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**CROSSING
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**Oral History Interview with Asha Sundararaman
Crossing Borders, Bridging Generations, 2011.019.010**

**Interview conducted by Jen Chau at the Brooklyn Historical Society on January 8th, 2012
in Brooklyn Heights, Brooklyn.**

JEN CHAU: Hi, this is Jen Chau. And it's January 8th, 2012. I'm with the Brooklyn Historical Society, doing an oral history interview for the Crossing Borders, Bridging Generations project. Um would you start by saying your name and introducing yourself?

ASHA SUNDARARAMAN: I'm Asha Sundararaman. (laughs)

JEN CHAU: Anything you want to say?

ASHA SUNDARARAMAN: Um I've lived in Brooklyn for about five years.

JEN CHAU: OK, great! Um and can you just give us your birth date and where you were born?

ASHA SUNDARARAMAN: Um I was [date removed for privacy], uh in Palo Alto, California.

JEN CHAU: Excellent. Um so I know you have a lot to talk about, as far as multi-heritage identity but, before we really go into that, I would love to hear about some of your life history. So can you start by telling me your earliest memory?

ASHA SUNDARARAMAN: I -- I think I have a memory from preschool when I was about three. Uh there -- uh it's very -- uh it's very vague. But it's something about a -- there's a church and an altar and -- uh was with my preschool class. But my mother tells me that's probably not a real memory. (laughs) But I do remember my brother being born. So. That was about that time, as well.

JEN CHAU: So he's a few years younger than you.

ASHA SUNDARARAMAN: He's about 3-1/2 --

JEN CHAU: OK. Um and can you tell me a little bit about where you're from?

ASHA SUNDARARAMAN: Uh I'm an oil brat. So I grew up in California, Canada, Nigeria, spent a year in Indiana, just kind of -- kind of random. Uh and since college I've lived in a few other places (laughs) around the world, before I came back to the States.

JEN CHAU: And can you talk a little bit about those different places and -- and your experiences, how they varied in those different places?

ASHA SUNDARARAMAN: I mean, California was -- is where I'm from here. So it's -- it's kind of home. It's -- But it's also -- I lived in very homogenous communities. Uh Canada was also very homogenous, one of the places where everyone had -- Uh in Calgary everyone had lived -- grown up in the same place, lived in the same place, didn't really know every-- anything outside of -- outside of the city. So, (laughs) coming from California, I was kind of an oddity. Uh Nigeria was a lot more people who had -- who were from all over and who had -- who understood, and the -- our l-- our lifestyle and the way, you know -- the way we lived, the way we traveled. And everyone was just kind of -- they were mostly there from other -- other countries. And there were also a lot of other mixed-race kids, actually. Um and then coming back to California was -- I don't know. Uh it was inter-- it was interesting. It was definitely a change. (laughs) But -- but, I mean, I -- I like it there. So.

JEN CHAU: Can you say more about that, about how it was a change?

ASHA SUNDARARAMAN: It's -- as opposed to when I had first lived there, where everyone was kind of, you know, from the area, the -- a lot of the -- a lot of people that I went to school with had -- had varying experiences but none of them had really -- They'd been out of the country but never really lived out of the country. There -- it wa-- it was diverse bu-- I kind of went to a -- what we like to call -- We liked to call ourself the hippie school, uh (laughs) where -- call our teachers by their first names and -- It was -- everyone was -- everyone was really open-minded, which is really -- really nice. Uh but it's definitely -- you definitely still sometimes feel like --

JEN CHAU: Mm.

ASHA SUNDARARAMAN: -- you're an -- on the outside looking in, when you come back to that kind of -- uh kind of environment. But I did have classmates from all over the Bay Area, uh Oakland, San Francisco, Napa, as well as, you know, in the -- in the town that our school was in. So, a little bit more -- little bit more diverse. (laughs)

JEN CHAU: And of the -- all those places that you've lived, uh was there one that sort of made you feel the most at home?

[0:04:54]

ASHA SUNDARARAMAN: I think Nigeria was definitely uh most -- That was home. And it's still -- at least Nigeria in 1995 is still home. It -- You can't -- you can never really go back. But uh it's one of those -- it's one of those things where everyone -- everyone understands your life. And so you don't really have to say much. They'll -- they're just -- they get it, you know, because they had the same -- they had the same kind of life. They're all moving around and traveling everywhere and going back home, wherever home was supposed to be. (laughs) So.

JEN CHAU: And in 1995, was that when you first moved there or --?

ASHA SUNDARARAMAN: I first moved there in '93.

JEN CHAU: OK.

ASHA SUNDARARAMAN: We were there from '93 to '98. Uh and I left for a year in '97, to go to school in Indiana, which is -- Tha-- OK, that was definitely more of a change (laughs) to California but -- That's like farm -- farm country. And even Indianapolis is still farm country.

JEN CHAU: And was that for high school?

ASHA SUNDARARAMAN: It was for high school. My high -- my school in Nigeria didn't have a high school. It had -- it went up to ninth grade. And then they just didn't have the demand, so they had never built a high school. Everyone went off to boarding school, and various parts of the world. Uh and that's -- I mean, it's just kind of what you did. So I went to Indiana to live with my mom's family and go to school with my cousins. Because my parents were still there and so there's nothing else to do. (laughs)

JEN CHAU: And can you tell me a little bit about your family?

ASHA SUNDARARAMAN: My father's from India. Um he moved to the U.S. in 19-- I want to say it's like 1973 -- 1972, 1973, uh for grad school. My mom is American but a military brat. So she grew up on military bases in various parts of the country and -- and in Europe. Uh my grandfather was a Marine. He's from the South -- (laughs) Deep, rural -- rural Mississippi kind of South. Uh my -- my mom's mother is from Indiana, uh by way of -- Her family is originally German, Austrian. Uh they're farm -- farm people, as well. Actually, I think my great -- one grandfather o-- great grandfather owned like a -- Wasn't a dairy farm. It was a -- some kind of farm equipment. And the other one was a

train conductor, which is kind of a change from my dad's family, who are all very highly educated, professors and -- (laughs) except for his father, who wasn't. But -- Uh and I have one younger brother, uh who's about 3-1/2 years younger than me. He's doing an MD/PhD. Because he's an overachiever. (laughs) Uh my parents are both one of five -- well, five living. My grand-- my father was one o-- one of six and then his older brother passed away, sometime in the '50s, I think. That's my family, in a -- in a nutshell.
(laughs)

JEN CHAU: Uh what -- how would you describe your relationship to your family?

ASHA SUNDARARAMAN: I think uh my mom's family is the people I spent the most time with. We -- we used to go back every summer um and spend some time on the farm and -- My grandmother has a farm. And some uh -- My grandfather had a farm, as well. Uh spent so-- uh spent a lot of time with them. And my mom is very close to her sister. She's close to her brothers too but not as -- not quite as much as her sister. Her sister's very much, you know, her rock, I guess. Uh and so we -- uh I spent a lot of time with them and so they're very much -- they're family and they're -- You're comfortable with them. You know them. Uh my dad's side, I spent less time with -- with them. Because they are -- they're on, at the moment, four continents. Um I have one in Austral-- uh family in Australia, India, Italy, and here in the States. Uh so I spent -- uh definitely spent less time with them. But they're also --

JEN CHAU: Mm

ASHA SUNDARARAMAN: There's more of a -- similar lives. Because either they're also mixed race or, you know, they're children of immigrants or they're immigrants themselves. And they -- they are well traveled, as well. And so just -- As opposed to (laughs) my mom's side of the family, who travels but not in the same kind of way. Uh my dad's side has just been exposed to more, I think, and more life experiences, that are closer to my own. So we just kind of -- even though we see each other once every, I don't know, ten years, probably, I mean, as one big family, and you kind of still have the -- you have a rapport. You just -- you just, you know -- you know, you know each other, even though you don't really (laughs) spend a lot of time together. So. We're trying to get better at that. But it's a slow process.

[0:10:20]

JEN CHAU: And who did it feel growing up, spending more time with your mom's side of the family and being -- uh feeling that difference?

ASHA SUNDARARAMAN: I don't know if I really noticed. Uh I -- I think I notice it more now that I'm older and uh there are things that stick out. And I'm like, "Wait, that's -- that's different." Uh I remember my cousin commented that she liked when my -- that my parents lived in Nigeria, that we lived in Nigeria, we lived in Angola, and uh because she got cool presents uh from other places. And I think they've just kind of -- they've -- I mean, uh I don't remember how it was back in the beginning but they just kind of accept that we're -- our -- kind of our difference is a part of -- part of the family and -- My -- my aunts -- or my grandmother used to keep uh Indian pickle in her -- (laughs) in her fridge. Now my cousin actually has a lot of it. My cousin loves to cook Indian food! So she's got -- she's got everything. Uh so I think we influenced them a little bit, not enough to really make a huge difference but, you know, enough for them to recognize that -- I don't know, that they were a little different than every-- than everybody else uh in town, because of (laughs) who we are. So.

JEN CHAU: Did your family ever kind of openly talk about this difference? Or was it not really a conversation?

