

Melissa Yanfen Huang & Tenzin Kunsel

AAS 307 Final project

05/01/18

SECTION ONE (5 points)

Person interviewed: Nancy Yao Maasbach

Interviewee's title or position: President of Museum of Chinese American (MOCA)

Date, time, and length of interview: April 10, 2018 at 2:00 PM. Length of interview: 1 hr 3 minutes.

Your objective in conducting this interview: To learn and understand the role of Nancy Yao Maasbach as an influential woman in the U.S-Asian relations and how her enriched experience in different Chinese communities shaped her goals as the president of MOCA.

SECTION TWO (10 points)

Description of the pre-interview research (What did you find out **prior to the interview** about the person and/or place with which she is affiliated? How did you prepare for the interview?)

List your interview questions.

Before the interview, we searched the name 'Nancy Yao Maasbach' on Google, in hopes of finding out more information about her. We read her biography on the MOCA website, which gave us a general idea about her accomplishments in life and experiences she had prior taking the role as the president of MOCA. We learned that she was the perfect representation of the U.S-Asian relations as she had many years of experience both living and working in Chinese communities. Then, we moved on to her linkedin account to see her education background and professional experience. We found out that she had attended Hunter College High School and moved on to Occidental College where she earned her Bachelor's in Diplomacy and World

Affairs. Then, she moved onto Yale University where she received her Master of Business Administration from the Yale School of Management. During her undergraduate years, she was involved in research in China studies, which most likely gave her the exposure to the field that she was truly interested in. She moved on to working overseas where she was constantly involved in different Asian communities. After this in depth pre-interview research, we could not wait to find out more about her and how her experiences shaped her as the influential woman she is today.

In order to prepare for the interview, Melissa and I decided to first check if our laptop was functioning properly to avoid any technical difficulties while conducting the interview. After checking, we agreed to equally split the questions that we were going to ask. Thus, Melissa asked the first 8 questions and I asked the remaining 7 questions on our list. After splitting the questions, we practiced our own parts on our own. Later, we came together and did a quick rundown of what our actual interview would run like. While doing the rundown, there were times where Melissa and I would pause and not know what to say. During those moments, we agreed to exchange encouraging words to prevent awkward silence when conducting the interview. This strategy allowed for our actual interview to run smoothly without any confusion among us, and the interviewee.

Interview questions:

1. Can you tell us a little bit about yourself? Ethnicity, education, languages you can speak, hobbies, etc.
2. How was your childhood like growing up in New York City as Asian American?
3. Did your childhood have an impact on your professional career?
4. Were you the first one ever to attend college in your family?

5. How was your college experience?
6. How did your college experience shape you into who you are today?
7. Do you believe your major/minor played an important role in becoming the President of MOCA?
8. Why did you want to take that major/minor?
9. Was there ever a time where you were in denial of your Asian ethnicity?
10. Have you ever been treated differently as a woman with Asian background in the professional field?
11. Did this apply into some of your professional pursuits you've taken such as in Goldman Sachs?
12. Can you describe your experience working in Hong Kong after you left Goldman Sachs?
13. What were some of the challenges you faced while transitioning?
14. Now that you are the President of MOCA, what are some future goals that you would like to accomplish for MOCA and the greater Asian community?
15. Is there anything else that you would like to add?

SECTION THREE (10 points; 2 points each)

1. Did you get complete answers to your questions? Explain

We got complete answers to most of our questions. We started off the interview Skype call by asking her to “Tell us a little bit about yourself, including your ethnicity, education”, which was an open ended question. From this question, she gave us a very thorough response. She told us about growing up in NYC where she faced racism as a young girl and went on to other topics from there. Since she was very well spoken and provided us with a lot of information, she even answered some of the questions we had on our question list as she was

telling us about her experiences growing up. There was one question that we felt she did not fully understand, which was when we asked her “Have you ever been treated differently as a woman with Asian background in the professional field?”. In the process of answering this question, she had to pause a few times to think. She told us about some of the story of her ‘cheating the system’ by not paying for metrocard fare when she would go on the subway with her father. She felt that it was wrong and confronted her father about it, but her father saw it as her being rebellious because “no one was looking” anyways. We felt that her story related to another question we asked her earlier, which was related to her being in denial because of her Asian ethnicity. Though she did carry on to tell us that there were circumstances where men would tell her inappropriate things at the professional workfield, we were looking forward to find out if she faced any discriminties working as an Asian American woman. We felt that she could add on more information to it.

