

Oral Histories of the Post-1965 Lives of Asian Americans in Idaho

The Reminiscences of
Manuel Garcia Jimenez

Asian American Comparative Collection
University of Idaho
2020

PREFACE

The following oral history is the result of a recorded interview with Manuel Garcia Jimenez conducted by Kathy M. Min on July 24, 2020. This interview is part of the Oral Histories of the Post-1965 Lives of Asian Americans in Idaho project, conducted in partnership with the Asian American Comparative Collection.

Readers are asked to bear in mind that they are reading a transcript of the spoken word, rather than written prose. The following transcript has been reviewed, edited, and approved by the narrator.

Transcriptionist	GoTranscript transcript reviewed and edited by Kathy M. Min
Narrator	Manuel G. Jimenez
Interviewer	Kathy M. Min
Session Number	1
Location	Virtually through Zoom. Both participants called from Boise, Idaho.
Date	July 24, 2020

00:00:03

Q: So today is July 24th, 2020. I'm Kathy Min, the interviewer, and today, I'm interviewing Manny. The interview is taking place over Zoom. I'm calling from Boise. And, Manny, are you also calling from Boise?

Jimenez: Yes.

00:00:21

Q: We're both calling from Boise over Zoom, and the proposed subject of the recording is an oral history of Manny's life for the Asian American oral history project. So, we'll start with the first question. What is your full name?

Jimenez: Manuel Garcia Jimenez.

00:00:41

Q: When and where were you born?

Jimenez: I was born in Baguio City, Philippines.

00:00:46

Q: What is your current occupation and educational background?

Jimenez: I am retired. I have a bachelor's degree in computer science, and I have—what else do I have? There's got to be something else. I forgot. Okay, that should be enough.

00:01:16

Q: That should be enough.

Jimenez: The thing is I have 420 credits of college credits.

00:01:23

Q: Wow. Very cool.

Jimenez: I have a business degree as well.

00:01:38

Q: So a few degrees here and there.

Jimenez: MBA, an MBA. There you go. Yeah, I have an MBA.

00:01:46

Q: Also, when were you born?

Jimenez: I beg your pardon?

00:01:50

Q: When were you born?

Jimenez: I was born in 1950. August 19, 1950. Yes, so I'm fully retired and I'm happy, I think. Well, I am. I'm happily retired. It's good to be 70.

00:02:14

Q: Yes, for sure. I think we'll talk a little bit more about your life now, but we're going to back up and talk about your early life. So, what are the names of your parents?

Jimenez: My mom is Rosario Garcia, and my dad is Augustin Jimenez.

00:02:35

Q: Are they still alive?

Jimenez: Both of them have passed.

00:02:44

Q: When did they pass?

Jimenez: 2012, I believe, was my dad. No, no, no. My mom. My dad was something like 1992.

00:02:59

Q: And do you have any siblings?

Jimenez: Oh, yes. It's a Filipino family, you know, come on. I have seven others. There's eight of us in the family. Four boys and four girls.

00:03:14

Q: Tell me a little bit about your siblings, like their names, their ages, where they are now, what they do?

Jimenez: Okay, so being born in the 1950s and with the background of my parents—I mean, the 1950s was just a few years after the Philippines got their independence from the United States, okay? And my mom and dad, they both worked for the US government. Basically, that's how the entire family got raised. We were schooled properly. We were actually speaking English from first grade, well, from the day that we were born, mainly because both my parents worked for the US government up in Baguio City.

00:04:14

Jimenez: And Baguio City is a huge area for Americans.¹ They have a big base over there, so we were exposed to that. My family always believed in education. Despite the fact that there's eight of us in the family, every single one of us is a college graduate. You know, most Asian families are like that though. It's not uncommon for you to see an uneducated Asian. Isn't that right?

00:04:55

Q: I know a lot of times in the US, a lot of Asian Americans specifically came on a student visa or [unclear].

Jimenez: Right. Exactly. We're believers in education, and this is it. So technically, I never felt out of place. My adaptation to the western community here, well, took a while, you know. But I would say I had a pretty good experience in my—well, as a matter of fact, most of my friends say, "My God, you've fully integrated." Yeah, what kind of a choice do I have? If I need to work in this environment, then either I swim or sink. And I'm quite capable of swimming, so yeah, so swim we go.

00:06:06

¹ Baguio City was designed by Americans in the early 20th century. Camp John Hay is a former rest and relaxation facility for American soldiers, and is now a resort in Baguio City. From *Go Baguio!*, "The Americans & Baguio City," accessed January 11, 2021, http://www.gobaguio.com/americans-and-baguio.html#.X_yYaC1h0Wo.

Q: Are most of your siblings still in the Philippines?

Jimenez: Nope. Everybody is over here. Let me see. Where are they? I've got a sister who is in San Francisco. My other brother is in—they're both in the Bay Area. My brother is in the Bay Area. Four of my sisters are back east. And of course, my eldest brother passed away a few years back, so there's only seven of us now.

00:06:46

Q: Sorry to hear that. What is your place in the family? Are you a middle child? Youngest? Where do you fall?

Jimenez: I am the second.

00:06:56

Q: The second oldest?

Jimenez: The second oldest, yup. Now, I'm king of the clan. A displaced king.

00:07:11

Q: Tell me a little bit about what it was like growing up with your family. Sounds like a big family.

Jimenez: Yeah, a big family is always good. You fight each other, you play with each other, you grow with each other. That's what makes the family concrete. Let me tell you this. Ever since—I went my own way, and I was never in touch with my family for something like 16 years. I'd do occasional phone calls. Yes, it happens maybe once or twice a year. One of the family members always knows where I am at, but I haven't seen them physically for something like 16 years. And guess what? As soon as I show up, as if I wasn't even gone for a couple of days. That's how solid my family is. That's why I'm so lucky. I am very lucky.

00:08:40

Jimenez: I don't know. I don't know why the family values were instilled in us, I guess. My family, my sisters, my brothers. It just runs through. My brother over in the Bay Area whom I haven't seen in 10 years—come on, I'm only in Boise and he's down in the Bay Area. I don't even see him; I don't even talk to him. When I see him, when I go down to the Bay Area and visit him, it's like, "Okay, so you're here, I'm here. How's things?"

00:09:17

Q: Actually, what is the age of your youngest sibling? Do you know?

Jimenez: Oh, jeez. I think everybody's in their 50s already.

00:09:31

Q: Okay. I see. And you mentioned your parents were employees of the US government. So it sounds like they were also alive at the time that the Philippines was not independent. Did you ever hear about what their lives were like then in that time period?

Jimenez: Which one?

00:09:54

Q: For your parents. They were living at a time when the Philippines was still a colony of the US, so I was wondering did you ever hear about that?

Jimenez: Well, no. Actually, my dad elected to stay in the Philippines because he was politically connected, but my mom came to the US. As a matter of fact, she came to the US back in the—let me see, sometime during the late '70s. My dad stayed in the Philippines. My mom came over, and she lived in San Francisco, and then she eventually—my sisters when they moved to New Jersey, they brought her with them and that's where she passed. About 12 years ago, I think. I cannot even remember the exact date anymore.

00:11:01

Q: Wow. I was wondering, do you have any stories that have come down to you about your parents or your grandparents or more distant ancestors?

Jimenez: That is related to what?

00:11:20

Q: Oh, sorry?

Jimenez: That is related, like a story from my grandparents? My grandparents, my mom's dad was the one actually who was responsible in integrating the entire family into the American value system, because he was a Philippine Scout,² and during that time, since it was just after the

² The Philippine Scouts (1901–1948) were a military unit made of mostly Filipinos under the direction of the US Army. The Philippine Scouts helped the US's imperial ambitions in the Philippines, defeating independence leader Emilio Aguinaldo in 1901. By the time of World War II, there were almost 12,000 Philippine Scouts. From Edward M. Coffman, "The Philippine Scouts, 1899–1942: A Historical Vignette," in *The Embattled Past: Reflections on Military History* (Lexington, KY: The University Press of Kentucky, 2013), 67-78.

war—as a matter of fact, he's a pensioner from the American government, my grandfather. I don't know how that correlates.

00:12:03

Jimenez: It correlates in a way that since my grandfather worked for the US government, basically became an employee of the US government, all of a sudden the entire family was exposed to that environment. Well, Baguio was like that, mainly because it was a big American stronghold at the time, Baguio City, Philippines, from 1942 until [the late 80's]. They've got a gigantic base over there. The American influence is truly alive in that area.