ASHA SUNDARARAMAN: It wasn't -- it wasn't really a conversation. Uh I -- I remember, in elementary school, definitely feeling very different from my classmates. In fact, they would -- if -- if they ever wanted to tease me about something, then they would bring it up, uh or they wanted to leave me out, then they would bring it up. But we were very much -- My mom put us in uh -- really put me, actually, in Indian dance classes and voice lessons. And so we -- even though we weren't really part of that community, we were still involved a little bit. And so she'll say, "Oh, well," you know, "it wasn't your father who did that. It was me." Uh she really wanted us to know where -- where we came from. Uh and we used to have language books, kids' language -- alphabet books in my father's language to -- And we would read. And she -- she -- my mom used to know a -- a Tamil lullaby that she used to say. She can't recite it anymore. But at some point, she used to -- she used to be able to do it. So it was just -- it was kind of -- It wasn't

something we talked about. It was just something that was always there. Like the food was -- food was always fusion -- fused together. My mom made Indian food. My dad makes American food. It's just -- it's definitely, uh I think, a melding of cultures, religions, a little bit less so but -- Uh yeah, d-- I don't know. I don't they under-- they knew, really, how to talk about it, so they just didn't. (laughs) But they did -- actually, my parents, before they got married, went to premarital classes for interfaith marriages, actually. Uh I remember my mom complaining that -- said, "Well, you know, they don't really know what Hindus are. So all the classes are for Jewish/Catholics. (laughs) That's what -- "you know, "that's who they're catering to." It's 1980s California. Uh so I'm not sure how helpful they found it. But I think they -- they went to premarital counseling and everything, just to make sure that they could -- that they knew what they were getting into, I think.

JEN CHAU: And do they -- have they talked a lot about that experience or uh told you about the kind of uh maybe attitudes that surrounded their relationship, at the time?

ASHA SUNDARARAMAN: They -- uh it wa-- it's never really been -- they've never really said much about it. Uh I asked my grandmothers once what they thought when my parents got married. Uh and my -- my Indian grandmother said she cried and she prayed and she asked God what she'd done wrong. Uh and my white grandmother said that my mother was going to do whatever she wanted, because (laughs) she's a very stubborn person. So I th-- uh I think they've kind of -- they just [0:15:00] want to put it past -- you know, get past it and have it not be a conversation anymore. My -- I heard a story from -- uh I don't remember who it was, a long time ago, that said -- who said that my grandmother almost didn't come to my parents' wedding, my white grandmother -- almost didn't come to my parents' wedding. And my mom completely denies this. She's like, "No, that didn't happen -- uh didn't happen. I don't know what you're talking about." So I'm not really sure whether or not whoever it was that told me was -- was telling the truth or whether it was -- Uh well, that's just something that my mother doesn't want to even consider. It comes up every so often, because my gr-- my grandmothers, each -- uh both of them, will make -- still make comments. But my parents just get really annoyed at them when they do that. (laughs)

JEN CHAU: Comments that sort of hearken back to that time or --?

ASHA SUNDARARAMAN: My -- Uh well, the -- It's as if they still -- as if they still hold some resentment. My Indian grandmother uh actually complained to my father that her -- uh most of her sons went off and, you know, got married to -- to white women and now she has all these problems. And my father actually really got really angry at her and really -- "If you ever say that again, I'm never talking to you. Like that -- that's it." Um she has actually -- because she had said that to me previously, a few years before. "Oh, well, if my sons had stayed in this country, then they would have married good Iyengar girls and I wouldn't have all these problems." Like what problems? You don't have any problems. (laughs) Uh and my white grandmother likes to say things to my father like, "Oh, you're getting -- getting a little bit brown. Maybe you should stay out of the sun." My father's quite dark. "Uh maybe just -- The sun -- You're spending too much time on the beach," and, "in Angola. You need to stay out of the sun. A little -- a little dark." Uh and she's -- she's also made quite a number of racist comments, that I kind of -- I either push back on or -- "You just -- you like are -- I can't -- can't take it," you know, "There's no -- there's no -- nothing left to say." Uh but uh usually they're fine -- (laughs) just occasionally.

JEN CHAU: How do you -- how do you make sense of, you know, the Indian grandmother who says that she has these problems? I mean, how does that make you feel?

ASHA SUNDARARAMAN: It mostly just makes me feel like she's being ridiculous. It's -- She's also -- she also said, "[Well], you should date lots of -- lots of men but you should marry an Iyengar." My mom was like, "Why? You're no-- you're not pure anyway. (laughs) Your uh -- your blood is already tainted. It doesn't really matter." Uh it's just kind of one of those things. She's -- she's old fashioned. And I can argue with her about it and then there's nothing -- there's no point anymore. Uh I think my grandmother uh was -- she was better when she started having grandchildren. The grandchildren come along and uh they're like, "Oh, well, that's nice. That's my -- my first grandchild," [I guess]. Uh it's only now that she can actually complain about it, that she's started complaining again. She didn't use to -- I don't remember her use -- uh her complaining before. Now she complains. She's kind of -- she's kind of regressed in her old age.

She's gone back to be more conservative, just more -- She wants to do things her way. And it doesn't really work in an extended family.

JEN CHAU: And -- and on the other side, your white grandmother, who says things that -- that are racist. Uh how do you decide whether or not to engage?

ASHA SUNDARARAMAN: Uh I engage her mostly to contradict her. Uh but uh sometimes I think that she's -- she's doing it to get a rise. Because she does a -- she does that a lot. You -- you're not really sure, with her, whether or not she's serious or whether or not she's just trying to -- trying to annoy you. Because that's the kind of person (laughs) that she is, actually. Uh and it's -- to be honest, she doesn't just say racist things. She also says incredibly inappropriate things at various -- various times. And just like, well, you can either ignore it or you can engage. And I -- I kind of enjoy engaging, because I like - - I don't know. I like -- I like being difficult uh with her. [0:20:00] But she's -- she's not -- uh she was never a very easy person. Neither of them were. They were never very easy people. And so I guess, because they were never really like the quintessential grandmothers, you just kind of -- you're like, "All right. Whatever." (laughs) Doesn't -- or it doesn't really affect our relationship, because our relationship was never that great to begin with.

JEN CHAU: Would you say your brother has a kind of similar relationship to these family members or do you think he's experienced things differently in the family?

ASHA SUNDARARAMAN: Um I think he has a better relationship with my Indian grandmother. Because he actually -- I -- I don't really have the patience. Uh but he'll sit down and try to be nice and -- And it's -- Uh if you -- if uh he makes her made for some reason, he'll, you know, uh work it out. I just don't -- I don't have the patience for it. My white grandmother, she's never really liked her grandsons very much. She has three and she doesn't really like them very much. Uh I mean, she doesn't really like most of us. But -- (laughs) They've uh -- she like-- she likes my brother, now that he's going to become a doctor, a double doctor. So uh -- And sh-- and also he -- he's also very patient with her, will, you know, sit down and show her things and explain things to her -- that I just -- I never got that patience. (laughs) So I think he probably has better rela-- a better relationship with them, because they -- he just will -- he'll take the time to, I don't know,

talk to them, sit with them, deal with whatever it is they're saying. Uh so they're probably a little bit nicer to him (laughs) than they are to me. What can you do?

JEN CHAU: It sounds like the grandmothers are definitely prominent. Uh --

ASHA SUNDARARAMAN: They're -- they're pr-- My grandmother -- uh my grandfathers were not so prominent. Uh my grandfather on my dad's side, my actually grandfather, passed away when my dad was ten. So uh he hasn't really been around. Obviously, he wasn't around. Uh f-- the -- my dad's uncle, who kind of took his place and we're his grandchildren and, you know -- he's -- he's a little bit quieter. And he doesn't -- he doesn't make nearly so many controversial statements. He makes some but usually about things other than race. (laughs) Uh my -- my other grandfather died when I was 12 and - - He was very -- he was a good grandfather. He liked -- he liked having grandchildren. Uh and my step-grandmother liked -- uh seemed to like us. Uh but he was -- he was very quiet, didn't really say much. So I'm never really sure -- It was just kind of li-- he was just there. And he took us fishing and, you know, we rode the tractor and -- Uh he wasn't as big a presence, um especially since he died a while ago. So.

JEN CHAU: Can you talk a little bit about your friends growing up?

ASHA SUNDARARAMAN: I m-- I moved around so much that I didn't have a lot of -- The -- the friendships never really sustained. I mean, obviously I had my elementary school friendships and my best friend, who -- uh who I played soccer with. Uh in Canada -- I -- I didn't have that many friends in Canada. Because everyone kind of had their -- already had their own -- uh already had their friends. So my friends were the people who had -- honestly, the -- the people who were foreign or from -- not from the area. Uh I was friends with two Lebanese twins, and the first year I moved there. And then they -- they moved back to Lebanon. Um and then I was friends with like people who were -- who had moved -- moved in. Uh Nigeria, I mean, uh it was so small. (laughs) I had a class of 60 people when I started and 22 by the time I ended. Uh and I was mostly friends with people in the -- within the corporation. Uh because we lived on a compound and you hung with people in the compound. Everyone just kind of did everything, played tennis, went s-- went swimming, played, you know, manhunt, and played basketball. Uh we just -- we just kind of did things together. When I came -- when I came back to the U.S. --