2. Was your interview structured, unstructured, or mixed? Explain

Before conducting the interview, Melissa and I thought the interview would be structured since we had practiced earlier before the interview. However after interviewing Miss Nancy, the the interview turned out to be a mixed interview. Melissa and I agreed that it was a mixed interview because Miss Nancy was able to provide answers to questions that were asked, and also gave additional information which answered some of our other questions that were yet to be asked. This prompted us to formulate and ask follow-up questions on spot, and also actively listen. These follow up questions paved the way for the next set of questions that were yet to be answered, and it also helped guide our conversation.

3. What probing questions did you use? Explain

Many probing questions ranging from Miss Nancy's ethnicity, childhood growing up in Flushing, Queens, her college and work experiences, to her current position as the president of Museum of Chinese in America were asked. Of them, we asked Miss Nancy, "Can you describe your experience working in Hong Kong after you left Goldman Sachs? What were some of the challenges you faced while transitioning?". When asked about her experience in Hong Kong working for Goldman Sachs, and the challenges she encountered after quitting her job and making the new transition, Miss Nancy answered saying that while living abroad, "you have a lot more time by yourself...to observe and process" things. After discussing about the "alone time" that Miss Nancy had while working in Hong Kong, Miss Nancy connected it back to her time working in Goldman Sachs where she felt like she had to "prove" herself. Moreover, she wished that she was more mature at the time. These were good probing questions to ask because we were able to truly understand her motive behind why she decided to quit her job at Goldman Sachs, and how she was able to recover and find herself during the "alone time" she had. Overall, her intriguing responses truly influenced the course of our interview and the follow up questions that we asked after.

4. Explain your team approach. That is, who did what?

Our team approach was by splitting up the work into half between Tenzin and Melissa. Melissa met with Professor Christoff to obtain interviewee's contact information and confirmed the interview letter that was sent to the interviewee afterward. Then, Melissa reached out to Nancy Yao Maasbach and maintained communication with the interviewee via email while Tenzin sent out email reminders to the interviewee before our official interview on 4/10/18. For the list of questions we asked Nancy Yao Maasbach, Melissa came up with the first 8 questions, meanwhile Tenzin came up with the remaining 7 questions to finish up the Skype Call interview.

When the interview was done, Melissa typed the transcripts for the first half of the interview, meanwhile Tenzin typed the other half of the transcript. In preparation for the presentation slides, Melissa uploaded the complete interview video to her google drive and shared it with Tenzin so each of us can find specific clip from the interview that answer the question to each of our slides. Melissa was responsible for the 'Content' slide and Tenzin was responsible for the 'Process' slide. Lastly, for the final report, Melissa and Tenzin split up the questions evenly again. This time, Melissa answered the questions relating to the contents meanwhile Tenzin answered the questions relating to the process of the interview/presentation.

5. Did the interviewee give you any documents or references to articles to read, or did she mention other people for you to talk to (or research)? Explain

The interviewee did not provide us with any articles to read, but she did mention at the end of the Skype Call that if we ever needed another woman to have an interview on, she would be happy to provide us with the names and contact information upon request.

SECTION FOUR (30 points)

Insert your interview notes/write up here. Remember to be accurate and concise. Consider what was said, any emerging trends your interviewee mentioned, different interpretations, and recommendations for follow up interviews.

Interview Notes

Nancy grew up in Flushing, NY, in a bilingual family. Nancy speaks mandarin, she is Shanghainese & Chongqing descent. She felt that she had the "Soft image", but she did not want to let her soft looks deceive others and take advantage of her. There was a time when her classmates on the school bus randomly made fun of her for being Chinese, she fought back by

cursing them out with the 'F' word. This was her very first encounter of racism. That was when she realized the power in her, that she is not willing to settle and let boundaries confine her." She also mentioned how people would group her with other Asians in her class, and said how "Kenny Lee was destined to be with her."

