

ORAL HISTORY TRANSCRIPT

FELICISIMA SERAFICA

NOVEMBER 12, 2014

Q. I am Deb Ballam. Today's date is November 12, 2014, and I am interviewing Ping Serafica, whose birthdate is?

A. March 22, 1932.

Q. And I realized I called you by your nickname, but you are Dr. Felicisima Serafica. Well, thank you for participating in our "Voices of Women" project. We really appreciate being able to include your voice in our collection. Could you describe the positions you've held or the roles you've played at Ohio State, in what units and over what time period?

A. I joined the Department of Psychology at The Ohio State University in September 1977. I had a joint appointment in the Department of Psychology and in the Department of Pediatrics, until the mid-1990s. And then sometime around there, I decided to resign from the joint appointment. I had a joint appointment because I was supervising students in clinical child psychology at Children's Hospital. We had no psychological clinic in the Psychology department in 1977 but by the 1990s, we had a psychological clinic in the department. I wasn't going to Children's Hospital anymore. It seemed time to give up that position as well, and I didn't really have time to do much more beyond that at Children's. So I stayed on in the Psychology department. I became Associate Professor about two or three years after I got here, and I remained there until my retirement in 2002. I was in the clinical child psychology program, which was part of the Developmental Psychology Program at OSU.

Q. Was your entire academic year spent at Ohio State then?

A. I spent some time at the University of Pittsburgh before coming here, starting while I was still doing my grad work at Clark University.

Q. So your graduate work was at Clark?

A. My doctoral training was at Clark University.

Q. Okay.

A. But this is really my second career.

Q. What was your first career then?

A. My first career was really as a special education teacher, then as a practicing clinical psychologist. I graduated from the University of Pennsylvania with a B.A., majoring in Psychology in 1952 and an M.S. in Special Education in 1953. I worked as a special education teacher in Philadelphia, teaching what were then called trainable mentally retarded children, at private schools since there were no public schools for those children as yet. At the same time, I was going to school getting a Master's degree in clinical psychology at Temple University. I obtained my Master's degree in '55, and in '56 I went back to the Philippines. I worked in the Philippines for a period of 10 years, during which I helped establish the first school for the then-called mentally retarded children in the Philippines and subsequently, the first inter-disciplinary mental health clinic. Following that, I worked as a school psychologist as well at an international school. So I had that career before going back to graduate school.

Q. Wow, I hadn't realized you had done all those things. Wow, that's fabulous. So you had a lot of actual experience in the things you taught then, too.

A. Yes.

Q. That's great. Can you talk a little bit about your family background and experiences that shaped you before you joined the faculty at Ohio State?

A. I was born in the Philippines in a place now called Legazpi City in the southern part of Luzon, which is one of the largest islands in the Philippines. My father was a lawyer by training who ended up as branch manager at one of the branches of the Philippine National Bank, and my mother was a home economics teacher, although she gave that up after she had her children, I think after her first or second born, and did not go back to that. So we lived there until I was about 7 years old. Then my father became ill and retired from his position, and we moved back to their hometown. So I grew up there. My father died in 1940, and shortly after that the war broke out. We lived pretty much in that town through most of that period actually. I actually went to school during the Japanese occupation as well, because in about mid-1942, things kind of settled down. The Japanese were occupying the towns but they were opening up the schools. And so I went to school there and finished elementary school, then went on to high school. But at that time there was no high school in my town, so I attended a convent school in a neighboring town. It was a boarding school, so to speak. Then in 1944, the Americans were coming back and things were getting really tough all around. So they sent all the students back to their hometowns at that particular time. I stayed in my hometown briefly before fleeing with my family to other areas during the bombardment and then returning after my hometown was re-taken by the American army. After the liberation of the Philippines, a public high school opened up in my hometown. So that was where I went until I finally completed high school. So I really grew up in Mangaldan, Pangasinan.

I came from a family of six [children]. My oldest brother died early, at the age of 16, I think, so I was essentially the middle child in my family. My parents had their first three children, and then the next three. My sister who is the oldest in the family, was 15 years older than I was. She was really away in college or working for most of the time. I really didn't know her while I was growing up but by the time I went to college I got to know her better. As an adult, I became very good friends with her. She was one of my mentors later on. Also, although she was a journalist by training, after the war she took a bachelor's degree in social work and got her Master's degree at the University of Southern California, then went back to the Philippines and worked there, eventually became head of the Social Development branch of the National Economic Council. So she and I had a lot in common, too, professionally and kind of had the same set of acquaintances in the field. We really did a lot of things together as adults. My second oldest brother was four years older than I was, and he was away at school most of the time that I was growing up. So we didn't know each other well. But now, we're close collaborators on family matters so we have a fairly close relationship. I had two younger brothers as well.

The thing that I remember most, was that ours was a family where we really were given support and freedom to do what we wanted to do. It wasn't that my widowed mother went along with us all the time. But she eventually would see that something was important to us, and would let us go ahead and do it. For example, it was very unusual in the Philippines, not just in my town but in the Philippines, to let a daughter of 19 years go off to the U.S. in those days. Usually people waited until you had finished college and then you could go to graduate school abroad. Unless you were among the very wealthy

who did send their children off to college in the United States. I am citing that just as an example of the fact that my mother was supportive. After she was widowed at the age of 43, she was quite active in the community. She was president of the Women's Catholic Club and she was president of the PTA, that sort of thing. So we were really brought up to be familiar with community service. It was kind of the thing that we did, that our family did and has continued to do.

