

LOS ANGELES GAY ASIAN PACIFIC COMMUNITY ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

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Descriptive Summary

Title

Los Angeles Gay Asian Pacific Community Oral History Project

Date(s)

1997-1998

Creator

Eric Wat

Extent

22 narrators

23 interviews

Repository

Center for Oral and Public History
California State University, Fullerton

Los Angeles Gay Asian Pacific Community Oral History Project

OH 2647.1

Narrator: TAK YAMAMOTO (1938-2012)
Interviewer: Eric Wat
Date: November 7, 1997
Location: Los Angeles, California
Language: English
Project: Los Angeles Gay Asian Pacific Community History Project
Audio Format(s): Digital
Length: 01:32:14
Transcript: Digitized. Verbatim; 43 pp.
Ephemera: None

Abstract:

An oral history with Tak Yamamoto, a self-identifying gay Japanese-American from Los Angeles, California. The interview was conducted by Eric Wat, a master's candidate in American studies at CSU Fullerton. The purpose of this interview was to gather personal experiences regarding Gay Asian-Americans in southern California. Specifically, this interview details Yamamoto's experiences as a gay Japanese-American; briefly discusses growing up in Westminster and being relocated to a Japanese internment camp at the age of three; discusses moving back to Little Tokyo and East LA following internment; describes first encounters with gay men during high school years and questioning of own sexuality; recounts first connections with gay men in the air force and the difficulty of concealing identity as a gay individual in the military; recounts coming out to family following military service; describes working in Southern California and being part of a small circle of gay Asians; discusses the competitiveness within the gay Asian community in pursuing the white male as the ideal partner, and the problematics behind the concept of it; details the development of Asian/Pacific Lesbians and Gays [A/PLG]; recounts serving as one of the founders of A/PLG; discusses the actions carried out in ridding of hostility towards gay Asians within the gay community as a whole; describes the work carried out in developing A/PLG's presence within several Asian-American communities; explains growth in comfort as openly identifying himself as a gay, Asian man; discusses the gay Asian's lack of representation and the importance of developing a group for gay Asians; recounts being a member of the Japanese American Citizens League [JACL]; and explains the acceptance (and lack thereof) of gay Asians from Asian/Pacific straights.

OH 2647.2

Narrator: TAK YAMAMOTO (1938-2012)
Interviewer: Eric Wat
Date: February 18, 1998
Location: Los Angeles, California
Language: English
Project: Los Angeles Gay Asian Pacific Community History Project
Audio Format(s): Digital
Length: 00:58:46
Transcript: Digitized. Verbatim and edited; 23 pp
Ephemera: None

Abstract:

An oral history with Tak Yamamoto, a self-identifying gay Japanese-American man from Los Angeles, California. The interview is a follow-up with Yamamoto and was conducted by Eric Wat, a master's candidate in American studies at CSU Fullerton. The purpose of this interview was to gather personal experiences regarding Gay Asian-Americans in southern California. Specifically, this interview details Yamamoto's experiences as a gay Japanese-American man; discusses realization of being gay as a major turning point in own life; explains struggle of maintaining a White attitude in the military, as it was difficult to fit in for being an Asian man; discusses experiences with affirmative action, and discussions among co-workers regarding gay identity; further details the caution taken in visiting gay bars; discusses the rule within A/PLG [Asian Pacific Lesbians and Gays] in not nominating non-Asians for positions on the board; compares views regarding having non-Asian/Pacific members within GARP [Gay Asian Rap Group] versus A/PLG; discusses the process by which by-laws were written in A/PLG; explains how A/PLG discouraged serving as a dating service; discusses the differences between members who were politically/educationally engaged, compared to members who were not; describes the differences involving engagement between gay members and lesbian members in A/PLG; discusses differences between American-born Asians and immigrant Asians; recounts events carried out by A/PLG; and discusses the social growth within A/PLG.

OH 2648

Narrator: DEAN GOISHI (b.1943)
Interviewer: Eric Wat
Date: October 24, 1997
Location: Los Angeles, California
Language: English
Project: Los Angeles Gay Asian Pacific Community History Project
Audio Format(s): Digital
Length: 00:32:46 (Note: much of the audio in the interview is missing)
Transcript: Digitized. Verbatim; 24 pp.
Ephemera: None

Abstract:

