

Susan March
Narrator

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Interviewer

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Brooklyn Center, MN

Susan March - **SM**
Insung Oh - **IO**

IO: This is [an interview with] Susan March from Korean Adoptees [Ministry Center-KAM]. This is conducted on January 2, 2011.

What's your name and tell me all your family members?

SM: My name is Susan March. Currently, I live with my fourteen-year-old daughter, China.

IO: When did you come to Minnesota?

SM: I came to Minnesota when I was four years old, and grew up most of my life in Coon Rapids, Minnesota.

IO: What year, exactly?

SM: I came to Minnesota in 1975.

IO: Tell me in detail the story of your adoption.

SM: I was around four years old when I was adopted. My parents' names are Charles and Carol Adelman, or Chuck and Carol Adelman. I grew up in Coon Rapids. I have one brother. His name is John. He's my parents' biological son. There's just the two of us, me and him as the kids.

IO: Where were you growing up after adoption in Minnesota?

SM: I grew up most of my life in Coon Rapids, Minnesota. I graduated from Coon Rapids High School. After high school, I went to college at Mankato State University [in Mankato, Minnesota].

IO: How did they adopt you?" Like from, for example, Children's Home Society or through another institution?

SM: I'm adopted through Children's Home Society. I believe Mrs. Hahn [Hyunsook Han] who is well known in the adoptive community.

IO: Why did they decide to adopt a Korean kid?

SM: Actually, my parents were open to adopting any child in need. They were open to adopting any child of any nationality. I believe they did want a girl, though, because they already had a son, and they were able to adopt me.

IO: Would you tell me about your adoptive family and your early life in American culture at home after your adoption?

SM: At home, as I said, I grew up in Coon Rapids. My parents thought since my brother and I were just a year apart that we would always be fairly close. But we actually had different personalities, so we weren't that close growing up. We would kind of fight each other, sometimes, and had different kinds of friends. So we grew up differently.

IO: Can you tell me about your adoptive family to which you were adopted, for example, were they stable economically?

SM: Yes. Growing up, my dad was a teacher. He taught social studies in Mounds View [Minnesota]. My mom used to be a teacher, but while we were growing up, she was, actually, just a homemaker and would make home-cooked meals every night. We would eat dinner together. Also, her hobby is sewing, so she would sew a lot on the side, like quilts, different quilting.

IO: Were you satisfied with your father's job? Were you proud of your parents?

SM: Yes, I think we were pretty much a middle-income family, and growing up, economically, we were pretty well off. It would be a treat for us, once in a while, to get take-out food, which is a lot different nowadays. People get take-out food almost every day. Back then, my mom would always cook dinner, and we would eat our meals at the kitchen table every day. It was good.

IO: Are they still living in Minnesota...your parents?

SM: Yes. When my dad retired from teaching, they moved to Luck, Wisconsin, where we had a cabin growing up, and they built a house there. They currently live there, which is only about an hour and a half from the Cities. So they do come down a lot and will either babysit for my brother's kids or do shopping down here. We usually see them at least once a month.

IO: Can you tell me about your school life? Were there any complicating issues in school while you were attending?

SM: Growing up, looking different, Asian, I would get teased or made fun of once in a while. I never did talk about it, so my parents never knew about it. When I grew up, I was able to have a conversation with them that that did happen.

IO: You mean you didn't face any complicating issues at school. What about your family setting, like with your brother?

SM: Ummm, I always knew when I was growing up I was adopted, but I didn't really know what they word meant. We just had different interests, so I think that's why we weren't that close. But he never made fun of me the way I looked or he never made me feel different because I was Asian. There was just kind of sibling rivalry.

IO: What were the most difficult issues at school, especially any stereotype questions or discrimination issues?