Q. Talk more about coming to the United States when you were 19.

A. I was going to college at the University of the Philippines and one day, as I was sitting in class, someone came in and said, "The Dean (of the College of Liberal Arts) would like to see you in his office." I thought, "What did I do?"

Q. That is always a terrifying request.

A. I had never had any interaction with the Dean previously. So it would have never dawned on me that he had anything positive to say. Usually when you were called into the Office of the Dean, there's a problem. So I went in and he said, "There's an opportunity for a scholarship from the Fulbright office." At that time the Office of International Education was offering undergraduate scholarships, which was very rare. It usually offered the Fulbright and the Smith-Mundt scholarships for graduate students. That (i.e., the undergraduate scholarship program) wasn't a program that was familiar to me. And so I asked him to give me more information. Then I said, "Well, I'll have to talk to my family about it." And so I went home and talked with my sister, because she lived in the city where I was going to college. And then we talked to my mother. And they, my mother and sister said, "Well, if you would like to, just go ahead and apply and then we'll see. If you do get it, then we'll talk about it again." So that's what I did. And there were three of

us applicants, two women and one man. We were all close friends, actually. And I was granted the scholarship. The University of Pennsylvania gave me a tuition scholarship. The Panhellenic Association gave me a scholarship for my room and board. I lived in one of the sorority houses and I ate my meals at a different house every week.

Q. Oh really, why was that?

A. Because the Panhellenic Association wanted each house, each sorority, to become acquainted with me. At that time, right after World War II, there was a great deal of interest in international and inter-cultural issues. Actually, the year before I came, the Panhellenic scholar had come from Germany so they wanted someone from Asia this time. It was a very interesting exchange, actually. And that was a very formative experience for me as well.

In the summer after that, I did something that turned out to be quite a turning point in my life. I took an internship with the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) after graduation, the summer before I went into graduate school in Special Ed. I had worked with a young child in the clinic at Penn and this child had developmental delay. That was what got me interested in Special Ed. The clinic at the University of Pennsylvania was the first psychological clinic in the United States. It was started by [Professory Lightner] Witmer and it was really a psychoeducational clinic. What he was interested in was the application of psychological principles and findings to educational problems in the young. I applied and got accepted into Penn's Graduate School of Education and received a scholarship. But I wasn't sure how I would feel in dealing with large groups of these developmentally delayed children. I had worked one on one in the clinic. So I took this summer internship in a school for the developmentally delayed. It

was the Lincoln State School. Five thousand people lived in the town of Lincoln, Illinois, and 3,000 of them lived at the institution. That's how big it was. But the interesting part was that, because our AFSC group was an international group – we had, besides myself and the white American students, a student from Jamaica, one from Colombia, and a young woman from Mississippi who was African- American – we found out that we could not go into any of the recreational facilities in town.

Q. And this was in Illinois?

A. Illinois. Lincoln, Illinois.

Q. Because of your race and ethnicity?

A. Exactly. So that got the group upset. The leader of our group was a man named Brad, and he was a student at Earlham College. He was a very interesting guy. Years later, I read that he led a group that walked to Russia for peace, in the 1960s I think it was, during the Cold War. But anyway, he decided that we needed to work with the townspeople. So in our time off from work at Lincoln State School, we organized the first NAACP chapter in Lincoln, Illinois.

Q. What year was this?

A. 1952.

Q. Wow.

A. And we worked to try to get places desegregated. There was a movie house, there was a skating rink, and there was a Coke place, one of those places where you could go in and get a Coke or play the jukebox, that sort of thing. It was segregated. At the time we left, not all of those had become desegregated but I think we got the skating rink desegregated

or something like that. We were successful at one. We organized it enough so that there were people that we worked with, ministers, who would continue the work after we left.

Q. And what were the races and ethnicities of the group? The people you were with? Brad was what?

A. Brad was American. He was a student at Earlham.

Q. He was Caucasian?

A. Yes, he was Caucasian.

Q. And there was an African- American woman from Mississippi.

A. Mississippi and then the rest of the Americans were all Caucasians. There was a young woman from Texas. They were all European Americans. There was a young man from Illinois. And there was a young man from New Jersey, and another one from someplace in the South.

Q. So the discrimination was both against the woman from Mississippi, who was African- American, and against you because you're Asian?

A. Yes, and against the international students from Jamaica and Colombia. I was not with them when they initially tried to get into these places. But one day, I went to town and I walked, because there was no public transportation, and it was hot and dusty. It was a summer day. So I stopped in this Coke place to get a Coke, and they refused me. And then they explained why. And I said, "I'm not (_____ using the designation prevalent at the time), I'm from the Philippines." And they were willing to do it (i.e., serve me), but I didn't want to accept it, either. So I had that experience as well.

