

>> Carlene Tinker: [Audio issues] Good morning, Mrs. Arakawa. My name is Carlene Tinker, Carlene Tanigoshi Tinker. And I'm a volunteer at the Special Collections Research Center at Fresno State Henry Madden Library. I am working for Ms. Tammy Lau, who is the director. And she has an oral history project called the "San Joaquin— the Japanese-Americans in the San Joaquin Valley during World War II." And so, another person and I, Dr. Howard Ono, and I were interested in volunteering to get more interviews for this particular oral history project. So, that's why I've asked you to participate in this interview today. We're meeting in my house at 4553 East Alamos, Fresno, California. It's Friday, August 25, 2017. Both Dr. Howard Ono and I were internees ourselves, of relocation camps, just like yourself. And because of that experience, although we were young and so were you young, we do have some memories and some experiences that we wanted to share with others and hear what others had—like yourself, had. So, that's why we're doing our part in this oral history project. Let's see here, So, what you're going to do today is to share some experiences and memories about your family, your time in relocation camp, and then what happened to you after World War II. Okay? Do you have any questions?

>> Rumiko Arakawa: No.

>> Carlene Tinker: Okay. So, before we start, let's talk about, or let me have you give me your full name including your maiden name.

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Okay. My name is [audio issues] Rumiko Lucian and my maiden name is [Rumiko] Sakow Arakawa.

>> Carlene Tinker: Okay. That's fine. And then your birthdate?

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Eleventh—November 12, 1940.

>> Carlene Tinker: Okay. And where were you born Rumi?

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Fresno, California.

>> Carlene Tinker: And what is your longest, what address were you at the longest? Either in Fresno or other cities?

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Oh, during my life?

>> Carlene Tinker: Yeah.

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Well, I would say it's my current address here in Fresno. Here in Fresno we've been there 43 years.

>> Carlene Tinker: Okay. And what is that address?

>> Rumiko Arakawa: That's 705 East Magill, Fresno, California.

>> Carlene Tinker: Okay. And that's near what intersection?

>> Rumiko Arakawa: uh, First and Herndon.

>> Carlene Tinker: First and Herndon. Okay. Now, I think when we talked earlier, you explained the derivation of your maiden name, Sakow. Because when I looked at the spelling, it had a "w" at the end, which is kind of unusual. Is that true?

>> Rumiko Arakawa: True.

>> Carlene Tinker: Okay. Do you want to explain how that "w" got attached?

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Okay. My—my father, who's very— was very literate and he had a bachelor's degree in English literature from Japan. And from the Ryukoku [phonetic] University in Japan. But anyway, he says that our name was started a thousand years ago and originally our family were sake makers. And so, if you read the character of our name, it's sake, it's the character for sake and then the next character is to be born from or to live. And so, originally it would have been pronounced Sakon, S-A-K-O-N. But eventually just dropped the "n" and it became Sako. But when my parents came to America in 1934, my father said there were a lot of Sakos. But none of them were written in the character of our last name. There's different forms

and they were spelled S-A-K-O. So, he wanted to make sure it was a different Sako, so he puts on a “w”. I don't know why he put the w on. But like he was saying, we found out that in New York City there are pages and pages of Sakow's S-A-K-O-Ws, but they are shortened forms of “Sakowski” and “Sakowitz” [Laughter] And so, that's the why my father put the “w” on to our name. Differentiate from the other Japanese S-A-K-Os.

>> Carlene Tinker: You know, recollecting our conversation before, your father seemed like a really kind of funny guy. You know, he was very interesting to say the least.

>> Rumiko Arakawa: If you met him, you wouldn't think that.

>> Carlene Tinker: Also, why don't you give me your father's name and how he Americanized it.

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Okay. His first name is Shoshu. But—It sounds like S-H-O-S-H-U. But when he came to America, he Anglicized it and he made it S-H-A-W-S-H-E-W, which throws off a lot of people. And the reason he made it S-H-A-W is like he liked English literature. He liked Robert Louis, no, that's skinny. He liked Shaw. So, he made it S-H-A-W-S-H-E-W. And it looked like it would be pronounced ShawsheW.

[Laughter]

>> Carlene Tinker: Where did the S-H-E-W come from?

>> Rumiko Arakawa: I guess he thought that sounded like “shu”.

>> Carlene Tinker: Oh. Okay. That wasn't after a famous author?

>> Rumiko Arakawa: No.

>> Carlene Tinker: [Laughter] Okay. And then you, what was your mom's maiden name?

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Sasaki, Sasaki. Her first name is Masako, M-A-S-A-K-O. and Sasaki, which is a very common name. S-A-S-A-K-I.

>> Carlene Tinker: Okay. And then Sakow, S-A-K-O-W, was her married name.

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Yes.

>> Carlene Tinker: Now, going back to your name, Rumiko. What is your middle name again?

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Lucian.

>> Carlene Tinker: Okay. Now how did he give you that name? Or how did . . .

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Okay. Like my father liked Robert Louis Stevenson. And so, he found the name Rumiko, I don't know where he found it. It wasn't that common a name when I was born. It's more common now. But, and then Sakow. And then he wanted an L. But he didn't want Lucy, Linda, or common names. So, he found Lucian. And I asked my father, I said, "Papa, where did you get this Lucian? I think it's a man's name." And he said, "Yes, it is a man's name." He says, "He was reading a novel and there was a priest by the name of Father Lucian. A French priest by the name of Father Lucian." So, he says, okay, that's a Lucian. What can you do with that name?

>> Carlene Tinker: Is that the French spelling, L-U-C-I-A-N?

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Well, there's many versions of it. There is an L-U-C-I-E-N also but I don't know where he got that. I don't where but he must have seen that in the novel he was reading. It was written that way.

>> Carlene Tinker: Oh, isn't that something. Well, he sounded like a very educated and literate man. Because he was familiar with all these famous authors.

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Oh, he loved to read. Yeah, he loved to read. I caught him one time reading this thick book. And I looked at it and right next to him, he had his Japanese-English dictionary. And it was *War and Peace* in English. And so, he wanted to make sure he knew precise words. If there were words that he didn't know he would look it up.

>> Carlene Tinker: Yeah, and so he was very literate and he read a lot throughout his whole life.

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Right, right.

>> Carlene Tinker: What kind of . . . Okay, Rumi. I hope it's okay if I address you as Rumi?

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Oh, yeah. Yeah.

>> Carlene Tinker: Or do you want Rumiko?

>> Rumiko Arakawa: No, it's fine.

>> Carlene Tinker: So, we're going to break this up into three parts. The first part I'm going to ask you about your grandparents, them coming over. Your parents coming to the United States. Then we'll talk about camp. And then we'll talk about after camp. Okay?

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Okay.

>> Carlene Tinker: So, first of all, let's talk about your grandparents. You have kind of two different stories, as I recall. Because one set came to the United States, is that correct, and then went back to Japan? Is that right?

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Yes. He visited.

>> Carlene Tinker: Who was that?

>> Rumiko Arakawa: That's my maternal grandfather. My mother's father. He traveled all around the world. I mean, back in the . . . we're talking about the late 1890s and the early 1900s. I think, I heard that he got as far as Europe from Japan. But he was the first Buddhist minister to go into Canada. The Buddhists had already come into the United States through San Francisco.

But he went into Canada in about 1905. And I think he took his family. Because my mother's—my mother and her two older sisters were all born in Vancouver, Canada.

>> Carlene Tinker: I'll be darned.

>> Rumiko Arakawa: So, when he—when they shortly got there, shortly after in 1905, the first of my aunts—older aunts were born there. And then my second aunt was born about 1907. And then my mother was born in 1909. So, all three of those girls were born in Vancouver. And then my uncle was the oldest one. The only boy. He was born in Japan. So, he must have been about maybe two-years-old when the three of them. . .

>> Carlene Tinker: When they came to Vancouver? Okay. Now did they stay in Vancouver or did they go back to Japan?

>> Rumiko Arakawa: They must have been there between 1905 and I think they went back in about 1912. So, he established the Buddhist Church in the first Canadian Buddhist Church in Vancouver.

>> Carlene Tinker: But in Japan, he was carrying on the tradition of Buddhist priests in that side of the family?

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Yes. Both sides of my family, my maternal side and my father's side—uh, my maternal and paternal side, have been Buddhist ministers, the Jodo Shinshu Buddhist ministers for the last, like I think, my father must have been the 26th generation. And my grandfather must have the same, 26th generation. So, it went back about 600 years.

>> Carlene Tinker: Okay. Now I'm showing my ignorance. Was that the beginning of Buddhism in Japan? Or had there been other priests before that?

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Oh, there were other Jodo Shinshu, I mean there other sects of Buddhism that came over from China through Korea. Most of Japanese culture and most of the people, more or less, [audio issues] came through Korea. So, our Korean language and the Japanese language, if you listen to them speaking, it almost sounds the same. It's not the sing-song of the Chinese language. But I can't understand Korean. But it sounds like Japanese.

>> Carlene Tinker: Is Korean tonal like Chinese? Is Japanese tonal?

>> Rumiko Arakawa: No. No. It doesn't have the, like the Chinese language, I hear there is something like nine different tones. And if you say the word, the syllable "wa", you can say it nine different ways and it means nine different things. Japanese and Korean are more or less fairly.

>> Carlene Tinker: Yeah, I kind of remember the word for hashi, chopsticks. Is that right? If you say it a different way, or different tone, what does it mean afterwards?

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Different accent, it could mean bridge.

>> Carlene Tinker: Bridge. Okay. Why do I think . . . I think because my maiden name something sounds like that. Tanigoshi [phonetic]. It's not hashi, but someone said that my maiden name meant something to do with a bridge.

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Goshi. I don't know. It could be boshi or hashi. The variations.

>> Carlene Tinker: I don't really... Yeah, yeah. That's fascinating. Well, how many different sects are there of Buddhism?

>> Rumiko Arakawa: I don't know, all together. But our Jodo Shinshu Buddhism was started by Shinran Shonin. And that was back in the 1200s.

>> Carlene Tinker: Twelve-hundreds? Okay. And is that what's currently predominant now in Japan? How many sects are there?

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Oh, there's many, many sects. There's the Zen, and then there's all the different variations of the Zen. And then the Jodo, even within the Jodo Shinshu they've splintered and broken down. But the one that was brought to the United States is basically Jodo Shinshu. Most of the temples that are here and the Buddhist churches of America is based on the Jodo Shinshu sect of and then our headquarters is in Kyoto, in Hongan-ji [phonetic].

>> Carlene Tinker: Okay. Now getting back, this was, you just told us about your mother's side. Right?

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Mmm-mm.

>> Carlene Tinker: Okay. So they went to Vancouver, went back to Japan around 1912, you think. Is that correct? Okay. What about your Dad's side?

