and 13. And after that you take another exam if you want to go to a university. At that time there were two universities and a couple of colleges. So for a typical child in junior high and high school even now, that's all they focus on, preparing to take all these exams. If you fail --

What happens if you fail?

You have to take maybe another year. You take the exam again or again and again. I know some of the classmates who took the exam two or three times until they have enough grade to be accepted by the college or university.

Is it acceptable to not go to college?

In those days -- you're talking about how many years ago?

Thirty.

So a long time ago. If you have a high school education, you can find an okay job. But if you want to advance in a career, you've got to have a degree. That's what happened to me. After my high school I went to work for two years. Then I remember the college. I'm looking and I'm not going anywhere.

What kind of work did you do right out of high school?

I worked in a bank for a year. And then I worked at a police forensic lab, like CSI. Actually, I was doing the blood typing. All the police would bring in clothes and garments with bloodstains and we had to identify the blood type and other stuff. And I decided I've got to go and get a degree.

Because that wasn't something you were interested in? Were you interested in it?

Yeah. But I couldn't see that I could advance.

So you went to a university in Hong Kong first?

Yes.

And what did you study?

I studied economics -- a totally different story, because in high school my number one subjects were chemistry and biology.

So how did you jump to economics?

Well, I'm thinking again back in Hong Kong. Now, I see in many, many cases if you had that type of degree, a science degree, most likely you end up teaching high school. I didn't want to do that. So I changed to economics.

Did that decision come easy to you, economics? Was that something you were interested in?

Sometimes you don't have a choice. The reason I'm saying that is it depends on your grade in those particular exams. And you applied to not just a university. You apply to a major. It's not

like the U.S. where you apply to a university. You choose a major and then apply with your grade. And if your grade is good enough, you get the major. If not, you get a second choice major or third choice major.

Did you get your first choice?

I think my first choice was like business management.

So how long did you go to college or a university in Hong Kong?

Three years.

Did you receive a degree at the end of the three years?

Yes.

Is that the same as a bachelor's degree here?

Yeah.

So they call it a Bachelor of Science?

At that time my school was in a transition of moving actually from a four-year to a three-year. I think that was like a (indiscernible) diploma (indiscernible) four-year degree. In Hong Kong at that time there was one university that was four-year and one that was three-year. (Indiscernible.)

Do you recall how old you were when you graduated in Hong Kong?

Twenty-five.

At that time had you started a family yet?

No. No.

So then where did you go from there?

Then I say, okay, I want to see more now than just get a degree. So I come to the U.S. to study more. I got an MBA after I came to Texas.

Was it a difficult process to apply for Texas?

No.

And what university was that?

I went to what is now called Texas State. It was called Southwest Texas State. It was in San Marcos about 50 or so miles from Austin.

What was your experience like there?

Well, I would say it was a life-changing experience.

In what way?

In a number of ways. Number one, they were saying -- Hong Kong to me was so small. I go to the U.S. It's so big. Everything is so -- there's so much more freedom. In Hong Kong most people live with family. You can't afford your own apartment. Now you're on your own. Then, also, you can see there's so much more out there.

More opportunity?

(Indiscernible) experience a totally different culture.

In Hong Kong did you have to learn English? You had to learn it. Was that part of --

In those days there were two types of high schools and junior highs. One, everything is supposed to be taught in English. The other type taught in Chinese. And I went to the English-speaking school.

So you had a good grasp of the English language when you came to Texas?

Sufficient enough.

Did you feel welcomed when you got to the university?

I think it was an okay school.

Did you live on campus?

Close. Not on campus, but close. Not in a dorm.

I'm just curious how you made that transition. How you knew to get the apartment or where --

There were some Hong Kong students on the campus already. And they really were great. They helped new students out. So other students made it easier.

And so you got your MBA there. How long did you go to school?

I think one and a half years. Really quick.

And then what happened?

Let's see. When I became a master, I'm thinking it's too easy.

You like to challenge yourself.

I want to take another challenge. So I applied to a Ph.D. program. So I got accepted at Louisiana State. I applied to Louisiana for a Ph.D.

