

Houston Asian American Archive
Chao Center for Asian Studies, Rice University

Interviewee: Theresa Chang

Interviewer: Jarvis Sam III, Ramya Subramani

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Transcribed by: Jarvis Sam III, Ramya Subramani

Edited by: Priscilla Li (5/19/2017)

Audio Track Time: 1:26:10

Background:

Mrs. Theresa Chang, J.D. was born in Taichung, Taiwan in 1958. In 1975, Chang moved to Taipei, Taiwan for educational pursuits. In Taipei, Chang studied chemical engineering at National Taiwan University. In order to fulfill her parents' request to pursue more education, Chang moved to the United States in 1979 to study at the University of Texas-Kingsville. Chang was in Kingsville for one year and a half before moving to Houston, TX. Chang got her first job working as an Engineer for Furlow-Philbeck Engineering Company. Chang worked there for several years and continued to advance in the company. She began doing quite a bit of regulatory work and found the legal aspects of the engineering business to be very interesting. As a result, Chang went to South Texas College of Law, where she received her Juris Doctorate degree. Today, she serves as an Associate Judge for the Houston Municipal Courts.

Setting:

The interview took place on campus in the Humanities Building of Rice University, and required about an hour and a half. Ms. Chang recounted several stories from her childhood in Taiwan, describing the way in which her family life and upbringing has informed her worldview. The interview follows the chronological progression of her life, specifically marked by moving from place to place: the transition from life at home in Taichung to college in Taipei, immigrating to Texas for a fellowship in petroleum engineering, and finally settling down in Houston.

Interview Transcript:

Key:

TC	Theresa Chang
JS	Jarvis Sam
RS	Ramya Subramani
—	Speech cuts off; abrupt stop
...	Speech trails off; pause
Italics	Emphasis
(?)	Preceding word may not be accurate
Brackets	Actions (laughs, sighs, etc.)

RS: Hello, This is Ramya Subramani...

JS: and Jarvis Sam.

RS: And we're from Rice University with the Houston Asian American Archive project, and we're here today with the Honorable Theresa Chang. Uh, would you like to start off with a bit about your childhood and upbringing in Taiwan?

TC: Sure, um, I was born in um, I was, I was born in Taichung. It's right in the middle of Taiwan and as you know, Taiwan is an island. So, um, that's where, where I grew up, and um I had my elementary school, my middle school, and my high school in there. Um then at uh, I went to Taipei, which is on the Northern side of Taiwan to attend my uh my college at the National Taiwan University, majoring in chemical engineering.

RS: Uh, and when was that?

TC: When I graduated?

RS: No, when you moved to go to college...

TC: You mean the year?

RS: Yes.

TC: 1975.

JS: So while you were in Taichung, what were your basic childhood experiences? What was your childhood like?

TC: Alright, Taichung is probably one of the major city um in the center part of Taiwan so I um I grew up in the city. And we uh we walked to school, um it's probably everyday probably 30 minutes walking. So so it's probably I would say probably only half a mile; I mean, my house from the school, only half a mile away. We walk to school. And we have summer. It's a semester. We have two semesters, and we have summer vacation and the winter vacation. Just like here um...I had a very good time. At that time, my, my, my family, especially my dad, emphasized our education. Um, because of um, he, well if you remember the World War I... World War I... or II, that's when—when was the Pearl Harbor? That was World War II, right?

JS: World War II, yes.

TC: I think World War II really interrupt his education, so he um—I'm not sure he graduate from college because of that. So he—and he I think his career suffered from that. He has seen his friends with higher education um really going places. And he has—we are a middle income family, and I thought he had a wonderful job. But he knows that good education could provide more opportunities for his children. Um, so when we were growing up, education was important uh it's very important for every one of us to have good grades in school. Um but other than that, I mean, so he, he was, he was very, um how to say, um stern on that. Make sure, make sure that we really put all our efforts into education and really reach to our maximum potential. Other than that, we had um very good childhood, I would say.

JS: What did your father do for a living?

TC: Um he works for tobacco company. Tobacco company in Taiwan is um, government owned. Um so it's—I guess it's like monopoly. The tobacco company also do liquor. And that's the only company in Taiwan they, they uh do that.

JS: So these companies made a lot of money in Taiwan?

TC: Uh, that I don't know because it's government owned. I mean, it all goes back to the budget.

JS: Right, right.

TC: Yeah.

JS: So what did your mom do during this period?

TC: Um she is a uh, homemaker. Yeah, she stays home and took care of us.

RS: Nice. Uhm, how did the Cultural Revolution that took place in Mainland China affect your family, if at all it did?

TC: Um it did not affect us at all because we are, we are really separate in Taiwan. And that's what happened in Mainland China. But, um, I have to say I didn't realize how—what kind of impact to uh to a country or to the people until really now, when I get to know some of the people from, from China. That either they have been through it or they have seen their relatives been through it. It's because, in Taiwan I think we kept um older Confucius um and older Chinese heritage um, and we um study on that in school. So we all know about that and now, you know, um the old, the old Chinese that we probably—I mean was probably born the same time you [gesturing to Interviewers] were, but they are lacking of that part of the cultural heritage. And after I compare with it, then I know how much they have lost.

JS: Right. So in terms of your father's income, you said y'all were a middle class family, correct? What could that buy in Taiwan during this time? What was your house like?

TC: Uh our house, is really doesn't belong to us. It belongs to the government. So, they, they let you um... but it's a house. It has a little garden, and my mom took a lot of time. She has green fingers so we have all kinds of different flowers—so like Japanese garden! It's very little. It's probably um, well it's hard to say, um, it's probably, I would say, 100 square feet, feet our garden. But we have all kinds of flowers.

JS: Okay...

RS: Hm, okay, so...

TC: And I, I would say our life is, um, because my mom always, um... we buy new clothes, but usually during the Chinese New Year. Um you don't buy new clothes, you know, normally. But my mom can make clothes. So um so we will do that and she always make the most pretty, pretty clothes for me and everybody loved it. Because, it was one of a kind. And also, you know, uh actually I don't think we have money to buy all that stuff. But um I was really satisfied... because it had a lot of love.

RS: [laughs] What was your uh, sorry, what was your religious upbringing, if any?

TC: Oh! I'm glad you asked that! Um I have been telling people I've been a minority all my life, because we are Catholic....

RS: Oh wow!

TC: ...which is very, um, it's, it's um, it's, the population—the Catholic population—was not that big in Taiwan. I don't think it's that big now. The reason we are Catholic was because when Japan invaded uh China, my mom was in Nanjing at the time. That's where her hometown, and Nanjing, you know, had all the brutal killings. So uh she flew away—no, not flew away—ran away from—with um her brothers to the central part of China. And during that time, she was helped by nuns, Catholic nuns. And I think that's where she got her religion, and she raised us as Catholic.