Q. I'm sure that was formative, based on what I know you did after. I'm sure that was formative. Well, that leads into our next question. In what ways do you generally identify

yourself as well as how others see you, in terms of gender, race, sex, religion, class, all the kinds of ways that are multi-cultural.

A. Of course you know how I identify myself by gender. I identify myself as Asian American by race and Filipino by ethnicity. And I'm Roman Catholic, have been all my life. And I come from a middle-class family in the Philippines. I had looked at your interview questionnaire and saw the question, How has being female shaped your life? When I thought about it, being a female was never high in my consciousness, I think, for two reasons: One, I come from the Philippines where, although there are definite roles for men and women, in terms of achievement, schooling, etc., women have always been encouraged to go to school, and we have a very high literacy rate for everybody. Women have participated in occupations always. A recent international study on the gender gap showed the Philippines ranked among the top in terms of women's participation in economic life of the country and political life of the country, and so on.

Q. Why do you think that was in the Philippines? Because that's different from a lot of countries.

A. Indigenous Filipinos, though they were not completely egalitarian, had strong women. And women were accepted, although that was later submerged as a result of our colonization. Scholars are just beginning to unearth that history. Also, because the Spaniards placed so much emphasis on social status, the men who could afford it, aspired to becoming lawyers or whatever, but they did not make a lot of money. So it was the women who were engaging in businesses, who were making the money and actually were the mainstay of the family, while their husbands who were politicians or office holders in the government, were not making enough money. Or they (i.e., the men) were off

fighting in the Revolution against Spain. So the women always had these opportunities to assert themselves and do something economically meaningful in addition to the meaningful task of raising a family. And they did it without being too obvious about it. He could decide big things like whether or not to take up arms against the Spaniards, and the woman decided day-to-day matters.

Q. So when you came to the United States, how was it to be a woman in the United States then?

A. The big shock to me when I got to the United States as a college senior, was that everybody (i.e., my female peers) was so focused on getting engaged.

Q. That would have been true at that time.

A. That was it. That was really the focus. And I was focused on getting into graduate school, because that was what was expected of us then too, in the Philippines. I was already planning, we (my close friends and I) were all planning to apply for Fulbright or Smith-Mundt fellowships to go to graduate school eventually.

Q. And again, what year was this?

A. 1951. I came in '51. I was in the College for Women because the University of Pennsylvania at that time was not co-educational. They admitted women, but women were in a separate college. I think only three people in my class whom I knew personally were applying to graduate school. So that was the shocker for me.

Q. How has your Asian-American identity shaped you then?

A. Initially when I first came to the United States, the identity that came to the forefront was being an international student from the Philippines, not an Asian. It wasn't until the 1980s, when the rise of the Civil Rights Movement in the 1960s was followed by the

ethnic movements, that being Asian American or having an Asian-American identity sort of came to the fore.

Q. And so you were already here on the faculty.

A. I was already here on the faculty. After I came to OSU, I was invited to a workshop at the Ohio Union and that was the first workshop where I really saw Asian-American students, males included, crying about their experiences. I think these were students who were really born in the United States. I think to some extent, Asian students who are coming from Asia are kind of inoculated in the sense that they grew up in a setting where they didn't experience discrimination. Whereas these U.S.-born and/or -raised students had.

Q. What were some of the experiences that they'd had? Can you remember the things they talked about?

A. They talked about the experiences of discrimination that they felt when they came to OSU, including some that were at offices where they thought they could get help. That was the logical place for them to go to get help, and they didn't get it there. And also in the classrooms.

Q. What were some of the things that would have happened to them?

A. They talked, for example, of not being able to obtain financial aid that they thought they might be eligible for, or that the teachers, for example, would bypass them when calling on students to recite in class, or if students wanted to ask questions or whatever, and so on, those kinds of experiences. And the loneliness they felt. The difficulties of also having and making friends. It was very difficult for them. That made me realize how difficult it was for the students. And then of course, I also became aware of it because at the time I was a member of the Society for Research in Child Development and was

asked, along with one of my African -American colleagues, one of my Native American colleagues and one of our Hispanic colleagues, to write a chapter on Ethnic Socialization in our respective groups. We found a dearth of scientific information about ethnic family socialization in the United States. This really got me interested in that field of study. To this day, I have an interest in ethnic development and mental health.

Q. Okay. I know that you chaired some task forces at Ohio State on Asian-American issues.

A. But before that I chaired the Committee on Women and Minorities.

Q. Oh, talk about that. Was that a University Senate committee?

A. Yes, a University Senate committee.

Q. Talk a little bit about what you did with that then.

A. In 1981, I think it was '81, and my initiative was to conduct the first study of a ten-year representation of men and women among the University faculty. So we did that. A copy of the report is in a box in my basement, but I looked for it and I couldn't find it. It's somewhere there but I just didn't have time to look for it successfully.

Q. The Archives would love to have that.

A. So I'm going to look for it.

Q. Any reports you have like that, we would like to have.

A. I have them all in a box somewhere. So we did that. And we proposed a resolution to the Senate, I think it was to – from then on – present an annual report on the status of women and ethnic minorities in the faculty. And that was the first study that was done. And they did, the Senate passed the resolution. I remember my trepidation. Jim who had chaired the committee before I did....