[0:25:00] Indiana, I -- I was only there for about a -- uh for nine months. So I made friends and -- They -- I don't know. I just -- I somehow mana-- I found this group of friends and -- It was -- it was also a private school and so they'd only been there a year and -- It's a lot easier to transfer into a private school as a sophomore, because people's friendships are not completely established yet. The-- but they were -- you know, they're -- it's a group of people that I ended up being friends with. And I -- uh they're still my Facebook friends. (laughs) Uh California, I was -- I was friends -- actually, because I transferred in as a junior, I was friends mostly with the sophomores. And I'm still friends with them. My two best friends are two guys I went to -- I went to high school with. Uh I think it was just a different -- it's -- it's a different -- It was definitely people with different perspectives, I think, in California. And it ma-- it made it easier for friendships to sustain past -- uh past the end of high school. So a few of them I'm still friends with. One of them moved to Germany with -- with her husband. Uh one of the-- one of them lived -- used to live here and -- My two best friends are kind of -- one of them is a child of immigrants and the other one is currently in Poland doing theater. In college, I was -- My roommate in -- my first-year roommate, who I ended up living with second semester sophomore year, uh was also a third-culture kid and also mixed race, which is kind of -- Uh it's kind of impressive that they (laughs) put us together, actually. Uh her father was Japanese. Her mother was American. And she was born in J-- born in Japan. She'd lived there the first eight years of her life. She had not had very good experiences being Amerasian, in -- in Japan, as it ha-- as, you know -- Most Amerasians don't have -- don't have very good experiences. And so she came back to Jersey. We used to tease her that she lived on a commune in -- in Jersey. (laughs) Uh we still -- we still k-- But she lives in California now. We still keep in -- keep in touch. I don't call her as much as I should but -- She's -- I could -- even though I talk to her about once a year, I still consider her one of my closest friends from college. Uh because we shared a lot of the same experiences. And then I have -- I have other groups of friends tha-- from college that I'm friends with because we kind of -- I mean, we had a group and we lived together and we share -- uh we share senses of humor. But -- oh, I think, more and more, there's -- I still kind of feel like I'm -- I'm on the outside. And they're just -- they're really, really white,

really white. And it's because -- since college -- Uh in college it was kind of -- I don't know. For some reason, it was kind of buffered or something. Since -- since we graduated, (laughs) it's just -- sometimes it's just there. You're just like, "Wow! Wow, you're really white. Oh, my God!" Uh especially since they all, except for one -- one girl in the group, who was trans-racially adopted -- they're all from small town, or America, pretty much. Uh I'm not entirely sure how we became friends! (laughs) I think it's becau-- I really think it's because we had the same sense of humor. Uh just I c- - I can deal with them either one-on-one or if it's a group and I -- it's not in a closed space, it's a place -- it's somewhere I can -- I can just leave, if I need to leave. But they - - they still get together, you know, and every year, at least once a year. And I -- I just can't do it. I can't. Uh it's too much -- it's too much all in one -- in one place. And as I've -- since I -- I went to grad school. Everyone was kind of from all over, because it was London. Uh made a few friends in India. And Ang-- I moved to Angola. And tha-- actually, that group of people, I -- even though I was only with them for a few months, I could really -- They -- I still consider them my friends. They're -- they're also from all over the -- all over the world. And it's just kind of this group that -- 20-somethings, 30-somethings that came -- came together because they're -- they're not -- they weren't affiliated with corporations and they were -- they weren't married and -- uh just a really good -- It's a good group of people, who's well traveled and -- uh and smart and fun, have a lot of fun together. [0:30:00] Everyone dances. Uh Angola was definitely focused on dancing, partying until 7:00 am. New York -- uh New York is a funny place. I don't think I've had the same friend group in the entire five years I've been here. Every year it's a different group of people. And I'm still fr-- it's not that I'm not still friends with them, because, you know, I'm friends with -- with them. But we don't spend nearly as much time together as we used to and -- It's f-- it's just funny to me how -- how it's never -- It's, I don't know, so temporary. O-- uh one year it was my high school and college friends. First year, it was my high school and college friends. Second year -- So I don't even remember what the second year was. Second year, I guess I must ha-- I made friends with some people from Columbia -- who went to Columbia. But then they all moved on, because they were all in grad school. And then third year it was dance

class. Fourth year it was like, I don't know, kind of a mishmash of people. Now it's work. I spend a lot of time with my -- my coworkers. We have kind of -- we just go out drinking -- to deal with -- (laughs) to deal with our office environment! Um and uh I have some -- I have some good friends here but it's definitely no sense of community that I've had in other places. But -- Yeah, I think uh -- But most o-- most of my friends that I have here, that I still am pretty close to, are -- uh are also kind of more international-focused Americans or uh minorities or -- One friend is a q-- a quarter Chinese. She call- - Uh she's quarter Chinese, like half Jewish, and half Buddhist. (laughs) She's -- Uh she said, together, she and her husband make one full Jew. Uh so it's kind of uh more international. I like -- I like them more. I have -- I have a group of friends that's very New York. They're -- they're New Yorkers, born and raised New Yorkers. I don't spend as much time with them as I used to -- mostly because they're born and raised New Yorkers. (laughs) So they're very uh -- it's all -- it's all -- and everything revolves around the city, everything. But --

JEN CHAU: Can you --? I -- I want to ask a couple of questions uh but first can you kind of do the whole timeline of --?

ASHA SUNDARARAMAN: OK. (laughs)

JEN CHAU: Because I -- I think you've talked about things pretty chronologically but I just want to make sure we know where you were and when. I think that would be helpful.

ASHA SUNDARARAMAN: Uh so for the first three years of my life -- four -- 3-1/2, four years of my life, uh I lived in Northern California, in the Bay Area. My parents worked for Stanford. That's where they met. Uh and then my father went and worked for -- worked for Chevron, where he worked for 30 years. Uh so he was living in Richmond. And then we moved to Southern California, outside L.A., uh Orange County, for five years. Uh then we moved to Calgary for two years. So lived there fourth and fifth grade. Then we moved to Nigeria for s-- five years. But that fifth year, I was in Indiana, going to school. Moved to California for six years, the two of them -- So I went to high school for two years in California and then I went to college, um in Wellesley, for four years, and came back during the s-- during the summers. And after -- after college I went to grad school in London. And I lived there for a year-and-a-half -- it wa-- Because it was a total

12-month program and I spent another six months there, just working and kind of hanging out. I moved to India for six -- what ended up being six months -- and Angola for four months. My parents were living in Angola. I really should have stayed there longer, actually. Uh I -- you know, it's one of the things -- I wish I -- I wish I'd stayed there longer. I would have gone -- gotten better -- had better experiences and like more experiences. And then I -- I've lived here -- and moved here. I've lived here for five years.

JEN CHAU: And do your parents currently still live in Angola or --?

ASHA SUNDARARAMAN: No, now they live in Philadelphia. They -- my dad retired a couple years ago. They went to India for a year and tried -- tried living in d-- India, which I think worked out OK, except that they could only stay there for a certain number of days a year. Otherwise, they would get taxed on their retirement income, which they wouldn't get taxed on (laughs) in the U.S. So they decided that was kind of [0:35:00] silly. Uh and my brother -- my brother's currently at Penn, so it works out for them. They're in Philadelphia. They've got a house and are kind of getting -- And for -- for the first probably eight or nine months that they lived there, they -- they felt like it's only temporary and they were going to move on somewhere else. Now they've kind of started settling into life. And my mom volunteers and my dad's working again and -- Um they're getting to know their neighbors -- and being invited to holiday parties, (laughs) holiday open houses. Uh they've kind of -- they've put roots down for a little while. Uh when my -- when they first moved there, my dad called me up and said, "Move to California, so that I can move to California." (laughs) So they're still hoping at some point my brother and I will move to California, so that they can go back to California. But for now they're OK living in Philly. They don't mind it very much.

JEN CHAU: Um and when you were moving, it was because your dad worked for Chevron?

ASHA SUNDARARAMAN: Mm-hmm. Uh my -- my mother used to be a librarian. She was a -- she was a chemistry librarian at Stanford. Uh she kind of reached the height of her career. She was the head of the chemistry library. She -- you know, she did her thing. And then she had us and she decided that's what she wanted to do more. So she became what I call an expat wife. There's a very -- Uh actually, I ta-- was talking to one of my

friends, who wa-- I grew up with in Nigeria, about it. So we -- we don't know any other life than being expat wives -- expat wives. You're -- depending on where you are, you're actually paid a stipend, because you can't work. And so, in order to -- to make it more attractive to -- to the uh employee and the spouse, they give you a stipend. Uh so my mother got a stipend in Nigeria and in Angola. But in Nigeria, she actually -- she ended up working at our school and being the librarian and kind of putting together the library. Angola, there was the language barrier, that -- She speaks Portuguese-- she used to speak Portuguese OK, enough to communicate with the driver and the gardener and -- but not fluently enough to work. So she did her charity work and had canasta and TGIF, sat on the beach every weekend. (laughs) So this was a pretty good life. Not going to lie. It's a very nice life. So.

JEN CHAU: How did you feel, when you were younger, moving from place to place?

ASHA SUNDARARAMAN: I think it was just kind of the -- one of those things that you did. It -- it was very matter of fact. We didn't really have a -- we didn't have a choice. We didn't -- I don't even think we really questioned it. Uh I think, when you're -- you start moving young enough, it's just -- it's just what uh -- what you do. And especially since my dad's family lives in so many different places, uh it just seemed normal. It was only, really, coming back to the States that I realized it wasn't really that normal. Uh my dad does like to tell me, though, that I'm not really a third-culture kid, because I didn't live nearly as many places as some of the people that I grew up with. Yeah. Uh which is a -- I mean, I didn't. A lot of people that we knew, uh some of them had never -- they never lived in the States. You know, they'd -- born in like Scotland and -- and then went to Indonesia and Venezuela and Kuwait and Turkey and all these places -- Nigeria and all the places that the company is. Because their parents did the overseas thing longer than my parents did. But I don't know. Some-- uh he -- he likes to say things like that. (laughs)

JEN CHAU: For those who uh -- who might not be familiar with the term, can you just say more about "third-culture kid?"

