

CHEMICAL HERITAGE FOUNDATION

**DOUGLAS YEE**

The Pew Scholars Program in the Biomedical Sciences

Transcript of an Interview  
Conducted by

Andrea R. Maestrejuan

at

University of Texas Health Science Center  
San Antonio, Texas

on

23, 24, and 25 August 1995

From the Original Collection of the University of California, Los Angeles

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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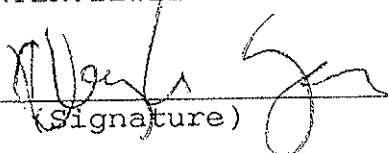
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University of Texas Health Science Center  
Department of Medicine/Oncology  
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University and Interviewee have executed this Agreement on the date first written above.

INTERVIEWEE

  
(Signature)

Douglas Yee  
(Typed Name)

University of Texas  
Health Science Center

7703 Floyd Curl Drive  
(Address)

San Antonio, TX 78284-7884

Date 9-22-95

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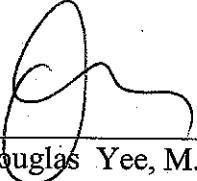
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## DOUGLAS YEE

1955 Born in Detroit, Michigan on 2 June

### Education

1977 B.S., University of Michigan  
1981 M.D., University of Chicago

### Professional Experience

1981-1982 North Carolina Memorial Hospital  
Intern  
1982-1984 Resident  
1984-1985 Chief Medical Resident

1985-1988 National Cancer Institute Medicine Branch  
Medical Staff Fellow

1988-1989 Georgetown University  
Instructor

1989-1993 University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio  
Assistant Professor  
1993-present Associate Professor

### Honors

1977 Phi Beta Kappa  
1981 Catherine Dobson Award, Pritzker School of Medicine  
1987 Adviser, Michele Susan Kogod Memorial Foundation  
1990-1994 Pew Scholar in the Biomedical Sciences

### Selected Publications

Yee, D. et al., 1988. Insulin-like growth factor II mRNA expression in human breast cancer. *Cancer Research*, 48:6691-96.  
Yee, D. et al., 1989. Analysis of IGF-I gene expression in malignancy, evidence for a paracrine role in human breast cancer. *Molecular Endocrinology*, 3:509-17.



- Yee, D. et al., 1989. The insulin-like growth factor binding protein BP-25 is expressed by human breast cancer cells. *Biochemical and Biophysical Research Communications*, 158 :38-44.
- Yee, D. et al., 1989. Identification of an alternative type I IGF receptor beta chain mRNA transcript. *Journal of Biological Chemistry*, 264:21439-41.
- Lippman, M.E. and D. Yee, 1990. Introduction. *Journal of National Cancer Institute Monograph* 10:1.
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- Yee, D. et al., 1994. Insulin-like growth factor binding protein-1 (IGFBP-1) expression inhibits IGF-1 action in MCF-7 breast cancer cells. *Cell Growth and Differentiation*, 5:73-77.
- Yee, D. et al., 1994. Use of insulin-like growth factor I expression to distinguish between breast and ovarian cancer: Report of a case. *American Journal of the Medical Sciences*, 307:108-11.
- Yee, D. et al., 1994. Prognostic significance of insulin-like growth factor binding protein expression in axillary lymph node-negative breast cancer. *Journal of National Cancer Institute*, 86:1785-88.
- Yee, D. et al. Pharmacokinetic profile of recombinant human insulin-like growth factor binding protein-1 in athymic mice. *Biomedical Pharmacotherapy*. In press.

## ABSTRACT

Douglas Yee was born in Detroit, Michigan to parents who had fled China just before World War II. His father was an engineer and his mother a radiologist. His mother comes from a large family, all of whom left China and settled either in Hong Kong or in the United States; they remain close, getting together often for family events and holidays. Yee has one sibling, an older sister who took a PhD in social work at the University of Chicago.

