

Sacramento COVID 19 Asian American Oral History Project

Asian American Communities, Ethnic Studies 113

CSU Sacramento

Fall 2023 Semester

William Gow

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Interviewer: Jeron Brooke Valentin

Group Members: Jeron Brooke Valentin

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James

0:01

Hello. My name is James Pallett, and I'm with Jaron Valentine.

Hi. Today is the 5th of September 2023 and we are currently in Mendocino Hall at room 13 here at the University of Sacramento State, California.

Jeron

0:05

And we will be recording an oral history for Professor Glass Fall 2023 at next 130 and Asian-American Communities Courses.

James

0:15

Mm hmm. So, Jeremy, how are you? Good. Good.

Jeron

0:22

How are you? I'm glad to be here. Good. Good. I'm glad. Are you comfortable over here?

James

0:25

Do you want to change anything or. No. Everything's okay. Everything's okay.

Jeron

0:29

All right. We got a long interview ahead of us. Okay. Okay. There you go.

James

0:33

So, first off, what do you want? What do you like to do for fun?

Jeron

0:37

What do I like to do for fun? Yeah. So how do you stay for fun, huh?

James

0:40

For sales people going to the gym. Fun? Yeah.

Jeron

0:47

I mean, do you. Do you think it's fun? Yeah, I think it is. Yeah. What do you like to do at the gym?

James

0:50

Like. Well, obviously a workout workout? Yeah. It's your favorite thing to work.

Jeron

0:54

Like all my legs, All the.

James

0:58

All parts of my body. Really? Yeah. Is there anything that you're focusing on right now?

Jeron

1:02

My legs. Because my legs looks skinny as [INAUDIBLE]. Really?

James

1:07

And my leg. Because in here. I'm sorry, I. You know what?

Jeron

1:10

It's okay. It's okay. It's. We can always bleep it out later during during the editing or during the edit here.

James

1:14

So. So, yes, I like to work on my legs.

Jeron

1:20

I like to warm up during my squats. Yeah, I like I mean, I warm up my squats.

James

1:23

I mean, do you, do you do any stretching beforehand? I do.

Jeron

1:28

Okay. I'm going to say it's very important, very important to me. I'm tired of a couple of things while working out.

James

1:31

Know, stretching. Yeah. Yeah. It's very painful.

Jeron

1:36

Yeah. So is squats like your favorite workout to do as a woman?

James

1:40

That's okay. I'm off. Yeah. I was going to say, if you. If you want to go, like, work out, you can always do a rdl.

Jeron

1:44

Yeah. Are they? Oh, yeah. My second favorite. Oh, okay. Yeah. Okay.

James

1:50

Yeah. Even though it kind of looks sketchy. It's okay.

Jeron

1:53

Honestly, it's only more on the back that you have to focus on when you're doing that type of stuff.

James

1:57

So, you know, just be. Just be careful and, you know. Yeah. Look out for yourself.

Jeron

2:00

Yeah. Yeah. I mean, you look. You're very. You look like a very big guy. It's like right now I can see the shoulders are my father.

James

2:04

You could see the biceps going and the forearms.

Jeron

2:10

So, yeah, I tried to even working out for like, I started working on 2017, but then I just like up and down.

James

2:13

I skipped, I started again, I skipped, I started out.

Jeron

2:21

So I'm guessing right now you're starting up again? Yeah. Yeah. I was going to say, even for how Stop start you say you are, you still look pretty.

James

2:24

Pretty good for your for yourself. Thanks. So when you're working out, what kind of music do you like to listen to?

Jeron

2:31

Oh, when I work out, Yeah. Okay. I like to listen to aggressive, aggressive music.

James

2:35

Oh, say you like EDM type of guy? No, not. Not even like.

Jeron

2:41

Yeah, that's pretty aggressive. Like rap groups like Rap or some of those typical TikTok music.

James

2:45

Yeah. Yeah. Like, like those Gen TIKTOKS can't say that I really know what that means by He probably listens like Drake.

Jeron

2:56

Probably. And I do listen to Drake. Forgot his name for that.

James

3:04

Let me see. Is it Kendrick Lamar? Kendrick Lamar?

Jeron

3:10

Ha. Um, I listen to Nelly.

James

3:14

Nelly. Okay. A little bit of old school rapper's. A little bit of old school.

Jeron

3:19

Jay-Z. Okay, Yeah. Low n0n and, um.

James

3:23

Travis Scott. Travis. Scott Yeah. There you go. Wow.

Jeron

3:28

Okay. And Jack. Yeah, that's it. Yeah.

James

3:32

So you really never thought about it, you know? No. So why are you so opposed to it?

Jeron

3:35

Because it's so annoying. It's just to me, it sounds so.

