

Regional Oral History Office
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University of California
Berkeley, California

THE LOYALTY OATH AT THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA,
1949-1952

Interviews with:

Howard Bern
Ralph Giese
Mary Tolman Kent
Deborah Tolman Whitney

Interviews conducted by
Germaine LaBerge
in 1999

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INTERVIEW HISTORY

In October of 1999, a University of California symposium (“The University Loyalty Oath: A 50th Anniversary Retrospective”) explored the loyalty oath fifty years after its imposition on university employees. Historians, university administrators, non-signers, and bystanders gathered in Berkeley for two days of reflective discussion on the meaning and consequences of this event in California.

The symposium prompted the Regional Oral History Office (ROHO) to undertake a series of interviews with six individuals who were junior faculty, teaching assistants, or well-placed observers of this controversy in 1949: Professors Emeriti Howard Bern, Charles Muscatine, and Howard Schachman of UCB; Ralph Giese, a former student of Professor Ernst Kantorowicz and now Professor Emeritus from the University of Minnesota; and the two daughters of the late Professor Edward Tolman of UCB, the key leader of faculty opposition to the oath. Indeed, the California Supreme Court decision (1951) declaring the oath unconstitutional bears his name (*Tolman v. Underhill*).

In the pages following are interviews with four of these individuals.

In 1949, Howard Bern was an instructor in the Department of Zoology at Cal. A Canadian by birth, he had served in the U.S. Army during World War II for almost four years, and had earned his PhD at UCLA in zoology. In his interview (conducted in December 1999), he reflected on his objections to the loyalty oath, his reason for signing at the last minute, the campus atmosphere which encouraged friendships with like-minded individuals.

Ralph Giese was a graduate student in the Department of History, a devotee of the famous Professor Ernst Kantorowicz. Kantorowicz, a non-signer, gave mesmerizing lectures on medieval history, which many faculty attended along with the students. Giese’s interview, which focuses on Kantorowicz’s philosophy, was taped during his visit to campus for the symposium. He specifically highlights his mentor’s *The Fundamental Issue*, which expressed opposition to the loyalty oath. “The University is the *universitas magistrorum et scholarium*, the body corporate of Masters and Students. Teachers and students together are the university regardless of the existence of gardens and buildings...” Kantorowicz later left Berkeley for the prestigious Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton. Meanwhile, Giese and other teaching assistants also faced the choice of signing or not signing the oath; the interview, therefore, offers that unique perspective, too.

Deborah Tolman Whitney, the elder of Edward Tolman’s daughters, spoke about her parents’ backgrounds, their family life, her married life to Professor James Whitney, M.D.—all of which touched and was touched by the principles informing Tolman’s stalwart stance against the oath. Mary Tolman Kent had yet another connection to the oath through her husband, Professor Jack Kent. Both the Whitneys and the Kents were active in Berkeley politics in later years. These interviews offer insights into the decision-making process in various local and national issues in the latter twentieth century.

We are grateful to all six interviewees for taking the time to add to the historical record with these interviews. Researchers may also like to consult other interviews in ROHO’s University History Series for more information on the loyalty oath (Regent John Francis Neylan, Presidents Robert Gordon Sproul and David Gardner, Professors Emily Huntington and Josephine Miles, and attorney for the non-signers Stanley Weigel, among others). Charles Muscatine’s interview was completed in July 2004 in a separate volume, *The Loyalty Oath, the Free Speech Movement, and Education Reforms at the University of California, Berkeley*. Howard Schachman’s oral history is still in process as of this writing.

The Regional Oral History Office was established in 1954 to augment through tape-recorded memoirs the Library's materials on the history of California and the West. Copies of all interviews are available for research use in The Bancroft Library and in the UCLA Department of Special Collections. The office is under the direction of Richard Cándida Smith and the administrative direction of Charles B. Faulhaber, The James D. Hart Director of the Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.

Germaine LaBerge
University of California, Berkeley
August 2004

Regional Oral History Office
The Bancroft Library

University of California
Berkeley, California

Howard Bern

THE LOYALTY OATH CONTROVERSY AT THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA,
1949-1952

Interviews conducted by
Germaine LaBerge
in 1999

Since 1954 the Regional Oral History Office has been interviewing leading participants in or well-placed witnesses to major events in the development of Northern California, the West, and the nation. Oral History is a method of collecting historical information through tape-recorded interviews between a narrator with firsthand knowledge of historically significant events and a well-informed interviewer, with the goal of preserving substantive additions to the historical record. The tape recording is transcribed, lightly edited for continuity and clarity, and reviewed by the interviewee. The corrected manuscript is indexed, bound with photographs and illustrative materials, and placed in The Bancroft Library at the University of California, Berkeley, and in other research collections for scholarly use. Because it is primary material, oral history is not intended to present the final, verified, or complete narrative of events. It is a spoken account, offered by the interviewee in response to questioning, and as such it is reflective, partisan, deeply involved, and irreplaceable.

All uses of this manuscript are covered by a legal agreement between The Regents of the University of California and Howard Bern, dated May 25, 2000. The manuscript is thereby made available for research purposes. All literary rights in the manuscript, including the right to publish, are reserved to The Bancroft Library of the University of California, Berkeley. No part of the manuscript may be quoted for publication without the written permission of the Director of The Bancroft Library of the University of California, Berkeley.

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BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

(Please write clearly. Use black ink.)

Your full name Howard Aclan) BERN
 Date of birth 1/30/20 Birthplace Montreal Canada
 Father's full name Simeon Bern
 Occupation deceased Birthplace Syracuse NY
 Mother's full name Ethel E. Bern
 Occupation deceased Birthplace Gaspé, Qué. Canada
 Your spouse Estelle (Bruck) Bern
 Occupation retired Birthplace Los Angeles CA
 Your children Alan
Lauren
 Where did you grow up? 0-14 Westmount Qué Canada
14- Los Angeles CA
 Present community Berkeley
 Education BA, MA, PhD UC ~~Berkeley~~ Los Angeles
 Occupation(s) Professor
 Areas of expertise Comparative Endocrinology,
Tumor Biology, Fish Physiology
 Other interests or activities see Who's Who
or Amer. Men/Women of
Science
 Organizations in which you are active "
 SIGNATURE Howard A Bern DATE: 5.25.00

INTERVIEW WITH PROFESSOR HOWARD BERN

I. BACKGROUND

[Interview 1: December 14, 1999] ##¹

Childhood and Education in Canada

LaBerge: It's December 14, 1999, and I'm interviewing Professor Howard Bern in his office in Valley Life Sciences building.

Well, we always like to start with some background just to place you in context before you get here [to Berkeley]. So tell me a little bit about the circumstances of your birth and your education.

Bern: Okay. I was born in Montreal, Canada, and until we moved to the United States when I was fourteen--I was born in 1920--I thought I was a Canadian citizen. My mother thought she was a Canadian citizen. And it turned out that my father had never changed citizenship from American to Canadian. He had been born in Syracuse, New York, and moved to Canada when he was kid--on a farm with his father, with his whole very large family. But when we left Canada, I was going to say the height of the Depression--in the depths of the Depression--we really were essentially Canadian Okies, to use that term, because we couldn't have survived another winter in the cold.

I remember my father and my brother chopping up the basement for fuel. That can only be done once. And I think my mother in particular decided to just go to a warmer climate. We went to California from there, which was the best thing that could have happened to me because I could go then to a state university which cost in those days practically nothing. As a matter of fact, I can recall getting a scholarship for my second, third, and fourth years, and the second and third year was 200 dollars a year, and that made all the difference in the world.

1. This symbol indicates that a tape or tape segment has begun or ended. A guide to the tapes follows the transcript.

LaBerge: We're talking about UCLA [University of California at Los Angeles], is that right?

Bern: Right. That's where I got all my degrees--my bachelor's, master's, Ph.D. If I had stayed in Montreal I could never have gone to McGill, which was the only place probably I would have considered. [interruption]

LaBerge: Let's go back to Montreal for a minute. Did you grow up learning English and French?

Bern: No. In those days the school system--there was a Protestant board of schools and a Catholic board of schools, and I think even a temporary and unsuccessful Jewish board that evanesced. So I went to the Protestant school system. These were the public schools, basically. And that means that English was spoken. French was taught from the third grade on, but it wasn't taught in a way that would allow one to communicate with a French-Canadian. You know the history of the repression of French-Canadians in Quebec, leading to the Québécois national movement, of which I would have been an ardent adherent had I been there.

I studied French and then when I took my sabbatical in 1951-52 with my wife and two-year-old son, we went to France. I thought that since I could read French with no difficulty--but I never had really spoken it. I couldn't do anything. I couldn't order a bowl of soup. I went to a café to get a full meal, just totally ignorant. My mentor there, since I was on sabbatical, told me that he would give me six weeks in which he would speak English, which he spoke excellently. And then he would speak only French. With that compulsion, French is my second language. I can speak it and I have lectured in it.

Family and Religion

LaBerge: How many children in your family?

Bern: Three children. An older half-brother, whose father drowned on the *Lusitania*, if that brings back any history, and a younger sister.

LaBerge: Was there anything in your background that would shed light on your stance on the loyalty oath? What about the Depression or--

Bern: No, I don't think so. My background was very bourgeois. I come from a Jewish family--on my mother's side it represents one of the oldest Jewish families to come to Canada. And the ancestor settled in Gaspé, which was entirely French-Canadian with a few Guernseymen. So he was looked upon as being sort of an honorary Guernseymen. And so there was sort of a dynastic family on that side.

My father's side--I can't remember beyond my grandfather, who was a scholar, probably trained as a rabbi but never practicing, and very politically involved. He was an opponent of the Zionist movement. He was anti-Zionist. He felt that Jews should certainly go back to the land, but they should go back to the land in the countries in which they found themselves. That's why he moved to Canada on a farm, where as I

understand, as legend would have it, that he never did much work but his wife worked herself into a froth, and the sons did all the stuff, and he philosophized on a boat while fishing in a lake.

LaBerge: [laughs] Growing up, did you practice your religion?

Bern: Yes. I was confirmed in a Reform congregation. My mother's and my father's families belonged to Orthodox congregations, but my mother's family never really adhered to it. They would go to synagogue, but hopefully it would not conflict with Christmas dinner, which was part of their English tradition. It was an Anglo family.

LaBerge: What were your mother's and father's names?

Bern: My mother was Ethel Hyman. And my father was Simeon Bern, which undoubtedly had a suffix after it at some time.

LaBerge: I wondered if your religious background had anything to do with your philosophy.

Bern: No. I got confirmed and I was a very ardent young intellectualized Jewish kid without a hell of a lot of identity beyond the fact that I really enjoyed studying history and the history of the Bible, which we analyzed in great detail. I can recall learning adjectives like the Jahristic and the Elohist parts, depending upon what they used as the term for God in Hebrew. I got the rabbi's cup for being the best little boy of the year. And the next year after my confirmation I dropped religion completely and I am totally areligious. That applies to all religions. It's part of my own attitude as a scientist. I just don't buy into it, and my wife is the same even though she had a much more strict background. My kids never went to either church or synagogue but had the absolute freedom to do so, but Berkeley was interesting enough without having to do that. They learned much more on the streets.

My mother, I think, was pretty much a social snob--pardon me, dear mother. With this came a considerable amount of racism. There's nothing from my mother or father that I think influenced me, but during the Depression years as a student, both in high school and at UCLA I became increasingly radicalized--I think that's the way to put it.

World War II Service

LaBerge: What events or people would have--

Bern: I had a high school teacher who was a member of the Hollywood Anti-Nazi League, which was later pilloried for premature anti-Nazism. He was an extremely ethical guy. I can remember Mr. Waldrop [spells]. He made a great impression upon me. He wasn't Jewish. He had no Jewish antecedents or anything like them; he was just a philosophical anti-fascist in the days when there were not very many of them. So he, I would say, thinking back upon high school influences--he taught me chemistry and was just an intellectually tough guy. He impressed me. Then when I went off to university I would go to peace rallies and such things.

LaBerge: And this was peace rallies before World War II or during World War II?

Bern: Yes, before World War II.

I got my B.A. at UCLA in zoology and my master's a year later in zoology, and then went into the army for almost four years during World War II.

LaBerge: What year did you graduate with your M.A.?

Bern: In '41 with my B.A. and '42 with my M.A. I spent four years about--it was less than four years, probably three and a half or something, of which almost two years were overseas in the Pacific. Everywhere from New Guinea to Korea, all the way up with [General Douglas] MacArthur's island hopping. I was attached to a medical unit, which was originally organized to combat malaria.

The unit needed a parasitologist, who were in really very short supply, and I was no parasitologist, but I had had parasitology and had a master's. I was an enlisted guy for a year and was up to staff sergeant and then got commissioned directly as a second lieutenant to fill the parasitologist niche. After one year as an officer, I was shipped over, actually without my unit.

I was given another job as a cargo security officer on a Liberty ship. I learned how to take apart and put together and use--I guess you could call it a machine gun; it seemed a little bit bigger than that. But it was the only protection that the Liberty ship had. I think we had four of them--by navy and army volunteers to do this.

LaBerge: Were you a volunteer or were you drafted?

Bern: No, I was drafted. There were strong efforts made to get me into a medical training program and a meteorology training program, none of which I was very enthusiastic about, and I must say that when the draft came it was almost a relief. I didn't wish to evade. I certainly didn't want to go to medical school. There were three good opportunities for full-paid medical school education, and I always felt that would have been a major compromise. I wanted to be a biologist, not a medic.

LaBerge: How did you change your view toward the war from peace rallies to--

Bern: I was never an isolationist, and I didn't do much except go to peace rallies. They didn't become war rallies [laughter], but they stopped occurring, I guess, after Pearl Harbor. Certainly there was along with this, I can recall, my own sympathies for the loyalists in the Spanish Civil War. That was almost a romantic adherence. There never seemed to be any conflict. Both seemed a part, obviously, of being very much against Hitler and Mussolini.

In those earlier days who would have known to put the Japanese in that category? It was very shocking to me. I had a very good Japanese-American friend who disappeared, obviously, into camp. I never thought of the Japanese as a potential enemy until they became one. I was in the Pacific and then I really was witness--too strong a word--but certainly was well aware of what they were doing to the population, particularly in the Philippines. I still have a godchild there.

But the interesting thing is that beginning in about the late fifties I began to have Japanese scientists coming to my lab. Since that time probably three dozen Japanese have been through here at all levels from graduate student to professors. These are my Ph.D. and postdocs, and now I have very close connections with Japanese scientists, very close personal connections as well as scientific connections. Several of my very close friends who were postdocs are now professors.

Interest in Science: L.A. High School and UCLA

LaBerge: Were you always interested in science?

Bern: Yes. As far back as I can remember.

LaBerge: From high school on or even before?

Bern: Yes, even before that. In high school, I remember I had an English teacher named Miss Alma Gunning. All I can say about her is that she looked like she was Miss Alma Gunning. But she was marvelous. She taught me English language literature, but also supported my desire to be a biologist, pointing out quite incorrectly that I would have of course to be medically trained to be a biologist, which I discovered was incorrect after I had been at UCLA for about three weeks, and that was the end of my pre-med career. But she had a real influence on me also. And I think the people whom I knew, my high school teachers, were in their own way--other than Mr. Waldrop, who obviously knew politically what he was about--I think these other teachers were good-feeling people, and had a good social attitude. My recollection of high school is nothing but positive.

LaBerge: And it was all spent in Los Angeles?

Bern: Yes. It was L.A. High. I can even sing the first line of the school anthem if you'd like. I can't sing at all, but--

LaBerge: [laughs] Maybe if we do a video we'll do that.

Bern: Right. Until you've heard me go through "L.A. Will Shine Tonight"--.

LaBerge: Well, after the war you came back to UCLA for doctoral work?

Bern: Yes. I would have gone on to graduate school elsewhere but I think I made the correct decision. After being away four years, I was coming back to a completely different university and completely different faculty, in a way, because the guy I had done my master's with was the lowest man in the department. He hadn't finished his Ph.D. yet. He was also a child of the Depression. During the wartime period he finished his Ph.D. When I came back the guy who had been lower than an instructor became chair of the department. So that was a bit different [chuckles].

LaBerge: What was your family situation? Were you married then?

Bern: No. I got married three months or so after I got out of the army.

LaBerge: What is your wife's name?