Yee attended a boarding school for high school; he did not evince an early passion for science, but he did like the puzzle of chemistry, especially organic chemistry, when he was in college at the University of Michigan. He ended up majoring in zoology and anthropology. During the summers he worked in Joan Bull's lab at the National Institutes of Health, where he became interested in cancer and human genetics. He entered medical school at the University of Chicago; there he studied Epstein-Barr virus in Elliott Kieff's lab and realized that he wanted to concentrate on lab research rather than clinical practice. He married Janet Smith, with whom he now has two children. His internship and residency followed at North Carolina Memorial Hospital in Chapel Hill, North Carolina; his specialty was internal medicine, his subspecialty oncology. After his residency he accepted a staff fellow position at the National Cancer Institute. He began his research on the role of insulin-like growth factors (IGF) in Marc E. Lippman's lab. From there he went to an instructorship at Georgetown University Medical Center; then to an assistant professorship at University of Texas Health Science Center in San Antonio. He is now an associate professor there; he continues his work on IGF, publishing many articles and winning a number of grants and awards.

## UCLA INTERVIEW HISTORY

### INTERVIEWER:

Andrea R. Maestrejuan, Interviewer, UCLA Oral History Program; B.A., History, University of California, Irvine, 1988; B.S., Biological Sciences, University of California, Irvine, 1988; C. Phil., History, University of California, Riverside.

### TIME AND SETTING OF INTERVIEW:

**Place:** Yee's office, University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio.

**Dates, length of sessions:** August 23, 1995 (171 minutes); August 24, 1995 (126); August 25, 1995 (78).

**Total number of recorded hours:** 6.25

**Persons present during interview:** Yee and Maestrejuan

### CONDUCT OF INTERVIEW:

This interview is one in a series with Pew scholars in the biomedical sciences conducted by the UCLA Oral History Program in conjunction with the Pew Charitable Trusts's Pew Scholars in the Biomedical Sciences Oral History and Archives Project. The Project has been designed to document the backgrounds, education, and research of biomedical scientists awarded four-year Pew scholarships, from 1988 through 1992. In preparing for this interview, Maestrejuan, in consultation with the director of the UCLA Oral History Program and three UCLA faculty Project consultants, developed a topic outline to provide an overall interview framework. Maestrejuan then held a telephone pre interview conversation with Yee to obtain extensive written background information (curriculum vitae, copies of published articles, etc.) and agree on a research and interviewing timetable. Maestrejuan further reviewed the documentation in Yee's file at the Pew Scholars Program office in San Francisco, including his proposal application, letters of recommendation, and reviews by Pew Scholars Program national advisory committee members. For general background on the recent history of the biological sciences, Maestrejuan consulted such works as: J.D. Watson et al., *The Molecular Biology of the Gene*. 4th ed. 2 vols. Menlo Park, CA: Benjamin/Cummings, 1987; Lubert Stryer, *Biochemistry*. 3d ed. New York: W.H. Freeman, 1988; *The Journal of the History of Biology*; H.F. Judson, *The Eighth Day of Creation: Makers of the Revolution in Biology*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1979; and recent issues of *Science*, *Nature*, and *Cell*. The interview is organized chronologically, beginning with Yee's childhood in Detroit and continuing through his education at University of Michigan and University of Chicago, his internship and residency at North Carolina Memorial Hospital, and the establishment of his laboratory at the University of Texas Health Science Center in San Antonio. Major topics discussed include the role of IGF-1 in Epstein-Barr virus, the potential for gene therapy, science funding, and the place of M.D.'s in

basic science research.

#### ORIGINAL EDITING:

Kristian London, editor, edited the interview. He checked the verbatim transcript of the interview against the original tape recordings, edited for punctuation, paragraphing, and spelling, and verified proper names. Words and phrases inserted by the editor have been bracketed.

Yee reviewed the transcript. He verified proper names and made minor corrections.

Steven J. Novak, senior editor, prepared the table of contents and index. London compiled the biographical summary and interview history.

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