An oral history with Dean Goishi, a self-identifying gay Japanese-American from Los Angeles, California. The interview was conducted by Eric Wat, a master's candidate in American studies at CSU Fullerton. The purpose of this interview was to gather personal experiences regarding Gay Asian-Americans in southern California. Specifically, this interview details Goishi's experiences as a gay Japanese-American; discusses birth in an internment camp and moving to Reedley, California; recounts early life in Reedley as a member of YBA [Young Buddhist Association]; discusses attending UC Berkeley and learning of the LGBTQ identity; explains lack of understanding homosexuality at a young age; recounts transferring workplaces across several states in the US with then-partner; discusses family's acceptance of being gay without explicitly coming out; recounts visiting gay-frequented bars; discusses the occurrence of Asians preferring older White men due to the pursuit for financial security; explains how Asian restaurants served as a safe space for gay Asians to gather; discusses the lifestyle of the bathhouse versus the lifestyle of bars; discusses the lack of socializing among gay Asians; explains interactions with other gay men of color and non-LGBTQ Asians at the workplace; discusses homophobia within the LA Asian community; explains how exposure to homosexuality in San Francisco assisted in adjusting to the LA gay community; discusses the formation of A/PLG and how the Gay Liberation Movement assisted in creating A/PLG; and discusses standpoint on how all gay Asian groups must collaborate.

OH 2649

Narrator: ANONYMOUS
Interviewer: Eric Wat
Date: October 23, 1997
Location: Los Angeles, California
Language: English
Project: Los Angeles Gay Asian Pacific Community History Project
Audio Format(s): Digital
Length: 0:24:02 (Note: much of the audio in the interview is missing)
Transcript: Digitized. Verbatim; 33 pp.
Ephemera: None

Abstract:

An oral history with Virgil Vang (Pseudonym), a self-identifying gay Chinese-American from Los Angeles, California. The interview was conducted by Eric Wat, a master's candidate in American studies at CSU Fullerton. The purpose of this interview was to gather personal experiences regarding Gay Asian-Americans in southern California. Specifically, this interview details Vang's experiences as a gay Chinese-American; recounts early life in San Francisco; describes developing process of coming out through self-expression in writing during college years; recounts moving to Los Angeles and meeting people through the gay bar and club scene; describes race relations in the gay community, and the commonality of Asians' preference in White men; discusses having gone out with immigrant gay Asian men; recounts having been closeted in the workforce, and eventually coming out; discusses the positive impact of the feminist movement on gay men, and how women are more considerate in learning of gender and sexuality; discusses intersectionality, and its prominence in the gay community; describes workforce associating with the Asian community; recounts joining GAPSN [Gay Asian Pacific Support Network]; recounts living in Taipei and associating with the gay community in Taipei; discusses the role of class, and its prominence in the gay community in Taipei; discusses how race relations in the US gay community are based off of stereotypes; discusses Asian-American views towards gay individuals; recounts work carried out in GAPSN; recounts joining AIT [Asian Pacific AIDS Intervention Team] and work carried out; describes the gay Asian community; discusses the role of food in relations with other gay Asian men; discusses the role of Asian restaurants in their surrounding communities as a whole; and describes integrating own sexuality in work, and supporting other social movements.

OH 2880

Narrator: ANONYMOUS
Interviewer: Eric Wat
Date: December 4, 1997
Location: Los Angeles, California
Language: English
Project: Los Angeles Gay Asian Pacific Community History Project
Audio Format(s): Digital
Length: 01:32:56
Transcript: Digitized. Verbatim; 32 pp
Ephemera: None.

Abstract:

An oral history with Anonymous of Los Angeles, California, a self-identifying gay Japanese - American. This interview was conducted for the Gay Asian Community Oral History Project by Eric Wat. The purpose of this interview was to gather information about the personal experiences regarding gay Asian Americans. Specifically gives an account of Anonymous' experiences as a gay second generation Japanese American growing up in the later end of World War II and handling racism/prejudice in social settings within the gay Los Angeles community; dealing with feelings of inadequacy due to being "othered" in majority white spaces after formally being in majority Japanese-American/East Asian-American environments [Terminal Island, Los Angeles, CA, Manzanar War Relocation Center (CA), the Tuesday Bowling League, and the Asian/Pacific Lesbians and Gays (APLG)]; his early childhood with an absent fisherman father , four sisters, as a "latchkey kid," and a sexual object for his peers but not his pseudo-girlfriends born of feelings of inadequacy. The interview covers his lack of self-identification as an Asian until it was pointed out and how he tried to absorb white culture; what it was like to be gay and closeted in the army (which he volunteered for at 19) in the mid-1950s and the need/desire to be overtly masculine and shroud femininity. Also covers the late 1950s-early1960s Los Angeles gay bar culture, specifically Red Raven bar on Melrose, Los Angeles bath house/gay hook-up culture, and an aversion to the more popular West Hollywood gay bar/club culture. Describes his unease with white men being uninterested in him and other Asian-Americans, and his suspicions towards white men who did take specific interest in Asian men comparing gay Asian men fetishized as subservient Geishas. Explains his conflicting views of being Asian-American but not particularly liking immigrant Asians (specifically Thai men). This interview includes the struggle to find friendships in the gay community as a minority within an already marginalized community which led to his unintentional political activism for gay rights.