SM: I think I tried to do fairly well in school. I would get pretty good grades. One thing is I would really not speak my mind in class, though, and the teachers, sometimes, like during parent/teacher conferences, would say, "We wish Susan would speak up more." So I was a fairly quiet student. Other than that, I think school wasn't too bad. I tried to be involved like in extracurricular activities to become more popular or to fit in with the crowd. Some of the activities I was involved with were cheerleading and track.

IO: When did you feel your identity as Korean or as an Asian minority?

SM: I would say going away to college, there was a few more minorities. Growing up in Coon Rapids was pretty much all Caucasian. When I went off to college, there was a little bit more diversity. That's when I began noticing more that I was interested in learning about the Korean culture and language and food and, like, that's part of who I was. So I was interested in learning more about it.

IO: When you felt for the first time seriously your identity, as you said, at college, what did you feel you had to do to tackle this issue of your identity?

SM: After I graduated from college, I moved back to Minneapolis, and I was able to meet other Korean adoptees. They had MAK back then, Minnesota Adopted Koreans, different adoptee organizations. That's when I first began meeting with other adoptees and really connecting with them.

IO: When did you first meet with some adopted children and how did you feel at that time?

SM: Growing up, my parents would bring me to a couple of Children's Home annual events, and we would have Korean food. But I didn't really seem to bond with other Korean adoptee children. It was just kind of more of a cultural experience. As an adult and meeting other adoptees, I feel like I had a closer connection with them and was able to meet a lot of Korean adoptees and maintain friendships with them.

IO: Can you tell me more about KAM? What are the benefits of this institution? What's the meaning of connection to other adoptees?

SM: KAM Center stands for Korean Adoptee Ministry Center. We're different from the other Korean adoptee organizations in Minneapolis, because we have a ministry and a spiritual focus to our ministry. This group has helped me kind of find more of my identity and was, also, the spirituality component to really learn who I am, and I felt more as a whole person. It combined a lot of aspects. They have cultural events like a yearly Korean New Year celebration. That would be more of a social event. Then, we have monthly, a small spiritual discovery group with a small Bible study group for Korean adoptees. There, we can kind of share ideas and different thoughts about spirituality. Not every is Christian per se, but they have some spiritual component to their self.

IO: What was your Korean cultural camp or language learning experience? Can you tell me about the Korean language lessons from KIM (Korean Institute of Minnesota)? You attended KIM, but especially, you said your parents had no interest in your involvement in Korean language classes or Korean cultural camps?

SM: Growing up, my parents never put me in a Korean cultural camp. They might not have thought it was important. Also, when I was growing up, I always felt like I was kind of Caucasian and wanted to fit in. After being an adult, I have taken classes like at the Korean Institute of Minnesota, KIM School, their language classes for several years. But they only offer classes twice a year, so it's really hard to learn the language. I kind of know like one word phrases.

I think my parents just feel like I'm American. For me, I feel like there should be some type of balance. So I've tried to learn the Korean language, but because it's so sporadic and offered only twice a year, it's really hard to learn it. Having a daughter myself now, I'll try to say one-word phrases, like ball-ee-ball or 'bae-gu', just so she's exposed to that a little bit. Even though the classes are geared toward adoptive children and their families, she actually took some classes there for several years as a child to learn those Korean cultural things that, maybe, I wasn't able to teach her.

IO: Did you ever think that the diverse American culture was helpful for you to overcome your identity issues?

SM: I think it's easier when you're an adult and you're not under your parents. Then, you can decide what you'd like to learn or not learn. It's easier. For me, I've kind of embraced...like I want to learn Korean culture. I want to learn who I am. I've also traveled to Korea twice now. When my daughter is older, I'd actually like to take her over there to see where I came from, and some of those things that I'm not able to teach her, I can show her.

IO: Yes.

[pause]

IO: Did you ever especially feel American diverse culture was dysfunctional? You've said you don't always embrace 'differences.' Can you tell me more about this in detail?