JS: So I assume you're still a practicing Catholic today?

TC: Yes, Yes. I had a Catholic wedding, [**JS:** Oh okay!] and I still go to Catholic church.

JS: So looking back to your school period, was there no public transportation or school offered transportation available?

TC: No, mm-mm. No. But it's just like here: you go to different schools according to where you live. So people can walk to the school. There's no school bus, [**JS:** Okay.] not at all. I don't think there's a budget for that.

JS: Gotcha. So what were the classes like in school? What general classes did you take?

TC: Um, it's all fixed, structured classes. [**JS:** Gotcha.] There's no elective if that's what...

JS: And what's that structure like?

TC: We have, oh... We have math, we have language, we have PE, we have science, we have...you talking about elementary school? Middle school?

JS: Well, primary and secondary education.

TC: Secondary education: um so we have, we have history, geometry, science, yeah.

JS: Was there a large focus on maintaining Chinese culture through your classes?

TC: It's just part of the life...

JS: Okay. So you don't take any classes specific to Chinese language or Chinese art?

TC: Oh we have Chinese language. That's uh that's Chinese. Like here is English, there we have Chinese.

JS: Right, definitely. Okay.

RS: When you say 'It was just part of the life,' what, what exactly do you mean?

TC: Um, for example, like um hmm...

RS: I'm sorry, I know that's a bit of a...

TC: Yeah it's really hard to...

RS: Difficult to vocalize...

TC: Yeah, um so for example, like, um, there's one thing that I think we can tell the story. Like we, in the Chinese um tradition, that you pay respect to the elderly. So you call um like your parents, your uncle. You always have like uncle, you have specific name for the uncle and aunt on our father's side, from the uncle and aunt on your mother's side. So different title. It's called 'uncle' but they have different title.

JS: Can you tell us what those titles are?

RS: Right like on the father's side, if the uncle is older than your dad you call 'Boaboa.' The uncle that

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Chao Center for Asian Studies, Rice University

younger than your dad, you call 'Shushu.' And their wives have separate names. And but on the mother's side, if—well there's no difference on the older and younger; you call 'Jiujiu.' But they are all uncles. But they have different um terms for them. [JS: Gotcha.] So that just tells you that the Chinese are um—think the relationships are important. They need to separate those on both sides. Alright, not only that; when you call them, you never call them names. You never call them names. You always call them 'Uncle So-And-So,' or just 'Uncle.' Um and or 'Juijui so-and-so.' And um even when you grow up, even if you are ninety years-old, you still call your uncle 'Uncle,' you call your aunt, 'Aunt.' And that's—so after several generations, like I have some um niece, niece and nephews, they are actually same age or older than me; but when they see me, they have to call me Aunt. [JS and RS: [laughs]] They don't call me Theresa, you know. It's just... just that, that's part of the heritage.

JS: Right.

TC: But here you see a lot of times that grandmothers say, 'Oh, don't call me 'grandma,'" right? They want to look younger, like 'Oh, call me Carolyn!'

All: [laughs]

TC: [inaudible] that every day, so, uh, that's the difference about the uh the culture.

RS: Nice. Um...

JS: So does your family still own the home in Taichung today?

TC: No we never owned a home. It's [JS: Oh okay.] uh government owned house.

JS: So what happened to it?

TC: It's still there! [JS: Okay, okay.] Well, when I went there 20 years ago it was still there.

JS: Wow, okay.

RS: So you moved to Taipei in 1975 for [TC: Right.] college.

TC: For college.

RS: What was—what was that like, moving from Taichung to Taipei? What was the transition like for you?

TC: Um, it was um it was not easy at the time. But it was good to have that experience. Because I live at home all, except my middle school years, I have two years I was in Catholic school. So there were two years actually like boarding school. I live at the school, and I only go home during the weekends. So I think that experience helped me to kind of leave home and be by myself, be independent. But still, living, going to college in different city um and really don't know many people there. It's um it's just a transition you have to go through. I think first year was harder. Then after that...[RS: Right.] it's alright.

JS: What was Taipei like in 1975?

TC: Hmm, it's um, you know it's still the capital of the, of Taiwan. So they have—we have to go everywhere by bus. There was no subway. Um and you, you um pretty much each food on those street vendor. Those have delicious food. I still like those foods! [All: [laughs]] Umm you go you pretty much go everywhere by walking or by bicycle. Or take the bus. And we do make um some allowance by teaching, by tutor. As a tutor for the college students, we tutored for the high school kids.

JS: How much did that usually pay?

TC: Oh I could not remember.

JS: Was it a reasonable salary for the...?

TC: For us it was at the time. Yes.

JS: And so it generally paid for like personal expenses? Food?

TC: Um, not...no, no. [**All:** [laughs]] Probably can go out to eat at some nice food, nice restaurant, once in a while, yeah.

RS: What were your classes like?

TC: Oh the classes were, uh huge, especially for the general class like chemistry and physics. We have like 200 people, but then when you go to the um, more your major classes, then you have like 60...50 or 60.

JS: And so was it at this university where you first learned to speak English or was it before then?

TC: Uh, we—English is a second language since middle school.

JC: Okay.

TC: So when we start the—let me see, we start middle school in um, 7th grader. So um yeah, so we learn English as a second language.

JS: So what language was your—were your classes taught in at the university?

TC: We have English at the freshman year; then after that, you don't have to take English.

JC: Okay.

TC: But all your textbooks are in English. So that's another big transition from uh high school to college, because in high school all your chemistry and physics are in Chinese. But when you go to college, everything is English. I mean all your major textbooks are English.

RS: Was math and science always your forte as a child, and that's why you wanted to go into chemical engineering? [**TC:** Um actually when...]

TC: I was in elementary school, I love Chinese, and I was really good in Chinese. Um, but my sister, the one older than me, very good in math. And she was math major. So she made sure of my math. She tutored me during summer vacation. You see, my father said, 'You need to do that for Theresa.' So I—so she always taught me the subject matter that would come up next semester. So I was good in math, but I think because of that, yeah.

RS: Always one step ahead...

TC: [laughs] Yes, always one step ahead. So yeah. But I like math, I still do! I mean, I've been doing very well in math, and uh, I like it.

JS: So being a chemical engineering major, did you have any time for social?

TC: Um, yes! In college, I think um we, we had that misperception that, you know, after such a hard work,

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Chao Center for Asian Studies, Rice University

now you finally go to college, and it was good college so you should play! [laughs] Yeah I think the first few months, you have—I was I had the wrong impression. Then you uh you got penalized, so you know, by test; so you don't do well on test, so you better study.

JS: Do you remember how much tuition was to attend the university in Taipei?

TC: ... I don't remember.

JS: Was it generally reasonable though, for a family?