Q. And who was this?

A. Jim Leitzel. Professor James Leitzel, the now deceased husband of Joan Leitzel, Dr. Joan Leitzel. And Jim actually had urged me to take the Senate Committee on Women and Minorities Chair position when I told him that I had chaired the Committee on Racial Justice in the department at the University of Pittsburgh, where I had been before I came here. But I had not chaired a University Senate committee. And he said, “No, Ping, you can do it. You go ahead.” And he was very supportive. So he approached me just before the Senate meeting and he said, “Ping, are you going to go out with fireworks?” And I said, “I hope not, but I guess we have to do this.” This was a June meeting, I think it was the end of year meeting. I gave the report and I proposed the resolution. And fortunately the Senate passed it without too much fuss. I was prepared. I had really studied and really prepared for a lot of discussion. And they were good about it. There wasn’t that much controversy.

Q. Was the main proposal just to do the annual report, to look at the numbers, or to look at climate issues also, or just numbers?

A. The numbers, yes. Also while I was chairing the Committee on Women and Minorities in ’81 to ’83, talk about being in the right place at the right time, that was the time that President Jennings finally agreed to a proposal that [Vice Provost of Minority Affairs] Frank Hale had made, to create an Affirmative Action grants program and a Distinguished Affirmative Action Award Program. The Senate Committee on Women and Minorities was given the task of setting up those two programs.

Q. Oh really? Okay.

A. So we had no staff. We had nothing. The trunk of my car was the office. And so because of those two programs our committee had a lot of publicity. People were very eager to apply. There was \$100,000 for the Affirmative Action Grants Program.

Q. That's fantastic.

A. For example, we funded programs for recruitment of women in engineering. We funded programs for ethnic minority health issues. Any academic or administrative unit and any student organization could apply. So that was terrific. It was a lot of work, believe me, to institute two programs at the same time.

Because of the publicity this generated, we also started getting a lot of letters from people complaining about things that were going on in their department and so forth. And we referred them to the Office of Affirmative Action. And that was when I finally realized, I had been naïve, like these people, about the Office of Affirmative Action. Complaints put the Office of Affirmative Action staff, in a double bind, in a way. Because on the one hand, their mission is to see that the University is in compliance with Affirmative Action federal guidelines, and at the same time they have to deal with the issue raised by a faculty member or staff in a sympathetic way. And sometimes it was not always possible to be that way. People thought that the Senate Committee could do a lot more about their problems, when the Senate Committee really had no power to resolve those issues, except to lend a listening ear, to be supportive and help them negotiate the University system.

Q. Who ran that office of Affirmative Action at that time?

A. Sue Jackson.

Q. Dorothy Jackson?

- A. No, no, not Dorothy Jackson, Sue Jackson. [Sue T. Kindred was the director of the Office of Affirmative Action at this time.]
- Q. I didn't come until '85.
- A. I think that was her name. I'm not sure now, but I think that's right.
- Q. Did they do anything? Do you know?
- A. I don't know. Once I turned it over, I don't know what happened because of confidentiality rules. But that was the role, to help them. If we couldn't resolve it for them, at least we helped them to navigate the system.
- Q. To get things started.
- A. To get started, yes. So that's what we did. We got a lot of letters.
- Q. Do you remember some of the specific things that people talked about in the letters? Did you keep any of those letters?
- A. No, I didn't keep any of those. Things like, mostly they were directed at the Chair of a department, not being accepting of what people were offering and so forth, ignoring them (i.e., their contributions), or salary issues, tenure issues, and so on.
- Q. Okay, so you chaired that committee. I hadn't realized that. I don't want to leave anything out. So other than these task forces, were there other things too?
- A. Yes, I chaired the Task Force on Asian American Students.
- Q. And what time period what that have been?
- A. That was in 1990. And that was for one year. Provost Frederick Hutchinson responded to a committee of Asian-American students who went to see him. I think they went in the company of some of the Asian-American staff from the Office of Asian-American Student Services, who did so to lend support to the students. They were undergraduate

students, and the graduate and professional students were represented as well. They presented complaints about the lack of courses on Asian Americans, but also they felt that Asian Americans were not getting their share of scholarships through the Office of Minority Affairs, and they had other issues related to that office as well. They also felt that there were not enough supportive services for Asian-American students as well. So he, the Provost, decided to create a Task Force on Asian American Students, composed of faculty and staff who would examine and assess the needs of Asian-American students, examine the University units that were supposed to serve the students and what they were doing in order to meet those needs. The Task Force was charged to assess the pool of Asian-American students in Ohio as well, and what could be done to attract more of them to come to the University. So we did all of those. We actually did a survey of Asian American students on campus. We also did a survey of the different units that are supposed to serve Asian-American students. And we collected data through the State of Ohio Department of Education on high school seniors of Asian-American ethnicity in the State of Ohio. So we submitted a report that had a number of recommendations pertaining to services needed by the students, the extent to which the services were being met by the different units that were supposed to serve them, the absence of courses on Asian Americans, and we recommended that an Asian-American Studies program be initiated and organized. And we also submitted data on the pool in Ohio, and what might be done to attract those. Some of the recommendations were accepted. Unfortunately, though we submitted the report on time, by that time too, President Hutchinson had already accepted the position as President of the University of New Hampshire, and then he left. And Dean [Joan] Huber became the Provost. Incidentally, Barbara Newman was

the Associate Provost who worked with us, and she was wonderful. I don't know if you've interviewed her.