00:12:57

Jimenez: As for the current situation there, have you felt discriminated [against]? With all this discrimination going on against Asians and everything, I haven't been out and about in the public, but I read the Facebook posts and everything. I was like, "Jeez, these guys are animals." I mean, people are doing a lot of name-calling. I mean, name-calling may be okay, but you physically assault somebody? That is unreasonable, but I say to them, "Yeah, do that to me and you'll find out." So what do you want to know?

00:13:49

Q: I guess I'm still interested in some things about your life growing up.

Jimenez: Okay. By the time that I came to the US, I was already college-educated. That's why my integration into this culture was pretty easy. Matter of fact, I had a degree in architecture when I first showed up here. So because of that, I said, "Okay," and then I started looking for jobs.

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Jimenez: Of course, my first—what do you call it—safe environment has always been the college university environment. I took my transcripts and I had them rated just to see what can be credited and what can be carried over. Fortunately, the universities that I attended in the Philippines were the equivalent of—what do you call it—US colleges. A majority of my college credits like my maths and my science subjects, they were all carried over. So that made a very easy transition for me. So all of a sudden, I said, "Okay." I asked the university, "What kind of a degree, with all these other college credits that I have, can I have, say, inside a year and a half?" And they said, "You can go for a computer science degree if all you need is something like maybe a year and two months or something like that." So I did and that's how I ended up working in the computer industry.

00:16:00

Q: When you immigrated to the US, was that under a student visa then?

Jimenez: Yes. We immigrated back in '69.

00:16:11

Q: Oh, wow. Did you immigrate with the rest of your siblings or you just went on your own?

Jimenez: The first ones who came over were me and my brother, my brother who's in San Diego. And then we brought the rest of the family over.

00:16:33

Q: Why did you and your brother decide to come to the US?

Jimenez: Good question. It's more of the quality of life that we've heard about. And also our family, our cousins, they already were in the US. The cousins that we grew up with in Baguio got brought over by their family. It's a huge family, huge. I mean to say, the other side, our cousins, there's something like 14 of them. Well, Asian families are like that. Yeah, so they came. After that, we came, and then we all mapped in, of course, California. But in our case, we went to Hawaii for a few years, and then we eventually ended up in California. And then, when it was time for my parents to come over, like my mom and the rest of my sisters, we brought them all to California.

00:17:53

Q: Did your cousins sponsor you or they were just like an inspiration to you?

Jimenez: What was that, Kathy?

00:18:00

Q: Oh, did your cousins, were they sponsoring your immigration or they were just more of an inspiration to you?

Jimenez: They're quite an inspiration. Basically, because we all lived in this one gigantic compound in the Philippines, that was owned by my grandfather. Come on, there's 12 in their family, there's 8 in ours, and then the other one had something like another dozen, all 36 of us. My age group, anyway, we're all related and our relationship was really very close because of our exposure to each other. Everybody was a brother and a sister.

00:18:54

Jimenez: And up to this day, that relationship still exists. So, I don't know. We're all over the place now and there's more now. I couldn't believe that. I've been using Facebook a lot lately. Okay, what's Facebook? I don't know what it is. But almost every month, somebody I am related to directly, not even on a second degree, a first degree of relation, is having a birthday. How much more for the second and third? Then all of a sudden, of course—let me see—you see all these second- and third-generation people, or fourth-generation even, and they're having birthdays, new babies. What? Oh, my God. The thing is I don't see them. I probably see them—let me give you an example. One of my sisters who I'm closest to who lives in Charlotte, North Carolina. I visited her four years ago. And of course, her daughter had little babies, and now they're, what, four years older? I know.

00:20:40

Q: I have a few more questions about that journey to the US. In 1969, you first went to Hawaii for school?

Jimenez: Yup.

00:20:52

Q: At the University of Hawaii?

Jimenez: University of Hawaii. Yes.

00:20:57

Q: Where in Hawaii? In Honolulu?

Jimenez: Honolulu, Manoa. Yup.

00:21:04

Q: And so then, there you got your computer science degree.

Jimenez: Yes.

00:21:08

Q: I see. So you finished with a bachelor's of architecture in the Philippines first. At what school in the Philippines?

Jimenez: It's called Saint Louis University.

00:21:21

Q: And then you completed your bachelor's there, and then when you went to the University of Hawaii, then you completed another bachelor's in computer science.

Jimenez: Yeah.

00:21:29

Q: I see.

Jimenez: It's the safest environment, the educational institution.

00:21:37

Q: Is there a particular reason you went to Hawaii?

Jimenez: Not really. At that point in time, we weren't in control. The parents were in control.

00:21:52

Q: So your parents wanted you to go to the University of Hawaii.

Jimenez: Right, right. Mhm.

00:21:58

Q: Was there a reason why they chose it?

Jimenez: Not that I can really recall. I guess at that point in time, any place was better than the Philippines.

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Q: Was it just because they thought the quality of life was worse in the Philippines?

Jimenez: It's not the quality of life. It's the political scene. The political scene in the Philippines was basically what let us get out of there.

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Q: Could you talk a little bit more about that?

Jimenez: The political scene in the Philippines during that time, 1968 to 1975, was really very volatile. That was the Marcos era.³ That was when martial law was first declared by the

³ Ferdinand Marcos ruled the Philippines between 1965 to 1986. In 1972, Marcos declared martial law, whereby he “shut down congress, arrested his political opponents, took control of the media and courts, and suspended all civil

president. I am grateful that my parents had forethought to get us out of that environment. Because, otherwise, I think we would have been swayed by a majority of the people's opinions and there's no telling if I would have lived to arrive at an old age of 70 if I stayed out there. A crowd influence is very strong. You can get swayed easily by a crowd, but I guess I was mature enough to be able to judge really, like, "Do I belong to this group? Do I want to belong to this group? Maybe not." It is. It is a choice, and that is why the entire family migrated to live here.

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Jimenez: And as you can see, it's a third-world country. They're now top on COVID cases over there. Southeast Asia, they're number one.⁴ The government has never straightened itself. Maybe there's good things, maybe there's bad. I would say—I don't know. The society is just too corrupt. The US, sure there's corruption in there too, but it's not as rampant. It's not as visible. Over there, for you to become a political power, when you become a political power, you wield a lot of power, sway over people. I guess if you grew up in an environment like that, sure, you can get used to it. Why choose to grow up in an environment like that if you don't have to?

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Q: I see. Also, I meant to ask this earlier, but do you know what your parents were born?

Jimenez: Do I know what year they were born?

00:25:40

Q: Mhm.

Jimenez: Yeah, 1923 and 1927.

00:25:44

Q: Was your mom the younger one or your dad?

rights." Human rights abuses were rampant under the Marcos administration: "...an estimated 34,000 trade unionists, student leaders, writers and politicians were tortured with electric shocks, heated irons and rape; 3,240 men and women were dumped dead in public places; 398 others simply disappeared." The Marcos family and their allies accumulated billions of dollars while in power, which the Presidential Commission on Good Government (PCGG) has yet to fully recover thirty years after Marcos's rule. From Nick Davies, "The \$10bn question: what happened to the Marcos millions?", *The Guardian*, May 7, 2016,

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/may/07/10bn-dollar-question-marcos-millions-nick-davies>.

⁴ Compared to many regions of the world, Southeast Asia had relatively fewer COVID-19 cases and deaths during the year of 2020. However, the Philippines had the second-highest number of COVID-19 cases in Southeast Asia, as of December 2020. From *Center for Strategic & International Studies*, "The Latest on Covid-19 in Southeast Asia: December 17, 2020," December 17, 2020,

<https://www.csis.org/blogs/latest-covid-19-southeast-asia/latest-covid-19-southeast-asia-december-17-2020>.

Jimenez: My mom was the younger.

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Q: Okay. And so after you got your bachelor's in computer science in Hawaii, then you went to—it sounds like you went to California?

Jimenez: Yeah. San Diego.

00:26:04

Q: Can you tell me a little bit about that sort of migration for me?

Jimenez: By then, I was just traveling on my own. And my brother who ended up in San Diego was in the Navy. I went and visited him and then I joined the Navy, too.

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Q: Oh, wow.

Jimenez: After all, I had all those bachelor's degrees and everything. So yeah, isn't that interesting? I joined the Navy in 1972. I put in eight years, I had a couple of tours in Vietnam, three tours in Vietnam, actually, which I survived.