TC: No, um, because I remember see my, my, my uh brother and my sister went to college at, almost, at the same time, because they are four years apart. So when my brother was in senior, um my, my sister was a freshman. And um and they all went to what we call public college, so it's much more affordable. But I remember my parents were struggling with paying the tuition, and we don't have the financial aid that you can borrow money. So they had to borrow money. They had to borrow money from... I don't know where; because I remember that conversation. They don't really want us to, to worry about it, but there was a serious conversation. They all very um... they worried about it, I know. So um and they have to pay it back, you know when you have a loan either from a person or from the bank, you have to um yeah, pay it back. And I don't think there was a bank loan at the time for personal use. I think they—they have a system like, like a group of people, they will put the money in a pool, and whoever get that money, you have to pay a high interest to the rest of people, until you pay that off. Does that make sense?

JS: So it's like members of the community would put money in...?

TC: Yeah like the community, that uh that of course they all know each other—they trust each other. So, and I don't know how much amount. Um but for example, if each person put \$ 2,000, if they have five people, they have 10,000, right. So every month, one person would get the money. So I, if I am the first person to get the money, I have to pay interests for the remaining, until—So the last one will really don't need money, will get the most interest. Right? Um but, but the reason they put it together like this is because they know that someone will always need money at some time.

JS: And so that's the system that your parents used to pay for your college?

TC: Yes, yes. Yeah. [**JS:** Oh okay.]

RS: Um so there was a lot of—there's a lot of trust in the community then.

TC: Well, sometimes there's the fraud. I mean the people that you think it's your friend, they took the money and they left. That happens too. And there is no recourse, because it's not—it's like a gentlemen's handshake. It's not—there's no contract saying; but everybody knows. It's just—I think at that time it's not um...it's a smaller community. People are—trust each other more, I think.

JS: And does Chinese cultural tradition play into that in any way? The level of trust between each individual?

TC: I think the tradition to trust each other is just uh you are more—uh community plays an important part. Um, your family plays important part, and your extended family plays important part. And then your community, your smaller community—your neighbors, people that you work with—plays important part. And I think also I think you also rely on yourself to solve your problems. Like, you don't go to the government saying, what can you do for me? Usually that's not case.

JS: Up until the time you went to college, had you ever traveled outside of Taiwan at all?

TC: Mmm, no. I hardly traveled outside of Taichung!

JS: Okay. [**TC:** [laughs]] And then what extracurricular activities were you involved in, if any?

TC: Uh in high school?

JS: High school or college.

TC: In college, you're right, [**JS:** [laughs]] I didn't have much time to do much extracurricular activities, but in high school I did a lot I think. I did uh the band, um, what else did I do? I did the band... I did—I took some art lessons, um I was in choir for a year, um I was in speech contests, had lots of extracurricular activities. I was class president! [laughs]

JS: Oh wow okay. And so in—go ahead.

RS: No, no go for it.

JS:—so undoubtedly those experiences have helped you in the position that you're in today?

TC: Yeah, I think so. I uh, at that time, you know, I was not thinking for leadership positions. But it's just that I always been elected to serve, and every time I go home, I told my dad that I got elected which I thought was pretty cool. My father would say, 'No, next time don't do that. You need to concentrate your time, focus on your study. [**JS and RS:** [laughs]] These things only take away the time you have, so don't do, don't do that anymore.' So the following year of the semester, sometime I would say, 'Oh, I cannot serve again. My father...' [laughs] Like that!

RS: That sounds a little like my dad...

All: [laughs]

TC: So, that's tradition!

RS: Yes!

TC: It's tradition we have, yeah.

RS: So, when did you move to Texas?

TC: I uh I graduated from National Taiwan University in 1979, and that summer I came to Texas.

RS: Nice. What did you—sorry, just to back track a little, what did you do during the summers during college, if you remember?

TC: I think the first two summers I tried to go to different tours that sponsored by the government. So you go to climb the mountain, whatever. Um and then, last, I think the last summer I was in school, try to help a professor do research.

RS: Hm. Okay.

JS: So the government controlled the university as well?

TC: Uh, no, it's a public, public university, so—[**JS:** Gotcha.] and I really don't know how the budget goes. But at that time, it's, it's—at that Taiwan was, how to say, very uh, well—controlled community. And there are not many—there are probably some uh travel agency would provide a travel group for you, but most people don't like my parents, would never send me to go with them. So the government sponsored travel

Houston Asian American Archive
Chao Center for Asian Studies, Rice University

groups, and they all target like the high school kids. It's more um reputable. So my, my, my parents would have trust then to send me there, because they think it's dangerous the mountain climbing, anyway. And send their daughter to a group of people they don't know? They will not do that. So it's not—I don't think that's the only thing you can do, that's the only thing I would be allowed to do.

JS: Gotcha. So what was your motivation to coming to Kingsville, Texas of all places?

TC: All right, my, my parents did not tell me to come to Kingsville; but they said, you have to study more. I mean the bachelor degree is just not enough. You have to go back and remember what my father thinks—that he just think the education is wonderful, which, which I don't disagree. You know, it's—I think I have that idea myself. I, I sometime I never think that education is expensive because as long as you get something out of it, you just have to keep on learning. Um, but I think I got that from him. So they said, you have to have advanced study. Uh actually I think they wanted me to have a doctorate degree, but I just could not handle that much study anymore! [**All:** [laughs]] Can I handle that much school? After I got my Masters degree. But I was looking what I want to do in my Masters, since I was majoring in chemical engineering, and I'm coming to United States, I wanted to major in petroleum. Uh anything related to petroleum. So oil and gas. So—and only UT, at that time, only UT, um Louisiana State maybe, and Texas NI... have the—UT has the petroleum degree and Texas NI had natural gas engineering. And Louisiana State maybe had petroleum too. So—but Texas NI gave me a scholarship, they called fellowship at the time; it's a grant. So, uh, that's how I chose uh Kingsville.

JS: And so you applied there from Taipei?

TC: Right.

JS: Okay. And so what was your travel experience like and getting here?

TC: It was scary... Um and um and I know that I only had one chance to do this, because my parents, you have to remember although they—I have a fellowship, they had to uh get a loan to get the money for the airplane, airfare, and at least um the, the dorm. And for the first year's tuition, because I won't get my fellowship until I get here, right? So the first year, it's not covered, I mean the first semester, is not covered. So they had to uh make a loan and provide me with all that. So I know I only had that chance to make it work. English was not that good so coming over here is just uh, anyway you're excited, a lot of unknown, um you're not sure but you know that you cannot fail, all that kind of mixed feelings.

RS: Uh what—why did you want to go into petroleum engineering? What was it about the oil and gas industry that brought you, uh, interested you?