Bern: Estelle.

LaBerge: And how did you meet?

Bern: On campus. She was about two or three years behind me. Actually, when I went into the army she came up to Berkeley and took her degree up here. So she's a Berkeley alumna, and then went on and got social work degrees. Actually she got two of them. The one that meant something was at USC [University of Southern California]. And she practiced. She's been a working wife and mother throughout our entire marriage of fifty-three years.

U.C. Berkeley, Department of Zoology, 1948

LaBerge: So you went back to UCLA, got your Ph.D. degree, and had you always wanted to teach?

Bern: I always wanted to be a professor. That was the whole aim. The job of the year when I got my degree--actually this was before I got my degree because the job open in the fall before I came up here was the one in Berkeley--and they were looking for someone with my training, with interests in endocrinology. They probably wanted someone at that time who was more comparative than I was; I was a mammalian endocrinologist. But I had a very good academic record and all the support of my professors, including a couple who were Berkeley Ph.D.'s from the very department I finally joined.

The guy who hired me was Richard Marshall [Eakin], who just died last week. He had become over the years a close friend. I valued him greatly. He didn't know whom he was getting when he hired me. I used to keep on teasing him. He went off on a sabbatical to Bern, Switzerland. I didn't think he could stand being reminded of Bern [laughter] a whole bloody year. Actually, we got along very well, and during the turbulent sixties he moved from a lifelong conservative position to a much different one that was very much like mine. A good guy.

LaBerge: So you came up here in 1948?

Bern: Yes. It was my first job and I had no postdoc. Indeed, when I was told that I had gotten the job, I had never met Eakin. I was to go back to a meeting at Christmastime, and he was to go to the same meeting, and there he was going to interview me. I was all ready to go and I had submitted a paper and all the rest of it, but I had no money to go. So in the end I didn't go. He, on the other hand, arrived at the meeting and got so busy that he forgot to look me up. So he wrote a letter of apology to me for not having seen me [laughter] there, and I never corrected him. It's true: he never saw me there, so I didn't bother him with the fact that I wasn't there to be seen [laughter]. A couple--at least one young professor from here--came down and interviewed me in Los Angeles.

LaBerge: So you were hired as an instructor?

Bern: An instructor for two years.

LaBerge: In the department of zoology.

Bern: Right.

II THE LOYALTY OATH

Reaction in the Department of Zoology

LaBerge: Well, let's jump to 1949 and the Loyalty Oath. When the regents instituted it in 1949 were you still an instructor?

Bern: Yes.

LaBerge: So not a member of the Academic Senate?

Bern: I went to Academic Senate meetings. I think legally instructors--I think I had a vote because I'd go to senate meetings and listen to other people express themselves, most of whom I disagreed with, but those I agreed with I was roundly cheering. So I'm sure that I was--

LaBerge: That you were a member of the Academic Senate?

Bern: Yes.

LaBerge: Tell me when you first heard of the oath and what your reaction was.

Bern: My reaction must have been just after it got into the papers or something.

LaBerge: Maybe in June of '49 or--

Bern: Something like that. In '48 or '49. My reaction was there was no way I was going to sign that. And I would say that the majority of the faculty at that time, if asked, "Would you sign this oath--if you were given a choice?"--I think most of them would have chosen not to. I think the faculty was convinced that this was a minor something that they could afford to live with, by and large, except for the dissidents who at Berkeley numbered originally quite a number, because the Young Turks that first met, which I referred to when I talked [at the Loyalty Oath Symposium, October 1999], were really--there were dozens and dozens of us. And they dwindled, by the way, as people had other interests. The oath tended to be trivialized, I think, and it really was a trivial thing

if you think about it, because if it was supposed to keep out dangerous people--spies and so forth--they'd be the first ones to sign the oath to clean their records and look as patriotic as the enthusiasts did. As I indicated, my own Department of Zoology, which then didn't do very much about ever talking about politics, nevertheless was very tolerant of people who opposed the oath. I was by no means the only younger person--and certainly there were also older people--who really had strong reservations about doing it, and they expressed themselves.

LaBerge: Who were some of the people in your department?

Bern: I mentioned Curt Stern--he certainly was the most eminent of us. He was senior, a pioneer classical geneticist and human geneticist. He struggled a long time. I can recall one person with whom he discussed this in some detail; he discussed it with Lincoln Constance, who was then dean of the College of Letters and Science and succeeded the individual whose name I chose not to mention. Constance was and always has been a man of great principle and just discussed very frankly what he felt about whether Curt Stern should or shouldn't do it, and Curt would pass the information on to us lower ranks.

LaBerge: Curt Stern would pass it on to you.

Bern: Yes, right. As I say, he was not part of the coterie that would meet and pass objections, as he was not a member of a group of dissidents; he was just a guy that could make up his own mind. His very eminence made him someone one needed to listen to. But I don't recall any other senior person in the department that had the depth of feeling that he had about the legitimacy of the oath.

The younger people, among whom Ralph Smith, whom I have characterized as a chip off the Plymouth Rock--for other people he had a somewhat granitic personality. For me he did not.

##

LaBerge: Okay, we're talking about Ralph Smith.

Bern: They were associates in the department. People who hadn't finished their degrees or who had just finished them. I recall one by the name of Robert Samuels, who was an ardent oath opponent, although I think he may have signed it at the end as I did and as Ralph [Smith] did. But as I said, I can't be much more specific.

Philosophy Behind Opposition to the Oath

LaBerge: Tell me your philosophy about the oath. Why did you not want to sign?

Bern: I felt that it was discriminatory, that it was singling out university professors as if they were especially potentially evil. So on a civil libertarian ground I objected to this. And

the second ground was my own feeling. I had been in the army for almost four years. What more manifestation of loyalty did they really want?

LaBerge: What about the issue of academic freedom or tenure?

Bern: I think this is built into the civil libertarian feelings that I had. I felt that--I don't know what would have happened. I can't really recall enough to know whether the principled stand, which at least two people tried to express at our symposium, which is that why shouldn't Communists, even if we had them, have the right to teach as long as their teaching and their research passed the usual criteria? I don't think I ever expressed myself on that issue, though in retrospect I'd be glad to tell you.

LaBerge: Oh, sure. Yes.

Bern: I don't think that that--I think a stance that ipso facto defined a [interruption]--

LaBerge: You were starting to tell me about your feeling about whether a Communist teaching--

Bern: Yes, I think that there's only one position that one should take on that issue, which is that if someone whose politics are those of the Communist party still taught objectively and did research that would qualify him by the usual academic criteria, then his politics should have been essentially private. I'm just making the general assumption that none of these people was interested in violently overthrowing the government, number one. And number two, that they weren't interested in spying for the Soviet Union. There may have been exceptions, but I had no reason for knowing that there were such people.

So I think the stance that I would like to have taken would have been, "Why the hell shouldn't they teach?" As a matter of fact, I think in Britain at the time--and Britain had after all been at war--there were Communist party members still professors at universities. Certainly in France. And these were not looked upon as being threats to the government. Indeed, in France they played a very leading role in the Resistance and in strengthening the French opposition to the Nazis. I'm not sure how well I thought that whole area out.

LaBerge: At the time, but now looking back at it?

Bern: Looking back upon it, it seemed to me that this position I stated would be the correct one. And of course when we evolved these committees to see whether the non-signers were people that could be trusted or something, some of the people whom they chose as being unacceptable were shocking. I really do think that R. Nevitt Sanford--a very, very top-notch type of psychology professor--took his principled position and stuck to it and wouldn't answer their questions. He felt it was none of their damn business. And to find such an individual culpable or capable of improper behavior, it just seemed to me that the committee was way off-base.

LaBerge: Who else did the committee not recommend besides Sanford?

Bern: I can't remember names. I can remember that there were several, and some of them may not have gone back into academic life and may have just disappeared. That's tragic in its own way. Of course, they may have been glad to [laughter].

Friends Espousing Similar Principles

LaBerge: Now did you appear before the committee or had you signed by then?

Bern: No. My position was essentially to hold out, thinking in the end I might not sign, period. But I never became one of those who--I signed, I think it was, the afternoon of the last day that we had to sign. I think that's when I met [Howard] Schachman, for example, going over to do the same thing. We had some sad words to say to each other.

LaBerge: Had you met him before that?

Bern: Yes, because we had this--I no longer like using the term "Young Turks" because there's a certain national chauvinism there [laughter], but that's what we called ourselves. And I have to say something about that too. But I really think that as a result of this dissident resistance I made some lifelong friends. Certainly Schachman, who arrived the same year that I did. We're still very, very good friends, socially. It's not that we agree on everything; we don't. [Charles] Muscatine. The Muscatines are close family friends. Maybe they would have been anyway because we met through another friend socially. But I don't think so; I think there was this common bond of interest. Gordon Griffiths, who was one of the speakers there, certainly has been a lifelong friend. His wife, Mary, was a biologist on this campus. We'd see each other every day.

I think Charles Muscatine may have been the only one who really referred to this, that when other emergencies arose on the campus, these people were kind of ready for them and knew that there were certain people who would react on academic freedom principles without having to go through the labors of being convinced. I would see these people even at senate meetings on such very important issues as to whether faculty should pay for parking or not [chuckles]. Those of us who were opposed to the Loyalty Oath were also opposed to paying for parking [laughter].

I can recall one of the dissidents who has died--if he had been alive he would have been a participant here--was Roger Stanier. And this is something that gives me of course a certain amount of pleasure. It gives me great pleasure to know there's a Tolman Hall named after Edward Tolman. And every two years there's the Roger Stanier Memorial Lecture that's funded by a big publishing house.

LaBerge: What was his field?

Bern: Microbiology.

LaBerge: Was he an opponent of the oath then?

Bern: Oh yes. I don't think he ever would have had to sign it. Maybe he never did, because he remained a Canadian citizen. But he left Berkeley to become a professor at the Institut Pasteur in Paris. He was another lifelong friend.

LaBerge: Now did he leave because of the oath?

- Bern: No. He was here through the FSM [Free Speech Movement] and other landmark controversies--he left in the seventies, I guess. It was a real loss to the campus; it was a real loss to me personally. He was a good friend of mine, he was a good friend of Schachman's completely independently. I don't think the three of us ever got together [laughter]. Yes, we may have once.
- LaBerge: Any professors you know who left because of the oath--I mean, just resigned rather than go through all this?
- Bern: Well, I mentioned Margaret Peterson. Of course, she has been a hero of mine. It doesn't sound right to say a heroine of mine, does it? It sounds like something out of a Sir Walter Scott novel. She also became a close personal friend, but decades after she quit. She made such an impression on me.
- LaBerge: Did you hear her speak at senate meetings?
- Bern: No, not at senate meetings. She got up at one of these resistant Young Turk meetings and expressed herself on how distasteful she found the loyalty oath requirement. She had no intention of signing it and she was going to quit the university rather than face up to it. It was a very heroic thing to do, and I really mean it. She never had any financial security from that moment on, her whole life. She married a writer; that and her art were her source of income.
- LaBerge: Who else do you remember speaking in those meetings?
- Bern: Jacobus ["Chick"] ten Broek [spells], who was legally trained and was a professor of rhetoric or whatever--speech or whatever we called it at the time. And blind. He gave some of the most exquisitely crafted talks, reading from a Braille manuscript to do it. My recollection was that it was always Joe Tussman, who was a dissident and non-signer, who accompanied him and made sure that his physical needs were taken care of since he was blind, and that he did get up and talk in the senate. He was most fluent. I remember Muscatine, and I can't remember whether he specifically talked or not, or really helped make sure that the opposition had a voice. Have you seen the interview in the last *Cal Monthly*?
- LaBerge: With him?
- Bern: Yes.
- LaBerge: No, I haven't. Oh, I'll have to get it.
- Bern: Please do, because there's also a reference to our symposium and certain misquotes and things like that [chuckles]. Actually, Edward Tolman never told me, he told Schachman that his mortgage was paid for and his kids were grown up and that he had in that respect nothing to lose.
- LaBerge: Professor Tolman?
- Bern: Yes. But Tolman told Schachman that. In this *Cal Monthly* article he told me, according to the article. That's not true.

LaBerge: The person probably got the Howards mixed up.

Bern: Yes. They may have especially when the other Howard was named Harold in the picture [laughter].

LaBerge: All those things are--

Bern: How can you keep track of all of this? Those of us who lived this story may be more accurate than those folks who try to report it.

John Kelley was someone else whose forthright position was impressive. He just died in the last few weeks.

LaBerge: Yes. He was there the last day [of the symposium], wasn't he?

Bern: That was a beautiful thing. Leon Henkin, his colleague, brought him just so people could see him, because he'd really been non compos for some time and barely knew what was happening. But it was still great to see him.

There were other psychology professors but I'm hesitant to use names because I'm not sure I remember them very well. But certainly there were a good number of what I would call very principled people around, and that's not to say that the people who were in favor of the loyalty oath were necessarily without principles--but certainly different principles. Or, as I really think, I think most of us including me, when I signed, were opportunists. We just did it because in the end it was not a great act, and the principle had been expressed. But I think there was a certain real feeling of depression that came with signing the oath after being opposed to it. It's okay to make light of it particularly because two years later it was thrown out.

LaBerge: But at the time you didn't know that.

Bern: Absolutely didn't know. People who fought it took quite a risk. It would have been possible for some of those people to really have lost their professions as a result of doing it. Certainly the McCarthy accusations which resulted in dismissal of some people from other universities--you know, never hit Berkeley. Neither he nor the state committee investigating Communist activities ever hit the University of California. It was very strange indeed.

Reasons for Signing

LaBerge: When you did sign, was it for financial reasons?

Bern: Yes.

LaBerge: You had a wife. Did you have children too?

Bern: Yes, I had one child. My wife was working. Up to that point she had always made more money than I did. It's not that--I don't think we could have survived, really.

LaBerge: And how did your wife feel about this?

Bern: I'm sure that my decision to sign was something that we both agreed that I should do. But she certainly supported my opposition to it all the time. I suppose if I had taken a principled position she would have agreed with me. But as soon as I indicated that in the end I was going to have to sign this--the other thing is that I felt so damn lucky to have this job and to have *a* job and lose it was just more than I could really contemplate. There weren't people standing on the sidelines saying, "Quit. You can come here." That wasn't true for any of us. I never realized even that for a year Muscatine didn't have an alternative, but he knew what he was doing for that year. But I don't think any of us was being offered--there may have been among the higher ranks people who were saying, "If they get rid of you there--".

There is a history of which I don't know the details which indicates that we lost the chance to get several excellent professors because there was kind of a boycott of UC.

LaBerge: What happened in your department after that?

Bern: There was no departmental reaction that I can recall. It was simply, "Okay, Bern signs, so he's going to stay here." That was kind of it. Stern signs, Smith signs. Nobody seemed to care one way or another. I think if I had really left there might have been some concern. But remember, I was still an instructor. I had no reputation. I didn't start to acquire a real scientific reputation--that is, so-called "status"--I think until the mid-sixties. It took me fifteen-plus years to acquire the kind of stature where someone would have raised an eyebrow, which I think is interesting. But then I acquired stature [laughter]. No one was more surprised than I was.

The Three Deans and Monroe Deutsch

LaBerge: What do you remember about those who were in favor of the oath? Who do you remember speaking out at senate meetings?

Bern: I remember these deans to whom I referred to. It was a trio. Davis, the dean of the College of Letters and Science, who was a professor of botany. I think his first name was Alva. He was known as "Sailor" Davis. He was anathema to me, and there were other reasons too that--archives unfold and you hear some of the other things he had to say. He was a prodigious anti-Semite. I didn't know that at the time.

Morrrough O'Brien, dean of the School of Engineering, known as "Black Mike"--I didn't quite like that; it sounds a little bit--where the hell did they pick up the "black"? I didn't use that term. And then there was C. Ladd Prosser, dean of the School of Law. That trio of deans all strongly supported the oath with no question at all. Schachman paraphrased Prosser's superb statement that "sometimes we must rise above principle," and he will never be forgotten for that aphorism.

I don't think this anecdote's been told, and it belongs in some of these archives, and this has to do with the former provost of the university.

LaBerge: Monroe Deutsch?