SM: I think growing up in the 1970s in the suburbs was hard being a minority. You don't see people that look like you and people tease you because you stand out, because you look different. I would say now people are more open to diversity as time passes and are able to appreciate it more. So I feel like I'm proud to say, "I'm a Korean-American."

IO: Can you tell me about what your role model in your school life was?

SM: I had a couple of different teachers... One teacher was my English teacher in junior high. She just really encouraged me to write about things that are on your mind and be open to that. So I really enjoyed her class, especially. She seemed like whatever was on your mind was okay to say.

IO: What about outside the school setting, in other social life?

SM: Ummm...

IO: Pastor or?

SM: I worked a lot with Yooju Park [currently she is the executive director for Korean Service Center] in different capacities. She helped out with KIM school before and, also, the KAM Center. I feel like she's a good role model, because she's very supportive of Korean adoptees and has a heart and love for them. Also, she's always multitasking. She's got a full time job and she helps out in other ways. I look up to her because she seems to be able to balance being Korean, having a family, but, also, helping Korean adoptees.

IO: Were you attending any American church? Was it helpful for you, I mean, spiritually?

SM: I would say, growing up, my family was Lutheran, but they would only go to church maybe once or twice a year, like on Easter. I didn't really enjoy going to church growing up. But, after college, I began being more spiritual and going to church, mostly Baptist Church, so they're a little bit more outgoing with the music, so I really enjoyed that. Currently, I'm not attending a church, but I would say I'm still spiritual and am very active with the Korean Adoptees Ministry Center.

IO: Do you have any close Korean adoptee friends? Like when you are in hardship, can you talk to each other for overcoming your issues?

SM: Yes, I have several close adoptive friends, mostly females. I'm able to talk with them during low points in my life, and in high points. Actually, like quarterly, we try to

get together and either I'll cook here or somebody else will host it. We'll make Korean food. My specialties are bean sprouts or spicy duck-bok-kee, bulgogi, and man-doo. We'll get together for a Korean movie and Korean fellowship. That's really enjoyable.

IO: When did you start thinking, if any, about the issues of Korean adoption and why?

SM: My first trip to Korea was in 2006. It was a group of Korean adoptees from around the world, about sixty of us through the Korean Overseas Foundation. That's when we visited Holt [International] Adoption Agency in Korea. When we were there, we, also, visited an orphanage or foster homes. That's really when...like seeing other kids, babies, experiencing the same thing I did in the past was kind of overwhelming. You try to learn more about why there are so many adoptees here. Minnesota has the largest Korean adoptee population.

IO: Yes.

SM: So kind of learning why there are so many adoptees here and what was the path behind that. I believe that's when I first began thinking about why it's so huge, especially in Minnesota.

IO: From Korea or here, Minnesota, and other parts of the United States, many friends, many people are asking about why Minnesota has a large population of Korean adoptees. I have had some answers from other Americans, older Americans. They emigrated from many countries, especially Europe around the Second World War as they lost everything because of the war. They had already experienced hardships in their history. So, here are many adoptive agencies and families that are open to adoption.

SM: I think a lot of adoptee families here are like Norwegian and Swedish.

IO: Yes.

SM: Maybe they're Lutherans and Catholics, but they're a little bit more liberal or more open to adopting. Maybe, at that point, it was easier, so that's why there are so many here. I think there was maybe a cultural or spiritual aspect to those.

IO: I, in detail, talked a couple years ago to a Washington correspondent from a Korean news agency. He asked about, also, the same question, "Why do you think Minnesota has got a lot of Korean adoptee population?" That's true, after Sweden, Minnesota has the second largest population of Korean adoptees. I'm really proud of the Korean adoptees here in Minnesota. I was, also, talking about this aspect to NoPAK[Network of Professional Adoptee Koreans] recently.

SM: Yes, John Perry, the president of NoPAK.