Q. We have just located her. So we are hoping to interview her.

A. She would be one of those.

Q. And how did Provost Huber accept the report?

A. Before Provost Hutchinson left, he had also implemented certain recommendations already. But the one that I remember most about Provost Huber, was that she was not accepting of the recommendation for an Asian American Studies Program. She was willing to provide funding for one course, and we were able to establish the Asian-American course in Sociology. But not the Asian American Studies Program. We had also recommended that money be set aside for a colloquium series on Asian Americans, and she accepted that and provided funding for five years, so we were able to establish a colloquium series. I had set up an Asian-American research interest group by that time. The Asian American Research Interest group was given the authority to create the colloquium series and to manage it. So we did that. And out of that we were able, using part of the colloquium funds, to establish the Distinguished Lecture in Asian American History, which, years later, became the Distinguished Lecture in Asian American Studies. It still continues to be held annually.

After Provost Huber retired from that position, Richard Sisson became Provost. He was from the University of California at Berkeley. He was very familiar with Asian American Studies so he was much more supportive of that. Provost Sisson created a committee to study the feasibility of an Asian American Studies program at OSU. So we did that and we recommended that it was feasible and they said, "Oh yes, let's set up the

Asian American Studies Program.” So they set it up, within the Department of Comparative Studies, but they didn’t provide funding. By that time, again we got a new Provost. And the new Provost supposedly said, “No funds.”

Q. Was that Ed Ray, did he follow Richard Sisson? Did Ed Ray follow Sisson?

A. No, no, we finally got it funded under Ed Ray.

Q. There was somebody between Sisson and Ed Ray. Who was that?

A. Let’s see. I drew up the timeline. Judy Wu and I wrote up an article on this. Okay. It was the person between Sisson and Ray.

Q. Oh I know, Myles Brand.

A. That was before that. Myles Brand was before that I think, yeah. Anyway, I chaired the committee that assessed feasibility. Then, they (i.e., the Deans) established an Asian American Studies Program (AASP) interim oversight committee that would try to work out the relationship for a structure that would administer the AASP, develop the curriculum and work with Comparative Studies to get a minor approved. So we worked on that with the help of Comparative Studies Program Specialist Margaret Lynd and we submitted a proposal for a minor in Asian American Studies to the Office of Academic Affairs. The minor was approved in 1997. Remember, we started in 1990. In the meantime, there was still no funding. There was no program coordinator because there was no money. In June 1999, Ed Ray, who had become the Provost by then, became aware of the lack of funding for the Asian American Studies Program, so he met with the Deans, Dean [Randall] Ripley of Social & Behavioral Sciences and Dean [Kermit] Hall of Humanities. Together, they decided to appoint a coordinator and provide funding initially for two years, to be followed after that, possibly by renewals. And so by 1999,

ten years later, almost ten years later, we finally got the Asian American Studies Program established and funded.

Q. And it is a strong Asian American Studies program now, wouldn't you say?

A. Uh-huh.

Q. So it's a good lesson in social change. You've got to start with a small step and then you can just build.

A. But then, there is another story. But then what happened to the program, the ethnic programs, all of them, is another story altogether.

Q. I remember, going back to your Asian-American task force with students, I seem to remember going to a panel discussion where you presented your final, you had the whole group there. Do you remember presenting the panel discussion on your findings? I seem to remember going to that. And it was the first time I had really heard about issues facing Asian-American students. And I remember I cried at that panel, when I heard the stories, what we would now call hate crimes toward students. Can you talk a little bit more about those kinds of things that students experienced?

A. And faculty as well. Because at that time (late 1980s to 1990) there was graffiti on the parking garage walls. That was the time when Americans first became aware of how popular Japanese cars were becoming. And at the same time the economy was undergoing a recession. So there was graffiti in all the parking garages against Asian Americans. The students also experienced the discrimination at the bars. There was discrimination in housing. And the other part was, the animosity against Asian Americans was aided also by the model minority myth. It completely ignores the fact that, you know, there's a great deal of diversity among Asian Americans.

Q. Can you talk a little bit about the model minority myth?

A. The model minority myth was really created, you know, in the 1960s. The idea was that the Japanese Americans and the Chinese Americans were performing very well academically and occupationally. And that was because they were supposed to share the values of European Americans. One of the consequences of that myth was that they were not perceived as in need of any of the aid that was available to other under-represented groups. Asian-American students were expected, for example, to do very well in math. And this in a sense resulted in other students resenting them as well. And also, that did not take into account the fact that at the same time, not everybody among the Asian Americans did well in math. But where it really hurt, because of the model minority myth, they, the Asian Americans were not considered as an under-represented group in need of special services or financial aid. So that was one of the big things, eligibility for scholarships through the Office of Minority Affairs, for example.

