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My History:

Myoung-ja Lee Kwon and the UNLV Libraries

An Oral History conducted by Claytee D. White

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The transcript received minimal editing that includes the elimination of fragments, false starts, and repetitions in order to enhance the reader's understanding of the material. All measures have been taken to preserve the style and language of the narrator. In several cases, photographic sources (housed separately) accompany the collection as slides or black and white photographs.

The following interview is part of a series of interviews conducted under the auspices of the Boyer Early Las Vegas Oral History Project. Additional transcripts may be found under that series title.

Claytee D. White, Project Director Director, Oral History Research Center University Libraries University Nevada, Las Vegas

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Preface

Myoung-ja Lee Kwon began her life on the grounds of the Kyongbok Palace in Korea. In a country where education is valued, her father's occupation as a university professor meant that the family was highly honored, thus this palatial space allowed them live in a state of prosperity. But war changed these circumstances and in this interview Kwon vividly explains the family's evolution. In 1965, after graduation from Seoul National University she married and a year later, moved to the United State of America where she earned a Master's degree in Library Science in Provo, Utah. Her first professional position was at the University of Nevada Las Vegas as a cataloguer and after many promotions, became interim dean of UNLV Libraries.

In 2001, she took the job as Dean of Libraries at California State East Bay Library, retiring in 2008. Currently, she serves as a special lecturer and discussion leader with the Fulbright Senior Specialist Program. During her 2009 visit to Korea, she presented information to graduate students at the Sookmyong Women's University Library and Information Science division.

The family's strong ties to Korea have led the six siblings home for many occasions. Photographs throughout this oral history document some of the family's traditions and Korean cultural norms as well as Myoung-ja's life in the United States. She beautifully serves both worlds.

Myoung-ja Lee Kwon is passionate, first about her family that includes her son, Billy, a true artist at heart, husband, Ernest, a teacher and five brothers and sisters. Her second passion is education. Since she grew up in libraries it is fitting that the family's name graces a room in UNLV's Lied Library, the Han-San Lee Faculty Lounge was named in honor of the Han-San Lee Endowment. Lied Library is special to her because as interim dean she helped to oversee the construction of the building for several years of the building process.

After this exciting interview, I wanted to visit Korea; you will also.

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Graduation from Seoul National University, 1965 (p.20)

This is Claytee White. It is September 4, 2004 and I'm in Hayward, California, in the home of Myoung-ja Lee Kwon. Now we are going to get started talking about your early life. Tell me about some of your first memories?

Actually, the first memories I have are all about my family. Sometimes, because we have a big family, some of the stories that people told me were kind of added to my real memories. I don't really have early, early memories. But they actually begin with my 1st grade of the elementary school or probably a year before or after that. The reason I always think about the 1st grade is that I have three older sisters who all went to one elementary school but by the time I was ready to go to elementary school the school district changed on us. So I had to go to a different school than my sisters. My grandfather took me to school everyday on his bike. I rode with him on the backseat of the bike. So that's my first childhood memory and it was a very fond memory in the sense that my grandfather was just very good about teaching me things like how to cross the street and how to avoid traffic. I especially remember one time after about three months, my grandfather told me, "it is about time for you to go to school by yourself and I'm going to watch you cross the street." I ran when I crossed the street and my grandfather told me, "Myoung-ja, you should never run when you cross the street. What if you fall and then a car comes? So, you always have to walk and always remember that you have enough time to cross the street."

Tell me about your parents, give me their names as well as your sisters' and your brothers'?

Ok, my parents' names, in Korea, we don't change the name when we marry. So my mom has a last name different from ours. Her name is **Kyong-nam Suh** (서경남

[徐敬男]). Suh(서) is the last name. My father's name is **Hong-jik Lee**(이홍직[李弘稙]), and Lee (이 [李]) is our family name. When you see my name,

Myoung-ja (명자 [明子]) Lee (이 [李] Kwon (권 [權]), since I came to the United States,
I [added] the married name, but I kept my maiden name, Lee. Then when I got divorced,
[since] I had a son carrying the last name, Kwon, I kept that name. Also in your

professional life you needed to have a constant name. Anyway, that's my parents'

names. My sisters' names: the first one is, **Soon-ja** (순자 [淳子]); second one, **Song-mi**(성미[成美]); and third one, **Yoen-ja** (연자 [延子]). My brothers' names are **Chee-kyu**(치규 [治珪]) and **Song-kyu** (성규 [成珪]), the last one.

What is ja?

Ja (자[子]) is actually a Japanese name convention for girls. We were born during the period when Korea was under Japanese occupation. So our names are actually Japanese names. You may hear about Aki-ko and Yoko that end with a Ko in Japanese names, [which is pronounced as Ja in Korean]. My second sister, somehow got the name, it wasn't Japanese. It's weird. The way my parents named us was unusual. When my father was a young starting professor, he used to do a lot of instruction from one college to another. I was born in the year he started at the college whose name starts with Myoung. My third sister was the same, Yoen-ja. There was a university that is called the Yoen-hee University (연회대학교); right now they changed it to Yoen-sae University (연최대학교). So we would always tease my parents about that.

Tell me about your parents what kind of work they did, if your Mom worked outside the home, those kinds of things.

We were actually an educated family. My mom was a high school teacher before she was married. She continued teaching until 1960 or '61. You can imagine-- she had seven children while she was teaching. We have a lot of stories about how all of us were girls, one girl after another, but no sons, and then [finally] she had two boys. All of us girls have nicknames about when she gave births. My father would come to the midwife and say, "What did she have?" The first daughter is considered a jewel of the family. It is always good to have a first born daughter. So they were pleased. 'Oh, it's a girl.' Then the second girl came and they said, "Oh it's a girl again." Then the third one came and "Again?" Then the fourth one came and said, "Don't even ask!" I was actually a fifth one, because the very oldest one died when she was nine years old. When I came along my grandmother couldn't even say anything to my father. She just ssighed, "Ahhh." So, my third sister would say, sometimes, jokingly, "I am the 'Don't even ask!"

Tell me where you grew up?

I grew up in the city, Seoul, the capitol city of Korea. The reason I hold fond memories about my first grade was that at the time, my father was the Assistant Director of the Korean National Museum and all of the museum staff lived in the residential area behind the Kyong-bok Palace (경복궁 [景福宮]), one of the palaces in Korea. The palaces had the most beautiful ground, one of which was our playground.

So you grew up in a storybook setting?

Almost like that. So, when you see some of our pictures taken during this time, we were in pajamas or the really utterly out of place clothing in front of the palace. It was just wonderful to grow up in that setting. We were just so happy with everything, the seasonal changes, and the birds and flowers on the ground. It was just beautiful. My

grandparents used to grow things in our backyard. My grandfather always wanted to do something to add to our family economy. He grew chickens and when they were hatched, the chicks stayed in his room since the Korean heating system made the floor warm. We lived as an extended family, so my grandparents and my uncles, one aunt, and six of us with our parents lived together.

Which side of the family, your father's side?

Father's; yes, 12 of us. We had two housekeepers since my mom was working. Our grandparents took care of us a lot when we were growing up because there were so many of us. My elder sister is the one that really took charge of all of us. At dinnertime, we'd have two tables, the grown ups and children's tables and we were yapping away and grandfather would look over at us and 'shhhh.' We were quiet for awhile, and then we started the chatting again. It was a really pleasant good way for children to grow up. That changed when the North Koreans invaded.

Tell me the approximately the year that happened?

It was 1950. I actually forgot what year that was, but it happened on June 25 and I think it was 1950 when they came and the government completely evacuated -- only higher officials fled -- and all of us stayed. [The Director of the Museum went in hiding] Then the North Korean [soldiers] came and [in July] they told us to evacuate the entire palace ground. We didn't really have any place to go. Fortunately, my mom's older sister had a house and was living by herself. So we moved in with her.

Everybody all 12 of you?

By then my grandmother, actually that year just before we had to leave the palace ground, she had a stroke and passed away in her sleep. My grandfather wasn't really

comfortable living in his daughter-in-law's sister's house. So he chose to go to the country where we had a mountain house, where the caretaker was living. So he went there.

Now you just mentioned a mountain. Tell me about having a mountain and a house? In Korea, there were a lot of people who had a family mountain. We had a really illustrious ancestor, who rose to an equivalent of the prime minister position. When his father died-- I could be a little bit wrong about exactly how the mountain came about-the king gave him a real big funeral service [in honor of his father] and gave the mountain to the family, a piece of the mountain.

Now we are talking about a regular mountain?

It's like this hill, but we call it a mountain. Actually it is bigger than this mountain because there are a lot of trees. You can see the pictures. It is a climbable mountain, not like Rockies and things like that.

When she said 'where we are now' we're in Hayward and the house is on a hill where we are right now. Tell me a little more about the class structure before the invasion.

Well actually, when you say before the invasion, I should say before the Yi Dynasty (Choson dynasty, 1392-1910) collapsed, before the Japanese occupation or before the Westernization began. We basically had a three-class structure: aristocratic [noble] class (양반), middle class (중인) and low class (전인). The aristocracy composed of royal family, landowners and scholars. The middle class are people who are engaged in commerce. Then the lowest class is composed of artisans, shamans ... I'm not explaining this very well because I'm not sure where the sharecroppers, the farmers who do not own

land fit in . Also there is the servant class. Although we don't really call it slavery, but there is the class who serve people. I am not really giving the exact historical facts that I would like to give. Our family is part of an old aristocratic [literati] family simply because we were all educated people. We also served the King in a very important way. We can trace our very first ancestor back to around the 1350s, when Koryo Dynasty (고려왕국, 930-1390) and Yi Dynasty changed. Our ancestor was one of the staunch loyalists of the old dynasty. When the dynasty changed over, that ancestor was given poison to end his life. We have the place [along the Han River) where he actually drank the poison that came from the King. In Korea there are a lot of [historical] stories, and our family has our share of very interesting family stories. A couple of years ago my sister and I were driving and we were visiting small places. We visited the particular area [where a small gazebo [pavilion] stood with a sign explaining the death of our ancestor]. Usually when there is the change of a dynasty, some trusted officials [of the demised dynasty tend to meet] a real atrocious end. This wasn't. It was a graceful ending. We all know that. He was a scholar, so we have a lot of his works still. They are now reprinted. [Over time], as his descendants increased, the Han-san Lee family branched out. In our family branch, the closest we can trace our ancestor is the afore-mentioned illustrious ancestor who was awarded our mountain. We have the monument that the King gave which was erected in the late 18th century. Usually when a son is a high official and his father dies, the funeral service is really big, and in our case, the government provided all that [in recognition of our ancestor's contribution]. When he himself died, his son wasn't really as important a his father. So he never got his monument or the gravestone built. So, the eulogies that his contemporaries wrote for his gravestone never got inscribed on

his gravestone. It was a really long one, listing his accomplishments. Some years ago, a large part of our family mountain had to be sold because of the city planning development project. My brother, Songkyu, carried out the project of moving all our ancestors' graves that were scattered all over the mountain into one place, creating a park like setting]. At that time my brother found a real good calligrapher, built a monuments, and had the eulogy inscribed on the newly erected monument on his honor. I'll show you the picture of the monument.

Now is the mountain a cemetery as well?

That is the purpose, I mean the King gives a mountain or the family buys a piece of the mountain. There are some mountains that are used to plant chestnut trees, oak trees, and other kinds of plants. At the same time, mountains are used for all family members' final resting place. When we were young and before the grave consolidation project, my father used to take us around the mountain and pointed out, saying things like, "this is your seventh-great grandfather and he used to be a governor of a small province." We all became very ingrained to our family history tradition. One of the things that my father did annually was to air out and hang the ancestor's portrait on his birthday, sometimes in August. We prepared a small altar in front of his portrait to burn incense and light candles to memorialize him. This portrait was done when he visited China as a member of official envoy which took place annually to tribute to Chinese emperor. The portrait was in silk screen him sitting in his official robe and in color. That portrait was actually displayed in the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York for two years [1997-99?]; now it was returned to Korea and my brother has it. When we had to relocate to a different mountain for the second time, we built a house in the mountain for the family to

come and spend time. In that house, my brother collected and stored works of our branch of Lee family members. A copy of our ancestor's portrait and other photographs of my grandparents, parents and uncles are displayed in the house. In a way it will probably become a small private museum of our family.

Now tell me about your mother's family?

My mother's family was resistant to the Japanese occupation. My mother's family is also large [I had three aunts, and four uncles (mother's sisters and brothers)]. Compared to, or contrasted to our family, here is a much more politically active family.

Aristocracy also?

Yes. They are landowners in the southern part of the Korean Peninsula, Jon-la Province (전라도) while our family is from the central part of the peninsula, Kyongki Province (경기도). My [maternal] grandfather was very active in the resistance movement against the Japanese government. Literally he was in and out of jail all the time before 1945 [during the Japanese occupation]. Also he was very much active in the early Korean labor movement. My brother is actually in the process of writing a biography of his life, because he is a very important person not as in officials or president or that kind of thing. (My brother's book was published in 2008.). My grandfather has done a lot for equality in the Korean labor movement in the 1920s and 1930s when he was literally in and out of jail. My grandmother actually pulled the family together and raised the children. In 1945 when Japan surrendered to the Allies and Korea was liberated, the Korean government was formed, he became [was elected] one of the members of the constitutional National Assembly (현법국회). During his term, the Korean Constitution was drafted. Then in

the National Assembly. When North Korea invaded the Seoul city my grandfather refused to leave. The end result was he was captured by North Koreans and we have never seen... we never knew what happened to him. My grandmother always believed that he was still alive so she kept one set of his clothes in the bottom of her dresser drawer. She passed away 1969 (it was in March 1970) and we held funerals for both.

Because she refused [to believe that her husband was killed by North Koreans]. That was something. By then, I had left for the United States, so I don't know the whole story. I heard that the government recognized his death as well at that time.

Do you remember the occupation at all first hand? Do you remember when the Japanese came in?

So you were under Japanese until 1945? Then in 1950, the civil war, the Korean

That was 1909. We were under Japanese for 36 years.

War. There was a five-year period there where you were a united Korea?

No. When Japanese surrendered to the Allies, there was a meeting at Potsdam to discuss the fate of all these colonized countries. The Soviet Union is a part of that Allied forces. By then communism was growing. One of the countries was Korea and it was determined that, "in due course", the Korea will be unified, but already the line had been drawn with the communists along the 38th parallel line. The North and South became the separate nations, North Korea and South Korea. We always say that the liberation date was August 15th because that's when the Japanese surrendered to the Allies and that ended the World War II. For a couple of years, the border was not as strict. There were a lot of crossings at night as people escaped from North to South. When the border was finally established, some people literally left all of their family in North Korea. The family

separation [division of of North and South] caused many families never to see each other again. Our family was really fortunate that we didn't have to do that. Then, the Korean War broke out and a lot of families lost their family members. My two uncles, my father's brothers were captured by North Koreans and they were conscripted into the North Korean People's Army (인민군). One uncle escaped and one day, he came back. He had to live underneath the floor for two months in hiding. The other uncle became a Prisoner of War and when the War ended, he was released as part of the War Prisoner exchange. So we really didn't lose anyone. My mom's brother, the youngest one, also was captured, but he ran away and came home. That was really a bad time. So the Korean War, first one, the first invasion was on June 25, 1950 and the North Korean Army went all the way to the end, taking over the peninsula except one city, the Pusan Port. If Pusan had collapsed, the South Korean government would have become an exiled government because you're not on the Korean soil anymore. With the U.N. intervention, our side started moving back restoring the capital city in September of that year [1950]. We didn't go anywhere when they [North Koreans] invaded first time [because we did not have time to flee]. But in January of '51 when the Chinese got involved in the Korean Conflict and [the UN troops began to retreat], our Seoul City was invaded again. At that point, our family went to our mountain, 40 kilometers away from the city. And we walked.

You walked the 40 miles [kilometers]?

Oh yeah, we stayed at inns in between and we had the horse drawn cart that we took our possessions. Literally we left almost everything in the house and we just left. That's

how refugees are; you just go. We didn't wait till the last minute. My parents decided we would just evacuate ourselves, so we went to our mountain and stayed there.

What provisions did you have there? What kind of housing did you have there?

We had a house. Actually the mountain came with a village, the village is ours. [We don't own the houses in the village but the land of the village belonged to our family.

There was a couple who stayed at our house and took care of our mountain. The husband would visit us in the city once a year and reported to our father on the condition of our mountain. He also brought blocks of soybean paste which we made soybean soup.]

Because you own the village.

Yes not the people but the land. We didn't have anything other than what we brought and we really were on a subsistence living mode for a year in the country. But my father [did not stay with us in the country as long as we had]. I need to say more about my father [and his family]. He was one of the most important persons in my life in the sense that he and I were just so close. I don't know how that came about but everyone knew that I was his favorite. I took care of him in whatever ways a daughter could take care of.

My grandfather really wasn't successful in making a living. He tried a lot different things in his life, [teacher, salesman, small business owner, etc.]. As a last resort he moved his family to Japan, during which time we were under Japanese occupation and one can live in Japan without any problems since we were one nation. This would give his children better opportunities. So they lived in Tokyo, Japan for really a long time. My father graduated from Tokyo Imperial University, the most prestigious university in the nation. (Now Tokyo University) Once you graduate from the University, you've got it made.

After graduating from high school, he received an Emperor's scholarship to attend the university. While the Japanese occupied Korea, the Japanese government encouraged Korean youth to be educated in the prestigious Japanese universities and provided scholarships. My father received the King's scholarship. [When Japanese occupied Korea, they took the son of the last Korean king and arranged him to be married with a Japanese royal family member. This prince established a scholarship for Korean students]. After graduating from the University, my father came to Korea to work in the Yi Dynasty Palace Museum [이왕적 박물관]. During that time, my mother's father knew of my father [through his family mutual friend]. So, they arranged the marriage. My maternal grandfather told my mom that she had a mission to make this young man (my father) a true Korean since he was raised in Japan and received Japanese schooling. That's how they got married. By the time the Korean War started he was serving as the assistant to the director and also was teaching at various universities as an instructor. That's how our names got to be the names of universities.

Which year were you born?

I was born in '43 when we were still under the Japanese occupation.

It was very unfortunate that the Korean War happened. He [my father] was trapped in the sense. [During the three months of North Korean occupation of the city (June-September)], the director went in hiding. My father managed to continue the operation. After the reoccupation [in September 28, 1950], he was accused of collaborating with [North Korean] communists. He was fired from the museum. [He was given an administrative leave without pay for three months.] There was a lot of [hearsay], I

remember. I was just seven years old when the bombing began. [The night before] the U.N. troops advanced to push [North Koreans] back to North, they bombed the city [Seoul City] quite a bit. My father and another assistant moved a lot of museum treasures into the basement [to save them]. Shrapnel hit [him in the face] and he almost died. I remember he came home after two days of not coming home. He was completely bandaged. He was captured by U.N. troops. The South Korean people would kill North Koreans or communists in sight at the time. So, he [my father] was imprisoned and beaten. Fortunately, one of the officers was his student and that's how he was saved. After that [September-December 1950] he didn't have any kind of positions or anything. I remember that winter my mom and my dad made a huge pot of porridge everymornight to sell to workers [at the market]. That's how we made living. It's just unbelievable how we survived. When we retreated into the mountain as the UN troops lost the City [Seoul], there was nothing for us. I don't even know how we managed...

Now, how long did you stay [in the country mountain]?

We actually stayed almost a year [not positive], but my father went to the South alone [first] to get a job. If we look at the calendar chronologically from when the Chinese came, approximately January '51 and when we went to the mountain and the countryside, we were there altogether a whole year. Then we [the UN Troops] moved back. So, after a year, they actually re-captured the Seoul city, but the government still stayed in the South and nobody could go into the city. Then the war talk began in '52 or about that time. When the fighting stopped and the talks were going on, there was still a lot of back and forth activity on the peninsula. My mom decided that my father should go where the people and the government were, so he could re-establish his professional career and

livelihood for us as well. So he left the countryside to go to Pusan where the temporary government was established. All the schools were opening and things were getting back to normal.

While still in the countryside, he did not stop [his research activity]. [He started] a project of indexing one of the first the Korean history books (沿元中小) that was written in the 13th century that didn't have an index. He undertook that indexing project [borrowing notebook papers from his children] and took it with him when he went to the South. People thought that my father went to North Korea, because some people believed that he was a communist. When he showed up, [many welcomed him since] he still had a lot of good friends and colleagues. One of his mentors or senior colleagues during the war was in the Navy, working on a project compiling Korean Naval history. So this colleague ran into him and immediately hired him to assist him in the project. Now that he had a salary, he came back and got us. So we went to the South, Pusan, and stayed there for two years. When the war talks were over and the government and the schools moved back to Seoul City, we came back.

You've mentioned a lot of published works in your family. What is the family's goals for those works? What do you plan to do with them now?

Well, actually we are not really in possession of those original pieces. They are all reprinted and available in libraries everywhere. That's how that is.

When did you leave Korea?

I left Korea in 1966, August.

Whom did you leave with?

By myself, because my husband was already here.

Tell me what it was like to go to school for you and your sisters?

High school? Oh yes, actually, my sisters were really smart. Like when we were in the country [during the war], intermittently the school opened, and we went to a school in the countryside for six months. It was time for my elder sisters to go [to a middle school (7th grade) . My sisters were really smart and the age difference between the three sisters was just one year apart. Between the third and me was a complete two years [apart] and that's such a [difference when you are young]. So I was more associated with my younger brothers than my older sisters. The three of them were always going together and they learned a lot of things together. I was always separate [from them]. When war began, I was just beginning to do multiplication. We memorized all those tables. My reading wasn't as fast as my sisters' [reading level] and when the first day arrived we went to school in the country, most of us in one room. My one sister happened to be in my room, her classes and mine. She witnessed that I couldn't remember the multiplication table. She went to mom and said, "Myoung-ja couldn't remember." So that's when my mother really took me seriously. To this day actually, I don't really read fast enough. All the time I was the top one or two [in my class]. One time I was embarrassed [when] we were assigned to read a page silently; one kid in my class had done it, read the whole thing [before I finished]. The teacher was completely upset with that kid because 'if Myoung-ja couldn't finish the reading how could you [have done it]?' I couldn't tell the teacher what was really happening: [that I was a slow reader].

So, anyway, my oldest sister needed to go to take a national exam [when we were still living in the countryside. [At that time in Korea], once you finish 6th grade, you must take a national exam. Based on that national exam score, students can apply for a certain school [middle school]. She had to go to a larger city to take the exam.

How did she get there and where did she stay?

Oh, the interesting thing was that in our family village everybody is a [member of Han San] Lee, immediately becoming an aunt, a grandson or some other relation. Our branch of the [Lee] family didn't prosper fast enough. If we traced generations in the broader Han San Lee family tree, I was their grandmother. There was one well off family who were our grandson's generation in the next village. They took us into their family. So, one of their sons took my sister to the city to take the national examination. Her score was the highest in that province [for that year]. By the time we relocated to the South [Pusan City], schools had already begun a month prior, so she was too late. The very first rate school would not accept her. Then, she went to a private school. During that time it wasn't the same, [i.e., as good] as the government funded school. [Because] she went to that school, we all followed - Ewha Girls Middle-High School. It is actually a Christian run school, established by a missionary [group in the late 1800s]. During our time that school has become really prestigious. When my third sister took the national exam she was the first in the nation for the year.

The first sister who took it and ranked that high now what is she doing today?

She's retired. She was a library science professor. She has a Ph.D. in library science.

The sister who ranked highest in the nation what does she do as her career?

She didn't. She was a housewife. In her own right, she is so well versed in everything. She's really smart.

But she never worked outside the home that was her career?

Uh hum.

Tell me about the family religion, the religion you grew up practicing?

We don't. We just went to church with our friends. My parents never went to church. They never told us not to go or anything. So we went on and off. My husband went to school at Brigham Young. I went to [a LDS church when I was going to school in Provo, Utah].

Tell me what dating was like? Did you and your sisters ever date?

Oh yeah, they did all the time. I didn't.

How does that work in your culture, what is the practice like?

Oh well, by the time we were grown-ups, there were opportunities to meet boys.

Actually there were women's universities and there were co-eds. We went to co-eds.

Let me go back and say a little bit about the education system. So, by the time my third sister went through the national exam, that system was abolished. In its place, each individual high school would conduct its own entrance exam. Because of the rank of schools were publicly known, teachers would send certain students into this ranked school and that ranked school [according to their academic score]. By the time I was ready to go to high school -- we consider high school as a six year sort of thing -- there was a middle school and a senior but it's all the same.

So 7 through 12?

Yes, but in the 10th grade after you completed 9th grade, you need to take another exam to move on to the 10th grade. By the time I was ready to go [to high school], my three sisters were in the ninth, 10th, and 11th grades. We had a really nice campus. My sisters all announced to everyone that my baby sister was coming and that she's smart. When I took the entrance examination, my oldest sister was so sure that I would score within the top three. I didn't. The result of the exam was posted on the wall. If your name was there, you passed. At our high school, because our principal was so interested in encouraging us [to do well], we had scholarships while other schools didn't. The first top three [scored] stood out [in posting their names on the wall]. My name wasn't there [where the top three names were posted]. I didn't think it would be. I was just glad my name was in there somewhere. My sister said, "Myoung-ja, how could you not be in the top three posting?" So, I started crying. I was crying all the way to the bus stop. People were coming to see the result of the test and one of the mothers commented, "oh, poor girl, she didn't pass." My mom said, "No, she passed but she wasn't in the top three." That's how my family was. [When] my sisters went through the 10th grade test, they were in one of the threes. Then when we went to the university, the college entrance exam was also given by the college.

How is it determined who goes to the university?

Whoever wants to go. Whoever can afford to go.

Who pays for it, the family?

Uhh hum. The national university is cheaper.

What happens to the 10th grade students who didn't pass the exam?

They go to the second rate high school. Actually high school cost money at that time.

We are talking about somebody at that time, who work in the servant class or landless class could they afford to go to high school?

By the time we came along, the class structure was all gone. In the countryside if you are done with sixth grade, if you knew how to read and write, that was it.

That was the end of your school?

Yes, the seventh grade on is not compulsory if that's what the family needed to do. I think it has changed quite a bit.

Before we start talking about the university could you tell me a little more about your father's work? The kind of work he engaged in from your memories.

His major, when he was going to university was actually Japanese history, but after he started working in Korea his concentration became Korean history in early period, very early like 200 B.C. on to the three kingdom era (삼국시대) and to the Koryo dynasty (고려양국). So, he ended up engaged in a lot of archeological field work. Especially during that time there was a lot of grave digging. He was not only a university professor but he was also a member of the National Treasure Preservation Committee right after the normalization of the government. By the time he passed away he was a very recognized professor and revered because of his [scholarly accomplishments and his service to the country]. He also cared for his students and he always put person first. He tended to help a lot of people. So, when he died he was given a medal [from the president of the Republic of Korea], the highest medal a civilian could get. It was the first one the president gave, so we were honored. Every time I think about those two years during the Korean War, I just feel so bad. He really proved that some people were wrong about him. He was a respected professor.

You were his favorite child?

Uh hum.

Tell me the memories of the special times you spent together.

One of the things that no one knew was that because we had so many children, there wasn't really time that one of the parents could spent special time with us but I managed to sneak it off. Upon my graduation from the university I planned a day with him. I wanted to just take a picture at [a professional] photography shop, have lunch with him, and then go to the graduation. So I have this picture and my sisters said, "Where did you take that?" I said, 'well you know, father and I just...' "He never did that with us." Sometimes when he had a little time between classes we used to just go to the coffee shop. He'd always say, "Gentlemen always have to have a cup of coffee in a coffee shop."

Tell me what it was like, your memories of the city, try to tell me what the city looked like before you had to go to the countryside?

Actually, I really don't remember much about the city, other than going to school because we lived on the palace grounds. You had to pass the guard [at the entrance of the palace ground where our housing complex was]. I remember walking long line of stone walls [that separate the palace ground and outside world. I had to walk along the wall when I went to school].

When you say living on the palace ground, give me an idea of how big that space was the palace and the grounds?

Actually when you are little everything is big. The palace itself is huge, but we don't walk the whole palace every day. We did go to one of the pavilions that had water and

lotus plants. In early fall mornings, the palace ground was so pretty. I remember that lotus flower stems coming up above the water and the morning mist rising over the pond. I wasn't very good at directions. I still am not good at directions. My nephews here [Hayward] are just so tickled when I get lost. I don't seem to remember the streets and I just get lost. [My memories before the Korean War were not much. After the War, going to high school was just an ordinary bus ride].

Tell me about the university and what that was like for you?

The university itself is a little bit different. First of all, we all had to wear uniforms in high school. It was just a white blouse and black skirt in the summer and a black jacket with a white collar with pants in the winter time. Our hair was always straight and our high school was the only high school that allowed long hair – braided. All other high school kids' hair was right here. [she indicates the shorter length a about the neck]. The first thing I remember about the university was a liberating feeling of it. I was very conscious about how small I was, not tall. The minute I graduated [from the high school], I got myself a pair of high heel shoes [and a suit that was custom designed at a lady's dress shop]. So, that was the first thing I really remember about the university. We had to take the college entrance examination. We didn't have the SAT, [then]. Now they may have something different. I applied for the Seoul National University. That was the university to go to if you wanted to be known as a smart person. All my sisters went as well. [Their their entrance examination scores were the highest for their college].

You had some big shoes to follow.

Oh yeah, definitely. Your score or your success [to get into the university] depended on how many students applied for that department. Here, they go without declaring a major but over there, you actually apply to the department.

So you apply to the school and take the test to get into the school. Do you apply to the department?

No, you apply for the department period. That is the university. For instance, that year, I applied for the History Department [of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, Seoul National University]. The department was not that popular. It was not as competitive as other departments like English or Chemistry, etc]. So, about 170 kids came but the quota was approximately 20. Everybody took the test and out of 20 [who were admitted], there were only four girls. Usually, there aren't that many girls who go to the co-ed schools. They usually go to the women's university. I'm not very good at high math and we took a test. When I did the math test, I knew I didn't do well. I cried for two weeks. I figured I failed it, but I got in.

That's just so you could get in?

Yes. Even though my father was not teaching at that university, everybody knew him and my family. All the professors were in and out of our house all the time. I always questioned about the grade I got for classes; is this a real A or B? Did he just sort of sympathize me and give me a B. Then, if I get a B, could that be a C? That was something I always did to myself.