James

3:39

I think there's no soul, if you will.

Jeron

3:43

It's more like to elicit kind of reaction out of, you know, it's like a lot of headbanging to me.

James

3:49

Yeah. It's just like once the beat drops, you know what I'm saying?

Jeron

3:55

Like, Oh, you like idea, huh? Well, I want to say in a city like it, but, you know, it's I think it's very conducive to work out in there, you know?

James

3:58

I mean, if it's not your thing, it's not your thing. Yeah, No, it's not.

Jeron

4:05

It's really not. No, no, no. How about what's, like, kind of like a guilty pleasure kind of music to us?

James

4:09

Yeah, I listen to Miley Cyrus.

Jeron

4:15

Really? Yeah. Miley Cyrus? Yeah. Especially the part in the USA.

James

4:18

I know. It sounds so long. It is old school, but it's good.

Jeron

4:23

Miley Cyrus. Wow. So and Lady Gaga sometimes in Vegas.

James

4:27

Okay. Are you K-Pop? Yeah, I am a K-Pop cover guy twice.

Jeron

4:33

I love it. Sometimes I can't. That's why I love surfing.

James

4:37

Yeah, that sounds familiar. Oh, okay. So probably not.

Jeron

4:42

Probably not. A lot of people that think. Yeah, Awesome.

James

4:46

There you see, there's a new band.

Jeron

4:50

Not bad, huh? No, I haven't heard of them.

James

4:53

Really? No, they're one of the more popular ones. But there's these girls that rap.

Jeron

4:58

I forgot the name, but it's an attacks.

James

5:03

Yeah, they. They've been pretty. They've been popular. They're going around.

Jeron

5:09

Yeah, I listen to them because they're. So you kind of losing that.

James

5:12

I would just say it they they're so good to listen to even though I don't understand Korean.

Jeron

5:18

Okay isn't it. And then it says here that you are you have a pet.

James

5:23

I do have a pet, yes. His name is Bobcat Cat.

Jeron

5:27

Is that off of the Spider-Man movie? No, no, no, no.

James

5:31

I got way earlier. I think I saw I seen a picture of you over here and it kind of had erm when I saw Spy, I thought of the Spider-Man movie.

Jeron

5:35

Hey. Hey ho. How, how old is five. He is almost three years old.

James

5:43

Almost almost three years old this November. Yeah, it's November.

Jeron

5:48

So what type of cat she's you. Good kind of bad cat. He's such a dramatic cat.

James

5:52

Okay. Cause every time I hug him in the house so loud.

Jeron

5:58

But, I mean, God has his.

James

6:00

So, Jerry. Hi. Where. Where are you from originally?

Jeron

6:03

Cause, you know. Hey, I'm from the Philippines. Yeah.

James

6:09

What part? Manila. In Pasay City. Oh, okay.

Jeron

6:12

So you're from the city? The city? Yeah.

James

6:15

The capital. It's nice. So, city boy. How long? How long?

Jeron

6:18

How long did you live there? Yeah, I lived there for 15 years, I believe.

James

6:24

15 years. Wow. Yeah, Basically born and raised over there.

Jeron

6:30

Yeah. So? Yeah. Yeah. Are you suffering?

James

6:35

Pardon? Are you so fluent? Yes, I am. Very funny. Oh, really?

Jeron

6:40

Yeah. Really? So when you were moving here, how was it like when?

James

6:51

Yeah. No. Yeah. How? How, when? When you. At first I had a hard time because English is not my first language,

Jeron

6:56

and I have the hard time understanding getting along with fellow peers at this age.

James

7:01

And especially when I was just a teenager at the time, I wanted to get along with everybody.

Jeron

7:06

But I can't because I'm having a hard time speaking English.

James

7:12

Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. So over the years, has English gotten a little bit easier for you?

Jeron

7:16

Yes. Yeah. Yeah, English has gotten better.

James

7:26

My accent has gotten better. Yeah. And I feel like although there are some tweaks and improvements I need to make.

Jeron

7:33

Yeah, I feel like I'm a lot better. Yeah. I mean, you definitely can get a sense.

James

7:45

Like, as soon as I mentioned that there's, like, a little bit of an accent there, but it's, you know, it's not, it's not too bad.

Jeron

7:53

It's not like me where I. I don't have an accent at all. Yeah. You know.

James

7:59

Yeah. So that's nice. Yeah, I have an accent though. I sound like I have an accent.

Jeron

8:06

Oh, a little bit. When you say when you say some of your words, it kind of rolls out, but you know, it's okay.

James

8:16

Yeah, it's okay. Yeah. So some of the Tagalog like, are you is it pretty frequently speaking at home or.