IO: Yes, John. I was talking with him. While they were preparing their event 2009 'Passport to Korea,' I gave him some advice, you know, like "You should be proud of

Minnesota experiences. You can establish here as a hub of Korean adoptive community, Korean adoptive professional organization through which you can reach out to the other parts of Korean professional adoptees across the America. You may want to reach or connect to like a Boston Korean adoptee organization which was established in 2006, I think.

SM: Yes.

IO: “You can reach—I talked to John—every corner of cities across the US.”

SM: What’s kind of amazing is it seems like as Korean adoptees, we just kind of have this special unwritten bond with each other, that we just kind of know each other and what we’ve been through. It’s kind of a special bond just having other friends that are Korean adoptees, as well, male and female.

IO: There have been many Korean adoptees according to generation after generation in America. I think her name is the same first name as yours... Susan Cox? She is one of first generation in America among Korean adoptees. She’s living in Seattle, I think. She recently wrote some articles in the *New York Times*. She doesn’t like any more adoption from Korea. She criticized about the Korean government.

SM: Is she in her 60s?

IO: Yes. I would like to ask you about this same question for you.

SM: Okay.

IO: You were experiencing in 2000 while you were in Korea, you said your group were talking about these issues. There are now in Korea many Korean institutions which have been established since that time and they are nowadays raising these issues to Korean government.

SM: To help.

IO: Yes.

SM: I think they started a process, but, to me, I don’t feel like Korea is doing enough. I think there’s kind of two sides to the story. I know some friends that are adopted, they totally want to end it. I guess my feeling is I would like to see the numbers reduced, but there are loving children that need good homes to be adopted to. I don’t think the Korean society is there yet to be able to provide the best for them, because everything is still based on your bloodline.

IO: Yes. Can you tell me about your opinion for both sides of your points?

SM: Those children don't have a chance to be a professional or get that college career that most other Koreans get. To me, they're still kind of a flawed system. I would like to see the numbers reduced some. Even if the Korean people are willing to start adopting themselves domestically, we are also helping improve the situation. I think Korea still has a ways to go, though, to help this whole situation.

Against adoption... I would say it's because when you're adopted, you don't really know who you are, and you lose that Korean culture and identity. For adoption, like I said before, there are many children that need to grow up in stable, loving homes and they need to be with a family. Again, if there could be more support in Korea to allow families to stay together or to support domestic adoption and lessen the stigma around the whole situation, I think it would be better for everybody.

IO: Did you ever overcome the fact that you were adopted regardless of whether you could or couldn't meet with your birth parents?

SM: I tried to, when I was in Korea in 2000, go to my adoption agency, and they said they had lost my adoptive family. I've also been on a KBS [TV - Korean Broadcasting System] once. They did, I believe, a two-hour special about Korean adoptees around the world, and they interviewed me for one part. One woman actually contacted them. She thought she was my birth mom, but I sent my hair in and did a DNA [Deoxyribonucleic Acid] test. They found out that was not her.

So kind of after having my own child myself, trying to learn more information about my birth family and was not able to, and being on the television station and not being able to find it that way, I feel now that I've kind of come full circle, that I won't find my birth parents, and I'm fine with that. I think there's just a longing to know people that look like me and where I came from and to be able to answer those kind of questions, but I feel like I am okay not knowing or finding them, at this point in my life.

IO: Okay.

What was your thought about your parents' decision on putting you up for adoption? I think in the 1970s, differently right after the Korean War, there were many Korean adoptees because of different reasons. You were adopted in the 1970s?

SM: In 1975.

[break in the interview]

IO: You don't know your birth parents' home town?

SM: No.

IO: Any clue about this?

SM: From my papers, I was dropped off at a coffee shop by a man. I don't know if that's true or not. At that time, they would just kind of make up your name. My Korean name was [sounds like Youjung Mah] that they gave me, but I'm pretty sure that's not my real name. I also don't have my real date of birth. It's really difficult to find any information.

