

## Jen / continued

systems of Oriental societies. Hawaii sounded good to Jen.

"I accepted — just one phone call. In one week I received formal appointment; second week I took plane to Hawaii. I taught three years and met my wife in Hawaii. Ching Hwa is a little bit more practical. She told me if I wanted to stay in the United States, I needed the higher degree. My wife taught at the University of Hawaii, as well, so we both gave up a five-year contract with that system."

Jen applied to a number of universities and received an excellent scholarship from the University of Wisconsin.

"That was my choice," he says. "Wisconsin has a very strong program on East Asia and India. Before finishing my dissertation, I came here to teach; that was 1970. A year later I went back to Wisconsin and submitted my thesis and passed my defense oral."

Jen's teaching style is probably more the exception than the rule. He doesn't just lecture. Instead, he uses articles — tools, utensils, clothing and religious objects — collected from his many trips, to show students examples of different lifestyles and the different customs people practice throughout the world. He encourages students to travel, to leave their hometowns and live with other people.

"The farther, the better," Jen says. "I developed the China Semester for all CSUF students. They spend 10 to 12 weeks studying at Hangzhou University and another two or three weeks traveling. They cover one-third of China's territories, about 15 cities. After that we'll help interested students find jobs to teach English in China. Since 1986 about six students remained and are still in China. They take a job, like it and come home for a visit, and then they return to China to teach."

Most anthropology graduates pursue educational careers, although museum research, pure research and government positions are other possibilities.

"Government sometimes, not always, likes to include anthropologists to promote understanding," Jen says. "The U.S. government included a number of anthropologists to join their decision-making groups during World War II because American soldiers were fighting in the Pacific, Japan and Southeast Asia. The government did this to put these people in a safer situation. They learned a little bit more about the people and the environment in these places."

It's safe to say that Jen is knowledgeable about the different cultures in the world. He has been to every continent except Australia. Some trips were short-term, while others required him to live for months, sometimes years, in such places as Sardinia, Korea and Japan.

"That's the way we learn," Jen concludes. "We learn directly, or what in anthropological terms, we call 'participant observation.' I have collected more than 3,000 original, handmade specimens from all different people. They are in museum in Taiwan. Very valuable, but besides that, I have many good memories of people in different countries."

### Discovery

Shien-min "James" Jen was born in China, educated in Taiwan and has spent about half of his life living in the United States. As a cultural anthropologist, he has lived with Papago Indians in Arizona, high mountain tribal people in Taiwan and has spent months, sometimes years, in such places as Nigeria and the Bete Tabago Islands in the South Pacific. He is the proud owner of more than 3,000 finds that are housed in a museum at the Institute of Ethnology, Academia Sinica in Taiwan. While Jen has made many discoveries, he hopes the day will come when people discover "understanding" — a cross-cultural understanding that will bring world peace.