Jeron

8:26

I do. I. Yeah. My parents live there and my grandmother there, and they don't talk in Tagalog over there.

Jeron

8:36

Um, I rarely speak in English because to me, kind of is where you've been though it should help, you know, because normal.

Jeron

8:42

But talking to doing Tagalog is awkward cause you feel like I'm being cocky if know.

James

8:49

Mhm. So I know. But I am a girl and.

Jeron

8:54

Oh. Are there any. Whatever. Hi.

James

9:01

How are you? I am. I see. So. So being as an Asian-American, I'd like at this point in time, is that like.

Jeron

9:09

At this point in time. Yeah. Like, you know, we just, we just finished up with COVID and stuff. Yeah. To me, honestly, during those three years, I was just working, so I didn't really feel any difference I would say, because from where I work, there's a lot of it's diverse basically from where I work. So I didn't really feel any discrimination or hate from other people.

James

9:36

So where do you work At Costco? Yeah, yeah, I work in which one? Oh, the doing by a girl. Oh, okay. So that means that you live in an area where it's like a very high, like Asian population. Yeah, I know that over there, there's, like, a little Filipino community over there. There there is. Are you a part of that or. No, I live in Sacramento.

Jeron

10:01

Oh, okay. So you just work down there?

Jeron

10:07

I just work down there. Yeah. Okay.

James

10:11

Okay. That's nice. So you brought up COVID. What year in school were you in during COVID or were you at school?

Jeron

10:17

I was at school. I. I skipped school.

James

10:29

And then and just coming back this semester. So during those three years or three years, I really just working just to help my family pay the bills. Uh huh. And yeah, So were you a junior college transfer is like.

Jeron

10:40

Yeah. Oh, yeah. I'm a junior year transfer. Yeah. From where do you go from Sacramento City College. Oh, this is actually. Okay. So it's not too far away.

James

10:55

Not too far? Yeah. Yeah. So what was it like being your pandemic?

Jeron

11:01

Like, you mentioned that you were working a lot. Oh. Did you do anything else?

James

11:08

Actually, I followed the pandemic life. The very first year the pandemic hit.

Jeron

11:17

I was. I was not working, actually. Okay. I was relying on disability to get paychecks.

James

11:24

Oh, okay. Because everybody got laid off and.

Jeron

11:30

Yeah, and but thank God Costco is still hiring.

James

11:39

So I got in. So were you working at Costco at the time before?

Jeron

11:47

And then you got laid off and then you just came back or was it a different job?

James

11:56

I say it's been a long time for comp. I think right up and down that's like that.

Jeron

12:03

But I think. I had a different job.

James

12:09

So the pandemic job right now, it's a different job for me.

Jeron

12:16

Yeah. Yeah. Okay. Okay. So that's not so it's good that you're still able to find a job. And especially nowadays, like even if you do find a job, there's post-COVID, there's people that are scared to work or people that don't want to go back to work. So there's definitely like a lot of avenues in which you could have gone to if there was anything there.

James

12:40

Yeah. So was there anything memorable that happened during COVID?

Jeron

12:46

Yeah. Yeah. Oh, there are some very sad moments. Yeah, because some. My uncle passed away because of COVID. Yeah. Yeah. And at first, we didn't believe it was real because, you know, we thought it was just propaganda or like a hoax to shake the public. But then it's real. Yeah. So is it.

James

12:55

Has your beliefs kind of changed, like, throughout the years? Like, did it change pretty quickly to believing that it was real as opposed to like, yeah, that because of that event?

Jeron

13:09

Yeah. My passing away, it was all sudden. It was just a month after him getting the COVID and then he just passed away after. Yeah, there's a lot of people that kind of choose to believe that it wasn't real, even though that there was.

James

13:30

That's cool. Yeah. So, you know, like, it it was very serious. You know, it's I'm not saying that it was a good thing that that stuff happened, but it's good that, like you were able to come to a realization that, you know, it's like it's it's not manmade. It wasn't it wasn't artificial. Like it was something very much real. And that, you know, something that we should have taken seriously. Yeah. Right.

Jeron

13:55

I feel like that's what all Americans should have taken seriously.

J

James

14:05

Yeah. I think there was actually reports of COVID. Like, I think we I started hearing about it since November. I want to say, of that year. It was it started in November. Yeah.

Jeron

14:15

So, I mean, it definitely could have been easily prevented. But, you know, like, it's a good thing that, you know, nothing else happened.

James

14:22

And, you know, you were able to at least, like, realize about it. Yeah. Stuff like that. Well, thank you for your time. I really appreciate it. So, yeah, I hope you have a good day. And thank you for your interview.

Jeron

14:45

Yeah, no problem.