00:26:49

Jimenez: And then in 1980, I said, "The Navy life is not the life for me." I'm so used to being able to have access to information like, say, newspapers, books, libraries. And then when I went into the Navy, I was stranded out in the ocean for something like, what, six months out of a year. And then we'd come back to port, and then I'd have to catch up myself and say, "Okay, I got to go to the library and read through all these good articles to find out what's going on and everything." I really found it very limiting.

00:27:36

Jimenez: I mean, My experience in the Navy was actually quite an eye-opener. I liked it. I loved it. I think it shaped the way that I truly know how to relate to other people, regardless of race or gender, because it's a very mixed environment. It's a very mixed environment. And you can either go with a clique, a group, or you can choose to be on your own and you'll be a free floater. I chose to be a free floater and in everything also I was on both sides of the camp. It's not called fence-sitting. I had to make my own decisions. It's just being able to adapt to the situation.

00:28:37

Q: For your brother who also—so he also went to Hawaii with you. Did he join the Navy then or was he also in school with you?

Jimenez: He joined the Navy afterwards. You know what? He is a retired captain.

00:28:55

Q: Oh, wow. He never left the Navy.

Jimenez: No, he never left the Navy. Once he got in—because he had a degree already, he went through something like a program called the Officer Candidate School.⁵ When he graduated from Officer Candidate School, he became an officer in the Navy. I guess that's what trapped him. But he enjoyed it. He spent a lot of time in Japan because he became the commanding officer of the naval supply system in Yokosuka, Japan. So his family, his wife, their two kids, they both were raised in Japan.

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Q: Is his wife Japanese or they were just all living in Japan?

Jimenez: No, they're Filipino, but that's where he spent a majority of his time.

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Q: And so then, you enlisted in the Navy—what year?

Jimenez: 1972.

00:30:18

Q: Okay. And then, at that point, were you a citizen of the United States or you were—

Jimenez: No.

00:30:26

Q: But you still wanted to serve?

Jimenez: Right. I was still a Filipino citizen.⁶

⁵ Officer Candidate School (also known as Navy OCS) is a 13-week course at Naval Station Newport, Rhode Island, meant to train Naval officers. From *Naval Education and Training Command*, “Officer Candidate School,” accessed January 11, 2021, <https://www.netc.navy.mil/Commands/Naval-Service-Training-Command/OTCN/OCS/>.

⁶ According to Elizabeth Lee and Geraldine Pratt, “Filipino nationals comprise the highest percentage of foreign-born US military recruits—a trend enabled by the fact that US citizenship is not required to serve in the armed forces and promoted by the colonial history of the US in the Philippines...Military service has become not only a means to naturalisation, but also one of the most viable forms of employment for migrant communities and their families in many American cities.” 200,000 Filipino nationals served alongside the US military during World War II. After the Philippines gained independence in 1946 under the Tydings-McDuffie Act, Filipinos were no

00:30:31

Q: Oh, I see. Then, you served in the Navy for like a decade until the '80s.

Jimenez: Right. Eight years.

00:30:38

Q: Oh, eight years, I see. Are there any stories that stand out to you from those years [unclear]?

Jimenez: Well, you don't want the nasty stories. No, not really. It allowed me to basically travel. I always wanted to go—well, there's two coasts that the Navy operates in, right? The East Coast and the West Coast. The West Coast Navy is Southeast Asia; that's the sphere for them. The East Coast Navy, they're in the European waters. I always wanted to go to the European areas, like Italy and all that, but the Navy refused to send me. And that is one of the reasons why I finally said, "Okay, you don't want to give me what I want, then I'll just go." I resigned. I basically—what do you call it—terminated my enlistment.

00:31:58

Jimenez: But despite that, I still was able to capitalize on that since I put in something like eight years already with the federal government. Towards the end of my career, I went back to the federal government. All I needed to do was something like 12 years of federal service. And I did that. That's why I'm a retired US government employee, despite the fact that during my employment with HP and all that and Micron over here in Boise, and that's how I met your mom, working at HP—all that did not really count for my retirement.

00:33:13

Jimenez: So I had to figure out a way, okay, so how will I draw my retirement pay? I can go back to becoming a federal employee and I can pull in all the other eight years that I already had served as a federal employee being in the military. I just added that together and I came up with one to two years of service to the federal government as opposed to something like a good 12 years in the computer industry. And all those years add up. That's why I'm like this now. Look at me. I'm 70.

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longer US nationals ("the very status necessary to enlist in the US military). As a result, President Harry Truman and the Philippines government formed an agreement in 1945 to allow US Armed Forces recruitment of Filipinx citizens. From Elizabeth Lee and Geraldine Pratt, "The spectacular and the mundane: racialised state violence, Filipino migrant workers, and their families," *Environment and Planning A: Economy and Space* 44, no. 4 (April 2012): 889–904.

Q: I have no idea what you're talking about.

Jimenez: Because there was no way that I could retire from the civilian community. The buyout packages were just too attractive.

00:34:21

Jimenez: So actually, let me tell you. This is how I ended up in Boise, Idaho, in, let me see, 19—when did I come to Boise, Idaho? 1996. 1996 was when I ended up in Boise, Idaho. The company that brought me to Boise, Idaho is actually a subsidiary company of Micron Technology. It was called MicronPC. And they were based in Nampa.

00:35:05

Jimenez: Of course, during that time before they hired me, I was already an independent contractor in Oregon. Then I said, "This contract job is really wonderful." I was doing computer networking for, which one was it, the Redmond Prineville School System down in Oregon. That is around the Bend area, Madras, if you are familiar with that area, Madras, Bend, Redmond, is basically Central Oregon. Then they had an opening for a network engineer at MicronPC because MicronPC back in the early '90s, they were number one in the industry.⁷ Dell was playing catch up on their coattails. They brought me over. So that's how I ended up in Boise. And then I said, "Boise is not too bad." I really liked it. I really loved it, so I stayed. That's why I'm still here today.

00:36:33

Q: Cool. I think I have a few follow-ups. Manny, I'm still really interested in your military service just because I don't think I've actually met that many people who are Vietnam War veterans. I was wondering, you mentioned there's cliques, and you were more of a free floater. I was just wondering a little bit of what that looked like there? You also said race didn't really matter when you were serving in the Navy. I was just wondering what that meant for you to be a Filipino serving in this war that's taking place in Vietnam.

Jimenez: That's a good question. That's a really good question. I never thought of it that way. I never thought of it that way. To me, it was just another job. It's another job that I signed up for. And it was my obligation to do the best I can. And I did. I tried.

00:37:53

Jimenez: I mean, I ran into a lot of trouble. Okay. So basically, I was a nonconformist. And being a nonconformist and you being in the military means to say that you will court a lot of

⁷ For example, see David L. Farquhar, "Micron Computers' rise and fall," *The Silicon Underground*, July 20, 2018, <https://dfarq.homeip.net/micron-computers-rise-and-fall/>.

trouble, and I did. I think that's also one of the reasons why I got out. I loved the camaraderie, I loved the respect that you got, I loved the companionship, but there are just people who are truly complete authoritarians. It was very difficult for me to truly tolerate that. Basically, you can compare it to physically stepping over somebody. I just happened to be not one of those people that you can just walk on, as they said. And so, yes, during my eight years stint in the Navy, I was an enlisted person.

00:39:19

Jimenez: So I went in as an E-1—and you have to make grade.⁸ During those eight years, I got probably demoted in rank something like six times. That is also one of the reasons why I got out because the highest rank that I can make was something like an E-6, and that is pretty good. There was no way for me to be able to step into the E-7, E-8, E-9 rankings because those are the guys with the really clean records. And my record was so screwed up.

00:40:10

Jimenez: Okay. So during my eight years in the Navy I made E-6 twice. You'll have to research this. E-6 twice. I made E-5 twice. I made E-4 twice. I made E-3 twice. There was a point in my career where I am an E-5 and then I misbehave, or I do something wrong, and then I go to captain's mast. A captain's mast is basically a summary court-martial wherein the captain decides what to do with you. So based on what they perceive the offense that was committed, then the captain has the right to reduce you in rank.

00:41:13

Jimenez: There was a point in my career wherein I got reduced from an E-6—which is pretty high—E-6 into an E-3. That is three grades down. Go figure. But other than that, my exposure to different disciplinary systems, I guess, is quite an eye-opener. It kind of makes you—I'm not trying to override any authority. I'm not even trying to circumvent any. It's just the stupid actions that I do that will get me in trouble. Without me thinking that [unclear] but what can you do? It happens.

00:42:10

Q: Oh sorry, I think when you were adjusting your headset some of what you said got cut out. Could you repeat it a little bit?