You were insecure about it.

Yes.

So now this was the time in your life you could meet boys? Were you still living at home?

Oh yes, nobody leaves. Claytee, if you leave the house, it's a scandal.

So when were girls permitted to leave the house without it being a scandal?

After they graduate and get a job.

Or get married?

Yes.

Ok, so those are the two ways. Now tell me about dating rituals in your country are they the same as the United States in the 1950s and 60s?

Well, I don't know how it was back then (in the U.S.). There were ways you can meet and go on a date. Like at a co-ed university, you could do whatever you wanted to do. There were some senior high school students who belonged to some clubs sponsored [by churches or other groups like] bible schools. Sometimes they study together, that kind of thing.

Any dances?

Not in those days. Also, I wasn't very outgoing. I still don't think I am. It takes me really a long time to be comfortable with friends whether they are girlfriends or boyfriends. My sisters all dated. I should say the first of two sisters dated and married (after) a long dating period.

This was at the university?

Yes, they went to the same university. My third sister had an arranged marriage.

Tell me how that worked?

There are always people who have the list of the eligible bachelors and young women. 'Oh so and so's daughter is ready to graduate and so-and-so's son [is at the age to get married].' That's how it went. My third sister had some kind of arranged relationship. She was introduced to two lawyers at the same time. So she was kind of picking which one she would take because they were both lawyers, they actually ended up working together after their marriage.

When you look at it now and you see two sisters in a regular marriage (*not described as a regular marriage in Korea, but called a "love marriage") and one sister in an arranged marriage, is there a difference? Does it make any difference after awhile?

I guess not. I really don't know whether there is a difference. Of course marriage is always a very private thing and they have ups and downs. My third sister, I found out later, because I wasn't there all the time, really had a lot of problems with her mother-in-law and sisters-in-law. They were really mean to her.

It sounds as if at one point you had extended families where the bride would go off with the husband and his family? How long did that last?

Yes. It's on and off. Especially if you are, the first born son, then that kind of thing is expected that you live with the parents for sometime. Sometimes the circumstances might be that you need to take care of your mom. My second sister and her husband were actually married here in the U.S.A. Right after graduating from the university, my brother-in-law came [here] right away and [then she joined him. They were engaged in Korea before he left for the States]. They got married in New Hampshire [when he was

getting an MA at the University of New Hampshire, Durham]. Then he came to Berkeley to get his Ph.D. After completing his degree, he got a teaching position at CUNY, Brooklyn. While he was teaching there, my sister got a Ph.D. at Princeton. Then they went back to Korea. They didn't live with in-laws or anything. My first sister [lived with her mother-in-law], because even though her husband was the youngest, he was the one who cared for his mom. His mother was an angel really. I have to tell you that my brother-in-law [was killed] in a bombing accident. It was a really tragic accident. That's another family tragedy. Then when I got married...

How did you meet your husband?

We went to school together. We never really had any special thing going or anything. Then after I graduated, he came calling and we just sort of dated a little bit then got married. I don't consider that we really dated or anything like that. After we got married he came here and then I joined him. Because his mom was living in the country, I lived with my parents after we got married. So I never had to do that [lived with the in-laws]. You came here; your husband was here first and then you joined him here. Where did you live when you first came to the United States?

Provo, Utah. That's when I just started the program [Master's in Library Science]. When I finished, but he didn't finish; he had one more semester to go. That's when I got a job at UNLV. We didn't live anywhere else. [In] Provo a year and a half, then in Las Vegas, and then here, Hayward, California.

Tell me a little about your husband, tell me how you met? I know you were in school together but how you met? What that decision was like to come to the United

States? How did the family feel about it? Were you the first one to leave to come to America?

Oh no. By then my two sisters were here.

Your sisters had come to America as well?

Well, my second sister joined my brother-in-law who came out first. She came in '62 or '61. During those days, many students, young men and women, come to get [advanced] degrees in the United States. Then, when you come back, your job opportunities are very good. It was always good to have an overseas education. Now there are just so many young people going out of the country. When we were coming here, it wasn't that easy. We had to pass an examination that was conducted by the Ministry of Education, to show that you are worthy of spending American dollars to get an education. So you had to go through that test.

I want you to tell me the difference when you first moved to Provo compared to life in Korea?

Actually Provo wasn't really that different [than the life in Korea]. In a way I was glad. If I were to land in the Bay Area with flower children and everything going at that time, I couldn't have made it. I was just so fortunate to have the acquaintance of a family in Provo. They took us in and were just like parents to us.

Did you know them before you came?

No. By the time my husband, his name is Young, came to the US [by himself], my sister was in Berkeley. They were going to school at UC Berkley. Young met my sister and he took a train to Provo. On the way to Provo he met this man who lived in Provo [on the train]. He liked Young and until I got here, Young was very friendly with this family.

When I got there they just took me in. They were owners of a motel. I would help them out by cleaning the rooms and doing other things like that. The first time I helped them, they paid me. It was so foreign to me to get paid for the work I do for the friends. I said, 'I really don't think I should take it.' She thought that she was paying me too little. I said, 'No, no that's not it. I was just uncomfortable getting the money.' She said, "No, it is good that you get paid for the work you did." That time it was a dollar an hour. Tell me what it was like when you came here to meet your husband, you're married now. And I also want to talk about what the marriage ceremony was like? In Korea marriage ceremony is in two [steps]. One is the Western ceremony and the other is a traditional Korean one. The Western ceremony is where we get married in a public place. Usually the person who presides the marriage ceremony is your professor or someone that you respect. Not necessarily, that marriage will get registered {right away automatically]. Also it's the parents' affair as well, because in Korea we help each other in the way of [covering] expenses, it is customary to send a wedding invitation to all of the parents' colleagues. Depending on parents' [social position], 200-300 people attend the wedding ceremony. The friends of the parents all give a cash donation. That's considered customary and the next time, when your kids get married, everyone helps you. Then, after the public ceremony, you go on a honeymoon and then go to your husband's parent's house where they prepare a [traditional wedding] ritual. The bride has to bow officially for the first time [to be accepted] into the family. You have to bow to every single person. My father-in-law was a really nice person. For some reason or another he really liked me. Anything to make my life easier, he would do it.

Had you met them already?

Oh, sure.

During the courting period?

Yes, definitely. We were kind of looking to get married somehow. [Young and I did not date for long, but we were exploring whether we could get married] It is expected that you get married after you graduate from the university. My parents had no clue [as to what to do with me]. That's because all my sisters got married so easily. So I got kind of stressed out in a way [since I did not have anyone to get married after my graduation]. After [Young and I met several times], we decided to introduce our parents to each other. He [my father-in-law] was an elected official, not the whole state, [but] a province. His family wasn't rich, but was [well off]. Because my father was very well respected, Young's father just really liked our family. So, that day [on our traditional wedding ritual day, after we returned from our honeymoon], I had to bow to everybody. Young had seven sisters and the one brother. Normally you have to bow to parents and aunts, all of them separately. So, my father-in-law said, "Well, Myoung-ja is too small and she will have bad cramps tomorrow if she has to bow to you individually. So, you guys line up and she can bow all at once." He was just so nice to me. After Young came here and I was living with my parents [in Seoul], once in awhile, when he came to the city, he would always take me out to lunch. He would always ask if I have enough spending money. One of the reasons that I really agonized[over my decision] to go through the divorce was that I felt like I was betraying him. So that's something I always... Tell me what it was like when you first got here? Had you already been on your honeymoon?

When I first got here..., I felt that I wasn't really paying that much attention [to anything else]. I was also very self-centered [or focused]; I got enrolled in the school and [had to finish the school as soon as possible]. In the beginning, we understood that the library science degree could be completed quickly. After I get my degree, I could get a job and produce an income. We would not have to have help from his parents. Then he could get going with his Ph.D. program. He ended up doing neither of them. I didn't want to spend time with wifely duties. When I realized that he didn't help me in those kinds of things [house chores], I resented it. In hindsight, probably he wasn't expecting that I would be that way. When I got here he didn't want me to go to school.

Oh so he had changed his mind?

Yes. He wanted me just to get a job at a local factory or whatever that could just bring in some money. I said, 'No!' That wasn't my understanding and I wasn't about to change that. I went ahead and went to school, and indeed that was the best thing I could have done. When I graduated and got a job at UNLV, he didn't finish it. But I sent him money.

So UNLV was your first job out of the program and he remained in Provo?

Uh huh. He would come on semester breaks and things like that. He was a

Communications major at the same university.

Did he already have a bachelor's degree?

Yes.

So he was working on his master's in Communications?

Uh huh.

Now did he let you finish yours first before he started his?

No. We were going together. It's not that he was working to support me or anything.

Why didn't he finish his?

Because he just didn't.

Did he move to Las Vegas as well eventually?

Yes, eventually. That's when Billy was born. Then because he literally abandoned his program [at Brigham Young University], he went to school at UNLV. He got an accounting degree. His degree [previous undergraduate degree in Korea] was also a B.A. in history. So he got a Bachelor's degree in Accounting [at UNLV]; he's very good at math and everything. He could have become a CPA. It never materialized. His intention was always good and he was not a bad person. He just doesn't come through. He ended up apologizing a lot. I don't really think it's good if you have to keep apologizing. Why don't you not do it so you don't have to apologize? He's not really motivated.

Where were you in your life when Billy was born? Were you in Provo or in Las Vegas?

Las Vegas. My father understood that I couldn't have a baby until I was done with [my] school. He didn't say anything [while I was going to school]. The minute I graduated, I came here to Las Vegas because I was hired by UNLV. My family has a real problem with me getting a job in Las Vegas. Oh, it's just unbelievable. I started working and my dad wrote me and said, "Myoung-ja, you're not getting any younger. Well, you know, you have to get going with having children." I was only 25. I was just so naïve. I didn't really think twice about it, so I went ahead and got pregnant. [Looking back], already then I had doubts about Young. His not finishing the degree was such a disappointment. [When I got pregnant], it [made it] easier for him to stop working on his program at BYU,

and to come and join me. Even during the pregnancy, so many times, I felt I was left all by myself, and not knowing what to do. By then my first sister was actually at Stanford with her husband. Her husband was going through his Ph.D. program. So, it was a good thing that at least they were there. They stayed in Palo Alto until '72. Then they went back to Korea. I was all by myself in Las Vegas and it was really difficult. It's just a blessing that the library was so small then and there were really lots of good staff members who took me in. They took care of me really well, [especially], Kathy Rothermel in Acquisitions. She really took care of me a lot. Eva Stowers was a student assistant when I was a cataloger. We almost grew up together in a way, but I was older. She's still really a good friend.

This is my second day with Myoung-ja, here in her home in Hayward, California.

Today is September 5, 2004. How are you this morning, Myoung-ja?

Fine.

Yesterday, we stopped just as you were entering Las Vegas. But can we go back and can you tell me how the decision was made that you were to come to Las Vegas? That is rather an interesting story. As you know, many Korean students, even though they get financial help from the family, they do quite a bit of summer work when the summer comes around. Las Vegas was one of the places where the students go to work for the summer in casinos. My husband was already planning to come to Las Vegas to be a Keno writer. During that time the Keno [game was popular but was] not computerized as it is today. So there were a lot of Keno writers who use a brush to mark up the numbers as the gamblers or customers come to the counter or window. The summer is the busiest time in the gambling industry. Many student workers flock to Las Vegas and get hired instantly. The first year we were in Provo, I started going to school in the fall of [1966]. After spring semester was over in 1967, both my husband and I came down to Las Vegas [for summer work]. Actually we first went to Reno, but Reno was a smaller town. At first I wasn't really comfortable about working in the casino industry. So while he was working in one of the casinos, I was hired as a button maker in the furniture [upholstery] company. All day long, I made buttons with a button machine. In my first try, I made them all wrong. I had to do them all over again and my supervisor called me 'Suzie Wrong'. They teased me a lot, but they were nice people. Those days, there weren't that many Asians. They thought that I was one of those rare ones. They were

wery much interested in asking me about [many things]. One of the lady workers gave me some of her clothes. I got to know a lot more about ordinary people in America. My husband Young, did not really feel that Reno was busy enough that he could make enough money. So he went down to Las Vegas and got a job in a casino. Then I joined him about a couple of weeks later. I just also, bravely, took a job in a casino. I became a change girl.

Where?

Pioneer Club. Those days, change girls wore a belt with a change dispenser. Changes that I had to carry were very heavy and at that time I was weighing a little bit less than 100 pounds. My waist was just really small; that's before I had a baby. The work was ok and the people were nice. One thing that was interesting: there were rows of change machines and when there was a jackpot in a certain machine, change girls usually have to call out the number of that slot machine to the cashier, sitting [in the cashier's box elevated and away from the slot machines]. I soon memorized all the slot machine numbers. If I was giving change away at the end of the other line when one jackpot went off at the other end of the room, I didn't have to rush to the machine to identify the number, but I'd just look up and call out the number. They were just so impressed that I could do this. I spent the first summer in the United States in Las Vegas as a change girl!

Did your parents know?

Yes, they knew. Yes, they knew and they were just really fit to be tied, and yet they knew that we needed the money and we were just doing our best to do that. At the end of August, when we were ready to go to school my father wrote me and said, "I am just so

thankful you're all right and you are ready to go back to school. Hopefully next summer, you won't be doing that."

Explain being a keno writer and using the brush. Could you explain that process? Yes, during those days -- I don't know how long that practice has lasted -- the people on the floor they mark the numbers on a keno sheet. The keno girls are the ones who go around and collect [keno sheets from the customers at] the coffee shops and [other corners in the casino. Where the keno numbers are floated up from the machine], keno writers sit behind the rows of windows like cashiers cage]. The players hand in their marked slip and keno writers will mark the numbers with a brush and that's the official ticket. So when the numbers come up, and if they hit some numbers displayed on the board, they present that official ink marked keno ticket to the window and claim that.

So the brush technique is that something anyone can learn?

Where did your husband work? Was he at the Pioneer Club also?

Yes.

No, he worked at Fremont. No, I think 4 Queens is the one he worked at. His shift began two hours before my shift began. Mine began at midnight and his began at 10. We would go together because I had one car and I would sit at the coffee shop until my shift began because 4 Queens and the Pioneer Club was like two blocks away. One time we had a torrential rain while I was waiting in the 4 Queens coffee shop. I didn't want to be soaking wet, so I waited until the rain stopped, but the street was completely flooded. I didn't want to wear the tennis shoes soaking wet during my shift. I took the tennis shoes off and I went barefoot across the street and then when I got to the Pioneer Club I dried my feet and put my tennis shoes back on. One time at the end of the shift I was

short \$10. The only way I could think about it was that one person gave me a \$10 bill and I thought it was \$20 and gave him/her \$10 change. That was taken out of my paycheck and at the time \$10 was really a big money. I cried a lot and that's the probably the last time I cried for \$10 that hard.

Tell me about tips did you get tips as a change girl?

Yes, the tips were not as much as other places because the Pioneer Club, as you probably know, was a very small club. The slot machines were not giving out big winnings. I don't remember getting any big tips.

What about your husband?

Keno writers do get a lot of tips and actually their pay is pretty good. I don't remember exact amount. Mine was minimum wage but his was a lot better. We were just so feeling rich at the end of the summer when we got about \$1200 or \$1500 to come home to school. The arrangement with my husband's family was that they would give us tuition and we would take care of living expenses. The summer work helped us going throughout the whole year. Also, during the academic year we worked on campus, I worked at the library circulation desk; I was sending out overdue notices and things like that, and he worked as a custodian at the school. At BYU they don't really have a full time custodian crew; they have a supervisor, but they hire hundreds and hundreds of student workers to clean the entire campus. He cleaned the gym. His shift was during the night. The reason why we came to Las Vegas after my graduation [in May 1968] was that Young has not finished his master's program while my master's were done. Since his summer work was already there, he could just walk in and get it. During that time the casino supervisors were really good about hiring the summer workers who come

in annual basis. Young already knew all the people at 4 Queens and he got a summer job right away. In fact he went earlier then I did. I waited until my graduation ceremony. The way I got my job [was accidental]. Young was in Las Vegas two weeks earlier than I did. He walked into the UNLV Library and asked to see if there was an opening for a librarian position. It just happened that the assistant cataloger was going back to her country; she happened to be Chinese. Mr. Erickson met Young and said, "Yes, we have an opening. Why don't you have your wife send an application?"

Who was Mr. Erickson?

Mr. Erickson was the director at the time. Harold Erickson. He later became the Director of the Library Development, and retired in, I think, '86; we can look it up. I always think of him as my first supervisor. He has been really good to me. I always think of him as a very kind person.

So he had you send an application?

Yes, and not knowing what it was. In Korea while you're going to school you never work. So in a way, I was just really inexperienced, you might say. I still chuckle when I think about how I prepared my application. I went to a photo studio and had my picture taken. I tried to present myself as good as I could be. When I think about it -- nobody does that. I felt like they needed to know what I looked like. So I sent my application and two weeks later they asked me to come in for an interview. So I came to interview and they said, 'when can you start?' So that's how our Las Vegas [life began]. You know, the previous year Las Vegas was a summer job place, but that summer of 68, I was thinking about this is the beginning of my professional career. I didn't think about how my family would feel because this time I was not working in the casinos; this time, I was

working in a real educational institution. When I told them I got a job at the university in Las Vegas, they really had a problem with that. It's not that they would say, "No, you can't work there and you just find a place elsewhere." But they were really concerned about my working in a city that is notorious and has bad reputation.

How did they see Las Vegas? Give me some examples of how did they even know about Las Vegas and what did they know of Las Vegas?

Well, it's not that they know intimately. They know of Las Vegas and what kinds of activities it is known for. Although they're not really familiar with the geographical conditions, they do know about Nevada how they are portrayed in the movies; like marriages and divorces are done easily, and gambling is well known. They were very much concerned; I didn't really think much about it because I was going back to Korea in two years. We were not planning to make a permanent living in the United States. Only reason we came to the States is that we came to get an education. We would go back to Korea. I thought that, after graduating from a professional school, two years of working in higher education institution would give me a good understanding of how American university libraries worked. That was my purpose and I didn't think of Las Vegas as a permanent home.

Was your husband thinking about it as a more permanent place?

No. He also [thought so]; his parents expected him to come back. So we didn't think much about it. I was pleased that, without going through many applications, I got this job – fine with me. I know what the city was like and I was sure I could make it ok. So we just began the Las Vegas life.

Where did you live that first summer you were here, where did you and your husband live?

During the first summer when we were working in the casinos, we lived in an apartment somewhere in Charleston and 25th and then ...

What did that area look like at that time?

It's an apartment, low [single story] apartment. I'm not sure whether it's still there, or not. It's just an ordinary apartment street. We slept most of the day. When we came back the second year after I got a librarian position at UNLV, we rented a small cottage on Stewart St. not far from Charleston. It was a nice residential area with lots of trees.

Where did you do your grocery shopping?

Grocery shopping was done on Charleston. Do you know where Fong's Chinese Restaurant was? We used to go there a lot. And we shopped at Montgomery Ward. The funny part, after I started working at UNLV, Dr. Boyer was my dermatologist. When Ken told me he gave us an endowment, I could not believe. [In 1998, Dr. Boyer donated \$500,000 to the UNLV Libraries to set up an oral history project.] By then, I did not go to the dermatologist anymore. My skin condition got better.

After I started at UNLV in 1968, I knew that my student visa expired in August. The international student affairs office usually takes care of matters concerning foreign students' visa at the university. I was so naive and so ignorant about what needed to be done about my visa status. Suddenly, after I started working in Las Vegas in July, I remembered that my visa was expiring in August. So I walked into the Las Vegas Immigration and Naturalization Services (INS) office and said 'I needed to extend my

visa.' They looked at me and looked at my passport and said, "Are you aware that you are working here illegally and we could deport you tomorrow?" I said, 'Oh, I thought that once you graduated from a professional school, you have a year or two that you could work in the field. Since I got a job in the field that I got a degree from, I didn't think much about it.' He said, "No, you are wrong. You need to go back to the school you graduated from and start from there." I flew to Salt Lake and drove to Provo, met with the international student counselor. They arranged to extend my visa. Also, Mr. Erickson had to write a letter stating that, indeed, I was working at the UNLV.

What about your husband's visa?

Oh, it didn't matter because he was still a student. After my visa was extended, in the fall of '68, I went through a process of requesting a permanent resident status. I felt that even though we wanted to go back to Korea, I didn't know how long Young's school would take or anything. It was best for me to be prepared, getting a kind of visa I could work without restriction. During that time, going through that kind of process was not a big thing. Now I hear about lawyers working and having to pay for everything. I didn't have to do any of those. I went through the process by myself; I got the papers from the immigration office, filled out everything that needed to be done, and sent them in. The following year, in the summer of 1969, I got an Alien card. Whenever they talk about the word alien, I always think about the alien from outer space. I used to joke about it, 'Hey guys, I look exactly the same; my color may be a little bit different, but I don't have any kind of horn on my head.' The alien status always gave me a chuckle. I stayed as a permanent [resident] status for awhile. What happened was -- there was some sort of state regulation at the university – that unless you are a faculty member, you cannot be

hired as a state employee with permanent residence status. That was I think 1972 or something like that. The library wanted to keep me; so what they did was they sort of gave me a faculty status by giving me a class to teach. Some librarians teach library science classes offered through the College of Education, but [I was not teaching at the time. The library administration] knew that I couldn't teach well because I was still so shy and couldn't talk very well and things like that. So Bob Anderl, the Assistant Director for Technical Services, was teaching a course on reference materials or something for that year. He had me in his class as a co-teacher. [With this arrangement, the university did not have problems with my alien status]. I also have to explain one incident. EG&G, is a government contractor in Las Vegas. One year, they opened up a little company library and [invited us to visit the library. When we got there, they stopped me and asked me, "Are you a citizen of the United States?" I'm the only Asian or non-American in the group. So I said, 'No, I have a permanent resident status.' They said, "I'm sorry that you can't really go in because this is considered to be a sensitive area and non-citizens are not allowed." So while everyone went to look at the library, I stayed in the lobby and wait for them because we all came together.

Did they know what had happened to you?

They didn't know before but they knew why I couldn't go in there. Then one time, when I was visiting Europe, actually England, with my friend at the library, [I experienced delays in] entering and exiting out of the country because I was still holding a Korean passport. She went zipping through and I had to go through a different thing. So it made me realize that changing the citizenship may not be [a bad idea]. In principle, whether you change the status or not, you're still a Korean. It depends on what kind of value you

hold. I said to myself, 'Well, as long as I am going to be in the United States, then it will be better if I change my status.'

At what point did you and your husband begin to think 'well two years past already, we're still here.' When did it begin to change that you were here a little longer? I think that has been coming gradually. My personal deciding point was when actually my father passed away in 1970. That was something it really made me look at my life a lot more critically. I was always thinking about going back to him. I still remember the night when he helped me pack. He said, "Well, Myoung-ja, you'll come back, but also remember that once you are in America, always live like American. You learn to act [as they do]. That is really a good rule because that way you learn a lot more. I don't want you to fall behind. I want you to remember that." He was just so caring. I always remember when he was packing my suitcase with me. And that was the last time [I saw him]. After I graduated from BYU and when Billy was sixth months old, [my father] passed away. He did see Billy's picture, but didn't see Billy. When he passed away, I was thinking, 'well I don't know, if I really have that strong feeling about going back.' And then, my marriage problems were beginning to come to the surface -- the things that I had been avoiding and not addressing. The deciding point was when I got the divorce; I definitely thought that I didn't have a place [in Korea]. My mom, when I finally told the family what I was going through the process to end my marriage, came out and said, "you cannot come home."

What does that mean?

That means that you don't visit Korea.

Because?

Because I was a divorced woman....

So tell me about divorce in your society?

We don't. Now they do.

At that point, we are talking just the 60s?

Right.

So the 60s and before, how were divorces looked upon in Korea?

Well, they really don't get a divorce. What they, men, do is, if they don't like their wives, they go and get another woman and live with her but the official record shows that the first wife is still a wife.

Did they live, so they separated from the first wife and they would marry a second wife...?

They don't; they just live together. Then if they have offspring, their offspring is officially recorded under the first wife.

So you're telling me it's ok to take a second wife?

For men. [This is no longer practiced.]

But it's not ok to get a divorce?

Definitely, but some women don't like to get divorced. If husband leave, they live by themselves.

How do they survive?

Well, the husbands support them [or they work].

The husband continues to support the first household?

Yes, upper class or middle class people will support the wives because they don't like the scandal. The lower class people just leave and abandon the wives; the women have to

struggle and do [anything to survive]. Always when there is a divorce or separation, it is always woman's fault. From my mom's point, I could have endured everything that's happening and should keep the marriage, just like she has done. She is one of those people who believed that that needed to be done. When I decided to go through with the divorce, there were two attempts. At my first attempt, he was very distraught and threatened me to kill himself. I withdrew. At the time, he was in Oregon; his job was moved to Oregon, but I stayed. There were a lot of times when we were separated. For a year, [while I was contemplating with the divorce], I was really sick most of the time. It was dizziness and migraine headache and I couldn't function. So I went through tests [after tests, but every test came back negative.] Finally, the doctor said, "well, we can't find anything wrong with you physically. Are you happy?" I said to the doctor, 'What kind of question is this? Happiness is very relative.' She said, "I know that, but are you happy with your husband?" That's when I told her that I was having problems [at home]. She said, "To me, I think, physically you don't have any problems, but it's the manifestation of your emotional being or state of your emotional being." [This condition went on quite a while]. Whenever I would get sick, I used to bring work at home, and do a lot of work at home. When Billy was little, he was [frequently] sick, too. He was a very allergenic baby. I used to bring work home whenever I had to stay home if Billy was sick. During that time, there were no computers; we used to type up headings, -- subject headings, [added] authors, and other headings - on top of the card. Library assistants would type the cards and put them in the box for me to proofread. So, I would take boxes and boxes of proofreading work home. While I was taking care of Billy, I would do that work so the work wouldn't get behind. It's not that I couldn't take a sick leave, but I

[source of] information that people could find out what new acquisitions were. It was important for us to file them in a timely manner. As I was sick that often about six months, I was beginning to fear for my livelihood, in the sense that, if I get so sick often, people at work didn't think of me as a viable employee. I didn't know what to do with Billy and myself. I was determined to have some kind of change. So, that's when I filed [for] a divorce one more time. This time, I was really strong about going through [with it]. [I have been thinking it almost for four years and I finally made up my mind]. My sisters, unlike my mom, were encouraging [me that I] should think about it. So I did. A couple of my coworkers went with me to a divorce hearing [to be] the witnesses. So, I got the divorce in January 1976. From then on, I felt a lot [better and] freer, in that, whatever the consequences of this fallout, or of this divorce, I need to make it work. I was responsible for everything.

How did you feel when your mother come here to say that to you?

Oh, she didn't come here; she wrote to me.

How does that feel?

Well, I didn't really get worked up about it because I knew how my mom was. My mom is a duty driven woman; she doesn't have a real soft feeling for people. If she does something, that is because either it's her duty to do so or because it's right thing for her to do. She always let us to believe that because she produced us, she was doing her best to raise us and that was that. My father was the soft one who provided the richness of love and emotion. I just took it; besides, I did not expect any kind of financial support from anyone. Whenever I decided to do anything, I always think, 'Can I afford it with my

salary?' If not, then I didn't do. If I could [afford] it, I would do it. When I was buying the first house, we were still married. But I was already thinking about that there was a strong possibility that I would be doing it by myself. So, [I was thinking about whether the house payment was within my means]. I calculated [my take-home pays; what I must have and what's the leftover; what I could do with that. Within a year [after buying the house, I got the divorce. I should say that I was better off divorced than I was married. During our marriage, for some reason, I really don't know why I did this, but he took over the responsibility of taking care of the checking account. I would give him my paycheck and there were times that a gas bill wasn't paid in time or an electric bill wasn't paid. We came home one night, there was no light [because the power was shut off]. This was sort of a beginning of an indication that this would not work. The one thing that I felt good about my getting the divorce was that I was under my own control; whether I sink or swim, that's up to me. Also, I started going back to school after I got the divorce. I got my second master's in 1980.

That was a master's from UNLV?

That's a history master. That was really a good feeling. During that time Billy was...sometimes, I just feel bad about whether I was a good mother or a bad mother. When I took him to football games, -- he played a little league football,-- I would take my book with me and while they were playing, I read the book. When I had to do a term paper, the dining table was full of books and a typewriter, and we didn't have a place to eat, so we ate at the living room coffee table. Billy still talks about that, "Mom, do you remember when you were doing the French revolution paper?"

I think it is great you did that since he remembers it fondly and learned with you.

That was really something else. I was so glad that I really did that. Gradually my salary increased and I did not have that much problem [financially]. The first year I was divorced, it was very tight. But I somehow managed. Young had begun some kind of import/export little company. He brought items from Korea manufactured by Korean companies and sold them in casinos.

In the casino gift shop?

Yes. One of the items he had made was card shoes. That's the instrument [used at the black jack tables to dispense cards for the players. He was using our garage as a warehouse. The first [generation of the card shoes] that they produced was not good. The veneer was peeling off from the surface of the card shoe. There were a lot of defective ones; when we got a divorce, he left everything for me to deal with. He just abandoned the unsold items. One day, I got a call from one of the gift shops and they were looking for that card shoes. I hadn't been getting any kind of child support. The court ruled that he would give \$250 a month for Billy's care. It just stopped after two months. So, when I got a call, I was really glad; I could not only dispose of it, but could get some money. The box of 12 or 24, I forgot, anyway, it's a box that he [gift shop owner] wanted, and he told me how much he used to pay Young for a box. I would make up an invoice and I delivered it in my car. I was able to sell about six or seven boxes. [He paid me \$300 a box]. I considered that the sale of a box was his child support. I thought, 'you know, somehow, there is a way you can go on.' One of the songs that I always remembered during that time was a Korean song. There was a phrase, 'like the moon is cloud covered, there will be a hard time, but when the cloud moves away,

moonlight will come out and [you will be happy again].' Some days were just like winter days, so bleak, and my mind was almost like in a thick foggy night. I wouldn't say I was depressed, but bleak. Then I would remember this song, and so then I went on. You know, we really do have a lot of hard times in our life.