She Went to Hunter college high school, president of student body, soft ball player, had a role in theater (got the script she wanted) but she had to give it up because her priority to get into a prestigious college like Harvard. However, she got rejected from Harvard. Rejection from Harvard allowed her to realize that she was not mature enough.

At Hunter, she felt mediocre because she was not performing well academically. In middle school, it was easy for Nancy to get good grades which is why she said that her middle school didn't prepare her enough because she had to compete with people who were not first generation immigrants.

At Occidental College, her English professor pulled her out and asked her if Chinese was her second language. She felt targeted and unintelligent. She said this was due to reason that Hunter didn't educate them on grammar. That's why she felt like she wasn't able to write at a college level, and often time she finds herself messing up her grammar while talking. However, she corrects herself when this happens.

At Occidental, she minored in theater. She said that mentorship from an early age would've helped her to discover her career path in theater. This is why she truly encourages Asian Americans to have this relationship because it is important to get guidance and find what you are

passionate about. Moreover, she wants to inspire Asian Americans born in the U.S. and Asia to pursue careers that they want to pursue.

When applying for jobs, Nancy was looking for a company that was well known and had prestige. That was Goldman Sachs. Nancy said getting accepted to work in Goldman Sachs was sort of like a redemption to get back at not getting accepted to Harvard.

When they hired her, they thought she was a “China Hire”, but she had to confront them that she was not from China. Even though she was fluent in Chinese, she was not from China and thus did not have any relationships with other investment bankers in Shanghai or Beijing that will help promote the company. Her encounter with a coworker at G.S. made her realize that she doesn't want to work there. Also, Nancy felt like she was a minority when working in Goldman Sachs.

Nancy's father worked for the first airplane company “Pan American” that gave them free tickets for international travel. This gave Nancy the exposure to international relation from a young age. This also allowed Nancy to enjoy travelling and enjoy the process. Nancy's mom went to college in Taiwan for a year, but never finished, and came to U.S went to bilingual school in New York. She remembers helping her mom with her college essays when she was 7 years old, and told her mother to improve her English. Thus, she did by subscribing to a magazine that had essays, and her mom would read it and translate it.

Nancy used all her Chinese new year red pocket money (\$60) and applied to Yale theater program, but did not get accepted. She realized she did not try hard enough, and said she “winged it” without enough practice, and was not mature enough for the program. She also

talked about the disadvantages being an Asian women. For instance, there were a lot of uncertainties about her potential, and inappropriate jokes were made in the international relations field that she was pursuing.

Nancy briefly talked about the modesty of Asians and Asian Americans through her parents experience when they attended her 2nd grade parent teacher conference. She can resonate with this modesty when people praise her for her accomplishments. When people compliment her, she finds herself being modest with the compliments. Thus, her husband encourages her to accept the compliments when people compliment her. Furthermore, Nancy mentioned that she puts the museum first and cares more about building a positive reputation for MOCA than receiving an award for her service. As a result, she finds it hard to balance being a good wife and a good mother, and often feels like her professional and personal persona are different.

“In China’s development, the markets were really beginning to form and I love the macro, the macroeconomic, the macro political components of living it and breathing it. I mean before I worked there in Hong Kong was Goldman starting in 1999, and I had worked there in 96’ and 97’ in two instances with CNN. I had followed the pre hand over and then the handover coverage for CNN. I love it. I was such an observer in that space...If you meet me in person, people are always like “oh” you’re so outgoing and all this, but I think in the core I really do like to research and study what is happening in the dynamics. Like I’ve had a lot of time alone. When you live abroad in international settings you have a lot more time by yourself and that's something I’ve learned to appreciate and I do appreciate. There’s a lot of that time on the plane, when you’re by yourself. There’s a lot of that down time when your family is not living with you because you’re 10,000 miles away that you’re by yourself and you’re having a cup of coffee by yourself. And