Jimenez: What?

⁸ “There are nine enlisted paygrades in the military, starting with E-1 and progressing up through E-9.” From Rod Powers, “Military Enlisted Paygrades By Ranks,” *The Balance Careers*, December 31, 2018, <https://www.thebalancecareers.com/enlisted-paygrades-and-ranks-3356726>.

00:42:17

Q: Oh, I was saying, what you were saying earlier got muffled because you were adjusting your headset.

Jimenez: I know.

Q: Could you just repeat it a little bit?

Jimenez: Oh, what?

00:42:30

Q: Could you repeat what you were saying?

Jimenez: I mean, it's all those trying to circumvent the established rules and regulations. It will always get you in trouble. That's why I was telling you that, yeah, I did not belong in the military mainly because of my nonconformist attitude. It's very difficult to belong into an organization wherein the rules are really very rigid; there's no flexibility. Maybe that's how organizations should be. I don't know. Otherwise, because if they cannot control their people through proper discipline, then how else will they function?

00:43:29

Jimenez: It's all the same. I mean, the same thing in private corporations as well. They have regulations to follow. They have work schedules. They have projects they have to deliver on. So in the end, it truly boils down to personal responsibility towards the company that you signed up with. As to the loyalty portion of it, that can depend on you. That depends on the individual. There are practices that should not be condoned. On the other hand, there are also practices that you need to safeguard and everything else.

00:44:28

Q: I think I still have a few more follow-ups about your time in the Navy. I was wondering, do you think where you were serving was diverse? Were you the only person who was Filipino—I guess, in your regiment? I'm not sure what the right word is. Oh, sorry, can you hear me okay?

Jimenez: Hang on. I keep losing it. Okay. Repeat it now.

00:45:01

Q: I was wondering about your time in the Navy, if the unit you were serving in, was it diverse? Were you the only person who was Filipino in that unit?

Jimenez: Oh, yes, it was diverse. There were a few Filipinos, actually. There was quite a few Filipinos. As far as I can remember, on all the ships that I served on, I served on several, there's always more than twenty Filipinos in there. More than. You tend to find each other and group.

00:45:47

Jimenez: One thing good about the Filipino groups in those US Navy ships, they are well received, mainly because, I think they don't really group like other races would. Like the Blacks and the whites. And you do find some of that on-board a ship, despite the fact that the officers, from the captain and all down, they try to discourage it. But you cannot help it. So it just really depends on you, on how you relate with the other people. Some you just ignore, some you don't. Yeah, it's really interesting. I've never been asked that question before.

00:46:51

Q: You also mentioned that you and your brother, once you came to the US, started petitioning to have the rest of your family members come to the US. Around when did your other family members start moving into the US?

Jimenez: Oh, 1980s. In the '80s everybody was—

00:47:12

Q: —so after you finished serving.

Jimenez: Right. Everybody was already in the US after 1982. The entire family was already in the US after 1982.

00:47:27

Q: I see. And I think you mentioned when your family initially immigrated everyone was in California together?

Jimenez: At one point in time, yeah. It was basically the gathering point. And then after that, everybody just went whichever way they wanted to go. So San Francisco, California, was basically where everybody started. San Francisco Bay Area, Sacramento. That general area now. Then from there, poom, everybody just poom [spreads hands out as if dispersing]. "Oh, let's go back over here. [Waves hand around.] Oh."

00:48:19

Q: Then tell me a little bit about what it was like moving to Boise.

Jimenez: What is it like living in Boise?

00:48:29

Q: Moving to Boise.

Jimenez: Moving to Boise, for me, was actually quite interesting. At the time, of course, the computer industry was booming and I was right in the heart of it. I was just right in the heart of it. MicronPC—which at that time still existed, but they are now non-existent because the stockholders made their money and they decided to say, "Okay, this is it. We're going to sell the company," and they did.

00:49:13

Jimenez: So everything was paid for. The company was really very, very generous. Surprisingly, when they brought me in, they provided everything. Temporary housing for months. They shipped all my household goods. They shipped, of course, my family and everything else. They paid me well, which was, at the time, really good.

00:49:49

Jimenez: So, I wasn't too intimidated about moving to Boise. Usually, when I choose a place, I do a lot of research on it to see how the environment is like, how the people are like. Of course, when I first really looked into it, I said, "My god, that's Idaho, that is"—what do you call it? Not Ku Klux Klan, but it's the other guys. What do you call them—"the skinheads. Hm, okay, this should be interesting." So I looked at the—that's the challenge, and I never ran into them in Boise. I guess they're further up north. Do I want to run into them? I don't think so. I would do all I can to avoid any confrontation with them.

00:51:07

Jimenez: Other than that, the main objective in coming up to Boise was, yeah, to work for MicronPC and gain some knowledge from them, and maybe meet people. And amazingly, when I came onboard MicronPC, there weren't that many Filipinos in the area but surprisingly, one of the guys I ended working with at MicronPC was actually half-Filipino. To this day, he's still a very good friend of mine.

00:51:52

Jimenez: Working for MicronPC, yeah, I think I did experience a little—not necessarily discrimination. It's more like maybe a trust issue—or not a trust issue—but people get envious. You know, "Hey, there's this brown guy over there and he knows more than you do." Situations like that. You either elect to push it or take advantage of it or you just let it go. I just let it go. As long as I do my work; I maintain my loyalty to the company, the company's products; I say things when I don't feel comfortable about it. It's more of a personal principle than being actually directed by the company.

00:53:08

Jimenez: Finally, when we got word that MicronPC was getting ready to sell, that's when I said, "Okay, it's time for me to send out resumes again." This was back in, I think '99 is when they started to go out.⁹ Then I did not want to leave Boise anymore because I was pretty established. That's when I applied to HP, Hewlett-Packard, and they brought me in.

00:53:45

Q: Then when you came to Boise, did you just come by yourself or did you come with family?

Jimenez: Oh, no, my family. I had my family. I had my wife and my son.

00:53:57

Q: When did you meet your wife?

Jimenez: Back in 1990.

00:54:06

Q: Okay, back when you were working with the federal government?

Jimenez: Yes. I was working with the federal government.

00:54:16

Q: Wait. Were you also in California when you were working with the Federal Government?

Jimenez: Yes, I was. As a matter of fact, in 1986. Yeah, 1986, I was in San Francisco. And then I made a move to Seattle.

00:54:39

Jimenez: In 1986, the office in Seattle needed "my skill." They said, "You want to come up to Seattle?" Then I said, "Okay, I'll come up to Seattle." So from San Francisco in '86, I went to Seattle, we went to Seattle in 1988 with my family, me, my wife and my son. He was just a toddler then, he was probably about five years old. We went to Seattle and then after three years in Seattle, the only government agency I worked for, Housing Urban Development. We maintained their computer systems. Housing Urban Development is of course in all 49 states at the time—well 50 states including Anchorage, Alaska. But the only office that was not connected to the national network was Anchorage, Alaska.

⁹ In 2001, Gores Technology Group acquired MicronPC. From John G. Spooner, "Micron Electronics makes final PC sale," *CNET*, January 2, 2002, <https://www.cnet.com/news/micron-electronics-makes-final-pc-sale/>.

00:55:57

Jimenez: In 1998, at the time, or 1988, out of the entire 50 states, the only Housing Urban Development office that was not connected into the national network, HUD, Housing Urban Development, was Alaska, Anchorage, Alaska. When I got into Seattle in 1988, in 1989, they looked for somebody who was willing to go to Alaska to connect with the Alaska network system into the national network for Housing Urban Development. And I took on the job and I did it. I connected them. So I spent another something like—so I went to Alaska in 1991 to connect them and by 1995, they were. All HUD offices [in the 50 states were connected via networks].

00:57:22

Jimenez: And then from Anchorage, Alaska, that's when I moved back to Oregon, because Central Oregon was where my wife was from. So we moved over there. And then that's how I ended up doing the contract school work for school networks down in the Central Oregon District. And then I got tired. It's a lot of driving. I mean I was logging something like 150 miles a day. And then that's when I applied for a job with Micron, and Micron said, "Okay. come on up." That's how I ended up over here in Boise. As you can see, I'm still here.

00:58:19

Q: Yeah, you've gone so many places.

Jimenez: Yup, I have. I really have. And I like it, you know? Looking back I say to myself, "So, where am I now?" I'm confused. Now, I really think it's just being able to adapt is the biggest thing. To me, that is the biggest asset that I have. I can just adapt to the environment, I can talk to people, I can understand people. I try to understand them. If I can't then I say, "Okay."