May I ask how you financed your education? Did you work at the same time?

Which part?

When you came to the United States.

In Hong Kong at that time, even now, it's a very popular way for students; tutoring other students of not the same grade, lower grades. And you make money. So I saved some money and I got some money from my relatives to come to the States to get my MBA. And it was really inexpensive at that time. One of the reasons I chose that university is because it was so inexpensive.

Do you feel you got a good education there?

Yeah.

And then at Louisiana State?

That was totally on assistantship. I didn't spend a dime. It was only \$6,000 a year.

So you didn't work while you were getting your Ph.D. Can you talk to me a little bit about how you came to Las Vegas and the university?

When I graduated I interviewed for different jobs at the same time. That was in the early part of 1989 and 1988. At that time there was a faculty opening in a department and then there was a job here. So I interviewed here. I had gotten another job offer already, but I took a chance and interviewed here. They told me of an opening because they hired just -- in fact, my professor from LSU. But they had an opening for a visiting professor, so I took a chance to follow him and come out here. Then the following year there was a regular full-time position and I applied and I --

And you've been here since.

Yeah.

And is that original member that you followed still here?

He's still here.

And who is that?

Mel Jameson. He's now one of the associate deans of the college.

Can you talk a little bit about your impression of Las Vegas and this area, this region of the United States, when you moved here compared to your time in Texas and then in Louisiana?

Oh, it is a much bigger city. San Marcos, it was a much smaller city. But it's not like here.

You're in the desert here. You're in heat here. There's more openness here. Here you see

mountains. I moved here sometime in August.

You came during the hot time.

Yeah. If you walk out to the car or your apartment, it's like you walk into an oven. The hot wind keeps blowing at you.

Did you do any investigation prior to moving here or did you just say I'm going to come?

I didn't do anything.

You didn't think anything. You didn't think about the environment when you first moved here?

No.

And was it an easy transition for you? Did you get a house or an apartment right away?

I got an apartment. I know that another professor is here, so it makes it much easier.

When you said you went near Austin, the Texas college, that there was a strong Hong Kong population, did you find the same here? Were there Asians here in this university?

At that time, no. Let's say, for example, in the business college at that time -- I may be wrong -- but I probably was the first Asian, the first Chinese in the whole college.

You very well could be right there.

But now we have a bunch.

Did you feel that you were kind of the welcoming mat for people to come in?

I'm not sure that's significant. But more and more are coming.

What were your impressions of Las Vegas when you first got here compared to now?

Oh, it was real hot. It's still hot. But now I like the hot weather more than the cold. But at that time it was -- in terms of -- I'm thinking of the Strip. On the Strip at that year the biggest thing was The Mirage. It just opened.

So you kind of came here just as the boom was starting.

That's right. And at that time the talk of the town was the volcano show. People would drive along the Strip and then stop their car and watch it. Now no one cares because there are so many more things going on along the Strip. Look at all this development. Now Las Vegas really sounds homey to a major business city. And in terms of driving, it takes so much longer to drive to places. For example, at that time Seven Hills and Anthem were not there. Now there are houses

and houses there.

So the one thing is jobs in the casinos -- they bring people in and then that brings other types of jobs. So Las Vegas still depends on casino and gaming and hospitality. But the industry is getting more diverse. You see a lot of institutions, banks coming out here and other manufacturing types coming out here. So I think the city's getting better and bigger.

Did you get settled here? Did you purchase a house? Start a family? Did you get married?
Yeah.

When did you meet your wife? Where did you meet her?

Somewhere on campus, actually -- off campus.

Is she American?

No. She's Korean.

And do you have children?

No. Not yet.

When did you get married?

In '94.

And what does your wife do?

She is a freelancer florist designer. She makes the flowers for weddings.

Who was the president of the university when you arrived?

Maxson.

And what do you remember about Dr. Maxson?

I remember seeing him talking, walking on campus especially in the old student union. His charisma -- you see him talk to people. Everybody walks up and talks to him. He would have a shirt on his shoulder, his trademark.