IO: Usually, while meeting or talking with people, we Koreans would like to ask "Where are you from?" or "What city are you from?" If we knew about the city, we would be able to figure out what situation was your hometown in 1970s. Do you have any clue about your parents' hometown?

SM: I was dropped off somewhere in Seoul. I don't have any other information.

IO: Korean society in 1970s and 1980s was a really high peak of economical and social development. Many issues were raised, you know. Still, at that time, Korean society was governed by military people. Korean government was only focusing on economical success. So many parents left their home cities for Seoul and other big cities. So there were many social issues raised, like China now. It was sad. They had to leave their home or their family because of money, money, money. Yes, it was inevitable.

Have you thought about your family, your parents' situation? I met another Korean adoptee woman. She was adopted in 1978. In 2007, I was publishing Korean newspaper, and I published her essay in English. According to her story, she still doesn't understand why her parents put her up on adoption. In 1978, it was even in Seoul or big cities that many families struggled. She was living in the south of Korea, all the way south in a small city. At that time, the parents were really poor. Another reason for her adoption is that there were many, many daughters, you know, one, two, three, four, all consecutively daughters. They didn't have a son. Korean society has been male-oriented for longtime.

SM: Yes.

IO: So her mother was forced to give up her for an adoption through a delivery care in Pusan.

SM: I would like to believe that they probably gave me up hoping I would have a better life. Maybe they weren't able to provide for me. But, on the other side, a lot of Korean adoptees, I know, they struggle with themselves, identity issues, self-esteem issues. Especially the male Korean adoptees, they've got a lot of anger issues.

IO: Yes.

SM: I actually know at least one adoptee that has committed suicide. So there's also some downsides to Korean adoptees. I don't think that issue has been addressed very well. They have identity issues or they don't really know themselves. They either need some help or just someone to talk to. It's not always that they go to America and have this whole better life. Sometimes, they do struggle with life, even with the everyday issues that everybody has.

IO: Compared to European societies into which many Koreans were adopted as well, you know, much more stories over there are sad, and more success stories are here in Minnesota.

SM: Okay.

IO: I heard about some really frustrating story. She found her family in 2007 in December, I think. Her parents are now economically stable. All their family got together in Seoul after the broadcasting.

SM: Every adoptee has their own story, too, and their own life journey. Some are really positive and some aren't so positive.

IO: The title of the Korean press article she gave me, "Why Me?" Why did they put me up for an adoption.

SM: I would say that's the biggest question, like why did this happen?

IO: Yes.

[pause]

IO: If you ever try to make every effort to find out your birth parents, what would be the significance for you to meet with them? What motive did lead you to try to find your birth family?

SM: Basically, it's just to have the basic foundation of where you came from and that you actually have parents and you look like someone. I did in 2000 try to find information from my Korean side of the welfare system, which was the Social Welfare Society. They said that they had lost my files, so, from there, I didn't really consider finding my birth parents again. But a few years later, I had the opportunity to go on KBS. They did an adoption series about adoptees around the world, which was like a two-hour special. I was chosen for one of the feature stories. They came to my house and my job and they interviewed me. One woman did come to KBS and thought she was my birth mom. But after a DNA test, it was found that she wasn't. So I was kind of disappointed. I think it would have been really exciting for me to find my birth parents and be able to ask them questions that I've had over the years. But that didn't follow through, so after that I kind of really came to terms that I would never be able to find my birth family, and I was okay with that.

IO: What's the significance of Korean culture and identity for you?

SM: I think it's very important now being an adult, and, also, having a child of my own. I try to teach her as much Korean things that I know. She did attend the Korean Institute of Minnesota and was able to see other adoptees and other children growing up and learn

some of the culture and language. Also, at home, I collect Asian dolls, Korean dolls. Just for her to be exposed to the Asian and Korean things is very important to me, to make sure that she has that balance in her life growing up.

IO: What is your job now? What are you doing?

