

Formal Conversation – ucamg1f, Santa Barbara

F: And what are you doing in the university, what subject are you doing?

MG: I'm pre-med, so biology.

F: Biology. And you want to be a, you want to be a, <MG: A doctor.> a medic/ a doctor? And you're in the first year or sec/? <MG: Third year.> Third year? (laughter) My goodness. You look as if you were a first year student. <MG: I know I look young.> How old are you?

MG: I just turned twenty a couple days ago.

F: Oh that's brilliant, when, if you pass everything when would you be a doctor then?

MG: (noise) Twenty-eight.

F: Twenty-eight, it takes what eleven years to become a doctor? <MG: Yeah,>

MG: four years of college, four years of med school and three years of internship. So, by the time I'm twenty-eight. (laughter) Seems like a long way. <F: You already uh>

F: go into hospitals just to do things or not yet, or <MG: Yeah,> is it all theoretical at the moment?

MG: I'm supposed to be doing that right now but, I mean I work here so I don't have that much time right now. Winter quarter I'm going to start working in a hospital, I want to.

F: What uh made you think of medicine as a, as a possible career?

MG: I don't know ever since I was young I've always wanted to be a doctor I want to be a pediatrician specifically. I love kids and, I want to help them I think it'll be fun, it'll be hard but that's all I could think that I'd ever want to do so.

F: And you want to be a doctor not a nurse?

MG: No, I def/ I definitely want to be a doctor and just recently I was questioning you know whether I want to go through med school and everything but, I really want to I hope I can get in, (laughter) that's the only thing.

F: So when is the big exam for getting in? Is it?

MG: August. Next August.

F: So after three years then you take a, <MG: The M. Cat.> what is it called?

MG: The M. Cat.? I'm not sure what that stands for but, abbreviated M. Cat. (laughter)

F: And what's in that exam, in that uh?

MG: Uh, biology, chemistry, organic chemistry and physics. Everything I took last year, except for I'm taking physics this year.

F: So it's really theoretical, getting into medical school? Is that a good thing? I mean should you, do you need to know all these things to be a good doctor do you think?

MG: I don't think so no. (laughter) I don't think I'll ever use my physics or my chemistry again, I'm, I'm kind of bored of my classes because I want to learn about diseases, I want to learn how to cure people and that's, uh we're not learning about that at all. We're learning about the cellular level and it's annoying. (laughter)

F: And if you tell that uh, to your teachers how do they react?

MG: Well basically Santa Barbara's not, it's, it doesn't have a pre-med major, so I think if I would have gone to another university, that I would be getting classes like that but here it's more biology so, I mean I guess I'm stuck, and, (laughter) it's a good school but, probably I should've went to somewhere with a pre-med.

F: And, so where will you go after three, when you, take the uh that, that exam? Will you actually you want to stay in Santa Barbara would you or? <MG: Well I'll,>

MG: I'll be taking that before I'm a senior in college so I'll take it, and then my senior year I'll stay here, and apply to all the medical schools and hopefully get into one and then the very next year go on to medical school.

F: When you say all the medical schools you mean in California or anywhere in the?

MG: I really want to go to California, I really want to stay in California I love it here, but, I don't know I'm not, I'm not doing too much, you know volunteer work and I should be and my grades aren't like, straight As so, I very well could be out of California.

F: What's this volunteer work can you, I'm not sure what it is, it's?

MG: We should go to uh hospitals and uh, just volunteer our time doing whatever they want us to do, you know helping with the patients I mean, it's probably nothing very difficult but, just getting a lot of experience. <F: Why you're not doing it?> I've just I haven't had time because I'm working two jobs, so, and money is really a factor right now and I don't have a car to get to the hospital so I'd have to take the bus but I have no time because of classes and.

F: Are you self-funding in fact, or are you do you have grants you have uh,

MG: Yeah <F: that kind of things?> I've a few, a few grants but mostly loans I'm really on a lot of loans so, <F: Loans? Wow.> Yeah, so. Parent loans and my own loans, so basically I have two jobs to, you know pay what the loans don't because financially it doesn't (X) that much <F: (XX)>

F: it may be indiscreet but how many dollars have you borrowed then?

MG: Oh God uh, because I, this is my third year, so at least fifteen thousand dollars. <F: Fifteen thousand?> At least.

F: And what would the, the repaying is over, is spread over many years? How does it work in terms of you repaying that?

MG: Uh six months after I graduate I have to start repaying them, and I'm not sure how much that is monthly, I'm kind of scared about that. (laughter) I don't know it's, it's going to be hard because then I'm going to be going on to med school and I'm going to be accumulating hundreds of thousands a month for med school, so I'm going to be very poor until probably I'm forty. (laughter) That's the plan I think.