My hardest time was between 1972 and '78. [During this period], not only was I trying to make up my mind about whether I should divorce or not divorce, but then, after the divorce, I had to make a living [on my own with Billy]. Around '72, Young graduated from UNLV with a BS in Business, an accounting major. So he got a job at one of the CPA firms [in Las Vegas] but after six months, he was transferred to Sacramento. So that summer, we were going to move to Sacramento. I resigned from the library, but I gave myself two months. Bob Anderl told me, "Whatever the arrangement you make, that's fine." After [Young] went to Sacramento, I was also trying to get a job in Sacramento while I was still working at UNLV; I visited CSU-Sacramento, but at that time, all of CSU-Libraries would only take [librarians with] second Master's. At the time, I only had one master's. I just visited the library to see what kind of opportunity they had for me. The head of Technical Services and I had a long talk. He was very sorry [about the policy]. I had four years of cataloging experience and when I was talking, it was obvious to him that I know what I'm doing. I was disappointed. Young thought about it [the situation] -- I wouldn't get a job right away. And he wasn't quite sure whether [his position] with the firm was good. A week or so later I came back to Las Vegas, he said, "Well, Myoung-ja, it's best that you not come. Ask to see if you can be reinstated." I was just so upset that I couldn't sleep. It was my pride. I could not go in

and say, 'well my husband's job is not really good enough and I have to stay.' I couldn't really say that. I thought really long and hard after I spent sleepless nights.

[When] I resigned [from the library], we had a small townhouse. We sold that house. All my things were already in Sacramento. I was just staying with my friends with incidentals with Billy. We rented one room at my friend's house.

I thought about it [my asking the job back] and I said to myself, 'well, it is best to have income than not to have income and my pride.' It was just unbelievable -- I just could not really bring myself to say this [my need to take back my resignation]. I went into Bob's office and said, 'Bob I have a favor to ask of you. It just seems like I need to have my job back.' He said, "Oh!" He picked up the phone [and called] Human Resources, and he said, "Remember that there was a resignation letter from Myoung-ja? Just tear it up." They were just so good. Bob was unbelievably [good to me]. Billie Mae Polson [who was my immediate supervisor] was actually the president of the Nevada Library Association [that year]. She was very busy. [When I told her about my decision to stay], she just could not believe it. I was reinstated and that's when I definitely think about my life -- my plan has to be on my own; I cannot depend on anybody else.

What did you do about housing, getting your things back from Sacramento; how did all that work out?

Now that I'm staying, I moved out of my friend's house and Young brought back some of the things but none of the furniture. I rented a furnished apartment. Then, for a year or so, Young was either in Sacramento or he was transferred to Oregon. He was going on

his own. All during that time, I didn't get any kind of financial support. He spent his money on whatever. He was always crazy about powerful car. One of his visits to Las Vegas, he brought a red [sports car]; it's a Nissan, but it was a Datsun at that time.

240Z?

Yes, exactly. He drove that, and I could not believe it! Here I am with one child and trying to survive after the loss of everything and here he is. That's the kind of husband he was. I gradually built whatever needed to be built. Billy and I had a two bedroom furnished apartment. That's when I started getting sick a lot and lot. When I got a little bit recovered, we found a better place; it's between Flamingo and Harmon, called 'the Nottingham Garden' which was a new apartment [complex]at that time. That was like, beginning of my life with Billy and myself, even though I was still married then. We borrowed some furniture from the library staff to move in. The apartment was really clean and just right for us. I told the manager, 'I would not want my husband visiting the apartment without my saying so. So don't open the apartment [for him when I am not here]'. His Oregon work didn't work out and he came back to Las Vegas. [He did not have any place to go and I had to accept him]. For awhile we stayed together. It didn't really work.

Where was your old furniture?

He disposed of it. Nothing came back.

It just sounds like he wasn't mature enough to have a family?

No. During the time he was gone, all of the credit card bills were coming into my house. I'm the one who had to pay all of them. I was trying to get the credit card balance down and the sooner I paid it off, then came another bill of \$300-400. During that time, \$400

was so huge for me and I got upset [whenever I received the bill]. I guess as I go through that kind of thing, my belief about independency -- not rely on other people, self-reliance is such a principle that I held so dearly. I would have never managed it if I just had a kind of [mental] breakdown. Of all the family members, my big sister-- she's the one who helped me. She sent me money whenever I had birthdays. When she visited me she would always give me something I would use in the house. So that microwave,[she bought it for me]. At the time, I couldn't afford it.

I believe that no matter how difficult or how bad the times may be there is always learning. There is always good that comes out of it.

I always say, 'if you don't learn from this difficulty or problems, what good does it do?' That's what I always remember.

I want you to talk just a little more about tradition and influences in your life things like that. I just want to start with a very simple question. You left Korea to come to Provo, Utah?

Uh huh.

Tell me what that transition was like and what the city of Provo was like?

Transition was something that I really didn't think much about then. I always think about life [at present], the things you needed to do, what needed to be done, and you do it.

Once it was determined that I would go to the city or university where my husband was studying, I just went. Fortunately one of my sisters, the second oldest sister, was in Albany in the Berkeley area, California, not New York. Her husband was going through his PhD. in political science. She also was going through her master's program in art history at UC Berkeley. So, when I came to the United States, at least, I was able to

spend a week with her before I went to Provo. That trip itself [coming to the States] was very interesting in the sense that not only it was the first time I left Korea but also the first time I had ever flown. My stomach is really sensitive. In those days we didn't have a direct flight, and airplanes were rather shaky. They don't fly high enough to make that stable flying condition. We had to stop in Tokyo first and there was a five-hour layover and we flew to Canada, Vancouver. We used the airline, Cathay Pacific, something like that. I don't think they are in operation anymore. (They are still in business). We were supposed to fly from Vancouver to San Francisco. That particular time, there was some kind of an airline strike with Canadian airlines and there was no flight from Vancouver. The passengers on our plane were bused from Vancouver to Seattle. Then, from Seattle to San Francisco, [we flew]. I arrived very late. Needless to say, I had motion sickness problem about 15 minutes after I started my journey from Korea. When it landed in Tokyo, and then [from Tokyo to Vancouver], the whole 20 hours, I was completely sick. That flight was in a way a chartered flight for students who were coming to the United States. Some of the students were very helpful. In Seattle, we had to stop and make a phone call to everyone that they have any kind of connection in the United States. My sister gave me her number, but didn't give me all the directions on how to make a long distance calls, those kinds of things. I had such a hard time trying to get connected, but we finally got connected and we were able to talk. They met us. Young was there to meet me with them. He came to San Francisco to meet me. We spent a week with my sister and then we took a train from Oakland to Provo, Utah. We traveled on an Amtrak, which took us almost 20 hours. It was such a beautiful journey, which I really enjoyed. Young had rented a little cottage, almost like a separate garage turned into a studio

apartment, in the landlord's backyard. The unit has a bathroom, a little kitchenette, and one bed room. It's very cozy and nice, clean and \$40 a month. We began our Provo life, in that cottage. The campus was close enough, either you walk to it, or take a bus. For the first few weeks, we didn't have a car and our landlord, when they went to the grocery stores, they took us. It worked out. After a few weeks, we bought a car, a Rambler, Studebaker's Rambler. I think it was a '58. The life in Provo, I really enjoyed. I am not [a type of person who gets] into deep philosophical discussions or belief [with Mormons]. I valued their conduct of life in the sense that they are very hardworking, studious, and they don't get into drinking binges. We did have to abide by the rule that, while you are going to school, you don't drink coffee or alcoholic beverages. I actually enjoyed drinking coffee, but I wasn't really, at that time, as much as a coffee drinker where I have to have coffee in the morning. I also knew that as long as we were going to school, the rules are rules. But some of the Korean students didn't. So they would get into...

Were there other Korean students in Provo?

Yes, there were. We got together once in a while and we'd do things together. They would get together at the outskirts of town and they would buy beer and smoke. Koreans smoke all the time. The only time they don't smoke is on campus. I didn't really like my husband's smoking. I just wasn't comfortable about him doing that. Other than that, the school was just so clean and the professors were friendly. We all call them brother or sister, like Brother Lamsen, Sister so-and-so. They also in return called us, Sister Lee, and brother so and so; I was using my maiden name. Our class is the first class for a library science program at Brigham Young University. We were the first to graduate in May 1968. I enjoyed going to school and the classmates. After I left Provo, I met a

couple of my classmates at one time, and they were successful. One of the classmates was the director of the Utah State University-Logan Library. He visited me at UNLV at one point when he was looking for an automated library system. Our library has done more automation than his school and he wanted to find out more about what we have done. That was really good [to see him after all those years].

I think about Brigham Young University as the university where I've got my education [Master's] and that's that. Looking back, with my sheltered life, that kind of conservative setting, clean environment, was just what I needed in transitioning from Korea to the United States. I always think about that period as a really good period of my life.

Since we are talking about traditions, customs and all of that you mentioned yesterday, two things, I want to talk about the system of a person having a heir and how if you can't bear that heir how it works? And I want to talk about the engagement since we were talking about your husband and early marriage. Explain to me the process of becoming engaged?

Engagement is something we don't have a big ceremony with a lot of invitees.

Engagement is the family gathering, both bride and grooms. They exchange engagement rings. Also at the same time, it is customary that groom's parents give gifts to the future daughter-in-law in a box of jewelry that could contain, based on the financial condition of the groom's family, from just nothing but an engagement ring to a huge treasure box. It could be, at times, taxing to the groom's family because Koreans do a lot of face saving

kind of acts. They talk about it, like who got what at engagement party. Our family is just ordinary people who value life not material things. At my engagement party, I think my mother-in-law gave me a thick gold bracelet, rings, and other little trinkets. Then, I got a diamond ring for the engagement. He gave me a beautiful watch. We gave him an engagement ring.

Men get an engagement ring as well. Does that become his marriage band?

No. It's either way; we do also get a wedding ring when we get married. Usually engagement ring is the one that has a stone on it.

I'm interested in families that cannot produce a heir can you tell me about that process and how it works out?

I'm not sure what is happening in Korea right now. In ancient society or the Confucius society, son is the one that carries the family name. When a son is named, there is always one Chinese character -- name is usually composed of two Chinese characters -- which is the designation of that particular generation of that family. So in our case, we are Lee Family from Han-san, the village called Han-san. So, that's why, Han-san Lee. Whenever they say, "which Lee family are you?," we will say, Han-san Lee. Then, they know what that meant, or maybe, people know. In our case, my brothers' names are: Song-kyu (**\forall T\bar{\text{g}}T\bar{\text{g}}T\bar{\text{g}}T\bar{\text{E}}T\bar{\text{B}}T\bar{\text{g}}T\bar{\text{g}}T\bar{\text{g}}T\bar{\text{g}}T\bar{\text{E}}T\bar{\text{g}}

sons are not that abundant. So, when you don't produce heir, especially, when you are the only son, or you are the first son of the family, the custom was that you adopt an offspring of your younger brother. So, that baby, the adopted baby, was taken out from his natural parents and raised by [his uncle who is the heir of the family. Sometimes, the adoption is only on record and when adopted father dies, the adopted son becomes as the heir of this family]. My father's generation was lucky because my grandmother produced a lot of sons. My father was the first son; he was the eldest of the... I forgot how many. Before that, my grandfather was the only one son. His father was the only one son. Male was just really scarce and when my grandparents produced that many sons, of course, my grandmother was just so proud of herself because she really contributed a lot to the family. According to my mother, when she started producing all the girls, my grandmother pressured her a lot. She kept saying, "You haven't even begun," even after she [has given birth to] five girls. My mom told us, "I vowed to myself that no matter how many babies it takes, I will get a son." Can you imagine that? Can you imagine the difficulties of raising all these kids? I was thinking 'Gosh, how could she think that.' But anyway, that was her generation. When finally my brothers came, you wouldn't believe the celebration the family had. Not only the family but the school -- the school my mom was teaching. When they heard Teacher Suh Kyong-nam produced, finally, a baby boy, at the morning assembly they did what we call Rah for her. In Korea a lot of celebration starts and ends with [shouting, Hurrah]. It's called a 10,000 years of best kind of luck. [It was a gesture one raises arms up and down, shouting at the same time, 'Mansae, 단세, meaning, to live 10,000 years]. That's what they did for her. My grandmother used to tell me that when I was born, nobody even wanted to say it was

a girl. Now she said, "I'm the one who led the boys." So she was telling everybody, "You know we should treat Myoung-ja really good." That was just really good for her [my mother] that she did have two sons. We are just so thankful, in her later years, that youngest son was the one who took care of her for 40 years. He didn't live separately. After my father passed away and he got married, I think there was about a couple of months or so when they [my brother and his wife] were living in an apartment separately. Then he decided that he [and his family] would live with Mom. They were together until my mother passed away last year [2003]. So the last five years of her life, it was thanks to his devotion that she was able to enjoy her life comfortably. She told him that she would never end up in a hospital, and she's not going to go through any kind of surgery. She was really healthy and he took care of her so well. Whenever I see him, I just want to cry, well actually not cry but the tears come in my eyes because I was touched by his devotion to his mom. They had a special bond between them. While we think of my mom as a very cold, duty bound person, he doesn't see her that way. That was something very fortunate. How the family is continued on ... because my brothers have only two girls. Our cousins, my uncles' sons, they produced sons, so at least there is that generation continuing [in our Lee family].

Your brother, the heir, cannot adopt?

We don't do that anymore and it's not that important.

Could they have adopted a son from a sister?

No, never. In Japan if you only have a daughter, they may bring in a son-in-law and have son-in-law change his name. So he becomes their family and the line will continue. The interesting part is that all of the girls, three sisters and myself, have boys only. So when

my sisters all got through with their boys and when I was pregnant, my father told me, "I don't really think it's important what you will have, but I'm going to wish for you that you will have a son so that you could be as pleased as your sisters. I don't want you to feel like, 'all my sisters got sons but I only got a daughter." So when Billy was born, the first thing my father said, "That is so good for Myoung-ja." -- I heard that he had said that. We were just always laughing about why, all the daughters went to other families and delivered boys, and sons did not have boys but only girls. We were thinking about how our mom felt about that. So we were always determined to make her feel better.

How does a girl usually feel when there is so much emphasis put on boys?

I don't really think there is any kind of feeling. We don't talk about feelings and also it depends on the family. Our family, my parents were never differentiating girls from boys. In terms of education issues or doing something for the children, we were all their children, not daughter or sons. But for some families, there is that differentiation.

Getting back to UNLV, tell me about, you told me some of the younger years at UNLV. Do you remember specific people at the beginning? Working with these people, what was that like, you were in the old library then. Describe to me the working atmosphere at UNLV and some of your co-workers?

I think, looking back though, I was not part of many groups. I was all by myself in so many ways. I also needed to explain something. Because of my visa status I was not, for the first few years, able to get a faculty status. I was hired in a technician exempt class. I was not exactly a library assistant, or a classified staff. In essence, however, I was a classified staff because I did not get the same number of vacation days as a faculty member does. That was something that sort of made me feel a little uneasy about my

status. For the first few years, or ten years, I was very shy. I was struggling to learn as much as I can, as fast as I can so that I wouldn't stumble or make mistakes. I used to teach myself a lot at home. I would take my cataloging rules and the subject heading guide with me. I dreamed about all of these. I was just trying to cope with a new position and a new life in the United States in a way, not as a temporary worker in casinos but a real worker in a real institution. I was very much oblivious of what was going on around me. Fortunately, I did have a lot of concerned staff who would look after me in different ways, like Bob Anderl whom I had talked about several times. He was the Assistant Director for Technical Services. He is really a bright person but he's not a people skilled person. When people recognize his value and his worth, they work with him very well and also he worked with them. But there were those who resented him and didn't like him. I was one of the people whom he took under his wing. He reinstated me after I had submitted a resignation letter without hesitation. He always saw in me, that there was something that he could support. I am always grateful to him. Whenever there is an opportunity, we do try to meet together. Mr. Erickson was considered to be a very weak administrator. I guess, the university was in a growing environment, [both its enrolment and reputation.] We were hiring a lot of librarians, and the newly hired librarians did not agree with how he chose to run the library. There was quite a bit of conflict. He did not like conflict; he avoided it if he could. One of the things that I felt bad about was the way he had to step down. That is something I will always feel bad about. Then, it was his way of handling crisis. There was a consultant who was brought in, I think, specifically to point out to the administration that he [Mr. Erickson] was not an able administrator. A report came out and he stepped down. But he

didn't say anything to the library staff and faculty. We learned about it through the newspaper. I actually called him that night. I told him that I was really sorry that it happened this way. I will always remember him as my director who hired me, and I will always be grateful for that. He said he really appreciated my phone call. There is always politicking; there is always a power struggle. But it is my belief that, as much as you can, you should think about how you preserve person's dignity, especially, when he/she is down. I always remember that incident [with Mr. Erickson.] Mary Dale was put in an awkward position. ...

What was her position?

She was the newly hired director. After Mr. Erickson stepped down, we conducted a national search and Mary Dale came.

Do you know what year that was?

It was '82. Mr. Erickson stepped down in '81. Right after we moved into a new library addition, the rectangular building.

So you added the rectangular building? You had the round building before?

Um huh. The rectangular building was finished and we moved in. We had an open house, a [grand] reception and then, Mr. Erickson stepped down. One of the things that the people criticized [Mr. Erickson] was how badly mishandled the construction and the design of the rectangular building. But in the end, it worked out ok. The walkway [bridge between the round and the rectangular buildings] wasn't our [initial] design. It was the university's campus master plan that [required] two buildings should not be joined together. The plan did not allow a huge massive building in the middle of the campus. So that's how the walkway was created. Initially the design was [to have the

two buildings] together [without the separation]. One of the things that came about was [that] the building was really a lot more forward looking building than people were ready to jump. I became the Non-book Librarian during the time when the construction was going on. The AV Librarian left and the position became vacant. I thought about it and I said to myself, 'I've done enough of cataloging and I wanted to do something different.' I knew that I needed to get out of the Cataloging Department if I were to do different things. I told Bob Anderl that I was interested in becoming the AV librarian. They wanted to change the title to the Non-book Librarian because of the [new services they planned for handling AV resources]in the new building. One half of the entire second floor of the new building was dedicated to the non-book space.

Mr. Erickson and Bob envisioned the expansion of media resources and delivery of the service to faculty and students. I decided that I was going to go for it. Mr. Erickson had someone else in mind, but then, luckily for me that person did not take it. She was a music librarian but non-book, to my thinking, was not just music sound recording, but all of the videos and other non-print materials. I was really trying to expand my experience in [wider scope of new media resources]. So they gave me that job. I did say that I also would like to work under Bob Anderl not under Public Services. Nonbook could be an independent section in a way, because I would be responsible for processing all new acquisitions with my cataloging background as well as serving the public. When I took that job, I discovered that so much processing of the sound recording was left undone and the mess was just unbelievable. During the first year, we didn't have to serve the public that much because we were waiting for the building addition to be completed. It took me all that year to clean up everything. I took back [music] records (LPs) that professors

checked out and never returned and put them into our cataloging information [database] so that people could find them. One of the music professors, Doug Peterson, had like a 100 song recordings and he didn't return them. He used to be a choir director at the church that I go to. [I sent him a notice and] some got returned. I sent him a bill of \$190 or something. It was huge then. He came in to my office and was really angry with me. I told him, "You know, it's not just you to whom I sent notices. I'm cleaning everything and I'd like you to return them. But when you need them again, you can have them. When someone else needs them, he/she can use them." He was just so angry and stormed out of the room and went to see Mr. Erickson. Mr. Erickson waived his fine a little bit, but only half of it or something. He returned most of them eventually. Records were dirty with dog hairs and smudges on the vinyl, so we had to clean everything. After that, he and I became really good friends. The organization of the collection was so important, especially, during the first year since I also had to fight for the budget to develop media collection. When Mr. Erickson stepped down, Dr. Dettre from the College of Education became the interim director for awhile, while we are searching for a new director. Dr. Dettre helped me in [my efforts to expand the Nonbook section]. Eventually we were getting more and more money devoted to non-book material collection development. The separate budget for the Nonbook collection made me full responsible for developing the collection. I would always consult with subject bibliographers, and they could let the faculty know about the non-book budget. The first year we moved into the new place was the year I really started working with the faculty [even though I was appointed the Nonbook librarian two years prior]. I interviewed all department chairs and the faculty, soliciting their input in terms of media resources development. The Nursing Department

really needed a lot of boost. At that time, there was a Physics professor who wanted us to tape off-air *The Cosmos Series* [produced by PBS and narrated by Carl Sagan]. Off-air taping was really new to us. I became the Non-book Librarian in '79. We moved into the new rectangular building in '81. Then, Mary Dale came in '82. She made some changes; she changed Bob Anderl's position to the Systems Librarian from the Assistant Director of Technical Services. He left [shortly thereafter]. A lot of people didn't like Bob Anderl [because he was responsible for designing the new building and was viewed as Mr. Erickson's man].

Systems librarian was a higher position for him?

No.

So he had to step down?

Yes. Systems Librarian was actually a new position. Because we were going in more and more in automation, we needed to have that kind of a position. He really didn't stay in that position long since he left within a few months. What he did was, before he left, that he opened a door for me. [He recommended me to serve as a liaison to various campus units and the System Computing Center, which he used to serve.] I began to be involved with units outside of the library in terms of computer applications and technology issues. I continued to work as the Nonbook Librarian. We actually worked together with computer science people to have a lab in the Nonbook section of the library. That was really the beginning of my getting into computer technology. At the time, AV Services, the Mike Stowers' operation, was beginning to be involved in network infrastructure and technology issues. The AV Services supplied playback units in the Nonbook area. We [the library] developed the media collection. We viewed that

our role was to develop regardless of formats. His role was to supply equipment, such as video tape players, TVs, slide projection units, record players, etc. As a result, Mike and I worked together. Mike liked me because I wanted to bring the media resource services into the future. He helped me as much as he could and we became real good friends because of that. That's how Mike and Eva met. I introduced Eva to Mike and they got married. Mike Stowers' shop [the A-V Services] worked with the Provost [to create a faculty development center in the library]. This was the beginning of faculty support, recognizing that there must be a place for faculty to come and do their word processing work. There weren't any word processors available anywhere [for faculty use]. So the Provost bought DecMate, the first generation of a word processor by DEC. [DecMate became the campus supported word-processor after that until IBM PC came out with WordStar].

Who was the Provost?

Dr. Nitzschki...didn't stay that long. It could have been Dr. Unrue who bought it. I think it was Dr. Nitzschki who bought the first word processor. Guess where it went? It came to Non-book. So we actually got into a real training of the use of DecMate word processor. There was always a unit in the back so that faculty could come and do their word processing. Darlene Unrue, Dr. Unrue's wife wrote her book on that word processor. So we were always proud that the library really accommodated her book creation. She and I sometimes talk about that time [as we look back]. While I was engaged in a lot more media [related library services], I [was] also involved with System Computing people. When Bob Ander left, Mary Dale formed a search committee to go for a national search for a systems librarian. We really didn't get anyone that we were

looking for. So, Mary Dale thought about it and opened the search in-house. Anyone who wants to apply for it can [do so]. I applied for it. There were three in-house candidates who applied. I became the Systems Librarian. One librarian who, for some reason, thought that she was going to get it but didn't, had difficulties in accepting my appointment. She didn't come to work for a week. There was a little bit of tension when she came back to work. Eventually she left. The other person who also applied had a very good cataloging background. She's still there. When I became Systems Librarian, Mary Dale didn't have an associate director. I became a sort of a defacto assistant [director] for her over time. The library budget was growing and nobody was really [responsible for monitoring and analyzing expenditures systematically. Technologies cost a lot of money and I had to find [out how big our budget was and what flexibility we had]. I just took upon myself that I would be [responsible for monitoring our finance]. I analyzed [the monthly expenditure reports] and I learned how the invoices got paid and [reconciled]. I [began to work with Business Administration people and investigated how our accounts were set up and worked, both state and soft-money accounts. Some accounts came with restrictions. Mary Dale gave me signature authorities for all library accounts so that I could authorize expenditures in case of her absence.] Kathy Rothermel was the head of Acquisition and she [used to do some reconciliation of other accounts in addition to the library Acquisitions account]. After all, our acquisitions account was [the largest of our accounts]. She and I worked together really well. I gradually put a system in place so that all library accounts could be tracked with revenues and expenditures. After two years [serving] as the Systems Librarian, Mary Dale's title changed to the Dean of Libraries from the Director of Libraries....

Was that just a title change?

Yes. It's a title change. By then, the head of Technical Services was hired and Bob Ball was made the head of Collection Development. Also, there was the head of Public Services. They were all given a title of Assistant University Librarian, even though we don't have the University Librarian; instead, we have the dean. Having an associate dean was not the one that the university was ready for. I asked Mary Dale, 'They can have Assistant University Librarian, but I would like to be Associate University Librarian in my title.' She said, "Fine." Because budget was a major part of my responsibilities, my title became Associate University Librarian for Systems and Budget. I worked with Mary Dale on that capacity from '83 until she left.

I am always grateful to [people who gave me opportunities] to go from one place to another; I think about how Bob Anderl opened the door for me [whenever there was an opportunity. Before Mary Dale left, she suggested to Dr. Unrue, the Provost, that it's about time we needed an associate dean and recommended that I be made associate dean. She pointed out to him that after she was gone, the associate dean would be responsible for the library until the new dean was hired]. Dr. Unrue agreed and made me the Associate Dean of Libraries. Of course, there were a lot of library people who were really fit to be tied. So many people thought that it was a poor decision on Mary Dale's part and she should have never done it. She should have left it the new dean. One person told me, "Do you realize what you have done by accepting it? You put the new dean in an awkward position, not knowing what to do with you?" I just said, 'Well, this is how it's going to be. You may think that but I don't agree with you.'

When Mary Dale left, I was mad an interim dean for six months. Mary Dale left at the end of June '92. Matt Simon came in January'93. Some people thought that I was going to change everything around, but that wasn't my intention. I was to hold the position so that the library could move on, get the budget spent, and continue the service. At the end of six months, people changed [their opinion about me]. That's when they gave me the thank you card. Even the person who really criticized me for accepting the position as associate dean, publicly admitted that he was wrong about me. It's good to think about not holding grudges and just stay in principle. You go on from there. Do I think about him as a bad person? No, I just don't. People were kind of wondering what the new dean was going to do for me or do with me. Pretty soon [we all found out that] Matt Simon, the newly hired dean, wasn't the person who's into details or anything. Everything just got dumped on me.

Before we get into Matt Simon's reign I want to talk about, at this point that you are assistant's person and then the associate dean and all of that. What is going on, on the bigger campus do you remember buildings going up? Do you remember presidents who were coming and going?

There was a lot of conflict in '82-83 between the Provost and the Senate. Provost

Nitzschke left and also at the same time, Dr. Goodall stepped down from the President
position. The new president came on board. I forgot the exact year when the new

President, Dr. Maxson came. Dr. Unrue became the interim provost after Dr. Nitzschke
left. He always favored the library. He really truly believed that the library needed to be
supported. Mary Dale was unsure because when Mary Dale came on board, Dr.

Nitzschke was the provost who hired her. He [Dr. Nitzschke] also was very supportive of the library. He's the one who instigated all those changes that ended with Mr. Erickson's stepping down. He truly felt that it was his responsibility to make the library position elevated to where it ought to be. When President Maxson came he decided that he would retain Dr. Unrue as the Provost [and the Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs]. They worked together as a team until Dr. Maxson left. I think that Dr. Maxson is the president who has built the solid foundation for the university to shape the way we are now.

Because he was here for about 10 years?

Yes. He was a very people oriented person. He was very successful with getting outside funding. He believed in slogans and marketing. We always used to call ourselves, "young and proud university." You would see [the slogan on the billboard all over town]. He was also very supportive of the library. When Mary Dale came, one of the things that we had to do was the space study. We were always running out of stacks space and some physical reorganization has to take place [to make room for stacks]. Until I became the Assiocate Dean, I really didn't directly deal with the university administration. I remember about how Dr. Maxson's conflict with Jerry Tarkenian and the Board of Regents. I actually sent a letter to Dr. Maxson one time because I felt that he really needed to hear how some of us felt [about him and were supportive of him]. I don't know how he responded or if he read my letter or not, but I felt that I needed to say something about how grateful we were to have a president like him who has built a foundation for the university to grow upon. That's what he did. I will never forget what he has done. It was really good when I came to California and at one point I met Dr.

Maxson. We hugged each other and he remembered me. [When he left UNLV, he became the president of the California State University, Long Beach]. He did a lot and one of the things he did for the library was to get us \$3 million dollar for new building planning in the biennium 95-97. That's how it began.

Is that the new building?

Yes. The \$3 million dollar was for building design and development. Normally in the state legislative budget planning process, if you are funded to design the building in one biennium, the next biennium usually comes with the building construction money. That's how it was for us. The actual construction money was funded in the 97-99 biennium. In 1996, the Lied Foundation Gift came through. Matt has something to do with that Lied Gift in the sense that Matt presented one of his ideas to the University Foundation Board where Christina Hixson was present and she was interested in Matt's presentation.

So tell me how it was after working for Mary Dale, she leaves then Matt Simon is brought aboard, tell me what it was like working with him?

Actually Mary Dale and I had a little bit of a different relationship in the sense that I wasn't truly her associate in the way I was to Matt. Because I didn't become the associate dean until after Mary Dale left. My dealings with Mary Dale were limited although I was her confidential sounding board in the evenings when we worked late. My office was in the Administration office area. My work for Mary Dale was limited to technology issues and financial issues. When Matt Simon came, Matt wasn't the type of a person doing any type of detailed 'deanly' work. That was mostly up to the associate dean. I took that as my opportunity to learn all about library operation. Six months as the interim dean made me aware of a lot of issues [that I was not exposed to previously].

As the interim, I did things that must be done without starting any new initiatives. Matt came and he really relied on me a lot. I used to go to Academic Council meetings (meeting of the deans with the Provost) whenever he was not there. I didn't even know that wasn't accepted, because deans council is very exclusive to deans only. But nobody told me not to come. So, I was always there when Matt wasn't there. After Dr. Ferraro came ...

Ferraro is the provost?