SM: Currently, I work at SuperValu Incorporated, a large grocery chain. I'm an administrative assistant to [unclear] vice president. I also work part time with the Korean Adoptees Ministry Center helping Reverend Sung Chul Park assist other adoptees from Minneapolis and even around the country also. We offer a Spiritual Discovery in Korea every year. We've had more people go from out states, like Florida and different states in the last couple years.

IO: Among Korean adoptees who have grown up to adults and who have had their kids, they are really concerned about the fact that they couldn't learn the Korean language and culture very much. So they have had hard times teaching their post-generations. Korean American second generation is in the same situation as the first generation after their immigration has strived to get mainstreamed. They have more focused on English language and culture. One of Korean Americans who were immigrated actually here to Minnesota said that all Koreans who have been adopted or immigrated to America, regardless of who they are and where they are from, are all the same in that they should be acculturated to American culture. It means losing their language and culture. I agree. What do you think about it?

SM: That, it's important? Ummm, that even being here, the Korean culture is still important? Is that the question?

IO: Yes.

SM: Okay. I think, again, that Korean [unclear] Minnesota has really helped myself and my daughter be able to, the things that I'm not able to teach her, she's got other people that are Korean and can help her with that. Even being around Korean Americans, you have that identity that you look alike, but, also, it's really a good foundation for learning the language or just learning little Korean cultural techniques. I think it's very important.

IO: Many Koreans back in Korea aspire to live in a different culture, especially in America, because of a better living and education for their children. Have you ever thought you were 'immigrated' to America; although, it was not your decision? Do you think your dream is different from other Korean American immigrants?

SM: I think that there's always that same dream to do well in school, get a good job, and try to be the best person that you can, except for Korean adoptees. They just lack that real solid foundation because they didn't have that growing up. Like most adoptees have Caucasian families; they don't look like them. Their Korean culture is not embraced while growing up. So they may have the same dream, but they achieve it differently. For the adoptees, they miss that whole foundation in their beginning years of life.

IO: Have you ever thought about the issue of immigration and adoption, the relation of immigration and adoption? Do you think adoption is one type of immigration? If so, why do you think so?

SM: I think it's the type of immigration. For adoptees, they just didn't have that choice whether to come here or not. Immigrants, typically, if they're Korean, they know their Korean. They sometimes know the language, but even the food is Korean, while adoptees growing up, their food is pretty much American. They don't have that foundation of culture or choosing whether to really learn the language. They're missing that option or that choice.

IO: What is significance for you to being motherhood to your children, to your daughter?

SM: It's very important that I know who I am. I'm a Korean adoptee. Growing up she would hear that word so much that she would say, "Am I a Korean adoptee?" She wanted to belong to the group, because she heard it so much. I think it's very important that she learns as much as I know about the Korean language. I cook Korean foods when I get the chance. I teach her as much as I know. Also, like if we go to the Parks' house or different Korean Americans, she's exposed to other Korean Americans as well.

IO: How important is the fact that your children live as Koreans is?

SM: My daughter is actually bi-racial. She's Korean and African American. She spends time with her dad also, so it's important that she has a balance of who she is as Korean and, also, as African American. A lot of my friends are Korean adoptees or African Americans or other types of friends. [chuckles] It's very important that she has that balance and information about both cultures that she's aware of it.

IO: Have you heard about the other adoptee groups such as a Korean adoptee community or Korean adoptee mission group?

SM: I've been to NoPAK. There's AdopSource. There's the *Korean Quarterly*, which is a newspaper, that's for adoptive families. There's also AK Connection, so there's several organizations, especially in the Twin Cities that are available for Korean adoptees. Probably in the Twin Cities more so than in outstate Minnesota, there's more activity, more cultural things that adoptees have. If they're living in the Twin Cities, they'd have more options of connecting with others.

IO: Okay. What about your daughter's identity building? Is she proud of her identity as a Korean? Has she confessed her struggles at school, if any, like that you had experienced at your age?