Q. And can you talk a little bit about the diversity in the Asian-American community that really explodes that myth?

A. The Asian Americans are composed of, not only the Japanese and the Chinese and the Koreans, those are the East Asians, but also the Vietnamese and other Southeast Asians such as the Cambodians, Hmongs and Laotians. Then, there are also the Filipinos, Indonesians, Malaysians, Burmese, and the South Asians from Bangladesh, India, and Pakistan. And then there are the Pacific Islanders: the Samoans, the Hawaiians, etc. And all of them have different histories, and therefore also different levels of economic development, especially among the refugees who came here. While many of them were educated, there were just as many who were not, or their relatives were less well

educated. What all of them have in common was an interest in education. They valued education. They wanted their children to do well and so they encouraged them. But not all of those children were doing well. Those who had language proficiency problems, for example, would have more difficulties in school than those who did not have these language problems. And furthermore, among certain groups, for example, that were mountain groups, like the Hmongs, they encountered difficulties with getting their families to support them in their desire to go to school. So there were all these difficulties that the students were really having.

Q. Do you think even today that model minority myth hinders the ability of large segments of the Asian-American community to get the services they need?

A. Oh yes, I think even today.

Q. Were there any other task forces or committees that you chaired that focused on equity issues for either women or people of color or any groups?

A. Here at OSU?

Q. Yes.

A. Not so much minority but I was also active for a while in the Women in Development group.

Q. Oh, can you talk a little bit about that?

A. Former Provost Joan Huber, you know, helped to start that group when she was still Dean of the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences. She, and former Dean of the College of Human Ecology Francille Firebaugh and others, including myself, helped to start that group.

Q. What was the purpose of that group?

- A. The purpose of that group was to get together women who were interested in women in the developing world and to share their research and experiences with women in developing countries. It started out as a discussion group and people would present, particularly people who were doing work in the in developing world. So it was mostly women faculty and graduate students, including international graduate students, who were doing research, like Claire Robertson in History, Cathy Rakowski in Rural Sociology. Did you interview her?
- Q. We haven't yet; we've been trying to...
- A. Cathy was sort of Coordinator, after Dean Firebaugh left to go to Cornell, I think it was. And then Dean Huber became busier, becoming Provost and so forth. Cathy Rakowski really took over that group and it flourished under her leadership. And then the students got a chance also to present their work. So it was a very interesting group as well.
- Q. Okay. I think we've actually covered a lot of the questions that I didn't ask, but I think we've covered them. But I wonder if you could talk about any other collective efforts for change, other than task forces and committees. Were there any other collective efforts you were involved in at OSU, around equity issues?
- A. The Asian American Studies program has really been still something that concerns me, in terms of its organizational structure. And this concern holds for the other ethnic studies programs, except for African American Studies. I think the University has done a splendid job on what I call the body count, i.e., on diversifying the student body and faculty and staff. But it really has, I would not say completely ignored, but it has exercised benign neglect in the production and teaching of research relating to under-represented groups, except in the African American and the Women's Studies programs.

They've never really provided the kind of support that the other ethnic programs need to flourish. Now one of the reasons I turned down the opportunity to become the first coordinator for the Asian American Studies program was because it was placed in the College of Humanities, which is very appropriate in many instances. I felt that someone who is in the College of Humanities ought to be the coordinator, because he or she would know the internal structure, and could work better with the Department of Comparative Studies and the College of Humanities. Dr. Tom Kasulis, Chair of the Department of Comparative Studies, had been very supportive in the creation of an Asian American Studies program. But when he was no longer the Chair, I think, the Asian American Studies, Latino/a American Studies and Native American Studies, which had all ended up under Comparative Studies, were not receiving the funding they really needed. And even though part of the reason Comparative Studies was interested in hosting these programs was so a new Ethnic Studies Program within that department could be included in their application for an Enrichment Grant Award from the Office of Academic Affairs. They received the enrichment grant. Two of the new faculty slots included in that Enrichment Grant were supposed to be for the Asian American Studies Program, one of them specifically for a senior position, so a Program Coordinator at a senior level could be hired. Those two hires never materialized. So eventually, I don't know exactly why because I was retired by then, but Asian American Studies and the other ethnic studies programs became part of an interdisciplinary group of studies under the direct office of Dean...?

Q. Debra Modellmog? Or Jackie Royster?

A. No, no. The African American.

- Q. Jackie Royster? She was the Dean of Arts and Sciences, the Executive Dean for Arts and Sciences. And I think she tried to do some things.
- A. She tried to do something about it. So the three ethnic studies programs were taken out of Comparative Studies and moved to the College of Arts and Sciences. When she left, they kind of didn't have a home anymore because the College of Arts and Sciences was reorganized, right? So the different ethnic studies programs went their separate ways. Latino Studies aligned itself with the Department of Spanish and Portuguese and Asian American Studies and I think, Native American Studies affiliated with DISCO [Diversity and Identity Studies Collective at OSU].
- Q. So that's a big thing that still needs to be done, is provide an organizational structure and support?
- A. Yes, because it would have been nice if they could have remained in the Ethnic Studies program under Comparative Studies, and eventually maybe they could have emerged from that foster-child relationship. The Department of Comparative Studies received a certain amount of money to support this group of ethnic studies programs, I assume. That's why I think of it as a foster -child program. And had these programs received the kind of support that they needed from the Department, the College, and OAA [Office of Academic Affairs], including senior faculty, they could have grown and become an Ethnic Studies Program and eventually perhaps even a department, in their own right.
- Q. Right, so there's still a lot to be done.
- A. There's a lot to be done. But more importantly, they ought to support the research or scholarship. Not just the program; it's the scholarship or production and teaching of research-based knowledge about ethnic minorities.