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Okay, my Dad's side. My father—my paternal grandfather was uh, I think, his older brother, his older brother was supposed to take over the temple but he, I think he got a PhD or something like that and he was more into other things. So, he left. He, he said he didn't want to take over. So, eventually it came down to my father. My father and... No, that was his uncle. That was his uncle that left. And his father[Rumi's paternal grandfather] had to take over as the minister. But he was an alcoholic and he died at the age of 42. And so, after that he [Rumi's father] was being... I think, he was raised by my mother and father [who] are first cousins. And in Japan, first cousins that are children of a brother and sister, is okay. But a brother and brother's children cousins are no, no. And the sister and sister is a no, no. But brother and sister children can marry. So, anyway my father was, . . .

>> Carlene Tinker: Is that still true today, do you think? Do a lot first cousins marry?

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Ah, I think it's not maybe not as prevalent. I think it might still happen.

>> Carlene Tinker: Okay. I'm sorry to interrupt you. Okay, go ahead.

>> Rumiko Arakawa: But my father had a choice of well, he, he graduated from college, he was pretty smart. And he graduated from college with an English literature major at age 19. And he started teaching in a girl's high school. Well, he's 19 and his students are 18. And so they said, "ooh, that could cause hanky-panky" So, they said, "we better get him at least engaged." You know, so that, he still is sort of responsible that he's not going to fool around. So, anyway he was given a choice of three girls to pick from to become engaged to. And one was not related to him. And then the other two was my mother and her older sister.

>> Carlene Tinker: Okay.

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Well, the older sister is the same age my father. And she's very headstrong, pretty strong lady. So, he said “no” to her. And he said “no” to the other lady. And then he said he'll take the younger one. She's a little quiet and pliable. So, he got engaged to her. And she was only like 15. Because there is [background noise] a four years difference. And so, they weren't planning to get married until later.

>> Carlene Tinker: Did your mom know about this?

>> Rumiko Arakawa: No, my mother, you know, in those days, they're not told anything. And she's in school—in high school. And barely in high school. And one day, she's in school and another aunt came and said, “oh, we're gonna—I want to take you and have you accompany me to go into Kyoto” which is about a train ride away. “And we're going to go shopping.” And so, my mother said, “oh sure” to get out of school. [Laughter] So, she goes with her aunt and they land in Kyoto. And lo and behold, my father's there. And then my—that Auntie says, “Masako, stay with Shoshu. And I have errands to do. So, he'll show you around here.” And so she says okay. This is her cousin that she more or less grew up with because he was most of the time living with them while he was growing up because his father had passed away. His mother was—his mother was, they were divorced very shortly after.

>> Carlene Tinker: Oh, so he didn't have any natural parents to live with. So, he came to live . . .

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Yeah, yeah , yeah so, after his father passed away and his grandmother passed away. You know he—my mother's family sort of raised him. It would be his auntie, my [Grand] father's [pause] sister, ah his auntie. His paternal auntie. So, she says “okay” and then, so, I never thought of my father as a romantic. He was very quiet, very you know—always reading. So, my mother says, he takes her out to this, rents a boat, then rows out to the middle of this lake. And then he proposes to her. And she doesn't know, it's coming out of the blue. And she says “I didn't know what to do. I'm only 14[15] years old. I couldn't jump off the boat. I'm in the middle of the lake.” Had nowhere to go, so she says, “okay.” [Laughter] and then she...

>> Carlene Tinker: She wanted to make sure she made it back to shore.

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Yeah, so, so they go back and she goes back home. By the time she gets back to school. All the kids already know [inaudible], that she got engaged. And they start telling

her, “oh how wonderful.” and she's so embarrassed. And she says “I don't want to stay in school.” And my maternal grandfather was the principal of the school. And he had been assigned to go to Sapporo, which is quite a ways away, to be a principal at a high school in Sapporo. So, he realized how embarrassed she was. And how uncomfortable she was. So he said, “do you want to go with me?” So, she went away, [Laughter]so she wasn't around. I don't know how long they were there.

>> Carlene Tinker: Oh my gosh. In the meantime, though, I forgot to ask your Dad, even though he was going to college and majoring in English literature, wasn't he also being trained as a priest?

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Oh, yes. He also had to become a minister because he had to take over the family temple.

>> Carlene Tinker: Right, yeah.

>> Rumiko Arakawa: So, because he had other obligations, too.

>> Carlene Tinker: So, he was both a teacher and . . .

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Yeah. yeah. So, he . . . I guess the school wasn't that far. I guess in the same city where as the temple is. And so, I guess it was okay. And then they, they got married when she was 19. And he was 23. And uh...

>> Carlene Tinker: Okay. In the meantime, did they have contact with each other. She's up in Sapporo?

>> Rumiko Arakawa: I don't know.

>> Carlene Tinker: It doesn't sound like it. I think with arranged marriages, which this was, you just sort of expected it. You got engaged and then later on you got married. There wasn't much of a relationship, of dating. Is that correct?

[laughter]

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Yes. I don't think so. My mother says— I said “did you ever date or go out with a boy?” She says, “no.” She says the closest she got to a boy was her school—girl school was here. And then across the street was the boy school. And they looked through the fence and looked across the street to see the boys. And that's about as close as she got to any kind of boys. She says they didn't date. Everything was arranged.[Laughter]So, there was no fraternizing there.

>> Carlene Tinker: So, ultimately then when your Dad was 23 and she was 19, then they got married. And I guess, I didn't ask you, what area in Japan are your relatives from?

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Oh my family is from Fukui-*ken*, which is a province opposite side from Tokyo on the Sea of Japan side. And it's on the ocean—on the Sea of Japan. It's on the seaside. Sort of a seaside province.

>> Carlene Tinker: Right.

>> Rumiko Arakawa: And it's not too far from that Nagano about 150 miles from . . .

>> Carlene Tinker: And you spelled that F-U-K-U-I

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Fukui-*ken*. Fukui-*ken*.

>> Carlene Tinker: And so, is that where they got married?

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Yes, I'm pretty sure that's where they got married.

>> Carlene Tinker: Okay. What year would that be? Do you remember?

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Uh, Nineteen-twenty-eight. Yeah. Yeah.

>> Carlene Tinker: '28, okay. So, did they stay in Japan for a while?

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Oh, yes. they were there in Japan, let's see. Between [the age of] 19 and 25 my, my mother had four boys.

>> Carlene Tinker: Oh my gosh.

>> Rumiko Arakawa: She didn't know where they were coming from.

[Laughter]

>> Carlene Tinker: I hoped she learned by that age.

>> Rumiko Arakawa: My oldest brother was born in 1929. And then second one was born about 1931, I think, early part of '31, there's only about 15 months between the two. And then the third one was born, I think 1932.

>> Carlene Tinker: Okay.

>> Rumiko Arakawa: So those two were, the second and third were pretty close. I think only like 12 months apart...

>> Carlene Tinker: oh, yeah.

>> Rumiko Arakawa: ...or 12 or 13 months apart. And then, And then about 1934, I guess, there was the possibility that the main temple in—in Kyoto asked if my father might consider going to America to be a missionary, Buddhist. Buddhist. And so, my father always, always looked to Japan—uh, America. He liked English literature, America. So, he says oh, yes. And he wanted to go. My mother was not reluctant. Because she's leaving her family and she's going to be taking her children and everything.

>> Carlene Tinker: So, she had three boys—they had three boys by that point?

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Yeah, but by that time. So, they were ages like 5, 3, and 2.

>> Carlene Tinker: oh, Wow.

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Something like that 5, 3 and 2. And uh, but the members of the temple, they said, “Wait a minute, wait a minute. If you go to America, are you're going to come back?” You know, “Who is going to take over the temple?” And so they said, “You've got to leave somebody behind” You know. “One of—one of your sons is going to have to stay behind and to finally take over the temple. So, it was decided to keep the first two, the 5 and 3-year old. Because—And the 2-year-old was too young. And I think that my mother was expecting her fourth by then, at that time. So, they decided to leave the first two. So, my oldest brother, Toshihiko and Fumihiko were left behind.

>> Carlene Tinker: Who did they stay with?

>> Rumiko Arakawa: They stayed behind with I think my grandfather, my maternal grandfather, maternal grandmother and some other aunts and uncles or whatever that were still living in the area. And then they came to Tacoma. Tacoma, Washington.

>> Carlene Tinker: Okay.

>> Rumiko Arakawa: And then shortly after they arrived about six months later, my fourth brother was born in Tacoma. Raymond was born in Tacoma, Washington.

>> Carlene Tinker: Okay. That was about 1934? Okay.

>> Rumiko Arakawa: 1934. And then, the two that were left in—in Japan, the oldest one, Toshihiko was really a brat. I mean he—he just did what he wanted. He didn't follow the rules. He'd run away from home. The police would call later on and say, “could you come and pick up

your son, Toshihiko.” [laughter] And we found him wandering around. And so, finally the church members decided he was not going to make a good minister.

>> Carlene Tinker: [Laughter] Not a good role model.

>> Rumiko Arakawa: No. Not a good role model. So, they decided they'd keep the second one, Fumihiko, because he was quieter and more compliant. And they...

>> Carlene Tinker: And what is his first name? Fumihiko, Okay.

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Fumihiko. Later on he changed his name to Bungen. But anyway, they sent--sent Toshihiko to America to join—our family, the rest of the family. And that was about 1938.

>> Carlene Tinker: Okay. So, Toshihiko . . .

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Toshi's about nine years old. When he comes...

>> Carlene Tinker: Okay, but he's the one who was not a rule follower?

>> Rumiko Arakawa: No, no, no.

>> Carlene Tinker: Okay, but your other, the second brother [Fumihiko] stayed in Japan...

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Yes.

>> Carlene Tinker: ...and then he was being trained as a Buddhist minister?

>> Rumiko Arakawa: And eventually he became, he took over the family temple...

>> Carlene Tinker: Wow.

>> Rumiko Arakawa: ...He went to college and he became a Buddhist minister.

>> Carlene Tinker: Yeah, yeah. Okay, since, you know, how do you consider yourself? Would you say you're Nisei, first person, first generation born here? Or would you say you're Sansei, second generation born here because both sides are different.

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Yes. Yes. I always said "I'm one and half. [Laughter] Issei-hun. Because my mother technically was a Nisei. Because she was born in Canada. But my father was a Issei. Three of my brothers are Isseis. And then my fourth—my fourth brother was a Nisei. [Laughter]

>> Carlene Tinker: That's pretty complicated.

>> Rumiko Arakawa: yes. So, I don't know, I'm either two and half or one and half. Or something. But I'm not quite a Sansei.

[Laughter].

>> Carlene Tinker: You know, I've learned from other people that I've interviewed, similar kinds of situations.

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Yeah. So it's not the clear-cut thing.

>> Carlene Tinker: It's not.