SM: I think [sounds like Kee-uh] [unclear] parent is open communication and teaching her while she was growing up to not be afraid to talk about racial issues. I believe I've

created a foundation even early in life, like, if kids ask you what you are, what are you going to say? People do look at you because you look different. What are you going to say? Asking those questions growing up and having her be able to ask me any questions or just knowing that she might get teased, if you ask her, she'll just say, "I'm Korean and I'm African American." I believe she's proud of that. She knows who she is.

IO: Compared to your American adoptee family, how could you be different as a real mother?

SM: The biggest thing for me when I was growing up, my parents really didn't talk about hard issues or about their feelings. The culture was like you talked about the weather. You talked about the movies. You really don't talk about hard discussions. But, for me, it was very important having my own child to have that open communication, and being able to have her ask me anything that she wants. I'm open to any questions. Sometimes, I tell her things that she doesn't like to hear, but it's very important.

IO: What's the most difficult issue in educating your children as Korean and teaching Korean culture or values and, also as an African-American.?

SM: Yes. Again, it's not having that foundation of growing up in a Korean culture or language. I have to expose her to other people or organizations that will help me teach her the things that she will need to learn her identity, I try to teach her as much as I know. One goal for me is really to bring her to Korea so she can view the Korean culture and language and food for herself and kind of base her own opinions on what she thinks Korea is like.

IO: I think the most important reason for Koreans to immigrate to America is the education of their children. I think the fact that you don't know who you are and where are you from will affect significantly how to educate your daughter. Your motherhood will be something different to your daughter regardless of any hardship for her. Compared to your adoptive parents, what's the most important for you to teach your children?

SM: I think Korean society puts a lot of focus on education.

IO: Yes.

SM: Where, in America, it's a little bit more on being happy.

IO: Yes.

SM: So my goal for my daughter is to have a little balance of both. She knows that education is very important, and she knows she's going to go to college. After that, she can decide what she wants to do. But, also, I think I would like to see her happy and know who she is, and if she has an opinion about something to speak up her mind. I

would really like to have a balance of both, education and just being happy over all and being able to make friends with anyone. Being racially open is very important.

IO: Yes, I think that she has experienced African culture and Korean culture, also American culture that can be really strong points while her journey to her life I think at the college and as she work at a professional job or something like a nonprofit organization or something. Her ethnicity, you know, combines Korean and African American; I think that can be a strong point for her future.

SM: Yes.

IO: What do you think about Minnesota's—this is the last question, I think—Korean adoptees community? Korean adoptees community, which has been developed since, I think, the 1970s, that is very important, functional to Korean adoptees in Minnesota. Are there any same institutions for adoptees in other ethnic group like Africans or other ethnic groups? Have you heard about that?

SM: I don't think there are very many extensive programs for other adoptees. I think because there are so many Korean adoptees here, they've built their own little community than a lot of other organizations. I've not heard too many adoptive programs for other ethnic groups. I think probably Children's Home Society offers something.

IO: Yes.

SM: I think there's a lot of adoptees that have strong minds and really want to interact with each other. There's several different organizations here that are for Korean adoptees, probably more so than any other ethnic group in Minnesota.

IO: Why do you think KIM is important to Korean adoptees community? What have they been doing and how have they affected Korean adoptees community? What should they do more for Korean adoptees community?

SM: I think the answer again is different because there's that spirituality factor. Actually, there's probably less Korean adoptees in our organization because a lot of adoptees are mad, like why did this happen to me? So they shy away from God or spirituality, because they have those anger issues against their adoption and not knowing where they came from. Also on the flipside, because KIM offers that spirituality component, that a person is able to have that spirituality component along with other things in their life that can really make them become a more whole person with all different aspects, family, work, spirituality, and because you have all those combined factors put together, it really helps you learn who you are and deal with those difficult issues of being adopted and really can help adoptees achieve a better place in their life.

IO: Okay. Thank you so much for your time.

SM: Sure.