Q. Aside from the Ethnic Studies programs, what are the main things that still need to be done, in terms of the climate for Asian-American faculty, staff and students at Ohio State?

A. I'm really less familiar now with the issues, being retired. I've been involved with Asian American Studies because I'm interested in this field. But I don't know much about what the issues are relating to the students in particular. What I do know is that not as many eligible students are taking the Ethnic Studies courses, because they're not getting the encouragement to do so from their departments, faculty, or the Office of Academic Advising.

Q. So still a lot to be done.

A. There is a lot to be done.

Q. Can you talk about the most powerful experience you had during your career at Ohio State?

A. It was being part of a developmentally oriented clinical child psychology program. I don't know about powerful, but it was meaningful. I came here because Charles Wenar, who established the clinical child psychology program, had a very strong developmental orientation. He was a pioneer in the field of what is now called developmental psychopathology, in that he believed that the study of psychopathology in children should be based on knowledge about normal development. Until then, the approach to clinical child psychology was simply to take what we knew about adult psychology and extend it to children. Anna Freud started this whole notion about normal development as the proper basis for understanding abnormal development, not only in children, but also in adults. That it is a continuing process. But as psychoanalytic theory fell into disfavor to

be supplanted by behavior theory, all of that (i.e., the developmental orientation) began to fade away. So Charles and I and a few others across the country, were very much bucking the trend in proposing this, although it has by now gained greater acceptance. And there's a lot of research in the field of developmental psychopathology now to support it.

Q. So you were able to help develop that?

A. I was able to participate in that in my career. And also in terms of even popularizing it as well. So that's been very important to me. And our students have really come here just because they wanted a developmental orientation. Our program was nationally known as the program for graduate students who wanted the developmental orientation. Though that too kind of faded after Charles retired, because then we moved the program from the Developmental Area into the Clinical Psychology Area, which was then solely an adult clinical psychology area. Because of licensing issues, it was better for the graduate students in clinical child psychology to be in the formerly entirely adult Clinical Psychology Area because it was accredited by the American Psychological Association (APA). APA would accredit only one clinical psychology program at each university and the adult clinical psychology program was established first at OSU and received the APA accreditation. So we merged the clinical child psychology program with that. As you know, in departments, things change. Funding patterns change. So right now the clinical child program is not as strong as it used to be.

Q. That does sound like it was a powerful thing.

A. At this time, besides the increasing acknowledgement of developmental psychopathology, the study of ethnic development was also becoming popular across the nation. I was able to become part of that whole national movement, too. It was just fun.

Q. This has been fascinating. Is there anything that you want to add that we haven't talked about? Anything that we've left out that you would like to cover? Topics you would like to cover?

A. Yes, we talked a little bit about being a woman and so on. In terms of one's career development, I was fortunate because I happened to have good male mentors. When I was at Penn, I had a good female mentor when I was in an undergraduate. Francis Seidman was a clinical child psychologist on the faculty of Penn, and she taught the clinical practicum courses. She was a faculty supervisor. And she was excellent. And she helped me in a sense navigate the system, because I was fairly new to the United States. Even though I was accepted into Penn's Graduate School of Education, I was not accepted into the clinical psychology program at Penn. And this is where I experienced discrimination, as a graduate student. Not during my undergraduate career or even before I went to Lincoln, Illinois, but afterwards. After I had finished my Master's in Special Ed, I wanted to go on and do my clinical work at Penn. The head of the psychological clinical, who was a woman, didn't favor my application. I had no idea she felt the way about me, because she was very, very nice when I would meet her. I had A's in my courses. I did very well in the general exams. So everything was fine academically, in terms of my grades and all that. But because I was a foreigner, I had a foreign accent, she did not think I should be accepted, and because she was the head of the clinic, she had a lot of say in the Admissions Committee. So I couldn't get in there and I had to go to another university. But other than that, when I came back to the U.S. for doctoral training I had good male mentors to steer me through graduate school and I could not have asked for a better head of a clinical child psychology program than Charles Wenar. He and his

wife were clinical child psychologists. They were both really very instrumental in helping me feel very welcome and comfortable in the department. And overall I had a good experience in the department. I enjoyed it. But the one thing I must say is, to go back to when we were talking about the number of women in units, there was the one thing that was perhaps a drawback, that there were so few of us and we were housed in so many buildings, that we rarely saw each other except in the ladies room occasionally. So in that sense I've sometimes wondered when I saw my male colleagues forming collaborative relationships around research much faster and easier, they got together quickly, whether I could have had more such collaborations had there been more women in my area. I collaborated with Charles Wenar, but by the time I came to OSU, he was beginning to phase out his research program. We did some research together and we wrote together a number of articles. When Gifford came, she tried to get the women together.