00:59:18

Q: What do I want to ask? Was your wife also from the Philippines or she grew up in the US?

Jimenez: Your what?

00:59:26

Q: Was your wife also from the Philippines?

Jimenez: No. Okay. That's a different issue. I've been, let me see, I've been married four times.

00:59:46

Q: Wow.

Jimenez: So yeah, US standards, right? You don't want it, you can go. So yeah, let me see. First, second, third, fourth. Yeah, four times. I don't know. I guess I just truly adapted to the Western culture. How else can I put it?

01:00:29

Q: Were all your wives born in the US or were any of them from the Philippines?

01:00:38

Q: Were any of your wives from the Philippines?

Jimenez: My first wife was from the Philippines but she also grew up here. She grew up in San Diego as a matter of fact. That's where I met her. We had a daughter. It was good. It was a good marriage. It lasted for something like three years. We had a daughter. I was the happiest guy and she was the happiest mom. And then the kid got sick and she ended up in an intensive care unit. She was in the intensive care unit for something like—she was born premature. So that was very difficult. The baby spent six months in the intensive care unit and then she eventually passed. Basically, that's what I'd like to think that tore that marriage apart. That was my first divorce. The second, the third, and the fourth were just, yeah.

01:02:12

Q: I'm really sorry to hear that.

Jimenez: But my first wife and I, we remained friends throughout as a matter of fact. The last I was in San Diego was, let me see, 2016, '17? No, 2017. I looked her up. We both went to the cemetery where our baby was buried. We were saying, "My God, she would have been 47 today." Yeah. So either those experiences make you or break you or I don't know. They should inspire you to endure.

01:03:23

Q: You also mentioned you have a son. Do you have other children as well?

Jimenez: Yes, I have a son.

01:03:29

Q: Just one son?

Jimenez: Yeah, just one son.

01:03:33

Q: And he was born in 1980-something?

Jimenez: 1986.

01:03:41

Q: Okay. Do you keep in touch with your son still?

Jimenez: Yeah. They live in Nampa.

01:03:47

Q: Oh wow. Really?

Jimenez: Yeah. They live in Nampa. I visit my grandson. I've got a grandson.

01:03:57

Q: You have a grandson! Wow.

Jimenez: And he's an awesome grandson. I do miss him. I haven't seen him in over a week, but my daughter-in-law religiously sends me pictures so I get to see him. And every time I go down to Nampa, I visit them, of course. I stay there the entire day or however long they allow me to. It's actually pretty awesome. Can you see that? [Holds phone up to camera.]

01:04:49

Q: How old is he?

Jimenez: He is 15 months old. Yeah, he's 15 months old. He's just now starting to walk. It's so wonderful. Well, he is my only grandson at this time.

01:05:25

Q: And so what does your son do?

Jimenez: What does what?

01:05:30

Q: Is your son working? Does he have a job?

Jimenez: My son?

01:05:35

Q: Yes.

Jimenez: Yes, he works for a company out here, right across from HP called Bodybuilding.com. I understand that the company is going under. I told him, "Well, you better start putting in your application for Amazon."¹⁰ His wife works for—she works for, let me see, the state.

01:06:13

Q: The what?

Jimenez: My son's wife works for the state. She's actually a counselor for the, what do you call it, for the abused people. [Unclear.]

01:06:38

Q: When did you ever become a US citizen?

Jimenez: 1980.

01:06:47

Q: Really?

Jimenez: Yeah.

01:06:51

Q: Sorry, I think it's a little muffled on your end.

Jimenez: Yes, 1980. Is that better?

01:06:59

Q: Yes.

Jimenez: 1980. As soon as I got out of the Navy, I said—well, actually I think I was in the Navy when I made sure I was a citizen before I got out, so I won't have any problems with, "Are you a citizen?" on the employer's questions. I'd say, "Yes, I am."

¹⁰ In November 2020, Amazon opened a fulfillment center in Nampa, Idaho. In December 2020, Amazon announced it would plan to open another sorting center in Boise. From *KTVB*, "Amazon opens huge fulfillment center in Nampa," November 9, 2020, <https://www.ktvb.com/article/news/local/growing-idaho/amazon-opens-fulfillment-center-nampa-franklin-and-star-roads/277-f0d4bd17-faff-4bd1-9eac-1e2d0371f43d>, and Hayley Harding, "Amazon is building a new warehouse in southeast Boise. Here's what we know," *Idaho Statesman*, December 16, 2020, <https://www.idahostatesman.com/news/local/community/boise/article247858855.html>.

01:07:34

Q: And then, just so you know, I'm in the identity and community section of my questions. And also I think we've been talking for about an hour or so let me know if you ever want to take a break. Do you feel like you're part of a certain community here in Boise or is there a reason why you wanted to stay in Boise for so long?

Jimenez: No, I really think that to me, it's more of a personal exploration. I like looking at the environment and how the communities are growing. How the populace is changing. People's attitudes are changing. I don't know, there's not a very big—well, I've been trying to find out if there's a big Filipino community in Boise, okay? And up until now, I still don't have an answer.

01:08:45

Jimenez: My brother who was in the Air Force, actually, who now lives in Bakersfield, California, used to be in the Air Force. He got stationed over here in Mountain Home. He says that there's a big Filipino community in the Mountain Home area. Ever since 1996, ever since I've been in Boise, there were a couple Filipino restaurants that attempted to come into Boise but for some reason, they never succeeded. They always ended up closing up. My exposure to the Filipino community in Boise ever since 1996—I mean, you're talking what? You're talking over 20 years in here now, right? Is it 20, yeah? Yeah. It's really non-existent. None.

01:09:55

Jimenez: The only Filipino guy that I know is my best friend, is the guy that I met from Micron. And the friendship is still existing. The only time we had of course was we both worked for MicronPC. To this day, he's still my golfing partner. No, I am not aware. I've been trying to—well, the folks that I'm staying with, he's Filipino, she's white, but they know more of the Filipino community than I do [and] they say that no, there's no solid Filipino community in the area. If there is one, they would be over at Mountain Home, mainly because of the military influence, the Air Force. Evidently, there's a lot of Filipinos as well in the Air Force. They may be Filipinos by birth, Filipinos, but I imagine that they are US citizens.

01:11:19

Q: Do you have an idea as to why there's not a big Filipino community here?

Jimenez: No. I really don't. I really don't have an idea. Maybe it's because most Filipinos, I guess, do not cater to refuse to bend. Never refuse to bend the authority. I think. Well, I do. Why should I let you run my life? I don't know. I really don't know. It could be—I couldn't say social skills because I'm pretty skillful. I can adapt into any environment. It's more like—I would say most of the Filipinos that I know can get intimidated very, very quickly. When they run into

some form of intimidation like that, they just back off. I don't know. Like, "Oh, okay." So I don't know.

01:12:55

Q: A little bit of a different question. Do you celebrate any holidays or have any special traditions?

Jimenez: Do I celebrate any holidays?

01:13:07

Q: Mhm, or have any traditions?

Jimenez: Family traditions? Yeah, we have birthdays, family holidays, Thanksgiving, Christmas, all those. Birthdays, anniversaries, everybody does. My family, they are no exception. They are proud. My sister just celebrated her 50th anniversary.

01:13:47

Q: Wow.

Jimenez: I know. My sister! I said, "Whoa, 50 years!" I said, "My God. Husband and wife, 50 years." She must be 20 years my junior.

01:14:10

Jimenez: But other than that, I went home to the Philippines two years ago. And that was my first time to go back home in 52 years. Of course, it was quite an eye-opener. There's more people over there now. It's more crowded and traditions have shifted drastically. Seems to me that the people over there now—there's a lot of Muslims in there now.¹¹ From being a Catholic country, it's gotten diverse. Of course, it's gotten so crowded. Come on, their population of something like 107 million. That's a lot of people in a little landmass. I don't know.

01:15:27

¹¹ Filipinx Muslims, also known as Moros, make up about 10 percent of the Philippines' population. Islam's cultural foothold in the Philippines predates Western colonization by at least several centuries. The Moros have been routinely dispossessed of their traditional lands in the Mindanao region in the southern Philippines, beginning with Spanish settlement and continuing through Philippines independence. Conflict arising from the Muslim secessionist movement in the 1970s resulted in the displacement of Moros to other parts of the Philippines, especially Manila. From *Minority Rights Group International*, "Moro Muslims," accessed January 11, 2021, <https://minorityrights.org/minorities/moro-muslims/>; Akiko Watanabe, "Migration and Mosques: The Evolution and Transformation of Muslim Communities in Manila, the Philippines," *Afrasian Centre for Peace and Development (Ryukoku University)*, 2008, <https://www.afrasia.ryukoku.ac.jp/data/deliverables1/115-1.pdf>.