Bern: He was really highly esteemed, and he came to a senate meeting, asked by the opponents of the oath. He made a remark that put those deans in their places. I can't even paraphrase it, but it was something like saying, "Oh, they're just deans. What do you expect?" Something like that, but much more genteelly, because Deutsch was really of the San Francisco elite. He deliberately put them down, and I don't think any of them liked it a bit. I loved it [laughter].

LaBerge: I'm picturing you as a young instructor and having a dean say some of this probably is a little intimidating.

Bern: Oh, highly intimidating. And that's what I again said--it was Charles Schwarz in physics who asked me why I found this intimidating. I said, "You go to a senate meeting, you barely have any rank, and you're listening to the dean who's going to have to pass on your putative promotion tell you that you ought to sign the oath and that you're a damn fool for not doing it. I felt very intimidated by--

LaBerge: Who was your dean?

Bern: Davis. Davis was the dean. He was a very intimidating guy, big and blustery.

LaBerge: How often was this meeting of the opponents? How often did you go to meetings?

Bern: It was something like at least once a month and maybe more often. I can't remember.

LaBerge: Would you get emergency phone calls like, "Please come tonight"?

Bern: It wouldn't be so much of an emergency, just an expectation that I would do it if I didn't have anything else to do. And I was generally pretty responsible. I considered this my solemn responsibility. And to get a few other people involved.

There was another colleague in my department whom I'm sure felt the same way about this as I did, and that was William Berg [spells], who was an experimental embryologist at the time. Bill Berg is still alive; I talked to him this morning after years of not doing so--he retired very early. We're going to have lunch on Thursday, he and my wife and I, to talk about the residue of old times. He's been living in a motorhome up in the Sierras for decades, he told me. But we used to be good old boys together. He also felt the same way I did about the oath.

LaBerge: He signed and stayed.

Bern: He signed the oath.

LaBerge: So there were a lot who really opposed it who just had to--

Bern: That's right. One has no fair estimate of that at all. You can't believe there are only two people at UCLA who opposed the oath.

LaBerge: You've been to UCLA.

Bern: I've been associated with UCLA, I knew professors on the staff who were on the left and I knew outspoken civil libertarians, teachers, union members, and so on, so I can't believe there wasn't an element of resistance there as well.

Role of President Sproul

LaBerge: What were your thoughts then--or now looking back on some of the administrators--like President [Robert G.] Sproul?

Bern: I never had a formed opinion of the role of President Sproul, but I think David Saxon was right that Sproul mishandled the situation very badly. He could have nipped it in the bud probably. There's a history during the McCarthy period where agencies and universities tried to clean their skirts just to prove how pure they were before they could be attacked by McCarthy or a state committee or what have you. And I think this was a case in point with Robert Gordon Sproul.

LaBerge: He was trying to put off the Tenney Committee from--

Bern: Probably, and feeling this would do it, but not being very thoughtful about what he was doing. Creating a controversy in this area made the Tenney Committee, if they wished to, would be sort of convincing them that with all these dissidents there must be "where there's smoke there's fire" kind of a situation. So I don't think he did the university any favors. It's true this--just as, although he would not admit it, the Free Speech Movement really broke Clark Kerr, I think the loyalty oath situation just destroyed Robert Gordon Sproul and his influence. I don't think he was a bad man, a bad leader, but I think he made a very fatal error.

LaBerge: Had you ever met him or did he come to meetings and speak?

Bern: Oh, yes. He came to senate meetings, and his booming voice could be heard. I met him at UCLA. That's an apocryphal tale. A scientist with whom I first worked down there and later became a dean, Bennett Mills Allen--

Young Radical at UCLA ##

Bern: In the Depression days when I used to be an NYA--National Youth Administration--employee making between ten and twenty dollars a month, Allen thought every month or so he really ought to take me out to lunch. He would take me to a Westwood store; I think it was Bullock's because he liked to watch the models [laughter]. That was

however something we never discussed. I described it as he would take me out, and I'm starving, literally. I'm a young guy with a big appetite and no money to buy--to waste unnecessary food, and he had always suggested a nice green salad. I think I detest salads for that reason. So we would have a nice green salad.

One day we were sitting there and talking. We always talked politics and so on. Every time I would get out of hand he would tell me, "Howard, when I was a young man"--that would have been about 1920--"I was a socialist." And I took that very seriously. One day Robert Gordon Sproul, with whom he was on good terms, walked through this restaurant. Allen said, "Mr. Sproul, stop for a moment. I'd like you to meet one of our local radicals." [laughter] That was my first introduction to Sproul. Sproul took one look at me, completely unfazed by this, and said, "Keep him off the *Daily Bruin*." That was my intimate relationship with Robert Gordon Sproul.

LaBerge: And you were off the *Daily Bruin*, right?

Bern: I never was on it. But he was having trouble with it, particularly with a woman who later became a good friend, married a San Francisco artist, and became a very important P.R. person for UCSF. And she was on the *Daily Bruin*. And he wanted that kind of voice silenced.

LaBerge: Were you a young radical at UCLA? Did you do things other than peace--

Bern: As far as Bennett M. Allen was concerned I was a young radical. But it wasn't that he was so different. I mean, he was a strong supporter of the Loyalists in Spain himself because he had medical friends who were involved. Again, I guess the major feeling I had is that all along, both as a student and here, I've never felt out of place because my ideas were so unconventional. I used to argue what I felt. I was on the left, could I say in high school? Not very much. I was a real pacifist. But from college days on I haven't really changed appreciably. I mean, there are things that I had supported that I wish I had not, and there are things I haven't supported I wish I had. But beyond that I don't find my point of view having changed so greatly. I have no reason to be a neo-con, and some of our acquaintances are. You know that term?

LaBerge: No, I don't know that term.

Bern: New conservative. Neo-con. People who moved even from being former Communists to supporters of Ronald Reagan. That's quite a change.

Administrators and Regents

LaBerge: In your group, was there talk about the regents? For instance, Regent Neylan or regents that were on your side?

Bern: I'm sure there was much more than I was--I wasn't familiar with--I mean, it took me a while to realize that my friend Gordon Griffiths had a father on the regents, who was really being driven bonkers by Neylan. Farnham Griffiths was a solid Republican, but

Neylan knew that he had a son who obviously was not in agreement with Neylan. He used to really make life tough for Farnham Griffiths. David Gardner said that he knew this story too, that Farnham, after his term on the regents was over, didn't last very long. He really had been stressed terribly by this kind of conflict.

LaBerge: I read the part of Gordon Griffiths' memoir on the loyalty oath, and it sounds very sad about his father, that maybe he caused that--

Bern: I'm sure he gave his father, who was very conservative, agony by taking the position he took. I think if Farnham had lived long enough he would have taken great pride in what Griffiths did.

I must say when I think of my own family during this, I don't think anybody realized that I was in travail particularly. My parents, I'm sure, and my parents-in-law, didn't have any reaction to what particularly was going on, and particularly since I seemed to succeed ultimately [laughter]. I remember my father-in-law, after I got this marvelous job up here, asking my wife, "When's Howard going to get out of school?" [laughter]

LaBerge: Not knowing you were going to stay forever.

Bern: And forever it's been.

LaBerge: What do you remember about the publicity surrounding the Loyalty Oath? Was it in the papers every day?

Bern: Yes, I think so because in the first place Neylan was given to making those incredible statements, really incredible. I can't remember the gist of them, but he was just pre-McCarthy. This has been analyzed by somebody as the real fight between the right and the left in the Republican party. The left wasn't very left, but it certainly wasn't the extreme right that Neylan came to represent or that William Randolph Hearst came to represent.

LaBerge: Meaning they wanted to get rid of Governor [Earl] Warren in favor of--

Bern: Yes. They wanted to stop Warren, and they wanted to stop Robert Gordon Sproul because he was identified with Warren. Some of those Board of Regents meetings must have been quite something to behold. A lot of venom would be spewed.

AAUP Meeting in the Early Fifties

LaBerge: Do you remember specific turning points? Also, a wrap-up of how you think it affected you personally, this whole experience.

Bern: I think this was just the beginning of a great deal of trauma in the academic world as a result of the applying of McCarthyism in one of its many forms, including from within the university itself--at some universities, because there were professors all over the United States, very good people, being fired and turning up jobless.

I remember we had an AAUP [American Association of University Professors] meeting, of which I have been a member for fifty years according to this certificate they just sent me. It was a small chapter with very few people there--I don't even remember who they were, but I remember one guy whom I had met before. The chapter asked if maybe two outstanding civil liberties academic freedom cases could be presented that were presently going on or had just been concluded--and I took it upon myself to present the situation of Alex Novikoff [spells], who was a biologist at some New York University and had been fired. He incidentally went on to become a professor again after all of this calmed down at Albert Einstein Medical College. He was elected to the National Academy of Sciences. Obviously he was a very, very good scientist. But he had written, as an open Marxist, something on dialectics in biology, and it was published in *Science* magazine. So I took and presented his case. I neither defended or failed to defend it, but I felt this was a good case of a very capable scientist who was being punished for political reasons. His academic freedom was being violated.

The other guy chose another good case. I can't remember the case, but I remember the guy--it was Owen Chamberlain. Owen Chamberlain was an assistant professor of physics. It would be interesting to find out what made him conscious the way I was conscious. Certainly we had known each other. I don't remember his being around particularly during the oath thing. But as you know he later emerged as a major left figure, as well as a Nobel Laureate.

LaBerge: So when was this that you presented this?

Bern: Early fifties is all I can--

LaBerge: Okay, so after the loyalty oath.

Bern: I have no records of any of this stuff. I wasn't interested in writing my history; I still am not. [laughter].

It does reflect an answer to the question, which is that people continued to be very, very concerned. One of the guys I had gone to school with, who had been a graduate student at UCLA when I was still a senior, and maybe during my graduate year got his master's at UCLA, was Clement Markert [spells]. Clement Markert is one of the few academics that I know of who declined to answer the committee. I think it was McCarthy's committee. He took a very strong stand and refused to talk about his associations. He was not fired from the University of Michigan, whereas two other people who had taken strong stands--a mathematician whose name I can't be sure of, and Mark Nickerson, who was a pharmacologist and left for a Canadian university and then emerged as one of Canada's most prominent scientists. Markert just died a few weeks ago. We had maintained our friendship over the years. So he not only was kept at Michigan but left Michigan to go to Yale, where he became chair of the department and a member of the National Academy. He had fought in the Spanish Civil War--fought, not just supported it. He was a gutsy guy. I remember his case, obviously, since he was a friend of mine.

LaBerge: What do you think accounts for so many scientists being opponents? It seems like there were a lot of scientists.

Bern: Of course, I know them.

LaBerge: That's true.

Bern: I'm not sure that I would know people who were in philosophy or languages who felt strongly. There were leftists in universities who had nothing to do with science and who were very eminent in their own fields of specialization. But it is an interesting question.

LaBerge: When you look at the list of non-signers--I didn't count them but I would say the majority are scientists.

Bern: That's interesting. They must have stood out like sore thumbs in most of their departments, I'm sure. I'll give that one some thought.

[End of Interview]

TAPE GUIDE--Professor Howard Bern

Interview 1: December 14, 1999

Tape 1, Side A

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Tape 1, Side B

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Tape 2, Side A

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Ralph Giese

THE LOYALTY OATH CONTROVERSY AT THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA,
1949-1952

Interviews conducted by
Germaine LaBerge
in 1999

Since 1954 the Regional Oral History Office has been interviewing leading participants in or well-placed witnesses to major events in the development of Northern California, the West, and the nation. Oral History is a method of collecting historical information through tape-recorded interviews between a narrator with firsthand knowledge of historically significant events and a well-informed interviewer, with the goal of preserving substantive additions to the historical record. The tape recording is transcribed, lightly edited for continuity and clarity, and reviewed by the interviewee. The corrected manuscript is indexed, bound with photographs and illustrative materials, and placed in The Bancroft Library at the University of California, Berkeley, and in other research collections for scholarly use. Because it is primary material, oral history is not intended to present the final, verified, or complete narrative of events. It is a spoken account, offered by the interviewee in response to questioning, and as such it is reflective, partisan, deeply involved, and irreplaceable.

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BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

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Organizations in which you are active NONE

SIGNATURE Ralph Giesey

DATE: 13 OCT 99

INTERVIEW WITH RALPH GIESEY

**I. A STUDENT OF ERNST KANTOROWICZ REFLECTS ON HIS
PROFESSOR AND THE LOYALTY OATH**

[Interview 1: October 8, 1999] ##¹

Background

LaBerge: We're in a study carrel at the Doe Main Library [at UC-Berkeley], and I'm interviewing Ralph Gieseey on the loyalty oath.

We like to get a little personal background to find out how you got, for instance, to the University of California. So tell me the circumstances of your birth and how you then got to California.

Gieseey: I was born and raised in Detroit, Michigan. I got my A.B. at Wayne State in Detroit. I had just finished it and went into the service in July of '43. I was in the navy; I was an ensign, a naval officer during the war, and I came back to Wayne in January of '46. Within that year I did my M.A. in history with William J. Bossenbrook, quite well-known and a very influential person. I stayed in history more because of him than anything.

LaBerge: Which field in history?

Gieseey: Let me interpose this. During the war I spent some time based in San Francisco and lived in Oakland, and I got a notion of the University of California. So after the war--I had developed a very bad sinus condition early in the service, and for some reason I wanted to get away from the cold weather, and I thought a good place to come was California, and that obviously would be Berkeley. That was a stupid mistake because

1. ## This symbol indicates that a tape or tape segment has begun or ended. A guide to the tapes follows the transcript.

this is a lousy place for sinus. But I never had any problems with it afterwards. But that is why I came to Berkeley.

I was in modern French history, and I was going to work with Professor Franklin Palm, a very well-known French historian at the time. But as Gordon Griffiths told me last night--he was Palm's colleague--Palm was pretty much of a dipsomaniac. When I arrived as a new graduate student--I came here with the G.I. Bill [Serviceman's Readjustment Act of 1944] and all that--Palm's assistant made up my courses. So I took Palm's lecture in modern Europe, R.J. Kerner's lecture in modern Russia--since I'm in modern history--and Lawrence Harper's course in American constitutional--that's one of my outside fields. And the other was early modern European, to which the assistant said, "We don't have an early modernist this semester. We have one who's coming and is hired for the fall"--that was Gordon Griffiths. But he said, "One of our medievalists has agreed to give a course in the Reformation," and that was [Ernst] Kantorowicz.

At the end of that semester in June, I changed totally all of my orientation. I became then an early modern major with ancient and medieval as my minors. The comprehensive examination was headed by Kantorowicz, with Gordon on the committee.

Seminars at Home of Ernst Kantorowicz

- Giesey: That is the setting. Kantorowicz was one of those rare people with wit and intelligence, elegance, sort of aristocratic, and at the same time very democratic in behavior. Because he was a bachelor he got very attached to his students who were sort of his family. That same thing happened to me when I became a professor, especially in those years when I wasn't married. That was how the close association developed over the years. It was then the third year being here that the oath came up.
- LaBerge: When did you come to Berkeley? About '46 or '47?
- Giesey: January of '47.
- LaBerge: Was there anything in your background before coming here that would have influenced you as far as your feelings about the oath or your orientation about the oath?
- Giesey: I was like most young idealistic college types, what one might have called a "fellow traveler." Typically you believed in the ideal of equality of communism, and I had had a couple of Young Communist League friends at Wayne State University. They had been badly treated by the administration there, so there was that kind of sympathy. That is, of course, (laughs) in no way in Kantorowicz's camp, who was a devoted anti-Communist. He fought the Communists. That's the way to put it: very liberal Democratic--I still am that, these fifty years later.
- LaBerge: Can you describe your first memory of hearing about the loyalty oath and what the reaction was?

Giesey: In '49--I've gone through the chronology there; let me look at it again and then I can specify from it [looks at chronology].

LaBerge: If you remember when you first heard of it.

Giesey: I would have heard about it naturally from the first, in the newspaper. Here we are. All of this that is going on in early '49 of regents and so forth, and Sproul's early action. I suppose I heard the talk about that in the fall of '49 in the Academic Senate.

That year Kantorowicz had a sabbatical leave, from '49 to '50. And then '50 to '51, which was the firing, he was on leave [in the East] at Dumbarton Oaks and then by the time they [UC] actually fired him he had already been hired by the Institute for Advanced Study [in Princeton, New Jersey].