OH 2881

Narrator: TERRY GOCK
Interviewer: Eric Wat
Date: December 8, 1997
Location: Rosemead, California
Language: English
Project: Los Angeles Gay Asian Pacific Community History Project
Audio Format(s): Digital
Length: 02:16:51
Transcript: Digitized. Verbatim; 24 pp.
Ephemera: None

Abstract:

An oral history with Dr. Terry Gock PhD., a self-identifying gay Chinese-American. The interview was conducted for the Center for Public and Oral History, California State University, Fullerton by Eric Wat, a Master's candidate at CSUF. The purpose of this interview was to gather personal experiences regarding gay Asian-Americans. Specifically gives an account of Gock's experiences as a gay first generation Chinese-American—growing up in Hong Kong, China attending an all-male high school being extremely socially involved (recalling passively identifying as homosexual but not identifying/understanding gay culturally as it was acceptable for heterosexual males to hold hands/hug/be physically close) and moving to California, ; attending California State University, Chico and still working through sexuality regardless of the openness of the time in Northern California. Having to first process the cultural shift present in first generation immigrants and later understanding sexual orientation and gay culture; facing micro-aggressions from white-Americans. Having an Afro-American roommate consciously involved with Black Nationalism taught him about oppression; Gock never consciously felt oppressed but rather isolated as an intersectional minority but currently identifying with a Pan-Asian movement. Involved in helping to organize a gay-lesbian center at Cal State Chico, joining the Metropolitan Community Church and later joining and becoming actively involved the Asian/Pacific Lesbians and Gays [APLG]. Describes white attitudes towards Asian-Americans as either undesiring or desiring them for "Geisha-like" subservience; describes the lack of gay Asian friendships as they viewed each other as competition for white attention and the Asian-American versus Asian tension present in Asian organizations; noticed that non-Asian leadership in Asian organizations becoming more prevalent breaking an unwritten rule. Explains why he eventually left these organizations to focus on the broader community.

OH 2882

Narrator: **ANDY CHAEN, ROY KAWASAKI, TAK YAMAMOTO, AND DOUG CHIN**

Interviewer: Eric Wat

Date: May 2, 1997

Location: Panorama City, California

Language: English

Project: Los Angeles Gay Asian Pacific Community History Project

Audio Format(s): Digital

Length: 01:27:07

Transcript: Digitized. Verbatim; 41 pp.

Ephemera: None

Abstract:

An oral history with Andy Chaen, Roy Kawasaki, Tak Yamamoto, and Doug Chin; who all share connections with the Asian/Pacific Lesbians and Gays, APLG. The interview was conducted by the Center for Public and Oral History, California State University, Fullerton by Eric Wat, a Master's candidate at CSUF. The purpose of this interview was to gather personal experiences regarding gay Asian-Americans. Specifically gives an account of the four men's experiences in Los Angeles' gay social scene as Asian-Americans facing numerous micro-aggressions. Interprets the dominant demographics of popular gay bars, specifically River Club in 1970s Los Angeles, California: popular places gay Asians in Los Angeles attended; places where APLG fundraisers would be held. Describes social pressure to be "Model Minority" when in predominantly white gay bars. Describes gendered clothing regulations for Drag Queens and heavily enforced for "passing" Drag Queens (particularly South Pacific/East Asian). Explains the need for predominant gay Asian social environments in predominantly white environments. Recalls the beginning stages of APLG in 1980, Terry Gock's involvement in bi-law creation and church involvement with the organization. Overviews the purpose of APLG and "rap groups" held early in organization's history; disbanded due to negative feedback from white members. Justifies Asian and white romantic involvement in gay community.

OH 2883

Narrator: STEVE LEW (b. 1958)
Interviewer: Eric Wat
Date: January 19, 1998
Location: San Francisco, California
Language: English
Project: Los Angeles Gay Asian Pacific Community History Project
Audio Format(s): Digital
Length: 01:10:04
Transcript: Digitized. Verbatim; 23 pp.
Ephemera: None

Abstract:

OH 2884

Narrator: LEO JOSLIN (b. 1955)
Interviewer: Eric Wat
Date: November 7, 1997
Location: Bay Area, California
Language: English
Project: Los Angeles Gay Asian Pacific Community History Project
Audio Format(s): Digital
Length: 01:23:48
Transcript: Digitized. Verbatim; 36 pp.
Ephemera: None

Abstract:

An oral history with Leo Joslin, a self-identifying gay Japanese-American from the Bay Area, California. The interview was conducted by Eric Wat, a master's candidate in American studies at CSU Fullerton. The purpose of this interview was to gather personal experiences regarding Gay Asian-Americans in southern California. Specifically, this interview details Joslin's experiences as a gay Japanese-American; recounts growing up in Atascadero, family dynamics at home, and discrimination from peers; describes sexual encounters with male schoolmates throughout junior high and high school; explains influence of Fundamentalist Christian upbringing, attempted relationships with female schoolmates, and how such relationships were thought to rid of the idea of being gay; recounts self-acceptance of being gay; recounts moving to Los Angeles for college, and visiting cafes, bars, and bathhouses; describes discrimination from homophobic students in college; recounts sexual encounters in bathhouses, and escaping the AIDS epidemic through preferences in sexual practices; details being a member of GAY [Growing American Youth], and later joining the Frontrunners Track Club; recounts disregarding A/PLG's [Asian Pacific Lesbians and Gays] presence, due to the attendance of 'rice queens' at events; describes initial lack of understanding intersectional identity as a gay, Asian man, due to focus on being a gay man navigating through the AIDS epidemic; recounts later acceptance of intersectional identity as a gay, Asian man after joining GARP [Gay Asian Rap Group]; explains disregarding the commonality of Asians pursuing white men, and being in an Asian-Asian relationship; theorizes the idea that rice queens are pedophilic; discusses growing up as a biracial individual, and the early struggle of comfortably representing both identities; recounts coming out to family and marrying partner; and discusses relations among gay Asian groups, and the purpose of representing gay Asians in the mainstream.

OH 2885

Narrator: PRESCOTT CHOW (b. 1962)
Interviewer: Eric Wat
Date: January 21, 1998
Location: San Francisco, California
Language: English
Project: Los Angeles Gay Asian Pacific Community History Project
Audio Format(s): Digital
Length: 01:10:56
Transcript: Digitized. Verbatim; 19 pp.
Ephemera: None

Abstract:

An oral history with Prescott Chow, a self-identifying gay Chinese-American man from Los Angeles, California. The interview was conducted by Eric Wat, a master's candidate in American studies at CSU Fullerton. The purpose of this interview was to gather personal experiences regarding Gay Asian-Americans in southern California. Specifically, this interview details Chow's experiences as a gay Chinese-American; recounts early life in San Francisco; describes coming out and associating with gay groups in Northern California; recounts attending bars in Northern California; recounts moving to Los Angeles to attend CSU Long Beach, and visiting bars; compares the bar scene in Northern California to Southern California; details first impressions of A/PLG [Asian Pacific Lesbians and Gays]; recounts first realizations of intersectional identity of being gay and Asian; explains first experiences in forming GARP [Gay Asian Rap Group]; discusses the impact of GARP on own identity; discusses the subject of race within the gay community in the past; explains GARP's interactions with A/PLG and GAPSN [Gay Asian Pacific Support Network]; discusses racial dynamics within the gay Asian community; explains GARP and GAPSN's restrictions on only having Asian members; recounts involvement in GAPSN; and discusses views on the gay Asian community and the significance of support groups.

OH 2886

Narrator: STAN YOGI (b. 1962)
Interviewer: Eric Wat
Date: January 24, 1998
Location: Los Angeles, California
Language: English
Project: Los Angeles Gay Asian Pacific Community History Project
Audio Format(s): Digital
Length: 00:55:36
Transcript: Digitized. Verbatim; 21 pp.
Ephemera: None

Abstract:

An oral history with Stan Yogi, a self-identifying gay Japanese-American man from Los Angeles, California. The interview was conducted by Eric Wat, a master's candidate in American studies at CSU Fullerton. The purpose of this interview was to gather personal experiences regarding Gay Asian-Americans in southern California. Specifically, this interview details Yogi's experiences as a gay Japanese-American; recounts early life in Gardena, California; discusses the role of Christian upbringing and involvement in school on personal life; recounts the impact of proposition 6 on identity of being gay; discusses past relationships with women; discusses the negative impact of Christianity on gay identity; recounts coming out at the same time as high school friend during college; discusses involvement in college, and implicit confrontations of discrimination; recounts dropping out of Berkeley Ph.D. program and later graduating with a Master's degree; discusses process of integrating gay identity with Asian-American identity while working with AIDS/HIV programs; discusses own life as being an influence towards political views; recounts not having heard of gay Asian/Pacific groups; discusses fear of coming out to the public; discusses racial dynamics within the gay community, and frustration towards stereotypes involving Asian-Americans; discusses attraction to other gay Asian men, unlike how Asians tended to not be in relationships with one-another; recalls the organization of a forum which discussed the portrayal Asian American men in the media; and discusses the growth of Asian-American views towards gay individuals, and growth towards ridding of stereotypes regarding gay Asian-Americans.