TC: Um, well I thought chemical—chemical engineering is such a broad field, and um I think I just chose that. I really don't know why I chose that, I just said well that's something I think, I'd be—would be one field I know um I probably can learn more and be a contributor to that field.

RS: Right. Did you uh did you ever think at the time that however many years down the line petroleum engineering would actually be such an international and revolutionary point of discussion?

TC: No. No. Not, it's no, I never thought of that. I just know that chemical engineering is so broad with so many industries you can go to, and you have to choose something, right? So I chose petroleum. And maybe the other reason is my, I don't think that's really a factor, but my brother was in Houston at the time, so my, my parents really wanted me to come to Texas. Be closer to him—they think he can watch me from Houston in case [laughs]

JS: So is that how you found out about the three universities that offered petroleum, was through your brother?

TC: No, I uh I think there's... I went through...there's uh I don't know how I got it. I don't think—I don't

Houston Asian American Archive
Chao Center for Asian Studies, Rice University

remember the assistance my brother gave me. I remember have to go to the library to check them out, then start sending letters to the universities asking for all the brochures, and then go through them. I don't remember the process now. He probably gave me some hint.

JS: Now when did your brother arrive here?

TC: A long time ago. Because he, he, he is thirteen years older than I am. So he came to United States much longer. I think when he came here it was by boat! There was no um airline available at the time.

RS: Hmph. It's been quite a journey.

JS: So in terms of immigration, what was that experience like, when you first came here?

TC: Um, I uh, I think I'm lucky to, to uh come to Texas, because I really don't feel *that* at all. I mean at first, when I came here, I first came here, and never... I just never felt that. Um that um people would treat me, uh, not good because of that? No... I don't think that, at all... You mean when I was in Kingsville right?

[**JS:** Right, yes.] Yeah, it was, it was a very welcoming city. I think I had a culture shock, because Kingsville, you know, is a very small town, and I grew up in a big city. So I said, wow! Only one movie-theater! Only one main street! Anyway, so... [**All:** [laughs]] but I don't think I feel that they don't welcome me, no not at all.

JS: So did you immediately apply for American citizenship or did you remain on a visa?

TC: I was on student visa.

JS: Okay.

TC: Yeah, I applied for uh American citizenship when I was working.

JS: Okay.

RS: Were there uh other Chinese students and Taiwanese students uh in Kingsville?

TC: There were. Uh not many, I would say probably 30 of them.

JS: And so with that network did you all get together a lot?

TC: Oh yes! Um we, even when I came here, they uh they contacted, they, they picked me up from the airport, and uh so they, so they provided all the help. They took us to grocery shopping uh once a week to, to buy us whatever we needed. Took us around, so that really helps.

JS: So what was graduate school like then?

TC: It was really, uh, the first Masters I have to say I had, I had some problems with listening and understanding my professor, because at that time professors in natural gas engineering, they are all um old people, and they are all from Texas I think. They all have that strong Texas accent. So um I really do not know what they were talking about, [**JS and RS:** [laughs]] but I made sure in every class, I know what the homework is. I would put it down and I would study myself; because I know English, right? So I can study myself. But I think after first year, second year is much better.

RS: Um, it says here that you were only in Kingsville though from '79-'80.

TC: Right.

Houston Asian American Archive
Chao Center for Asian Studies, Rice University

RS: So how many years was the program that you were in?

TC: I was in actually was two years program so I got a degree major in chemical engineering and minor in natural gas engineering. But actually I finished all the, all the classes of my paper at the end of 1980. I did not officially graduate until May of 1981, but I already start working on January of 1981, because I already finished everything. I turned everything in. So, yeah. I could have stayed probably for another semester because I was doing, um the fellowship grant I had. I was doing research with a professor. If I wanted to stay, I probably could, but I got a job um starting January of 1981, so I came to Houston and started working.

JS: And how was that experience? Moving from Kingsville to big city Houston?

TC: I loved it! [laughs] You remember, I was a city girl; in the city, I loved it! And Houston was not that huge at that time. You know, a lot of places that I remember I work in Southwest Houston is so—a lot of farm land. Now it's all buildings.

JS: So then that's where... how did you find out about your first job?

TC: Um, I uh actually I, I applied several places; my—I have uh um some friends that graduated before me from chemical engineering then came to Houston—that was, when Houston was booming, especially for oil and gas. So it told me you know there are a lot of opportunities here. So I sent in my resumes to, I don't know, maybe 20 letters? So I got one offer. I think I got three interviews, got one offer. So, it was—I remember how much I made! [laughs] It was my first job, and I don't mind sharing. It was... they paid me \$2,000 a month. At that time, I thought sheesh! [laughs] That's a lot of money.

JS: And so 1981 in Houston what could that get for you? In terms of housing or...

TC: I uh—at that time, I live with my brother, so my, my parents would not let me to live by myself. And I really wanted to have an apartment but they won't let me do that so I live with my brother. Um he live—at that time he lived in Sugar Land, he still lives in Sugar Land. But that time, he live in Sugar Land, so I lived with him, and I just, I just bought me a car.

JS: Do you remember what kind of car it was?

TC: Subaru!

JS: Okay, okay.

TC: [laughs] It was the white color and had four doors. And um and it has when you open the door—at the time, when you opened the door, they have—it's like a 'ding-dong' sound. So I told my—that was really part of the reason that I bought the car I think. I thought it was so cute. Yeah.

RS: Nice. Um...hm.

JS: What were your general job responsibilities at Furlow-Philbeck?

TC: It was um a um—I started as what they call 'Process Engineer.' So basically you design um the facilities and just make sure. And we do—uh that's what my background is in engineer: is oil and gas production facility, facilities either in off-shore or on-shore. So we design the facilities that when the, when the uh oil and gas drain comes out of well, then you have to treat them, probably have to store them. And then they can send into other places for uh further treatment, further processing. But our job is to—once we know the composition of well stream we design the facility to handle that.

RS: How long did you work there again?

TC: For a few back, I probably work there 'til 1982 so that's eh—no not 82...um...hmm...80...probably '85. Probably 5 years—I think that was—a long job and then went to um...another small engineering company—I think it was in '84 or '85...and then I worked there for 2 years, then went to um Mustang engineering...not Mustang engineering um Omega Engineering and worked there 'til 19—1990 then I went to um Panto-Eastern company. That's probably one of the biggest company I work for. Then went to Mustang engineering—that's where I started my um...my law school.

JS: So during this period from '81 to about '88, were you affected at all by the national recession?

TC: Uh...not national recession—it's actually Houston recession.

JS: Oh okay, okay.

TC: Remember they have the recession that uh...they call oil bust?

JS: Right.