Did he know who you were?

No, I don't think so. But I knew who he was.

So you felt comfortable to go and talk to him if you needed to.

If I wanted to, yeah. That was the impression he gave to people, talking at times on campus in the student union. So yeah.

What do you feel his greatest contribution to UNLV might have been?

Could be the basketball.

What are your feelings about basketball for UNLV?

At that time it was (indiscernible). We won the National Championship. And then maybe there were some black marks. But still...

You thought it was a good thing for the university. How about Jerry Tarkanian?

I've heard good things and bad things about him. But still the biggest -- at that time the biggest university-wide accomplishment is the National Championship. That brought UNLV to the map.

As a faculty member knowing that students make the university -- the more students the better -- do you think that the basketball era of that time had a lot to do with UNLV becoming the university it is today?

I think it at least brings more students to campus. If you look at it honestly, some students come here because of something. At that time I mean the basketball was the number one thing. Later on -- basketball now is dying. But the university is expanding. And more students are coming not for that reason but other reasons. So, initially, I think it did bring more students to the campus because of that recognition.

And you felt that was a good thing?

Yeah.

Since Dr. Maxson, Carol Harter served eleven years as president.

Yeah.

And what are your impressions of her leadership at UNLV?

That -- mixed.

Can you elaborate a little?

As a faculty we don't feel that welcome, that honesty. Like even the experience I had. When she first came she invited the college faculty to a breakfast to talk about different issues and so on. One faculty member asked her what is UNLV's (indiscernible)? And she answered the faculty pressure (indiscernible).

Another experience I heard -- I haven't experienced it myself -- is every year there are faculty receptions. She would make sure everyone shook her hand. Why not? A new president wouldn't do that because it takes forever. You had to wait in line to shake her hand and then go to

a reception. There are other things that we see as a faculty, that what she had done may not have been helpful, like adding more layers of administrators. They are much more (indiscernible). And more administrators thought that before. But she did have the dental school and law school.

So she brought in some contributions. Like you said, there are mixed feelings.

Yeah.

And how do you feel the new president that we have now is going to --

It's still too early to say. But I think he's on the right track.

Who are some of the staff on campus that you associate with?

Most likely the college.

And the college that you work in is?

Business.

How does Las Vegas differ from some of the other two places that you lived in the United States? And how does the University of Nevada differ from your prior universities?

In terms of city, since it just kind of expanded in the last 15 years, everything is new. And (indiscernible) a bigger city. So like (indiscernible) an older city and the capital of Louisiana. So roads and buildings are older. In Las Vegas, everything is newer. The houses, the designs are different. The population mix is totally different. Back in Louisiana you have a much bigger population of African-Americans. But here it's less. Here Hispanic is the second biggest population.

How does that affect the population of the university?

I see there are many more Hispanic students on campus.

And do you have a lot of Hispanics in your business program?

There are some.

And do you think it's going to increase over time?

Definitely. No doubt.

So when you got here you were the visiting professor. And from there you became a full professor.

A full-time -- not a visiting -- full-time tenure-track position, assistant professor.

And are you now tenure-track --tenured?

Tenured.

You are tenured now, very good. Who was the dean when you first got here?

Who was that? Norville, Evans Norville.

Is he still on campus?

No. He left.

So now who is your current dean?

Flaherty.

What kind of accomplishments or progress have you seen in your department in your time here?

Mixed. The math and finance department is unique. There are four different fields in the department of finance. We also have business law housed in finance. We have real estate and insurance. And that diversity on one hand could produce synergy in terms of teaching and research activities. But on the other hand, the uniqueness in each area also brings (indiscernible). And now I'm the chair of the department. I now see all this.

How long have you been chair?

Just since last semester. So this is my second semester.

And how long will that last?

Typically, it's a three-year term.

Would you try to be chair again after the three years?

Oh, that I don't know.

What are some of your major accomplishments in the past year as chair? And what would you like to leave after your third year is up?