>> Rumiko Arakawa: No. No. And then I only spoke Japanese until I was about 5. 'Til I started—Just before I started kindergarten. Because my parents spoke only Japanese in the home. Although, like okay, my parents after 1938 moved to Dinuba. And then, uh...

>> Carlene Tinker: Okay. Is that because your Dad took another position?

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Yes. He got assigned, they said there is a position in Dinuba, in California. So, my father said, “okay.” So, they moved to Dinuba.

>> Carlene Tinker: At that point, all four—all four, no, two brothers, and you.

>> Rumiko Arakawa: No, three brothers and I.

>> Carlene Tinker: Three brothers ‘cause the second, I mean the first guy came back. Okay.

>> Rumiko Arakawa: So, so there is the four of us, four kids, and my three brothers and I. And then there’s six years difference between my youngest brother and I. So, so...

>> Carlene Tinker: Yeah. Because you were born in what, 1940? Okay.

>> Rumiko Arakawa: 1940, and he was born in 1934. So—so, I was the only girl. The youngest one. So spoiled. Yeah, I was spoiled, I loved it. But anyway, I was supposed to be born in Dinuba and I was supposed to be delivered by a mid-wife. But my mother got sick. And so the mid-wife said, “no, no, you better go into Fresno and go to St. Agnes Hospital. Dr. Taira” who was one of the first, uh Japanese-American doctors to be here—around here. So, he’s the one that more or less caught me. He actually just caught me because my parents, my mother was only in the hospital like 24 minutes before I came.

>> Carlene Tinker: Oh my gosh.

>> Rumiko Arakawa: My father kept saying, “oh, wait until tomorrow morning, wait until tomorrow morning.” Because this was in the middle of the night. I was born like at 1 o'clock in the morning. And—and those days you didn't ask anybody to babysit. Because I had my three younger brothers...

>> Carlene Tinker: Oh yeah. Yeah.

>> Rumiko Arakawa: ...That, I mean my older brothers and this was in the middle of the night. So, he didn't want to leave them but they did leave them.

>> Carlene Tinker: Oh, he did? Well they had to.

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Well yeah, they had to come in to Fresno. And so that's—my three brothers are sleeping there by themselves in the house. So, my mother—father just opened. In fact, he didn't even open the door. My mother just got out of the car and walked into the hospital. My father took off to go back to Dinuba. Because it's an hour drive and he had to drive back.

>> Carlene Tinker: Oh, yes. Wow. So, she stayed in the hospital and then he went back to make sure the other boys, I mean the other children were okay. And then how long do your mom— did your Mom stay in the hospital? Do you know? A week?

>> Rumiko Arakawa: She was there a week. And my father, but as soon as he found out that it was girl, he said, oh, and he didn't want any boys. He wanted girls. So, as soon as he found I was a girl he came back and he named me. And my —then my mother didn't even know my name because she was sick. She was sick that one week. And then finally when it was time for them to come in and pick me up they finally brought me to her. So, she didn't see me for that one week, I mean after I was born. Because she was sick and they didn't want me to get sick.

>> Carlene Tinker: Did she have something like a flu?

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Yeah. She had the flu. She was running a 103 temperature. So, so, so, the nurse comes in and brings me in just before she's leaving. She [the nurse] says, “okay, where's the mother of Rumiko Lucian Sakow?” She [Rumiko's mother says, “okay, Sakow is my name but what are the first two names?”

[laughter]

>> Carlene Tinker: Oh, no.

>> Rumiko Arakawa: She didn't even know. She was going to name me Sayoko.

>> Carlene Tinker: So, that's how your mom found out what your name was?

[Laughter].

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Yeah, yeah. And even Dr. Taira knowing that, uh, you know, that—that she had already four sons before me, when I was born, she—he, he took me and put me under her face and says, “you have a—Okusan, you have a daughter. You have a daughter.” And she says “really?” she says [inaudible]. She says “really!?” [Laughter] So, so, she—she was happy to see that she had finally had gotten a daughter. She always wanted a daughter, too, because she knew that daughters, you know, take care of the parents when they get older.

>> Carlene Tinker: Oh, was that the tradition?

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Yeah. Yeah.

>> Carlene Tinker: Yeah. daughters took care of the parents. Okay.

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Although my—the oldest brother said, “okay, we'll take care of you.” He says, “no, no, no, I'll go and stay with Rumiko when they retired.” Because she didn't want to go back East to live in . . .

>> Carlene Tinker: Oh, is that where he was living at that time.

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Yeah, he was in—he was in New Jersey. So. But anyway, so, so when the war broke out in '42, you know, they were very, very concerned that they knew, and that there was the movement that they were going to be put in the camps and everything. So, all those rumors going around. And so, my mother, you know, outside the Buddhist temple in Dinuba, they had the American flag and they had the Japanese flag. And she says, “oh, what am I going to do with the Japanese flag?” She says, “I have to get rid of it. But I can't burn it. I can't bury it. What am I going to do with this flag?” So, what is her solution? She decides to cut it up and out of the white part she makes handkerchiefs.

[laughter]

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Don't ask me. Blowing our nose on the American— the Japanese flag. I just don't know. I don't know what she did with the red part. [brief laughter] But she got rid of the red part. But I remember blowing my nose on those handkerchiefs later on when I was growing up.

>> Carlene Tinker: So, did you watch her cut up the flag?

>> Rumiko Arakawa: No, no. I was just a baby. Yeah [cross talk] Just a baby.

>> Carlene Tinker: [Crosstalk] Oh, that's right. You were really just an infant. Yeah.

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Yeah, yeah. And then we were moved...we didn't go to a...assembly center.

>> Carlene Tinker: Oh, is that right? Why was that?

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Areas east of the 99, we went directly to a camp. And we were sent to Poston. I don't know if everybody along Dinuba, Visalia, all those little towns, I don't know if everybody went to Visalia—uh, Poston. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

>> Carlene Tinker: I think so. I think you're right. One of the ladies I met was from Sanger and she didn't go directly, I mean she didn't move to an assembly center. She went directly to Gila. Yeah, okay. So, at the time of evacuation, okay, when executive order 9066 came out and we had to move. So your parents were still in Dinuba at that point? Did they ever move to Stockton before the evacuation?

>> Rumiko Arakawa: No, no, no, no , no. That's, that's my husband's side of the family. They're Stockton. They're Stockton.

>> Carlene Tinker: Okay. So, I'm remembering that incorrectly.

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Yeah.

>> Carlene Tinker: Okay. So, what did your— how did your parents react to the executive order 9066? [crosstalk] Were they citizens at that time?

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Oh no, no, no. They couldn't become citizens.

>> Carlene Tinker: It was illegal at that time.

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Yeah. So, they had no say. And my father was, you know, reading the newspapers. And so, he knew what was going on. And so, my... parents never said anything bad about going in the camps or you know, the, the inequities of it or the, you know, badness of it. It was just, I guess, the idea of Japanese idea of shikata ga nai, It can't be helped, kind of idea. And so they went to camp. And I sort of, I—I don't remember the train ride to Poston. But I remember, I was only a year and half when we went into camp. But four and half when we came out of camp. I remember the camp. The train ride after camp. We went Detroit, Michigan. So, it was a little bit different for most people. They came back to California. But I remember the train ride [audio issue] to Chicago and then Detroit.

>> Carlene Tinker: Yeah, okay. So, let's talk a little bit about being in Poston. Did your Dad minister at that point? Was he a minister at that point?

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Yes, yes, yeah. Poston was broken up into three camps. [audio issue] I think a total of maybe, at the maximum there were about 17,000 of us there.

>> Carlene Tinker: Wow. You were certainly one of the biggest ones.

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Yeah, yes. And we were in Camp 3, which was one of the smaller parts. And the most inward. I don't know exactly, inward, but they said we were the most inward.

>> Carlene Tinker: Away from the highway maybe? [inaudible]

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Yes. Or something like that. And part of—part of the people in our camp were like Dinuba and some of the other areas. And then there were some people from L.A. who were in our part of the camp. And, uh, I just can remember small things like, I can remember it was just one room. And there was a potbelly stove. And wooden floors. And, and, and I can remember, you know, it's just boards. And so, there is cracks or potholes or whatever you call them. And sand would come through and the floors were always dusty, you know, from the sand coming through. And then and since it's just one room, and there's, what how many of us were there? Six of us. I remember a rope going across part of the room and then the Army blankets. I remember the dark color, the greenish color blankets that divided the bed area. And I remember sort of like sleeping on cots, cot-like things.

>> Carlene Tinker: So, did your Mom and Dad sleep on one side of the partition, the blanket, do you remember that?

>> Rumiko Arakawa: We were all in the one part [phone rings], all of—one part of the family, you know, we all sort of slept along the [inaudible].

>> Carlene Tinker: Oh! So the other part that was separated, what did you use that for? Like a living room or something?

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Yeah. The living room. There must have been a table and chairs.

>> Carlene Tinker: So your parents didn't have any privacy?

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Oh, no. No, no, no, no. [Laughter] And the bathrooms were in the, you know, [Inaudible] in the building outside.

>> Carlene Tinker: Oh, yeah. [crosstalk] They weren't inside the room. You had to go outside.

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Oh, no, no, no, no. the only thing we had was the pot belly. And there must have been a window or two and a door. And, yeah, and then I was told later, by my brothers, you know I was only one and a half [years old], four and a half [years old]. And I was a cry baby.

>> Carlene Tinker: Oh were you?

>> Rumiko Arakawa: So, I'm crying all times of the day. And then they said they used to yell at me, "Shut up!" or "Keep quiet!" [Laughter] Because I'd be crying in the middle of the night. And they're going to school. They're already in school. [Laughter] And they says "We got to get some sleep! We got to go to school!"

[Laughter]

>> Rumiko Arakawa: And so, it wasn't the easiest living conditions. And for some reason my mother was working in the canteen or the kitchen or somewhere. And then my father was, I don't know where he was. Then my four brothers—I mean three brothers were always going somewhere with their friends.

>> Carlene Tinker: But they were of school age, weren't they?

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Yeah. Yeah.

>> Carlene Tinker: But you weren't old enough yet to, not even pre-school.

>> Rumiko Arakawa: So, they [the brothers] must have been about the youngest one must have been about seven and half [years old] and the oldest one must have been about 16, 15 or 16 [years old], something like that.

>> Carlene Tinker: Oh, wow. Wow, quite a spread.

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Yeah. Yeah, yeah.

>> Carlene Tinker: Yeah, so you were, your Mom...so what happened if your Mom were working, who took care of you?

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Well, there was this lady next door. She sort of...the boys were sort of on their own.

[laughing]

>> Carlene Tinker: They were what?

>> Rumiko Arakawa: The boys were sort of on their own. [Brief laughter] I guess. I don't remember where my father was. I don't remember seeing him around. But this one lady next door, she was more or less the one. And she had a granddaughter about the same age as me. So, she just sort of kept an eye on us.