ASHA SUNDARARAMAN: A third-culture kid is someone who -- if I remember the definition now -- uh someone who is -- spent their formative years outside their, quote, unquote,

home country, whatever that home country is, uh could be their -- their passport country, their parents' passport country. Uh so the idea is that you're from one culture and you move to a second culture but you're not really part of the first culture and you're not really part of the second. So you ended forming a -- a third culture, which is your own mishmash of whatever you've picked up from various places. Because -- And the thing about American culture is that it's very much based -- or at least I feel, in my experience, it's very much based on popular culture and keeping up with popular culture and knowing this k-- TV show and that TV show and this movie and who this person is -- and -- and also dim-- through traditions. Because -- I [0:40:00] mean, because it is a country of im-- mostly immigrants. And traditions that have just kind of come together in various ways, over -- you know, over the last few hundred years. And no one's really sure where they're from. But they exist, somehow. But everyone kind of has their own. So popular culture's really the -- what brings everyone together. So not knowing popular culture can be -- (laughs) can definitely be a -- Uh it's -- Uh you come back and you have no idea what anyone's talking about. It's kind of a problem. But my excuse when someone asks me a question about something that I didn't grow up with -- I'm like, "Uh -- I wasn't in this country. I don't know what you're talking about. I wasn't in this country." (laughs) It kind of backfired on me once but --

JEN CHAU: (laughs) Um I wanted to go back to something that you mentioned about high school. Um you said that people had different perspectives, which made it easy to sustain those relationships. And I was just curious about what that meant. Can you say more?

ASHA SUNDARARAMAN: It's -- My high school was -- it was -- it's part of a contingent of schools called the RoundSquare schools. And at the time that I went there, it was the only RoundSquare school in the U.S. Now there's a few others. Uh I know Deerfield, in Massachusetts, is one of them. It's -- so we have like sister or brother schools all around the world, something like 40, I think, schools, in South Africa, Kenya, India, Scotland, Switzerland, Australia -- there's a lot in Australia -- Canada, uh just all over the -- all over the world. And so uh you're part of this community that definitely extends farther. And you have -- we had exchange students. We had boarding students. So most of our boarding students, to be honest, came from Southeast Asia. That's -- Or Southeast Asia

-- Southeast Asia. I think they did a lot of outreach in China and Japan. Because there were (laughs) a lot of Chinese and Japanese boarding students. We didn't have a lot of boarding students relative to their size but it was -- I mean, they were there. It's a significant number. So between -- I mean, between k-- being an intern-- part of an international consortium of schools and being able to go on exchange in other schools and coming -- coming back and going to uh the conference every year -- Every year there's a conference in a different school. The first I was in -- at that school, it was at -- it was at ours. It was uh at our high school. So everyone converges. Four or five -- be four or five students from every school, with -- with their teachers -- will converge on one school, every single year. And you host this conference. And it was while school is going on and people are still having -- (laughs) You're still having classes. But you're just meeting all these people from all different parts of the world. And becau-- and because our student body, our day student body, came from different parts of the [area] and different backgrounds. And there's very much -- I k-- I think they're steering away from this now, which is -- I think is a problem. But they were -- they're very much a -- an emphasis on being -- uh on -- on difference and -- and understanding difference and -- uh and being able to -- to talk to diverse -- uh diverse people. So everyone -- and everyone was there -- because it's a private school, everyone was there for specific reasons. They were -- they'd -- you know, and either the parents had decided that they needed something more challenging (laughs) than their local high school -- Our -- California's higher education system is great. Our secondary education is not that great, unfortunately. Uh you know, uh eve-- it just -- it was -- it's what you -- what you knew. You knew that people were coming in from Oakland and San Francisco and -- and uh the North Bay and the South Bay and -- and all these places. And you knew that you had classmates from various parts of the world and -- And we had uh -- and we had our Students of Color club, that everybody could join. Like it w-- And it was a small school. There were only 250 people in the upper school. And there were only 65 in my class. So it was small but it see-- it just seemed really diverse and really open-minded, which -- uh which is unusual, I think, coming from Indiana. (laughs) Not that Indiana wasn't diverse and open-minded. But it was a Catholic school. (laughs)

JEN CHAU: And then curious about this friend group from Wellesley, uh where you all have the same or similar sense of humor. I was curious about how you said sometimes they're too much all in one place. Can you say more about that?

[0:45:08]

ASHA SUNDARARAMAN: We -- the group of -- this group of friends is -- they're -- it's all very strong personalities. I mean, Wellesley tends to have very strong personalities, in general. But they're very strong personalities, in a sense that they're -- uh they don't necessarily -- if you don't want to do something that they don't want to do, they're not necessarily OK with that -- or th-- you know, they're -- they're fine with that but they'll uh tease you mercilessly. Uh there's a lot of -- I feel like there's a lot of peer pressure within the group. And uh we're not a big group, ten -- maybe ten people. Uh but there's -- I think there's a lot of -- There's a lot of pressure to go along with, and everything, ev- - whether or not they realize it -- which, they probably don't, to be honest. Uh but it's also, I think, the way they -- it's the way they question things if you want to do something different. It's not -- uh it's not really respectful. It's very much like, "Well, why -- why do you think that? What are you talking about? I don't know what you're ta-- uh talking about." And I think they also have a tendency to both exoticize those of us who aren't -- who are different than the group but also be blind to the fact that, you know, there are difference-- I remember one Christmas we were all together and -- and uh one of them made a comment about the snowflakes and how they were so like all white. It's like, "Oh, it's like us!" And my -- my friend and I are like, "No. Ju-- No, not really. It's not." Uh they -- It's one of those things of convenience. Like it's convenient -- when it's convenient for them to see me or the -- or the girl that's trans-racially adopted as -- as different, then we are -- you know, we are who we are. And if it's convenient for them to see us as white, then we're white. And uh they don't really get that there's shades of -- shades of gray. Uh it's -- it's funny, though, because they -- they kind of commented to - - commented to me that I don't -- I don't open up to them. And uh they -- My uh one friend said, "Oh, we didn't know you had a brother until senior year of college," or junior year of college. Well, you -- you never asked. That's -- You proba-- you should have known. Uh I don't know why you didn't know. Because I'm sure I have like pictures

somewhere, you know. I'm sure I've mentioned my brother, in some -- some uh capacity. But -- So they -- Uh you know, and uh the funny thing is a number of -- a number of people have said it to me. And at some point, uh I've just -- I've thought, "Well, maybe it's not me. Maybe it's just -- maybe it's you. (laughs) You just don't want to hear it and you don't want to listen. So therefore, you're not going to. The -- You think that I'm just -- keep things in. But you don't ask. You don't -- you don't really listen. What's the -- (laughs) what's the point?" So that is definitely a very foreign concept to them. But -- I -- uh like I said, I can take them one at -- in small groups, one at a time. I can even take them in the full group but being able to do my own thing in various points. I can't take them if I'm shut up in an apartment with them (laughs) for -- and it's -- like there's a blizzard outside. I can't do it.

JEN CHAU: With the snow.

ASHA SUNDARARAMAN: Yeah.

JEN CHAU: Um and with the snow incident, was there a conversation -- or at any other point -
- when -- when they're either acknowledging that you're not white or not? I mean --

ASHA SUNDARARAMAN: It was -- it was actually -- that was a very strange Christmas. It's the only Christmas, or Christmas season -- we call it Dorkmas -- uh that I ever -- tha-- It's never on Christmas, because we all have places to go for the holidays but -- It's the first one -- the only one I've ever spent with them. And it kind of made me never want to do it again. Uh in fact, I went to a wedding this past summer that -- Uh I was going back and forth about whether or not I should even go. "Oh, my God. I don't know." Uh I had this experience and I don't ever want to have it again. Uh it was definitely a very -- it was a race-filled trip, where -- We were looking at the blog stuffwhitepeoplelike.com, and laughing about it, you know, going, "Oh, isn't that funny," you know, "Isn't that [0:50:00] funny. That's true. Oh, that's funny." So the -- Actually, the friend who's trans-racially adopted is Columbian. And she was adopted into a white family in -- in Massachusetts. And she's from -- she's from small-town Massachusetts. But she would like to -- she wants to go back and she wants to know where she's from. And her parents don't necessarily understand that. So we have had conversations about that. But she -- We were all at brunch and there was a cinnamon roll left. And so uh somebody said,

“Oh, who wants the -- who wants the last cinnamon roll -- half cinnamon roll? Who wants the last cinnamon roll?” And the -- my trans-racially adopted friend said, “Oh, no, I don’t -- uh I don’t really want it.” I said, “I don’t really want it either.” She -- “Wha-- well, what’s wrong with you?” you know, “How can you not want the cinnamon roll?” One friend says, “Uh well, I don-- I don’t really like a lot of sweet things for breakfast.” And I don’t -- I don’t either. I mean, I -- I eat Indian breakfast. So it’s all savory. (laughs) There’s not really much sweet uh in my breakfast. And even when I have a sweet breakfast, like I don’t -- I don’t want a lot of it. It’s just uh I don’t like that. I’ll have a little bit -- like I’ll have a little bit and then I’m done. Uh she said to the friends, “Oh, my God! What’s wrong with you guys?” (laughs) And the friend said, “Oh, it’s because we’re not white!” And we just start cracking up. Uh and at this point, the friend who’s talking looks at me -- just me -- and goes, “You don’t consider yourself white?” And I made a joke about my family. Because my grandfather’s family had slaves. And I was like, “Oh, because I had --“ you know, “had to have slaves. And so, no,” kind of a flippant comment. And then they started getting up in arms, like, “Oh, my God! We -- Why do I have to apologize for slavery?” and blah blah blah, just going off. And it’s eight of them. It’s like seven or eight of them against me. And I’m in the back. Uh I’m up against the wall, literally up against the wall -- sitting up against the wall, and I cannot escape. And I’m just like, “You’re just going to talk to each other and agree with each other? You’re not even going to listen to me? So uh I’m going to stop talking.” But then they wondered why I didn’t say anything. (laughs) Yeah. So I really never wanted to repeat that experience again.