Well, there was kind of a rift, a conflict, in the last several years between finance and non-finance. And what I did, at least in the last semester was hold two department parties. These were offered to bring them out, get them to talk to each other, reduce some tensions and so on. I'm not sure if it's working exactly the way I want it to. Well, my biggest mission is hopefully, by the end of the term, everyone is at peace, no more conflict.

And that synergy is in place.

Yeah.

That would be nice. Describe your UNLV students.

In terms of age and working, they are mostly a little bit older than typical college students. And mostly they may be working.

(End Tape 1, Side A.)

But in terms of study habits, they are probably similar to other major city universities, not the small town university. Small town university students are probably more timid than our students here. Here students would most likely talk to you more after class, even during class. If you have a class where the students want to talk a lot and you cannot control them, you have a problem.

Are you referring more to undergraduate students?

Undergraduates, yeah.

And do you find that's a problem at times?

It depends because each class is different. So it depends. I have experience in this; a couple of students will not stop talking. But that will not happen at a smaller university.

Do you find the students that are in your class as undergraduates want to be there or do they go into that program because they thought it was something different than what they find out it is?

It depends on what class I'm teaching. If I'm teaching somebody (indiscernible) finance class for the whole college, some of them I can tell don't want to be there. So I keep reminding them that this class could be potentially one of the most useful classes in their lives, not just academics.

Make it interesting. Make it (indiscernible) as much as I can so they don't feel like it drags every time in class. Why I have to be in this class? What is the point?

But if I'm teaching an upper level finance class, business or finance majors, they're much more motivated.

And what's your success rate with your students? Do most of them pass?

Most of them pass. For most (indiscernible) pass the class. I keep telling my students (indiscernible) a couple of things, attitude and effort.

Do you feel that our business and finance program is competitive with other universities?

I would think we're on that progress of getting more competitive, but we're not there yet. If you are looking at some of the major schools in the neighboring states, we are not there yet.

Who would you say our university kind of competes with? Who are we comparable to?

(Indiscernible), for example, Cal State, some of the neighboring (indiscernible). We are not, for example, Arizona or UCLA, at that level. We don't have the resources to do that.

And by resources you mean staff?

Staff. We need more staff and more resources to upgrade the programs, not just (indiscernible).

So we talked about sports and your view on basketball and whatnot. That was good.

How do you feel about satellite campuses? Does the business and finance department have programs running off campus?

No, we don't.

Would that be something that would be helpful in the future do you think? Would we get more students enrolled in the program if we had --

I think that's more like a statewide system (indiscernible). I don't think we can just do a separate department on campus. It's not going to happen. But let's say, you know, just a satellite campus in North Las Vegas (indiscernible). There's a business college there. And if you start there, that is a different story.

I live in North Las Vegas and I know how difficult it is to get to UNLV. So you're thinking we could possibly in the future do part of our program in North Las Vegas?

Oh, definitely.

That could be something you could work on as the chair of your department. You could push that.

Do you know what Research One institution means?

I have heard of it.

Do you know very much about it? And what's your impression of it?

Can you elaborate on that Research One thing?

No, because I don't know anything about it right now and I thought maybe you would.

I think I heard something about it, but I don't know.

Then we'll pass that question.

How about Millennium Scholarships? Since they have instituted the Millennium Scholarships, do you feel that they have benefited students?

This to me I have a mixed feeling about it.

Why do you feel that way? This might help policy in the future?

With their scores more and more are coming for (indiscernible) companies. We just have no problem. But the thing is the money stays there forever. They're thinking about (indiscernible). When that stops, where is the money coming from? Are you going to stop the scholarship?

Do you feel that the students have benefited from it? The ones that are still getting the scholarships, is it helping them do better in their university experience?

I would say probably it makes UNLV more affordable and it is probably one of the reasons why maybe (indiscernible). This is just my impression of it. If the education costs you money, you treasure it more. So the moneys from scholarship -- their motivation (indiscernible).

They may take it for granted. Do you have Millennium Scholarship students in your --
Oh, yeah.