TC: It was in 1980....was probably '82 right? [**JS:** Right.] '82, '83 so I had a job um I had a job 'til 80...ehh I can't remember...I think '84 because our company—the company store had laid off um and then I was probably one of the last um stayed there and I was actually I was laid off in 1980 but I could not remember the year...but maybe '83, maybe '83...and then, but I found—

RS: Uh sorry, continue.

TC: I could not remember the year. I remember I was laid off—one of the last people in the company and I was laid off so I started um—see uh my first job came pretty easy right? So I said...how am I going to find another job? So what I did—I went to the library and I got all the engineering companies—all the engineering companies—it doesn't matter the size and I put my resume in, I put a cover letter in and sent to all them. You know I got two jobs out of it—I don't remember how many it was, maybe 100 but still not bad—I got 2 ...I got 2 jobs out of it and um I never remember how many interview, maybe 5 or 6, at least 5 or 6, maybe 10. I got a lot of interviews, but I got 2 jobs because these two jobs are in Houston. There are other offering from like a paper plant—I told them I'm not going to move so I don't think they—anyway, they are interest in me anyway—so these two job I remember—I had, first one I decided to go, I told them I'm going and the second job came after that so I gave them my—my first job to my friend whose also laid off. [laughs] I told them well I—I could not go there—it may...because he had similar background like I did so I said—you may want to try because I know there is an opening right there I just turned down so I went start working for the small engineering company yeah. And I worked for about 2 years and I got recruited to Omega Engineering.

JS: And so by this time, by the time you got Omega, the Houston economy starting to get a little better?

TC: Yes, I think when—when I went to Omega, it was like that 2-year cycle already passed so actually they were looking for people. That's how I got recruited—because some old colleague went to Omega and they said, 'Oh we know Theresa Chang—it's a process engineer, engineer. We really like her. We worked with her before.' So they call me so I went over there.

JS: Did your salary improve a lot when you went to Omega?

TC: Every time when you recruited—

JS: Right.

TC: ...your salary—I don't remember how much plus a percentage...maybe 10, 15 %—yeah it's not bad.

JS: Right.

RS: Do you remember anything about the political climate at the time with Ronald Reagan and especially with the petroleum engineer uh with the OPEC oil—the oil prices went down in the 80s when Reagan was President. Do you remember anything specific about that like the political climate or if it affected you?

TC: Um no—I was not as sophisticated enough to understand why—why there was a downturn and why—um and then I do know that the industry has a cycle. It still does, but um when—as the cycle—and you can never predict what's going to happen next 5 years. When I was started working, everybody do a prediction—and now I do a 10 years prediction, but now we all learned it just—can never predict because a lot of climate has changed. I mean political—maybe there's a war, and especially global economy just every little things happen—Japan will, will impact us, but I don't think I was sophisticated enough to understand that at that time. The only—the first time I realized the political system at least in United States will impact my job was—is was when I was working at Panda Eastern—a pipeline company because at that time—I was a senior engineer so I was—what I would get involved also is—not only do the project, but every time—in the summer time we would start looking at least projects—I have looked at the projects I had and maybe have and look at them in come—put together budget and give to my managers and the managers will present to the leadership and then they will make decision which project they will do or will not do. And then we also will get involved in legal counsel in a company when they buy land or they um or whatever. So they would send us all these um statues and that's when the Clean Air Act—Clean Water Act came down and Congress and I had saw in my own eyes and how that changed my industry. A lot of projects that I would not even had presented—they were never do, now they're doing it because they always like doing new projects. We don't to fix the old facilities because very costly and the-the um the margin of benefit is not that great, but after that uh those 2 acts came down, those projects—the the revitalized the old plant's projects becomes top of the priority—I knew that's what happened because the legal department would send us those statue—they said 'Oh!' so I realized that um just doing my job is not enough and I really have to know what's going on especially in legal, legal um system and that's—that actually was one—the major reason I went to law school because I want to understand those statue...[laughs]...I could not understand those statue at the time.

JS: So just before going to law school, were you able to travel back to Taiwan at all during the 80s?

TC: Hmm... I went back there? But I know the last time I went back to Taiwan was 1992. I haven't been back since 1992 and I'm dying to go to see—because at that time, they don't have subway, now they have subway so everything has changed. They did not have 101 Tower at that time um I don't think I went back Taiwan that many times.

JS: Gotcha... So then you entered law school?

TC: Yes, right.

JS: Where'd you attend law school?

TC: Uh South Texas.

JS: Okay. And what was your experience like there?

TC: Um...South Texas...um you know I went to um I went to um school at night because I kept my um engineering job in the morning; cause at that time my goal was to have a law degree to improve or enhance my engineering career so I, I had um...uh South Texas are very good at providing a variety of night classes so I had a good time there. The only thing I didn't do is I didn't have the time to participate a lot of mock trials or student organizations which, which I think I should really—any student should do, but I just did not have the time.

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Chao Center for Asian Studies, Rice University

RS: Uh, when you were in pursuing a JD, what were some specific ways in which you thought that a law degree would help your career as an engineer? Besides from just understanding the legal statutes that are coming from above?

TC: Um that was um—I was pretty naïve to think that—you know—how can I understand how to read the statutes—I have to get some background and the only reason—the only way I know how to get that background is to get a law degree, but after I started law degree um...and um I met—I realized that United States was founded by constitution, by the law and we had case law here—It's not like European system. You know, Taiwan has European system so they don't have jury and not like here—and they really don't have case law. See...everything is case laws and I was fascinating by reading those case laws um, by understanding how the society's changed here um and that really provide um—It gave me a lot of personal satisfactions so I really—because I was always curious about why things happen that way, why people think certain ways and sometimes I—even though before I went to law school, I really don't think I understood people. I mean people surrounded me that well. I know why—I know that's how they act or how they say, but I just don't know where, why, how they think that way, but after law school and I really cannot tell you what uh caused me more—I just understand it—I just understand now, I just understand how the society has changed along the way because the opinion has changed you know—as opinions change with the society, even Supreme Court—they have changed over time um and it just I just appreciate—I just understand the society—I just fulfill my curiosity. I just—

JS: How much—oh.

TC: Go ahead.

JS: What types of classes like specific classes did you take during your 2L and 3L years? We need to be more specific.

TC: Um, I took all kinds of classes. I took—I took some environmental law and I took some patent law because people say I should take some which was good I took them so I said I'm not going to do that [laughs]...um some legal writing um more legal writing, mediation....

JS: And so since you mostly took night classes, were you able to finish it in 3 years?

TC: No, I finish in 4 years and a half.

JS: Oh okay.

TC: Yeah. 4 years and a half which it was a long time.....

JS: So when did you get married because I feel like it-?

TC: Oh, I married 1982.

JS: Oh.

TC: That's why that year keep on coming up! [laughs]

JS: I figured it may be somewhere.

TC: Yeah, 1982—that's when I married. So when I went to law school actually I was married in uh—my first kid was um I started 19—...1992 so...5 years—it was 5 years old.