>> Carlene Tinker: Oh, okay. So...

>> Rumiko: And I just remember playing in the sand right outside the house. And I had this little silver ring with a red, white, and blue little stone in it. And I was playing with it and I lost it in the sand. And I remember being very sad about that. And then, I remember seeing my one and only Indian, American-Indian, Native-American. He was on a white horse. No saddle. And he had just a headband, just a cloth around his head. Had sort of little bit like a, not a pageboy, but a just sort of cut hair kind of thing. I just remember that. And all the kid were wanting to talk to him. And...

>> Carlene Tinker: Did he come through the camp periodically?

>> Rumiko Arakawa: No. I think he was just on the outskirts. The Indians—The Native-Americans were kept away from us.

>> Carlene Tinker: But you basically were on Native-American property weren't you?

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Yeah. We were on their reservation.

>> Carlene Tinker: Yeah.

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Yeah. [inaudible]

>> Carlene Tinker: I wonder what their feelings were like about you guys?

>> Rumiko Arakawa: I don't know. I don't know. [when] I went to a reunion of the Poston Camp. And one of the Indian leaders, but he's a PhD kind of guy, very educated. And he was telling us the history and what happened. And he—he said, “you might have taken over our land. But we were very thankful that you were here.” And I said, “why?” And he says, because before you came it was just tumbleweeds. We could never grow anything.” And, you know, it was just a dust bowl. It was in the middle of the desert. He says “when you people came in, and you left, it was arable land. We were—You were able to get the water from the, make ditches from the rivers, and make canals and you [audio issues] planted things. And you made it a place where we could grow stuff.” He says, “We're the only tribe at this time that is not helped by the government in any way because we have like a two-hundred-million-dollar income from our agriculture because of you. Because of your people made this land arable. [crosstalk] So, he was thankful that we were there.

>> Carlene Tinker: Sure. What tribe was he from?

>> Rumiko Arakawa: They were called the CRIT. I mean, but it just means Colorado River Indian tribe. And he—he gave me the name, the actual name of the tribe, which were [audio issues] parts of like a Navajo and what's the other one. The other one from like New Mexico area that—an Arizona area.

>> Carlene Tinker: Not Hopi. No, I don't think so.

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Not Hopi, but one of them was the Navajo. But Navajo are more warrior kind of group. But there was another group that was more agriculture. They were—they worked the land and it was combination of those two tribes.

>> Carlene Tinker: That is fascinating because in my camp, which was Amache, essentially the same thing happened. I mean, to some degree. Because they actually, the Japanese, were actually

farming some land that was actually an existing farm. But they were able to grow things that had not been grown before. They were able to bring their ideas and practices to that area. So, I think a similar kind of benefit occurred as a result of the camp being there. Okay, so—

>> Rumiko Arakawa: So one of the other things that the Japanese-Americans in the camp did was, I know that we had a big outdoor stage that they made. They made a baseball field because they liked baseball. And they also made a swimming pool. I mean, they just dug up the ground and filled it with water from the river.

>> Carlene Tinker: Were you close to a river?

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Yeah. The Colorado River.

>> Carlene Tinker: The Colorado. You were that close? Okay.

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Yeah, yeah.

>> Carlene Tinker: Because our camp [Amache] was near the Arkansas River, which was a mile away from the camp.

>> Rumiko Arakawa: We made the place a better place.

>> Carlene Tinker: Yeah. So essentially, life in camp, was hopefully, a little more comfortable because you were able to go to school, not in your case but your brothers were able to go school. Your Dad had a job. Your Mom had a job. And I think the War Relocation Authority, which was the Civil Organization that ran the camps, I think, were benevolent. They were trying to support you as well as myself and our people. And they wanted to make life as comfortable as possible. Because they didn't agree with the War Department's movement and making us leave the West Coast. Do you agree with that?

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Yes. Yes, yes.

>> Carlene Tinker: Yeah, yeah. And so, the camps, like you said there was a baseball field, school, swimming pool, gardens, churches, lots of social activities. How did the people, let's see, were you close to any of your relatives besides your immediate family?

>> Rumiko Arakawa: My only--only relatives in the United States, even now, is my mother's oldest brother, only brother. His family. But I don't where they were. They were living in Sacramento. [phone ringing] We never really talked to them about where they went to camp.

>> Carlene Tinker: Sacramento.

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Sacramento, where did they go? Arkansas?

>> Carlene Tinker: They might have gone to Amache. It's possible. Because the people from Davis areas, Santa Rosa they went to Merced. And then Merced people along with a very small [Phone ringing] area in Southern California, L.A. Basin, we were the two main groups that went to Amache. And then later on, some people who were in Jerome and Rohwer, like when those camps closed, then a lot of those people came to Amache. But the two principal groups were from Fresno, I mean from Merced [Phone ringing] and—

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Oh, Stockton or Stockton area?

>> Carlene Tinker: —Yeah and the Stockton area. And they, like Gary Tsudama, you know him.

>> Rumiko Arakawa: So Hunter's mother's side of the family is from Stockton. And so, and I didn't realize there was a Stockton Assembly Center.

>> Carlene Tinker: Yeah. That was where Gary was, yeah. I think he went to Gila . . .

>> Rumiko Arakawa: I think my mother-in-law's family must have gone, maybe, to Amache then?

>> Carlene Tinker: Yeah. You know, let me back up. I'm just trying to think of the people who came from Merced, Woodland, Davis, and maybe the people from Sacramento went to Stockton. And I'm not sure where all them went. But Merced and the people from this little area around Southern California, like East Los Angeles, we were the two main groups that went to Amache. Yeah. It's . . . I'm not clear on all of that. But, anyway, so your Dad was fully employed. Thank goodness. [Inaudible crosstalk] Because other people couldn't get a job. They were bored. They felt worthless. You know, and I understand that family unity, family ties were broken up in camps because a lot of times the kids ate by themselves and the parents. [Crosstalk] Is that what you experienced?

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Well, in our case, our family was still—they were not quite old enough. But I've heard that, you know, like the older ones that were upper teenage years or early 20s, they sort of got . . .

>> Carlene Tinker: Went off by themselves. Yeah, and they didn't, [Crosstalk] I would imagine the parents didn't feel like they were in control very much, anymore. You know, they kind of lost their...

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Yeah. You know, that's the only part, like my mother, complaining about. Camp was the closeness of so many Japanese living close—so close together.[Laughter] You know me, because you're living in a barrack and it's divided into homes [audio issues] and the wall right next to you, you could almost hear the family's things going on next door, whatever. And then with the three boys that are like teen, young teenagers, they're always. And then being a minister's sons. She—she always said, “I got tired of having people tell me ‘oh, your sons are the Sakow boys or the minister's son are in trouble’.” I mean, they didn't get into any big trouble that I know of. You know, they might have stole watermelons or something like that or something like that. But she said that got to her. You know, just being the closeness and all the gossip and all the things.

>> Carlene Tinker: Yes. It was kind of like being in a fishbowl. You know. And then. . .

>> Rumiko Arakawa: And being a minister's family, you get sort of . . .

>> Carlene Tinker: Oh, yeah. And you were supposed to be role models for the whole community. And if any of your family didn't follow the rules then . . .

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Yeah. With three—three teenage boys, it's a little hard. A little hard to control.

>> Carlene Tinker: So, basically, you didn't think your parents objected to going to camp. That they seemed to adjust to life in camp. Is that correct?

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Yeah, more or less.

>> Carlene Tinker: To do as best as they could. You know, *shikata ga nai* you do what you have to do and you make the best of it. Is that correct?

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Right, right.

>> Carlene Tinker: For the most part, even in my family, I think we felt that way. Although some of my mother's siblings, who were in their 20s, maybe they felt like they had been uprooted. And they lost opportunities. And those were the ones that were the most bitter. You know, because I have one aunt who won't even talk about camp. So, anyway, the war ends in 1945. And so, what does your family do? How old are you at that time?

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Okay. I'm four and half. And I'm only speaking Japanese. I did go to preschool. And I didn't know what they were—they could only speak English in preschool.

>> Carlene Tinker: In camp?

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Yeah. In camp. They were told not to speak Japanese. And so, every day the teacher would send a note home, saying “Please teach Rumiko English. Because we can't speak Japanese.” But I never did learn English until we left camp. And then, but I found out that, you know, we were being read stories, you know, like *Three Bears* and *Little Red Riding Hood*, all these stories. But I'm not really—I don't think I'm understanding. But when I started school in Detroit and I knew English and they're reading these stories again, they were familiar to me. So, I must have been absorbing it. You know, when you're that young you pick up a language very quickly or get an understanding 'cause you're learning languages at that age. But so, anyway, how we got to Detroit is that everybody else was going back to California. But my parents, when they were in Tacoma, had some close friends and some—for some reason they

moved to Detroit, some of those Tacoma people moved to Detroit. And when it was being decided where we were going to go, you know, basically I would think that we were going to come back to Dinuba. You know...

>> Carlene Tinker: Because that was the place that you had left.

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Yes. And for some reason, they said “please come up to Detroit, because we need a Buddhist temple or minister out here.” And so my father, I guess, decided we were going to move to Detroit. So, all of us got on a train and we went to Detroit. This is like in May or so.

>> Carlene Tinker: May 1945.

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Yeah. 1945. So, we ended up in Detroit. And we moved into this house, somehow or another. Well, our friends, we first stayed with maybe a week or two at our friend's house. They—They somehow or another got a hotel. You know, not a big thing but it's like a two or three story hotel. And we stayed in some of their rooms for a week or two until we were able to find a place.

>> Carlene Tinker: This is in Detroit?

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Mmm mm. So we moved into this big three-story house on 3915 Trumbull. I remember my addresses there.

>> Carlene Tinker: Have you ever been back there?

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Yes, yes. We went back there for my 50-year high school reunion kind of thing.

>> Carlene Tinker: I'll be darned.

>> Rumiko Arakawa: And so we went and looked at the areas. But, anyway, I didn't know we were renting the house. I thought we bought it. It was formerly a house that was used as an antique place. And there was three stores of antique kind of things. And this Japanese man owned it. Mr. Hamano owned it and—

>> Carlene Tinker: What was his name?

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Hamano.

>> Carlene Tinker: Hamano? Okay.

>> Rumiko Arakawa: And I didn't remember it but he had gotten rid of almost everything. Except I remember a spinning wheel. [Audio issue] There was still a spinning wheel left there that he had not gotten rid of. I just remember that thing.

>> Carlene Tinker: A spinning wheel for like making yarn?

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Yarn.

>> Carlene Tinker: Oh. Spinning wheel.