OH 2887

Narrator: RUMMEL BAUTISTA (b. 1960)
Interviewer: Eric Wat
Date: January 26, 1998
Location: Los Angeles, California
Language: English
Project: Los Angeles Gay Asian Pacific Community History Project
Audio Format(s): Digital
Length: 02:02:52
Transcript: Digitized. Verbatim; 55 pp.
Ephemera: None

Abstract:

An oral history with Rummel Bautista, a self-identifying gay Filipino-American from Los Angeles, California. The interview was conducted by Eric Wat, a master's candidate in American studies at CSU Fullerton. The purpose of this interview was to gather personal experiences regarding Gay Asian-Americans in southern California. Specifically, this interview details Bautista's experiences as a gay Filipino-American; recounts moving from the Philippines to Los Angeles; describes relationships with female peers during high school; recounts early understanding of being gay; describes coming out to family; recounts first experiences at clubs, bars, and bathhouses; recounts relationships with partners; recounts joining A/PLG as it was forming; recounts attending law school, suffering from AIDS, and losing partner to AIDS; describes work carried out in the A/PLG HIV assistance group; discusses interracial relationships and their effect on minority-specific groups; discusses social patterns with other gay Asians; discusses the growing prominence of gay Asian-Asian couples; details work carried out as a member of A/PLG; and discusses the growth and progression of A/PLG over the years.

OH 2888

Narrator: STANLEY REBULTAN (b. 1951)
Interviewer: Eric Wat
Date: January 29, 1998
Location: Los Angeles, California
Language: English
Project: Los Angeles Gay Asian Pacific Community History Project
Audio Format(s): Digital
Length: 01:55:32
Transcript: Digitized. Verbatim; 35 pp.
Ephemera: None

Abstract:

An oral history with Stanley Rebutan, a self-identifying gay Filipino from Los Angeles, California. The interview was conducted by Eric Wat, a master's candidate in American studies at CSU Fullerton. The purpose of this interview was to gather personal experiences regarding Gay Asian-Americans in southern California. Specifically, this interview details Rebutan's experiences as a gay, Filipino man; recounts early life and family dynamics in the Philippines; describes life attending a Catholic college in the Philippines; discusses how one's identity as being gay is an inborn feeling that cannot be taken away; describes experience of having been married to a woman as being influenced from an upbringing focusing on conforming to society and starting a family; recounts moving to Los Angeles and working for twenty-one years; discusses being tested positive for HIV and being the subject of research entailing bitter melon as a treatment for HIV; discusses the negligence of medical professionals towards those suffering from AIDS or HIV, and only looking to research of treatment for self-gain; discusses reading the *Advocate* magazine and meeting people of similar backgrounds through personal ads; recounts attending gay Asian bars; recounts advocating for the rejection of Proposition 6; recounts being one of the first founders of A/PLG [Asian Pacific Lesbians and Gays] and being the leader of the political end within the group; discusses political activism carried out as a member of A/PLG; poses stance on the importance by which all LGBTQ+ Asian groups must band together in order to have their purposes heard; discusses early attraction to Caucasian men due to the fact that Caucasian features were considered "exotic" to own worldview; and recounts first witnessing interactions among gay men in the United States.

OH 2889

Narrator: CHARLES CHANG (b. 1940)
Interviewer: Eric Wat
Date: February 16, 1998
Location: Long Beach, California
Language: English
Project: Los Angeles Gay Asian Pacific Community History Project
Audio Format(s): Digital
Length: 01:11:32
Transcript: Digitized. Verbatim; 29 pp.
Ephemera: None

Abstract:

An oral history with Charles Chang, a self-identifying gay Chinese-American from Long Beach, California. The interview was conducted by Eric Wat, a master's candidate in American studies at CSU Fullerton. The purpose of this interview was to gather personal experiences regarding Gay Asian-Americans in southern California. Specifically, this interview details Chang's experiences as a gay Chinese-American; recounts early life in Hawaii; describes dating women and high school, yet being attracted to men; recounts not understanding the idea of being gay at a young age and later moving to California following high school; discusses first joining social groups in California; recounts first visiting bars with predominantly gay customers, and bathhouses; discusses relations among Asians, and experiences with racism in Hawaii versus California; recounts joining GARP [Gay Asian Rap Group] and growing a circle of gay Asian friends; describes early activities in GARP; recounts joining the Gay Men's Chorus and the Democratic Club, and the activities performed in both groups; discusses having desired an Asian partner, in comparison to the commonality of gay Asians pursuing White men; recounts developing a sense of Asian Pride through GARP; recounts visiting gay Asian bars; discusses the view by which gay Asians did not get together, as they had a sense of being family; discusses later joining A/PGF [Asian Pacific Gays and Friends] and lists the activities performed in both GARP and A/PGF; discusses the closeting of the gay identity in the workforce; and discusses the importance of having multiple gay Asian groups, by which they may serve as a safe space for gay Asians.