JS: So what does your—or what did or does your husband do?

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Chao Center for Asian Studies, Rice University

TC: Um he's uh a physician—he's a heart doctor.

JS: And was he completely done with education by the time you all got married?

TC: He was um—I had to put this in—he graduate from Rice University. [**JS:** [laughs]] Got his PhD in bioengineering or biochemistry from Rice [**JS:** [laughs]]

TC: Then he went to um UT uh Houston Health centers so he got his MD from there—he was uh interning with Baylor at the time when we got married.

RS: Does he work here in the medical center now?

TC: He uh he has his own office not too far from here. It's on uh 610 Loop and Bellaire.

RS: Oh nice.

TC: Not too far...

RS: Hmm.

JS: And so was he supportive of your decision to go to law school?

TC: He was the first person I talked to that I want to go to law school um because I want to make sure everybody—I just wanted to see what he says—he was so happy! He was so happy for me—he said you should go for it! Then, I told my dad: of course he was happy—another degree. [**JS and TC:** [laughs]] He was really happy that I finally decided to go to law school.

JS: So how long does your husband been in Houston?

TC: Um...he came to Houston when the year—when he went to Rice as a freshman, yeah.

RS: And where is he from?

TC: He's also from Taiwan, but he has traveled a lot. Um he left Taiwan when he was uh age of 10.

RS: Where did he go?

TC: I think he went to Philippine. Then he went to um Peru. Then he came here.

JS: Okay.

JS: And so going to Rice was his first experience in the United States?

TC: Yes. His brother actually graduate from Rice—two years senior than, than him and his brother actually encourage him to apply for Rice and come to Rice.

JS: And he just stayed here through the PhD?

TC: Yes, [laughs]

RS: Uh so when did you say that you had your first child?

TC: Nineteen ninety—uh 1987.

RS: Okay—soooo what would you say your children’s lives have been like as first generation uh Taiwanese Americans?

TC: Um—their life...their, I think-

RS: Or their experience.

TC: Their life I think is much more relaxed um... and I think um especially because when, when my first child was born and then when he uh was growing up I still worked very hard for my career and I went to law school worked very hard there so I think he—he although I never really push him that much um now for Winston...but he—I think he saw me because one time when I was um getting award—when he—when they asked him to introduce me—he was talking about that when he was little, I—a lot of times I took him to office, I had to work late—and or um—he remember that experience so he worked very hard himself now and I think that’s from just watching us from working so hard—just try to um just try to, you know always do better. Um...I think my young one is probably more spoiled.

All: [laughs]

JS: Did you try to continue to instill Chinese culture within your children?

TC: Uh yes I, I really uh try to um put them in Chinese school, language school, because I think it that’d be helpful for them when Winston was still little—I offered him the idea to learn Chinese—was that helpful—I don’t think he-they understood that at the time um, but now, now I mean Spencer all his friends say: you need to learn Chinese so...so, but it’s such a different language um they don’t use it um...and although they learn um read and write, but they don’t really retain them just because they don’t practice it at all. Yeah. Both my kids’ Spanish, I think, are better than Chinese.

RS and JS: [laughs]

TC: That’s really sad.

All: [laughs]

RS: Sounds really similar to my situation at home

TC: Yeah, right.

RS: So—do you and your husband speak Mandarin at home or...

TC: No, actually I speak English um...

RS: Okay.

TC: I just uh I think it’s just laziness I mean just more—much easier, but yeah.

RS: Hmmph...um...hmm so after law school and raising your children, how did you begin your career as well ...yeah how did you begin your career?

TC: Um...

RS: How did you get where you are today?

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Chao Center for Asian Studies, Rice University

TC: Right, when I um—um I want to go back to be uh to go back to engineering since we're talking about labor market and all that. Um before going to being a attorney, you know engineering field was still at that time when I started my engineering career—I think time has changed a little bit now. It's still um very male dominated so—because you asked me at the time—say how do I feel like as an immigrant. Even through um my engineering career, I never felt being an Asian American or being an immigrant has anything has any way or has anything to um prevent me from being advanced myself. But I do feel at time, being a female engineer has something to prevent me from more, more advanced. Um, so I realized um in that—I realized the time that I don't get to go to field trip-not field trip—just to go to the field to look at the facilities a lot and I don't go to go to rig—um so I went to my boss—I finally went to my boss and said I really like to go to some rigs sometimes to go to our—the facility—that we design or what we're working on so I can see what's going on. He was, he was surprisedly pleas-...I mean, how he was...he was pleased but he was surprised, but he was pleased, he was really pleased. He said, 'Theresa, I didn't know that's what you wanted to do, but now you want to do that—you know I will look for the opportunity for you to go.' And I didn't realize at the time that because like the rigs it's not designed for women to be there—it's really designed to be only male because they have all this living quarters—uh have these showers has no doors! So it's all men...it's really designed for all men only. It's nothing they try to discriminate you or whatever. So every time when they send me and a boss, do what he said—so he sent me to look at facility—they had to put me in the supervisor's little individual quarter—still no lock! [laughs] No lock on door!

But in morning, they are very gentleman—they knock me—at like 5:30—it's time to get up. They would knock me on the door and tell me it's time. So um so I had you know—then I have experience—a real experience as an engineer—I see what we have designed, what we need to correct, but every time I go to fab yard—that's uh not good—not good experience. People look at me like...And I always tell my colleagues: I said I feel like I'm an ET here....

All: [laughs]

TC: Because people just so surprised to see a female there—I don't think it's to see an Asian American—it's just to see a female there...it's just—they just not used to it. Not comfortable with it I would say. Um so now we can move to be a attorney...I won't put that in because I think time has changed. I really don't know because since I'm not in the field anymore. Um but I think that time—that's how I felt.

JS: Well, that definitely prompts several other questions. Were there many Asian Americans—men or women—that worked at these various companies that you're in?

TC: Not in the company I worked for, but I think other engineers' companies they are. Yeah.

RS: Um was there a wage difference that you remember between—I mean (?) being a female-do you remember if uh....

TC: Um I uh...you know I, I never really compare my salary. I was, I only know what my boss made. [laughs], but of course he made much more than I do, but um I always work for a small company so I think our wages is always not as good as the big companies are, but I never had to complain about how much I made um I mean I have jump around a couple times and every time you know, when they recruit me, I always have a very nice increase on my salary, but I had um I have to say I had very good experience um as an engineer although the environment was not um was...was, was the best for the female engineer, but I have to say my experience as an engineer for the companies I work for were very good.

JS: That's very interesting. So you think that in this field, they focus more on your gender than your ethnicity?