F: Do doctors earn a lot in, in America? <MG: Yeah, yeah.> I mean what's the salary of a doctor as far as one knows?

MG: I don't, I'm not really good with this I mean it's not really why I'm going into it so I, yeah. <F: No I understand that but>

F: at some point you have to, your mom and dad probably tell you, you have to think about this.

<MG: Yeah I, I wish, I wish>

MG: I would know, I mean I really, see, I need to look into this a lot more like because I don't know if I want to be, definitely a pediatrician or like a surgeon or whatever you know I kind of, I've always wanted to be a pediatrician but I think now I should weigh my options a little but I think a hundred thousand dollars a year, it's pretty, pretty uh.

F: No because repaying the kind of sums you're talking about, <MG: It's going to take a long time.> will take a very good salary you know.

MG: Yeah I think if I was a surgeon or something that it'd be, definitely over a hundred thousand and I'm sure a pediatrician is, maybe eighty thousand a year I think it ranges from, pretty good but I think the average, I mean I guess it also depends if you have your own practice and then you get more money or, I don't know (laughter) I hope (XXX) <F: And can your parents help you do they help you or?> Uh, well, they help me, like they do have a lot of loans in their name, but as for groceries and rent, and anything else I need it's me, it's all me so, because they don't, they don't have that much money and my dad just barely got a job, after being unemployed for quite a few years so I mean they're really in debt so the last thing they need is my debt also. So that's why I have two jobs, trying to.

F: Is there a lot of poverty in California would you say? I mean it's for us I'm a tourist here essentially you know I just spent a month <MG: Not in Santa Barbara. (laughter)> but I get the impression there's quite a lot of money in Santa Barbara. <MG: In Santa>

MG: Barbara it's, there's a lot of money, there's a lot of money but uh, I'm from L.A., from Claremont I don't know if you've ever heard of that. (There's) college's there but, (laughter) uh,

Claremont's a wealthy town. I lived towards the end of Claremont so it's not as, not as wealthy but, all in all California is, pretty diverse, but definitely up here it's wealthy. Yeah.

F: And so, when you haven't got a lot of money life must be hard in California. From what you're saying.

MG: Yeah there's places to move that don't require too much money but I mean you won't be in the nicest of neighborhoods and, it poses other problems so, yeah.

F: As you said your dad was unemployed at one point so that must've been.

MG: So it was my mom's salary that was, and I think she makes uh, only like thirty-five thousand dollars a year so I mean that wasn't very much for all of us and. <F: So she kept the family going, your mom did?> She's always has. She's always been the, provider. (laughter) It's a little different.

<F: You must be proud of your mom then?> Oh yeah definitely. <F: You're very close to her?> Uh huh, really close to her yeah I miss her a lot. (laughter) Yeah.

F: And do you have brothers and sisters?

MG: Yeah two sisters one's older than me and one's younger than me.

F: What do they do?

MG: Uh my elder sister lives in Washington with her boyfriend and, she's just hanging out up there I guess I don't think she's doing much and my uh, younger sister is a senior in high school this year so she's looking at colleges and seeing where she wants to go. I want her to come here but I don't think she will. (laughter) Yeah.

F: Where do you live? Do you live on campus? You've got a room on, uh you stay at the moment you, you're staying with your parents or your, your parents are not from here so, where are you staying while in Santa Barbara?

MG: In Isla Vista. <F: Where is that?> Uh, pretty much after, I uh freshman year here I lived in the dorms and pretty much every single person does that their freshman year, but then after freshman year, everyone wants to live in I. V., which is a town surrounding the school and the, the ocean so uh, it's very expensive to live there, I have a one-bedroom apartment, close to campus close to the ocean I pay, I share my room and I pay four hundred and sixty-two fifty so our whole apartment is nine hundred and twenty-five dollars. <F: Four hundred and sixty-two fifty?> Sixty-two fifty. <F: dollars a month?> A month. So it's nine hundred and twenty-five dollars a month, for a one-bedroom, very small. Yuck. So, and the closer you get to the ocean or the closer you're to school you could be paying five hundred dollars a month to share a room. So it's expensive but it's really fun, every it's, it's a college town every single person that lives in that town, goes to this college so it's really fun there's a lot of parties. (laughter)

F: Lots of parties. <MG: Lots of parties.> Have you got time to go to a party?

MG: Well on weekends. (laughter) But it's really fun. I really like it there, so. And it's close to here so I can ride my bike always back and forth. Yeah. <F: Exciting.> Uh huh, it's really fun. (laughter)