My involvement with it was almost solely through him. Here is the thing I remember. He was on leave that whole year of '49 to '50, but it was in the spring of '50 that non-signers had their hearings and all of that. He proposed that we have a seminar because the fact that he was on leave didn't mean that the seminar wouldn't meet. With Eka--I'll have to refer to that--

LaBerge: Everybody calls him Eka.

Giesey: The seminar would always meet--I had five seminars with him. It was always the same kind of studying of a certain text. It all started in textual analysis. This was an old German seminar technique. Then you pick it apart, dissect it, and then you see how it radiates, then you see its antecedents. It was very frequently a political text, because he was in political ideology.

So we had the text, it was to be the period in which Charles of Valois, the French noble, was the podestà in Florence in the early fourteenth century. We must have met ten times. All meetings were at his home in the evening.

LaBerge: And where was his home?

Giesey: Up Euclid. Not once was a single line of that text discussed. Every one of those meetings could run even to midnight--from eight to ten or eight to midnight--every meeting was devoted to the oath. It was in that period that he gave the speech that Gardner² records quite a bit of, and a lot of it is in there [*The Fundamental Issue*]. They are not identical, I might say; you would have to check Gardner's text to this and you'll see where they are, but it's not much different.

We had not signed early, as he had not signed. Then when they offered, said we would have the hearing--

2. David Gardner, *The California Oath Controversy* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1967).

Other Teaching Assistants

LaBerge: Can we back up a minute? For the record, you were a teaching assistant and you did not have tenure. I just want the record to show that.

Giesey: That materialistic issue was always there, just how much you would suffer if you didn't sign and were fired. Obviously since TA's and RA's and the others as rattled off by Gardner--also instructors--they are all strictly one-year appointments. Those types, we were always the dregs of it. It was the people who had tenure that in the end it really touched.

Then there were the non-tenured, say the assistant professors--I think Chuck Muscatine is the only one of that group of the Tolman case who was just an assistant professor; almost all the rest were "big boys." When you get to be that, a professor at California, you don't have to worry about finding another job. So it was easier for them in that way and easiest of all for a bachelor like Kantorowicz, because the others had families, kids, so forth. It would have been really tough. But for TA's, not so.

From his seminar, I think the only non-signers among TA's in history were his students. That was myself, certainly Joseph Rubenstein, and I think also Michael Cherniavsky [spells]. His widow Lucy lives here on Channing. She knew Eka very well. I don't know whether you know the Rosenthals, Barney and Felix.

LaBerge: I don't.

Giesey: Barney showed up [to the symposium]. Felix--

LaBerge: I'll give you this [hands over a writing by Felix Rosenthal].

Giesey: Kantorowicz was linked with them, Felix and Barney, who has the bookstore up Telegraph, although he's retired now. He knew Kantorowicz very well.

LaBerge: It says in this piece that he had a close association.

Giesey: I hope that Barney comes this afternoon. He was there yesterday, but I just got a chance briefly to say hello to him.

Anyhow, Lucy Cherniavsky was the secretary of Erwin Rosenthal, the father of Barney and Felix. He came here and set up the firm--Rosenthal is one of the grandest of all European book firms. However, I think it is going to be extinct when Barney is retired, because he had a daughter who didn't want to do it.

LaBerge: What bookstore is it?

Giesey: It's not a bookstore; he deals with manuscripts and rare books. I think it must be Rosenthal. Felix is the younger brother, an architect--I know them all from those days. They were part of the crowd.

LaBerge: Was there a group of TA's who got together in support, or were you all gathered around Professor Kantorowicz?

Giesey: There was, very quickly, when--you would have the dates down here when the non-tenured non-signers had their own separate group. Boy, we were a large number. We didn't meet in Wheeler Auditorium; it was some other auditorium, but it was at least a couple hundred or 300. We weren't all non-signers; some signed. Of that group at a certain point, Yussel, Joe Rubenstein, was the head of the whole group, and the great orator for it--whose name you did not get in there--is Robert Colodny. Whether he is still among the quick I don't know; I haven't seen him in some years. Certainly the later years of his life he was at the University of Pittsburgh.

Robert probably was at one time a member of the Communist party. They put him in very remote parts up in Alaska when he was in the war, because of his background; he was in the Lincoln Brigade for the Spanish Civil War. Robert was a great orator. My single most important recollection [chuckles] of the whole oath business was the meeting of the non-tenured non-signers. When this person or that person would speak, and then would come the moment when Yussel--

LaBerge: Yussel is his nickname?

Giesey: Gordon always calls him Yusef. Yussel's dead all these years. He was a very dear friend of mine and of Gordon's too. We traveled together in Europe and all that. Anyway, Yussel would recognize Robert, and there would be a deafening silence. Robert would get up and give this--and it was a question of Daniel in the lion's den, you know [chuckles]. Every persecution, all the way up.

Robert Colodny was in ancient history actually, although he did his dissertation--the book was published on his experiences in the civil war.

Hearings for the TA Non-Signers

Giesey: We had our hearings. Gardner doesn't say much about them at all; he said they existed. Well, he made a remark or who was it?

LaBerge: Maybe Clark Kerr.

Giesey: Could be, yesterday. You were not asked directly to take an oath at your hearing, but questions were posed about your beliefs politically--basically about liberty, the Bill of Rights. The result was that by answering these questions a certain way, there was no way a person could be a Communist. It was considered then that would be an alternative to signing.

LaBerge: Do you remember who was on the committee?

Giesey: John Hicks, our chairman in history, was the head of it. I just don't recall the other two. Ed Strong, who was my second professor, my outside professor as he was for Yussel

and Michael, we had seminars with Strong at his house. Kantorowicz came. And of course Strong had a quite significant role at this point, which is some years before he caught the brunt [referring to Chancellor Strong during the Free Speech Movement].

The way the hearings were done, you could tell how artfully it was done. There was no way you could deny your adherence to certain things they put in front of you.

LaBerge: You weren't asked if you were a Communist.

Giesey: No. That was the whole point. It was an alternative to taking an oath. I remember the three of us had ours--I do not think that Michael Cherniavsky did, because he was not a TA that year. I've been trying to get a hold of Lucy to check, but she's out of town. It was Yussel, Robert, and I. Anyway, Robert was the last of the three of us. When we were asked, Hicks would say, "Well, do you have any questions?" "No." When he came to Colodny and asked him, he cleared his throat and lectured them [laughter]. Robert was a real gutsy fellow. He was badly wounded early in the war and spent a large part of the civil war in a hospital. He was actually in Spain before the Lincoln Brigade got there. A very noble type.

Well, there we are. That's the hearing. And it looks like it's going to be an alternative all the way, and then comes the moment on your list here of reporting in the spring--here we are in the spring holding the hearings.

LaBerge: Do you remember where the hearings were held?

Giesey: I have a very good visual memory. Somehow I have the feeling it could have been over in--were there rooms like that in the Faculty Club at that time? Probably Wheeler Auditorium because history was in Wheeler then, and all our classes were taught in Wheeler.

Who was Fired?

LaBerge: Were you accompanied by either one of your professors or a dean? Felix Rosenthal says his dean came with him--or somebody accompanied him to the hearing.

Giesey: [Reading Felix Rosenthal's statement]. My God--here Felix says he received a letter from the regents, that he'd been fired as a non-signer. I never got a letter. That's what I want to find out from Gardner. I'm sure that this is wrong. Believe me. I know Felix. It is our belief--here's what I'm referring to: [reads] "President Sproul recommends to the regents, 157 employees, academic and non-academic, be terminated for not signing," and so forth. But that sixty-two--were they terminated? Because the next statement says "the regents vote to support the recommendations," and then they reverse their decision and fired them. Some sign [after the date]. "A total of thirty-two faculty are fired." Now that is the famous one, that's all the big boys. Those were all listed at the end of Gardner's book.

I'm in this group here [points to document] but I never got the letter. That's the one thing I'm going to ask [Chancellor] Berdahl to have ferreted out, and I would like to see a copy if I ever--I'm sure Felix is wrong. In other words, we were fired. But did Sproul put his name on the letter saying these guys are fired? Or was he just making noise? He was really trying to placate the press, because this was the single stupidest act (of which he had many) because that hit the newspaper the next day. That's what I remember. That was a total vindication of what the regents' oath was. We got rid of those dirty Communists as last. It proved that we're Communists, and none of these people were--well, Robert [Colodny] might have been.

I didn't know that I was one of those because no names were given until August. I think I'm in there. I would like to see just what happened to me. Eka's copy of this [showing *The Fundamental Issue*], he gave me, is inscribed "To Ralph, fired and rehired as a non-signer. Eka." That's the inscription on it. I remember we discussed it somewhat, but I think it was only a couple of years later that it surfaced who those anonymous firees were, and I was one of them. That's why Eka wrote that.

LaBerge: And you never knew it.

Giesey: No. See, my contract is over on June 30. It's all over. Sproul was doing this on June 23. But then in August I get another appointment slip and I have to sign. And I do sign.

LaBerge: You do sign the oath.

Giesey: Yes. Eka said if it's a matter of your livelihood, of course. It's not worth sacrificing--to fight for the principle is one thing, and certainly if they gave you an alternative to the oath then your principles are upheld, but if they're going to blackmail you like that, small fry--well, we were graduate students [chuckles] living off the G.I. Bill or a TA's salary. A few hundred dollars.

Ernst Kantorowicz' Background Before UC Berkeley

LaBerge: Can we talk about that a little bit, what Kantorowicz's philosophy was and what your philosophy was about the oath? Why did you not sign?

Giesey: In very practical terms it was because I was totally convinced that Eka was right [chuckles]. As I say we spent hours. Much of it is in *The Fundamental Issue* there. It became a matter a principle. He did not then talk about--as a matter of fact, I did not even know about his battle at the University of Frankfurt when he was professor when the Nazis came in. In late spring of '33 they instituted certain anti-Semitic things that caused him to--he went abroad. He didn't resign from the university; he got a leave and went to England for a year and came back. Then it was arranged that he could be retired, and he still got some sort of a living pension because he was a wounded veteran of World War I. Jews who fought in World War I got no pension unless they were wounded. He was wounded.

LaBerge: Was he Jewish? I didn't realize.

Giesey: Yes, but totally secularized. That's not true of Cherniavsky or Rubenstein, both more of the lower-class Jewish family, those who speak Yiddish. Eka's two nieces who were the family heirs are still alive. They're in their eighties and live in Saskatoon [Saskatchewan]. I visit them often and I'm involved in working with one of them. They don't know Yiddish [chuckles]. So he came from aristocratic background.

LaBerge: Why don't we talk about him a little bit then? How did he come to the United States? You started to tell me.

Giesey: He issued a letter which he sent, I suppose, to the equivalent of the chancellor at the University of Frankfurt protesting these regulations, invoking the fact he was very German. He was a Jewish German. He was German, above all, of Jewish extraction. He would recognize that there is always--with the Jews, because of that, there is always the notion of "unser Leute"--"our people." So he could relate very easily to all Jews because they, even as secular as he was, in terms of their common racial thing--that made it very easy for him.

Then he was abroad in England, which is very important--

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LaBerge: Professor Kantorowicz had a connection with the medievalists in England.

Giesey: The medievalists, over and above all to the classical scholar, a very famous man, Sir Maurice Bowra--later knighted Sir Maurice. He was a warden of Wadham, one of the colleges at Oxford, and he was chancellor of Oxford University for some years. He was Kantorowicz's best friend, in a way--the one he would most like to see. They had known each other in Germany; it was Bowra who helped to get him out. He got out at the time of the Kristallnacht in November of 1938. He had some German friends--I don't know, but I think Bowra had already gone back to England--they got him out of the city when it happened. I don't want to get into all the business of the passport and so forth.

From the time he left Frankfurt--that would have been in '35 in the spring, I guess--from then until late '38 Kantorowicz had no income from the family business--it had been lost--but he had an income from the World War I pension. He did scholarly things during those years. His main work, written in the late twenties, on the Emperor Frederick II, has been in print for seventy-two continuous years. There have been two translations in Italian, one in English, one in French. And recently the original German has been entirely reset in print in a box, two volumes.

An Offer from Monroe Deutsch

Giesey: The documents I found here at The Bancroft Library a few years ago explained that his coming to America was based, first of all, upon getting an enquiry from Monroe Deutsch, who was provost in those times, asking Eka if he was interested in a position here. Now that is dated, I think, October of '38. So he was already in the process of getting a passport so that when the Kristallnacht thing came, he got out immediately. He went to England briefly. There is a separate story I can't get into at all now. For many months Eka heard nothing about the position here because there was a history department quarrel. They had a house candidate they wanted to promote rather than a foreigner, as prominent as he was. It wasn't settled until July. That is some eight months after he got the letter. They knew he was in the States, in New York, and he just came right out as soon as he got the offer. He couldn't have been out here more than a week before he had to lecture.

LaBerge: Do you know who the inside history department person was?

Giesey: No. Here's what happened. I was going through all of Eka's records of his appointments, and the old catalogs of courses. I built that up, I have all that at home on the computer. In fact, a lot of that stuff I could print out and send to you. In the Bancroft where you sign in, an Italian professor, from the University of Turin, came up to me and said, "Are you Ralph Giesey?" He had seen my name on the sign-up slip, and knew articles I had written about Kantorowicz. He said, "I have some interesting stuff." He was investigating the background of an Italian who had become a professor at California, and was an admirer of Kantorowicz who had worked to influence his colleagues that Kantorowicz should come to Cal. He had heard about this quarrel, and that's the way we know the inside story of Eka's appointment. The Italian scholar said he would send me a print out of the article he was doing.

That is how Eka came here.

LaBerge: So he was here when you arrived as a graduate student.

Giesey: Yes. So we have him here in 1939, in August. I come to Berkeley only a good seven years later. So all those years were spent here.

Colleagues

LaBerge: Do you know who his closest colleagues were on the faculty?

Giesey: In those early days among the faculty, certainly Walter Horn in art history. I knew Walter somewhat. Leonardo Olschki, who was also one of the non-signers, you know, and Katie, his wife, I knew them better than I knew Horn. Otto Maenchen, he was professor of oriental studies. Anya, his wife, was a well-known psychoanalyst here, a student of Freud; I knew her quite well. All of these were refugee Jews. Maenchen was not Jewish, but he was a refugee. Early on there were some of the students, a couple of

whom are still alive. Probably the most prominent one was Norman Rich, who was a modern German historian. He was very close to Eka. I think Norman may still be with us. George Hunsten Williams of the Harvard Divinity School was in the seminar before my times. One of his major works came out of that seminar. Michael Cherniavsky had a prominent career. Yussel, Joe Rubenstein, became a quite prominent book dealer at his place in San Francisco.

Here's one thing that I didn't even know until yesterday [first day of symposium on the loyalty oath]. I did not know [Charles] Muscatine very well at all, but Michael Cherniavsky did. He and his wife Lucy were quite close to Chuck and Doris. Muscatine, as an assistant professor in English, was in the classroom for a whole year just to hear Kantorowicz. There were always more people in the classroom than there were students who signed up. Those who came and heard about him just had to come and hear him in person. His philosophy of history was remarkable and remarkably different. Even Gordon Griffiths has a bit of trouble understanding that because he was never a student and never sat in that classroom. If you were in that seminar you got a view of the professor that is entirely different than his best friends'. Maurice Bowra would not know--he's no longer with us--Eka as well as I did. I think that Bowra would have agreed. Bowra's memoirs have nice pages about Eka.

Eka's Mesmerizing Presence in the Classroom

LaBerge: Would you characterize what it was like to be in his classroom? What was his philosophy of history and how was it different?

Giesey: Do you have Grover Sales' reports?

LaBerge: I don't, but they may be in The Bancroft Library.

Giesey: You know who Grover is?

LaBerge: Was he a TA with you?

Giesey: I don't think he was a TA. I had the impression Grover was a very well-known reporter for the *San Francisco Chronicle* all during his life, and he now lives across the Bay and will be here this afternoon, Carroll [Brentano] says. Now, I haven't seen Grover in all those years.

Kantorowicz died in '63. Grover was still here, and he saw this little notice in the *San Francisco Chronicle*: Ex Cal Professor Died. Grover then gave almost an hour's lecture on the radio on Eka and then published a very large part of it in the *Chronicle*. [Erwin] Panofsky, the art historian at the Institute --he was Eka's friend--said when he read it, "The best thing ever written in the encomium of Kantorowicz." Grover, to answer your question, describes walking into the classroom, the presentation of the lecture, and the kind of spell Eka casts. I suppose I exaggerate it verbally at my age now, or, on the other hand, I might not now be able to know how profoundly I was affected.