TC: No, it's just uh I don't think anybody intentionally...I would, I would want to put that away. For example I went to Singapore, um and I was in charge of process uh our company was in charge of process engineering part so I went with a senior project engineer and when he left um, came back to United States so basically I was in charge so I had to go to fab yard and do the checklist to see where they were and

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Chao Center for Asian Studies, Rice University

report progress back to United States, but for example if I want to check a bow was 20 inches wide—I can really—I cannot physically move it—I just cannot—I just, I tried so I had to get a worker to come to help me out so I realized it's not anybody's fault that they don't want a female here because sometimes you have restrictions physically just don't make you as good as others. Doesn't prevent you from doing the job, but you can always get help. And they, they all know that so I think the environment was designed just because the nature of the job was designed more for male than female. Yeah.

RS: And, I know you haven't been uh working in the engineering field, but do you think that there are more females now getting into the industry?

TC: I don't know.

RS: Becoming more successful in it, or-?

TC: I really don't know. It's all the pipeline issues—you have to have more female students want to be engineer then to have that, but I have noticed like um a lot of oil companies has uh female ummmm leaders executives so I would just assume um either they try harder or they are—you know they just environment is better for them. That I really cannot—I really don't have the first hand knowledge on that.

RS: Right.

TC: But, when I graduate from law school and legal field, it's much more um yeah it's much more equalized—it's probably 50% 50%, but when I graduate from law school I got an opportunity to work for um the County Attorney's office and um before I had graduated I talked to Winston—Winston was almost, almost 10 at the time—9 years old so he went through a lot with, with us, with me, especially since I really did not pay much attention to him because I have to work in the morning and study at night and he was always very supportive as a child so I ask him—I said, when I graduated if I um if I become attorney um do you want me to work for big law firm—that means you probably never see me anymore even the weekends or you want uh me to stay home as mom and I can tell you that I will not be happy [**JS and TC:** [laughs]] and the third choice—I said I may work for a government agency and it will be 8-5. He said 8-5. So when I got that opportunity from county attorney's office—I grabbed it.

JS: So what were your general job responsibilities then?

TC: At that time?

JS: Yes, at the county attorney's office.

TC: Um I started at hospital district so we do all kind of legal—we're, we're a legal counsel for hospital district so um we do all kinds of contracts uh we did doctors, nurses, uh we did CEO of the hospital district or um we also do a lot of contracts for buildings um because all those hospitals buildings belongs to the county um all kinds of issues—we had board meetings um for hospital board...um and they have—their organizations sometimes they have conflicts among each others...we do have lawsuits sometimes—it's um malpractice lawsuits that they—some of the patients will file suit against the doctors —so we had to defend the doctors for them. It's uh a lot of variety of issues.

RS: What is it like uh...working with malpractice—having a physician as a husband?

TC: No, we are defending the doctors.

RS: Oh okay.

TC: No, we are defending the doctors because we are [**RS:** I was going to say that's-]—hospital district's legal counsel so there's a lawsuit so we defend them. Yeah. Still on the same side. [laughs]

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Chao Center for Asian Studies, Rice University

RS: Okay, I was going to say that's interesting.

TC: Yeah.

JS: And so you graduated from law school in 1996?

TC: Yes, December of 1996.

JS: Okay—and so in terms of community involvement, how did you get involved with the University of Houston with the Board of Regents?

TC: Um...interesting-I um...I was um at the time—when—when George W. Bush was running uh for governor....um and that I was...I was involved in his campaign from, from very beginning so, so I—and then later on I was asked by one of his um, um inner circle person and said um see if there's uh any appointment I would like to apply for. So I apply for—I just applied for University of Houston Board of Regents job. I did not get it the first time. It took me probably 3, 4 years. It was—he appoint me the 2nd term. He had yeah.

JS: How did you get involved with the Bush family?

TC: ...um....I um I supported dad....I went to the inauguration—I really just support them as a uh grass—root person um and they are from Houston so a lot of people that know—are actually very close to them so I was one of the troopers I think, but I went to his inauguration then I went to the other Bush's um inauguration so I was there.

JS: So did your involvement in the engineering or oil and gas assist in some way in helping build a network with the Bush's?

TC: No, uh this is funny how, how that goes. No, I uh it's really separate group-totally separate group. My engineering job is in the morning. At night, I go to my community involvement and I work at the time-it really I mean people ask me to help or help me to do certain things. If I have time, I do it, but later on fe-, that's how I become attorney before I um anyway...being engineer later—let me go back

JS: [laughs]

TC: Between my job changes, when I was in law school, I went to uh actually when I was on Board of Regents um Jim McDaniel was *Houston Chronicle* President at the time. He told me that he said, all their employees went through a test—the testing would tell them what kind of career path is best for that person and they um they rely on the test all the years when he was President. He was president like 20 something years. So I said, oh there's a test like that so I took it—so I said could you recommend me to the person that you had as a psychiatrist or a psychologist anyway so I went to that person and took the test. Remember I was between the—oh I was already change job to become attorney and my test says attorney would be my second choice to be in my career so I come back to be an engineer was not one of them...was not one of the top ten careers I should take. So I ask the psychiatrist—I said why did that happen? I said I was engineer for 15 years and I like engineering—I like math I still do, but he said—but he said, you really a people person so you had to be with people to be happier and that's really supposed to be career choice. He said, I don't know who told you to become attorney, but that's a better choice for you. [laughs] Because each person's different right? So I think that's why being an engineer really—although I can be very good engineer—but I feel something else I need to do to come to think about it. That's why I get involved.

RS: Nice. Um...hmm...

JS: And so you have a variety of other community involvement as well. How did you get involved with the YMCA?

TC: YMCA...uh I want to get involve with YMCA...um because when Winston was growing up, the first summer camp I put him in is YMCA. He was maybe 5 years old. And the counselor—and you know YMCA camp is huge, you know a hundred kids, but his counselor told me that he cried that first week and she, she was not that old—she was maybe 20 something years old—early 20s. And she was very nice I mean and I thought Winston after summer camp, I can put him everywhere. He just learned how to make friends, how to survive in the huge group of kids and you know I thought the counselor did very good job for Winston, but eventually it's why right—it helped Winston. So I told them I want to get involved—I want other people have the same experience as Winston—benefit from Y's camp or whatever Y provided, so.

JS: And then I guess final organizations that we'll look at are uh the state bar association and Texas Executive Women...

TC: State Bar—same thing, I told um—I just—I said I you know legal career really um really do a lot of things for me so I say it's time and the first 10 years I was busy to build my career because I start from scratch and I said it's really time for me to...um pay back to the legal community so I was asking around—I say what's the best way to, to um contribute back so they said—why don't you get involved in the bar association? The Asian bar is really too young for me—they're all the people-rising stars...[laughs]...like both of you...and I said—they said you know you can um apply to be—try to be a um you know on the board. There's a minority director position will open up once in a while. I said sure so I applied and um and then I got my recommendations in and people asked me said—because it's, it's very competitive.