Yes. Dr. Ferraro was the Provost. One time Dr. Ferraro told all the deans if could not come to the deans council meeting, they should not send their designee. So, that was the end of my going to the deans council meeting. I can understand it now that I am in the dean position. It is just accepted that dean is dean and dean's associate is associate dean. In my position, I was actually doing most of the dean's work. I was just not officially recognized. That came really clear to me one day. New library's schematic design was done and we were scheduled to present the schematic design to Christina Hixson.

Who is that?

That is the executor of the Lied Foundation which gave \$15 million to Lied Library. The meeting was scheduled and Matt went out of town. The president and the provost and Christina Hixson were all there thinking that Matt would present it. No, he wasn't there. After that...

So did you make the presentation?

I answered the questions and the design architect presented it with the Associate Vice President for Facilities Management. That worked out really well because Christina Hixson knew the architect, Tom Findley from Leo Daly. They had another project together in Nebraska, when Lied Foundation gave a lot of money to the hospitals and universities in Nebraska. [I thought the presentation worked out really well but the president was really upset because Matt was not there.

Who was president at that time?

Carol Harter. I was also feeling bad, although I thought we did ok. But it didn't count for the president; the dean should be [the one presenting it], not the associate dean. Then I realized that the associate dean was not enough. [In hierarchical organization settings, the dean has to be responsible for the library when it comes to working with the administration and outside dignitaries. That is why the president was really upset with Matt since he abandoned his responsibilities.] I think Matt was going through some kind of personal conflict in his life. He was having difficulties. So, after a year, he wasn't there, he was there but he wasn't there. We used to do, we, meaning the cabinet, used to meet without him all the time.

The university cabinet?

No, the Library cabinet used to meet without Matt. He would come in towards the end of the meeting. That time was the most important period for the library because the new library's design development has begun and the detailed drawings had to be done [and approved by us]. My thought was that I really could not fail this. No matter what happened, I had to carry on these kinds of tasks. If there were some things I needed to know I had to learn about them; I needed to find ways to get that done. But the thing was, because I was still the associate dean, if I decided on something, they would always ask me what Matt thought about it. So, there were still delays since Matt didn't give me yes or no on things some of the times. We just limped along. In October 1996, I think,

for some reason I had to go to Korea for a week. I don't know exactly what the occasion was. But I had to go. It could be my brother-in-laws' anniversary of his passing or that kind of things. The design development for the new library was going on and [I was worried about my having to leave the library for a week]. I went to see Dr. Ferraro. I said, 'I wanted to let you know that the library is in trouble in the sense that we just don't have Matt full time. I just need help. I just cannot do [everything]. I don't want to think of me as a villain or a troublemaker, but I'm thinking about the library. This is the most important period for the library since we are working on design development phase and then the construction of the new library. I need you to be aware of that [that Matt is not there most of the time].' So, he said, "What do you want me to do?" I said, 'I don't know; I just want you to think about it.' I told him that I was leaving for Korea and I would be gone for a week. So he said, "Ok. I understand and I'll think about it." While I was gone that happened.

What happened?

Ferraro and Matt had a big blow-up in public. I was informed that there was a patron who had three overdue books or something and the library had a clear record that he needed to pay for the fine. Matt wouldn't back down on that. The patron ended up in the Provost's office and the Provost waived the fine. So, during a Senate meeting, Matt walked in where Dr. Ferraro was sitting and Matt threw the book at him. He said, "You take care of it." The next day he was reassigned. That's when I walked in from Korea. It was a mess.

What did you say to Ferraro?

When I came to work and Lee, Library Sectretary, set a meeting with Dr. Ferraro. I said something like, 'Well, I guess it happened?' I also said, 'I didn't realize it would come to this way,' or something to that effect. For next two weeks, the media got a hold of this and Matt played up for it. I was just so ashamed; I was really ashamed. People were in different camps and it was very uncomfortable. Also, the university administration told Matt he needed to clear out his office [immediately]. His office was a mess. So, he cleared out his office and [he had me sign a statement that his office was cleared out without any damage]. Ferraro's way of promoting an interim dean was that he let the unit decide. So, there was an election. I think Nancy Master, a history and education [bibliographer, Steve Fitt, Non-book librarian,] and even Peter [Michel were nominated]. I think Peter declined. The Associate Dean of the College of Liberal Arts was also nominated. In the end, I was to become the interim dean for a year. At first it was the remainder of the calendar year, then it was as soon as the new dean was appointed. Ken Marks came in October of 97.

When a person is appointed interim dean, do they make the income of the dean?

Not as much as a regular dean. He gave me the stipend for taking on this additional responsibility.

How did you feel at this point because Matt Simon is still in the library? Ok, he was reassigned so you become the interim dean, how does that period work for you and is that comfortable?

Actually it was not comfortable. One of the things Matt chose to do [was to stay on as a library faculty member]. So we had to find a place for him in the library. So Peter took him [under his wing] as a manuscript processor, but not in Special Collections. We gave

him a room on the second floor of the round building. We gave Dr. Unrue a little office, when he stepped down from the Provost position. Dr. Unrue sent me a message, "Myoung-ja, I know you are looking for a place for Matt and I will give up my office in the library since I have not been using it." So, we gave Matt Simon that office. What was uncomfortable for all of us was that Matt would send very bad taste emails to everyone whenever he gets a little...

To everyone in the library?

Uh hum. One time it was bad enough that one of the librarians protested that it's a blatant sexual harassment. It was something to do with call girls or whatever. So I had to write a letter to Matt . I actually had my draft letter looked at by a general council to make sure the wording was right. Then, I had to send that. [I felt very bad because Matt and I worked together well in so many ways and I knew where his talent was, which I could learn from. I also knew there was really a dark side of Matt that not many people knew. I knew how he could be when he's angry. I had to do my work in the end. I think he was just completely upset with me.

Wasn't he just upset with the world?

Yes. I think that also. But I think he felt that I had betrayed him in that I took on dean's responsibility. I'm kind of sad about that. In so many ways, I like the guy. I always credit him with the first conceptual design of the Lied Library with the atrium and its openness. That was Matt's design. When the building was finished, I really wished to tell him how his idea worked, but I never had a chance to. I still don't know what he thinks about the building. That was a really bad part about Matt being around. When Ken came, of course, Ken did not have any frame of reference. Their relationship was

kosher. A little bit later, Matt left and I forgot exactly how long Ken and Matt overlapped. That's what happened with Matt.

So Matt leaves and Ken Marks comes, so about 1999? 1997.

You were there until how long?

Until January 2000.

What was it like working there with Ken Marks?

First I spent a lot of time with him [informing] about the budget and how the library managed and operated. He told me that I would continue to be responsible for the budget. I continue to monitor and authorize the expenditures. But for any expenditures, I consulted with him. The main responsibility at the time was to finish the building design and to go through the construction stage while monitoring the construction. So, gradually I was removed from a lot of library operational issues. Still there were a lot of people who used to work with me and I would work with them. During that time, system's librarian left. It was the most important period for the library when we needed a system's librarian most. We designed library telecommunications network with the campus Telecommunications people. The systems librarian actually worked with me a lot and she worked nights and weekends to do that, but she left in the midst of it. A month or two months before she left, we hired a really good person, Mike Pearson. [Pearson was the first professional staff we hired without a Master's in Library Science. He is a computer expert whose technological knowledge we depended on for the design of the new building]. I don't think the Lied Library was designed this well had we not hired him in the systems area. There was no question in my mind. He is such a quiet

man. Also, Jason was just unbelievably good. When the systems librarian left, Jason was an information resource librarian. Camille Clark-Wallin (systems librarian) was pretty and very professional. She also built the Systems Team. Now with Jason and Mike, the Systems group is a top notch unit. Every time I go there I'm really proud of how it all became. When I started as the systems librarian, I was all by myself. Then, I hired John Fox, and with John, I brought up two online catalog systems. I was beginning to realize, as the construction is approaching to the final stage, [that my time here at UNLV may be numbered]. I thought about what my role in the library was going to be after all those months just concentrating on construction. I know, for one or two years, that I will be busy with the move and the shakedown of the building. I was beginning to see myself that I am no longer as valuable as I used to be. I don't like that feeling. I also caught myself becoming emotional in many occasions when somebody questions about the building design. I just jumped and became defensive. I reflected on that in the evening and I told Ernest, 'It is not really good I do these kinds of things.' I told myself that I better do something about it. I have to think about my life after this building. After you built a building, what would you do more? I had a choice. I know that I have already reached 30 years of my work in the state retirement system [which allows me to retire regardless of my age]. I wasn't really in the TIAA-CREF retirement system like other faculty was. Because when I started, I was not given a faculty status [because I was not a US citizen]. I knew whatever I chose to do, there was income for me. I could either regroup myself or I go back to school, something like that.

When the construction was at its height, I suspended my doctoral program [in history] taking time off for a year. Ernest and I talked about that and I checked with my retirement system officer. In early '99, I became so restless. I did the necessary work and everything beyond. I finished all the furniture specifications for the bid. I just went through bid documents; attended the bid meetings and everything; answered the questions for the bidders; and designed the key schemes in the building after I learned how the key-lock system worked. I did so much. No one expected that I would do that much. At the same time, I was beginning to be very restless. I thought about whether I should I look for another job in the library. Knowing my position, I wouldn't go anywhere except for a deanship or directorship. It probably wouldn't be a good idea going to an associate position. I was really particular when looking. [I was convinced that when] the building was finished, I wanted to leave. I thought about going back to school full time to finish my dissertation. And then, go from there. Then, one night, one of those days that I was very depressed, I came home and looked in the Chronicle of Higher Education. There was this ad that CSU-Hayward was looking for a University Librarian. So, I applied for it. It was August when I applied for it. Then, I got the message that I was in the part of the first cut. They would like to have a phone interview. After that, they called me for an on-site interview in October. They gave me the dates and the particular day of the week. Usually we had Construction Project Managers meeting on Wednesday mornings. I told the Search Committee that I could join them in the afternoon. One Wednesday in October, I had the meeting with the construction team in the morning and I flew to Oakland for the interview. I haven't heard anything from them until Thanksgiving. One day, suddenly I got a phone call from the provost at CSU-

Hayward telling me that he wanted to offer me a job. I told him, 'Oh I thought, by now, you selected somebody. Is that position still open?' He said, "Oh you know how that goes. The process has taken longer than I had expected and we are now ready to ask you if you are interested." So I said, 'Well, before I say yes or no, I need to come back again one more time.' I went back the second time. This time, I met with library coordinators and other people [I would work with if I get the job]. The first interview was organized in such a way that it was just more of a university kind of thing; I met with the Deans' group. The only time I had with staff during my regular interview was two hours. They asked me to present something about the future of the library. What I did was to cut my talk short so that I could talk to the library staff. I told the group, 'Why don't you pull up all the chairs and make a circle and then sit down and tell me what you do. So that's what we did. Everybody said they learned from each other since they don't get to share what they do. When I went back for the second time, I met with middle managers in the library. I also met with other university people that I did not meet before as well. Then, the Provost said after my visit, "What do you think?" So I said, 'Let me think about it.' He asked me what I made. He said, 'Well Myoung-ja, you're making more than some of our dean's.' I said, 'Well, I've been there for a long time and that's what I make.' About two days later he called me and said, "I want to offer you this amount and you think about it." So I said, 'Well, actually your consideration was really good and I would like to accept it.' He asked me when he could announce my acceptance. I told him that I would really like to tell my staff first before he did it.

No one knew in the library except Ken. Around the Thanksgiving time, when the provost called me and he wanted to talk to my dean, I had to tell Ken. Wendy Starkweather and

Maria White knew. No one knew other than that. By then it was like December 10th and I was ready to come out for Billy's graduation. I left a letter addressed to all staff and I asked Ken, 'I would like to send a message to the staff. So when you send this announcement about my retirement, would you attach my letter?' Ken's way of announcing resignation retirement is to send a memo to announce that so-so will be retiring effective a certain date. I knew that's what he was going to do to announce my retirement. I explained what I had in my mind and everyone appreciated the letter that I wrote. So that's how I came to CSU.

Would you talk about some of your work on campus, working with other departments, working with other people, especially once Dr. Harter came on campus and started the reorganization?

Before I talk about Dr. Harter's university planning task force and committees, [I need to provide some background information.] Before she began her planning process, there was a position opened, that is, the university planning and assessment position. I forgot whether that was associate vice president or assistant to the president for the planning. I was interested in planning process and also I was interested in spreading my wings outside of the library at that time. When the position announcement came about, outlining the qualifications, they did not mention that it had to have a Ph.D. So I applied for that position along with some of the professors that I know. Of course, I didn't get it and Rebecca Mills was selected.

The person who shepherded that screening process was Dr. Fry, Andy Fry. So I made an appointment with him [after Dr. Mills' appointment was announced]. I asked him about

what qualification that I had they didn't like, and why I was not considered. He obviously was clear about what President Harter wanted. Basically she wanted was the person with a Ph.D. and with a lot more experience working with faculty.

I was thinking about the experience as part of a learning process. I did not want to think my library work is just for library. That is the reason why I had gone through a lot of management training programs on my own. One was a five-day program offered by the Graduate School of the University of Miami-Ohio on advanced leadership management in the summer. The session was really good. I enjoyed spending a week in a completely different environment. The campus was beautiful in the summer time. We had teachers from all over the business sectors including one former IBM executive. After school over dinner, we listened to his way of dealing with executive managers and I really enjoyed that. Think about that kind of training; it's not just library, but it's just different setting of management.

I was a little bit disappointed, that I wasn't selected, but I knew that there were better qualified people for that position. Dr. Fry told me that, "You know, Myoung-ja, although you weren't selected, we recognized the things that you could do and your ability to contribute. That's why I recommended that you serve on a co-chair of one of the committees." Whether that was because I applied for the job and didn't get it or not, I was selected as the co-chair of technology of the subcommittee of the planning task force. Each committee was asked to write a white paper. That process was a lot of work because we had to investigate what we had so far and what kind of future we were

looking for. That took about I think six months or so. After the white papers were created, the real planning process began. I am a little bit fuzzy about how the relationship between the planning process and the white paper and what ended up where. I was very impressed with Dr. Mills' leadership during that time. She really managed the entire planning process well. In its second and third year of the planning process, I was beginning to be busy with library building planning. I was sort of gradually removed from that activity.

One of the things I think about was my staying on campus so long helped me to provide a lot of background information and how it came about, and what we had been doing. Especially, in terms of technologies, the library was one of the major players in implementing new technologies. There is the chancellor's office computing services, SCS Systems Computing Services in the UCCSN (University and Community College System of Nevada) system. In early days of library automation, the System Computing Services played a major role in what we did. There was a union list of serials which Bob Anderl initiated, which lists serials holding owned by the libraries in the intermountain regions. It's called the Intermountain Union List of Serials (IMULS). He and computing services were working closely together. They wrote programs to maintain the list of serials, periodicals, and the on-going publications, starting from the Nevada libraries. Gathering what libraries have, which volume of the certain journals held by any library in Nevada. That branched out to the intermountain region that included Utah, Colorado, Arizona, and things like that.

In those days the resources were scarce and there were a lot of cooperation between the community colleges and UNR and UNLV. Directors' group, which consisted of the community colleges, UNR, and UNLV, met regularly. I forgot how often; it seems like twice a year, especially, during Mary Dale's deanship period. We were also going for library an online catalog system. The first and the foremost charge for me when I got the Systems Librarian position was to investigate and choose an online catalog system. So, we knew we had to go for separate funding for that because the cost was so prohibitive. The directors decided that the system libraries would work together and have a united front.

So this was UNR, UNLV...but not the State Library?

The State Library was in a different situation and I will come back to the State Library's role in that. So, we worked together; Reno's systems librarian and I are the two that carried the ball in the sense that community colleges didn't have systems librarians. We used to meet with the directors when they met. They decided that we would try to get the same system. We will have two sites, one in the North and the other in the South. So, at each university site (UNLV and UNR), we would take care of the community colleges in the area. An RFP for our online catalog system was written to let the vendors know how our system needed to be configured. The UNLV's site will have our library catalog and that of the Community College of Southern Nevada, and at Reno, they will host community colleges in Carson City, Truckee Meadows, and Elko. That's how the first online catalog was to be purchased and configured. When we got the funding in the biennium 85-87, none of the system vendors had a complete suite of modules that we needed to have, although everyone was trying to get an online catalog system. When you

look at a library online catalog system, there are four major components; 1) a public access catalog which allows a patron searches information about what we have; 2) a module called a database management system, cataloging functions which create records bringing the machine readable cataloging records into the computer and maintain them; 3) an acquisitions and serials control system through which we order books, keeping track of orders, receiving, and paying for them. (This module also allows us to keep track of periodicals subscriptions and process invoices.); and 4) a circulation system which allows patrons to check out books and keep track of who has what and what's due when. These four modules interfacing together sharing information make a totally integrated online library system. At the time none of them has that full package.

No one in the country?

No. That was too early. When the library automation began in the early 70s, it began with a circulation system only. That's one of the chapters in the Nevada cooperative automation project we shared the system with public libraries (county and city libraries) and the state Library. In the biennium 85-87, the universities decided that we should find our own system because we had a lot of unique needs that the public libraries didn't have. We were looking for the system that wasn't there. What ended up happening was that we got an online public access catalog first because our priority was to have some kind of a working public access catalog. The reason we had such urgency for getting this online catalog was because UNLV chose, at some point, not to type the cards anymore. We went into the microfiche catalog instead of maintaining the card catalog. We produced a microfiche catalog which was sort of a controversial one because updating and getting a new edition for a microfiche catalog was a really cumbersome process.

How does a microfiche catalog work?

Early on, when we catalog books, our catalog record is created in a machine readable record format. Our bibliographic utility is called OCLC; they have all the record for the books we have. We will get a [magnetic] tape from OCLC and then we send it to the microfiche producer. They were the one that produced the microfiche. Microfiche technology is the same as microfilm, except it is printed in sheets [instead of film rolls]. One of the advantages of microfiche catalog is that we could distribute the entire catalog to academic departments where the faculty can look up what books the library recently purchased. When UNLV started a microfiche catalog, I was the Non-book Librarian. The faculty really had a problem with microfiche catalog because updates were not as frequently done as in the card catalog, which we can update by filing cards daily. We were able to do a monthly update or a quarterly update. Then the annually master microfiche catalog was produced. When Mr. Erickson stepped down and Dr. Dettre became our interim director, one of the things we did was to improve the faculty relationship with the library. [We decided to provide a demonstration session on how to use the microfiche catalog for each department]. Because I just began working with the faculty in promoting non-book services, I said to myself that this would be sort of a good way I could do two things at once. I volunteered to do the demonstration sessions. When I met with a department, I would demonstrate microfiche catalog and informed them about the newly created non-book unit on the second floor. After the demonstration, we delivered one microfiche reader and set of catalogs to the department. That was actually well received by the faculty. But as records grew in the database and updating became more cumbersome, we needed to do something really quick.

Mary Dale thought that we had to do something about that. So, that's why we were in a hurry to get an online public access catalog even if we didn't have a totally integrated system and we needed to get a system that's real good. We, both Reno and us, agreed on a system called Carlyle. That was actually a short lived system. The public access catalog worked very well, but they could not deliver other modules they promised to do. We used the Carlyle system for a year and a half or so. It became obvious that they were not going to make it. We had funding to do a totally integrated system and before that money was completely used up, we had to do something. So we broke the contract with the Carlyle system vendor [after consulting with the University System Finance office].

Before we broke the contract, we extracted all the records we had in the database in a machine readable format, which was critical if we were to migrate to another system. They took all the hardware. At that time, Innovative Interfaces, Inc., a vendor who had a good acquisitions and serials control system, was beginning to complete their total integrated library system. While we were using Carlyle, we were still using the CLSI circulation system run by the Clark County Library District begun in the late 70s. CLSI is one of the pioneers in library automation. Back then, it was the only circulation system. When we were installing the first generation automated system, we had a lot of interaction with the public libraries and the State Library. Cooperation with the state library actually extended to other projects like the union list of serials. The State Library gave some money to the University System Computing Services to make that (the union list) continue. During those days, the storage device was an expensive item. We had a

300 mega byte disk drive, huge in size, and it was \$15,000. You think about now microcomputers come with 6 gigs. It's just unbelievable how the technology has changed. In the late 1980s, that's what we had to start out with. After we moved into the INNOPAC system [by Innovative Interfaces], we did have a complete integrated system.

While we were installing the library system, the publishing industry was beginning to offer a lot of electronic resources. So, the periodicals indexes were available in electronic format. In 1990 and 91, Reno's systems librarian and I, and the System Computing Services wrote a grant proposal. It's the US Department of Education Title II technology grant. The grant proposal was to build, what we call, an early stage of information gateway, NEON (Nevada Education Online Network), formerly named NALIS (Nevada Academic Library Information System).

We got a grant of approximately \$240,000 or something, to get a search engine, buy different periodicals indexes in electronic format, and load them into our Computing Services computer. Patrons can access the indexes through our terminal, online catalog terminal. So the online catalog terminal was becoming more than just library catalog access. That's why we call it a gateway to the electronic resources. Reno's Systems Librarian is a very smart person. Her intelligence level is really up there. She also is hard working and a no nonsense type of a person. She and I were able to work together. That was the time when the cooperation was needed and by pulling our resources together, we gave something to the public. So, looking back, I feel really proud to be part of that, I guess the formation period. As directors changed, cooperative relationships didn't stay

the same. I understand that the ties between the community colleges and the UNR and UNLV are not as tight as it used to be as far as the library is concerned. When I was the Systems Librarian at UNLV and Carol was the Systems Librarian at UNR, that was the time period, 10-year period, we really worked together.

What is Carol's last name?

Parkhurst.

While you're doing all of this at the university and making all kinds of progress there, you also had a personal life, you had a small son. Tell me about Billy and tell me about his development, tell me about his life?

He was a really sweet boy when he was little, five or six years old. He had problems with his allergies. The symptom of his allergies was asthma. So many times between seasons, we ended up in an emergency room at 2 am because he couldn't breath. One year he coughed so hard that he popped air bubbles in his lung. Oh! The pain he had to go through! We just did not know what was wrong and why he had so much pain. So, I rushed him to the Emergency Unit at Sunrise Hospital, and they discovered that air bubbles were popped. He was hospitalized and I was devastated. Every time he goes through that kind of thing, I learn something about human resiliency, how he recovers from sickness and how important it is to have the medical profession. I am always so impressed with doctors, how they can tell us what was wrong, making me at ease, saying, "It's not so bad, or it's going to work out ok." In his early life, because he was so much in and out of hospitals and was living with his allergy problems, he had a career goal that he wanted to become a doctor. In his junior high school year, he was doing a school project which was the illustration of the human body from *Fantastic Voyage*. Do you

know the *Fantastic Voyage*? an Asimov's novel? He wanted to be a doctor and was very interested in biology. When (Billy) was a freshman of the senior high school, before the teenage years began, he was a very serious student. But it was kind of cute, when he was so serious that he was going to go to a medical school. We would go to a store and buy sneakers or tennis shoes and the store clerk would ask him, "So, what are you going to be Billy?" He said, "I'm going to be a doctor." He would go on and on and on. The store clerk would say, "oh boy you are serious." One year, he worked on a science fair project. He won the first prize in the state. It was something to do with ecoli — a type of bacteria. Peter Starkweather at that time was a very young professor. He helped Billy in so many different ways. [Over the years] Billy's interests changed. He met one of the high school teachers, an art teacher, who influenced him so much. I think because of him he discovered his appreciation in art, and his ability to express. That's when he changed; he's not want to go to a medical school after that.

He had very difficult high school years, especially from the junior to the senior year. He was very troubled. It was more than just teenage temper tantrums or anything, but I think he was rebelling from the establishment. He didn't want to go to school with restricted schedules. He had all kinds of hairstyles to express himself. He would dye shirt in a different way, buy a jacket, and tear the sleeves halfway and let the thread hanging. He was very troubled. One day the school counselor called me and said, "Do you realize your son is suicidal?" I said, 'I do not believe that he is suicidal, but I know he is troubled.' She asked me if I could come and see her. I said, 'Of course, I will make an appointment.' So we talked about it a little bit. There were really a couple of unpleasant

sessions with the school principal and counselors. During those meetings, I was really thinking about how different Billy and I were, seeing how I was dressed in a very conservative, serious office attire, and Billy's unorganized, unkempt clothing and hair. One of the things that they recommended was that Billy and I go through counseling together. At one point, one of the counselors Billy met was actually Billy's daycare center teacher. They actually got on very well and talked about Billy's trouble. Some nights Billy would wake up and say, "I just hate going to high school." I told him, 'You know you really need to finish this. You can't just leave high school.'

What did he hate so much about it?

He hated the way that teachers treated students. I am not sure what he hated but I certainly could not understand him. That's when we really had the most problems. Then, he was experimenting with all kinds of different art and music. Oh, the things I had to listen to, Prince and others like Sting.

Prince, was that the social stage?

Prince was a singer and Billy was his fan. All kinds of different songs he played on the record player and it was the most difficult period for me. I think there were a couple of times Billy was in real trouble. It was when he finished junior or sophomore year. On the last day of the year, he broke up with his girlfriend and he went into hysteria. He just completely lost control and the school called me. He couldn't stop crying. I didn't know what to do. I forgot who recommended, but there was a place in North Las Vegas where troubled teenagers get treated. It was like an assisted living kind of place for teenagers with problems. So I admitted him to the facility and for the first few days he just hated me for that. I didn't know what to do with that, especially the teacher told me

he was suicidal. After two weeks in that facility, actually Billy was somewhat better; he was trying to resolve within himself. When he went back to school in the fall, it wasn't as bad [as before]. During that time he was into drawing mostly of human figures. He wanted to learn more about human body's movements and muscles. He wanted to take ballet lessons, and he did that for a year. [It was at the Nevada Dance Studio where he took his ballet lessons]. Towards the end of junior year, he did a public performance. He was very good. He was muscular, more than most male ballet dancers, but he was agile. They had a good program and after the performance, we felt good.

But that night Billy experimented with LSD. Fortunately, Ernest was with me that night. We all said good night and we all went to bed. Suddenly we heard really loud noise. He called out. When I went in his room, he was literally unconscious. I looked around and saw this little vile in his waste basket. Later, we found out that it was LSD. We took him to the Sunrise Hospital. In the car, he threw up everywhere. Good thing he did because if he hadn't, it [LSD]would have been completely absorbed in his body. [First thing] they had to do was to clean up his system. That's what you do when you have a poison in your body. Vomit it out completely and clean the system with charcoal. For a couple of days he was in the hospital.

So how do they get the charcoal in?

They forced a tube into it. Then the hospital recommended that I needed to take him back to that place [in North Las Vegas where he spent two weeks when he broke up with his girlfriend]. I really did not think [that would be good]. After Billy got out of the hospital, I talked to his pediatrician, Dr. Merkin. (Because his allergy was so bad, even though he

was becoming a young adult, we maintained his pediatrician.) He recommended a different psychiatrist. So, he had several sessions with the psychiatrist. Other than experiment, he was coming out of awful teenage years and beginning to settle in. That was the last big incident.

[Also, Dr. Merkin warned me that in case of LSD, there might be a recurring symptom as a side effect of the drug. Good thing he warned me about this. Within a week, one night, Billy was acting really strange and he told me to drive him anywhere and stay with him talking. We drove around the neighborhood for an hour. I was beginning to get scared about his incoherent behavior. That was when I remembered about Dr. Merkin's warning. I immediately drove him to the hospital. He was exhibiting the same symptoms as he has done when he first took the drug. Although he did not actually take it that night, it was some residues of LSD in his body acting up. He stayed in the hospital that night but he was released next day.]

I always think about, no matter what happens or what he does, he's my son. I also feel bad about him growing up without his father. Even though his father lived in Las Vegas, he was never part of our life. He would sometimes call and take Billy out or make an appointment, but he never shows up. Or sometimes he shows up drunk. Basically, Billy grew up without a father. When Ernest and I became closer, Billy and Ernest would talk and they became friends. Sometimes, when I get really upset with Billy, Billy would just storm out of the room. Ernest was able to talk to him and make him understand how he could think about things differently. We just accepted that we would fight a lot. Ernest

would take care of us patching things up. Even when he went away to Wisconsin to the Madison campus school...

What was the name of the school?

University of Wisconsin-Madison. That was the Madison campus.

Ok, now after high school, he decided...

No. After high school, he was at UNLV for two years majoring fine arts with the Art Department and then his friend left for the University of Wisconsin, Madison, getting a Master's in Fine Art. Chris asked Billy to think about coming over to the Madison campus. We agreed and so he went. For first two years, he was a really good student. At Madison campus, they have a policy that as long parents pay tuition, the transcript goes to the parents. I would get it first before he gets it. In his second year at Madison, he fell in love with a woman but he broke up and his grades plummeted. Also, unfortunately for him, the professor who was really mentoring him died. He died of a heart attack. He didn't show up for his class and his assistant went home and found him dead. Billy was devastated by his professor's death and breaking up with his girlfriend. He dropped out.

So at this time he was a senior?

He was like about six or seven credits away when he dropped out and he started working at an IHOP, flipping pancakes.

At that time did he and Ernest continue to have a good relationship?

Yes, but he didn't call that much. When he called, there were problems, either he needed money or that kind of thing. I did visit Madison first year he was there. One thing that he lacks is self-control over his financial situation; he buys books; he buys CDs and TVs;

and he has a better audio system than I do. A typical young kid... He has been accumulating consumer debt. Ernest and I moved to the Painted Hills house, and we I decided to get married. [Billy came with Jennifer and told us that they were engaged. This was the first time I saw Jennifer.] During this visit, we talked. We were going to support him to school and he didn't finish it. I said, 'Why don't you take the money and have the fresh start or whatever debt you needed to get out of.' At that time I think I gave him \$7,000. That really didn't help him much in the sense that he really didn't learn from that. One time he said that his car was completely trashed and he needed to buy a car. He asked whether I could let him have \$1,000. I said, 'When I gave you the check to clear your debt and start fresh, I meant that. It is actually more difficult to say no to you right now than writing a check for \$1,000. This time I'm going to say no.' I didn't send the money. That was really difficult for me to do. I think he got the message, so he was beginning to be careful about. But he didn't stop there. He continued on his lifestyle that way. But, he knew that he had to finish college. So, he somehow finished it with online course. I'm so tickled that he did finish. He got a Bachelor's degree.