JEN CHAU: I can understand that --

ASHA SUNDARARAMAN: Yeah.

JEN CHAU: -- absolutely. So you would say diversity, being -- (laughter) being in diverse groups is important to you?

ASHA SUNDARARAMAN: That is -- yeah, I think so. It’s just it’s more comfortable. People get it more. You don’t have to explain as much. So. Which, at this point in my life -- Uh you get tired of explaining.

JEN CHAU: Do you feel like that was a big part of your experience being mixed heritage, that you had to explain?

ASHA SUNDARARAMAN: I di-- You know, uh it's funny. I think that -- I think more uh -- It didn't start happening until I came back from Nigeria, where I was always mistaken for something else. Uh s-- when I visited colleges, so this girl at Barnard asked me if I was Armenian. And some-- at new freshman orientation at Wellesley, someone came up to me and asked me if -- asked me where I was from and then was like, "No, no, no. Where are you really from?" Uh I think -- because she was -- she was Persian and she just wanted to -- she wanted someone who she felt like she could relate to. And I was like, "Sorry, not -- (laughs) that's not me." Uh I -- I feel like college was more like that than anything else. High school was just you were who you were and everyone was -- everyone was there, uh although in Indiana there was some explaining. But I was also somebody's cousin, so it was like, "Oh, well, you're their cousin. OK uh." It was definitely more the having grown up abroad thing that was strange for -- strange concept for everyone to grasp. "Wait, you came from where? Whe--? What was that like? Uh! Weird! OK." Uh the race -- racial things started much later in my life, other than the incidents when I was like -- uh when I was in elementary school. (laughs) Other than that, it kind of started -- it definitely was a later thing. I'm not really sure why. Uh maybe it's because for my formative years I was outside the country, in a place where everybody was -- everyone was from somewhere else.

JEN CHAU: When you say, "what happened in elementary school," do you mean um the -- the kind of teasing that would happen?

[0:54:49]

ASHA SUNDARARAMAN: Yeah, teasing. Uh I -- I had a cla-- a group of classmates uh who I also did Brownies with -- you know, we were all Brownies together -- who were very S-- Orange County, Southern Californian -- uh not all of them but the loudest ones -- (laughs) were Orange County, Southern Californian. So we had to bring s-- I remember we had to bring snacks, all had to bring snacks for Brownies. And being my mother, instead of bringing like chips and -- or whatever, you know, whatever was typical, she brought Indian food. She brought the snack, and like kulfi. And the kids were just -- they would

have none of it, like, “Ah, no. What is this? Auh, auh!” Uh the hot snacks she cou-- she couldn’t really say anything about. The kulfi, she goes, “I should have just told it was ice cream.” (laughs) But they were -- they were very insular, uh and probably still are.

JEN CHAU: Mm.

ASHA SUNDARARAMAN: They still live in Orange County, you know, went to high school in Orange County, we-- I don’t know where they went to college -- any of them went to college. But probably still very much Orange County. But --

JEN CHAU: How do you -- how would you identify yourself today?

ASHA SUNDARARAMAN: I would -- I would say I’m a mixed-race, third-culture kid.

Because I think uh there’s not -- you can’t really, or at least I can’t, really separate myself from one or the other. Uh I am -- I mean, I’m as much white as I am Indian. So. I definitely would call myself a person of color, though, because there just -- there are things that -- I mean, I say this to my mom sometimes, like, “My God, you’re so white!” (laughs) when she said stup-- ignorant things and then wonders why my brother and I are like, “What? Just no, no.” Uh because I think there’s -- I think there’s a certain awareness that comes with being mixed and being a person of color, that you don’t have to have if you’re -- if you’re not. And I’ve -- I think I have those -- that awareness. Uh so.

JEN CHAU: Mm-hmm. Is how you identify yourself -- has that changed over the years?

ASHA SUNDARARAMAN: I don’t think it really has. Uh because the thing -- uh I didn’t grow up with -- uh with the Indian community. Uh we went for Diwali and that was about it, occasionally went to temple, but not very often. Uh my father’s not a temple-going person. Uh and he -- he also didn’t really -- he was never really part of that community. It’s very -- especially in California, it’s a very North Indian -- North Indian contingent and he’s South Indian. So he doesn’t -- It’s no-- it’s just not the same. I think a lot of people don’t realize (laughs) that there’s a big cultural divide when you go south. But there is. And I -- I think it’s -- l-- when I was l-- younger, it was definitely separate. They had the Indian side, that went to dance class and voice lessons and, you know, had things that -- these giant houses and -- I don’t even remember where they were, Brea, or something like that, like huge houses! And then there was the other side, that did

Brownies and ballet and -- and all those other things that you do when you're a kid. Uh and they didn't really -- they didn't really mix, except at home, where it didn't -- But home, it didn't really matter. Like you're -- it's home. It's -- everything's the same. But I think, as I've gotten older, I've definitely started identifying myself more as both as opposed to one or the other, just because it seems like that's -- Like if I -- I dated -- I dated a white guy and I felt very not white. And I dated an Indian guy. I felt very not Indian. (laughs) So I'm kind of like, aeh, it's in between. Everything is just in between.

JEN CHAU: How -- what else would you say about being mixed? And what is the experience like to you?

ASHA SUNDARARAMAN: I think -- I think it's one of those experiences that's unique to everybody. Because not everyone necessarily has -- uh ha-- nee-- has had to wor-- had to have the awareness. Or not everyone really cares about whether or not -- you know, mixed race issues or, you know, has really thought about whether or not they're mixed. And then you -- I mean, and some people really do a lot and have a lot of -- have a lot of uh thi-- more -- lot more that they go through. I ha-- I have uh kind of, I think, a unique situation at work, where [1:00:00] I'm one of four people in the office who's actually mixed. Uh but I think we all have different -- different experiences. One of them is from -- from the D.C. -- the metro a-- D.C. metro area. And she -- I think her father's like government or something like that, government or military. Because she grew up other places, as well, like the Philippines. Uh and so she's -- And she went to Howard. So she went to an [HVC]. And so she has -- like she has a different experience than, say, one coworker, who's half Ecuadorian and half Egyptian, who didn't grow up with his Egyptian father but grew up with a Columbian step-father, and so -- and in Queens. So it was like -- And that's different from -- my other coworker's half Japanese and half white -- who has family in Japan but is definitely from Virginia. Like it's -- I think we all have such a diversity of experiences. But there's also something -- there's also something that's shared. Uh I mean, whether or not it's the same thing that's shared, it's -- Who knows? But -- I -- uh I think it's one of those things that's just unique to -- unique to everybody. Because everyone kind of deals with it in their own way and has their own -- [You know]?

JEN CHAU: You talked about how, for the first time, you really had to deal with a lot of questions when you went to Wellesley. Uh do you feel like it feels the same, that you're getting that same kind of uh external feedback now? Or is it different?

ASHA SUNDARARAMAN: Uh I think it's the same. It's -- Uh I just got back from -- from uh Jordan -- uh on vacation in Jordan. And everyone just assumed I was Arab -- though I got French and Pakistani, as well. So, (laughs) it's kind of -- I think I got Italian at one point, too. Oh, it's just -- it just continues. And I think -- I don't know, I think maybe because I'm older, as opposed to when I was younger, people just --

[1:02:10]

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ASHA SUNDARARAMAN: -- they feel like they can -- they can ask and they can say something and -- (laughs) I had -- I had a -- a woman on the plane -- I was reading Harry Potter in French. Because I -- trying to keep up my French. Uh I had this French woman sitting next to me. So she starts speaking to me in French. She asked me if I'm French. I said, "No, I'm American." She said, "But you're no-- you must not be fully American, because you're a little dark. So like Spanish, Italian?" So that was funny, because it was very Eurocentric. But (laughs) I said, "No, German, actually," which kind of threw her. Uh I -- I enjoy doing those kind of things, uh just, if people ask me -- like assume one thing, then I'll just tell them the exact opposite. Uh they get really confused. (laughs) Uh I -- Yeah. Uh it just -- it continues. I don't think there's ever going to be an end.

JEN CHAU: And how does it make you feel when you're asked the question?

ASHA SUNDARARAMAN: I kind of find the question to be impertinent. Well, because I'm like, "You're -- you're a stranger. You don't know anything about me. Why -- why do you feel the need --?" Like you feel like you can ask me what I am, versu-- I'm not going to sit there and ask you whether or not you're from, you know, I don't know, Kentucky or something like that uh and what you're doing here. It -- I think people like -

- people like boxes. Uh people like to know where you are in their worldview. And when you don't really fit with their worldview, it kind of -- it throws them off. Uh it's too bad, actually. (laughs) But what can you do?

JEN CHAU: Can you talk a little bit about uh the 2000 census and it being the first time multiracial people could check more than one box?