Jimenez: But I kind of enjoyed going back. I visited the place where I grew up. As a matter of fact, I stayed, I spent a lot of time over there because my older brother's family is still there. They were basically my anchor point. It's very interesting. Yes, eventually, I think I will retire back over there again. If I can make it into the next five years.

01:16:04

Q: You got it.

Jimenez: Yeah, I think I can.

01:16:13

Q: Is there any reason you went back, in particular, two years ago?

Jimenez: No. I was retired and I didn't have anything to do, and I just thought, "Well, I'm going to go back and visit." I actually wanted to retire over there, so I had to go get a feel for the environment again. Being away for a lifetime—52 years—and that was the first time that I actually stayed over there for about a year and a half. Really exploring the place, re-meeting people that I used to know. Surprisingly, I found a lot of them.

01:16:57

Q: Sorry. Can you say it just one more time?

Jimenez: Huh?

01:17:00

Q: Could you just say it into the headphones again?

Jimenez: All right. Actually, I found a lot of the people that I used to know when I was there. Of course, we are all in the same age groups now. I mean, the people that I went to high school with, going strong. I thought, "Wow." Of course, they were happy to see me after 52 years. It was quite an adventure. I'm really thinking of retiring over there, maybe, if I'm still capable or well physically. If I can do it, I will.

01:17:47

Q: Is there a reason why you want to retire there?

Jimenez: Well, not really. I think it's much more comfortable over there, mainly because of the money. I mean, come on. Do you know the US dollar compared to the Filipino peso? Right now, I think it is [50 to a dollar]. That's a big multiplier. The average Filipino family can survive on \$100 [USD] a month.

01:18:33

Q: Wow.

Jimenez: That's 5,000 pesos. That is huge. That's a huge factor. Over here in the US, you make a dollar, you spend dollars.

01:18:51

Q: You want a big house in the Philippines.

Jimenez: Nah, I don't want a big house. I just want a comfortable house. Getting old has its merits and difficulties.

01:19:15

Q: I think you mentioned earlier, you were living with a Filipino man and his wife, or did I hear that incorrectly?

Jimenez: Yes. That's where I am right now.

01:19:27

Q: Okay, so they're your roommates basically?

Jimenez: Yup.

01:19:33

Q: Is there any reason why you're living with them?

Jimenez: One, I don't have my house. I sold it last year or before I went to the Philippines and they took me in. I feel more comfortable with them and I can help them. It's a "scratch your back, scratch my back" situation. It works.

01:19:59

Jimenez: I actually wanted to go to one of those senior living places, but they were charging something like, they wanted to charge me something like \$3,000 a month, and I said, "[Blows raspberry.]" Actually, I was pretty impressed. I took a tour. The living conditions were great. Foodwise—the people in the housing, in the complex, were very sociable. I loved it. Then I talked to my friend and his wife and they said, "Why would you want to do that?" I said, "I don't know," so I said, "Forget it," I said, "I'll just stay with you guys." So here I am.

01:21:04

Jimenez: I'm trying to think of, maybe I should rebuy and all that. The current market, the current situation today? I'm just taking my time, but I think eventually I will—plus I'm really getting old too, and I need the help. Not necessarily the physical help, more like the—what would you call it—emotional support, that I can garner from friends and people that I've known so long, and I feel really comfortable with, rather than being thrown into a semi-community environment of people that I truly haven't known, that I will be meeting.

01:22:01

Jimenez: But I'm also up to the challenge on trying to integrate into a group like that. Besides, I've never had any problems integrating into any kind of group. I just make sure that I stand my own ground and, and I do not make nasty comments about what they believe in and not be, what would you call it? Not be a pain in the ass. But I like being a pain in the ass. It's interesting to see the reactions of people. Just to see how far you can push their buttons, right?

01:23:08

Q: A different kind of question, is religion an important part of your life?

Jimenez: Well, religion was. Religion was, is what I'm saying. Okay. It's a very good topic for me to really cover. I was raised Catholic. Well, most Filipinos are what I call “cradle Catholics.” Children are born, they're automatically integrated into Catholicism.

01:23:54

Jimenez: It wasn't until the past 20 years or so that I—20 years or so? Yeah—that I pulled away from that. The Catholic religion has become too sectarian for me. So yeah, I still believe in being a Catholic, but I practice my own way. I do believe that yes, there's one God and for me, that is enough. Well, surprisingly, what is surprising about all this is, I went through seminary school, a Catholic seminary school, for two years. Then all of a sudden—I know. And all of a sudden—and I thought that's where I began to question some of the practices, some of the doctrines. I think to this day, I'm still really struggling about it, but the only thing that's really keeping me when it comes to the religion, it's not even the name “religion” anymore.

01:25:22

Jimenez: I think religion is the most—how would I say it?—screwed up thing that man has ever come up with. Like Christianity and the Muslim nation, if you look at it, how long have they been battling? Right? 1300s, 1500s, and up to now, they're still battling about religion. There are so many offshoots of religion now, they've got Iglesia ni Cristo.¹² They've got these

¹² Iglesia ni Cristo, founded in 1914, is headquartered in Manila, and has approximately 7,000 congregations around the world. The church has faced allegations of corruption, kidnapping, and murder. From Timothy Sawa, Lynette

organizations. They've got that. But what is the common core belief is there's only one God, and that's what I subscribe to. I can not, and I will never understand why the preachings of these so-called religions would differ from one another with the main objective for this. I mean, they've now become social groups, if not organizational groups.

01:26:55

Jimenez: I mean, look at the Roman Catholic church. How rich are they? They are one of the richest organizations in the world. The same thing with Iglesia Ni Cristo. Right? If you are familiar with that. The same thing with most of the religions that I know. Mainly because it's the separation of church from state. They got to keep their money. They profess that they do help the community.

01:27:34

Jimenez: That's the other thing too, growing up in a Catholic area, when I was growing up in the Philippines, used to be the Catholic church is open. Its grounds and the church itself is open 24/7. The reason for that is because of free sanctuary. People who do not have a place to go, to rest at, to sleep at, they can go into the church or the church grounds and spend a night in there peacefully. Used to be. When I went back to the Philippines, I visited the Catholic church that I used to go to, and the gates were locked. The grounds were locked. I said, "What happened? What happened to free sanctuary?"

01:28:47

Jimenez: I'm very divided. Well, no, I do not believe in any religion. It's just what it is, but I do believe in one God and that is it. And now that I have a grandson, I wouldn't know how to explain that to him. I just felt that I'm not put into a position wherein I will have to decide about something like that. I will leave it up to my son and my daughter-in-law.

01:29:27

Q: Are they practicing Catholics, or not really?

Jimenez: No, not really. Not that I know of. Not that I know of.

01:29:39

Q: Also, some more questions about life in the US. You've been here for a very long time. I'm wondering, have you ever encountered—and you kind of talked about it a little bit—but, have you ever encountered stereotypes or discrimination since moving here?

Jimenez: Yeah, I think I have, I really think I have, but my primary response was just to ignore them as long as they do not assault me physically, they do not hurt me physically. I've never had any—what do you call it?—angry exchanges, verbal exchanges with any other groups. I just leave them alone. But if they do chase me, then yeah, I would say, "Yeah, I'm open to it." But I'm not going to go chase them.

01:30:46

Jimenez: I mean Boise—especially Boise, as I said—my initial impression with Boise was, "Yeah, the skinheads. Where are they?" I've been here 20 years, over 20 years, ever since 1996, and I've never run into any situations involving just that. I read about them. I read recently how they came around over here and demonstrated at the Capitol, or something like that, right?¹³ But all that is this new society brewing, people wanting recognition, they feel that they are not being recognized enough. Well, maybe they are right, I don't know. I will say, "Good," if they're right, but they shouldn't use violence as a methodology for them to express those rights.