In what area?

Fine Arts. I don't think he looked for any other employment. He stayed on at IHOP. They made him a manager. For him, \$20,000 a year was a big thing and he was so tickled. After two years, he called us and said, "I don't really think I want to do this anymore. I am so tired of fighting with these drunken people." The Madison campus is notorious with students getting drunk. That's a huge campus and it's a good university. He thought he really needed to think about something else. I said, 'Good.'

This is the time, also, in my life, when my financial situation got better because I had a little bit of money coming from Korea. Our family mountain was being sold. After our really complicated discussions about whether married daughters should have a share of the families' wealth or not, we were finally given an amount; it wasn't as much as the sons but nevertheless we got a share. I didn't really want to tell Billy that I had this money and he could have it. I was able to provide him with tuition if he could have financial aid for living expenses. So that's when he went to UW-Milwaukee for his architecture degree. I didn't want him to wait. It was August when he decided that he wanted to make a change. I said, 'Well, these days the schools are very eager to have students. Even though it was late, you might be able to get into a fall semester.' He hesitated and said, "Oh well, you know I have the apartment lease until December and I can't really leave now." I said, 'If you wanted to go now, we could pay your apartment lease whatever you have left over. Just go.' He was accepted by the school and began his master's in architecture in the fall.

How did he decide on architecture?

That's sort of both of us decided. I told him about my library project. At that time, it was at the design stage of the library building. I had been meeting with architects on a daily basis and the design architecture firm was based in Omaha, Nebraska. I would go to Omaha once a month and I worked in the firm together with the engineers and architects. I was so impressed with their work, the creative process that goes into and the rendering of the design. I thought about how Billy could do this kind of thing. I asked him whether he would think about it. He thought that that was something that he would enjoy and that he would like to do.

And he had already been painting since high school.

Oh, yes. His bachelor's degree was in fine arts. But at Madison his focus was more on photography. His photographs were not just plain photographs, but he would add a painting or a sketch over it, making more complex picture images. He is a very creative person.

So that's how he got into architecture and he enjoyed his school work. In one school project, his team was featured in the city newspaper. I think it was the right profession he really could get into. I'm just glad. Once he has done that -- he graduated-- he still has a long way to go to learn about being responsible about financial matters. Whenever we meet we always talk about his financial mismanagement. I ended up lecturing. A year and a half or so ago, when he came to visit us, I made it clear that now it is time for him to start building something for his life, like owning a house. I would never pay off his consumer loans. I made it clear that any kind of a consumer loan is his responsibility. When he has done paying off those and he is at a point when he can be qualified for a house loan, or purchase of a house, then I would help him for the down payment. So, this was sort of an incentive for him to work towards that goal. He finally committed himself to be in a program with a debt clearance service. He's been doing that a year and half. In two and a half years, he will be able to clear his debt. Lately, I've been thinking about the interest rate being so low and I want to take this opportunity for him to buy a house. I told him now that he is on the road to clear his consumer debts and his career is on track, it would be a good idea for him to think about buying a house. Right now, recognizing that he would not be qualified to get a loan, I will go ahead and get them a house. When

the time comes that he can be qualified for a house loan, I will just transfer it. And he will take over the house payment. He was so glad that it was happening. We bought a condo in Chicago and Billy and Jennifer are living there. I think that this is something he will really take care of and he will learn from this.

Tell me about meeting Ernest?

After I had my divorce in 1976, I basically do not have any outlet to meet people. I think something to do with my ethnic background and the way I carry myself. People do not approach me. Also, I'm not about go out and get a man or something like that. That was sort of out of my thing; I didn't look for it, and I didn't really need it. After the divorce, I was very busy working, probably I worked most of the time, 70 hours a week. Non-book really needed a lot of my time and the Systems as well. When we were writing a request for proposal to purchase a library online system, I would stay like 2 am in the morning at the school.

And get up and be back again at 9 am?

Right. So I wasn't thinking about it [dating]. One time it made me pause; on one Friday night, I was home and Billy was going out with his friends. He looked in and I was watching TV or reading something. He looked at me and said, "Mom, I'm going." He came back and said, "Mom, don't you have anyone to go out with?" That was so sweet in a way. I think he felt kind of bad [because I was all alone on a Friday night]. He is such a sweet caring person, even though sometimes he says like "I don't care." So, this made me wonder whether he would feel a burden [about me] later. The way I met Ernest was funny in so many ways, even now. How I ended up with Ernest is just sort of impossible. When we were going through the library automation selection process, we

had three viable vendors we could further investigate. We invited them to campus and had them present a system demonstration. Also, we invited students and faculty. We sent out the information to interested students and faculty to come and participate in this demonstration. Ernest was one of those students who was there. He was a special student at that time, taking classes. One day, after the system demonstration, I was coming into the back-door of the library conference room. Remember the round conference room? Because the library window was made of glasses from floor to ceiling, the window reflects and you can see who's coming behind you. As I was coming towards the conference room door, I saw someone was walking behind me. I thought he mistook the conference room door as an entrance door. I turned around and said, 'You know, this is not a library entrance and you needed to go there.' [I pointed him to the entrance door.] He said, "Well, I know. I was at the demonstration." Then he said, "Would you like to go out to have a drink or something?" I said, 'Well I really don't drink and I don't go out. But if you want to talk about library catalog system, you can call my office and set up an appointment.' I gave him my card. He was so tall and he was wearing cowboy boots that have heels. Even without it, he's close to 6'2" tall and I'm 4'11". He said ok and he left. After a couple of weeks later or something, he called the office and he said he was the one who ran into me. He wanted to check whether I could go out. When he called, I was just about to make a site visit to the Boston Public Library. While we were checking various online catalog systems, we also visited the library sites where the system was being used. So I said, 'Well, I'm just about to go out of town. Maybe when I come back, why don't you give me a call?' When he called me again, I didn't have anything that weekend, so I said ok. He asked me where he should

pick me up. I said, 'Well, I don't want you to pick me up. I want you to tell me where I should meet you.' I didn't want [anyone meeting for] the first time to come to the house. The conversation went really interesting in a way. During the conversation I found out that he didn't have a car. So I said, 'Then, how were you going to pick me up?' He said, "Oh, for the day, I would rent a car." I said, "That's kind of foolish. I have a car. Why don't I pick you up?" He was living in the Rebel House, a little apartment complex at the end of the campus [on Harmon]. He was working at the Marina hotel as a waiter. He would ride a bicycle. So I picked him up and it was kind of cute. He had little tea ready for me when I got there. He made a reservation at Beni Hana and then I found out he doesn't drink. I said, 'You know, if you don't drink, how could you ask me to go out to drink?" We ended up drinking 7UP. As we were finishing the meal, I said, 'Well, actually I don't mind paying my own dinner. I don't want you to pay for my dinner.' I simply recognized his age and obviously I saw his apartment which really wasn't anything to speak of. [I could see that he was making ends meet. By then I was making a fairly good salary. I had no reason I should have this man buy my dinner. I said, 'Why don't we just go Dutch?' He said, "Ok." Later, he told me, "Not only I met a smart woman, but also it's an economical way of getting a date." That's how our first date was. Then, the following week Billy was institutionalized because of his hysteria. Mary Dale and Jim Deacon were so supportive of me. The friendship they showed was unbelievable. At that time it was their wedding anniversary and they were going to Carmel, CA for the weekend. Mary Dale knew that Billy was in the facility, so she invited me to spend the weekend with them in Carmel. Do you know how far away from Oakland to Carmel? It's [more than] two and half hours drive. They went ahead, like

two days before and they asked me to fly down to Oakland on Friday. They met me at the Oakland airport and then they took me to Carmel. We spent Friday and Saturday nights and we came back on Sunday. I was just so grateful to just get away and not think about my situation and Billy.

You probably couldn't see him those first few days?

No. There was visiting hours but also it wouldn't' hurt [not to go to see him]. I told Billy before I left that I would be out of town for the weekend. I needed time for myself to think about a lot of things happening between him and me. It was really good. I always wanted to send Billy a message about how one needed to take care of oneself, not dependant on each other [too much]. It was a good thing for me to get away. I remember how grateful I was with Jim and Mary Dale. They were just really nice people.

So going back to Ernest. I knew the age difference and I also knew that Ernest was not what my family was accustomed to [viewing as my possible spouse] in regards to his education.

He was also a different background, different race?

Oh, definitely.

How did your family come to terms with that?

They didn't in the beginning. Also, I didn't tell my family he's a lot younger than I am. He didn't have a bachelor's degree even. I didn't say any of those [to my family.] But I myself had a problem with the age difference and education difference. It's not the ethnic background. But when we talked, I found that he was very well versed, knowledgeable person because he read everything there was to read. When he was

growing up, he was reading encyclopedias [in his spare time]. There were just so many things he would tell me things that I would had no idea. He is quiet and he is a man of his own self. He doesn't care how other people think and he does what's right. It's not what looks right but it's what is right. It was just really good to have someone to talk outside of the library. But I had problems. [I was beginning to question about our continued dates.] Every time I meet with him, I will always say to myself, 'tonight I'm going to say that we shouldn't see each other.' But I ended up not saying that. So, gradually we became good friends. Ernest needed someone to talk to as well. When I first met him, he was going through a patent application for a time keeping mechanism using radio frequency. [Using frequency of waves going up and down canceling each other, you can keep more accurate time than most of watches.] His first application was rejected. We really worked together on that one. He hired someone to write the claim part with more articulation. The application was sent again and again. Then, they [the Patent Office] lost his application, so we had to visit the patent. We got the approval notice but we never got the final confirmed patent number. During that time, I had a conference I was presenting a program in Crystal City where the Patent Office is. Ernest came with me. I accompanied him to the Patent Office. The first thing Ernest said to a receptionist as he walked into the office was, "I want to see the Patent Director. I wanted to report a gross negligence in your staff behavior." The secretary's face just fell but it got their attention and they found it [his application]. The patent was finally awarded. We didn't make it a manufacturing item but during the process we were really working together. We became close good friends and after a year or so, Ernest asked me to marry him. I just could not. I just could not. I could be a friend but I could not marry him. I

was not ready to get that kind of commitment. I said, 'If you can't take it, we shouldn't see each other.' He said, "Well, if you don't want to get married, since I don't have any other plan or any other person I could just go out with, why don't we just stay as is." So that was what we did.

I met Ernest in 1986 and then we were sort of together after Billy's LSD incident. Ernest moved in and we lived together. When we bought the Painted Hills House, that's when we decided to get married. In the meantime, my family knew that I had a person but they never brought up the subject. The first year when we started living together, my sister visited and Ernest moved out. We didn't want to tell my sister that I was living with him. The second year when she came back, that's when I told her that we were living together. My sister was really surprised that I did go through that kind of change in my life. It was a shock to her. She told me, "Since you were living here, that's ok. But when you come to Korea, we will accept you as was and Ernest probably shouldn't come with you." That was fine with me because I really wasn't going to get married. After we have lived together long enough, my sister really tried to acknowledge him. One year when I went to Korea, she told my brother that he [the family] needed to acknowledge that Myoung-ja had a boyfriend and that he lived with her. He said that he didn't want to hear about that. He didn't want to think about him as long as he stayed here [in the United States]. I said, 'Fine, I'm not going to talk about it, so you don't need to worry about it.' I got married several years later since that conversation with my brother and sisters in Korea. [We got married at the end of November 1992]. After a year has passed since our marriage and around Christmas time, we planned a vacation. I

wanted to go to Korea with Ernest. That's when it all came about and I was told that it was best for us not to come.

Even though you are married?

Yes, but because my brother did not want to acknowledge my marriage and did not want us visiting Korea together. [When we decided to get married, I wrote to my sister that I thought it best that Ernest and I get married since we have been together almost five years. I did not hear from her after our wedding has taken place. At that point, I was not asking family's approval but merely informing my decision. My sisters sent me warm wishes and money to purchase anything I need for the house since we just moved into the new house.] He [my brother] couldn't really accept that, so he wrote me a long letter. He said, "As long as you are in the United States, it is fine [that you marry him]. But when you bring your husband of a different race and different culture to Korea, you are invading my space, the space I have built as I want keep how it is supposed to be for me." I wrote to him and said, 'If you feel that way about it, I am not going to invade, or I'm not going to make you uncomfortable. I have no right to do that. It is your life you built [and I was not about to invade it, as you put it]'

This is the younger brother?

Uhhum. It was really a difficult letter for him to write and for me to respond. I really cried over that letter. I didn't go but I already had a vacation planned. We went to Hawaii instead, an impromptu vacation. If you plan that kind of vacation in advance, you could probably go at a half of the price but it took us \$5,000 to spend a week in Hawaii. It was worth it actually. I really think that was the best thing we did. Instead of trying to see what my family thought about Ernest, we really had a good time in Hawaii. My

sisters already met Ernest and they knew how good of a person Ernest was and how he was good to me. My sisters were very glad about that. My sisters couldn't persuade my brother.

While this was all going on, the sale of the mountain was taking place. The discussion about how much married daughters should get and finally when it got resolved even the daughters got a really substantial amount. By then it was about '95 or something like that. I'm going to explain to you how my endowment, Han-san Lee Endowment, came about.

That was my next question...

When I got the money or when I knew that I was going to get the money, I didn't feel comfortable about getting the money after my brother objected my marriage and all of those things. I was already thinking about how I would leave the university --how I could leave my mark. When this money came about, I didn't really expect that I would get that much. I was still very uncomfortable with my family about my marriage issue. I knew that the university had this faculty matching gift program. [I thought about the way I could give more money to the university.] Instead of giving a lump sum amount, I would have it deducted out of my paycheck every month [and have the university match it.] I met with a University Foundation staff and told them that I was thinking about retiring in five or six years. I would like to plan my retirement gift to the university. It wouldn't be all at once and we should draw up a memorandum of understanding. One of the Foundation staff worked with me on that. Because I was working then and I didn't want people to know that I was giving this money to the university, I wouldn't want to

put my name to the endowment. I was also thinking about the reason I was able to do this kind of thing. There is this pot of money from the family that I know I can tap into. In a grand scheme of things a pot of money isn't that big either. To me, it was almost like a safety net. So, I felt good about it; on one hand I don't want to accept the money from the family, but on the other hand, because of that, I could do something good. Ernest and I talked about it, and Ernest knew that he did not have anything to do with the money. My goal was to have probably about \$60-70,000 [for the endowment] by the time I finish this. We drew up the contract and the first year the amount was \$5,000 and the second year on it was \$6,600. Every time I contributed the money, the same amount was matched by the Foundation. The time period I would do this was five years until June 2001.

I decided that the name of the endowment should be the name of my family. This was how the Han-san Lee Endowment came about. [My family name is Lee from Han-san.] I attributed the endowment in memory of my father, because I was always thinking about my father and what he has done for me. When I did this, of course, I did not realize that I was going to leave the university [earlier than the endowment obligation expires.] When I retired, I did not know whether I was getting an emeritus status or not. The first thing I asked the Foundation Director, 'Would you honor matching fund for my contribution to the Endowment until June 2001? My promised annual payment would end in June 2001 and I plan continue my contribution after I leave the University in March 2000.' He did. I thought about how I should state the use of the fund in the contract. I know what I was going to do; I mean this is for the library. There were pros and cons about leaving

unrestricted money to the institution. It depends who is the director at the time and things like that. When I was setting up our endowment, we were in the midst of our oral history project [with Dr. Goodwin about Las Vegas entertainment. My subject was Kim Sisters and I really got a lot out of this project.] I learned the value of the project such as this. I decided that the income from the endowment would be used for oral history projects. I believed that someday the library would be housing the oral history project unit at the library. In the Memorandum of Understanding, the purpose of the endowment was stated that the income from the endowment would go to the oral history project. In the event that the oral history project is no longer needed, then, it will go to the scholarship for the History Department. After that, it's the discretion of the director/dean. That's how my endowment was set up. Once the Memorandum of Understanding was drawn up and signed, I felt like a big load was off from my shoulder. That was really the best feeling.

When I first started this project, I was only thinking about giving something to the university [without any recognition in return.] As I was thinking more about the library new building, -- Matt Simon was the dean at the time we drew up the memorandum of understanding for the endowment -- I asked Matt, 'I really would like to see this endowment name somewhere in the library.' He did not have any problem with that. He said, "Of course, we should have it." That time the library faculty lounge was designed on the third floor. There were two rooms; one was the graduate student association space and the other one was the library faculty lounge with little cubicles. That was how it was in the first year when the library was opened. When I went to attend the Library open house dinner, Ken Marks took me to the third floor and showed me the sign, "Han-san

Lee Faculty Lounge," which was hung on the door. During the first year, the faculty lounge has not been used much. The university really needed a space for the Faculty Development Center and occupied the lounge. So the faculty lounge sign was sort of a little bit confusing and Ken must have sensed that. I think he was in the process of changing the name or the sign. At one point, I had a dream about the library and the sign wasn't there. I sent an email to Wendy inquiring about this. Wendy said, "The Han-san Lee Lounge sign is gone." So I sent an email to Ken, 'I know the space is used for faculty development center and I know how the space should be used as you see fit. If the faculty lounge does not work, I understand how you can assign the different things.' One thing is clear that graduate student lounge will always be used and always popular by students. I said to Ken, "I wouldn't mind having, instead of the Han-san Lee Faculty Lounge, the Han-san Lee Graduate Study Area.' He agreed to it, but he did not say anything about it in the meantime. He ordered a new sign in that Han-san Lee Faculty Development area. So in the meantime the sign was back on. So Wendy said, "Oh Myoung-ja, the sign is up. So I'll take a picture of it." So Wendy sent me a beautiful picture. In the meantime, Ken said that he would make a new sign for the graduate students study area. He must have never ordered a new sign for it. When Wendy brought the picture of the sign, it was so beautifully done and I didn't think to change it, because it wasn't such a big deal. I think it should stay as is. I will be pleased with that.

After I left Las Vegas, my family found out that I created an endowment for the library and also the name of the endowment was Han-san Lee. They were really pleased and my sister suggested that she or I or someone should write an article about this endowment to



Four sisters growing up on the Kyongbok Palace grounds, ca.1946 (p. 3)



The portrait of our illustrious ancestor who served the King in a high official capacity in the 18th century. This portrait was on loan to the New York Metropolitan Museum of Art and was hung in the Korea Section for two years. I visited New York in 1999 and took this picture at the museum and got a warning from the museum guard. (p.7)



A copy of the ancestor's portrait hung in the lobby of our mountain house. Photographs of my grandparents and father are also shown. This picture was taken before my mother's passing.



Our Illustrious ancestor, Choongjong-kong's monument, erected when we relocated our ancestors' burial site to the present location. His monument was never erected when he died, although the eulogy written by his colleague, describing his lifetime contribution to Yi dynasty was prepared at the time of his death. My brother had a well-known calligrapher inscribed the entire text on the monument. (p.7)



Last family photograph, ca.1961 before any of us got married or came to the States. The man in the center in the back row is my youngest uncle who was raised by my parents. (p.2-3)



Father and me on one of several history field trips, ca. 1963 (p. 20)



First Wedding, Young and me, November 1965 (p.25)



Father in Korean traditional attire to celebrate his 60th birthday, 1969 (p.19)



Father's funeral procession entering the university, his students carrying the casket. My youngest brother, Songkyu leading them, and all of us watching in the back. Women wear white and men wear black in mourning, May1970. (p.19)



Billy's drawing as a Christmas present to me, ca.1989. He has given me many of his art works to celebrate my birthdays and other occasions. This particular pencil drawing took him 20+ concentrated hours. It is hung in my living room. (p. 94)



Billy and me at Eva and Mike Stowers' wedding, ca. 1981 (p. 86)



Ernest and me on our wedding day at our Painted Hills House, 1993 (p.92)



Billy, me, and Ernest at our wedding day, 1993 (p.92)



Lied Library Topping Off, 1998 (p.76)



Last site tour of the Lied Library under construction at UNLV, with the architect and Wendy Starkweather before leaving Las Vegas, January 2000. (p.76)



an Lee Faculty Lounge named in honor of the Han-San Lee Endowment, 2001 on the eve Lied Library Grand Opening. (p.102)

be published on the Han-san Lee family newsletter. In Korea, genealogy, or the practice of keeping family record has been a tradition from the very beginning. Many families keep the registry of their family, recording each generation of descendents for hundreds of years. Han-san Lee family has been always known for producing many scholars. At present, in Korea, there are many people with the name of Han-san Lee are engaged in professorship and high school teachers. They do have annual gatherings. All of the professors are listed on the family register. My syster suggested that we could have a picture of the Han-san Lee Faculty Area sign in the Lied Library in the Han-san Lee family newspaper. We let everyone know that Han-san Lee is planted a seed in the United States. I think one of these days I will do so and we'll see.

This is third day, September 6th, with Myoung-ja. We are continuing with recording. How are you this morning?

Fine it is so interesting to listen to the tapes. There are some things, later on, I would like to elaborate or articulate.

Good, one thing I think had to do with the change machine story and could you go ahead and make those changes?

Yes. As I was listening to one of the tapes I kept referring to change machines and jackpot hitting. It made me realize that it wasn't a change machine but it was slot machines. I was working as a change girl for those customers who needed nickels, dimes and quarters to play slot machines. When slot machines hit a jackpot, a small amount of winnings -- like cherries which entitle customers 5 coins -- they dispense automatically what the winnings were. When it gets to be a \$50-100 winning, immediately the ball on

top of the slot machine will light up and the bell rings. Instructions we gave to the customers were, 'Don't play anymore, just stop and let it ring until the floor supervisor comes to the machine.' The floor supervisor would verify the winning and then pay the player. Only then, the play can turn the lever to erase the jackpot. It was always interesting to me that floor supervisor who also expected and collected tips from the customers. So it was obvious, after a few times of huge winnings were hit, he's the one at the front of the machine so that he will be the first to claim the tip or whatever it comes from. I understood that and that's one of the reasons that change girls don't really get so much tips. After a couple of months of working there, it was time for me to go back to Provo to continue my study. He was a good guy and he said, "Well little one, I will miss you. If you ever need a reference, don't hesitate to call me, all right?" I said, 'thank you,' but in the back of my mind, 'I really don't think I want to have a reference from a slot machine supervisor.' It was not that I would think of him less, but I was more thinking about my change girl experience might not be the job I would count as a professional experience in my resume.

Thank you for clarifying that. There is also an addition I think you want to make. When we talked about President Maxson, he did something really good for the library can you tell us about that?

In addition to the President's active role in getting a design development funding of \$3 million from the state legislators, he helped us to get a grant from the Keck Foundation. He knew a person who was in a high position in the Keck Foundation. The Keck Foundation is awards a lot of grants for scientific research projects in higher education. One of the famous grants funded by the Keck Foundation was the Hubble telescope

project. So President Maxson suggested Mary Dale -- at the time she was the dean of the library -- that we might send a proposal to the Keck Foundation to do something about library automation endeavor. In order for us to implement an online catalog system, all of the information in the card catalog needed to be converted into an electronic record format, the machine readable cataloging (MARC) records. The Library of Congress from which we used to get catalog cards introduced MARC records in the late '60s. The conversion process was a huge project that every library has to face. The project we called it a retrospective conversion. We had only 180,000 records in machine readable format. The rest of it, 300,000 records, needed to be converted. There were a lot of companies who began taking on that kind of work. It is the outsourcing of the retrospective conversion process. Taking Dr. Maxson's advice, Mary Dale sent a preliminary proposal to the Keck Foundation, which was accepted. We subsequently wrote a full blown project proposal. At the time the Head of Technical Services was Laverna Saunders. She wanted, while she was at UNLV, that she would undertake this retrospective conversion, which would be her legacy. She was a very goal oriented person. She is now at the Duquesne University in Pittsburgh. She is the University Librarian, the Dean of libraries there. Laverna, Mary Dale, and I became principle investigators for the project and we got \$100,000 from the Keck Foundation. Laverna undertook all the logistics of getting the retrospective conversion done and working with the staff. I kept track of the expenditures and the budget, and Mary Dale was the dean. Our obligation to the Keck Foundation was to give them a progress report. There was a site visit almost at the end of the project cycle. They were really pleased with us for what we have done with the grant. Instead of complete outsourcing to vendors, we did a

combination of internal conversion and outsourcing. \$100,000 stretched to a lot of areas. I always think about how well three of us worked together to complete the project.

Did you ever experience any kind of inequities in your pay structure while you were at UNLV?

I have never thought about it when I first got the job at UNLV. I was just so glad to get a job. In our graduating class in May 1968, just before the graduation, we used to compare each other's salary. My salary was almost equal to everyone's. It was \$7,000 a year. At that time, it was so huge and I was just in heaven. I was thinking, 'Wow! \$7,000!' When I was working at the circulation desk in the library during the school years, I was getting paid \$10 a week for working 10 hours a week, one dollar an hour.

That was...?

When I was at BYU... So, you can imagine! At the time, our rent was \$40 a month and we spent about \$20 a week for groceries. My family used to send me clothing and things that I need occasionally. So, the annual salary of \$7,000 was just unbelievably good and I was happy with the salary. That was until I found out there was a young librarian who came -- I think it was about two or three years after I came -- and her salary was a little bit higher than mine. I discovered it later by accident. At that time I wasn't really working with a budget. That kind of information was never public, you know. When I found out, I was just so devastated internally. I could not say anything to other people. I was questioning myself about this. 'Is it because of my ability to do the job, is it because of my English, or is it because of anything else?' I was not tuned into social issues, prejudice, or inequality. But I knew that I was as good as she was. Why was I not

getting paid at the same level as hers? Whenever I had a problem, ran into some kind of obstacles, or people misunderstood my intention, my mode of operanda was to wait and see or time would tell. I do what I think is best and what my value tells me to do, things like that. I said to myself, 'I don't really have the time and energy to brood over such things. Why don't I just proceed with it and do whatever I need to do, concentrating on learning and working hard.' In the end, I think I did ok in the sense that different opportunities came about and I was promoted. Probably, when I think about it, staying in the same institution, and working in different positions made me feel good. Over time, I was recognized for my hard work, and my salary was compensated accordingly.

Myoung-ja, when you reflect back what did coming to America mean to you and other careers as well?

One of the things that we think about coming to America is to get ahead in your life. In that, once you have degrees or advanced degrees in the United States higher education institution and when you go back, you will be given a lot of different choices at academic institutions and other areas. Korea was looking for a lot of experts in so many different areas because the country was just beginning to go through modern industrialization. All areas in Korea needed experts. First and foremost in everybody's mind was to complete his/her education in the United States. When they go back, they will have a better opportunity in their career and they will be almost guaranteed to have an affluent lifestyle.

A byproduct of my coming to America which I have never thought about in the beginning was a feeling of freedom and independence, which became such an important

part of my life. In Korean society, other societies as well, if you stay in the same area, Confucius teaching, filial piety -- that is to respect your elders and pay respects to ancestors -- is so ingrained in our head. Our conduct in life was always guided by that principle. Your identity comes from which family you come from and who your parents are. In my case, [in addition to the fact that my father was well known professor,] because I was the youngest sister of three sisters, I was always identified as so-and-so's sister, or Professor Lee's daughter. Especially, when I went to university in the same field as my father's, history, it was just given that everywhere I go I will be identified as my father's daughter. There were certain expectations on my behavior. Everyone expects Myoung-ja would do this; Myoung-ja would not do that; oh! how could she do that?; she's a professor's daughter and so-and-so's sister. Speaking of identification, because my mom produced children every year, my sister's friends would identify as part of the musical scale. So it's do-re-mi kind of thing, and I was "so." My eldest sister would be "do," things like that. Because there was a two-year difference in age between my third sister and me, we would skip one music note and then it goes on. Not that I would be a wild child, or do things that would shame my father, [I was always conscious about my position in the family and our circle of friends.]

When I came to the United States and started going to school and later working at the library, it was a sort of a liberated feeling for me. Such that, when I get an A, it's definitely an A. One time, in our cataloging class, we were given a 100 cards shuffled and we were to alphabetize. Out of 25 kids in that class I was the only one who didn't make any mistakes. I was kind of marbled at that. Soon it gave me a feeling of freedom.

'This is it. I am my own person.' What I do count, and if I don't do things, they do not get done. This was very important. Everything I do I think twice about it. This doesn't mean I don't make mistakes. I make lots of mistakes. During the first five or six years working at the library, I never said a word to my co-workers. The first thing I do was, 'good morning,' and then I just do work and work, and then when it's time to go home, I say 'goodbye.' That's all I did. I constantly tried to improve my English. When speaking I had to be always careful. The reason I didn't speak much was because I didn't want to make myself look foolish. I repeated and repeated a sentence in my mind before I said it, even if it was such a short sentence. I used to listen to a lot of radio and TV. Even though I didn't watch TV I had it on, so that the English speaking sound was always there. As for my family life, Young was going to school in the evening, and I was by myself taking care of Billy once he was born. I didn't really have any social life. I think by the time I reach a certain point that I needed to speak some things, I told myself, 'this has gone too far and I better express myself.' That sort of coincided with my desire to leave the Cataloging department. Definitely, by assuming the Nonbook Librarian position, it was expected that I work with faculty and students. Knowing my timidness, Bob Anderl, [my supervisor] asked, "Myoung-ja, are you sure you want to deal with faculty?" I said, 'Well, I have got to try.' Everybody was really surprised how I began to talk. Bob Anderl used to tease me, "You know what? She used to be so quiet and once she started talking, nobody could stop her."

We were taught English since the seventh grade, so comprehension, even though my vocabulary wasn't that a wide range, I don't have any problem understanding what

people said to me or what I read. It was just conversational English which I was just so inadequate. Also, one thing that I discovered very quickly was that American's cannot pronounce my name. For some reason, when they see the spelling, 'myoung,' they just completely lose it. I heard all kinds of pronunciations. Many times in meetings, they wouldn't really repeat what I said even though I said the right things because they couldn't say, 'oh Myoung-ja said it.' Instead, 'She said it.' At one point I thought about whether or not I should adopt an English name. Then I dismissed it because this was my given name by my parents. Especially, I like this name, even though my father chose the first character of the name of the university. The Chinese character 'Myoung' has such a beautiful meaning; it has the characters of the sun and moon together, meaning bright in terms of light but it also means intelligence. When you describe a person with high intelligence, we say his/her brain is really bright. So when I think about the meaning of my name I did not want to part with it. At one point people used to call me Lee because that's just so common and so easy to say. As I began to work with university administrators, pretty soon, they learned to pronounce my name. I think it is always where you were in a totem pole. When I was a cataloger at a beginning level position, nobody made an effort to pronounce my name properly. When I became the associate dean and the interim dean, everybody knew that they were expected to pronounce my name correctly. By then, the time had changed also, and people were used to foreign names with diverse population coming into the society.