OH 2890

Narrator: DOUG CHIN (b. 1949)
Interviewer: Eric Wat
Date: February 16, 1998
Location: Long Beach, California
Language: English
Project: Los Angeles Gay Asian Pacific Community History Project
Audio Format(s): Digital
Length: 01:18:48
Transcript: Digitized. Verbatim; 29 pp.
Ephemera: None

Abstract:

An oral history with Doug Chin, a self-identifying gay Chinese-American from Los Angeles, California. The interview was conducted by Eric Wat, a master's candidate in American studies at CSU Fullerton. The purpose of this interview was to gather personal experiences regarding Gay Asian-Americans in southern California. Specifically, this interview details Chin's experiences as a gay Chinese-American; recounts early life in Hawaii; recounts early sexual encounter with childhood peer; recounts dating girls in high school, and having friends with homophobic tendencies; recounts serving in the U.S. Army following high school, and experiencing sexual encounters during service; describes moving to Redondo Beach following service, and meeting then-partner; recounts relocating to Washington D.C., and then moving back to Redondo Beach; recounts befriending Roy Kawasaki; describes visiting The River Club, and the bar scene in LA; recounts being involved with the formation of A/PLG [Asian Pacific Lesbians and Gays] and attending early meetings; Discusses the problematics behind Asian-White couples; Explains work carried out in A/PLG, as being one of the first treasurers; discusses the role A/PLG played in helping other gay Asians find a sense of identity, and coming out; and recounts relationships with other key member of A/PLG.

OH 2891

Narrator: ANDY CHEAH (b. 1940)
Interviewer: Eric Wat
Date: February 25, 1998
Location: Los Angeles, California
Language: English
Project: Los Angeles Gay Asian Pacific Community History Project
Audio Format(s): Digital
Length: 01:33:39
Transcript: Not Transcribed
Ephemera: None

Abstract:

An oral history with Andy Cheah, a self-identifying gay Chinese man from Los Angeles, California. The interview was conducted by Eric Wat, a master's candidate in American studies at CSU Fullerton. The purpose of this interview was to gather personal experiences regarding Gay Asian-Americans in southern California. Specifically, this interview details Cheah's experiences as a gay Chinese man in Southern California; explains Chinese views of gay men as being labeled as effeminate; recounts early life in Malaysia; discusses early feelings towards other boys in primary school; recounts first sexual encounter with college classmate; discusses graduating from college in Malaysia, and meeting with other gay men while moving around; recounts moving to Hong Kong in 1967 for independence and work; recounts later moving to Los Angeles as a student; discusses receiving green card and later earning citizenship; discusses encounters with homophobia; recounts focusing on work, and not taking part in much social activity, following citizenship; describes visiting bars and drag shows on occasion, during the 1970's; recounts meeting with early founders of A/PLG [Asian Pacific Lesbians and Gays], and visiting A/PLG meetings and events; discusses hesitance in becoming a member of A/PLG, due to caution of being known as a gay man in the US; recounts contributions to A/PLG, especially during potlucks; discusses knowledge gained from being a member of A/PLG; explains barriers felt in being an immigrant versus American-born Asians; recounts the gay Asian bar and club scene, and its contribution in banding the gay Asian community together; recounts protests organized by A/PLG towards discriminatory clubs; recounts A/PLG retreat to Big Bear; recounts discussions within A/PLG regarding non-Asian members; recounts A/PLG's desire in not being seen as a dating service; discusses how immigrant Asians were oftentimes those who were part of Asian-Asian couples; discusses growth as an individual after moving to the US; and recounts eventual understanding of intersectional identity as a gay Asian man.

OH 2892

Narrator: DAVID HONG
Interviewer: Eric Wat
Date: February 25, 1998
Location: Los Angeles, California
Language: English
Project: Los Angeles Gay Asian Pacific Community History Project
Audio Format(s): Digital
Length: 01:32:16
Transcript: Digitized. Verbatim; 30 pp.
Ephemera: None

Abstract:

An oral history with David Hong, a self-identifying gay Chinese-American man from Los Angeles, California. The interview was conducted by Eric Wat, a master's candidate in American studies at CSU Fullerton. The purpose of this interview was to gather personal experiences regarding Gay Asian-Americans in southern California. Specifically, this interview details Hong's experiences as a gay Chinese-American; recounts early life in Chicago; discusses early realization of sexuality through encounters with school peers; recounts one relationship with female peer, and its fruition stemming possibly from peer pressure or denial of own sexuality; describes attempts in remaining closeted throughout high school, and purchasing magazines catered towards gay men; describes confrontations involving grandmother and mother, regarding own sexuality; recounts moving to Washington D.C. for college, and getting involved with the gay community there; describes the clubbing experience in Washington D.C. and North Carolina, and first encounter with another gay Asian man; briefly recounts getting involved with the local gay and lesbian community in Wisconsin; discusses later moving to Los Angeles and being introduced to the gay scene through adult gay bookstores; recounts first visiting events hosted by A/PLG [Asian Pacific Lesbians and Gays]; recalls first relationship with another Asian man; discusses later joining GARP [Gay Asian Rap Group]; compares the club scenes in Washington D.C., North Carolina, Wisconsin, and Los Angeles; discusses the idea of preference in race within the gay community as a prominent issue within Los Angeles; discusses building connections through social life in the Los Angeles bar scene; recounts starting the Asian Boys Club and activities performed within the group; describes the growth of GARP and work carried out in GARP; discusses the environments of GARP versus A/PLG; discusses the small presence of lesbians in A/PLG, and the lack of their inclusion; recounts the development of GAPSIN [Gay Asian Pacific Support Network] from GARP and its presence within the community; discusses the exclusion of non-Asians (predominantly Caucasians) from gay Asian groups; discusses the importance of having gay Asian groups work together; and maps out the creation of GAPSIN, stemming from how GARP desired putting out more services and social outlets.

OH 2893

Narrator: PAUL CHEN (b. 1954) AND CHRIS GAYNOR
Interviewer: Eric Wat
Date: March 31, 1998
Location: Los Angeles, California
Language: English
Project: Los Angeles Gay Asian Pacific Community History Project
Audio Format(s): Digital
Length: 02:05:08
Transcript: Digitized. Verbatim; 41 pp
Ephemera: None

Abstract:

An oral history with Paul Chen, a self-identifying gay Chinese-American man from Washington, and Chris Gaynor (demographics unknown). The interview was conducted by Eric Wat, a master's candidate in American studies at CSU Fullerton. The purpose of this interview was to gather personal experiences regarding Gay Asian-Americans in southern California. Specifically, this interview details Chen's experiences as a gay Chinese-American man, and Gaynor's experience as a gay man; Chen recounts early life in Florida and Los Angeles; Chen discusses early understanding of interest in men, but majorly focusing on school; recounts attending Cal State Fullerton and participating in the GSU [Gay Student Union]; Chen invite Gaynor into the interview and both discuss action taken against the Briggs initiative; both recount meeting with individuals who would later assist in forming A/PLG [Asian Pacific Lesbians and Gays]; recounts organizing OCCABI [Orange County Coalition Against the Briggs Initiative]; discuss moving to Los Angeles following graduation; Chen recounts working in the Gay Community Services center; describe A/PLG's [Asian Pacific Lesbians and Gays] development and first meetings; recount events hosted by A/PLG; both discuss the gay bar scene, and visiting bars with predominantly gay Asian patrons; Chen discusses A/PLG's desire in not being viewed as a dating service; Chen discusses A/PLG's growth and impact on the gay Asian community; Chen discusses the differences between American-born members and Immigrant members of A/PLG; Chen recounts the Asian American movement; Chen discusses compromises made within A/PLG; Chen discusses first understanding of intersectional identity of being a gay Asian man and the concept of rice queens; and both discuss the growth and whereabouts of other early A/PLG members.

OH 2894

Narrator: HARRY PARK (b. 1935)
Interviewer: Eric Wat
Date: March 7, 1998
Location: Los Angeles, California
Language: English
Project: Los Angeles Gay Asian Pacific Community History Project
Audio Format(s): Digital
Length: 01:08:06
Transcript: Digitized. Verbatim; 28 pp
Ephemera: None

Abstract:

An oral history with Harry Park, a self-identifying gay Korean-American man from Los Angeles, California. The interview was conducted by Eric Wat, a master's candidate in American studies at CSU Fullerton. The purpose of this interview was to gather personal experiences regarding Gay Asian-Americans in southern California. Specifically, this interview details Park's experiences as a gay Korean-American; recounts early life in Honolulu; discusses understanding own sexuality at the age of fourteen/fifteen, and simply accepting it; recounts working from a young age, following mother's death; discusses moving to California and working independently; recounts associating with the gay community through the bar scene; discusses being the sole Asian within friend group of Caucasians; recounts first associations with gay Asian men through The River Club bar; explains the system of cliques by ethnicity within bars frequented by gay Asians; recounts the formation of A/PLG [Asian Pacific Lesbians and Gays] and attending the initial meetings; discusses the sense of fulfillment in A/PLG through learning of cultures and breaking barriers; recounts work carried out in A/PLG as fundraiser; recounts the struggle in A/PLG maintaining financial stability; discusses self-growth through being a member of A/PLG and associating with the gay Asian community; discusses the issue of "cruising" within A/PLG; recounts founding Uptown Gay and Lesbian Alliance; recalls the prominence of activism which was organized and carried out by A/PLG; recounts experiences regarding discrimination; explains the development of the bar scene, and the formation of more bars frequented by gay Asian men; and discusses the participation of Asian lesbians in A/PLG.