As I was telling Gordon the other night--he and I had a rather drunken walk [chuckles] around the campus the night before last--the subject of the lecture course Eka taught before Gordon came was the Reformation. It started with Joachim of Fiore, the famous early Franciscan monk, and at midterm time the name of Martin Luther had not yet been mentioned. For Eka, all of the Reformation was the summation of lots of earlier strains and tensions within the church, and in all things, there was somewhere an ancient ring, and I mean pre-Christian, that was antecedent to it, that Kantorowicz would invoke. And at the same time, you had the feeling there is an echo of that still today.

In other words, not momentary history, but everything had that quality of a higher intellectual value. And he was performing that in his sing-song; that was his lecture. I believe he was something like that also in conversation. And it was all typed out and read, and since I inherited all of that stuff, all of that is now preserved. All of his lectures are now preserved in libraries. One, at the Institute for Advanced Study, the other at the Leo Baeck Institute--that's for papers of Jewish refugees. Leo Baeck was a rabbi in Berlin during the war.

Eka's Papers

LaBerge: Where is this place now?

Giesey: In New York City. And that's where finally I put all of his scholarly papers Michael Cherniavsky and I inherited, also all of his furniture and everything else [chuckles]. And then the niece up in Saskatoon got the family things. Included in the family things were the loyalty oath papers. Beate has always had that; she's told me at least that she had of all that sent here. I should check to see what it is. I thought Berdahl had got hold of that because he told me he was dealing with the Kantorowicz material. In the end not much of that came out in his talk at the symposium--far less than what he had told me he was going to say [chuckles]. But then I was sitting with his assistant at dinner last night. I said, "Did you write the speech?" [laughter] Probably did.

Why am I getting into those papers?

LaBerge: Well, you were telling me that you have all of his lecture notes.

Giesey: Yes. I inherited them but they weren't notes, but entire lectures typed out. I kept them for a long time. Michael died in the meantime, and in the early eighties I put them in the Leo Baeck. Then somewhat later the Institute for Advanced Study xeroxed all of them on durable acid-free paper [chuckles] because by this time they were quite fragile, all thirteen volumes of them. Then the third set I have at home. And that is to go to Frankfurt University.

Frankfurt was founded late. It was only founded, I think, in 1915 or something like that. At the fiftieth anniversary of its founding, Kantorowicz was to have come and be honored along with another former professor who had taught there, but Eka died before that happened. There is a bronze head of him made in the twenties which has been in

the seminar room at Frankfurt for as long as we've lived anyway, I suppose. Well, as long as you've lived [laughter].

In '94, '95, between the Institute at Princeton and the historical center in Frankfurt there were commemorative symposia held. And then a single volume out of that was published, a very handsome thing. I was at the Princeton one and gave my paper there. That's the best of the commemorative things. There were two other international meetings--one in Poland, in Poznań, where he was born and raised--that is, when it was Posen, East Germany. That's where he was born. How did we get into all of that?

LaBerge: Because I was asking you about his background and how he got to Berkeley. Then I asked you what his classes were like.

Giesey: I've given you some description.

LaBerge: And we'll look for Grover Sales' article.

Short History of Eka's Circle of TAs

LaBerge: Tell me how you kept in touch with him after he left and when he went to Princeton.

Giesey: In '51, when we dispersed--I'll just briefly tell you where we went. Yussel stayed here and got his M.A. in library science and was for a number of years the rare book librarian at the University of Kansas. Then he went into business for himself. He lived up into 1975, I would guess, and he died.

Michael and Bobby Benson--Bobby was later the medievalist at UCLA. Bobby went to Princeton. He just had an M.A. from Cal, I think, and he never even started the Ph.D. degree. But he went to Princeton to the department there. So they, Bobby and Michael, both go to Princeton, Michael as Eka's assistant. Professors at the Institute were allowed to have a full-time assistant and a secretary [chuckles], and a travel allowance, unbelievable, and the largest annual salary then--and still--of any normal professor. It is the class position in the--no matter how Harvard and Berkeley wanted to talk about how classy they are, the Institute is still the classiest place. But it isn't a teaching institution; it's simply research.

So Michael went as Eka's assistant, and he was finishing his dissertation. Michael was in medieval Russian history, if you will. Bobby went into straight medieval German, and he was a student of Theodore E. Mommsen (the grandson of the great Mommsen) who was the medievalist at Princeton. Michael was Eka's assistant for one year and Bobby for one year.

During those two years I was abroad. I had a Fulbright in Belgium, and then I had an ACLS--American Council of Learned Societies--I had that for a year. During that time I wrote my dissertation. I did the research in Brussels and in France.

LaBerge: What's the subject of your dissertation?

Giesey: “The Royal Funeral Ceremony in Renaissance France.” Now there’s a lot to be said about that. We can at least touch upon it later on.

When I finished that, I came back to Princeton as Eka’s assistant in ‘53. As we were sailing into the harbor in New York, we passed the ship in which Bobby Benson was setting out to go to Germany where he got his dissertation. Eka and Ed Strong and I were on the ship together coming in on the *New Amsterdam* back from France. Just by chance Strong was there; Eka and I had arranged to be on the ship together. He had been in Rhodes with Bowra.

We had a nice time. I guess that’s the last I ever saw of Strong, although he and I corresponded a bit later. So this is ‘53 now.

I am Eka’s assistant for two years there, and then if you want to run off quickly the rest of my career. This is the way I do everything: 1951 to 1953, 1953 to 1955, 1955 to 1956. One to three is abroad; three to five is Princeton; five to six is Vassar College, one year as a substitute. Three years then, from ‘56 to ‘59, I was at the University of Washington. Then seven years, from ‘59 to ‘66, at the University of Minnesota. That’s where I knew Berdahl. Then from ‘66 to ‘88 at the University of Iowa. And then after that I stayed eight more years until ‘96. On April 1, 1996, I established myself in my desert retreat in Tucson. Of course there were lots of other things--

LaBerge: Summers things and sabbaticals and--

Giesey: I may have brought along a vita; it would be in the [hotel] room.

LaBerge: Oh, that would be wonderful. You could stick it in the envelope.

Giesey: It has dates; most of it is my publication dates. If I don’t have it here I have it on disk at home.

LaBerge: How did you keep in contact with him in the later years?

Giesey: You see how it works there. Three to five I am with him, I am his assistant. Again, there is a situation where I was not then married; I’ve been married and divorced four times. I was between marriages. That was fine with him because Eka was a great cook and a lover of wine and conversation. That was the best of every day after you’ve done your work. So when I was there, I was not married. I had been married earlier.

LaBerge: Were you married when you were involved with the oath? Was that a concern, the economics of it?

Giesey: Actually I separated from my first wife just that summer before the oath began. It played no role.

LaBerge: And you didn’t have children.

Giesey: No, I’ve never had children.

Ralph Giesey's Dissertation Related to *The King's Two Bodies*

Giesey: At the institute I dined often with Eka, every other week he would have me, and we saw each other every day. My office was next to his. It was a sinecure; I didn't assist him in anything except one thing, and that is the dissertation I had written. I've now recorded some of this at least in footnotes--I've got to send it to you.

Briefly it is that I discovered within the funeral ceremony of the French kings in the Renaissance an element of the notion that the king never dies. That is, he dies in his mortal sense. And it is all worked out in an elaborate ceremony in which they treat the encoffined body and a lifelike effigy separately. I was the first to study this ceremonial in detail, but I wrote the elaborate history of that without knowing the theory of the king's two bodies. *The King's Two Bodies*--Eka was writing already before he left here and had written a fair amount of it, and it has to do with English and Italian legal things. While I was abroad--I sent the dissertation to him, and there, lo and behold, he found a dramatic dramatization of this whole notion of *The King's Two Bodies* by the French kings. That's one thing.

I said I was his assistant. He even thought of publishing the work collaboratively a bit, which was nonsense. For a little while I tried to write the footnotes in a long section at the end of the book, but they were plainly inadequate. There was a very heavy acknowledgment of me. This book is one of the most famous history books of the later twentieth century.

LaBerge: What's the title?

Giesey: *The King's Two Bodies*. It's now been translated into seven languages, including Bulgarian. There are other books like *The Queen's Two Bodies* or *The President's Two Bodies*. The book would not have had that significance if it hadn't been for the French king element, that I had provided. When I wrote the dissertation it was like Gardner talking about the oath: I had all the facts of how that came into being, and never saw what was behind it. What Eka saw, my God.

I could have written that dissertation for somebody else and he read it and used it, but it was from him that I got the subject when we were in seminar on the Byzantine emperors. Constantine Porphyrogenitus' Book of Ceremonies, there was a bit there on the funeral procession of the Byzantine emperor. We went through it and Eka said, "There's not much of interest here. Ah, but Ralphchen,"--that's what he always called me--"there is something that would interest you. You are in French early modern." During the Renaissance the French kings copied a practice of the Roman emperors of having a separate treatment. The body was cremated, being attended, and at the same time a doctor was coming every day and feeling the pulse of an effigy--

More on *The King's Two Bodies* ##

LaBerge: We were talking about your dissertation and *The King's Two Bodies*. He gave you the reference--

Gieseey: --to an article by Elias Bickermann, a fellow refugee-scholar at Columbia, then a classicist, who had argued that the French simply copied a newly-discovered text describing the funerals of the Roman emperors. From that, I began to look at all the sources. I proved that the French kings had developed the effigy ritual before it became known that the Roman emperors had had it.

LaBerge: Well, that was what you collaborated on anyway at Princeton.

Gieseey: I was there and he finished *The Kings Two Bodies* during the time I was there. His next two assistants helped him; it was published in Princeton in '57. It has been continuously in print. That's pretty good too--forty-two years still in print, then it went into paperback. Actually for one year *The King's Two Bodies* went out of print.

Then there was simply a take-off of interest. The Spanish were the first to translate it. And then I forget the series, the Italians and Germans. Portuguese has come out as fast, and now the Bulgarian. It's not an easy book; there's a lot of philosophy. The basic story is that deep down--that's what interested Eka--was the notion that these two bodies of the king was really a secular adaptation of the two forms of Christ as representing the church or in the Eucharist--you know, the natural body. He traced the intellectual sources there and how it works. It works in the Pope's two bodies for a while and then the king's two bodies. Then the French are almost last. The English--"the king's two bodies" is a phrase used by Tudor lawyers when they talk about the perpetuity of royal power and so forth. Then the French come up with the effigy ritual.

It was above all the anthropologists who loved *The King's Two Bodies* because the effigy ritual was done almost without any objective commentary. It is acted out. That's what the anthropologists want; they don't want all of this literary stuff. They want the great ideas to be transmitted to people who are illiterate, et cetera. Cliff [Clifford] Geertz--a famous anthropologist now at the Institute--was always one of Eka's great fans although he never knew Eka.

When I was in the University of Washington I would see Eka in the summers, and then when I moved to Minnesota it was closer. But I was regularly in contact with him. I would vacation in the East; my friends were all in the East. So I saw him all the time and right up to the end to the last night--I discovered the body, but I don't want to get into any of that.

LaBerge: Obviously, you were his "family."

Gieseey: Indeed. Michael [Cherniavsky] was in a way always number one boy, if you will, because Eka had known him--as soon as he came here, through the Rosenthals--Michael was close to the Rosenthals--and then Michael went off to the war and came back. He and Michael were very close, even after Michael was married.

I sent Berdahl one of the smaller Kantorowicz collected things. Most of his articles written in English have recently been translated into German, and many of them also into Italian and French--in those languages at least, and I'm always involved in that in some way because the word gets out, "Oh, Giesey has to--". That takes up considerable time. Finally I'm going to do these reminiscences when I finish my own current project, which I'm going to do probably collaboratively with Beate. She and I have worked on it for some time--which is, Eka in America. She and her mother, Eka's sister, and the family escaped to America even before Eka did, and so she's very American. She's an anthropologist herself.

In that sense I'm the last of the close students; the others are all dead. That gives you a pretty good idea of the connections.

Teaching Assistants' Stance and the George Circle³

LaBerge: We have a little bit more time. Can we go back to the loyalty oath? Do you have memories of what the relationships were--in the TAs, between the non-signers and the signers? Or the relationship between non-signing TAs and the faculty? Was there anything happening there?

Giesey: In the faculty, the two people I was closest to were Eka and Gordon Griffiths, and they were non-signers. So I didn't really have much contact. Eka had quite tense relations particularly with Otto Maenchen [Professor of Art]. I think he was a refugee from communism, not from Nazism. And so this oath, my God, he would swear it a hundred times a day if they asked him. That strained that relationship tremendously, although when the regents in August said, "All right, they've had their hearing and proved that they're not Communists, now let 'em sign."--the betrayal of what looked like an understanding--then even Maenchen began to suspect that Eka was correct. There was a lot of tension like that.

With the TAs I just don't recall. John Sperling, we haven't been able to get ahold of him, he was not a TA, I don't think. He would have been [G.H.] Guttridge's TA because he was in English history. He certainly signed; I think most of the other faculty-- Well, Lawrence Harper, the constitutionalist, was against the oath but signed. And Strong finally signed, too. He felt that if he moved over and stayed and helped to be involved in the negotiating, in the compromise effort, he could be of more use than to be on the dissenting side. There you can see, I was with the dissenters. Even Strong was a dissenter, Walter Horn was a dissenter. Among the TAs--well, you just don't know what goes on in their minds. It's become a common thing to refer to "Kantorowicz's circle." The greatest intellectual influence in Eka's life was Stefan George, the German poet, a major poet of the twentieth century, whose group was called the "George Kreis (circle)."

3. Kantorowicz was a member of the well-known "George Kreis" (circle) in the late '20s and early '30s, in Germany. Those who thought his students constituted a "Kantorowicz Circle" in Berkeley took that notion from his own earlier relationship with George.

George, around the turn of the century particularly--I've seen a lot of books, biographies, picture books--used to have a group, and they would even dress in Greek robes and sit around and relive the symposium of Plato and so forth. He was a poet and a thinker and a very powerful personality. Eka did not get to know him until after the war, when Eka was at Heidelberg as an undergraduate. But *Frederick II*, Eka's great work which was written without footnotes, was a portrayal of Frederick II--that's the title--who was the emperor in the thirteenth century. There were lots of magic things: he was called the "Stupor Mundi"--the Wonder of the World. There were lots of stories about him. Eka writes the biography using that information, recreating Frederick. Big controversy about the book later. They said he had falsified, and then he wrote a second volume published two years later in which every paragraph, one for one, was documented thoroughly with very scholarly stuff, where he got it from. How did we get there?

LaBerge: I was asking you about the TAs and the professors, what kinds of tensions there were. Were there tensions within the history department that you could feel?

Giesey: It's the George Kreis, the George Circle that counts. It has been referred to at times because Michael Cherniavsky's best book was *Tsar and People*⁴, I think. It again deals with royal things. Here I am dealing with the French kings. And Bobby Benson--well, Bobby dealt with bishops [laughter] rather than kings. It was also the fact that everybody knew that there was this personal relationship at the time, that it would continue, that it was family. So they began to talk about the circle.

Well, I do believe that there were at that time among the TAs those who, whether they were envious or not, should be envious in the sense that we had a relationship with our professor such as they would not have had. As soon as you're married with kids, you don't have the seminar at home; you teach during the daytime and that's the end of it. So in that sense there are those who may have said, "He would have signed that except for the fact that his boss isn't signing it." That can be true too. There's nothing more really to say about it.

Eka's *The Fundamental Issue*

Giesey: But I certainly did not see then as I can see now, with the time intervening, the significance of principles of the majority of the professors. I will forget to prompt, to twit Berdahl about this. He was telling me, wondering where the notion of the gowned professions came from. I guess they finally got it from here [referring to *The Fundamental Issue*]. He quoted part of it in his introduction yesterday. I want to pick up that point and finish the sentence, which he did not finish. I must have it here.

LaBerge: It is about the scholar, the priest, the lawyer [inaudible].

4. Michael Cherniavsky, *Tsar and People; Studies in Russian Myths* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1961).

Giesey: Yes. Here we are: Trade and Profession. “The janitor is paid by the hour.”