Speaking of diverse culture, I have to tell you about Korean foods that tend to have smell in your clothing or breath. First year, Young was hired as a Keno writer working with

the public. At that time in Las Vegas, there weren't that many diverse ethnic groups and probably 80-90 percent of gamblers were white. Young's supervisor knew that Koreans ate Kim-chi and had garlic breaths. They instructed workers not to eat Kim-chi before they came on duty. Young had a little bit difficult time in following the instruction because he couldn't think of eating anything else other than Kim-chi. I, on the other hand, didn't have any problem with it. I am like my father when he told me to live like Americans when you're in America. I followed his advice to the letter. If that smell is offensive to people I would not do. I didn't have any kind of problem with that and I didn't think twice about it. It is not that I don't want to keep my ethnic values, but that I want to be sensitive about people around me. If you create an atmosphere or something that is offensive to others, you shouldn't do that. I understood that part so acutely at one point.

I had been living in Las Vegas for a long time. Especially in early days, I was probably the only one or there was a very few who could speak English decently enough to represent a certain group of people. I used to get calls when there were traffic accidents if the victims of the accident were Koreans who couldn't express how they felt or where they hurt. One day I was in the meeting in the library and the police came to look for me. The officer was a female and she said, "I need your help. There was a huge car accident. A van turned over on the freeway and a lot of elderly Korean women were injured. We need an interpreter." That was the first time I was in a police car with sirens going on. We went to the University Medical Center. The emergency room was full of Korean elders. It was a church group going to a picnic and they had an accident. When I went

in, the Korean smell, food smell, was so potent that it filled the room. I myself could not breathe. You know how it is when you eat food with strong smell, your pore smells, just like alcoholics. Even though they didn't drink that day, you can smell them coming from their pore of the skin. I knew how that was. From then on, I was really convinced that we really had to be cautious about how we present ourselves, keeping ourselves clean and things like that.

Could you convince Young at that point?

Well, Young was already gone in my life at that point.

When you talk about being an interpreter, did you also have to sometimes go into court to do this? Tell me about those kinds of experiences?

Yes. For some years probably in the 1980s, I was, on and off, a court Korean language interpreter. When there was a court case which involved Koreans who need interpretation, I was called upon. They were just a little petty crime or civil suit. I was even called to a civil court in a divorce hearing. One time I visited the jail, county jail, with the lawyer who was representing this lady, who had a habit of writing bad checks. She had all kinds of different schemes she went through. I was beginning to learn all walks of life. Until then, speaking of sheltered life, our family and me, the way I was protected, I didn't realize how people lived and what kind of things people do. This was sort of an eye-opener for me. I felt really sorry for the people who did not have an opportunity to get ahead or they did not have enough education to do anything. There was one case I helped for a hotel, Alexis Park. I don't know what it is right now. They had a real high-end restaurant, Pegasus, something like that. The case I helped was an incident among the maids. They were Korean maids. Their supervisor, who happened

to be also a Korean, misused her power and abused them. Using her position, she would demand money and if she didn't get it, then they would get fired. It was reported to the hotel Human Resources office and they contacted me. They asked me to translate the letters from Korean maids stating their cases written in Korean. That's what I did and then we had to go to court for their case. The compensation for the service I got was dinner for two at Pegasus restaurant. I thought it was kind of neat in a way since I never expected any kind of pay or anything. That was my community service.

The one I got paid really big bucks was the case I did for the Gaming Board. I was retained by the Nevada Gaming Control Board for a couple of years. It is not a regular pay but it was time based. There was a case involving a Korean business man who brought high rollers from Korea. The Hilton hotel was the one that had a case against him. Apparently he got the money from the gamblers but didn't pay Hilton or whatever. He was also involved in some kind of an underground organized crime. The Gaming Control Board knew that this case was coming up and they went through a formal process of screening my qualifications. I sent a resume and all of those. Their pay was \$65 an hour but four hours of work was guaranteed. Even if I was there for an hour, I would get a half day's worth of it. I learned a lot about the Gaming Control Board and its scope of responsibilities. I didn't realize how extensive their screening process was. When new manufacturers introduced new slot machines, roulettes, or any gambling machines, they had to bring them to the Board and demonstrate each features, such as the mechanism of making ringing cycle [to hit jackpots] and rotation of the roulette wheel. It was an

elaborate process. So while we were waiting for our case to be heard, I sat through because we never knew when our case was called.

I was the Gaming Control Board interpreter and the defendant had his own interpreter. But the interesting part was that the defendant's interpreter could not translate well enough. He wasn't really good, as fluent I was. So, I ended up doing both sides. The Gaming Board lawyer said "Myoung-ja, you can't do that. The line is drawn, you can't do that." I said, 'Oh, yes, I understand.' The thing was that Korean called me at home and he would tell me his stories and I had to say, 'As long as I am representing for the state, I can't really hear you. You really shouldn't call me.' In the end, the case was resolved, either they settled out of court or something. Later he recovered and he opened up a Korean restaurant in Sahara. When I got there he was just really glad to see me and I was actually glad that it was taken care of, whatever and however that was. He was ok and I was just fine with that. That was actually the end of any kind of work with Korean interpretation work with the government. That was in '96 or '97 something like that. So you did this over a number of years?

Uhhum.

How did you leverage that with your work on the campus? Did you have to take some time off?

Yes. My work at the library was not on 8 to 5 kind of schedule. I did whatever needed to be done even if I ended up working really late at night; I stayed till 7, 8, 9, or 10. If the court case was going to be an extensive one, I took time off, but that wasn't really a problem.

Since we are talking about the kinds of community involvement you had when you were in Las Vegas, tell me about the Korean language school?

There was a group of Koreans living in Las Vegas who were really educated. They are mostly medical doctors and even at UNLV there were some Korean professors and their family. One of the Korean wives' had a Ph.D. in educational leadership at University of Texas. Her husband was a petroleum engineer and they were devout Christians. They wanted to do something for the Korean younger generation (the second generation in the United States). She organized a group of people to teach the Korean language to children from age 5 to high school age. She even got the school certified from the Nevada State Department of Education. We were a legitimate the language institute approved by the Department of Education. I served both as a teacher and treasurer for five years until she moved away and we closed the school. She was the principal and I couldn't really take over the responsibility. By then there were other language schools ran by Korean churches. They taught Korean language as a part of their Sunday school program. While we were doing that, we rented a place from a church, one of the Lutheran churches on St. Louis, close to Las Vegas Boulevard. The church had a lot of rooms. So our session was held on Saturday mornings from ten to one or two in the afternoon. We fed lunch. The lunch was always provided by the parents of the children and we helped out. We didn't have any bus or anything like that. Parents carpooled, and I also picked up a couple of kids in my area. We had about 70 students in all ages. I had a very small class with about 7-13 children. The language lesson was two hours in the morning and then we had a break. Then they had a art class. After lunch there was one hour of activities. It was either TaeKwon-do, or martial arts. We were a very congenial group. In addition to

teaching kids, we also gave advice to mothers and answered some of the questions they might have. I think that was really a good thing for me to be involved in. Before that, I wasn't really involved in the Korean community other than with a small group of people I happened to know. Also, most Koreans in Las Vegas work in casinos and they don't really normally have a weekend off kind of thing.

What were some of the jobs that the men held?

Keno writer, blackjack dealer. Many women also worked as blackjack table dealers.

Were there any associations you became a part of because of the school?

There is a Las Vegas Korean Association, sort of an ethnic association. Like in any other ethnic association, they have ups and downs and a power struggle.

What was the purpose of it?

To provide assistance to Koreans settling in the area and it's a social kind of thing, such as a Seniors group. Depending on the president of the association at a time, I would get a call from him, usually they were men. They said, "Mrs. Kwon, we should all work together and we would like you to be involved in the Korean community a little bit more. I would like to have a lunch with you sometime." And we did some of those kinds of things, I mean, having lunch together and discuss what I might be able to help.

They all knew that I was divorced and they all knew my husband. And Young was in and out of that association as well. But Young wasn't really trusted in that he would get accounting job or bookkeeping job for Korean small businesses, setting up accounting systems for them. But he would be always late for tax cycle and miss the deadline. So, pretty soon, they learned to disassociate me from Young and things like that. Sometimes

there was a hint about whether they would like to have a date out of me. But I did not really want to get into that kind of thing. They were all married anyway, you know.

So it's just like every other culture.

Oh, yeah, definitely. And I'm by myself and I'm pleasant enough and things like that. So early on I decided that I would just play dumb. And any kind of innuendos, anything like that, I would just act as if I had never noticed anything. And that worked just fine.

That's very good. Tell me about collecting the history of the Korean community. Did you ever do any projects like that or do you know of anyone who did?

I'm not sure that anyone actually did it systematically. But I do know that the Korean Association had a newsletter going at some point. One year, there was a project at the university. I don't know who organized it. There was a journal, Nevada Public Affairs Review. One of the journal issues was devoted to ethnicity and race in Nevada. We had a meeting at the university. Many professors were interested in writing an article about a particular ethnic group. I was asked to write on the Las Vegas Korean community. In order to prepare for that article, I did a survey of the Korean community. That was when I learned some more about how many Koreans were in the area and what they do and what kind of things that they are facing and things like that. There was a public TV station. What is it, KLVX?

I think that's it.

They had a program called *Reel To Real*. One of the programs they had was on the Las Vegas Korean community. Steven Kwon, even though his last name is Kwon, he's not related to my husband's family, organized this interview. Steven Kwon is a businessman in Las Vegas. He's a general contractor. He, Sue [Sook-ja] Kim [of Kim Sisters], and I

were the three panelists for the program. We talked about Las Vegas Korean community. There was a sister relationship with Las Vegas. The city's name is Ansan. And I'm not sure whether that relationship still exists.

There has been increasing awareness of the Korean community in the area, but it has never been really systematically researched. And when I was working on my Ph D. program, I did some interviews of businesswomen who were engaged in different kinds of businesses. I interviewed how they came to Las Vegas and things like that. I think it is interesting and [worthwhile] to organize a project and record the interviews. Just before I left to Las Vegas, one of the Koreans, who used to own and run dry cleaning stores, -- Koreans get into a lot of dry cleaning businesses-- wanted to compile a Las Vegas Korean community history by interviewing a lot of early settlers. His idea was to videotape conversations. And I was to be part of that project but because I got so busy and then I left, I don't know exactly what happened. He has been in Las Vegas as long as I have.

Now that UNLV has the oral history project office, it would be really good for the office to [track] that type of projects. It is important to recognize and keep records of different ethnic groups in the Valley.

One of the things that the research center could do is if there are people in the community, three or four people, who would be interested in doing the work, collecting the interviews, I could train them.

I think that might be a really, really good idea.

So that's something that's possible.

You mentioned a few minutes ago a person's name and you said something about the person could have been a part of organized crime. Is there a Korean organized crime group?

It's not really publicly known, but I imagine there are. And it's not like a really, really organized group. But there is a term in Korean term, Kkang-pae. Literally speaking, it's a bully. So they could be hired, you know, by undisclosed people, just to threaten people or sometimes they beat them up so that they learn a lesson or that kind of thing. There's always "Kkang-pae (沙과)."

One of the things that you did at UNLV is that there was a trip organized at one point. There was a trip to China. At that point you had not been home in about ten years. Tell me about that whole process. And I'd also like to know if we've ever organized other trips.

I completed my master's in history program in 1980. Oh, that was such a good feeling. I always have to thank Dr. Chung, Sue Fawn Chung, who became my mentor and encouraged me to finish the program. The first person who encouraged me to get into master's program was Prof. Rosemary Masek. She was the professor in British history. [She recommended that I applied for the history program and I was officially accepted in the fall of 1976. She passed away shortly after I began my program]. She was in a wheelchair. Sue Fawn [took me under her wing] and pulled me through to the final graduating point. In the spring of 1980, Sue Fawn organized a trip to China through the Continuing Education.

In 1980, going to China was not an ordinary thing. Tourists were just beginning to be accepted. She didn't even ask [whether I wanted go or not]. She just said, "Myoung-ja, you just go and I put you on the list." Well, at that time, even though the expense wasn't as bad as now, it was like \$2,000 to go to China. It was unheard of for me to spend \$2,000 for a vacation, [but I wanted to go]. The way I planned it was to use the tax-return money that year. I usually got some money back every year. Even though some people would say that it is kind of foolish to pay tax up front more than necessary, but for me it was like a sort of my way of saving. If you don't see it, you don't spend it. I used to get back between \$1500 and \$2,000 or something. So that year's tax return was my graduation gift to myself. So Sue Fawn said, "Well, Myoung-ja, you deserve it." So we went. Most of the people who went to China were elderly people who lived in Las Vegas, and were, you know, rich.

Were they Chinese?

Oh, no. No, no. They were all Americans. They all had their house in Spanish Oaks (an affluent gated community in Las Vegas). And they were retired. The only Asians were Sue Fawn and I. The professors who led the group were geology professor, Dr. Fiero. I forgot his first name. Bill Fiero?

We can find it.

And Sue Fawn and Bill Fiero gave us a couple of lecture sessions before we went to China, like what to expect and the history of it, and a little bit of [etiquette in traveling in China]. Oh, I take that back, Sue Fawn's mother went. She was a Chinese. And Sue Fawn's aunt, I think, also went. There were like 27 of us. Only young people were one geologist who worked at the Nevada Test Site, a student at UNLV, Sue Fawn and her

husband. I guess I was 36 or something. And the rest of them were older in their fifties and sixties and things like that. The trip was organized to stay in China for three weeks. [Staying in] Hong Kong was additional. And then I planned a week in Korea. So my trip was extensive lasting for five weeks. I had to really plan my vacation time and also care for Billy. Fortunately, Eva and I have become good friends and Eva really liked Billy and Billy liked Eva. So Eva came to stay with Billy. That was before Eva got married. Eva was living with her parents and so Eva stayed with Billy [while I was gone]. Eva wanted to feed Billy vegetables but Billy refused to eat it. And Eva was just so afraid that Billy would have scurvy.

That China trip was so good. It meant a lot to actually visit China because my undergraduate major was Asian history. We were taught Chinese history a lot, all the kingdoms and the history that goes with it. [The modern communist] China has been completely, completely isolated and it has not been developed at all. When I walked into the Peking or Beijing airport, I almost felt like going into a time warp machine. It reminded me of the 1950s in Korea just after the Korean War ended. Most buildings were in sorry state and there were piles of dirt all over the place. It was just unbelievable. We always call China a Big Nation (대국 大國). And that's like big in size and importance. So it's a Big Nation. [I knew that everything they do is big, but I did not expect how big the buildings were]. The scale of building structures was beyond my imagination. The size of our palaces [was no comparison] because they were always sized down, mandated by China over the period of history. China never occupied Korea but the relationship between China and Korea was such that our palaces couldn't be bigger than Chinese palaces. When I went to Tiananmen Square and the palace in

Beijing, I was so impressed with the scale of the plaza and the scale of the palace with its garden. You wouldn't believe how big that was. I really wish one of these days I will go back and then I will sort of compare how it has become in 25 years or 30 years or whenever I go back again.

I kept a short journal of that trip recording on what I saw, what I did, what I ate, and things like that. An interesting part is that even though I don't pronounce Chinese characters in Chinese way, the characters were common written language in all Asian countries, especially Japan, Korea, and China. We do use Chinese characters as part of our written language. In fact, all of our official documents, until modernization came about, were written exclusively in Chinese characters, Chinese sentences. So we all learned them, but not enough. I didn't have any problems with reading signs and that kind of thing.

One day when we were in Shanghai, I wanted to go to a museum, but the group went somewhere, either temple or shopping. They always went shopping, a "Friendship Store." I told Sue Fawn, 'I really don't want to go shopping anymore, but I would like to go to Shanghai Museum. I'm going to take a taxi and then tell the driver when to pick me up.' So with my short Chinese character writing I was able to make that arrangement. I spent the whole afternoon at the Shanghai Museum. Oh, that was just such a good experience. One of the places we visited was a famous historic place, called Hangjow (杭州), located in a little bit south of Shanghai, I think. And it is not a metropolitan city, but known for its beautiful scenery. It has a lake, called West Lake. I still have the picture that I took

from West Lake. Actually, that is the sunrise over West Lake. That's the picture I took when we went to the lake to see the sun rise. (She was pointing to a picture on the wall in the living room).

You took this picture?

Uh huh. And that place is known for a home of many famous poets who were exiled from the capitol city [during early dynasties]. A lot of poems were written while they lived in this city. So that was such a meaningful place for me just to be able to visit where poets whom I was familiar with their work had lived. It was just so beautiful with magnolia trees and flowers blooming. It was a very, very good place to visit.

After Hangjow, we went on to further south, [Guilin and Guangzhou. Guilin is famous for its magnificent mountain peaks coming up all over the city and along the Li River. We had a boat cruise on the river admiring the mountain peaks]. Then we came out to Hong Kong. Once the group got to Hong Kong, either you just right away go back to the United States or you could stay in Hong Kong for a week. And that's what I chose to do. So I continued to stay in the hotel that was assigned to me and we visited a lot of places in the area while in Hong Kong.

Did anyone else stay for the week?

Uh huh. Quite a few of us did that. While I was in Hong Kong, I visited Macau. Macau is the place where Portuguese missionaries arrived when they first came to China and then went on to Beijing. And one of the missionaries who came through Macau was a Jesuit missionary, Mateo Ricci.

[When I was working on my history Master's program], I didn't go through a thesis track, but opted for a research paper track, which requires to write a research paper, a longer paper than [a routine semester research paper]. I knew I couldn't spend time to do the thesis. So I opted for the easy way. I wanted to finish. The subject of my research paper was on Jesuit missionaries' work in the 16th Century China and how they influenced the emperors in developing science and technology in early Qing Dynasty. So Macau was the place I must visit, I thought. One afternoon I took a trip. They had a hydrofoil ship [ferrying people from Hong Kong to Macau. Because the ship's rotor was raised from the water, it was a smooth riding and I did not get seasick.] I went through the whole city where they had first landed and visited the church. I also visited a Macau Portuguese Government site and the place where government officials' residence used to be. It was so neat to be just coming out of that research paper and be able to actually visit and see the city. So that trip was really, really good.

Now I have to face a real delicate situation, going to Korea.

How did you reacclimatize yourself?

It's not the matter of acclimatization. It was an internal, sort of emotional turmoil that I had to go through night before I got on the plane to Korea. Of course, by then, they knew that I was no longer married. What I did not know was that Young was also in Korea when I got there. Young sort of continued to come and see my mom even after our divorce. So he saw mom just before I got there. It wasn't that everybody made a big deal out of my divorce or anything. But they didn't forget about it, although they were so glad to see me, which was a relief. They were all interested in hearing about my trip to China. My uncles and aunts, especially who used to live in Shanghai or in China before World

War II, were asking lots of questions about China. Before the World War II ended, everyone was free to go in and out of China, Japan, Korea, and Manchuria because they were all under the Japanese rule.

All of it?

Yes. Yes. And it's not all of it all at once, but it would gradually become that way, first Korea (in 1909) then Manchuria, and then so many of the Chinese cities fell under Japan. But actually city of Shanghai was not. I mean that wasn't part of Japanese. The Korean exiled government was actually established there. Many Koreans participated in underground movements fighting against the Japanese government were in and out of Shanghai. So a couple of my uncles used to live in Shanghai. They all wanted to see the photographs I took. We had a slide show and I explained about my trip. My uncles were just really glad to see the pictures and how China changed and things like that.

During ten years while I was not in Korea or not in contact with Korea (1970-80), Korea has changed so much. It has become just an unbelievably prosperous country. It was a booming nation -- if you work hard enough you make money. -- Most of my friends were rich. They made enough money. They made good money. And their lifestyles have changed also.

So my sisters were very well established and they really took care of me while I was there. My mom was mom as usual. She broached the subject about whether I should be getting together with Young again or not. I said, 'You know, that is a done deal. That is just out of the question and don't even bring this one up and I don't want to think about it.' Neither of us knew that he came to Korea to get married at that time. After I came

back to the United States, I found out. I told my mom later that Young has remarried. I always felt that it was my fault that I didn't continue to be married; I behaved wrong and that is why I was divorced. I mean I met the fate of a divorcee. It's the kind of thing I go through in my head frequently, especially for the first few years. Gradually, I decided I did not want to make an issue of anything, of whose fault it is or anything like that.

There was an interesting episode about my being a divorcee. One time I visited the Academy of Korean History and Cultural Research. It is a graduate research institute, which means that they only train graduate students. My sister was trying to get a position there. And the President of the Academy happened to be one of my professors in the college. I took classes from him and he knew me and, of course, he knew my father. So when my sister and I went to see him, he asked me how I was doing and how Young was doing because he knew Young as well. I said, 'Well, we are not married anymore.' And he said, "Your temper tantrum got to you, huh?"

And what did he mean by that?

He meant that I was not a patient wife; that I couldn't endure it and got a divorce.

So looking back now do you think you should have endured this?

No. No. I don't think so. But there were times when I questioned my decision to divorce my husband. I kept going back and asked myself, whether it was good for Billy or not and things like that. Now that I have grown older and I also learned a lot about human nature, I have been reflecting on a lot of my traits and my way of dealing with people. And along the way I guess I changed. I am matured to a degree. I am able to be more tolerant and not be so critical of people. These changes come also with work, since I have been dealing with a lot of staff members, their position and their development, and

things like that. I constantly think about, after I had done any kind of disciplinary actions, whether I should have done that, or whether I should have spent more time with this person to shepherd through his/her learning process, and things like that.

So sometimes in my fleeting moment, I kind of feel sorry for Young in the sense that I was a young wife and did not have any patience. I was struggling to get through life or going to school. I didn't have any patience with his lack of motivation. I didn't understand why he couldn't do the way I could do or the way it was supposed to be done.

Just think about the 240Z.

Yes.

And I think you know that you did the right thing.

Did you have any problems on that trip with passports or anything like that?

It is kind of an interesting process. By then, by the time I went to China, I had the United States citizenship. I knew that there wasn't really any kind of my delay or there isn't any delay on my part because I was a Korean and things like that.

But the interesting part was that at the time, the Chinese government did not want to stamp the passport. But at the entry point or the exiting point, they had a little dot on the surface of the passport, which was our proof that we went into China and came out. Only time the stamp showed was when we were going into Hong Kong. So I thought that was rather interesting. At that time China was still a strong, strong communist country and maybe that's how they decided to leave some kind of a trail.

I also wanted to have you comment some more on the situation in Korea during the Korean War.

Yes. As I was listening to the first tape, I kind of skipped over about the Korean War experience. When we moved to the countryside, it was a harsh winter time. [Once the Chinese and North Koreans reoccupied the capitol city Seoul and further south of the peninsula after January of 1951, our village fell under the enemies.] There were constant bombings in the village. The village was actually right next to the freeway, the major thorough way. There was no such thing as a freeway then, but was the major road [from Seoul to Pusan]. Because of that, both the communist troops and the allied troops used this road to fight for villages and towns connected to this road.

The Chinese soldiers came through and then they set up their headquarters in our village. Our house was the one that occupied because of the location of the house in the village. I mean this was our mountain village. So our house was sort of situated on a higher ground than the rest of the houses in the village. The physical layout of the house was a typical Korean family house structure. There was a big wooden floor as the main hall and on both sides of the main hall, there was a room. The room was heated underneath the floor. Communist soldiers were really, really interesting. They were communists literally in spirit in the sense that everything was shared. If you have two, you get one and I get one. They looked at our house and discovered that there were two rooms. They said, "Well, we'll take the main room and you take the ..."

The family would take the other room?

Yes. But then, our family, because we had so many kids, we were renting some other rooms from other families. During the day, the Chinese would dig out the hole in the ground and they stayed there in hiding and then came back in the evening to fix dinner

and things like that. My father was with us at the time when a Chinese soldier came to our house. [He must be the leader of the group because he would give order to his men.] My father and the Chinese communicated through written Chinese characters. It just was so interesting. My father learned that the Chinese soldier was about forty+ years old and that ever since he was probably 19 or so, he has been an infantry soldier. He learned never to take his boots off because he never knew when he had to run. And so even inside the room, he would sleep with his boots on. My father got a lot of information about how he grew up as a soldier and even about [Chairman Mao's troop.] He was with Mao's troop when they fled from the National Army, [known as "the Long March," which was the very early stage and difficult time for the Mao's communist party, fighting against the National Army led by General Chiang Kai-shek.]

Our normal day was always interrupted by the bombing. The B 29 bomber, I think, was introduced during the Korean War for the first time. We knew the sound of the bomber. If we heard that kind of a sound, we just hid under the mattress, straw mattress, or under our cushions and things like that. And then after bombing stopped, we called out for each other under the cover, "Yeon-ja, are you there? Soon-ja, are you there?" If we answered back, then that means we were all okay. One time the bombing was really, really severe, non-stopping for hours. After the bombing stopped, we looked at one of the cushions that my sister was resting her back against the wall. It was full of bullet holes. That was how close we were living under that kind of condition.

[When the last stage of the UN troops' fight to occupy our village, the bombing began and it stayed all night and all day. And by the time it was done, half of the village was

burned. A huge, huge fuel tank with the gasoline or whatever, was dropped in the middle of our village, which burst in flame and the houses were on fire.]

So these were the allied planes supposedly bombing North Koreans?

Yes. The communist occupied zones so that they could take over.

So this is that parallel that nobody was supposed to cross?

No, no, no. That's in our village.

Was your village near the 38 parallel?

No, no, no. It was in the south. Claytee, I will show you the peninsula. Well, when Chinese got involved in the Korean War, all over again the peninsula was occupied by the communist all the way to very south again.

So now, but we were supposed to have pushed them back. MacArthur was there.

Right. That was in September 1950. But then it didn't last long once the Chinese ...

Right. So the Chinese came into the south. So your village ...

Was just close to the Seoul city.

And what happened to you and your family, then, as they began to push them back?

That's when we lived right in the middle of the war zone. [The last final battle to take over our village was the critical one for the UN troops to move onto north to reclaim the Seoul City. That was why the bombing was so severe since the UN troops considered any people along the way were communists and they had to be captured]. Half of our village was burnt and many, many villagers died. One of the families, my father's colleagues who fled Seoul with us lost three of their family members during that bombing. It was a cold winter. We actually couldn't bury the bodies for a while. We had to keep the bodies in the house for a while.

The ground was frozen.

Right. And also bombing was so severe we just couldn't do anything.

The pillow that was shot through, how did your sister escape harm?

Well, it didn't reach her. Yes. And we always think about how close we were in that.

After the bombing stopped, the first UN troops came into the village. They were Turkish and they couldn't speak English. They considered that everybody in the village was a communist. So they captured all of the men folks and they took them to their headquarters. My father, since he was the only educated person and also could speak English, he was in essence representing the village. For three days we didn't hear from them at all. My mom would comfort village women folks and things like that. But he came back and all the villagers came back in three or four days.

Did he ever tell you what happened during that three day period?

Only just briefly. He could have told other people, but I wasn't really listening. He had a hard time finding a person who could speak English. And once he got to the point where he could explain to the person in charge that the villagers were not communists, then, they let the people go. By then, all the Chinese soldiers were gone.

It was kind of interesting while Chinese soldiers were in the village. We began, you know, we communicated and shared meals and all that stuff. The night they were retreating, they actually came and said goodbye. Yes. They were just ...

So it shows humanity.

Oh, yes. We really felt that little folks like us are all human [whether you are communist or not]. We talked to each other and the soldier was a good person. When they came to

see our father to say goodbye in the middle of the night, we knew that the reoccupation by the UN troops was eminent and the trrops would be coming soon. I remember about the Turkish soldiers. They came into the house with boots on. We never wear shoes in the house. Our mountain was low enough to walk up. They burned my ancestor's, monument (tomb stone). Even though it was made of stone, it left a little bit of sooty mark that we had to clean up later. We just really resented how the Turkish troops behaved.

There was a marked difference in culture. The Chinese, you were familiar with them and their cultures were similar.

Exactly.

But Turkey was just completely different.

Oh, yeah. Yeah, it was just completely different.

And I'm sure that if American allied soldiers had come into your town, I'm sure it would be the same.

It would be the same. Oh, definitely.

Because the cultures are so different.

Yeah. They wear boots all over the house and things like that.

After the bombing stopped, that winter, until the spring came before any kind of vegetation grew to make any kind of food, we would literally go into the mountain and look for some things that we could eat and we could collect. There were times we saw dead bodies, soldiers and some times civilians. As the allied troops advanced to the next fighting position, they would leave behind a lot of food, just rations, such as canned goods. So we would pick up those kinds of things. One of the things that I could never

get used to was tomato soup and peanut butter. Tomato soup, I just didn't like the taste; and peanut butter, the smell of it, a little bit too rich. Even when I came to the United States, whenever I saw peanut butter, I associated the smell with the time period when we were really desperate for food during the War. I couldn't enjoy peanut butter for a long time. Now I do. I make sandwiches and things like that. During the recovery period, one thing we got a lot of was dried nonfat powdered milk. That was really hard to swallow. But that was something that gave us something ...

Nourishment.

Yes. And Koreans were never used to long grain rice because our rice was short grain and it's stickier than long grain. That was part of relief food supplies that we would get.

How did you get those supplies?

Oh, through the local government.

But physically how did they get them to villages and places around?

Yes. We went to a certain local government office that they would ration. And then sometimes we also got the clothing.

Once that occupation ended that time how long was it before you went back to your normal life, going back to school every day?

So I think it was probably when that summer was over, we went to a local school in the village even though elsewhere the war was still going on. And then pretty soon the fighting stopped [and the negotiations between the UN/South Korea and North Korea began which was settled in 1953.]

So I always think about the Korean War with that type of bombing experience and the food shortage and the really, really cold winter that we had to endure quite a bit.

After I had Billy, I thought about the responsibility of being a parent. I thought how in the world my parents managed with six kids, especially during the war. If my mom thought like I did – not had any more babies after one or two --, I wouldn't be here because I was the fifth of her children.