>> Rumiko Arakawa: From—from way old. And this is like 1945, so I don't know. But I just remember that spinning wheel. But the—we lived on just the main floor. There was a basement and then there were three stories up above. We lived on the first floor. And then since my father went there to be a Buddhist minister. I remember he got this glass piece and then he put on, he printed on there, somehow or another, nicely printed, “The Detroit Buddhist Temple” or something, “Buddhist Church” or something. And then he put it somehow or another rigged it up between these two brick pole—columns that were on the porch. And so, he more or less put a shingle out on our porch.

[Laughter]

>> Rumiko Arakawa: And then we lived on the first floor and the main big room, front room with the three-bay window was our living room. But I remember having a wedding in that room. And I remember having a funeral in there with a casket in that room. And we had services. And he had [services] every once in a while, but in a city of two million people there were 500 Japanese and not all of those were Buddhists. So, we really didn't have services, maybe two or three times a year. Services. And then we might have periodic wedding or funeral or memorial services. But, so, he couldn't make a living on that. So, my father got a job somehow or another being a janitor, a night janitor at the Mills Bakery, which was a very large bakery that serviced the Detroit area. And my mother started working as a housekeeper, you know, working several different rich peoples' homes.

>> Carlene Tinker: Now was she speaking English well at this point?

>> Rumiko Arakawa: No, she never really learned to speak English.

>> Carlene Tinker: So, Japanese was still spoken at home but you were speaking English when you went to school? [Crosstalk]

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Yes. But before I started kindergarten. When I arrived in Detroit, I was—I became five years old in November of that year. But I was still speaking Japanese but being in Detroit, the only friends I had to play with were English speaking kids around the neighborhood. So, between May of '45 and since my birthday is November, they had the split system, where I didn't start kindergarten until the following January. So, '46. So, between May of '45 and January of '46, just being around English speaking kids, I had learned English, so by the time I started kindergarten, I'm speaking English. My brothers had all learned English because they were going to school from way—way back.

>> Carlene Tinker: Oh, okay.

>> Rumiko Arakawa: But at home they were speaking Japanese.

>> Carlene Tinker: Still speaking Japanese? Okay. So, how long did your family stay in Detroit?

>> Rumiko Arakawa: We stayed there from 1945 to 1959. So 14 years. I went from kindergarten through first year of college. So, and then my brothers, I think it was a good thing for us to go to Detroit because it gave my three brothers very good opportunities to find their vocations. I don't know what they would have become if we had come back to California. But in Detroit, the three of us, my oldest brother, my fourth brother and I all went to Cass Technical High School. Which was a high school, it's called "technical" but it was all college prep. But instead of going to the local school, which would have been Pershing High School. I don't know for what reason my brother, [audio issues] my oldest brother went maybe the— when we first lived at the Trumbull address, that was the school—high school that was the closest. It was about a mile away, mile or two away. But we had to take a, I took a bus anyway to go to school. I had to take three buses. You know, it took me longer, but to walk it would have been a little bit hard, especially in the winter time.

>> Carlene Tinker: Oh, yeah, in the winter time. Yeah.

>> Rumiko Arakawa: So, but anyway, the technical high [school]— My brother, oldest brother, had the inclination of being artistic. He liked to draw. He wasn't an artist where he could do paintings or portraits of people. But he was good at coming up with ideas of designing things like.... In the high school, he went into the art department. And the Cass Technical High School was broken into curriculums. They had a music department. They had an art department. They had an engineering department. Auto, aero, and I was in the what they call, "the home economics" But it was like pre-nursing. It was a lot of science. I had a lot of science classes. And but also had a lot of cooking classes. But I was in that part. I was thinking of becoming a nurse. And then my oldest brother Toshi went into the art department. And the training he got there was equivalent to the first year of Pratt Institute, which is a very prestigious art school in New York. And he says— and it was a very good art school. And he learned to become a, what do you call it, an . . . illustrator...

>> Carlene Tinker: Graphic arts and illustrator, or...

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Not interior designer. Industrial designer. [audio issues] And he would design a new bottle for a whiskey bottle. Or boxing of a product. He'd make up designs. And then his first job was working for, but for some reason, he got his first job with a Studebaker Packard. And he was a designer, interior designer of [the] interior of a car—of cars. [Crosstalk] And so, he designed interiors of cars. And then he moved to Chrysler Corporation. And he did the design, one year, the Plymouth came out with a pushbutton one. Push button instead of a stick shift, automatic. It was a push button one and he was the one that designed it.

>> Carlene Tinker: Is that right?

>> Rumiko Arakawa: And then the engineers put it through. But they only had it for one year. I guess it wasn't practical.

>> Carlene Tinker: Could you spell the name of that high school that you went to?

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Cass. Cass. C-A-S-S and then Technical High School. But it was all college prep.

>> Carlene Tinker: Is it still in existence? I'll be darned.

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Yes. It's on a triangular block. And the school is seven stories high. Four huge elevators. Because...and then the seventh floor was a foundry and also the engineering department was up there, plus the cafeteria. And then they told me that on the roof, there was an airplane there.

>> Carlene Tinker: Oh for heaven's sake.

>> Rumiko Arakawa: That they go fly or whatever. But then the music department was very well known. And I know that when I was there there was this one kid that came from New York City just to go to the school.

>> Carlene Tinker: Just to go to school there?

>> Rumiko Arakawa: And then the art department was very well known. So, it's still there. And it's still...

>> Carlene Tinker: Still operating at that level?

>> Rumiko Arakawa: But they gutted the old. The school is still standing there, the seven stories. But they built a new one across the street. A brand new one. The whole area looks like . . .

>> Carlene Tinker: Like it's been bombed out.

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Yes. It's been bombed out. But the school is—the brand new school is there and the old school is there.

>> Carlene Tinker: Isn't that something.

>> Rumiko Arakawa: And then right across the way from the old, was the commerce school, which was technically a girl's high school but it was all commercial. And it was like for secretarial or business kind of a school. We were connected between the two schools by a . . .

>> Carlene Tinker: Enclosed bridge?

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Yeah. Enclosed bridge. That was about three stories up.

>> Carlene Tinker: Right, So my impression is that you and your brothers were maybe, one of the very few Japanese-Americans, right? In Detroit?

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Yes. In my class of 600 kids, there were three of us Japanese.

>> Carlene Tinker: Wow. Now wait a minute. What happened to one of your brothers?

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Okay. The oldest one, Toshihiko and Raymond my third brother. He was in what they called, I was in the letters and sciences, too. The liberal arts one. Which we didn't declare anything. And he didn't major in any particular thing. But he joined the Navy at 19. And was in the Navy for 33 years. And he became a hospital Corpsman. And then he became a—by the time he retired he was a Chief Petty Officer.

>> Carlene Tinker: Okay now?

>> Rumiko Arakawa: He was smart.

>> Carlene Tinker: I kind of remember there's an interesting story about that brother. He didn't stay in school for some reason.

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Oh no. It's my third brother. Masahiko. He didn't go to Cass Technical. He went to the tech— Wilbur Wright Trade School. And that's where he learned to become a tool and die machinist.

>> Carlene Tinker: Okay. But wasn't there somebody who didn't like, he got punished.

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Well, no, no. He's [Masahiko] the one in his chemistry class, he caused an explosion. He mixed some chemicals and he caused [the explosion], so he dropped out of school. In his 11th grade. He didn't finish. But he got enough training. He was a very good tool. He was very good with his hands.

>> Carlene Tinker: Okay.

>> Rumiko Arakawa: And, [audio issues] Like he made two model sailboats. I mean, he made whole pieces of wood that he put together. He made the keel, the metal keel. That he did the melting of the metal. And he made a nice metal keel. He made the, the...He was very good. He handmade the sails. He sewed it himself. He made the string. It was a replica of sailboat.

>> Carlene Tinker: Amazing.

>> Rumiko Arakawa: A three-masted sail. He made two of those. Beautiful things. And I remember he also had a leather jacket that he embroidered a head of a bald eagle. I mean beautifully embroidered. The white head, the beak. It looked like a real eagle. But he became the tool and die [machinist]. And then being Japanese, we were sort of, not anti-union, but we didn't join unions and things like this. But he was the one that ended up, wherever he worked, all the other people would be union people and he would be the one training them to become better, you

know, tool and die. And if he would have been in the union he would have been a master tool and die machinist.

>> Carlene Tinker: Okay. So, your brothers went to school there in Detroit and...

>> Rumiko Arakawa: The reason I'm saying Detroit was a good thing, these three brothers found good careers...[cross talk].

>> Carlene Tinker: Opportunities that maybe if they had been in California. [Cross talk] And then yourself. You were training to be a nurse but you only went one year to college in Detroit. Is that correct?

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Yes. I did well. And then I got a scholarship to University of Michigan that paid the tuition. And that's, Ann Arbor was, what about 60 miles from Detroit. And my mother said, "oh, you don't want to go to college. If you go to college you won't be able to get married. You won't be..." But my father, who was very education-minded and he stood up for me. He said, "No! Rumiko got a scholarship, she did very well in high school. So, she's going to go to college." But my mother says, "How are you going to pay for the dorms. That's the expensive part." He says, "we'll do it." And so my two parents, one is working as a janitor, one is working as housekeeper. They paid for my first year, you know, to go.

>> Carlene Tinker: So, you were one year at University of Michigan. How long did you stay there?

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Well, it was just the one year.

>> Carlene Tinker: Just the one year.

>> Rumiko Arakawa: But then my father got the call from the BCA, Buddhist Churches of America. He says "do you want to go to a more of a real temple. We have an opening in Salinas, California. Would you like to come out to Salinas and become a minister?" So, my father decided, well, it was time to go back to California. [short laugh]

>> Carlene Tinker: And that was about 1959?

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Fifty-nine. So, it was decided that they were going to come back to California. And so, I said to them, "I'm only 19 and they're paying for my way. I don't want to be by myself out here." But my mother was going to stay with me in Detroit. And stay in our home until I finished college. And then she decided, wait a minute, wait a minute. My father's not going to be able to take care of himself. He doesn't know how to cook. He doesn't know how to this or that . . . So, she says, "no I better go out there and be the okusan, you know he needs [inaudible]." So, she decides she's going to go. And I said to her, I says, "well, if you want me to marry Japanese boy I better go with you. I can transfer." And being out on the East Coast, we always had contacts with UCLA. So, between Michigan and UCLA. So, I said "I will transfer to UCLA." And my father says, "wait a minute, wait a minute. There's a UC school in Berkeley." I said "Where's Berkeley." He says "north of San Francisco, near Oakland." I says, "Okay, okay." So I, so I told Michigan to send my records to Berkeley. And then I told my high school to send it to Berkeley. And then later on, I keep getting letters from Berkeley, saying "we haven't gotten your high school records yet." I says, "Okay, okay I'll go check out with them." So, I went to the high school and I says, [background noise] "did you send my records to Berkeley?" He said "Oh yeah, yeah, yeah. See here. It says, UCLA." [pounding on table] [brief laughter] I said, "No! No! Not UCLA. This is Berkeley." [He says] "Where's Berkeley? What's Berkeley?" I said "I don't know. It's UC..."