JS: Right.

TC: Very, very competitive—so they said um—what if they don't choose you. I said that's fine. And they said, can we ask you to serve as co-committees. I said no problem—whatever I can best serve. I just want to give back. I was chosen so I had...

All: [laughs]

TC: I had great time—it was really nice—um the reason I'm said serve on the board is nice—is just the people—people that on the board all want to contribute back to the legal community and they really want to make sure that the justice is served. And they want to make sure people have access to justice system um...anyway, it's just you know—you remind me of legal community—legal, being an attorney used to be very noble profession um especially Lincoln days...you know, it's just very noble, only noble people want to be attorneys and I know the image has been tarnished um for a while but if you have ever been around those people on the board...you just know that everybody's different, that they all think it's so important to restore our reputation.

JS: And so in 2009, you got your current position as Associate Judge of the City of Houston?

TC: Right.

JS: And so what does this position—This is a political position correct?

TC: Right.

JS: Okay, so what does that entail exactly?

TC: Um, it just we uh we work in uh the courthouse on Lubbock, uh we also have some um branch courthouse in Kingwood and um Southwest Houston um have one um on Southeast um basically you're the judge—municipal judge it's just um is only difference is it's by appointment not by election so it's appointed by mayor so I was appointed by Mayor Bill White.

JS: Okay.

TC: And I just got reappointed by Mayor, Mayor uh Parker.

JS: Okay and so this is not a campaigning type position at all?

TC: Um no...you don't have—well I guess you have to lobby to the people to reappoint you um but it's, it's, it's more about um it's more about the quali—qualifications and what you can do for the city.

JS: Okay, and so as a municipal judge, what do you do exactly? Do you hear cases or...?

TC: Do we hear cases? Um...municipal court only hear um Class C misdemeanor cases so it's a very—uh it's probably lowest crime um of all the criminal cases and they also have code violations um for uh it has some juvenile cases, have some environmental cases, have traffic ticket cases.

JS: Okay, and so do you plan on staying in the position?

TC: I really like it—it's a huge docket. I probably see 300 people a day, but um what, what, what made me think my job is important is sometimes when a juvenile comes before me—and this is most time is the first time um they um interface with um the judicial system and I always can look into the juvenile's eyes to know that—you know everybody make mistakes—this is good kid—they just happen to make mistake at that time and it just happen to be that the policeman was called and a ticket was issued so I always try to help them out. Go through the system so um you know because a lot of times they, they really don't understand that once you plead guilty, it may follow you forever.

JS: Yes.

TC: Um and your life may be ruined somewhat and I really don't want to happen to those young people when they just made the mistake. I, I would like to see them have a second chance. Um so but as a judge you really cannot give them legal advice so you just try to help them in a way to put in the right path so they will um you know they have a chance to correct themselves. That's what I like about the job.

RS: Have you ever considered running for uh a uh higher political office in the Houston or...or possibly the State?

TC: Campaign um...campaigning is very hard on the person and on the family. And um you know I went through one campaign and I um I really think I really do not think I can do it when I still have a kid at home.

RS: Right.

TC: So right now, for least next 4 years, I think that question—I would not even consider the question, yeah. 'Cause I think the family, once the kid is ruined, it's hard to get them back.

RS: Definitely

TC: Yeah.

RS: Hmmm.

JS: And so, personally in your leisure time what do you do now?

TC: I have no leisure time!

All: [laughs]

TC: What you talking about? [laughs]...I don't think I have any leisure time. I have some quiet time—had some quiet time then I probably just read and get some books and read.

JS: So do you have any future plans to travel to Taiwan soon or...?

TC: I really wanted to um to do that, but I haven't had the opportunity, um no.

JS: And I guess finally, how well has your network been maintained over the different places you've been or individuals that you knew in Taiwan—do you still communicate with them? The Bush family in Texas?

TC: Um I um—you know the you can communicate them by Skypee...uh Skypee...the video system.

JS: Skype?

TC: Skype, Skype, Skype, Skype—you can communicate with that. You can—just so many means—there are so many means um but I um when I get older, since I, I uh I really try to um do more things for others not for myself—um for example, if a friend gets sick and I make sure I go see him or her and uh a friend got award—I really try to be there for them. I just think it's um you know—it's really my you know my life has different seasons. Now my time is...the season I have now is do more for others...anyway.

RS: Great. Is there anything else you uh wanna talk about or share with us that we haven't touched on yet?

TC: I think being um an immigrant and to come to United States—it's uh = it's a great privilege—um I think being American is great privilege and um I, I really um appreciate um this country and I think the country is called the Land of Opportunity—it's still true— doesn't seem that, that—I mean I know a lot of young people going through um the economy downturn and it's hard to find a job, but I think my immigration experience really has um taught me how to survive in the—with the worst condition so once you went through that—it's—it's—you feel like there's nothing...anything can happen. Um there's nothing that you cannot do. So with that in mind, I really want um so with a lot of people who are not immigrant, they really have more blessed life so it's just a little bit barriers or obstacles they will say...ohhhh why that happen to me? So I really want them—so life is never fair right? So I want to say that if you think you can survive the worst condition, you can be anybody or anything that you want to be.

JS: And so in constructing this archive, in addition to the oral history that you provided for us today, we are also inquiring individuals—do you have any photographs or documents that you would be willing to share with us?

TC: Okay.

JS: Enjoy that.

TC: Alright, thank you.

JS: And the final plank, we'd like to remember to invite you to Dr. Chao's house—Professor Anne Chao is having a reception for all the interviewees as well as the interviewers at her home on Thursday, July 21st, 2011 and further information and invitation for that will be sent out to you in the future.

TC: Alright, thank you.

JS: Great.

TC: Very nice of them. Yeah.

RS: Alright, thank you so much!

JS: Well, great, thank you so much!

TC: You're most welcome. I hope this works!

RS & JS: Yes!

TC: Tell me what kind of documentation you want.

JS: They are looking for anything from uh application processes that you did with uh the U.S. in terms of—getting your American citizenship or any photographs of the inauguration or your experiences there...essentially your experiences were shaped through documents or photos with saying we took the oral history of you—any type of photograph or anything that can help us get a visual and how you describe—pictures of what that environment looks like—will definitely help.

TC: Oh okay, alright. Gotcha.

RS: Should I just...press the record button to...?

JS: I'm not sure, because my actually went out 10 minutes into the interview so I'm gonna probably...uh we're gonna have to print it on both of our computers if possible.

RS: Okay. I'll just press this red button.

JS: Yeah. I think that works.

RS: Oh it's still recording...

TC: Don't delete it...[laughs]...don't rewind and delete it...[laughs]

JS: Yeah...I think....