That's right. But she has to have that boy.

Yes.

I really appreciate that history lesson and those personal experiences.

Getting back now to after your trip to Korea and now you're back at UNLV, one of the things, well, even before I ask this question, tell me about your sisters. And this is probably going to be our last question for this session. Tell me about your sisters, their names again and what they do.

I have three older sisters. First one is Soonja. Second is Songmi. And the third is Yeonja. Soonja is now a retired emeritus professor. She had library science degree like I did in 1966 and '68, in the same period, at the University of Hawaii where her husband went to a master's program at the East-West Center. After he finished his Master's, he came to Stanford University. When he came to Stanford to do his Ph. D., my sister worked at the Stanford University library until just before they went back to Korea. And then she went on to her Ph. D. in library science in Korea. So she became a professor at the university, teaching library science. And she served as the director of the university library a couple of terms. In Korea all of the administrative positions at the university is sort of assigned termed position. So a dean of college will serve two years and then they go back to teaching and things like that.

So my father also in his time served as the director of the university library and also he served as the director of the university museum. My first sister, Soonja retired as a library science professor.

I explained a little bit before about my second sister that she was the first one to come to the United States. She had a Ph. D. in art history at Princeton University. And she is a very, very internationally well known art historian now. Her husband had a Ph. D. in political science at UC Berkeley. And he was a professor at the university and also he served as the Minister of Foreign affairs at one point. And now he is the ambassador to the United States and they live in Washington, D.C.

My third sister married to a lawyer. And he became a really successful lawyer and he's an expert in commerce law I think. He's retired.

In Korea?

Yes, in Korea. And they're really, really well off.

back to Korea and rose to be the president's top economic adviser in 1980. In 1983 the president Chun, Doo-whan (전두환全斗煥) and his 17 cabinet members visited Burma [now Myanmar]. During this visit, the bomb went off at the National cemetery while the cabinet members stood in line waiting for the President's arrival. Later the bombing was claimed by the North Koreans, that they bombed that party. The President escaped but all 17 cabinet members perished. That was the most tragic event since the war. We couldn't forget this for a long time. He was 45 years old! He was known as the architect of the Korean economy. He introduced market economy and he could have done a lot for the country. It was just devastating for his family and the country. I think one year

before that incident happened, Newsweek had an article about three major players in South Asian economy and he was one of the people featured. I had also special feelings about this brother-in-law because he was a really gentle person. He would always call me his "little sister" and when he was visiting America for his official trips he would call me in Las Vegas. He would say, "I am really sorry that I couldn't see you, but as I fly over Nevadan sky, I always think about you." It was such a sad thing that happened to our country. My sister is really a strong person. She raised two sons and in her own right she had a career. She is really good with her kids and I admire her for that. It was beyond one's imagination how she went through her life, raising her children, professionally active while carrying her pain.

How does the government recover when all of the cabinet has been eliminated?

Oh, well, I guess that's something that the president had to think about. I am really speaking as an outsider because I wasn't there. I did go back after the funeral, by the time I made the arrangement to go, the funeral was already over. They all were buried in the National Cemetery. When I go to Korea I always visit his grave.

Is there anything else you'd like to add about any family members?

I don't really think so at this point.

I noticed something, it might be important to your career as you talk about people that you went to school with, people who worked with you at the UNLV library, now you know people all over the country working in libraries. So over this 30 year period you really have a national network?

Well, not as much as some other people would do. I would contact people when I need it and when we worked together. I'm not very good at networking. I am not very career

oriented as some people do, always staying in touch with this person that person. I am not really involved in national associations that much. My work was mostly confined in the campus and the state. Any outside activities were sort of as needed basis and I did not maintain the contact. If I had to all over again and if I were really definite about where I wanted to go, I feel I should be actively involved in professional organizations and build network of colleagues who could know me better.

Laverna Saunders is a very strong goal oriented person and she knew that wanted to be an administrator and that she was not going to live in Las Vegas forever. She had a systematic way of accomplishing things to achieve her career goals. When she came to UNLV, she immediately enrolled in the Ph.D. or E.D.D. program at the College of Education. She was very active in professional organizations and she has a lot more professional colleagues. I don't know whether it is my ethnic background or just my personality that I don't do it. The fact that I was not professionally active with national and regional organizations became an issue when I was up for promotion to a full rank librarian. There was a lot of criticism about my lack of national reputation. I think that the Provost recognized what kind of a contribution I made to the university and state.

Matt Simon was the one who really pushed me to become a full rank librarian. I knew that I did not have a national reputation, which is a required qualification to be promoted. But the administration promoted me for the contribution to the university and the state over the years.

Right now if you were counseling a young person 25-years of age who wants to go far in the field of library science what kind of advice would you give them?

They need to be clear about what they want to become. It is important, but it's not that easy either. There are always individuals that they could not really keep on track. It is very important that you know what you want to do. I would definitely go for a Ph. D. degree. That is, if you want to become an administrator at your later stage. Networking is equally important. It helps you to be more aware of what is going on and be active in professional organizations.

Certainly there are people who never want to be an administrator. They want to be exactly in the same position they were in, but you can no longer do that, because the library field is changing so much and so fast. No one can predict how the information industry is changing and how we provide services to our users in five years or 10 years. The changes in the field are both evolutionary and revolutionary. It is important to work with the faculty a lot if you work for the university. I think there will always be debates about whether librarians should be faculty or not. That issue is still out. I don't really think librarians need to be faculty depending on the university. There are librarians who so strongly believe in their faculty status. If they want to be, then they should be ready to be engaged in research activities like teaching faculty members, building publishing records and obtaining Ph. D. Librarians don't really think they need Ph. D. Academic faculty members, believe it or not, consider librarians second class citizens. If you don't recognize that you're kind of blind. If you recognize it, you get on with your education and do it. Looking back at my career, after I had the history master, UNLV didn't have a Ph. D. program in history at that time. One of my sisters told me, "Myoung-ja, it doesn't matter which subject your in. Education is the easiest Ph. D. or Ed. D. you can get. Just

go ahead and do it." I was not ready for it. I was not really interested in getting a degree in education. I didn't really think about it but I should have. There were a lot of times that I could have set my path in different ways if I were a strongly career oriented person. But I also think that along the way in my career there were a lot of fortunate events that changed the path of my career.

I don't have any kind of regrets. I don't brood about what I could have done or not done. One day, as I was reading a page of a Tao book called, 365 Tao, which I do in the morning, one of the passages hit me right on. It was something to do with, 'you don't talk about things on and on. You set your long term goals and short term goals. You just diligently go on doing that. In the end you wish for graceful death with no regrets.' That was such a profound passage. I am now in my closing years on Earth and I wanted to be just that. By the time it happened to me, all of my affairs are taken care of, my son is well taken care of, Ernest will be taken care of, and things like that. I don't have hang-ups. Only thing I wish for is just a quality of life before I go. So my mind is really at peace. When I advise staff members who are going through emotionally difficult times, I am able to give them different lights and different thoughts. I am constantly trying and making efforts in practicing self-discipline.

As you prepared to leave Las Vegas, what were some of the most dramatic changes over those 30 years? What about the city itself, the part of the city you dealt with everyday?

The city has grown so much and while you are living in the city you just don't recognize how fast the city is growing. Suddenly it hits you; Las Vegas has reached this point.

When I first started living there, the thing I enjoyed about it was the desert mountain views. Oh, the desert mountain ranges when the sunlight hits in the afternoon, are just unbelievably beautiful. In early days, the Las Vegas Valley did not have the kind of pollution that they do now. I always lived in the east side of the town, east of Sandhill on Tropicana. As I drove up to work through Tropicana or Flamingo, I could always see the Red Rock Canyon in the morning sunlight and it was just so beautiful. The thing that I minded was when the MGM was built, that the view was obstructed. When I was going home, the sun has already set and the Sunrise Mountain changed to purple, which was the most beautiful scene. I really treasured this desert beauty. So when I first came to Las Vegas, there wasn't really that many traffic lights; Maryland Parkway and Flamingo had 4-way stop signs. On Tropicana from Sand Hill to Maryland Parkway, there was only one traffic light on Eastern, and that was it. As the city expanded and the traffic lights were added one by one, and suddenly it dawned on you, 'oh, my gosh! all these traffic lights.' When you go up to Mount Charleston, housing development, filling of all the vacant spots in the valley was unbelievable. We used to be able to see just desert land from one end of the mountain to the other. Now it's completely filled with housing encroaching to the mountains. It really scares me. Knowing that the water supply in the valley is such a serious issue, although the changes were fast but gradual, you just suddenly realize them. I wasn't really social issue oriented person; I was in a way isolated in my work and my home and that was it. I was not really paying attention to the political pictures of Las Vegas and that kind of things.

You began in Las Vegas working in the casino; did you go into casinos for food, entertainment during those years? Did you see that change take place?

I can't say that I've been there that often. All 30 years I've been in Las Vegas, I only went to three or four shows. Can you imagine that? One show was performed by a pianist, Roger Williams, or someone who was a really good pianist. The way I got to hear him was accidental. The husband of one of my staff members was a piano tuner. He tuned the piano for the entertainer and she invited me to come to the show. I knew of that particular performer and liked his music. I really enjoyed the performance a lot. One time we took my sister to Jubilee. I could not enjoy the show that much since there was a lot of nudity. [The one show I still remember was the Sami Davis Junior Concert at Caesars Palace. This was the first and last time I saw him on stage and I was so impressed with his performance. Later when our Special Collection received "Rat Pack" archives, it brought back memories of him.] The last one I saw was 'O' at the Bellagio Hotel. That was the extent of my going to shows in casinos. I was brought up with classical music and all of that. I took violin lessons during my high school years. After I started working at UNLV, I resumed taking violin lessons again. I played with the Civic Symphony for about three or four years, then I dropped out. Now I can't even play a simple thing. I wish I could go back and do it. Early days at the university (UNLV), there wasn't really kind of performance activities or events.

So we didn't have the Judy Bailey theatre or Ham Hall?

Judy Bailey came a lot earlier than Ham Hall but the performers the University was able to attract were not that good and I could not appreciate that much. As the city grew and the campus grew, the quality of performance became better. When Ham Hall was completed and Charles Vanda was hired as the impresario of the Ham Hall concerts. He used to know all kinds of performers. So the university's Masters Series was born. I had

season tickets and that was such a good feeling that we finally had something I could enjoy. Then, the Barrick Lecture Series came about and Carl Sagan, my favorite astronomer, was one of the lecturers. Those are the changes I appreciated most and I liked so much. Here in the Bay Area, if I want to go to San Francisco Symphony, or opera, I just go. I don't think much about missing anything, even though I don't go to every concert. Living in the area where you have access to all kinds of cultural activities makes me more relaxed. Casino entertainment has never been my cup of tea. I am so sensitive about smell, any kind of smell. Usually the casino comes with alcohol smell and cigars and smoking. I really could not stay inside of the casinos. Later, I heard that I wasn't dreaming about this casino smell. Someone told me there was nickel smell. With all of the slot machines there, there is a peculiar odor in casinos. I could not stand the smell. I don't go into the buffets much. I don't appreciate people piling up food so much. We stopped going. Later years, Ernest and I, when a new casino opens, we would play tourists and we would get up at 7 a.m. on a Saturday and go and get a breakfast at the newly opened casino before they are really saturated with the smell. We like to just adjust ourselves, what we want to do and what kind of things we could enjoy.

Is there anything you would like to add?

Even though my family was not comfortable about my living in Las Vegas, my sister always made a point to come and visit. When I finally left, my sister said, "Myoung-ja thank you. I don't have to take a special trip to Las Vegas. Do you know what they say at the Custom booth as I go through the immigration process at the San Francisco Airport? They would always say, 'Are you going to go gamble?' Now I don't have to answer to those questions." When I go to conferences and I take a taxi, taxi drivers will always

make a conversation about where you are coming from. One year that I was in New York for a conference and the taxi driver asked where I was from and I said, 'I am from Las Vegas.' He proceeded to tell me, "You know I didn't know people live in Las Vegas." I said, 'How do you think all those gambling casinos and hotels were run?' So he said, "Well what do you do?" I said, "I'm a librarian at the university." He said, "You mean to tell me there is a university in Las Vegas?" I said, 'Yes, and it is a very good one at that.' Then I stopped and I was so mad at the taxi driver I did not even tip him. So there is always a Las Vegas stigma that we carry. But, I was very proud to be part of Las Vegas' growth and growth of the university. We were at the special place in the country.



Family gathering in Hayward. In 2002, my youngest brother's family visited us from Korea and my other brother flew in from LA to visit everyone. My eldest sister and her two sons' families live in the Bay Area. She lives in Korea and visits them twice a year.



Consulting visit to United Arab Emirates University Library, 2002



My 60th birthday celebration with the Bay Area family. February 2003. Billy flew in from Chicago to celebrate with us.



My 60^{th} birthday celebration with my family in Korea, March 2003. This was the last picture of mother with us. She passed away in October 2003.



Six siblings visiting mother's grave, 2003.



Our family mountain house (Taken in November 2008) (p.7)

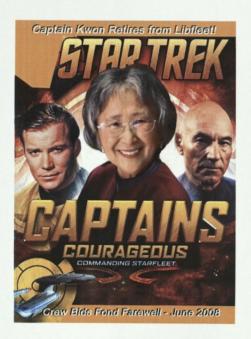


Our family mountain leading to the ancestors' burial site. The Chinese inscription on the rock states: Here we shed our outer layers before ascending as a cicada does before its transformation. (Taken in the fall of 2008) (p.7)



Ancestors' burial site. All of our ancestors were buried throughout our original mountain since the 18th century. We relocated them to this mountain when our original mountain was sold because of government land developments. The first phase of the relocation project began in 1993. We bought this piece of mountain in 2001. (Taken in June 2009) (p.7)





Retirement reception from Cal State East Bay Library. Star Trek Theme, June 2008.

What PhotoShop can do!!



Completing my tenure at Cal State East Bay Library, 2008 This was taken in the Special Collection of the Library.



Special lecture and discussion session with Sookmyong Women's University Library and Information Science graduate students, 2009. I was a grantee of the Fulbright Senior Specialist Program in June 2009. (p.165)



A discussion session with the library staff at Hanyang University Library in Seoul, Korea, 2009. (p.165)

This is Claytee White. It is August 11th, 2009. We started this interview in 2004. And we are in the Reading Room in Special Collections at UNLV in the Lied Library. And I am with --

Myoung-ja Lee Kwon.

And would you spell that for the transcriber?
M-Y-O-U-N-G, dash, J-A. L-E-E. K-W-O-N.
Thank you so much.

It's been a long time since we've been together. So I'm just going to ask -- when we were reading over the interview, there was some information about dynasties and how they operate and how they change leadership. And there was a very, very interesting aspect of it about suicide. So can you talk more about that for the westerners who don't understand that at all?

Well, actually I was thinking, probably even in Western history when there were changes in their dynasties or monarchies, there were some kind of a tragic ending of human lives. In Korean dynasties -- we have a series of different dynasties that changed over time. And usually at the end of a dynasty, or the demise of the dynasty, there were riots and unrest and things like that. The way the Chinese or Korean society was – it was not out of really low class person becoming a king or establishing a dynasty, but I think a small circle of powerful families that took over. So usually when either the king's position was -- what should I say? -- turned over to another person rather than a smooth transition from father to son, there was always a party or a group of people who supported the ex-king or the new king and things like that.

In our ancestor's case that we talked about, he was given a poison to end his life when the change of dynasty took place, from Koryo Dynasty (고려왕국[高麗王國]) to Yi Dynasty (이조선왕국 [李朝鮮王國]). He was part of the people who were loyal to the old dynasty. When the new dynasty was born, many people who were loyal to the old

dynasty were purged. One prominent person who was a close friend of our ancestor was killed, ambushed on the way to the palace summoned by the King, somewhere on the bridge. So we have many tales about his blood stain still visible on the stone bridge where he was killed. In our ancestor's case he was a scholar in his own right and he has written a lot of scholarly works. He retired to the country and chose to lead a secluded life. Once the dynasty was established he was given poison from the king.

Once you get that (poison from the king) -- and it's not any kind of things you can avoid. You have to follow the king's order, which is an honorable thing to do (drink the poison and die). So we have a small pavilion type structure along the Han River -- it's a small tributary to the Han River. And we still have the sign that says this is the place where our ancestor drank his poison. When you see historic epic drama productions on TV, where kings or dynasties change, you see scenes of such rituals of getting poison from the king and die.

Has anyone in your family ever thought about a movie production?

Oh, no. No. Claytee, we don't do that kind of things.

Okay. Earlier we also talked about a ritual that your father went through in August every year when he was alive.

Right.

So tell me about that ritual.

This is for another ancestor who lived and served the king in the 18th Century. The first ancestor whom I talked about, who was given poison from the king, was in the 14th Century. So there is that whole 400 years of time difference. This particular ancestor whose portrait had been kept in our family was a very high level official. One time when he went to China representing the country, this portrait was done. It was a very long scroll, not the horizontal, but vertical. My father always took it out from its case and aired it out in August every year. August happened to be our ancestor's birth-month.

Because the recording of any dates in the past was according to the lunar calendar, we just said, you know, August is the appropriate time to do that. Also, Korean summer is very humid and the mold is just active in the summer month because it is the Monsoon season and things like that. Especially, the portrait was done in silk and very susceptive to mold. My father would take it out from the wrapping and hang it. We also had a little temporary alter with incense burning and the fruit and things like that. I guess as the father of the family responsible for protecting the portrait for generations, he wanted us to remember our heritage and family tradition. We feel really good about that. I always remember those summer months and those occasions. It's good.

So where is the portrait now? Your brother has it?

Yes, my brother has it. And then I did tell you in my previous interview that one time it was loaned to the New York Metropolitan Museum of Art. I got caught by the museum guard when I tried to take a picture of that. That was funny.

There was one other tradition -- there are many other traditions. But one that you talked about was arranged marriage. Do you think that's still done in Korea in today?

Yes, in some fashion, I think -- especially in wealthy families they do quite a bit of those. And I do know that there are Korean matchmaking online services. Now they do have that. But it's different.

So now we're going to skip to more current events. When you left UNLV you told us about the employment process, how you were hired. So tell us more about Hayward, what that was like. Give me some idea about the work that you did in the library there and how that work differed from UNLV.

All right. Looking back, I was quite, quite naïve about different universities' systems. It is so unexpectedly strange from the California system to the Nevada system. Since I was in the same university system for 30 years, I was ignorant about other systems. In my sort of desire to relocate or desire to find a different place other than UNLV, I did not think much about moving to a different system would be so different. It's kind of weird in a way.

And so when I got there, I began to understand how the California education system worked. I knew that in the California State University (CSU) system, the highest degree granting program was the MA, the master's level, because I did look at the website in the chancellor's office and things like that. But I did not know much about the tiered education system that California had in place in its State Higher Education Master Plan. In the Master Plan, University of California (UC) system is the top, CSU is the second, and the third layer is the community colleges system. In California over the years they really made sure that its citizens were provided higher education, and the universities' (both UC and CSU) tuition is very cheap, and community colleges' tuition is just almost nothing.

The CSU system is sort of in the middle state's higher education unlike University of Nevada's system where we are the top which we enjoyed what the legislature provided us. So that's different. We had to struggle to get things in California. When I first got there, it was obvious that library was not as privileged as what we have enjoyed here at UNLV. I had to struggle to get funding to the library. The Provost was -- he's a physicist --And he is not a strong library supporter in so many ways. He would tell me, "Myoung-Ja, you do what you can with what you have. We don't have much new money for the library." But because he did not interfere much, I had quite a bit of latitude on what I could do. It's just that the funding was very inadequate. But then I was coming from very rich environment -- especially the past few years at UNLV we had so much funding. I had to struggle a lot at Hayward.

What I did not expect is the relationship between the librarians and the other administrators. My predecessor was not on good terms with librarians. And that was just, oh, so bad in the sense that she was really an able administrator with vision. But then either the way she carried out things was something to be desired. Majority of people just completely mistrusted her. So I had to get through that in my first two years.

One of the things I said to staff members was that I didn't want to hear what the previous administrator had done. I was not her and this was the new chapter of the library. I said, 'We begin with a blank piece of paper. And it's up to you and me to fill that paper. This is how it is going to be.' Individually they were very hard-working and believed in the mission of the library. They want to help students and they do what was right for the student. But collectively it's kind of difficult for me to push my agenda through. Before I came to CSU, I knew about their union environment but I did not know how much union contracts influenced the way we do our business. We were bound by many union contracts. Some things I don't decide on my own. I made sure that the union contracts allow the actions I was about to initiate and always consulted Human Resources in all aspects of personnel issues.

One of the good things about this university was its library information literacy program. It was just really a topnotch program. I always feel proud of what our librarians have accomplished in that area. I tend to kind of look at the good part and forget about the bad.

One bad thing that I'll never forget is the library facility. It is just so rundown and the carpet was so bad and taped everywhere and things like that. The minute I walked in I told the Provost that we needed to have new carpet throughout the library. He told me that we did not have any capital funding to make improvements to the facilities. It so happened that after two months of my coming on board, a fire broke out in the library. But it was in a different part of the library building occupied by non library services

units. Fortunately, the fire damage hadn't spread through the collections. But we had smoke damage and we had to close the library and clean up the smoke smell and all that. The Provost told me jokingly, "Myoung-Ja, I knew that you wanted new carpet, but I didn't realize you wanted it so badly to set the fire in the library." So from then on my name goes with library carpet.

In my second year, the California budget cut cycle began. That's another one. I never knew that in California they have budget cuts every ten years. They had a real big cut in the early '90s. They had one in the '80s. But now they said the one we were about to have was not only due to the budget cut cycle but the cycle is no longer a ten-year cycle. It's less than ten years. The library budget was cut by 25 percent.

How did you cope with that?

You know, when I think about it, I did very well in the sense that I did not cut any services out of it, except that there were areas that we went through outsourcing which saved staffing costs. When we had a vacancy, we just didn't fill. There were a couple of vacant positions at the time which was never filled. Seven staff and one librarian positions were not filled. So with a little bit of library materials budget cut, we were just fine.

But in the second year of the cut we made a statement. I cut the library hours. In reality cutting library hours doesn't save the actual amount of dollars that's cut. It's the statement so that the public will understand. And that worked. The following year, I got some money back even though we haven't recovered. We restored the library hours and things like that.

In the CSU system it is a struggle with so little money we can have. Yet, the salary is governed by or determined by the contractual agreement. And even if you don't have money, if the contract says there is a one or two percent increase, you have to come up

with it internally. This was often called, "Unfunded mandate." One thing the Provost did I liked was that he didn't really micromanage in the sense that he told the deans, "I gave you lump sum and do whatever you need to do." I think he was very much in agreement with what I did with my resources. I did a lot of just monitoring my expenditures in detail.

So out of the library fire, because I was coming from being responsible for the Lied Library construction, I convinced the Provost to have a library space feasibility study conducted before the university rebuilt the fire damaged area. Usually what happens was, if a space feasibility study is done, then you can propose to the State that something should be done about the facility. But our space feasibility study did not work out that way. We did do the feasibility study, but the Provost and the President were not convinced about improving the library as one of their priority. And that's something that I just felt bad about that. The library stayed just really in bad shape.

I did a lot of facility improvements within my means, rearranging the area that it could be more accessible to students and bringing in the computer access or computer lab type of -- like information comments here at UNLV. I teamed up with the IT division and brought in many technologies, which we could not do on our own. We managed it better than what IT could do with their money and they also got credit for it, which satisfied them as well. I was very proud of those kinds of things that I was able to accomplish.

The one thing I liked coming to California was that I was brought in as the University Librarian, which is equal to the Dean. I had everyone's understanding that I am the one who makes the final decisions. I like to push through most of my agenda with support from my library faculty and Coordinators of library units. Some times, I had to explain my position and persuad people to agree with me but I was also expected to make hard decisions, which I had done. At UNLV, all those different positions that I had during my tenure served in different ways. The Interim dean position was completely different from

the permanent position which was nationally searched and hired. So that's something different.

And that position at Hayward was a dean?

Yes. The title itself was called University Librarian. In the UC system, their top library position is University Librarian. CSU kind of likes to be like UC. At CSU campuses, there are different titles designating the top library position. There are 11 library deans, six university librarians, and some other titles, last time I counted. So each campus is different. CSU has 23 campuses. It's the largest for higher education system with over 450,000 students. Things like that.

That is massive.

Yeah, it is. So we are really what we call manpower-producing engine. So we always say that our graduates are the workforce of California. It is also interesting that not many Californians, go out of state to live. They live in California. If they relocate to other state, they eventually come back. That's what Californians do. And so when I first got up there not only they don't know much about Nevada, I didn't know much about California even though we are neighboring states. I told my son, 'Billy, there are lots of things that Californians do differently.' And Billy said, "Mom, that's putting it mildly; the rest of us in the country, we think Californians are nuts."

That's right.

But there are so many things about California I like. I like about their environmental consciousness. And I like about providing education at lower cost. But that comes with a cost in the sense that we can't do much. And I wish we would invest in more education. I think holding the tuition down so cheap comes with a cost. I was telling people, you know, even if we raise tuition, it's still cheaper than other states and things like that.

After working in the California state system for eight and a half years, I felt good about

some things that we have done. One thing that is really good about the CSU system is that the system-wide library directors work together cooperatively. We meet quarterly to discuss issues and set future goals. You can imagine how impressive it is when 23 library directors meet. We do projects like procuring electronic databases together and share each other's resources through interlibrary lending. At the Chancellor's Office, there is an office that works with the system libraries coordinating all electronic database licensing negotiations and things like that. That is well known, what we call the Systemwide Electronic Information Resources (SEIR) project. It's the way that the system office negotiates when purchasing information resources for all CSU system libraries. There are committees through which we work together. I served as the secretary on the Council of Library Directors (COLD) twice. And we tried to do a lot of strategic planning together. And if we can do the system wide that helps library services, we do it. Just before I left there was an initiative. It is called The Virtual Library of CSU. The idea is that any CSU students, regardless of their affiliation, should be able to access any information resource database the system provides. And I think they're moving ahead with that concept. And it's a good thing that they do.

While the system-wide project is done at the Chancellor's Office level, each campus was always responsible for wheat happened on that campus. I am green with envy for several CSU campuses that received funding to build new libraries or retrofit existing buildings on a large scale. It was unfortunate that our library was not getting enough of the attention to improve the facilities. But then it was gradually getting that. Just before I left we finally got replace the carpet.

Good.

The new carpet project was to be completed before it was time for me to go but it got delayed and it was still going on when I left. When I went back again they didn't do the whole thing as they had planned. I was crushed. The main stacks section which was badly needed was not done. So that's one thing that I will always think about; I should

have delayed my leaving but I could not help it.

How did you have to change your management style? You know, working with the union and the way things are done there is so different from here.

I made a lot of mistakes in the beginning, but it got quickly corrected. The first year I was there it was about the merit award process. They don't do it the way UNLV does with the committee. Although the CSU library has a committee structure which recommends a merit award, there are always discussions about merit money being just equally divided and things like that. I don't believe in dividing the merit money equally. They already got the cost of living. The faculty is reviewed by three categories when going through the tenure and promotion process. They are based on job performance, research, and service. I sent a memo to the faculty chair stating that when the committee recommends certain faculty members for merit award, it should be indicated in which categories they are meritorious.' When they received my memo, they were upset since they have never had that kind from the director. The Provost said, "Myoung-Ja, obviously you don't know how it works here." They gave me the recommendation requesting that the merit money be given to everyone equally. And then I did the final distribution of the merit money.

After the merit money was given according to my recommendation, the people who didn't get the equal amount or something, they filed a grievance. They got the money anyway, which was really bad because I always believe the merit award should be something that goes to people who are really meritorious. I always don't like about equity payment kind of thing. You know, equity payment works only in the sense that when this person was hired it was not really given an equitable pay. That I blame the individual. Either they didn't speak up for it or the previous administrator who hired that person didn't think.

But along the way there is always this merit pay, which we don't have that much in CSU.

But in Las Vegas they did. And so along the way that they should have gotten merit pay along with the cost of living so if they stayed in the same institution their salary would reflect accordingly not to have the equity payment, you know, that kind of thing. So that's something I always feel uncomfortable about, the merit pay going to everyone equally and things like that.

There were certain expectations I'm sure when you took the new position. Do you think you were able to fulfill all of those expectations?

At the time of my hiring CSU was trying to get more private funding. And I was able to do that on a small scale but not as big scale. So when I got there we didn't have any endowment to speak of. By the time I left we had like three endowments. But the amount was small. I wanted to have a little bit bigger endowment, which wasn't really possible. The Foundation -- University Advancement, was helpful but they were not helpful enough. And I don't know enough community people whom I could tap to solicit funding. The College of Business and Economics has a lot of supporters in the community and the College of Science with the industry.

Sports.

Well, not really. Our campus is in the Division Three and we don't get many private donors for sports scholarships. Now they are trying to be in the Division Two. So it's a struggle for CSU to be competitive in terms of getting private funding because in California, UC is always there. People will want to give UC, not CSU that much.

I see.

I feel I could have done more in fundraising part. But I was feeling really good about how I changed the perception of the library amongst university community. And so later not only I was a carpet person, but people used to say, "When Myoung-ja speaks, she doesn't stop until she mentions about the library." So the library was always in everyone's radar. I used to go everywhere, in any gatherings. So over the years, it paid

out. I felt good when the former president, who retired one year prior to my retired, told me the other day, "Myoung-ja, once you came on board I stopped worrying about the library because you were there."

Apparently not only the library directors didn't get along with librarians internally, but librarians went everywhere to talk about the library in a negative way. So that's not good. I told library people that any complaints about the library had to stop internally. When they go out to the community or the university community, they should talk about the library in a positive way only. 'You just have to talk about how great you are and you try to help people and things like that.' And I think that's a good way of putting it.

So did it change the attitude?

Oh, yeah, I think so. I think in the library. Another thing is people who had a lot more complaints about the library, they retired. One of the things that I always feel grateful to the previous director was that she made changes even if unpopular. They were the needed changes. And I was able to carry on. She made a large scale changes in the Technical Services Division. Librarians who used to be in the Technical Services, like catalogers, went out to the Public Services helping students and faculty. And if they can't handle the public, then either they retired or something like that. And so we don't really have librarians in the Technical Services. So that change was really hard.