[Reading from *The Fundamental Issue*] “The professors together with the students are the university.” Here we are with the gown: “...his connection with the legal profession as well as with the clergy from which, in the high Middle Ages, the academic profession descended and the scholar borrowed his gown. Unlike the employee, the professor dedicates, in the way of research, even most of his private life to the body corporate of the University.” *Corpus corporatum*, that’s the king’s two bodies notion even there.

Here we are, page sixteen, under “Accessory and Essence.” “The University is the *universitas magistrorum et scholarium*”--of teachers and students. “The body corporate of Masters and Students. Teachers and students together are the university regardless of the existence of gardens and buildings...” That’s the line that Berdahl quoted.

But let’s go on. “One can envisage a university without a single gardener or janitor, without a single secretary, and even --a bewitching mirage--without a single regent.”

That’s the line that ever since I’ve always been quoting, because whereas the regents wanted to make the professors--like the gardeners and janitors--just their employees, Eka turns this around. It is the teachers and the students who are the university. It is the regents who are like the janitors and the gardeners: they are to support it. And as I may say, considering he was a great lover of gardening, he would have regarded the gardeners more important than the regents.

I don’t want to get into whether Berdahl really understood that, but that is the heart of it. What nobody has mentioned yet is the question of the integrity of it as a profession, except Berdahl briefly. Now you’re going to hear a lot about that from Gordon [Griffiths], and I’m quite sure from Chuck [Muscatine] [laughs]. Chuck says he hopes that some of the others are conservative; that means that he’s going to be dynamite [referring to Loyalty Oath conference in afternoon following interview].

So that is what the difference is. I have said some things to you here about the way that Eka appeared in his lectures, in the relations, the seminar--the totality of that life. Things were like that much more in earlier days in Germany, even in Heidelberg during the Weimar period. It doesn’t make any difference, and it wouldn’t, I’ll bet, with the German professors that stayed there--it would have been the same even in the Nazi period, where politics wasn’t involved.

It is not something that is, however, known really to Americans. They read this [*The Fundamental Issue*]. A lot of them now read it and say, “Look, he’s putting down janitors and gardeners,” which is utterly untrue. He was so democratic in his behavior, but in this case what he was trying to do was isolate the quality of being a professor. I suppose what Ellen Schrecker said yesterday about the corporate character that the universities are taking on, Eka would certainly agree. Regents are like the trustees of a corporation, and you have the CEO and there are all those professors and so forth. That is the utter reversal of what the university is all about. I felt a little uneasy at the affair last night for that reason, because I really, really left. I don’t want to get into that. We’ll see what comes out with the dissenters [at the symposium].

LaBerge: Do you have anything else that you’d like to say on this?

Giesey: No. If I were Robert Colodny I would clear my throat [laughter].

LaBerge: I want to thank you very much.

[End of Interview]

TAPE GUIDE--Ralph Giesey

Interview 1: October 8, 1999

Tape 1, Side A

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Tape 1, Side B

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Tape 2, Side A

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University of California
Berkeley, California

Mary Tolman Kent

THE LOYALTY OATH CONTROVERSY AT THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA,
1949-1952

Interviews conducted by
Germaine LaBerge
in 1999

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Regional Oral History Office
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University of California
Berkeley, California 94720

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

(Please write clearly. Use black ink.)

Your full name Mary Tolman Kent
 Date of birth 4/17/21 Birthplace Berkeley CA.
 Father's full name Edward Chase Tolman
 Occupation U.C. Prof. of Psychology Birthplace Newton, Mass.
 Mother's full name Kathleen Drew Tolman
 Occupation Civil Libertarian Birthplace China
 Your spouse Thomas John Kent Jr. (deceased)
 Occupation City Planner/Prof. Birthplace Oakland, CA
 Your children Thomas Edward Kent,
Stephen William Kent (deceased), David Robert Kent
 Where did you grow up? Berkeley
 Present community Berkeley
 Education Arena Hercul School, Scripps College (2 yrs.)
U.C. Berkeley (2 yrs. but no degree)
 Occupation(s) housewife, political activist,
writer.
 Areas of expertise _____

 Other interests or activities _____

 Organizations in which you are active U.C. Section Club, 3
writers groups.
 SIGNATURE Mary T. Kent DATE: 11/15/99

INTERVIEW WITH MARY TOLMAN KENT

I. FAMILY BACKGROUND

[Interview 1; November 8, 1999] ##¹

Edward Chace Tolman

LaBerge: Okay, I am sitting here with Mary Tolman Kent on November 8, 1999, and we're going to discuss the loyalty oath today. But before we get to that subject, if you could give me a little bit of family background, like when and where you were born and who was in your family and a little bit about that.

Kent: Okay. I was born in Berkeley at Alta Bates Hospital in 1921. I was the second child and the first native Californian in our family because my parents had come from New England, in 1918 I think, with my older sister, who was a baby when they came. My father had been fired from his job, his first real job at Northwestern University, probably because he was a pacifist, in World War I.

It was just chance that they came here because he found a job here. I think his job was working for Professor [George Malcolm] Stratton, who was the father of Dr. Malcolm Stratton, but he was a psychologist. In those days, the psychology department was just part of the philosophy department, which is a little interesting. But it grew, and my father was in on those early years.

LaBerge: Let's go back to New England. Your father's name was Edward--

Kent: Chace, C-h-a-c-e.

LaBerge: Tolman. And where was he born?

1. This symbol indicates that a tape side or section has begun or ended. A guide to the tapes follows the interview.

- Kent: I think in West Newton.
- LaBerge: Massachusetts.
- Kent: Yes. And his father was a manufacturer and had gone to MIT [Massachusetts Institute of Technology] as an engineer. My father and his older brother [Richard Chace Tolman], who became a physicist, were both expected to go into the family business, but neither one of them did.
- LaBerge: I see. And where did he go to school?
- Kent: Richard?
- LaBerge: Edward.
- Kent: Well, he went to both Harvard and MIT. I think he went to MIT first and was getting his engineering degree, but then he got interested--he knew he wasn't going to want to be an engineer--I really--this is where Deborah because she was older and paid more attention, and she also became a psychology major herself, so she I think would know more about the psychological parts of his--but there are books--I should do a little more research.
- LaBerge: What you can remember is fine.
- Kent: Okay.
- LaBerge: And so did he finish--he got his B.A. at Harvard, or his Ph.D.?
- Kent: He got his Ph.D., I believe, at Harvard. I mean, he got his B.A., I think, at MIT and then did graduate work at Harvard. I think that's the way it was.
- LaBerge: In psychology.
- Kent: Yes.
- LaBerge: And what was his career before Northwestern?
- Kent: That was his first job. Well, I shouldn't say that for sure, but I think it was. He and my mother hadn't been married very long. They were late to get married, and he was traveling in Europe and trying to decide what he was going to do, but they were married--I think they were both thirty when they were married. These days that's not--
- LaBerge: These days it's not so unusual.
- Kent: Yes. And so they were--and that was his first real job.
- LaBerge: Okay. Tell me about your mother's background? What was her name?
- Kent: I want to tell you a little bit more about my father's background, which is interesting in terms of the loyalty oath. His grandmother, who was a Quaker, was very active in the

suffrage movement and before that in the anti-slavery movement, and she and her husband had an Underground Railroad station in their house, so it was very exciting. My sister has written a book for children about this, based on this story in our family, so she can tell you more about that.

LaBerge: Do you remember your grandmother's name?

Kent: Elizabeth Buffum, B-u-f-f-u-m, Chace. They lived in Rhode Island. I feel--for me, it's very much a part of my attitude about things, and I got that from my father and all this history.

LaBerge: Right. That's what we're trying to get at, too, to see where it came from.

Kent: Yes.

LaBerge: In World War I, your father--

Kent: He didn't--

LaBerge: Was he a conscientious objector?

Kent: No, I don't think he had to be; it never came to that. He never had to decide, but he was struggling, I think, with what would he do. My uncle did go into the army--I've seen pictures of him in uniform, but I don't really know much more.

LaBerge: Anything more on your father's background?

Kent: Well, just that, yes. And there was that Quaker--and some Unitarians in there, and New England manufacturing. My grandfather--his father was quite a successful manufacturer. He invented the first braided rope, which was called Samson [this name was after the biblical Samson--a man of extraordinary strength--like the rope] Cordage. That was used extensively in double-hung windows. Remember, they have those ropes?

LaBerge: Yes.

Kent: It's very strong and durable. Later it was used in sailboats and ships. Then it was bought out by a company in Texas named Ensearch. I think it had to do--I hope I'm accurate about this--actually, it was used in some of the space missions.

LaBerge: In building the spaceships or something?

Kent: Yes. And it was a nice little factory in Shirley, Massachusetts. One time Jack [Kent] and Deborah [Tolman Whitney] and I went to a kind of pilgrimage to see our background--

LaBerge: Your roots.

Kent: It was Jack's idea. It wasn't his family, but he thought we should do that. So we did this in the fall in the 1970s, when the leaves were beautiful, and then we went to this little

town, Shirley, Massachusetts, which was just charming. We saw the house where they had lived. They didn't live all the time in Shirley, but back and forth--West Newton, Shirley. It was in the beginning a summer house, and that's where he--my grandfather, James Pike Tolman--had his factory.

Kathleen Drew Tolman

LaBerge: How about your mother? Where did she grow up?

Kent: My mother grew up in China.

LaBerge: Oh, my!

Kent: She's not Chinese [laughs], but her father was--well, I think he went to Harvard Business School, and he worked for the Chinese customs service. Her childhood was very kind of colonial--lots of servants and fancy dresses and garden parties with the British and all that. They lived in many different places, Foochow, Canton, Shanghai, Peking. Deborah will also know more about that because she went to China once and kind of checked it out. I have never been. So she had an interesting childhood.

There were six children in her family. I mean, she was one of six, next to the youngest.

LaBerge: What was her name?

Kent: Kathleen--there she is, right there [pointing to a painting].

LaBerge: Oh! Did you do that?

Kent: No.

LaBerge: It's beautiful. She's beautiful.

Kent: She was. Now, her name was Kathleen Drew [Tolman]. She's one of six. Somewhere in that family, that dark streak is there, and almost all of her siblings and both of my siblings have that dark streak. We used to joke about it, and we decided that it was probably back in the Spanish Armada days, when--a commingling of British sailors and Spanish ladies, or vice versa, I think--British ladies and Spanish sailors.

LaBerge: Right. Who knows?

Kent: But it's a very strong sort of exotic look that I did not inherit. I look more like my father.

LaBerge: Do you want to tell me something more about her growing up?

Kent: Well, yes. Let's see. All those children, when they got to be high school age, they were sent either to Germany, to boarding school, or back to West Newton, which my mother

was. She lived with an aunt and went to Newton High, which is a very--still, I think--a very fine public high school in West Newton or Newton--I'm not sure there if it's Newton or West Newton. There's Newton, West Newton, Newton Center--they're all kind of together. I think that's where she first met my father, as a matter of fact.

LaBerge: I see. In high school.

Kent: In high school, yes. But then many years went by. She went to Radcliffe. She was really an intellectual. She was magna cum laude and Phi Beta Kappa and learned Greek and Latin and everything, and taught those things also. She taught school. She also was quite competitive in sports. I have pictures of her playing basketball, sitting on the basketball team. She played a pretty good game of tennis.

LaBerge: Did she teach high school?

Kent: She taught here. Yes, she taught at the A to Zed School--you know, that was a private school down on Telegraph, just over--maybe it's in Oakland; I'm not sure. It might be just near the Oakland border. She taught there for a while, and she also taught at a private school which--neither of these schools exist anymore--Miss Ransome's School.

LaBerge: Oh, I've heard about that.

Kent: In Piedmont, yes.

LaBerge: What was the name of the other one?

Kent: A to Zed. A to Zed, Z-e-d. A to Z.

LaBerge: Oh, I see [laughs]!

Kent: But after my brother was born, he had a lot of health problems--nothing serious, but she just found it too difficult--

LaBerge: This was her third child?

Kent: Her third child. She just gave up teaching. But I don't know whether she felt badly about that or not. I wish I'd asked her. Deborah might know. Deborah has a feeling that she did--always kind of regretted that she didn't have her career, but she was very active in many, many activities in this community. She was a real civil libertarian and on the ACLU [American Civil Liberties Union] board and also very active in university circles.

Faculty Wives, Section Clubs, Other Professors

LaBerge: Like the Faculty Wives?

Kent: Oh, yes. And poured tea and did all those things. And they belonged to many sections. Do you know about the sections?

LaBerge: I do, but tell me what they were involved in.

Kent: I'm still involved. I'm also a faculty wife, and I just got into the same thing, although in a slightly less formal way. Well, they were in the Drama Section, which I am still in; she was in the Tennis Section. In fact, she won some--her name is on the cup that goes around. I'm in that section--I was in that section. I don't play anymore. Let's see. What other ones? That's all I can think of at the moment. But those two were very active.

And the people in those sections tended to be the people that they knew socially. Quite a few of them were from the East, who had come to the West the same time they did, and some of them were important people, like Professor Adams, who was active in the--oh, there was a big revolution back in--

LaBerge: In 1919?

Kent: Yes. You've heard of that. Well, you probably know it more than I do. Anyway, he was a big leader in that. And Professor [Jacob] Loewenberg and [Ivan] Linforth and Stephen Pepper. The Peppers were very good friends, and neighbors.

LaBerge: In her oral history, Mary Woods Bennett says that your parents would have graduate students over at Thanksgiving.

Kent: Yes. Oh, did she? I'm glad you reminded me of that. Yes, they did do that a lot. And not only Thanksgiving, but I remember little sort of Sunday afternoon teas, where people would come. Mother would--when there were men there, they would have a little rum in a little blue pitcher. I remember seeing that little blue pitcher, and they'd pour a little bit of rum into the tea--but just for the men!

LaBerge: [laughs]

Kent: Isn't that weird?

LaBerge: And would you be kind of skirting around, helping?

Kent: Oh, yes, I was--well, not helping. I was kind of flirting with--I mean, I wasn't much help, but I do remember those, being very enamored of the whole thing. [Robert] Oppenheimer--one period he used to come quite often when he was in Berkeley. He was very dramatic and just intense and fascinating. And Krech--do you remember?

LaBerge: No, I don't know that name.

Kent: David Krech, K-r-e-c-h. It really was Krechevsky, but he shortened it. He was one of my father's wonderful students, and he became a good friend. His wife is a friend of mine. Others I remember are Richard Crutchfield and Robert Tryon.

Biography of Edward Tolman

LaBerge: Let's go back--before we get more into the Berkeley campus. How did your parents reconnect and meet?

Kent: How did they meet?

LaBerge: Yes. I mean, how did they connect again after high school?

Kent: Oh. Well, I really don't know except that they lived in the same community, and it was probably like Berkeley. They moved in the same circles. I really don't know any more than that except that they met in high school and they knew each other all through those years.

LaBerge: How long were they at Northwestern?

Kent: I think only about a year and a half. Deborah was born there, in Evanston. She was born in 1918, I think--'18, yes. I think they were there for a year and a half.

LaBerge: It's interesting to hear that background that he was fired from there.

Kent: Yes.

LaBerge: You really don't know?

Kent: You know, there's a woman who's writing a biography of my father, and she has jostled my memory because every now and then she sends me chapters. I hope she gets it done. She's been writing it for years.

LaBerge: What's her name?

Kent: Her name is Nancy Innes. She's Canadian. She's a psychologist. She got interested, and she was writing about the history of psychology, and somehow she got into my father's papers and found herself wanting to know more, and so now she's writing a biography of him. But as I say, she's been working on it for years. I like what she's doing, and I hope she gets it done. She has jostled my memory, which is nice.

LaBerge: Is it more on his career as a psychologist?

Kent: It is, but there's a lot about this background of his--but yes, and the psychological part I don't follow very well, but that's all about who was important and who was leading who and who was following who, and different trends and so forth.

Mary Tolman's Childhood and Education in Berkeley

LaBerge: How about you, yourself? Tell me about your schools and then a little bit maybe about your family life.

Kent: Okay. Well, I went to Hillside School until the fourth grade, and then I was taken out of that school because I began being a liar and playing hooky.