there's a lot of that time in Hong Kong when you're an expat or whatever you want to call it where you have a lot of time to observe and take down things so because I've had that very international sort of random places, I just feel like I've had a lot more time to observe and process some of those experiences. And it was good It was a very good time I did theater on the side as well there And it was difficult I felt like I had to prove myself In a somewhat tricky environment where There were assumptions about me. I felt like they hired me because they thought I was the China hire and I kept like saying Look I'm from Flushing, Queens Like born and raised. I speak Mandarin But I'm not your China hire I don't know anyone in Shanghai. I don't know anyone in Beijing And I mean my Mandarin is good but i'm not a native speaker. I'm catching up with myself a lot and my professional career, I kind of always feel like there are pockets of things I didn't get exposed to. I feel like I wish I was a little bit more mature when I was working at Goldman. There weren't a lot of people I knew who were investment bankers at Goldman and so I was really trying to figure out a lot of that by myself and also as a woman. You think about some of the people you may know. There are like generations of bankers, and some of them are White Anglo Saxons or they're Jewish Americans and their parents and their grandparents are all bankers or their uncle was a banker. I really didn't have anyone I knew who was a banker. I had to trial and error a lot of stuff.”

“Everything after [Goldman] seemed easy after that. I wanted to leave Goldman because to be honest I felt that you know I paid back my loans that was a big part of my comfort level. And I kind of felt like my personality was changing a little bit, and I didn't like that about myself. That was one thing. You know I'm Christian. My parents aren't but I am. I went to church on my own from a very young age and I think fundamentally I was always seeking how I could be a more loving person. And I think for some reason and I'm not blaming Goldman. I don't think it's a

Goldman culture persay because certainly there are people who are god fearing good people working at Goldman, but for some reason the culture was affecting me in a way that I felt like I wasn't being the best person I could be, and so like the moment sort of woke up to that and I think it was some interaction I had with a stranger where I wasn't too sure. I was unhappy with myself in just that interaction, and it gave me a quick wake up call and I thought maybe my time is done in this institution. Then, getting myself right with who I am and how I want to interact with people on a daily basis regardless of where I worked. I think that was really important for me to sort of understand and recapture that. Everything else after I feel like it's been pretty straight forward and really wonderful and special.”

“ I was trying to redeem myself in a lot of ways... Goldman was a little bit of my redemption path. I'm good enough and I'm gonna look for the most difficult job that is the most competitive at the best firm. I felt satisfaction from getting it... it was something that I needed to accomplish to... it was making up time for something that I have not accomplish or didn't live up to my potential.”

SECTION FIVE (25 points)

Your analysis: What aspects of the interview did you find to be particularly meaningful? What aspects were not useful? What more would you like to know? What other in-class presentations did you find particularly useful? Explain

My partner and I found the actual interviewing aspect of the interview, being able to see her emotions through the videochat to be particularly meaningful. When our interviewee, Nancy Yao Maasbach, talked about growing up being pushed into certain roles because of her gender and the constant pressure to be a successful woman, we could see that it was a time of uncertainties for her. There was a lot of pauses when she thought back to this part of her memory

and all the things she could have done to pursue acting. Preparing a bunch of questions for the interviewee to answer was not useful because she answered most of the questions as she talk about her childhood, education, professional agendas and family relations. I would like to see the different roles she has in her daily life. I would like to know more about how Yao Maasbach's days goes in a work day as the president of the museum and how she spends the remaining time with her family as a wife and mother. From the many excellent in-class presentations, I found the presentation on Sarah Park to be particularly useful because it portrays the life of a traditional Asian woman. The in person interview at Ms.Park's laundromat makes the whole interview more realistic and relatable. At some point when Ms.Park mentioned about saving up money for her children's education by not having a cellphone, it was very touching to see how much a mother can give up to contribute for her family. When she describes her strong devotion for God, I see a similarity between the missionary women we learned about earlier in class and their great dedications to missions motivated by their religion. Overall, the class itself and the readings provided us an in depth analysis on women and their international relations. We learn to appreciate and understand the works of women more than before.