Is there anything else about the job at Hayward that you'd like to talk about?

Let's see. Other than I was gradually getting used to the way CSU system works. One thing good about the library in CSU, we are a truly, truly student oriented school. And I would get comments like, "when I come to this library I know I get the service." That's a really good one. When you go to UC, it's so big and students, especially undergraduate students, don't get enough help they need. I like the way we work with students. I did a lot of walking around the library. Students who study in the library, know me well. At the graduation it's good to see them go through the procession. And one thing, the library

is always packed. It is unbelievably packed. Even though they may just do studying or visiting, and they're not a serious, serious researchers, the library is the place that they can actually do what they need to do. Sometimes in the middle of our lobby area, students have a roundtable where they practice their presentation sessions and things like that. So I like about that part.

I enjoyed working with deans for the first few years before this new administration started. It was just wonderful to work closely with deans as colleagues. At UNLV, I remember that deans were always competitive and as the Interim, I did not feel comfortable with them, 12 college deans.

Yes, about.

UNLV deans were a lot more I should say territorial. But at Hayward, there is only four colleges -- College of Arts and letters, Business and Economics, Education and Allied Studies, and Science. The library was not a college but equal. Four deans and I would go out to lunch quarterly I'm the one who always arranged lunch and things like that.

Of course.

But when the new president came, he did not really include the University Librarian as part of the deans' group. And then deans changed while I was there. So that collegiality was lost. And so that's kind of sad.

That's very sad.

I still meet with ex-deans, the deans who used to be deans when I was there. And we have lunch and we still have a good time because of that collegiality.

Oh, that's so good. That's so important.

Now, I have that we've been talking for about 52 minutes. So why don't we stop right here. And when we come back we're going to probably jump to Korea. We're

going to talk about the economy there. And we're going to talk about the graduate course that you're going to teach in Korea.

Great.

This is August 11th, 2009. And we are back. This is Claytee White. It's the afternoon now and we have a very, very short session left. Myoung-Ja is going to start about telling us about her retirement decision.

My retirement decision did not come about overnight or anything. It started out with my desire to end my career in an orderly manner. And when I first went to California, because this is the administrative position and that the recruitment process is a lengthy one, I didn't want to accept a position unless I was ready to stay at the university a minimum of seven years. When I accepted this position, I was going to be 57 in three months. I calculated, if I were to stay for seven years that I would be passing my 64th birthday. So I was ready to accept the new position as the University Librarian. And the decision came at the right time in the sense that the Lied Library construction is almost done. For the past ten years, I have been pouring my soul into the new library project from the design to the construction. I felt very good about leaving the university and starting a new life in California.

Once I started working for CSU, things were happening all the time but I was beginning to think about my retirement during my seventh year, 2007. Usually for deans, it is customary that you do give a ten months or so notice because the national search takes about that much time. The faculty search committee has to be formed through an election process. In our case the search committee was consisted of two librarians, one faculty each from four colleges, one library staff, and one member from the university in general appointed by the president. If I were to retire at a certain point, I have to do backdating of the plan and determine when to announce my retirement. I did not want to announce my retirement too soon since I did not want to be a lame duck.

When I came here (CSU), I had some goals for the library I wanted to accomplish, but the huge budget cut in the academic year of 2002 and '3 which I did not expect, made me rethink my retirement date. The 25-percent budget cut came as a shock and I needed to manage what's best for the library and for staff and the students. Seven years of my tenure may have to be extended one more year or so before I retire from this position.

In the meantime, the high level administrative team turned over; first the Provost who hired me retired in 2005 followed by the retirement of the president. The new president came on board in July 2006. We finally had the permanent provost position filled in March of 2007. So by the time the permanent Provost came, I had gone through four Interim Provost, Vice President for Academic Affairs.

The new president who came in 2006 was an engineer. He also had just so much experience in overseeing the financial side of the university operations. At that point Hayward was going through quite a bit of enrollment problems and we were losing funding. So we had a debt to the state, which was called structural deficit. It was my understanding that the president was hired to clean up the deficit. As soon as he came on board, the vice president level positions changed. He brought in a new Vice president for Business Affairs. The comfort zone that I had with old administration was gone even though they weren't really, really strong, strong supporters of the library. I had very good sense of what they had expected of me and also they valued my service.

While all these kinds of changes happening at the university, I was also beginning to feel the fast pace of technology changes for library services was getting to be too much for me. While I recognize the need for implementing technologies, I still see the continued value of the traditional library services. I wanted to combine those two values and to make evolutional changes to our services. But the library field is changing in a way that technology people are taking over.

Some of the new librarians we hired I hired didn't have the basic foundation of knowledge, which is quite a concern. I will continue to be worried about our society losing thousands of years of accumulated world knowledge of human civilization. I recently heard of a book, which I'm about to read -- I just got it -- it's called *Empire of Illusion*. The author talks about how our society is becoming a media generated information society based on bites of knowledge, which is far from truth. We live in an illusion. The younger generation doesn't have any humanities and social science background but they want to be in business and make money. Annually we produce more business degrees, but the financial situation is chaotic because they lack the general knowledge base. I was intrigued by that book as I was listening to NPR. I know where he's coming from because that's what I was feeling lately.

Going back to my decision to retire, I wanted to spend time doing things I had postponed, like traveling and learning new things, which I did not have time to do. I began my retirement plan as early as January of 2007. As I began inquiring about the process, I discovered interesting things about my Social Security situation. Nevada state employees were exempt from Social Security contribution and since I worked for the state university until I left Nevada, I did not contribute anything towards the Social Security system. And I didn't expect to get any benefits. But because California is a Social Security state and it was mandatory and the chunk of Social Security contribution every month was taken out from my paycheck. I was looking at all kinds of aspects of retirement. I looked into my Social Security situation because I contributed to the SS system for eight and a half years. I knew that in order to be qualified to receive the benefit, all you need is ten years of contribution, which is 40 quarters. Some unexpected things I discovered; when I worked as a change girl in Las Vegas casinos during the summer of 1967, Social Security contributions were deducted from my paycheck. Also, I did some consulting services on and off over the years and somehow when I got paid for my services, the contributions were made. So I had like five quarter credits unexpectedly. Now all I had to do was one more year to be qualified for the benefit. Because my income was such that even if I

only worked two months in 2008, I would have credits for the entire year's worth of quarters. However, they do not credit point at the beginning of the year but at the beginning of each quarter, which meant that it was wise for me to stay employed until the beginning of the fourth quarter. I decided that I would physically work until the end of July 2008. I went through lots of workshops for prospective retirees and learned all about the California Public Employees Retirement System (CalPERS) and what to expect. Since I left UNLV, I have been receiving retirement pension from the Nevada retirement system because I had worked for the state more than 30 years. If you have built thirty years of service credit, you can start receiving your retirement pay regardless of your age.

I first informed the Provost about my intention to retire and then announced it to my staff in September of 2007. I told him that my plan was to end working at the end of the fiscal year, June 30, 2008 but if the university did not have my replacement, I would be flexible and stay on one more month. I had so many unused vacation days and I would continue to receive my salary from the university until the end of October. I was on an extended vacation. My unused sick leave days were added to service credit.

The Provost was still new, but I told him that it was about time for me to go. Most of the things I wanted to do when I first came was done or was in the process of getting done like replacing the carpet in the library. Before I left, I did a real extensive report for my successor about the budget situation, staffing, and the things that a new University Librarian might consider continuing or not continuing and things like that.

As my retirement date came nearer, I got really scared. I was not quite sure how I would handle my retirement since my work was my life. I was becoming anxious and apprehensive about retirement. One day as I was going through my mail, I found an information brochure about the Fulbright Scholarship program. There was a workshop at the UC Berkeley campus in April 2008. I attended the workshop to find out what kind of

programs I might be interested in participating., which will make me gradually weaning off my professional career. But I did not really want to commit myself to a year-long scholarship grant which requires me to produce something after the grant cycle is over.

I found out that there was a short program, called the Fulbright Senior Specialist Program. This particular program worked a little different from their other programs. If you want become a grantee of the Senior Specialist Program, you apply for the program to have your name be included in the specialists roster. So depending on your discipline and your qualification, they will approve you to be included in the roster under your discipline. So I began the application process for the Specialist program in July. In either August or September I got a reply back that I was accepted as a candidate to be included in the Specialist roster.

The Fulbright Senior Specialist Program will keep my name for five years. And during the five years I could be invited three times by host institutions, whoever wants my expertise. In my case it was in the areas of academic library administration and facility planning. The financial responsibility is divided between the host institution and the Fulbright office. So if the host institution's proposal is accepted by Fulbright, then Fulbright will pay my transportation, way to get there and back, and then honorarium for each day during my stay. The host institution will be responsible for providing room and board and any incidentals that I incur during the stay.

Because I was always going back and forth to Korea -- and then whenever I go, I do either a special lecture or something like that. This year, one of the institutions, they were having an annual conference for academic librarians and directors. So they decided that they would apply for the program to invite me. Knowing that my room and board was taken care of (I would rather stay with my sisters and not in a hotel), the host institution's responsibility was reduced considerably. All they had to do was to invite me making sure that I got to the conference site, and then reserve a hotel room for me during

the conference.

My proposal, which was prepared by the host institution and myself, was sort of packaged around presenting a conference lecture, participating in panel discussions with library directors, and working with many different university libraries. During the two week period for the grant, which was the shortest grant period, I was able to do five different library visits and three different discussion groups in addition to giving lectures at the conference. Although the grant cycle can be up to six weeks, I only took two weeks since I didn't want to extend my grant period because I feel a responsibility while I am under the grant. Although my two weeks were packed with tasks and I was exhausted at the end, it was a very good, rewarding experience.

The libraries didn't have to feel obligated that they had to pay me or anything. In fact, if I got paid for my lecture, then I had to report that and then the Fulbright office would deduct that amount from my honorarium. I told everyone that my services were paid by the grant and they didn't have to pay me anything. All I asked was to provide opportunity for me to participate in the conference and conduct workshops with academic library staff, which worked out really well.

I was just impressed with some of the librarians who were really dedicated, some of whom I had not met before but some I already knew. The conference lecture was really good because some library directors felt that I addressed the issues and concerns that they were addressing at present. One of the directors invited me to his library when I come back in the fall.

It was especially good for me since I did not want to disconnect from the library field right away but to continue to be involved in the field at least for a while. Since it was not a full-time commitment, I enjoyed more. Having gone through the application process and receiving a grant gave me a little bit more, I guess, a sense of my self-value. I could

also say that actually I am part of the expertise that the Fulbright office will keep me on their specialist roster at the Washington office and things like that. Just knowing that was a good feeling. Right after I retired, without this kind of thing I would have a little bit of, 'oh, what am I going to do now?' kind of thing. So I think picking up this Fulbright gave me a good opportunity just to be -- the level of involvement I can decide. And then it worked out fine. When you think about all the work I did, the \$200 a day honorarium is nothing. But it worked out just fine.

While I was in Korea last June under the grant, the faculty members from one of the universities that offers a library science program asked me if I could create a course that covered a free flowing subject in which I could talk just about everything. This is sort of an experiment for them. More universities in Korea now offer lectures in English and my ability to lecture in English was just kind of things they were looking for. Also, they were excited about my idea of creating a hybrid format course that I hold classes when I am in Korea and online course from the States after I come back.

The class is going to start on September 1st. As soon as I get a list of students from the university, I will immediately begin contacting them. Then I'll give them an outline of what I want to accomplish during the semester. The three weeks in October we are going to meet twice a week for three hours, which will count as six class sessions. The university operates on a semester system. We must have and equivalent of 16 weeks of three hour class sessions. The class will be designed around project base contents. It's not a straight three hour lecture, but I would like to challenge them requiring them actively participating in class discussions. If they were to think about creating a new future for academic libraries in a digital age, they have to think differently not only in Korea but globally. It is still premature in the process of molding. I'm kind of excited about that.

Oh, you should be.

There is quite a bit of paperwork still to be done because I'm a United States citizen. In the past, they did not have any problems with inviting me as a special lecturer here and there, but this is a full credit course which meant that I had to be officially employed and given a contract. This is the first time for them and there are lots of unknowns. Will see.

But it's going to work out because they need it.

I think it will be interesting. Once I have gone through the whole semester of this lecture, I will know what to expect, what kinds of things I could do. But I do know that I wouldn't be able to keep up with the changes in the library professional field indefinitely since I am no longer a practicing administrator. In order to stay in the field, it is important that your daily work includes keeping up with new emerging technologies and application in building your base. And I don't feel right now my knowledge is completely outdated, but I feel it's gradually receding. And I shouldn't really even pretend that I know and things like that. The things that I feel comfortable about myself or talking about are things like personnel issues, budgeting, and all aspects of operating academic libraries because I've been through it and I've been through with so many different styles of administrators. I could still talk about those, but soon I won't be able to could not address many new service initiatives using newly development software and hardware in a meaningful way.

My thought right now is that I want to give back something to the society by volunteering wherever my service is needed. I feel that I am one of the luckier beneficiaries of two states, Nevada and California that have been providing financial security or income for their workers after retirement. Right now, I know that there are so many unfortunate people whose retirement income has been reduced drastically. But also at the same time, I don't want any of my volunteer work to deprive anyone's employment opportunity. And that's something you always have to keep in mind yourself.

There is a program at the Hayward Public Library called LiteracyPlus. It is a state and

federally funded program for the adults who are illiterate. They are functionally literate, but they are illiterate, in the sense they have managed to carry out their given tasks without being able to read or write. They are working and able to speak, but can't read. They can't write. The condition of the program for a person to be part of it is that he/she is older than 18 and can speak. This means that the program is not taking any high school kids, but only adults. Especially in the Hayward area, there are so many immigrants who came and who learned the language to do the minimal work, like manual labor. But they can't read books to their children. They can't read instructions.

I volunteered to be for the LiteracyPlus program. I went through two weekends of training on how to tutor these people and how to prepare the lesson plans and that kind of thing. I have one student now. The teaching/learning session is one on one. I meet with my student once a week. She's from Yemen. And she has three children. She's divorced. Would you believe it? I didn't know they divorce in Yemen. And she speaks well enough English to understand, but she can't write at all. Now she is beginning to read. She can't read even the words that she has been saying all the time. So I had her read aloud to make sure that she understood. Then I read it to her so that she can copy. And so hopefully she will stay with me for a long time.

Another one volunteer program I went through training was a patient support program. I was always aware of hospice work. When I was at UNLV I lost two close colleagues with cancer. And so I know how it is when the patients come to the last stage of their illness. So I searched for a similar program in the Bay Area. I found that there is organization called Asian Hospice Network. It's based in Oakland and they take care of mostly Asian patients. It so happened that they were trying to start a patient support group with viable volunteers who will do the home visits and sit with patients or read to them. They are not expected to do any housework or anything like that, but it's just providing some kind of support or sometimes relief to a caregiver. And so I have gone through that training as well. In order for you to be qualified to interact with any

patients as a volunteer, they will have to do the background check on you and you have to do the tuberculosis test. I haven't gotten any patient assigned to me yet. When the time comes, I will visit someone and take care of him/her regularly.

At the same time, I don't really want volunteer work dictating all my time, but I want to make a difference to someone's life even if it is not much and this seems to be working okay. Because now I am going to Korea twice a year and staying for a month, my time is broken a little bit. I may have to rearrange the Korea trip in a different way because I also wanted to take classes through either CSU system or Berkeley. Through the University of California, Berkeley Extended Education I can take classes on all kinds of interesting subjects. The Osher Life Long Institute provides grants to various university extended education units to encourage to offer courses to adults. Berkeley's program is called OLLI Berkeley. I took three classes between January and May. So those are the kinds of things I just love to do. And one class on astronomy was just so interesting. It opened my eyes and things like that.

It's going to be an opportunity to learn as well as share.

Right. Also, as I stay in Korea longer, I am beginning to have a better understanding of how Korean society has evolved. I always consider that my family is in a different class or category. It's not a normal kind of average family, but it's an upper class in a way, not in a snobbish way. Our family members are highly educated intellectuals as well as financially well off. My sisters sometime don't understand how ordinary people work. So I keep reminding them, 'well, you guys are up here and I'm here. I am trying to let you understand how other people live and think.'

What I appreciate most when I visit Korea is spending time with my sisters and a brother as well as their circle of friends. We have so much fun together. Since I am the youngest of sisters, they take care of me so well. Some of my sisters' friends are a former ambassador of somewhere, the principal of the school, or the dean of a college and things

like that. When I go along with my sister to her friends' gathering, the conversation is so interesting and stimulating. I learn many things from them. As I am staying there longer, I notice how people live and what kinds of things they enjoy.

In Korean society, number one concern is providing better education for children so that they can be better than they are. The Korean zealousness of the education effort for their offspring is almost incomprehensible by American standards. They would spend a lot of money for it. Sometimes I really wonder where those monies come from. Of course, in a different part of Seoul, you just don't know where -- I mean Korea is no longer a third world. Korea is one of the nations that has enjoyed the prosperous economy in the past ten or 15 years, which has provided more opportunities for people to become wealthy. More people who have gone through education here in the United States are going back because the Korean government and other companies are really looking the educated people and the experts and things like that.

My niece's husband has gotten a Ph.D. from Stanford. It's the biomechanical engineering that makes artificial knees with -- I think it's bioengineering. And so he graduated two years ago. He was engaged in a postdoctoral research at a hospital in the Bay Area. Now he was hired by the university to start up that program in Korea. My niece herself is something else as well. She graduated from CSU San Francisco in instructional technology and in museum management. She got two Master's. While her husband was going through his Ph.D. program, she got a job at the Monterey Army Language School as a Korean language instructor. The school was run by the U.S. Department of Defense. Students are all soldiers and depending on where the armed forces are dispatched, the number of students in different languages changes. So when she got there, there were quite a bit of the soldiers needing Korean language training. And she's been there for six years. Since her husband is going back, she went to look for a job. And she landed in one of the universities trying to create the similar program as, the Monterey Army Language School in Monterey Bay, CA. So she's leaving like next week.

These are the kinds of opportunities that are happening. I'm just really feeling good about that. This month, Claytee, I've been here in the United States for 43 years. And I think about, wow, that means I'm now 66. So I was in Korea for only 23 years. The first ten years I mean you're a baby, you know, that kind of thing. But why is it that I feel still I'm a foreigner here and over there is my home? You know, that probably will change when my sisters go (pass away) and things like that. It's the family connection that I have. And we are so tightly knitted family. My sisters are just so tight. I feel Korea is where my heart is. It's kind of sad, or it's unfair to Ernest if I feel that way.

Would you ever think about moving there?

I wouldn't ask Ernest to live there.

But as you spend more time there, is that one of the ways that you could do it by spending a month or two at a time there and then coming back?

Yeah. But there will be a time when I may not be able to make the trip because 12 hours is a long time to be on the plane. It is a long time. I never used to feel anything when I went because I don't have a biological clock or anything like that. People used to say that I am weird. But as I grow older I feel that. Yeah. So I'm not sure. You know, I have my son here. The reason I decided to stay was not only I got married, but also I was always feeling bad for Billy growing up without grandparents. So I thought if Billy ever has children, then I will be here for them, doing grandmotherly things with them. But he decided not to have it. So that's okay.

Yes.

I'm kind of really very content at the moment. I don't really think I need anything.

Wonderful.

Yeah. That's kind of really a good state to feel that way.

That's right.

All I have to do is to think about a different way to help others. I don't mean that has to be a special thing. Ordinary help will be just fine. Also, I want to continue to learn new

things.

I think it's wonderful to live the kind of life you've lived and be completely happy and content right now. That's wonderful.

Yeah. Actually, it came easy for me in that. There may be people that are never happy no matter what.

That's correct.

I also like try to be "whatever comes, I'll take it," that kind of thing. I told my doctor that I don't want to be kept alive and things like that. The doctor said, "oh, Myoung-Ja, don't worry; you will have like another 20 years." And I said, 'no, I don't think so. I don't want to live that long, (if I am not healthy enough to handle my life).' He told me that he wanted to see my living will and make sure that some of the information is there and things like that.

Yes. But we can live to a hundred.

No.

We're healthy. There's no reason not to.

Claytee, it doesn't matter how healthy you are. A hundred years is a hundred years. Every year I could actually feel that my energy is a little bit declining. So that's why I feel like -- when I first retired I said I want to visit this and that. And I said this year, 'well, I'm going to pick places I really want to go.' So next year I will try to do that and this year I'll just do micro trips and things like that.

Good. Like come to Las Vegas to see us.

Right.

Well, Myoung-Ja, this has just been so wonderful. I thank you so much.

Oh, you're welcome. This is actually fun for me. I still think whether this is worth spending this much time. But having this will make me write something out of a certain event which I could elaborate a little bit on my own. I think it will be a good starting point and I am so glad that you were interested in doing this.

I don't know why people think that. But I was just talking about your experiences, the Korean War for instance. I just told somebody over lunch about some of your experiences in the war. They didn't know whom I was talking about, but they were fascinated. They were fascinated.

That's interesting.

So that's the kind of life you've led. You don't even realize how fascinating, how interesting, how motivating.

Yes. Oh, and then I forgot one thing. You know, because I was always interested in history, this year I actually initiated a scholarship program at CSU. So the way that I did was -- I don't have enough money to give like \$25,000 or something. But I did promise each year I will give the department thousand dollars. I don't want to split that between two students. I just want to have one student to receive the whole thousand so that the student will have some kind of significant support. The History Department could not believe that I did that because they probably thought that since I was a library director, if I were to give anything, it would be to the library. But I felt that a scholarship will touch an individual and help make differences in his/her life.

That's right.

Library is a good cause, but during my tenure there at CSU, I did enough supporting the library. And this particular one -- Ernest and I talked about it. And I said, 'Ernest, it would be really good to give something to the university this way.' The department was just unbelievably happy that we did. The foundation said, "Myoung-ja, would you like to leave it in a will?" And I told them that I would just start out with a five year agreement in a memorandum of understanding and then we can renew.

Yes. That's right. Because you give that's why you receive so much. I think so.

Because you give so much.

Uh-huh. You know, I really do think I'm a very fortunate person. So why not?

That's right. And we'll end it with that. Why not?

Yes. Why not?

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Appendix

Myoung-ja Lee Kwon to Leave Library

Letter to Provost Douglas P. Ferraro

Letter to library staff

Letter from Carol C. Harter

By Eva Stowers

Dated December 13, 1999

Dated December 13, 1999

Dated June 28, 2001

EX LIBRIS

A Publication of the UNLV Libraries, January 2000

MYOUNG-JA LEE KWON TO LEAVE LIBRARY

by Eva Stowers

Effective March 1, Myoung-ja Lee Kwon, Associate Dean of Libraries, will be retiring from UNLV after 31 years of service to the James R. Dickinson Library. The position of assistant cataloger that she accepted in 1968 was her first professional position after graduating with a Master of Library and Information Science from Brigham Young University in Provo, Utah.

In 1979 Ms. Kwon became the Library's first Nonbook Librarian. At the time the collection of non-print material was small, consisting mainly of long-playing vinyl records, and was tucked away behind the journal collection. Barely visible, and poorly cataloged, the collection was rarely used. Under her leadership the collection was expanded to include material in a wide variety of formats, such as videocassettes, slides, compact discs, and computer files. With her experience in cataloging she made sure that for the first time "audio-visual" materials were fully cataloged. She led the planning for the vastly enlarged Nonbook Section that was created with the opening of the new wing of the library in 1981. The

section was and continues to be an imporant factor in raising user awareness of the increasing availability of information in formats other than traditional print.

In 1983 Ms. Kwon became the Library's first Systems Librarian. At that time the only automated systems in the Library were circulation (used for checking books in and out, fines, etc.), acquisitions (ordering library materials,) and cataloging, each working separately. She spearheaded the request for proposal and implementation of the library's first on line catalog. This automation project was one of the first major projects in which all of the UCCSN libraries worked together to achieve a common goal, that of enhancing library service.



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In 1991 she collaborated with the Systems Librarian at the University of Nevada, Reno, in obtaining a grant of \$230,917 from the U.S. Dept. of Education for a system-wide cooperative automation project. The grant for this project known as NALIS (Nevada Academic Libraries Information System) was the largest single grant awarded by the Department during that grant cycle. The project's goal was to provide unified access to the Nevada academic libraries' catalogs, electronic journal indexes, and other databases. Today, NEON, Nevada Education Online Network, formerly NALIS, is used not only by the UCCSN students and faculty, but also by Internet users throughout the world.

Ms. Kwon's responsibilities evolved over the years and she was appointed Systems and Budget Librarian in 1988 and Associate Librarian for Systems and Budget in 1989. In 1992 she was appointed the Library's first Associate Dean, the position she currently holds. Ms. Kwon also served as Interim Dean from July to December 1992 and again from November 1996 to September 1997.

Ms. Kwon has played a major role in the planning and design of the Lied Library, which is set to open in May 2000. Working with the Library staff, members of the campus, and the architects, she helped design a facility that will be state-of-the-art. After construction began she served as project coordinator for the Library. Her weekly site visits allowed the early detection and correction of design inconsistencies.

In addition to her library service, Ms. Kwon has been active in campus and community service. Her service to the campus included assignments on committees such as university master planning, system computing, statewide library automation, university budget, and university accreditation. When President Harter initated a university wide planning process in the fall of 1995, Ms. Kwon was appointed to the UNLV Planning Task Force. During the academic year of 1995-96 she served as co-chair of the White Paper Writing Committee: Technology. This committee identified goals and objectives for technology issues at UNLV. For the past two academic years she has served on the Task Force for a Just and Inclusive Campus community. In service to the community she has also served as a resource person for local hospitals, the school district, and the Clark County court system, interpreting for Koreans unable to speak English.

Ms. Kwon's undergraduate degree in History from Seoul University demonstrated her interest in the study of history. In 1980 she received a Master of Arts in History from UNLV and is currently pursuing a Ph.D. The subject of her dissertation will be the experience of the immigrants in the western United States.

After 31 years at UNLV it might be expected that her library career would be coming to an end, but not so, for she has accepted the position of University Librarian at California State University, Hayward. Please join us in thanking her for her many years of service to UNLV and in wishing her good fortune in her new position.

A reception in Ms. Kwon's honor will be held at the Judy Bayley Theatre Lobby on Monday, January 24 at 3:00 p.m.



December 13, 1999

Dr. Douglas P. Ferraro Provost

Dear Dr. Ferraro:

This is to inform you that I have accepted a position at California State University, Hayward as the University Librarian. The appointment is effective March 1, 2000. At the same time, I have given my resignation letter to Dr. Marks.

While it may not be necessary to inform you separately of my resignation, I cannot think of leaving the university without letting you know how much I have appreciated all your support for the library. I am so excited about the Lied library and feel sad not to be here when it is finally completed.

For the past few months as I was working through various search processes, I began to discover how other academic institutions operate and, at the same time, I came to appreciate what we do here more. Under your leadership, I believe we have become more matured as an institution and will continue to expand and evolve to a different level. Since I practically grew up with UNLV, I have lots of thanks to the university for providing many new opportunities and challenges within the organization.

I understand that many challenges are ahead of me as I move on to the new position, but please know that you will always be remembered and appreciated in my heart for what you have done for the library while I was working at UNLV.

Best wishes,

Myoung-ja Lee Kwon

Associate Dean of Libraries

cc: Kenneth E. Marks, Dean of Libraries



December 13, 1999

Dear Library faculty and staff:

It is with mixed emotions that I inform you of my retirement effective March 1, 2000. My last day at the library will be January 31, 2000. Many of you may already know that I have been working at UNLV for over 30 years, and have been contemplating my retirement once the Lied library is complete. It was only the matter of time. As I watch the Lied Library taking shape, I cannot help but think what I will be doing after the project is completed. I have been involved in various new initiatives in the library during my tenure, from the creation of the Nonbook section when we moved into the rectangular building, to the first online catalog system, Carlyle, then the installation of the first truly integrated system, INNOPAC. The more I thought about my future contributions to the university, the more convinced I was that no other tasks would be greater than the new library project in which I am presently engaged. Initially I was going to wait until the move is complete and the shake-down period for a new building is over before I take my leave.

As I explored other options for my life after retirement, an exciting opportunity came to me. I was offered a position as the University Librarian at California State University, Hayward effective March 1, 2000. As it happens, I have three nephews living in the Bay Area and I will be living within 20 miles from all three of them. Also, Billy (my son) will be receiving a Master's degree in Architecture and Urban Planning from the University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee. I guess the new year will bring about lots of changes in our family.

In a way, I am sad that I won't be here to take us through the finishing line. I want to assure you that most of the critical tasks are taken care of and my files will be in order. From now until the end of January, I want to make sure that I spend enough time with those of you who need to know anything about the new building, library budget matters, or other things I was responsible for.

I want to take this opportunity to thank every and each one of you for your support and help during all these years. Without your help I would not have gotten through many of difficulties we have had. All our troubles are behind us now and you can look forward to the beautiful building where you can do wonders for our faculty and students. Knowing that the library is under Dr. Marks' leadership, my heart will be more than light to fly away to my new place.

Once again, thank you and good luck to all of you.

Sincerely,

Myoung-ja Lee Kwon

Associate Dean of Libraries



June 28, 2001

Mrs. Myoung-ja Kwon 27123 Fielding Drive Hayward, California 94542

Dear Myoung-ja:

You have been recommended to me for the title Emeritus Librarian, and I am pleased to confer this title upon you, effective immediately. This is a well-deserved honor that will serve as a continuing legacy of the many contributions you have made over the years at UNLV.

As an emeritus faculty member you are entitled to several privileges that are outlined on the enclosed sheet. In addition, you will be invited to the annual Emeritus Faculty Breakfast held each spring. I do hope that you will be able to continue your association with this campus, its faculty, and students during your retirement.

If you do not already have a UNLV photo identification card, please call the Campus Community Development office (702-895-4331) during regular office hours to make arrangements for securing one. This card will be needed for you to continue receiving faculty/staff privileges and benefits. If you have any general questions about emeritus privileges, you may call Schyler Richards in my office at (702) 895-3888.

Congratulations on this latest milestone in your professional career.

Sincerely,

Carol C. Harter President

Carol,

CCH:sr Enclosure

cc: Dean, Libraries Human Resources Department