[Laughter]

>> Carlene Tinker: Even though Berkeley probably was established first. Right? Even before UCLA.

>> Rumiko Arakawa: And it was just about that same time that the Clark, President Clark Kerr had a big write up. And it was in Time Magazine about the UC system and that Berkeley was the home base. [Cross talk] But up until that time, back east, we didn't know about Berkeley. We only knew UCLA.

>> Carlene Tinker: Well, then, one more thing about Detroit. Since you guys were one of the few Japanese-Americans in Detroit, or Japanese. Did you ever experience any prejudice or discrimination there from the Hakujin people?

>> Rumiko Arakawa: No, no. Not really. I don't know. I think we were a novelty. I don't know if my brothers felt any. You know, they're a little bit older, and they were in school. But by the

time I started, I was a novelty because I was one of the few Japanese. And I was a good student. I didn't cause any problems.

>> Carlene Tinker: Right. I think that helped a lot. Because otherwise, if you were seen as a troublemaker, that would have a problem. [Cross talk] Okay. One more thing about camp. I didn't ask you about the loyalty questionnaire. Do you remember anything about that? Do you know what I'm talking about?

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Yeah. I just remember the loyalty question about when my parents were going to become citizens. And that was in '54.

>> Carlene Tinker: But not before then? Did they ever talk about questions 27 or 28? Do you...

>> Rumiko Arakawa: No.

>> Carlene Tinker: Let me, let me kind of give you a little background on that. I think in '42 they were talking, the government was then ready to draft the young men. Okay, I hope I'm telling you correctly. So, they were going to administer this questionnaire to see if these young men were eligible or qualified to be in the armed services. [Cross talk] And in mistake they administered this questionnaire to everybody, including the Isseis. And the Isseis, of course, weren't citizens.

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Yes, right.

>> Carlene Tinker: So, they had no citizenship. They didn't belong to Japan because they were here in the United States. And they didn't belong to the United States. So, these two questions, 27 and 28. First of all the first one asked, "Do you, are you loyal to Japan?" And the second one said, "Will you renounce your citizenship in Japan and declare loyalty for the United States?" Well, obviously the Isseis, having no citizenship either place, were reluctant. They didn't know how to answer that.

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Yeah. 'Cause they're not citizens here.

>> Carlene Tinker: If they said, “No, no.” They became known as the “no, nos.” All right? And if they said, “yes, yes.” Then they were going to be sent back to Japan. Is that, do you kind of remember that? Yeah. So, you don't remember anything about your parents talking about that?

>> Rumiko Arakawa: No. And my father's thing was he always wanted to come to America. So, he didn't want to go back to Japan. So, he had no qualms of leaving Japan because he wanted to come to America. So, he had no qualms about going back. So, in, in—in camp there was you know, as the war was going on, there's these people that are still loyal to Japan and there... but, my father's reading the newspaper and he started telling the people, “you know, Japan's not going to win this war. I mean, it's all against them. They're not going to make it.” And he almost gotten beaten up for saying things like that.

>> Carlene Tinker: Oh, is that right?

>> Rumiko Arakawa: So, he learned to shut his mouth, [audio issues] you know. But he, he knew that they[The United States] were going to make it. He didn't want to go back to Japan. My mother was, you know, because she still has brothers and sisters, you know, back there. That she wanted to go back. She had relatives. She, she—she didn't exactly want to go back but you know.

>> Carlene Tinker: She still felt loyalty or some feelings, [Cross talk] some sentiments about Japan.

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Because of my father's feeling that there wasn't too much. So, when it came to their citizenship and at that time you had to give up your loyalty for Japan. At that time, you could not keep dual citizenship. Now you can. You can keep dual citizenship. And my mother wasn't. I mean she had the dual citizenship because she had Canada also. She was a Canadian citizen and a Japanese citizen. Because she was born in Canada. She had no qualms about giving up Canada. [Cross talk]

>> Carlene Tinker: Because she was a little baby at that time.

>> Rumiko Arakawa: But she was sort of reluctant about giving up the Japanese one. But my father had no qualms. Because he wanted to stay in America.

>> Carlene Tinker: Right. So, in 1954, they applied for citizenship and then they got their citizenship. And remained here.

>> Rumiko Arakawa: And since my mother still didn't speak that much Japanese, she had a friend that could speak Japanese and English. And so she went with her when she was sworn in and she explained everything in Japanese, the swearing in.

>> Carlene Tinker: You know, that's an interesting thing. I'm surprised that they allowed that.

>> Rumiko Arakawa: They did allow that. Otherwise, she couldn't have done it.

>> Carlene Tinker: I know, yeah.

>> Rumiko Arakawa: So, they realized that, too.

>> Carlene Tinker: Yeah, yeah. Okay so, getting back to after the war, you're in Salinas. Your parents are in Salinas, it's 1959. You went to Cal. What did you major in? [Cross talk] Earlier you wanted to be a nurse?

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Yeah, I was liberal arts. And then I was taking biology classes, a lot of biology classes, you know. But I didn't do as well in that and I did better in history. So, I switched to history. And I ended up with a history major, basically American or Western History.

>> Carlene Tinker: Yeah, so and... So, when did you qualify for your bachelor's degree at Cal?

>> Rumiko Arakawa: I got it in '62.

>> Carlene Tinker: '62.

>> Rumiko Arakawa: '58 to '62. Well '59 to '62.

>> Carlene Tinker: Okay, so you got your bachelor's degree then. Did you... then—you said earlier that if your parents wanted you to marry a Japanese man. That was the reason you came back to California. So, did that bear out? I mean, did you meet somebody who was going to become your...?

>> Rumiko Arakawa: I met my husband. At Cal.

[Laughter]

>> Rumiko Arakawa: In my, let's see. I started my sophomore year. So, yes. towards the end of my sophomore year I met him.

>> Carlene Tinker: Was there a lot of Japanese-Americans going to Cal at that time?

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Oh, yeah, yeah. But they're were broken up into, I don't know how many of us there were, but there was the San Francisco group that stuck together, Oakland group, the Berkeley group, and then there was our group. And my husband is from Fresno. And I was from? Where was I from? [brief laughter]

>> Carlene Tinker: Salinas.

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Not really. I was from Detroit. And then a lot of our, a group of about 10 of us, most of us, most of them were from Hawaii, they're Japanese-Americans from Hawaii. A lot of Cal students were Japanese-Americans from Hawaii.

>> Carlene Tinker: Oh, is that right?

>> Rumiko Arakawa: And then my one roommate was Chinese. But she's from Sacramento. And she didn't know any of the Chinese. And she was with our group. So, we considered her Japanese.

[Laughter]

>> Rumiko Arakawa: She looked more Japanese than I did.

>> Carlene Tinker: So it was very cliquish, very cliquish

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Yeah, yeah. Berkeley was very cliquish with the Japanese groups.

>> Carlene Tinker: The Asians groups... yeah.

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Yeah. So, we were the, I called us the “outside insiders.” [brief laughter]

>> Carlene Tinker: You called yourself what?

>> Rumiko Arakawa: The “outside insiders.” Or the “inside outsiders.” Whatever. So, we were our own little group.

>> Carlene Tinker: So, Hunter, is your husband. You found him there. Or you met him there.

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Yes. I did.

>> Carlene Tinker: What is his Japanese, what is his full name?

>> Rumiko Arakawa: It's actually, his first name is Hayao, H-A-Y-A-O Hunter Arakawa.

>> Carlene Tinker: Okay. And Hunter was actually a given name?

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Yes. He was named after a friend, a Caucasian friend of their, of his parents. His name was Hunter something or other. They liked that. So, they called him Hayao

Hunter. And he was called by his family and all, everybody calls him Hayao. But once he started school, they couldn't say Hayao, which is a hard name to say. And so, he went by Hunter. Sometime shortly starting kindergarten.

>> Carlene Tinker: Is that right? Is Hunter the same age as you?

>> Rumiko Arakawa: He is one week older than me.

>> Carlene Tinker: Yeah, yeah.

>> Rumiko Arakawa: So, when he was introduced to me by his roommate who was a fellow, John, who was from Hawaii. The reason that he wanted to get to know me, that he found out that we were one week apart with our...

>> Carlene Tinker: Birthdates.

>> Rumiko Arakawa: ...birthdates. And then same year, so we're just one week apart, older. And then his parents were the same way. His parents were one week apart. [brief chuckle] His father was one week, so that's [cross talk]

>> Carlene Tinker: [cross talk] [Laughter] That's a very sound reason for getting interested in you, I must say.

>> Rumiko Arakawa: That was one of the reasons.

[laughter]

>> Carlene Tinker: So, how did you actually meet?

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Well

>> Carlene Tinker: Who, did anybody arrange this? [Crosstalk] Did you have classes together?

>> Rumiko Arakawa: John Kunishi is the one I had classes with. And he was rooming with Hunter. And he was the one who introduced me to him. And when I first met, Hunter was very shy at that time. He's not anymore. But he was very shy . . .

>> Carlene Tinker: Is that because of your influence?

>> Rumiko Arakawa: I think so. [laughter] But I'd see him passing by in the dorms. And I'd say, "Hi, Hunter." And he would just go "[mumble]" just mumble and walk by me. And so I said, "Wow, he's really snobbish." And then later on, well, John [Kunishi] knew he was interested in me. So, he kept on saying, you know, "Ask her out, ask her out." And then finally, he asked me out to go to a hayride.

>> Carlene Tinker: He asked you out to do what?

>> Rumiko Arakawa: To go on a hayride.

>> Carlene Tinker: Oh, hayride.

>> Rumiko Arakawa: One of those things that they used to do. I don't know if they do that anymore.

[Laughter]

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Somewhere out in the boonies. Somewhere out in the country. So, he asked me out to a hayride. Slowly, but he was very slow and methodical. We met in like '59, but it was really '60 before we really started dating. Then '62 a little more serious, '64 we got engaged, '66 we got married, '68 we had our first kid, and then in '70 we had our second kid. And then after that we went off to [inaudible]...

>> Carlene Tinker: And what did...what is Hunter's job? What did he get trained in?