Q. Gifford Weary. When she became Chair of the Department?

A. Eventually, much later. When she first came, as an Assistant Professor, she was the first one who really tried to get the women together. When I came there were only a few women. There was Mari Jones, who was very welcoming but Mari's office was in a different building.

Q. Right.

A. And there was Alexis Collier. And Nancy Betz and Pat Myers, who was a senior.

Q. Was Dorothy Jackson there at that time?

A. She was Associate Provost. She was not in the department.

Q. How about Sally?

A. Sally Boysen?

Q. Yes.

A. She came much later. I think there were just very few of us.

Q. And numbers do make a difference, don't they?

A. And Gifford wasn't even there yet at that time. It wasn't until Gifford came that really the women in the department first got together. It was Gifford who hosted us, at her home. And after that, we met for a while, now and then, at each other's homes. But I could count that on less than ten fingers, the times that we got together. And that didn't bother me in terms of the substantive work that I was doing, but it would have been nice. I looked with envy at some of my colleagues in Human Ecology, Education, or Nursing, because they socialized together. And I ended up socializing with them really because there were more of them and because I was working with school psychology and with human ecology as well, so I had a lot of interaction with them.

Q. It's kind of like the same thing the students have talked about in that task force, is that they were just lonely. Without numbers you can just be lonely. And it makes a huge difference in the quality of your life.

A. And there was Barbara Edmondson, a colleague at Nisonger Center who had a joint appointment in the psychology department. She introduced me to a group in Columbus called Women and Executives in Mental Health. They were mostly social workers, educators, head of residential treatment facilities, that sort of thing. They met once a month, like a career support group. That was one of the things that I really liked and enjoyed. We met for dinner. If somebody was having difficulties with tenure, promotion, or other job-related issue, they would talk about it.

Q. It's interesting. You find support groups. You just try to find them, don't you?

- A. Actually, the collaborative relationships that that I found were mostly from all over the country. You end up collaborating with people in other universities who have similar research or policy interests.
- Q. That's interesting. Is there anything else that we haven't covered that you want to be able to add?
- A. I think that's it. I really don't know the concerns today about equity issues. Even though I go a department colloquium occasionally, I don't know the women in the psychology department anymore. Everyone I knew well has retired.
- Q. If you have any photos, reports, newspaper clippings, anything like that, the Archives would love to have it. And they will make photocopies and get it back to you.
- A. I will let you know when I do find them.
- Q. Are there other people you think we should interview? You mentioned Cathy Rakowski. We have her on our list.
- A. Barbara Newman, those are the two.
- Q. I'm going to add Gifford Weary to the list, because we don't have her.
- A. Yes.
- Q. If you think of any, just let me know.
- A. Nancy Betz.
- Q. Oh, we need to put Nancy Betz on the list too. We have a lot we need to get on the list.
- A. I'm trying to think, Sheila Kapur, who headed the office of Asian American Student Services.
- Q. We need to get her on the list too. She would be a good one.
- A. Yes, because she also served as Assistant Dean in the College of Law.

- Q. Is she still in town, do you know?
- A. Yes, she's still in town. Actually, now she is in social work. She left, she resigned from there and decided to go into social work. Got a degree from the College of Social Work, and is now working here, in Columbus. And Rebecca Nelson.
- Q. We've already done Rebecca Nelson. We've done Rebecca Nelson and Chicaco Cox and Judy Wu. Well, thank you so much.
- A. You're welcome. This is a great project.
- Q. Yes, it's been a wonderful and interesting interview. I appreciate it.

Postscript

After reviewing the transcript, I realized that I had failed to mention my involvement with advocacy for women at OSU. This omission seemed puzzling at first but not after considering that it was the earliest movement in which I became involved at OSU so perhaps so many other memories were layered over it. Furthermore, my participation in it came about more naturally in that my participation came from reading an announcement or hearing about a meeting regarding women's issues. I could. It was not something that I was specifically asked to do, with clearly delineated responsibilities, such as serving on the President's Diversity Committee. My participation consisted mainly of attending meetings held to discuss issues raised by women faculty, students, and staff and strategies for resolving these issues. The most salient issues relating to faculty were the scarcity of women faculty in many academic departments, tenure-related issues, and the fact that few women had been promoted to full professor rank. Similarly, staff were concerned with promotion to supervisory and administrative positions. Students also raised issues, including the lack of women's studies courses, but the most disturbing report

concerned sexual advances made by a male faculty member toward graduate students. Campus climate was a shared concern among faculty, staff and students. The meetings provided a venue for identifying problems and exploring possible solutions. It also served the equally important functions of providing emotional support and mentoring, as well as instilling a feeling that one was not alone while facing challenges in academe. Insights gained from participating in the OSU women's movement helped to shape the perspective that I brought to my subsequent role as Chair of the University Senate Committee on Women and Minorities.