LaBerge: [laughs] That's so funny to hear you--

Kent: I had a teacher who I hated, and she was mean to me. She was mean to everybody--she was a bad teacher. She shouldn't--that was in fourth grade, and I just began to be rebellious. With another friend. We'd go home to her house. Her mother was working. In those days that was very rare that you could go home to an empty house, and we'd eat lunch and then we'd never go back to the afternoon session.

My parents found out about this, of course, and they were horrified. So there was a little private school, neighborhood school that was started at that time. It was called Miss Munn's, and it was on Greenwood Common, in a little nice house. Quite a few of the neighborhood kids went to it. It was a very interesting school. I went there for three years.

Among my teachers was David Park. He was nineteen years old. It was his first job, and he was terrified of teaching, but he got over it. I mean, he used to blush whenever you looked at him or said anything to him. But it was interesting having him. He taught both history and art. And so I went there for three years.

And then we went to Europe on a sabbatical--all three--my sister and me and my younger brother were put in a boarding school in Switzerland for that year. That was very interesting. We had to speak French. It was a good school, I think probably quite progressive for those days. I really don't know. Of course, it was a boarding school. My parents were in Vienna. My father was seeing [Sigmund] Freud and becoming very interested in Freudian psychology. He wasn't being analyzed--he used to say he didn't quite have the nerve to be analyzed. That was a great year because we had--Christmas we went up skiing with my family and various cousins and aunts who were in Europe, in a little village in Switzerland--for a whole month. It was just lovely. We skated and skied and played Mah Jong.

And then at Easter we went to Italy for a month. That was incredible too--Rome, Florence, Naples, Mt. Vesuvius, Rapallo, Amalfi. I had my thirteenth birthday on the Isle of Capri.

I had an aunt--one of my mother's sisters married a Britisher and lived in London, and we visited them. So that was my seventh grade year--no, eighth grade year.

When we came back, my sister and I both went to Miss Head's, which was then right down, you know, on Bowditch Street, across from People's Park.

LaBerge: Yes.

Kent: That's where I graduated from high school.

LaBerge: No more playing hookey.

Kent: No, but I never did become--

LaBerge: You probably didn't have a bad teacher.

Kent: I didn't have to play hookey, right. I didn't really catch on, wasn't academically inspired until I got to college, and then suddenly it all began to--I sometimes think high school is a very difficult, useless time for a lot of students. I've seen that with my sons, and grandchildren.

LaBerge: When you finished Miss Head's, where did you go?

Meeting Jack Kent in Inverness

Kent: Well, then I went to Scripps College down in Claremont for two years. But by then I had fallen in love with my husband-to-be. We were in Inverness--we always went to Inverness in the summer--and still do.

LaBerge: Did you have a house there?

Kent: Yes. My parents rented houses, but most summers of my childhood we went there at least for part of the summer. Jack's family had a house there. That's where we met. But he was four years older than me, so he didn't pay any attention to me. I was watching him though, for years.

Just before I started college--and he had just graduated from college, and he was on his way on a year's exchange fellowship--in Germany, of all places. Now, this is 1938. It was really kind of a propaganda thing that had been arranged by his fraternity house. They had a Nazi kid there. He lived in Freiberg. There were really no strings attached. They would take these American students off on bus tours and show them all the wonders of Nazi stuff. But he didn't even have to enroll in university. He did enroll at Freiberg University and had really a fabulous year, but he basically was--Lewis Mumford was his tutor--who he had actually gotten in touch with and asked if he could be his tutor, which he was. He gave him a list of books to read, and he--let's see, Jack had graduated in architecture--

LaBerge: From Cal?

Kent: Yes. But he had decided that he was never going to practice a day in his life because architects only built houses for rich people, and he was a real radical by then, at that point. He was questioning everything. It's probably interesting that he took advantage of--well, he was--

LaBerge: Of the Nazi fellowship or whatever.

Kent: Yes. And he went to Russia that year, and he went to Scandinavia, and he went to Rome, and he really had--you know, it was a wonderful post-college year. He began to focus on and meet people in city planning, and that's what he became--then. It was great. So anyway, that was my first year in college. We had just sort of sparked before that. So we had this terrific letter-writing experience for that year.

I went back to Scripps for my sophomore year. I always sort of planned to go there just two years and then come to Cal. My parents didn't want me to go to Cal as a freshman because they thought I would get swept up--which I would have--in all the sorority stuff. They just very wisely found this place which had some of that aura about it--dormitories and nice girls from nice families and all that--but it really was a wonderful education. I got excited about my courses there. Humanities is their thing. I took art from Millard Sheets. It was very broadening. And all the time Jack was tutoring me, educating me. He had been to college. And what I should read and what we should think about.

Early Married Life

Kent: So anyway, in the middle of my junior year I got married.

LaBerge: Were you back here at Cal?

Kent: Yes, I had come back to Cal. We lived right up on Shasta Road. He was working for the National Resources Planning Board then. It had a regional office here. It was actually in the downtown post office. He also had some jobs, consulting jobs at various small planning departments around. He was just getting started in that field.

LaBerge: And then did you finish school or not?

Kent: Well, I almost did. I still have fifteen units. I went for two whole years, but I got pregnant, and then he went to graduate school, MIT, so we moved East. I just couldn't take quite the full load that last year because I was pregnant. That was unusual--

LaBerge: I'll bet it was. A married student--

Kent: It was. It was very unusual. But it was great. First we lived in a little apartment right on Shasta Road, which Oppenheimer had just moved out of because he also had just gotten married. It was a neat place. We lived there six months, then we moved to another apartment down on Eunice Street. Then we went to Boston, where our oldest child was born. Jack was at MIT.

LaBerge: Okay. How long were you at MIT?

Kent: Well, not very long. We were there--let's see--about six months. And then Jack was offered a wonderful job in the city planning department in San Francisco, so he decided, well, he would take it, even though he had not gotten his degree yet. But this is now 1943.

LaBerge: So after Pearl Harbor?

Kent: Tom was born in November '42. Yes, the war was on. We were dodging the draft and trying to--you know, starting a career and starting a family, and everything was very unsettled. So we came back. We lived in San Francisco in a wonderful apartment on Russian Hill. We came back in February maybe, and by June the draft board had--Jack had to go before the draft board, and they said, "You should go back to MIT and get your degree. It'll defer you for a while, but get it. Your career in the army or anywhere else will be much more interesting."

So he went back, and I did not because by now Tom was about eight months old. He went back and got his degree in just a few weeks.

World War II: What the Tolmans and the Kents Were Doing ##

LaBerge: Okay, so he got his degree.

Kent: Yes, and he came back, and then he was drafted. Now, I think it was the end of the summer of '43. And everything changed again. I had to go back home with my baby and live with my parents because I couldn't afford to live on fifty dollars a month, which is what we got--so that was kind of a hard time. And the war. My parents--oh, they were in agony. My brother had been drafted, and he was off in Burma somewhere. They didn't really know. They had such mixed feelings about the war, being basically pacifists but also agonized over what was happening with these Jewish refugees that were coming. A lot of them were scholars who my father got to know and care about. They were just torn apart about the whole thing, wanting to--not wanting to fight--

And then I remember--I didn't really understand it very well at the time--about the America First people. Some of those people were really very radical and liberal. Some of them were not. I mean, it was a confusing thing, and everybody had to make these choices. I think it was an extremely hard time.

My father--interesting--about that time he decided he wanted to do something for the war effort, so he got a job testing possible spies for the OSS [Office of Strategic Services]. It was all very secret. We didn't know where he was. He would disappear somewhere--Washington, we presumed. Oh, and I was pregnant again. Jack had been through two different basic training camps and was now in officers' school in Texas, in military government. I lost that baby. It was stillborn.

My mother was in agony over not knowing where my father was and where my brother was, and we were living in this great big house on La Loma Avenue. It was a very difficult time. But eventually I joined Jack in Washington, D.C. He finished his officers' training school. He was stationed in Washington with the provost marshal general's office. It had to do with prisoners of war who were in America, like German prisoners who were in camps in the South--he had to keep the natives happy--the people were very nervous and upset, and Jack would get these calls from people, and he had to

deal with that. I don't know what he knew about that--nothing [laughs]--but he was a very nice person, so probably was reassuring.

It was kind of crazy, but it was interesting to be in Washington at that time, fascinating. We were there when the war ended in Europe, and we were there when the bomb dropped. We were there when [President Franklin] Roosevelt died. When Roosevelt died, I can remember seeing people just standing on the street corners, crying. It was amazing, absolutely amazing. I don't think that would happen anywhere else but in Washington, you know.

There were a lot of interesting people there, friends. The Meicklejohns were there. You know who Alexander Meicklejohn was.

LaBerge: I do, yes.

Kent: Well, he and his wife lived across the street from my parents on La Loma, and so they were friends, and they were in Washington. In fact we were in a taxi on our way to dinner with them when we learned from the taxi driver that Roosevelt had died. I don't know exactly what they were doing in Washington, but something to do with the war. My Uncle Dick, Richard, my father's brother, who was a physicist, was in the Manhattan Project. He was General Groves's physicist specialist. We didn't know what he was doing, either, except that he would go off on these trips, and he'd come back with some gorgeous turquoise jewelry for my aunt. As soon as the bomb went off in New Mexico and we heard about it, we thought, Ah, that's where he's been going. Well, that bomb on Hiroshima--and then, of course, the second on Nagasaki, the war was over in two days or a week or something.

Then Jack was sent overseas to Berlin as part of the reconstruction of the country and the city. It was very interesting for a city planner. He was only there for about eight months, but it was an extremely intense and sad time.

LaBerge: You weren't--

Kent: I didn't go. I stayed in Washington with Tom, and I got a job with the National Planning Association, and Tom went to a little daycare. We'd never heard of such nursery schools, for the "children of working mothers." That is actually the only real job I've ever had in my life, where I went downtown into an office. I enjoyed it a lot except that Tom picked up all kinds of--

LaBerge: Bugs.

Kent: I had to deal with babysitters and taking time off and all that. That was kind of hard. But it was interesting to be in Washington at that time and to be working there, downtown. So Jack came back in--I think it was March or April, and then we drove home across the country and started all over again.

Tell me if I'm getting off the track.

LaBerge: One question I had before we get to the loyalty oath.

Kent: I know you need to know when we get to '48.

Family Reaction to Marriage Plans

LaBerge: Yes. How did your parents feel about you getting married so young?

Kent: They loved Jack. I mean, I think they probably were relieved that I--

LaBerge: [laughs] You found such a nice guy?

Kent: Exactly. I really think so. Jack told me that my mother was always kind of nabbing him whenever she saw him. In the grocery store or somewhere, and he knew that she liked him and she was sort of out to get him for me.

LaBerge: [laughs] So there weren't any objections.

Kent: No, none at all. There may have been some on Jack's family's side because they were conservative Republicans, and they had the attitude--now, I became very fond of them, so this is not derogatory, but I had difficulty with my mother-in-law because she was just a totally different kind of person than I am, but we worked that out. But they believed--you know, "people that can't do, teach" and that university people are not in the real world. Both of their children married into the university! Which was kind of hard for them.

LaBerge: It's interesting that your husband was so liberal--I mean, so the other way.

Kent: Oh, yes.

LaBerge: Maybe it was a reaction.

Kent: Oh, yes, I'm sure it was. But also the times. It was a time for radical thinking. Yes, and partly a reaction. He was ambivalent. He loved his father, and he was supposed to go into his father's firm, of course. He went to architecture school and he had a lot of talent. He would have been a fine architect. His father was an architect. And he had a lot of guilt about that over the years, which I don't think was warranted. I'm sure his father understood that he--later he thought he hadn't been very kind to his father. Well, you have to break away from your father.

LaBerge: Yes.

Kent: As he well knew, having three sons, they break away. They've got to.

Religion and Politics

LaBerge: In your family--growing up in the Tolman family, did you have a religious background?

Kent: Oh, that's interesting. Not really. My parents were agnostics by the time I knew them, but they did feel they wanted us to be exposed to religion. I remember we tried several different things. We tried the Episcopal church and the Unitarian church. I don't remember ever going to a Quaker--which is sort of surprising--church, but one of the most fun things we did was read the Old Testament with Max Radin, who was a law professor who lived up the street from us. He was a great, wonderful guy. We had these little sessions with several neighborhood kids. He had a nice roof garden, kind of roof terrace, and we'd sit out there and read the Old Testament. On Sundays. Why Sundays? If it was Jewish it should have been on Saturdays. Maybe it was on Saturdays. Anyway, it was the weekend. That was delightful, but nothing came of any of these things.

However, when I went to Scripps I studied--as part of humanities, we read the Bible a lot, and we had to write a paper on Jesus and Socrates. I can't believe I really wrote that paper. I was not prejudiced, I don't think, against religion. I have become more so. As I've grown older--I mean, I'm very ambivalent about the Catholic church, although I have a very good Catholic friend and my son Steve, a hippie, a back to the land pioneer, became a Catholic before he died last March. It's not the Bible. I love the Bible. The political part of the Catholic church is hard for me to take though.

LaBerge: What about the political background of your parents?

Kent: Liberal all the way.

LaBerge: Active in any party?

Kent: I'm trying to think. Not all of their siblings were liberal, and I'm trying to think about their parents. Well, I think their parents were--of course, my grandfather was a businessman. He probably--I don't know--I just don't know. But my memory of them was always they were very liberal.

LaBerge: Were they active in politics?

Kent: They became--let me think. There were some things they did that were active. They voted for Eugene Debs and Norman Thomas and Roosevelt. Jack and I became very active in the local politics, but, you know, that whole movement didn't really start until in the fifties, and by then my parents were quite elderly. My father died in '59. They didn't live for very long. He was only seventy-two. But they were too old to be very active. They did support things financially, and my father headed The Berkeley Interracial Committee, which was a wonderful group that sort of began exploring ways to break down racial barriers. That was in the forties.

My mother, as I said, was ACLU and League of Women Voters, and Red Cross during the War. And then, of course, my father--well, on the oath thing he told you where they were politically.

II. THE LOYALTY OATH CONTROVERSY

Setting the Scene

LaBerge: Yes, yes, exactly. Why don't we go to the oath now?

Kent: Well, the oath thing--

LaBerge: What's your first memory? I know you were a young mother and busy.

Kent: It was the first year we came to the university. Excuse me, no, the second. Jack had been the director of planning at San Francisco at a very young age. He was twenty-nine years old, and he was getting, in those days, a salary that was \$10,000, which was very big for a young man. But he'd always been interested in the idea of teaching. He talked to people here about the possibility of setting up a school, department of planning. Some of those people were Stephen Pepper and Baldwin Woods and President Robert Gordon Sproul, who he knew. He knew--Sproul's daughter was a contemporary of his and his sister's. She lives right across the street, Marion Goodin. And her husband, Vernon, was a fraternity brother of Jack's. Beta Theta Pi on the corner of Hearst and Euclid. It's the School of Public Policy now.

LaBerge: Either she or her husband--they both probably have oral histories.

Kent: Yes, oh, yes, probably. Oh, God. You could spend your whole life--

LaBerge: Exactly [laughs]. But you probably know all of them!

Kent: Well, I know. But I don't have time to learn all about them. Well, anyway, so we came--that was very exciting. We had lost the baby, but then we had our second son, who actually died this year.

LaBerge: Oh, I'm sorry.

Kent: Yes. He died in March. It was AIDS. There he is, up there. [pointing to photograph] I'll show you those later. But anyway, he was born in June of '47. We were, of course,

delighted because we thought that we might not have another child because they misdiagnosed me as Rh negative after I lost the baby, and then it turned out to be a mistake. The testing--it was a very new thing.

So anyway, we had this lovely second little boy, and Jack had this job which he really wanted, and I felt--I loved coming back to Berkeley. We lived in a big rental house on Scenic, which had been rent control frozen, but it still seemed expensive to us at the time. It was \$150 a month, I remember. We figured we could manage if we were careful. It was a great house, big house.

[tape interruption]

Kent: We had come back to Berkeley in that fall of '48. So that was Jack's first year. And '49 was the oath, wasn't it?

LaBerge: Yes.

Kent: So we had just been back in Berkeley a year, and Tom had started second grade. I can't remember--I wish I could--I can't remember a time when Jack said, "This is a terrible thing. I'm going to have to decide." It's all sort of part of the general confusion of the time. I was pregnant again. I had my third child in November '49.

LaBerge: Okay, so right in the midst of--

Kent: Yes. He's the one who lives right here.