ASHA SUNDARARAMAN: I don't know if I really paid attention, to be honest. Uh but I kind of did. But having taken so many of the standardized tests -- I don't even remember what I used to check. I -- I think, by the time that I -- by the time I got to -- to college applications, uh you could already check more than one box. So actually, I do remember getting like from, I think, one of the South Asian groups, and South -- actually, [probably] WASAC, at Wellesley, the South Asian group, a letter before I got there, because they had gone through -- And they don't a-- I don't think they had gone through uh the race category but they'd gone through all the last names and said, "All right, well, you're -- (laughs) you're from here, so we're going to send you this." And I -- I used to get, from the Hindus' -- uh Hindu group an invitation every single year that I was there, with -- uh I enjoyed the little piece -- piece of burfi that they used to send me -- uh inviting me to be -- be part of the -- Uh but, you know, I kind of -- uh i-- I had the awareness -- it's like, "Oh! Well, that's good. Now we can finally do that." But it wa-- didn't really -- it didn't really [seem] -- seem to have affected me. Uh I think I always used to just check "Other" anyway.

JEN CHAU: And did you have a reaction to Barack Obama and, you know, having him be our first president who could have talked about coming from this mixed background?

ASHA SUNDARARAMAN: Uh that's -- Uh I kind of thought it was about time. It was interesting, though, to hear my -- my mom's side of the family -- because they're Republican -- say, "Oh, well, you know, uh I mean, he's half white, so --" It wasn't that he was our first black president. It was that, "Oh, uh he's half white." Uh I thi-- I thought it was more interesting to notice that he'd grown up in -- had Indonesian step-father and grown up some time in Indone-- some in Indonesia. Uh I still have to read his books. I haven't do-- I haven't done that yet. But uh I definitely thought that it was -- it was good that it was a new perspective. But at the same time, his perspective is not

necessarily what I've grown up with. Because he grew -- grew up at a time where that's -
 - He had to -- I mean, he -- he was half black, so he was black. Like that's -- He
 identifies black. He's -- that's who he is, even though he has um a white mother and a
 white family. No, I think -- uh I definitely think he -- he's from a different generation, a
 generation where you had to choose, because that's how society was going to see you.
 And now, even though society sees you one way, you can be -- you can say, "No. I'm
 not going to accept it. That's -- [5:00] that's the way you think. Because this is the way I
 want to be identified. So I'm going to challenge your worldview." (laughs) Uh but I
 definitely think he brought a different perspective, which is -- was much needed.

JEN CHAU: Uh can you talk about any ways you may have been involved in mixed
 community?

ASHA SUNDARARAMAN: I was -- uh I was in Fusion at Wellesley, the mixed-race group. Uh
 I went to the conferences. I was co-president my senior year -- or junior year, I guess it
 was. That's right, because it was like half a semester. That was a semester. Because I
 went -- I went abroad. And I came back and some-- I don't remember who was
 president senior year. Uh I think I was more involved with it my first couple years than I
 was by the time I was a senior, and probably because I had a mixed-race roommate. It
 was the first time -- I mean, it was the first time I'd ever really been friends with
 somebody who had -- who had a similar experience to me. I -- I think I started -- I started
 becoming more aware of it in high school and then college is really the time I was like,
 "Oh, well, I can -- I can do this now." Then I went off to grad school, to just all -- Uh I
 guess I'm kind of trying to get back into it, especially now that I have -- (laughs) I have
 the coworker who's like, "All right! Let's do this! Let's go see this." Uh but we don't --
 well, you don't have a lot of other mixed-race people around. And uh I don't have a lot
 of mixed-race friends. Uh it's harder to -- to get in -- back into the community. Because
 there's just -- like you're doing your o-- other things. So.

JEN CHAU: And what were those experiences like, when you were in the organization at
 Wellesley, when you were in Fusion and when you went to conferences? What were
 your experiences like?

ASHA SUNDARARAMAN: I think it was one of those things like, “Oh, wow! Finally so-- people -- people who’ve had -- who’ve had similar experience, people who -- I mean, people who think my brother and I are married --“ because apparently, we don’t look anything alike, um that kind of th-- I remember some-- I don’t remember what her name was -- uh t-- someone talking about -- she was half Chinese and half white -- talking about living in Hong Kong and going out to dinner with her father. And people would assume that she was his like younger girlfriend. S-- and it’s -- it was inter-- it was definitely interesting to hear the different -- different experiences people had and relate them to my own. And I think that was the benefit of -- of having a c-- that club in the community, is to share -- you know, to share what -- some things that, you don’t necessarily have other people to share them with. So I was -- And I th-- I definitely think it wa-- having -- having a half-Japanese, half-white roommate (laughs) my first year hel-- first two years helped.

JEN CHAU: Did you guys talk about it a lot?

ASHA SUNDARARAMAN: We did, actually. I think, our first year, we talked about it uh more than -- I mean, by the second year we were like, “Auh --!” Uh our first year, it was definitely -- it was definitely something we talked about -- uh mostly within Fusion but also in our dorm room. Because, you know, you’re in a closed space. (laughs) She’s funny, though. She -- she cracks me up.

JEN CHAU: What sort of conversations do you -- did you have? Do you remember?

ASHA SUNDARARAMAN: Um I remember I ha-- we had a conversation -- uh we had the conversation about her -- her growing up in Japan uh and being Amerasian and having -- having issues there. We -- and we had a conversation about religion. Although her parents were the same reli-- they’re both Quakers. She had gone to a Quaker school. Her parents were Quakers -- that had a farm. Uh I don’t think uh --

JEN CHAU: Hm.

ASHA SUNDARARAMAN: I think I’ve met her dad like once. You know, her mom came, mov-- uh to move her in and -- I don’t think her dad came with -- with them. Because it wasn’t that far away. (laughs) Whereas my parents -- like my parents and my brother were there. Uh she had -- she had an older brother. Uh I think it was just one of those --

it was one of those things that, yeah, we had the conversations about. I can't recall what they were at the time but -- But, uh you know, because it was a part of our experience, like and our shared experience, uh it was -- was one of the getting to know you period. "Oh, well -- All right, well, this is -- this is what's happened to me. What's happened to you?" you know, "How does it feel having family in this part of the world and that part of the world and this part of the world?" you know. I think also we didn't necessarily have to talk about extensively, because -- I mean, because we both lived it. So it's not -- you don't have to explain it to each other. So you just -- if it comes up in conversation, it comes up in conversation. So.

[10:15]

JEN CHAU: That makes sense. Uh tell me about living in Brooklyn.

ASHA SUNDARARAMAN: I've lived here for five years. Um the first year, I lived in East Flatbush with uh one of my friends from college, who is currently -- She's from -- she's from Queens. She's from Forest Hills. She currently lives in Long Island City. Uh she actually had a lot of issues in our neighborhood. Because she's Chinese-American and it was a Haitian neighborhood. So she got a lot of comments. Uh and she -- I think might have prompted her to move back to Queens, (laughs) to be honest. Because it just -- they weren't -- they weren't very nice. Uh and, I mean, there's a -- there's a history of -- the h-- the history of tension between the communities anyway. And I felt that significantly less than she did, because I'm -- I mean, I'm not -- I'm not Chinese. Uh I don't -- When they -- uh when I would get catcalled, it would be uh something else. Uh I moved to -- moved to Park Slope about four years ago, almost. And that was -- (laughs) that's a change from East Flatbush, quite a big change. I lived at the -- the top of -- uh just off Prospect Park West, when I first moved -- uh moved here -- or moved into Park Slope, rather, just off Prospect Park West, in a three-story --

JEN CHAU: Mm-hmm.

ASHA SUNDARARAMAN: -- or three-family home that uh they converted to a one-family home, and uh with -- I lived with a bunch of New Yorkers and one -- this guy from Colorado, who were all friends, um and gone to -- gone to Stuy and had gone -- One of them had gone to MIT and the other one gone to Penn and then they'd come back.

(laughs) Uh I like -- and I liked -- I like the trees. I like being around the trees. (laughs) And so I pr-- I think that's why I prefer Brooklyn to Queens. Because it seems -- at least the part -- granted I live in Park Slope, which is probably why -- at least seems a lot greener than -- than Queens does. My friend keeps trying to get me to move to -- to Astoria. I'm like, "No, I li-- I really like the trees, actually uh. There are trees on my block. Uh it's not really the same. I don't know what it is. It's just not the same." Uh it's -- I think the area -- I live -- since I -- I currently still live around Seventh Avenue. It's a -- it's an interesting -- interesting group down there. It's a lot of strollers, uh a lot of 30-something yuppies with strollers -- sometimes double -- double stroller. I don't know whether I understand a double stroller! (laughs) Uh I have uh one friend from Wellesley who lives clo-- just off -- uh she lives off Fifth Avenue. And I think down there it's a little bit more -- uh it's younger. It's a you-- kind of a younger crowd. But I got -- I got good deals on my rent, so I live off Seventh Avenue. Uh I mean, like it's a cute neighborhood.

JEN CHAU: And in terms of diversity, how -- how does it feel to you?

ASHA SUNDARARAMAN: Uh it's -- to be honest, it's kind of a strange neighborhood that way. There's uh -- Since I live on Sixth Street, between Sixth and Seventh Avenues -- On Eighth Avenue, there's like a Catholic school. And so a lot of people who come off the train, off the F train um or the G train -- to go to that school. So it's -- for lack of a better word, it's -- it's kind of diverse during the week and, the weekends, it's not really very diverse. I definitely see -- uh I definitely see the difference. And there's a lot of -- uh there's a lot of nannies. You -- there are a lot of nannies uh during the week. And, you know, the weekends, the parents are, you know, kind of home, as opposed to somewhere else where the -- some other neighborhood where they're no-- might not be. But I definitely see more diversity during the weekdays, when people are coming in to go to -- to go to private school, the Catholic school, as opposed to on the weekends. We're - - I mean, it's -- it's not a ch-- it's an expensive neighborhood. It's -- And it's not necessarily one that's rela-- that's very diverse. (laughs) It's kind of -- Which is too bad.