OH 2895

Narrator: REGGIE BOGAN (b. 1931)
Interviewer: Eric Wat
Date: March 24, 1998
Location: Riverside, California
Language: English
Project: Los Angeles Gay Asian Pacific Community History Project
Audio Format(s): Digital
Length: 01:13:19
Transcript: Not Transcribed
Ephemera: None

Abstract:

An oral history with Reggie Bogan, a self-identifying bisexual American man from Riverside, California. The interview was conducted by Eric Wat, a master's candidate in American studies at CSU Fullerton. The purpose of this interview was to gather personal experiences regarding Gay Asian-Americans in southern California. Specifically, this interview details Bogan's experiences in working with gay Asian individuals in Southern California; briefly recounts early life in the US and moving to California; details owning a bar called the Stopover, and opening it up to both men and women; recounts visiting the bar Mugi's and meeting the gay Asian community; discusses joining A/PLG [Asian Pacific Lesbians and gays], and attending the first meeting; discusses race relations between Asians and Caucasians; explains the growth of Mugi's; recounts how A/PLG served as a learning place for non-Asians to learn about Asian cultures and views; explains reasons for interest in Asian men and women; recounts life with first Asian partner; discusses cliques forming by ethnicity in gay bars; discusses work carried out in growing A/PLG's presence, and growth of the group overall; discusses how A/PLG came to decide in barring non-Asians from being board members; explains events carried out by A/PLG; recounts how GARP [Gay Asian Rap Group] was formed off of A/PLG; discusses relations among members in A/PLG; poses view on the reason as to why there were rarely any Asian-Asian couples in the past; recounts bartending at Mugi's after closing the Stopover; discusses viewpoint on how A/PLG has downgraded from a social standpoint; and discusses inability to continue attending meetings due to distance.

OH 2896

Narrator: HOANG PHAN (b. 1960)
Interviewer: Eric Wat
Date: March 30, 1998
Location: Washington
Language: English
Project: Los Angeles Gay Asian Pacific Community History Project
Audio Format(s): Digital
Length: 01:36:14
Transcript: Digitized. Verbatim and edited; 35 pp.
Ephemera: None

Abstract:

An oral history with Hoang Phan, a self-identifying gay Vietnamese man from Washington. The interview was conducted by Eric Wat, a master's candidate in American studies at CSU Fullerton. The purpose of this interview was to gather personal experiences regarding Gay Asian-Americans in southern California. Specifically, this interview details Phan's experiences as a gay Asian man; recounts early life in Vietnam and moving to Oklahoma, then Orange County; describes attraction to American men, and relationship with a Vietnamese peer in boarding school; discusses upbringing as a Catholic, and its personal impact on identity as a gay man; recounts short-lived relationship with a girl in high school, and remaining closeted during the beginning of college; recounts relationships in later college years; describes being part of the bar scene following college; discusses the commonality of ethnic divisions within the bar and club scene, and dislike towards it; recounts joining A/PLG [Asian Pacific Gays and Lesbians] and finally feeling a sense of having found the right group; describes work carried out as vice president of A/PLG; discusses relations among Asians and Caucasians in A/PLG; discusses the lack of women in A/PLG; recounts the growing prominence of Asian-Asian couples; and describes social life and growing self-identity after joining A/PLG.

OH 5533

Narrator: ROY KAWASAKI
Interviewer: Eric Wat
Date: January 6, 1998
Location: Los Angeles, California
Language: English
Project: Los Angeles Gay Asian Pacific Community History Project
Audio Format(s): Digital
Length: 01:32:27
Transcript: Digitized. Verbatim; 30 pp.
Ephemera: None

Abstract:

An oral history with Roy Kawasaki, a self-identifying gay Japanese American. The interview was conducted by the Center for Public and Oral History, California State University, Fullerton (CSUF) by Eric Wat, a Master's candidate at CSUF. The purpose of this interview was to gather personal experiences regarding gay Asian-Americans. Specifically gives an account of Roy Kawasaki's experiences as a third generation gay Japanese-American growing up in a small Hawaiian town as the youngest of six siblings with a seamstress mother a sugar cane planter father. High school friends were "odd-balls" as he felt was his title. Attended Los Angeles City College as Art Major and lived with two older siblings. Romantic interest with Asian-American man in college who later joined military; led to unintentional "coming-out" to a professor. Sought recommended psychologist for guidance. Describes feelings of first homosexual intercourse with little understanding of self. States loneliness due to lack of Asian inclusion and a desire for "whiteness" due to lack of Asian representation. Pertains to internal discourse born of multiple identity crisis and constant micro-aggressions. Explains fear of "coming-out" in professional settings leading to joining gay teacher's organization. Tells of Asian/Pacific Lesbians and Gays [APLG] internal structure; leadership and membership from original meeting onward.