01:31:43

Jimenez: Basically, that's what the current situation is now, with BLM [Black Lives Matter] and Antifa.¹⁴ If you look at the philosophies, "Okay, so what are you guys fighting for really?" Then you hear these Karens, these white Karens.¹⁵ You know, okay. Yeah, it's funny. And, no, I think I haven't run into any [skinheads or Antifa protesters], but the stuff that I read is just really upsetting. How can people behave like that? Interesting. With the different societies and evolving society, people are already dissatisfied. People are trying to think that they are entitled to more than what is given to them. Because evidently, that is what most of the Black Lives

¹³ Over the summer of 2020, Black Lives Matter protesters and counterprotesters gathered multiple times in downtown Boise. Many counterprotesters carried guns and sported Nazi insignia, including a tattoo of a swastika. From Katie Terhune, "Boise mayor condemns 'violence and intimidation' at downtown rally; blames counter-protesters for clashes," *KTVB7*, July 1, 2020, <https://www.ktvb.com/article/news/local/blm-protest-boise-mayor-mclean-condemns-counterprotest-city-hall/277-a04dad9d-4f9e-45e4-9129-cac79a220c8a>.

¹⁴ Antifa is short for "anti-fascist," and in the context of the twenty-first century US, "Antifa is not a highly organized movement, nor is it merely an idea. Antifa is a loose affiliation of local activists scattered across the United States and a few other countries." From Leslie Gornstein, "What is antifa? Is it a group or an idea, and what do supporters want?", *CBS News*, October 16, 2020, <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/what-is-antifa/>.

¹⁵ The term "Karen" became widespread in the US and globally in the years leading up to this interview. As Ashitha Nagesh explains: "'Karen' has, in recent years, become a widespread meme referencing a specific type of middle-class white woman, who exhibits behaviours that stem from privilege. To give some examples, 'Karen' is associated with the kind of person who demands to 'speak to the manager' in order to belittle service industry workers, is anti-vaccination, and carries out racist micro-aggressions, such as asking to touch black people's hair. But a predominant feature of the 'Karen' stereotype is that they weaponise their relative privilege against people of colour—for example, when making police complaints against black people for minor or even - in numerous cases—fictitious infringements. And in recent months, the meme has evolved into something new: Coronavirus Karen. This particular form of Karen refuses to wear a face covering in shops, won't stick to quarantine, and thinks the whole pandemic thing is overblown." From Ashitha Nagesha, "What exactly is a 'Karen' and where did the meme come from?", *BBC News*, July 30, 2020, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-53588201>.

Matter people's situation seem to go to. They do that—I mean, defund the police? [Laughs.] Okay, defund them, who will you call, the Ghostbusters? All these people living in fantasyland or something, I don't know.

01:33:17

Jimenez: I don't know. I don't know, Kathy, but me? Well, that's just it. I wouldn't say that I like staying in my corner of the world, I'd like to go out there and find out, but do I really want to and get in trouble? No. I think I am sensible enough, that I wouldn't get into a situation like that. This is it, with the volatile situation that's going on right now, you can be picked on anytime. But luckily, now for my past 20 years or so here in Boise, it has never happened to me yet. So that is good.

01:34:18

Jimenez: I mean, Facebook. Facebook is so crazy. I commented on a couple of items in Facebook, and Facebook actually locked my account. They said, "That is an inappropriate comment." Yes, they did. They were like, "You cannot post for the next 24 hours." They've done that twice. I said, "Well, okay, I know, shall be fine." It is amazing what social media has done. It exposed a whole bunch, a whole bunch of inequities that you don't really pay attention to on a daily basis. Well, I don't anyway. I guess it's the attitude of "not in my backyard," right? If it's not happening in my backyard, why should I be concerned? Well, you should be, as part of the community you should be. But then everybody else in the community is doing the same thing, laying out. I mean, there hasn't been any incidences of —what do you call it?—hate crimes, racial slurs that I've heard, not within the community that I'm in, not even outside, not even Boise in general. I don't know. It doesn't bother me.

01:36:02

Q: I'm also wondering, what ethnicity are your friends? You mentioned your best friend is a half-Filipino. I'm wondering if most of your friends have Asian descent or it's more of a mix?

Jimenez: It's quite a mix, Whites, half-Asians, Asians. Yeah, diverse, pretty diverse. As long as I've known them, I've worked with them, gone out with them, I've done things with them. It's diverse.

01:36:42

Q: I'm wondering if you see a particular role of gender or sexuality in your life?

Jimenez: What now? Repeat again.

01:36:55

Q: Is there a particular role that gender or sexuality play in your life?

Jimenez: Sexuality? Yeah, I'm one way. I'm a straight guy. Gender, no, male or female, as long as they're good people, they can relate well and everything. I love being around people, I love being around people, good people anyway. Most of the friends that I go out with, most of the people that I know, I've known them for so long that we treat each other like family. You become so familiar with them that you know their kids, you know their daughters' kids and everything else, so yes.

01:37:54

Jimenez: I don't really have any inclination towards any kind of group. If it's a new group that I'm just being introduced to, then yes, I would look at the composition, I would try to feel what kind of environment it is. Is it a hostile environment, or is there some hostility towards other people about this group? I basically judge it for myself, and I say, "Yeah, I can be with you, I cannot be with you." I certainly make sure that I am in an acceptable crowd. It doesn't even have to be perfect, as long as it's socially acceptable, ethically acceptable. Not necessarily a law-abiding group, but definitely not rebel groups.

01:39:20

Q: What are your feelings about America, the country as a whole, and have these feelings changed from when you first arrived?

Jimenez: No, I think there's still a lot of opportunities in there for a lot of different groups, classes of people. Look at the border situation, all those Mexicans still trying to cross over. How long has that been going on? Forever. It has been going on for a long time. Most people know that there are a lot of opportunities that are available in the US.

01:40:11

Jimenez: Sure, the US government is screwing some things up. They're giving benefits to these immigrants that are not supposed to be entitled. They do. But the US government is that—they are too generous, I would say. A couple of days ago I saw a post, again in Facebook, this—what do they call it?—veteran, a homeless veteran living on the streets. And then superimposed on that picture is a picture of a Muslim woman who immigrated to the United States, but the United States government is supporting her. And they're not supporting this veteran, so he lives on the streets.¹⁶ The government policy is—I don't know, it's too confusing. But I think as an individual

¹⁶ Memes pitting refugees against homeless veterans proliferated amidst public debate over admitting Syrian refugees to the US. From Rebecca Ruiz, "Don't ban refugees. Ban garbage Facebook memes about refugees," *Mashable*, February 2, 2017, <https://mashable.com/2017/02/02/refugee-memes/>.

if an individual can really lawfully persist, there's a lot of opportunities available in the US, as compared to the other third world countries.

01:41:52

Jimenez: Right now, the main problem—like say, let me give you, again, the Philippines, they are exporting their talent. If you look at the papers and everything else, they have nurses especially nowadays. There are so many Filipino nurses in the US. I don't have an exact count, but I know a lot of those Filipino nurses choose to come to the United States because one, they pay better, and meaning to say that if they get paid better, then they can help their families in the Philippines much better.¹⁷ You know, send money and everything else, if not bring them over outright. Yeah, so the US government is probably chaotic at this point but there's still a lot of good left in it, a lot, as compared to the other countries. I mean, did you just see Chengdu?¹⁸ Did they just close Chengdu?

01:43:11

Q: Yeah, I think they did.

Jimenez: I think they did. Yeah, I just saw it, I think, this morning. I can't believe this. Isn't your family from there?

01:43:20

Q: Yeah, my grandparents live in Chengdu.

Jimenez: Yahs, I know. I said, “Boom.” That's what caught my attention this morning. Oh, unbelievable. I should talk to Sarah about this. When was the last time you guys were over there? Have you ever been over there?

Q: Maybe two or three years ago for me.

Jimenez: Is that right?

¹⁷ According to Catherine Ceniza Choy in her book *Empire of Care: Nursing and Migration in Filipino American History*, “Between 1965 and 1988, more than seventy thousand foreign nurses entered the United States, the majority coming from Asia. Although Korea, India, and Taiwan are among the top Asian sending countries, the Philippines is by far the leading supplier of nurses to the United States...By 1989, Filipino nurses comprised the overwhelming majority (73 percent) of foreign nurse graduates in the United States[.]” Choy argues: “...the origins of Filipino nurse migration to the United States are not new, but rather, lie in early twentieth-century U.S. colonialism in the Philippines.” From Catherine Ceniza Choy, *Empire of Care: Nursing and Migration in Filipino American History* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2003), 1-7.

¹⁸ On July 26, 2020, China ordered the US to close its consulate in Chengdu, China, after the US closed the Chinese Consulate in Houston a few days earlier. From *Politico*, “U.S. closes consulate in Chengdu, China, after Houston order,” July 26, 2020, <https://www.politico.com/news/2020/07/26/us-china-consulate-closed-382239>.