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Okay. He was, he wanted to become either a doctor dentist. But his grades weren't that great. But he did get into the podiatry school in San Francisco. And we had been dating. At first, my first job was in San Francisco. But he was still going to school. He went after he graduated from Cal in 1962. He went on and took some more science classes. He went to Fresno State for about a year or two. And then he got into podiatry school. So, in the meantime, between 1962 and 1964, I started working in San Francisco, I got a job. I took the federal entrance exam and I got a job with Social Security. And so I started working in San Francisco. And then he was still in Fresno. And then my girlfriend, Nancy, my roommate from college, she says, she knew I didn't like my job. Because it was just a big office with 200 people. And working in this big room. She knew I got tired of working in this big job. She says, you know, you want to become a . . . She was a social work major. She became a social, public assistant social worker in Sacramento county. She went back home. So, she says, "Sacramento County is picking anybody off the street if you have a liberal arts degree. [audio issues] They'll train you. They'll train you into social work." And I said, "oh, that sounds more interesting." I like working with people, you know visiting and talking with people. So, I said, "okay!" I took the test and passed it. So, I went to work in Sacramento. So, I'm in Sacramento. Hunter gets accepted for podiatry college in Fresno, I mean San Francisco. He moved to San Francisco. I moved to Sacramento. So, for the next two years we had this telephone [relationship]. That's what it is, between '62 and '64, we're talking on the telephone. Every once in a while I come back down to San Francisco or he'd come up to Sacramento to visit. And so that went on for two years.

>> Carlene Tinker: And so finally you got married.

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Yeah, finally.

>> Carlene Tinker: So, did you stay as a social worker for a long time, 'cause...?

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Yeah. Then, then about, after in '64, no, let's see, yeah, December of '65, I moved back to San Francisco and I started to working for Contra Costa County as a social worker in Richmond. So, I was commuting from San Francisco to Richmond and back. And then, and then that's when we got engaged. And then we got married two years later. So, we still lived in San Francisco 'til he finished school in '68. And then he got an internship in Oakland area. So, we moved over to Oakland. So, we lived there, Oakland, about '68 to '74 while he did internships and residency and working.

>> Carlene Tinker: In the meantime, you had two children by then, didn't you?

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Yeah. Yeah. Yeah.

>> Carlene Tinker: Did you work during the time you had the kids?

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Yes. I worked in Contra Costa County.

>> Carlene Tinker: As, still as a Social Worker?

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Social Worker, yeah.

>> Carlene Tinker: Okay, then when did you return to Fresno?

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Well, since he's [Hunter] an only child. And you know, his parents were not getting old, but he felt an obligation that he should be near his parents. And so, it was okay with me. And uh, so we moved here and...

>> Carlene Tinker: Where did they live? In Bowles?

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Bowles, yeah. Which is southwest area of Fresno...

>> Carlene Tinker: Of Fresno? Okay.

>> Rumiko Arakawa: ...in the country, 'cause they have a farm out there that they've had a hundred years.

>> Carlene Tinker: Oh, my God.

>> Rumiko Arakawa: They bought that property. There was the Homestead Act or something back in 1910. So, but Japanese couldn't own property until, until immigrants, Isseis could not

own property until they had a child that was born here in America. So, Hunter's oldest uncle, the first uncle was born in 1910. And so, they brought, bought the 160 acres out in the Bowles area, which is between West and Fruit Avenues, between Springfield and Dinuba, 160 acres out there. And then when the other Japanese people found out about that, a lot of single men were still here. So, they started buying property in his name, this uncle's name, since he was the first born. Until they got married and started having children. And then they transferred.

>> Carlene Tinker: Then they transferred the property ownership.

>> Rumiko Arakawa: To their children. To their first born

>> Carlene Tinker: Pretty clever.

>> Rumiko Arakawa: So, they got around it, owning property.

>> Carlene Tinker: So, did you continue as a social worker after you moved to Fresno?

>> Rumiko Arakawa: No, no. By then, when he came here he established his own practice. So, I stopped working.

>> Carlene Tinker: Oh, you did? Okay. When did you go back to work and did you continue?

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Oh, okay. Then I started working as a, you know, three and half hour aide, teachers' aide. And then it went up to six hours. I worked as special education aide, because they had six hours. And then I got benefits. So, that helped out because Hunter didn't have any coverage. Otherwise it would have cost us an arm and a leg. Through Fresno Unified. And then later on, I went back to school. I went to [Fresno city], and I got my library technician's certificate from Fresno City. And then I worked as a library technician, library tech or whatever, like I worked at Balderas School, while I worked at Hoover High School for about five years as a special ed aide. And then I went to school. And then I worked as, at Balderas as a library tech, at Bullard High School and at Edison High School. And then after about 10 years of that, I worked, I went into what they called a job counselor. Like I got a job and I did that for a year or two.

>> Carlene Tinker: Yeah, was that the last job you had?

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Yes. I worked a total of 27 years for the school.

>> Carlene Tinker: And then you retired from Fresno Unified?

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Yeah, and then.

>> Carlene Tinker: So essentially you worked for Fresno Unified [school district] for 27 years? Is that right?

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Mmm-mm.

>> Carlene Tinker: Okay. Now. I have a couple of things that I've overlooked. And, so, you know, if you want to add anything. Who was the minister from your family now in Japan?

>> Rumiko Arakawa: It was my brother. Then he passed away. Now it's his [small pause] third son.

>> Carlene Tinker: Third son? What happened to the first and second?

>> Rumiko Arakawa: First, well, the first, first, first [sons] and. Well they all became ministers. All three of them became ministers. But the second—the first son decided he didn't want to be the minister of a church. So, he's gotten into something or other, other things. He's done free lancing. I don't what he's doing now. [Audio issues] And then the second one passed away. So, it went down to the third son.

>> Carlene Tinker: Okay. And, so how old was that young man? Maybe not too young now.

>> Rumiko Arakawa: oh, lets see, yeah, my oldest, my oldest, let's see my oldest nephew, let's see he's got to be in his 50s or near 60.

>> Carlene Tinker: Does he have children?

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Yes. But he got divorced. He had a very complicated, life.

>> Carlene Tinker: But getting back to this legacy, passing it on.

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Yes. So it's gone to the third son, my third nephew. Which was, and then his, probably, his son who is about maybe 20 now.

>> Carlene Tinker: Do you think he'll become one of the ministers?

>> Rumiko Arakawa: I'm not sure because he's autistic. And he's the only son. He's got two sisters.

>> Carlene Tinker: Do women ever become ministers?

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Sometimes, sometimes. If there's no sons. We've had some women in [inaudible].

>> Carlene Tinker: In this family? Are there any girls? Would any of them?

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Well, my grand-nephew has two sisters. And so maybe their children might. If they have a son. Maybe.

>> Carlene Tinker: Oh, that's interesting.

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Yeah. But he might be able to do it. He's not that severe of an autistic.

>> Carlene Tinker: Yeah. If he has something like Asperger's which is not very extreme form of autism.

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Yes. It's more of that. Yes. because I was able to converse with him. And he was okay. He seemed okay. Just a little shy.

>> Carlene Tinker: Well, you know, Rumi, the fact that I've known you for a long time. And to every time I think about your family and how the family has had Buddhist ministers for 25 to 27 generations is just amazing.

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Six hundred years we figured out. Twenty-five years per generation.

>> Carlene Tinker: Yeah, yeah. That's incredible. Okay, another thing that I didn't ask you about was redress? [Background noise] In the 1980s there was this movement to somehow compensate for our experiences in being in a camp. And President Reagan at that time, President of the United States, was the one who actually signed the order to provide reparations for us. [Cross talk] [Background noise] Now, how do you feel about that first of all? Was that a good idea to have redress or to, you know, provide money for us? Certainly, it didn't compensate for all that a lot of people lost.

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Yeah, it was partial compensation. Like I said, my father really didn't have any great animosity about being in camps or anything like that. He was of the, you know, shikata ga nai, that's, you know, what's going to happen. There was the feeling of the American people. They weren't sure what the Japanese were going to do. The Japanese-Americans were going to do. So, they were afraid, kind of thing. So, he almost felt like it was a protection for us too. To not be beaten up or property, you know, destroyed or things like that.

>> Carlene Tinker: Now did they [your family] physically lose a lot of stuff? In other words, . . .

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Well since he was a minister, he didn't . . .

>> Carlene Tinker: He didn't have a lot, like a farm or anything?

>> Rumiko Arakawa: No, no, no.

>> Carlene Tinker: So his was a little special.

>> Rumiko Arakawa: The only thing they lost; was the only they could take was one suitcase per person, into camp. So there was a lot of things. But, my father, like, you know, loves reading. All I can remember, he built this big wooden box. And we had books. So somehow or another we took our books with us. Somehow or another it followed us through camp. And it ended up in Detroit. And even ended up here in Fresno.

>> Carlene Tinker: Did you guys have any pets or anything?

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Well, I don't think so. No. No. With four kids I think it was, [cross talk] we might have had a dog. I saw a picture of a dog in one of the pictures. One of the photos. But I don't think we had any.

>> Carlene Tinker: It would have been hard on your mom. So, did your mom, I didn't ask this either. Did your Mom and Dad ever come to Fresno? See, they came back. They were in Salinas. Where did they go from Salinas?

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Oh, they were in Salinas from '58 to '68. Then they went to, my father was assigned to the Buddhist Temple in Santa Barbara. So he was there from '68 to '78.

>> Carlene Tinker: '60 to '78?

>> Rumiko Arakawa: '68 to '78. Ten years there. So, 20 years, 10 years in Salinas and 10 years in Santa Barbara.

>> Carlene Tinker: Okay. Ten years in Salinas and 10 years in Santa Barbara. Is that right? So t

>> Rumiko Arakawa: That's when he retired. [background audio] And they decided to come and be near me. So, they moved to Fresno in 1978.

>> Carlene Tinker: Where were your brothers living at the time? Why didn't they move with them?

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Okay. Okay, my brothers after we left Detroit in '59, my parents and I moved back to California. My brother, oldest brother, Toshihiko, had moved to New Jersey. And he had started a business in New Jersey as an industrial designer on his own. His two sons grew up there. And then my third brother, he stayed in Detroit. He had, he was married and he had five children. And then he was divorced, then he got married again. Then he got divorced. Then he married a third time. The first two wives were Caucasian. And the third one was Japanese. She was a woman that had a no children. She was from Japan. Then she passed away. But in the meantime, he had moved to Florida. He was always close to his kids. So the whole five kids, even grown kids, they all moved to Florida. So, they're all in Florida. And then my fourth brother, my youngest brother, older brother, he was in the Navy 33 years. And he retired. And he lived in, retired to the San Diego area. And he has two sons. He passed away two or three years ago. I think he passed away in October. Then my brother in Japan passed away in March, the following March. In about a six-month period I had lost the two brothers. So, I'm just down to my third brother, my only brother in Florida.

>> Carlene Tinker: [Door creaking] Yeah, So, it was a little easier for your parents being on the West Coast come and live with you and Hunter or in Fresno.

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah 'cause, my mother was thinking of going to San Francisco because there's a lot of Japanese stuff there and then retire there. And then I said, "you know, if you move there, it's going to take me three hours if anything comes up and I have to help you. Why don't you come to Fresno, we've got Japanese stuff. We got church here and everything." So, they moved here.

