

## Examining Race and Discrimination Through Oral History

### Oral History Transcripts

#### Frank Yamasaki

Well, I've had some horrendous experiences, or shocking experiences. I would forget that, you know, there are moments that you forget that we are racially different. And there was a time where Tony's parents had a stall at the Public Market and we would go there after some activities. And then there was one day that Tony and Vito and another fellow, it was hot, said, "Hey, let's go swimming. The pool is right up here." Crystal Pool and we looked at, it cost a dime, so I said, "Hey, that's a great idea." So here we go, we, it was only a couple of blocks from the market, so we went there and they paid and I'm in line and when they came to me they said, "No." They just, they didn't say, they just waved their hands and said, "Out." And it just caught me by surprise. And the others, they were shocked. They didn't know, they couldn't understand, but I understood right away what it was about. And they, they start arguing with them, with the clerk there, or the cashier and at the same I was already halfway down the block.

#### Mary Jenkins

I grew up in the Jim Crow era. I sat in the balcony of the Albany (Georgia) movie theater. I drank from the separate water fountain. So I know a lot about segregation as it existed. I remember when I was very young walking through Crest Ten Cent store and my mother was holding tightly to my hand. And a little white boy just about my age walked up and squirted a water pistol in my face. And I tried desperately to get away from my mother so that I could catch him. But she kept saying, "You can't." And pretty much "you can't" has followed my life. You know, when my daughter was three years old I took her to Chehaw Park and she saw some white children getting on buses. Well, they were rides for them. And she said, "Mommy, I wanna ride on that." And I had to say the same thing to her that my mother said to me. "You can't." And she turned around and beat her little fists against me and she said, "You don't want me to ride." How was I to explain the system to her? So that meant that I had to take the blame.

Interviewer: So you know that your mother was trying to protect you?

MJ: Oh, definitely. Definitely. Any time that we were in some sort of white situation she was clinging, you know, to me and I knew that.