Q: Mhm, yeah.

Jimenez: So how different was it, or is it? It's probably you probably felt the same way that I did when I went back to the Philippines, like there's really a lot of change in here, but I couldn't put my fingers where the changes are. So I just elected to stay within my own comfort zone, okay.

01:44:22

Q: Well, I just have a few quick questions. So right, now we're obviously living in a really momentous time of history with COVID. I'm wondering, has it affected you or people you know in any way?

Jimenez: Well, it hasn't affected me. I'm glad it hasn't. I wouldn't know what to do. I think I'd be very upset if it happens to something or someone that I know. I think that there is the—what do you call it?—the general attitude of people, because with the total number of COVID cases, there's a lot of families that are grieving out there. But the people that are unaffected seem to be so insulated on how we would feel to lose somebody in a very tragic situation like that. They are so insensitive.

01:45:36

Jimenez: A good example alone is trying to prevent the spread, and people are of two minds. You either wear a mask, supposedly, not necessarily to protect the other guy, but to protect yourself from them. I mean, why would you [have an] issue with something like that? [Unclear.] Well, the way I see it, is those people truly lack compassion, and that is sad. It is sad not to acknowledge that, yes, it happens, and as you can see, there's so many deaths already about it, confirmed deaths. Then people would still say, “Oh, yeah, yeah, we don't”—I don't understand.

01:46:27

Jimenez: Again, compassion is something that most people seem to lack. Compassion, consideration for the others, for the other people's situations, and all that. I think they should be more compassionate. They should be more sensitive. They should behave like a group, a community, a behaved community, not a community of rebels.¹⁹ It's probably true that you don't have to wear a mask, it may not affect you, but who knows? I mean, this thing is invisible. Who knows who's got it? I don't, you know.

¹⁹ For example, armed protesters gathered in the Michigan State Capitol over COVID-incited stay-at-home orders in May 2020. From Abigail Censky, “Heavily Armed Protesters Gather Again At Michigan Capitol To Decry Stay-At-Home Order,” *NPR*, May 14, 2020, <https://www.npr.org/2020/05/14/855918852/heavily-armed-protesters-gather-again-at-michigans-capitol-denouncing-home-order>.

01:47:19

Jimenez: A matter of fact, my son and my daughter-in-law, they both went and got tested because my daughter-in-law thinks she has it. That has upset me so badly. I've been talking to them ever since last week. They haven't gotten their results yet, and I said, "Well, you let me know but I do hope you don't have it." Because how do you recover from something like that? This COVID-19, I read a lot of studies and everything. They're saying that, "Well, this virus affects—you may survive from it," is what they were saying. "But it will destroy some other bodily organs, liver, your pancreas, your heart, your blood circulatory system, your kidneys." It is a bad situation and hopefully they come up with a solution, but I don't know. It seems to be raging.

01:48:34

Jimenez: Now, of course, they're pitting the economy against it, because these businesses, not being able to open full blast, so the economy is on a downward trend supposedly. And it probably is, probably is. So how do you balance the two? It's not good for the US and the rest of the world. It's chaos, [unclear] and how we will fare through this? Who knows? Just living through it would be a good price, I would say.

01:49:34

Q: I guess I just have a few more questions. You've obviously lived a very long and full life. I'm wondering are there accomplishments that you're most proud of?

Jimenez: Sorry, what?

01:49:46

Q: Is there an accomplishment that you're most proud of?

Jimenez: I've lived. I've lived through thick and thin. To me, that is quite an accomplishment. I have always, in my work and most of my work—I did the best of my abilities and I'm proud of that. I have a lot of pride in the kind of work that I have done and the quality of the work that I have done. Up to this day, all those still spill over when I do these things like minor projects. It's just become a habit, you do the best you can, you put out the best product that you can. I do a lot of woodworking and you should see my woodwork. Very precise.

01:50:57

Jimenez: I truly believe it has a lot to do with the personal discipline that you learn. Not just from school but from relating to and with other people, different groups, different levels of thinking, is basically pitting yourself against all odds. If you win 75 percent of that game, you're good. That's

the way I look at it. I think I'm about, again, 75 percent. Sure, I've had a lot of disappointments. Sure, I've had a lot of maybe failures that I may not acknowledge as failures. I did well, maybe I could have done better, as they say, hindsight, right? That's what makes you a person. The things that you learn, how you implement them, how you use them to better improve yourself, rather than trying to use them to push somebody down. You cannot do that, it's inhumane.

01:52:45

Q: Kind of related to that, is there a moment that you consider your happiest moment in your life?

Jimenez: There's too many, there's too many. I honestly believe having been on this earth for the past 60 some years, in a lot of ways, I feel more blessed than most people. When I was in Vietnam, I got a couple of brushes with death. I survived. Sickesses and everything else, I survived. Difficulties in life, I survived. I'm still here.

01:53:44

Jimenez: So, not one in particular, but I think I've had—what do they call it?—a shared crop of grandchildren, like my brothers and my sister's kids, they're my grandchildren or something like that. Right? Or their children's children. Anyway, so I'm so used to having grandchildren. But it wasn't until I had my real, own grandchild, and I think he's the most precious. I think he's the one that's really keeping me alive at this point. There's a difference in degree and it's really biased. It really is and I don't care. I don't care. I think he's really the one that I'm really living for right now. When I came back, he was the main reason why I came back from the Philippines. If he wasn't born, I think I would've stayed in the Philippines.

01:55:32

Jimenez: What really made me not necessarily angry, but upset was before I left for the Philippines back in April of—was it 2017? No, April of 2018 was when I left for the Philippines. My son and my daughter-in-law did not tell me that they were pregnant. It wasn't until I was really, truly getting ready to find a place in the Philippines to settle down, I guess, and die over there, and they said, "You're having a grandchild." And I said, "What?" Honestly, that's what brought me back. I had to see this guy. "Why didn't you tell me?" I said before I left. They've known all along and the reasoning that they gave me was, "We weren't sure, we were not sure." I said, "Okay, I would accept that." So it took me a while to get back, but when I did see him, I said, "Well, yes."

01:57:16

Q: I guess, last question, are there any dreams and visions that you have for your future?

Jimenez: Well, just to survive, stay alive, stay well, stay comfortable. Hopefully, my aim right now is if I can last—what? I'll be 70 this August. If I can last for another 15, 20 years, that'd be awesome. Technology, technology, they have it now. Are you kidding?

01:58:01

Jimenez: August 25th, I had two stents in my heart put in, two. I was 30 minutes away from a major heart attack. I made it to the emergency ward 30 minutes before it actually hit. The doctor said, "Mr. Jimenez, if you came in another 30, 40 minutes later, the procedure would have been different." To which I said, "What? Open heart surgery or cremation?" It's amazing. They put two stents on my heart. Two days later, they released me. It was almost like an outpatient procedure. And look at me now. I am much healthier now than I was before the 25th of June, that's for sure. I had 95 percent blockage in my valve, and wow, I wasn't even aware of it. They can do that now, they can do that. They can change knee caps, they can change hips, but I don't think I would like to give up my brain.

01:59:46

Jimenez: So yeah. Hopefully, my immediate goal right now is, yes, I want to see my grandson grow up, get educated, grow up. See how his life will be. And also 20 years, it's in my target. Maybe it's not much to ask with all this technological and scientific enhancements that they are now discovering, right? Yes. 70, 20, another 20 years, wow. Yeah.

02:00:27

Q: Yeah, why not?

Jimenez: Yeah. That is my goal. Maybe I'll just stay in Boise for the next 20 years. I don't want to go anyways anymore. I would, maybe if this COVID ever goes away, maybe there will be more cruises and vacation places that I can go to. I would definitely take them. Well, it's time for me to enjoy life, I've worked all my life and all that, and I certainly felt that I have been truly productive.

02:01:17

Q: Well, that brings me to all of my questions, so is there anything you would like to add to the interview that you feel like we haven't talked about?

Jimenez: Well, no, but I would really be interested in the number of people that you end up talking with and really seeing the outcome of this study. Yes, it's always interesting to find out how studies come out. Yes, the different opinions, the different ideas, the different benefits, the different disadvantages, like, "Why did we even do this?"

02:02:09

Q: Yes, definitely.

Jimenez: Yeah. Yeah, I'm really looking forward to this, Kathy.

Q: Oh, thank you. Well, I'm going to stop the recording.

[END OF INTERVIEW]

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