>> Carlene Tinker: So how long were they in Fresno before your Dad passed away and before your Mom passed away?

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Okay, so they came in '78 and my father passed away . . . oh, I think he passed away in '90. So they were here for about 12 years. And then my mother passed away in 1997.

>> Carlene Tinker: Right, and I know there was a tragic story on your Mom.

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Yeah, yeah. So he passed away at 85 and she passed away at almost 88. She was almost 88.

>> Carlene Tinker: Okay. Now another thing that I didn't ask you about that came to mind right now. Japanese-American Citizen League. That was a very important organization for Japanese-Americans. Were you ever a member of the JACL?

>> Rumiko Arakawa: My parents joined I think. But just towards the end. Maybe just before the reparations kind of thing.

>> Carlene Tinker: But they weren't active members. How about yourself?

>> Rumiko Arakawa: I'm trying to remember if we ever joined.

>> Carlene Tinker: Did you ever follow their activities?

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Some. I think we joined but I don't think we're active.

>> Carlene Tinker: [Door creaking] But now, you're very active members of the Buddhist church here, the Buddhist temple. Whenever I talk to anybody, I say, "Do you know Rumi and Hunter Arakawa?" [they say] "Oh, yes! of course, we know them." So, you are very well known and very well respected.

[Laughter].

>> Carlene Tinker: Okay. I think I've asked most of the questions that come to mind about your experiences. Are there any things that you'd like to share that I have not covered. That you think would be interesting to have somebody read about or research?

>> Rumiko Arakawa: No. Other than Detroit was an area where the Japanese, were I don't think were discriminated against that much. Because we were sort of far removed. And out of, like I

said 2 million people there were maybe 500 of us. And we were quiet. There was a JACL there. There was a hall that the Japanese citizens would get together and have their activities. They'd have a little big get togethers once a year or something like that. But we weren't that active or close. Because we were all dispersed.

>> Carlene Tinker: Dispersed. And then when you came back to California and took up residence here in Fresno, did you ever experience any prejudice or discrimination from neighbors or community?

>> Rumiko Arakawa: No, no. But I know that, like I told you the other day, that the Lisle funeral Home, the reason that the Buddhist Church uses them as their funeral home for funerals and things like this, is during World War II, the Lisle family housed our Buddha statues and then the relics, the different kinds of things from the altar area in their basement for us during the war. So, we were always very grateful for them for doing that. So, that's why we tend to use the Buddhist temple, I mean the Lisle Funeral Home.

>> Carlene Tinker: Now that's very important to you. I wonder if your children know the reason why you go to Lisle.

>> Rumiko Arakawa: I think I told my children that. I try to tell my children about the things, the people here. And then there this was this one man that got our temple ready at the end of the war for people coming back to Fresno. And before they could get relocated back into some homes or whatever. He fixed up the hondo, the main hall for people to stay until they could find homes to go to.

>> Carlene Tinker: And who was this man?

>> Rumiko Arakawa: I don't know that man's name. but it's written down, there's this woman that did the history of Fresno. But she's got an area about the Japanese-Americans.

>> Carlene Tinker: Oh, that's fascinating.

>> Rumiko Arakawa: I don't know who, the Church probably knows who it is but I don't know who it is.

>> Carlene Tinker: In general, relocation in the eyes of some people, as you said, maybe your Dad thought this, too. That it was a way to protect us. I'm not sure everybody would share that.

>> Rumiko Arakawa: I would say the majority did not.

>> Carlene Tinker: And especially today, in today's politics and people who are anti-immigrants. Unfortunately, there are some individuals who think that relocation could happen again and should happen again. They thought that FDR was doing the right thing. How do you feel about that? Do you think that there is a possibility that some groups might be put into camps like we were?

[background noise].

>> Rumiko Arakawa: I hope that they don't just do over the board like they did with the Japanese-Americans. You know, if there are groups that there are active or the government knows that they might be doing bad things that they could get them away. But I don't think it was, but I'm pretty sure that the government realizes that to do it across the board, just thinking Japanese-Americans.

>> Carlene Tinker: Especially since about two-thirds of us were infants or women.

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Yes, and two-thirds of us were American citizens. [cross talk] And they tend to forget. And it's just that we stand out. We don't look like the majority of the white Americans or the black Americans. That we can be picked out. And I know even the Chinese were sort of worried, too. That they could be picked up. Because they looked Asian.

>> Carlene Tinker: And I think they wore buttons that said "I'm Chinese, not Japanese." Isn't that correct?

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Yes. yes. But I've heard of some Japanese-Americans that went into the Chinese community, like Chinatown and different areas and tried to blend in as Chinese, to not to be picked up. But as an overall thing, you know, just to take all the Muslims and put them in things. Or Syrians. You cannot do that.

>> Carlene Tinker: Getting back to redress, you know, this is a question that I need to research. Some people said in order to get reparations, that you had to have been in camp. And if you were still alive at the time that the money was dispersed. And that would be in the late 1980s. And I think we got our check in 1992. But some people said, that even if you were displaced and didn't go into camp that you got money. What do you remember about that?

>> Rumiko Arakawa: I don't know. All I know is that my daughters-in-law's family, the Chiamoris they tried to avoid going into camp. They went into Colorado or somewhere. And in fact my daughter-in-law's mother was born in Colorado. So, she was not born in camp. So they did not get any money.

>> Carlene Tinker: Even the ones that went to Colorado to avoid going into camp.

>> Rumiko Arakawa: If they weren't in a camp, if they weren't sent to a camp. Because they voluntarily went out. I think if you voluntarily went to an area that didn't get sent to a camp.

>> Carlene Tinker: Yeah, yeah, yeah. That's something that's come up in my doing these interviews. I need to find out. Because I've had conflicting interpretations.

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Unless they were in it, in it at one time and they left.

>> Carlene Tinker: I can understand that.

>> Rumiko Arakawa: I think that's what's happened to Hunter's family. I mean, his father left because he got a work permit. They were sent to Arkansas. And he got a permit. So, he went to work in Chicago area. But Hunter says that he and his mother were still in Arkansas. So, all three of those got redress money. So they had spent time in there.

>> Carlene Tinker: Right, okay. Let's see. I certainly appreciate, Rumi, for you agreeing to tell your story. You know, I have found for years listening to you and your stories to be amazing. To be really amazing. And I think others will enjoy this as well. As a citizen, not only of being Japanese-American, and a resident of Fresno, how would you like to be remembered? What would you like people to remember you about? Or how would you like to be remembered?

>> Rumiko Arakawa: I'm not sure. That I didn't cause, break any laws. [laughter] Upstanding citizen. But, I just for myself, I feel like my family had a unique history here. Because of my grandparents, you know, especially my grandfather, the uniqueness of him, traveling all over the place. And it's quite different from most of the other Japanese-American families.

>> Carlene Tinker: I agree with you. All of those things are definitely what adds to . . .

>> Rumiko Arakawa: And I'm glad that my, basically, I think I got most of the story from my mother, some of my father's thoughts I got from him. As a history major, I like personal history. I like to hear about people and my reading of books, [background audio] I like historical novels and I like learning about people and their travels. Right now, I haven't finished the book but I'm reading that Lilac Girls. And it's about three women during World War II, one is a Polish girl, one is a Russian girl, and one is an American girl. And their different experiences of World War II.

>> Carlene Tinker: Oh, that's fascinating. And that just brings me back to your Dad, who was an English major and very fond of books. I remember now thinking about you and how much you like to read. I think you're a voracious reader. [Laughter]

>> Rumiko Arakawa: My mother used to buy me these bedtime stories, A Hundred Bedtime Storybooks, and within a week I would have finished it. So, she would have to go find another one. Until I discovered the libraries. Then she saved money.

[Laughter].

She was very good about buying me these books.

>> Carlene Tinker: Well, thank you very much, Mrs. Arakawa. As a friend, I know you as Rumi, but Mrs. Rumiko Arakawa. Lucian Arakawa. Hopefully, your story will go on and people will enjoy reading it as much as I have.

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Okay. I enjoyed talking to you about it.

>> Carlene Tinker: Thank you, very much.

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Okay. [Audio issues]

>> Carlene Tinker: As we're sitting here talking about the interview, Rumi and I, Rumi actually thought of something that we should add to her interview. And she wants to tell a little story about her Mom and a necklace that her mother was wearing. [Audio issues] Okay, Rumi, you want to share that.

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Okay. This is after World War II when we were living in Detroit. My mother was coming home from work or something. And she was crossing the street. And this man came up to her and noticed that the necklace she was wearing was a little gold swastika. And the man said to her, "Why are you wearing this swastika?" He says "That's a terrible thing." And he ripped it off her neck and threw it down on the ground. And my mother couldn't speak English enough to explain that it was a very ancient, very old Japanese Buddhist symbol for Buddhism. And that the swastika is a very ancient good luck symbol and also used by different religions. The Pharaohs used the swastika. And it represents the four winds and the blowing of the four winds. And pointing to the north, east, south, and then west kind of symbol. And that, she couldn't explain this. So, I just thought that in a short period of time of maybe 40 years, Hitler had taken this good luck symbol, as a very ancient symbol of good luck, and made it into a very terrible symbol.

>> Carlene Tinker: Now was this symbol the same one that Hitler used?

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Yeah. But the good luck symbol, Hitler used it, it was, I don't know which way, [Phone rings] but it pointed a different way. The Hitler's one the national Nazi thing pointed one way. And then the good luck symbol goes the opposite way. Because if you turn it, it turns into a good way. But he used it, I don't know which way he used it. But it's the difference of the different symbol. I just thought people are ignorant about this thing. But he took this symbol that was an ancient symbol of good luck and good things and changed it into a terrible thing.

>> Carlene Tinker: And this happened in Detroit?

>> Rumiko Arakawa: In Detroit.

>> Carlene Tinker: And do you remember what year that was?

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Nineteen-forty-five or forty-six.

>> Carlene Tinker: So right after we were coming out of the war?

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Yeah, yeah, yeah. Before we moved to our second home. So, it was in the first two years.

>> Carlene Tinker: How devastating that must have been for your Mom.

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Yes. I think she came home in tears. Because she didn't know what to say. [Audio issues] And it was a nice little gold necklace that she'd been wearing for years.

>> Carlene Tinker: Was this somebody that was a stranger? Or was it . . .

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Yes. It was strange person. It was a man.

>> Carlene Tinker: You know people are ignorant. Instead of just assigning meaning or what you think it means, they should ask. They should ask the person. You know? And that kind of reminds me of what's going on in the current world and our government. Very bad misinterpretations. Well, I'm glad that you thought of that and we can share that with the rest of the interview. Thank you very much.

>> Rumiko Arakawa: Okay.