So you probably have seen that difference there.

Right. Unfortunately. The reason that I know they're on the scholarship is if they don't pass the class, they will drop from the scholarship. So there are things you know.

Well, how do you feel students in Nevada and, perhaps, specifically UNLV students -- how motivated are they to be good students, to get the best out of their education?

I would say probably (indiscernible).

One-third. Do you think that's good enough?

No, it's not good.

How can we get them more motivated do you think? Like you said if they pay for it...

The state university is a different part. If their mission is to be more competitive, that would solve that problem.

Do you feel a high school student would actually care? Do you think that they would push themselves more in the high school years?

If they know it's competitive, yeah, because, otherwise, you cannot go into university.

Do you think that our students today know how important a college education is?

I don't know.

How can we get that message out to them?

Let them know that if you don't get a college education your path will be totally different. You know, we've been young before.

However, when you were young it sounds like your parents -- did they push you or were you self-motivated to go to college?

Both. They don't mind work as much. Children work hard. In the neighborhood most of the kids would work after high school so they can help the family. But the parents (indiscernible). More typical way of thinking -- you want a more advanced education (indiscernible).

But here it's totally different. Here sometimes when the kids go to college, then it's important (indiscernible). You can really tell. Almost everybody goes to university. So it ends up we have students who are not ready yet; thinking they are when they are not. And they really waste their time and our time, university money and state money.

How much involvement do you have with a student like that? Do you try to push them or give them three chances and they're out?

At our level, our finance classes begin with third level, with junior level. So some of them are already weeded out, but some are still there. And there's nothing we can do. Two things we find they're lacking are writing skills and math skills.

And you can't compensate for it on the university level --

It's too late now. We are not teaching them at their level. In finance we are not teaching their level.

Do the students understand that? Do they understand that it comes from them if they want to succeed?

Yeah. But, unfortunately, some of them still (indiscernible), even though they are supposed to know already.

Did you buy a home in Las Vegas or Henderson?

Actually, I have one in Henderson and one in Las Vegas.

Which one do you live in?

The southwest side.

And are you enjoying the neighborhood of Las Vegas itself? Do you enjoy living here?

Since I prefer the heat, yeah. But the neighborhood is typical -- people will just say "hi" to you in

the neighborhood and that's it.

And that's it. Mind their own business. I agree.

Do you socialize a lot with people from UNLV or people from your neighborhood, or do you socialize at all?

Yeah. Some people from work, from church and so on.

What were some of the struggles or problems that UNLV was experiencing when you first got here and do you see that they may have improved or have gotten worse since you arrived?

In terms of pushing for academic exams, I think we have made progress. The problem is, again, funding. They're pushing for something that costs money. Sometimes that cannot just be done. That's one thing, criticism I have (indiscernible) trouble pushing for (indiscernible), whatever. Where is the money? We cannot do anything but talk about it. You've got to show us the money. If you want to do that, it costs money.

Do you, from a finance and business background, have any ideas on how that money can become a reality? Do you think that they've done a good job?

It takes all the way from the top.

Do you think that they've been doing enough to get that funding?

I think with the new president (indiscernible) struggling (indiscernible).

What kind of traditions that you might know of do your students participate in at the university? Do you know?

What type of traditions? Like maybe ball games and --

Are a lot of your students involved in sports at all on the campus?

That I don't know.

So do you know your students on a personal level (indiscernible)? Not too much?

No.

You don't get too personally involved?

I try not to do that.

How about academic advising?

That I do more.

When you do have children, do you think that by the time they're ready to go to university that UNLV will be a good college experience for them?

It depends. It depends on a number of things -- the cost, their grades, and where can they go. For instance, I know some faculty members' children go to (indiscernible) or some go (indiscernible) or some go here. So it just depends.

Will you stay at UNLV for a long time?

If I can finish this term, the term as the chair.

Do you set your sights for a different location?

Just a general (indiscernible) I would say. It's difficult for academics to move around.

Especially once you're tenured, right?

Once you're tenured because you'll give up that and start all over again. And you take a big risk.