[15:00]

JEN CHAU: Would you say that it feels like home?

ASHA SUNDARARAMAN: Mm not -- not especially. If -- I don't actually -- because most of my friends live -- that I spend time with live in Manhattan or Queens, to be honest, I don't spend a lot of time in -- in Park Slope. I enjoy it when I do. I'm like, "Oh! I can go to Rose Water. I can go to -- uh I can go to Tea Spot." Well, Tea Spot's in N-- is in Manhattan. Tea Lounge, rather. (laughs) There's only two places. Tea Lounge. "Or I can go --" you know, "walk up to the farmers' market, sit in Prospect Park." Uh that's -- those -- I mean, those are the kinds of things I do when I'm -- I'm actually in Brooklyn. But -- And I managed to spend all of yesterday in my neighborhood, which is kind of an accomplishment. I did notice, though, that the -- the people running the laundromat -- I think they must be like -- I'll bet they're So-- Uh they're definitely Arab. I'm trying to think. Like Somali, though? They kind of look Somali. (laughs) So there's li-- and people working there are diverse. But the people living there aren't really that diverse. Uh so it's -- uh I like it, for New York, but it's not really -- I don't know if I would call it home. It doesn't -- I don't know if it really feels like home.

JEN CHAU: Do you think you'll stay there for a while? Or are you thinking about being somewhere lese, living somewhere else?

ASHA SUNDARARAMAN: I think I've got about a year and then I have to reevaluate. Uh I -- be-- I mean, just because of the job and uh getting bored at work, and winter. (laughs) Uh from the tropics. I like tropical weather. Uh not going to lie. Uh I -- I've given myself about a year to -- to stay and see how it -- see how it goes at work and then decide what to do next. Uh I mean, five years is really the longest I've ever been in one place continuously. So it's kind of an accomplishment. (laughs) But at the same time, there's just -- at least -- I think because I wasn't -- I wasn't born and raised here, uh there's a -- I don't -- there's a transitory um feeling, that I'm not really sure I want to do anymore. You know, I'd like to have the same friend -- core friend core group for uh more than one year at a time. It would be nice. Uh as much as I've moved around a lot, I've always moved around where there's a community. And this is the first time I think I've ever really been without a community. But at the same time, my friends who are New

Yorkers, they've got their -- their people that they've been friends with for years. And they have the -- It's -- it's interesting. It's definitely such a dichotomy.

JEN CHAU: Tell me about some of the things that you enjoy doing.

ASHA SUNDARARAMAN: Um I -- I sing, and dance. Uh I take a da-- a dance class, in -- luckily, in my building -- it's really convenient -- (laughs) uh in Manhattan. Uh I write occasionally. I've gotten -- [I'm starting to do] -- more into photography. So I'm currently attempting, this year, to do a 365-day project, where I take one picture for 365 days -- every day of 365 days. Uh so now I have a -- now I have a blog -- because everyone has a blog -- uh to put -- you know, put the pictures up. And I kind of wanted to, when I get some time to sit down and actually do it, just do short -- some short prose on each picture. Uh I -- I like to travel, which is nice for my job. I haven't gotten to travel a lot yet. But I'm -- I'm hoping that uh this year I get to do some more travel. Because then -- then I will be less bored. (laughs) Uh well, uh I mean, I go see a lot of plays. And my friend and I go see -- go to the movies all the time. It's kind of -- it's kind of become our thing. We just -- Calls me up. "All right, you want to see this terrible movie?" "Uh I suppose. Yeah, I guess." "Do you want to see this really ba-- terrible movie?" "What about this good movie?" (laughs) Uh yeah, should I have to go see *New Year's Eve* [20:00] with her? Uh what else do I do? And I was in -- uh at Well-- at Wellesley I was kind of -- and pre-Wellesley -- I was in theater. I -- I've done a little bit here. But I got so caught up in other things that I just haven't -- haven't done much. And I'm trying to get back into it. Uh one my friends does -- I used to work for public access cable in Manhattan, Manhattan Neighborhood Network. So I have a lot of -- I have a group of friends from there, uh who are remarkably diverse -- it being public access cable, I think. (laughs) Uh so one of them said, "Oh, well, I have a-- access to all this equipment. Why do I d-- why don't I do a TV show every --" you know, "every month. We'll do a different episode. It'll be something completely different. It'll be different theme, a different format." Uh so I've kind of gotten started doing that with her. I think the next one is going to be a game show. That's -- so that's been fun. But -- Yeah, I -- I do a lot of artsy things, I suppose -- when I'm not at work. (laughs)

JEN CHAU: And can you say a little bit about what you do for work?

ASHA SUNDARARAMAN: I coordinate our volunteers. Uh I'm literally the volunteer coordinator. Uh it's a lot of admin, which I'm trying to get away from. Because I've been doing that for a while. Uh but it's a lo-- it's a -- also a lot of making sure the -- the volunteers know where -- where they're going and what they're doing and uh keeping up the relationships with them and -- My boss never answers her phone. So (laughs) getting calls from them, saying, "[No] -- no, she's in a meeting. I'm really sorry," "No, she's out of town." Uh I -- I was able to go on a program last year. So that was really nice, to be with -- with them and watching what they were d-- what they were doing and being in the OR and -- uh and just being able to experience what it is they would do on a -- on that week, so I can actually -- when people ask me, I can actually tell them, have an informed opinion. Uh I do -- I like what -- working with the volunteers. I enjoy the -- like the communications aspect of it. Uh we're getting an admin assistant, so hopefully that I don't have to do much more of the admin. But uh they're -- they're an interesting group of people. They're very -- from all different backgrounds and all different -- all different us states and countries and -- (laughs) It's a lot of customer service, keeping them happy.

JEN CHAU: And can you say -- and, you know, we were talking about this before -- but just a little bit about what the organization does?

ASHA SUNDARARAMAN: Um so we do -- we do preventable blindness. We send ophthalmologists to other countries to train other ophthalmologists. And our gimmick -- because every nonprofit has got to have a gimmick -- is we have a plane. It has a hospital on it. Uh so the plane will do, ideally, seven to eight programs a year, where they'll go into a city um and a country and spend two to three weeks on the ground with the plane, training uh with approximately -- There'll usually be three to four ophthalmologists, two anesthesiologists, and one to two nurses a week um training. And we do -- Uh occasionally a biomedical engineer. We -- we train not only in ophthalmology but also anesthesiology, nursing, and biomed. Because, I mean, they all -- you can't -- you can't do surgery if you don't -- if your equipment isn't working and if you don't have a nurse to -- you know, to be there, an anesthesiologist. So we definitely try to do a full scope of the training. We also bring out uh what we call associate ophthalmologists, who are

residents. They'll just assist with the programs. Uh and it's -- uh it's for people who are really interested in international ophthalmology and pathology, so that they're not necessarily going to see in -- you know, in their own practice. Because there just -- I mean, there's just so much more. There's so much more out there than what you find in the U.S., or -- or in the Western world in general, the kind of -- You know, here, if you get a cataract, you immediately go to the doctor and get it -- get it removed. There uh it could be 20 years before you have the money, you've done a -- have enough money. And we -- we cater more to the underserved communities, uh rural -- especially rural communities, who don't -- don't necessarily have the access. Uh and we want to train the ophthalmologists who are going to go back to those communities to -- you know, to practice. So we do -- we take the plane places and then we send one or two -- one or two people to smaller settings, to a hospital, just to be with the hospital and the trainees. And it'll be one subspecialty. You wou-- I didn't know before I got there and other people don't necessarily know -- is that ophthalmology has quite a number of subspecialties. (laughs) And everyone is -- everyone is supposed uh to specialize on a different part of the eye. Uh so it's important [25:00] for us to -- to train, and in the different parts of the eye uh and to train specialists. We really focus more on the subspecialty ophthalmology rather than general ophthalmology. Uh and hopefully they have more than one ophthalmologist in the country. But -- So we partner -- we partner with hospitals um and ophthalmic organizations, and with the permission of governments to go in and do it. And we're nonaligned, nongovernmental. Uh that's -- You know, we're very much -- We were in Syria in February, before every-- all hell broke loose. Uh we tend -- this year we seem to have a tendency to go into countries right before (laughs) all hell breaks loose. I don't know what's wrong with us. Uh so it's interesting -- uh it's a -- interesting work. Because a lot of -- When you're -- when you're out there -- And you don't necessarily see this in New York office. But when you're out there, people are really -- they're really excited about what you're doing and they're really excited to have you come in and either train -- uh train their ophthalmologists -- and also do surgeries, and like, "Oh, my God, it's -- it's amazing." Uh and we had -- this year we had Daniel Craig come out to the plane, because Omega is sponsoring us and he's our brand ambassador,

essentially. So I think they had a good time out there. (laughs) Uh yeah. It -- it's -- uh we do some good work. We've got management issues and follow-up issues, in terms of knowing wha-- knowing what kind of impact we're having. Because it's -- it's capacity building. It's hard to quantify capacity building, whether or not the people you've trained have gone on to other things and, you know, become better. You're not -- you're more -- Uh we need to be able to quantify it and it's a little bit hard to -- it's hard to quantify.

JEN CHAU: It sounds really interesting, the work.

ASHA SUNDARARAMAN: It's a really interesting organization. It's really too bad we've got such (laughs) management issues! I mean, it's an NGO thing, I think.

JEN CHAU: Um I'm curious to hear a little bit more about all of these different things that you like to do extracurricularly. Uh and you sort of described yourself as an artsy person. Is that something that you kind of grew up with? Or is it something that you've developed more as -- as an adult?

ASHA SUNDARARAMAN: Uh my mother was one of those people who put us in everything, quite literally everything. Uh by the time, I think, I was eight, I had done tap, ballet, gymnastics, piano, soccer, art class, uh Indian dancing, Indian voice. Were there more? And then the next year I did skiing and ice skating. So the only things that really -- the only things that really stayed with me were -- were really the piano and the soccer, although I quit soccer when I was 12 because I was the only girl on the team -- uh which kind of said something about middle school boys. (laughs) And then I did softball. So -- But I -- I liked to do all of them. But as I got older, I think I had to choose. And I like -- I really liked stories and storytelling. And I think everything, career-wise and -- I mean, uh and extracurricular-wise, has kind of filtered back into just getting a story out there. Uh so that's -- I mean, the singing and -- and even dance is more for fun. It's li-- I take a Bollywood dance class. And our teacher's really like -- she's very -- she's very small and uh --

JEN CHAU: Mm.

ASHA SUNDARARAMAN: -- s-- and very energetic. She uh -- she wants -- The first -- the first time -- uh first -- within the first few weeks of the class, uh it was Indians, and me. Now it's uh kind of uh definitely branched out more and there are more of other people.

But it was all Indians and me. And she -- (laughs) she goes, "OK, everyone sing along to the song. Everyone -- everyone can speak Hindi, right? Everyone knows the song." I'm like, "No." So she whips around and stares at me and goes, "Seriously?" Because she gets -- uh think she uh kind of assumed by my first name that I was just North Indian, and my -- my skin color. So that was kind of the reason. So that -- that I do for fun. Like uh we perform, as well, but it's mostly because I en-- I enjoy being active like that. Uh I did -- I mean, I l-- I like playing ultimate Frisbee and, you know, kicking around a soccer ball uh and things like that, horseback riding. Uh so I like the athletic stuff. But when it comes to -- [30:00] I think, when it comes to what really interests me, is I like -- I like people's stories. Um and I like knowing. I like mysteries. I've always liked mystery novels. Uh I like kind of -- I like the art of discovery, like discovering, uh which is actually -- I really liked that about Jordan about going around the ruins. Because there wasn't -- there wasn't so many things -- there weren't so many things that were roped off. There was practically nothing that was roped off. "Oh, we can't go here. You can't go here." So you -- it was really about climbing over these ruins (laughs) --

JEN CHAU: Hm.

ASHA SUNDARARAMAN: -- or scrambling over. As the Lonely Planet says, there's a -- there's -- in between hiking and climbing, there's scrambling. Because you're just trying to get up this rock. Uh so there's just, you know, discovering, "Oh, look, there's a door there. What's behind the door? Oh! There's a -- there's uh stairs. Where do the stairs go? Oh, they go up there!" We -- if we were in the States, this would totally be roped off! (laughs) Like they would not be able -- Liability. You can -- can fall down. It wasn't -- it was not a very big space. Uh s-- a lo-- I -- I like the discovery and -- uh and the stories and -- I think that's kind of what's led to both what I do extracurricularly and what I do as a career, just -- you know, just getting out there and telling people what -- you know, what this person -- if it's -- if it's theater, you know, or a -- musical theater, like what this person is thinking, at any given point. You know? Uh and I don't know if that stemmed from being constantly -- it's constantly questioning my reality. (laughs) But I don't know. Maybe it uh --

JEN CHAU: Can you say more about that, questioning your reality?

ASHA SUNDARARAMAN: Uh I think because I've always-- except for -- I mean, uh except for Nigeria, I kind of -- uh always grown up in a place where I'm on the outside looking in. Uh even within my families, uh yeah, I'm on the outside looking in. And like right now my cousins -- uh Indiana cousins have such different -- they're in such a different place in their life that it's just, "Wow! You're not that much older than me but you have a career that you've been in for a while, with a husband and at least one child. And you're talking about your kids and like raising your kids." And uh my brother and I are just sitting there looking at [them]. This is so outside our frame of reference at the moment that it's -- it's almost like it's another -- I mean, it's a dif-- it's a different life. It's a completely different life. Uh and having a different life than most people I know, uh I think that's -- uh I mean, that leads you to -- to look at the way y-- the way you live versus the way someone lives and your reality versus, you know, someone else's reality. My -- so my reality's different from my cousin's reality. Because, uh you know, I live in New York and I have -- I just got back from Jordan. And it's -- it's also -- Uh they say one of the uh -- or the stereotype is one of the -- the characteristics of a third-culture kid, that you're arrogant. And part of the reason you're arrogant is because, you know, your -- the way you relate to things is different from the way someone else relates to things. So I -- you know, I can look at something and say, "Oh, (laughs) well -- oh, well, when I was in an airport in India -- did -- uh that's like with this." And people look at you like, "What are you talking about?" Uh so you start to think more -- I mean, you thi-- start thinking more about how you come off to other people but also just about how your life is different from theirs and what it is -- you know, what it is about it that makes it -- theirs interesting or yours interesting. And -- Uh I -- I had -- Yeah, I -- I guess that's kind of questioning reality -- not necessarily questioning, just examining and exploring uh various realities. I mea-- I also think about just the difference between the way my parents grew up, my -- my grandparents grew up -- where my great grandparents grew up versus the way I grew up. Uh my grandmother made a comment about eating the same food every day and how she couldn't believe that we had issues with having the same meal, (laughs) like the same dinner every single day, like we wanted something -- want something different. She's like, "Auh! Well, when I was a kid --" Uh but also like my -- I mean, my father grew up

in India in the '50s, '60s. Uh and he -- he said they had sleeping mats, they had one teddy bear, and they went to the -- the well to -- to get water. Uh my grandmother would go to the well to get water every day. It was just -- it's such -- it's such -- so foreign to [35:00] me that that -- that's the way he lived. Or my -- my mom took a boat when she moved to Europe -- which is currently, actually, sitting in the Philadelphia harbor, oddly enough. Like she was on -- she was on a ship. I took an airplane to -- to Nigeria. She was on a ship. (laughs) Uh it's just -- I li-- I like imagining that I'm uh -- like imagining what it was -- what it was like, which might be why I like [roads].

JEN CHAU: And I'm -- I mean, I think it's great that you're uh so passionate about stories and storytelling. And so, therefore, I think it's great that you're involved in this project, because it's about telling stories. And I guess to wrap it up, I'm really curious to hear you talk about some of the -- the most positive aspects of being mixed or a third-culture kid.

ASHA SUNDARARAMAN: I think -- uh I think I -- it's just uh the different perspectives. Uh I like that I have a different perspective from other people. I like that uh my breakfast consists of pongal with Indian pickle, rather than cereal. Uh and I think I also like that I have -- I have so many stories to tell. I've -- mo-- I considered, brie-- might still consider it -- but briefly considered journalism as a -- as a career, and talked to, actually, a Wellesley alum about -- about what -- ho-- getting into it and what it's like and uh things like that. And she said, "Well, the -- [and] the difference between you and everybody else is that you already have stories. Like you know where the stories are and you already have them, versus someone who might no--" you know, they don't necessarily have it. Um and then she proceeded to ask me if (laughs) my parents uh wanted to arrange a marriage for me. Because she di-- we were talking on the phone, so she assumed by my name that I as fully Indian -- and was like, "Oh, are your parents trying to arrange a marriage?" I'm like, "No, I'm pretty sure they just wanted me to have a career first." She's like, "Oh, well, you should write a piece about arranged marriage." What is it with journalists and being obsessed with arranged marriage? (laughs) Uh and even though I get impatient with the questions, I also do like -- I li-- kind of like educating people. I like saying, "Well, I mean, that's not --" As long as they're willing to listen, I

think. Uh one of my best friends is -- he's -- he's always like, "Oh, I don't really know you." And I'm like, "You've known me for 13 years. You know me." "Uh well, but, I don't know, I mean, you're so different from me." But at the same time, he -- he was one of those people -- and I think part of the reason he's my best friend is we would sit down and have long conversations about everything. And, you know, he would think he was the first person to ever ask me what it was like to be mixed -- which kind of threw me off guard. But it was like, "Wow! You're actually interested in my experience. This is a foreign concept to me, (laughs) that you're interested in the fact that I didn't grow up the way that you did. And --" You know. Uh I don't know. I -- I like that I have family all over the world and my cousins' English is not that great. (laughs) It's just that I have to go learn Italian, because -- so I can communicate with them better. Uh and I think -- I think I have a richer experience because of it. Because I just -- and we just blend. Like my family's just kind of blended. And that's what we've done. And it's not unusual to have pancakes on one day and like, I don't know, something else on the next. It's like it just is. It's just the way it is. It's -- I put Indian pickle in my macaroni and cheese. I mean, it's -- uh I mean, I think it's just we want to be a melting pot in this country and it's not really -- it doesn't really work very well. But I like that, in my family, it works.

JEN CHAU: Well, I'm very excited for people to hear your story and I appreciate so much your sharing it with us.

ASHA SUNDARARAMAN: Yeah, I like to get the stories out there.

(laughter)

JEN CHAU: Thanks, Asha.

ASHA SUNDARARAMAN: No problem.

[39:28]

END OF AUDIO FILE 2