How do you feel about that? Personally, it would be difficult for me to know that I have to stay in one place. Would you like to have the opportunity to maybe expand your horizons a little bit?

Oh, yeah. Definitely. But once you pass the tenure state, my thinking is -- and it probably is true for most faculty -- if you want to move to a different school, there must be a good reason, a better school or better place to live. You just don't want to (indiscernible).

So you don't make that transition lightly?

No. Not exactly. The older you are, the more difficult it is to make that move.

Do you feel that your family's going to follow you to the United States?

No.

Your brothers are settled there. Your mom is just going to come for a visit.

My mom and my sister and her daughter come for Chinese New Year, which is in two weeks. They are professionals in Hong Kong. (Indiscernible) find a job. Like MD, he (indiscernible) possible.

Did you become a United States citizen?

Yeah.

When did you become a citizen?

1998.

Did you have to become a citizen?

No, I don't have to.

But you felt that it was an important thing to do?

Right.

I find your story fascinating. There are so many things that I would like to know.

It's probably true for everybody.

How about anything that you would like to share about your life, your times and your experiences that I have not asked a question on?

Just one thing, talking about the university. Some of these systems, some of the process (indiscernible) with chair, I have no idea why that is done like that. Why there is, for example, so much paperwork involved. There are things where as a faculty and chair, we don't know what's going on.

How could we bridge that communication gap?

I don't know. Here's an example. Do you know Web Campus?

Yes.

I use that. For the new thing I just used that last semester.

My professor uses it, too.

Yeah. Okay. So this semester, spring, I've been waiting for them to link my courses on the Web Campus. It hasn't been done yet. This is (indiscernible).

Now, I thought it was the professor's fault.

No.

I keep going onto Web Campus and it says it's not --

Exactly. You know why? It turns out you have to apply. Even if you're using, you need to apply for the class. Now, how could that be? We've been waiting and waiting. When is it going to go up? No. It's not there yet. Why?

It is a very good resource.

Yeah. And the reason is not everybody wanted to use it. So they're not doing it for everybody.

But we used it last semester. What do you think? And that is frustrating.

Is there anything that you can do? Are there any channels you can go to?

For most people's thinking, it's (indiscernible).

That's too bad because it was a very good, useful tool, very useful tool.

And why should we stop using it?

When your family comes to visit, where will you take them?

This time I'm going to take them to San Diego.

What are you going to see down there, the animal park?

Yeah. The zoo and SeaWorld. We'll all go, and when we come back, they're going to Grand Canyon. I cannot go. Now as a chair I cannot just take off. I have all the students. And then they will go to the "O" show and do some shopping. They'll be here eight days.

Beautiful. This is an old question, but you're a business and finance person. What's your opinion on gambling? Do you gamble? Do you gamble for fun? Do you gamble big? Or do you find it --

When I first came here, for the first several years I just sometimes went to play some blackjack. That's a challenge because you can remember the system. There's a system. Then you can increase your odds. Sometimes I did that in the beginning when I first came here. But (indiscernible). I haven't done it for a long time.

How about the slot machines and the video poker?

I only played -- what's that thing? -- Megabucks. I put a few bucks there and that's it. I don't sit there to gamble.

Is it because of you personally or is it your logic?

Both. Logic -- if you sit there long enough, you can lose all your money. It's very simple. Second thing, I don't want to waste my hard earned money. I came from a very poor family background. I don't want to just give all my money away.

But you could win big.

But the odds are against you.

That's very true. That's what I wanted to know. That's good for me to know.

I think that's about it. Is there anything else that you would like to add? I think this is a great interview and I appreciate you taking the time to --

Oh, I appreciate it.

-- come all the way up to the library and visit with me and spend some time.

You made me think about some of the questions.

And if there's more that you would like to share, feel free. I'm going to send you an E-mail to say thank you, so you'll have my e-mail address. And then if there's anything else you'd like to share, please feel free to do that.

Okay. I'll do that.

Thank you so much.

Great.

(End Tape 1, Side B.)