LaBerge: What is his name?

Kent: David. So I was--

City Planning Department at UCB and Democratic Politics

LaBerge: You were involved in all--

Kent: And Jack was starting this new graduate department, which was really a challenge, and doing really interesting work. It was a small class. I think there were about maybe six or so. It was his first class. It was so small that we entertained them quite a bit. They were close to our own age, in fact one student from India was older than Jack. They came to the house. They were doing an incredibly ambitious project, which was to make a master plan for the community of Inverness, which was an unincorporated town. It was a wonderful project. It needed to be planned. They had what government you deal with and all that, and Jack would take them up there on weekends, and they would go and interview everybody. They stayed at our house. I didn't go. I didn't have to do that. But anyway, I was just learning to be a faculty wife.

We also were beginning to get involved in politics a little bit. This was a time--I think Helen Gahagan Douglas--I remember that, and I remember Steve was starting to

nursery school. He went to Children's Community Center, which was and is still down on Walnut Street. It was the first co-op nursery in the state or something. And it's amazing, looking back on it, how active and progressive it was. But we got involved with all kinds of--oh, I don't know--factions that formed. It became quite political.

In a strange way, both in terms of how to raise children and there were some Communists in the group. We were young and pretty naive--but that was the beginning of our political activity. The Muscatines were in that nursery school. So that was happening--because some of the people in that nursery school later formed one of the Democratic clubs here, Berkeley Grassrooters. Dorothea Green was a prime mover and she soon became co-chairman, with P.G. Gibson, of the 18th Assembly District Precinct Organization. I don't know if you've heard of them.

LaBerge: No, I haven't.

Kent: So this was all the club movement which started in the fifties, with Adlai Stevenson's first campaign [for President]. That was just about that time. Of course, that's now '52, so I'm jumping ahead a little bit.

LaBerge: But that's how it started.

Kent: Yes.

Jack Kent's Involvement

LaBerge: So this was going on while the loyalty oath--

Kent: Yes.

LaBerge: --and all that had to do with communism was going on.

Kent: Yes, exactly. It was that time. And the Cold War was starting, [Senator Joseph] McCarthy was starting, and so I can't separate out any of that. It all was happening. And I just do know that, although I can't remember Jack coming home and talking to me exactly about it. He probably did, but I was distracted. But my father told him he should sign. I do remember that. He didn't struggle very long about that because my father said, "Now, I don't want anybody to be a martyr. I'm going to retire in three years, and I can afford to do this."

So I think Jack felt--I mean, he would like to have not signed, but his whole career was just starting. So he compensated by being very active with the non-signers group. There were lots of meetings. I remember [Professor] Malcolm Davisson's was one of the places he went. Of course, my father--I'm not remembering except that there were a lot of meetings.

LaBerge: Were there meetings at your father's house?

- Kent: Probably.
- LaBerge: You didn't have, like, discussions with your parents about this?
- Kent: I must have. I'm sure I did. I just don't remember it.
- LaBerge: Were there discussions among the women? Like, when you would go pick up the kids at school or anything?
- Kent: Yes. Let's see. Oh, by '49 we had started to build our house next-door, so that's another thing that was going on.
- LaBerge: Oh, my gosh!
- Kent: Having a baby--
- LaBerge: You look back and you wonder how you did it all.
- Kent: Yes. See, that's why I can't remember because I was so busy just keeping them together, and I really don't think--you can ask me more, but I can't remember except that I know later, as the year went on, Jack was the one that found the lawyer for them, Stanley Weigel. He just died recently.
- LaBerge: How did he get involved in doing that?
- Kent: Well, because he wanted to do something to make up for the signing. He knew some people in the city because of his job. He knew some liberal people. I can't remember who recommended Weigel. That might be in Jack's oral history.
- LaBerge: I read someplace--I think it was in Frank Newman's--that either he or Bernard Witkin had recommended--
- Kent: Yes, that's it. And he, Witkin, lived right up here, behind me on Shasta Road. And his wife was a very active. His ex-wife, excuse me, Betty Witkin. Do you know--
- LaBerge: Oh, no, I didn't know there was somebody before--
- Kent: Oh, yes. Witkin had three wives. Betty was the first. She lived right behind us, in the house behind the next--that house--up on Shasta Road. Bernie lived further up Shasta. She was a very active Democrat, high up in the state organization, and very liberal. Yes, and Bernie, of course--yes, that is right. Oh, Frank. He was--I've forgotten about him.
- LaBerge: He was probably a part of this whole thing.
- Kent: Oh, yes. And they also lived in that house for a while, Frank and Frannie [Newman] and their children.

Edward Tolman and the Group for Academic Freedom

LaBerge: Who were some of your father's friends who were active in all this?

Kent: [Charles] Muscatine, Gordon Griffiths, Frank Newman, Howard Bern, Malcolm Davisson, George Stewart, Jack Loewenberg, George Adams, Stephen Pepper, Howard Winkler, Joe Tussman.

LaBerge: Okay.

Kent: I have a plaque on the wall. Do you want to see it?

LaBerge: Sure.

[interruption as they look at plaque]

LaBerge: I'll say for the tape we just looked at a plaque given to Edward Tolman by the Group for Academic Freedom. I guess this was the group of non-signers.

Kent: Yes, that was.

LaBerge: And your father was the leader, is that right?

Kent: Yes.

LaBerge: What do you know about that?

Kent: I don't know much. Have you read George Stewart's book?¹

LaBerge: Yes, yes.

Kent: And I've got to reread it. And Gardner's book.² Gardner's book I remember not liking very much at the time. He came to interview Jack and me years later about--when was that?--in the mid-sixties, when he was writing that book. I had the feeling that he was--he was feeling that the oath--that the fight had not really been very successful. Now, maybe he's changed his mind, but you could tell that even before he wrote the book that he was going to express that point of view. And I don't agree with that. I think it was a very important--well, Gordon Griffiths was another person who was involved. Did you go to the symposium? He expressed what I feel about Gardner's book.

LaBerge: I did, yes. And I heard him.

1. George Stewart, The Year of the Oath (Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1950).

2. David Gardner, The California Oath Controversy (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1967).

Kent: I was so amazed he was there because he's in very poor health. I was so impressed that he came all that way. I mean, he was not terribly articulate, but he had--well, what he was saying was what I feel about that time. I really can't add much, I'm afraid.

LaBerge: Could you articulate what your father's position was, why he objected to the oath?

Kent: That it was just basic infringement of civil liberties. There was no question.

LaBerge: How do you think he became the leader of this group? Can you describe his personality?

Kent: Oh, he was a very jovial, funny, sweet person. He got a charge out of--he'd been chairman of the [psychology] department several times. He never really liked a lot of the committee work that went into that part of academia. But here was something that he took hold of, and it just fit him perfectly, and he felt the fit was right. I mean, this is just the way I felt about him. Here was something he could do. He really wasn't going to wreck his career or anything, but he believed it, and he could do it, and he could do it for all these other people. And he said--you know, he didn't want to be a hero or martyr; he kept saying that. But, of course, he *was* a hero.

Consequences for Personal Life

LaBerge: Yes, he was.

Kent: I think. So anyway, we were very proud of him. Now, my mother--my mother was proud of him, too, but she suffered more than--people cut her--people she'd known all her life--there was all this nasty--it was such a strange time. It's hard to believe that people were so paranoid, but they were.

LaBerge: So she lost friends.

Kent: She lost friends, and she felt--I don't think she ever recovered, really. She sort of lost her spirit, which was sad, but--

LaBerge: Did she talk to you about this?

Kent: She must have, I don't remember. She must have dropped little hints, but she was not a complainer, and she was rather a--what's the word?--reserved, formal mother. She would not have wept in front of me. She would not have even told me very much. I never remember her complaining, but she must have said enough things that I knew, and then I saw her decline. Her health declined, her spirits.

LaBerge: Now, the same thing didn't happen to you because your husband was active. You weren't ostracized or anything?

Kent: No, but, then, I was young. And he signed.

LaBerge: Yes. But he--

Kent: Oh, this is after.

LaBerge: He was active for the non-signers. Wasn't there a split there, too?

Kent: That's interesting. There were plenty of people like Jack that would have liked not to sign.

LaBerge: Gordon Griffiths eventually signed.

Kent: Yes, yes. There were a lot of people like that.

##

Kent: If I had told Jack not to sign, he wouldn't have signed, probably. I mean, I'm sure we had that discussion. [Apparently Doris Muscatine told Charles not to sign.]

LaBerge: "What could we live on?"

Kent: Yes. I can't specifically remember it, but anyway, it wasn't a hard time because he wasn't losing his job. He was doing good work, and he was on the right side philosophically.

LaBerge: Where were your parents financially? Was that going to be a burden for them?

Kent: No, it wasn't. That was another thing. He had inherited a lot of money from his manufacturer father. He always felt sort of guilty about that and gave a lot of money to good causes to compensate. My father said, "I can afford to do this." And, you know, he was--well, in the end they were all reinstated and paid back--and that was another thing that Jack was involved in, was raising money. They raised money to help the non-signers who needed it, and there were some of the younger ones who needed it. That committee went on for years. I remember that every year or so they'd have a meeting and decide what to do with this money.

LaBerge: Because it was turned back afterwards?

Kent: Well, people contributed to this fund, and then there was money left over. Yes, because--well, I don't remember when that finally ended. They finally disbanded and gave the monies to some--

LaBerge: Some good cause.

Kent: Yes, something to do with civil liberties.

Visiting Other Universities: Dedication of Tolman Hall

LaBerge: What did your dad do during this time, when he wasn't teaching?

Kent: Well, he went off to Madison [Wisconsin].

LaBerge: To teach?

Kent: To teach and also the University of Chicago. Yes, he was away. But I can't remember--

LaBerge: There's probably a certain group that was really wanting him to come.

Kent: Oh, yes, it was.

LaBerge: He could have gone wherever he wanted.

Kent: He got an honorary degree from Yale at that time, just for having not signed. I do remember a lot of talk about that. [Regent John Francis] Neylan was the bad guy.

LaBerge: The regent.

Kent: Yes. And then years later, when the building was built,³ named after my father, that was sort of like--see!

LaBerge: Your father wasn't alive to see that.

Kent: No, he died in '59. My mother was, though. She died shortly after that, she died in '63. I always felt she sort of kept herself alive to see that.

LaBerge: Did you go to the dedication and everything?

Kent: Yes.

LaBerge: That's wonderful.

Kent: I'm not crazy about that building, but I like the idea. There's a nice portrait of my father in the psychology entry there.

LaBerge: Do you know how your father felt about getting the honorary degree from Berkeley in '59?

Kent: Oh, he was delighted! When was that?

LaBerge: Fifty-nine, I think. Was it '59?

3. Tolman Hall.

Kent: Yes. The same year he died. Yes, that's right, it was the late fifties because I remember we went to that, and I took David, who was then about ten. He was so bored he could hardly stand it. He was just sitting and sort of--uhh [makes sound to accompany a wriggling gesture].

LaBerge: [laughs] Did you ever try to tell him what a momentous occasion this was?

Kent: Yes, and later of course David understood. My father was very pleased. We were all pleased.

LaBerge: So did he come back and teach before he retired?

Kent: Yes, he did. I don't remember the exact timing of that. Then we went to Europe for a year on a sabbatical, '54 and '55. So again we were sort of out of touch. Oh, that awful Nixon and McCarthy, carrying on.

Repurcussions in the Sixties

LaBerge: What do you see as the repercussions? Like, did you notice anything on campus-- because you were on campus then for a long time after that--among the faculty? Divisions or animosity or--

Kent: Not with people I knew, no. It's interesting, though. Now, some of the people who were such heroes in the oath thing became enemies in the sixties.

LaBerge: Free Speech Movement?

Kent: Yes. Clark Kerr was one of the pro-non-signers, and he was a very liberal--and then he became the big university guy. I saw that--[Chancellor Edward] Ed Strong was another one who sort of became unable to see the issues in the sixties.

LaBerge: That's a question we had, what did the people who were the non-signers or the supporters of the non-signers do in the sixties? For the most part, were the same people active in the Free Speech Movement as were active in the loyalty oath?

Kent: I'm trying to remember now. Someone like Muscatine, for instance--what were his attitudes? Oh, I mentioned about [Joe] Tussmann. Tussmann became very conservative. It's so interesting. He lived in our house as a student on La Loma.

LaBerge: When you were growing up?

Kent: When I was growing up--well, I was likely in college then, but he was there for several years.

LaBerge: Did your parents rent out rooms to students?

Kent: There was this one room that they sometimes rented, which had been my brother's room. I mean, after we left home they had all this space, you know? Anyway, that business of what did people do: I think Muscatine was--I don't know--I think he was pretty good in the sixties. I know Jack was very--it was very confusing to be a professor! He was good. But it was hard. I mean, he had to sort of say--I remember his figuring it out, saying, "Okay, this is just another one of those times." When he was on campus as a student, he had been involved in letting Communists speak on campus and all that, and then the oath thing, and then the sixties as a professor.

LaBerge: Would he have cancelled his classes or held them off campus?

Kent: Yes, he did adjust in some ways. He was a compromiser. But his heart was in the right place, and he learned a lot. Well, we had children, who were growing up at that time. Our oldest son was at Cal then. So we had all kinds of--

LaBerge: Activity around here.

Kent: Yes. And the second son in the sixties was turning into a hippie. And they were all--none of them were going to go to war, for sure, the Vietnam War. They each coped with that in a different way. It was extremely interesting. Jack was very good. He learned from--he was never put off by the kids in the sixties the way a lot of people were. I was put off. I could hardly stand my own children. But he kept saying, "Now, that's not important that he's got long hair. Just focus"--so I would. But maybe women are just more concerned about--you know--

LaBerge: The appearances.

Kent: The appearances. It was Jack's mother and father--they were upset, and I was upset for them.

LaBerge: Yes. But were there, that you know of, divisions among the faculty then that kind of harked back to the loyalty oath, or faculty versus the regents, or--you may not know.

Kent: Yes. I'll probably think of things later, when you're gone, and I'll jot them down.

LaBerge: Good.

Kent: Because I can't recall, really. But I'm sure it will tap my memory. I've been writing--I'm a writer, and I've been writing kind of a memoir, I guess it is. I hate that word, but I guess that's what it is. I'm just amazed that--in my writers group they say, "How do you remember all that stuff?" I say, "I don't really remember it, but suddenly something opens up something, and I find that I'm remembering all kinds of things that I haven't thought of for years." I'm sure that will happen with this.

[By the mid-'60s Jack and his colleagues who had been active against the loyalty oath were in their fifties. Younger men and women were in the forefront now. But we were sympathetic with Mario Savio, Jack Weinberg, all these people. We were disappointed in Clark Kerr and Ed Strong. Jack took a two-year leave of absence--'66 and '67--to act

as San Francisco Mayor John Shelley's Deputy for Development, so we were living in San Francisco for two years, right in the middle of the Free Speech Movement.]⁴

LaBerge: Let me just look at my notes to see if there's just something else I wanted to ask. Do you know anything about the graduate student non-signers, the TAs?

Kent: No, but do you have any names of those?

LaBerge: One fellow was there at the conference. I interviewed him, Ralph Giese. He was a student of Professor Kantorowicz. Did you know him, by the way?

Kent: I did meet him, yes. I can't exactly remember it. He had a very thick accent. Both Jack and my father liked him a lot.

LaBerge: I guess he didn't usually have classes; he had students come to his house. The classes were all about the loyalty oath, Ralph said.

Kent: Interesting.

LaBerge: And his whole background was fleeing from the Nazis in Germany and the requirement of taking an oath.

Let me see. Did you ever go to any of your father's classes? Do you know anything about that?

Kent: I did go once, and I was sort of embarrassed. I mean, I just went in.

LaBerge: Snuck in the back.

Kent: Deborah did, too. He didn't like teaching big classes. I don't think he was particularly good at that. But he liked--I've seen pictures of him in seminars, you know. I bet he was good at that.

LaBerge: With the graduate students.

Kent: Yes. But it was so odd to have him up there lecturing. I couldn't even relate to it.

LaBerge: Not your field.

Kent: It wasn't my field, and it wasn't my relationship with him. I felt very awkward and strange. Jack, on the other hand, was a much more articulate speaker.

LaBerge: Did you go to any of his classes?

Kent: Not to his classes, but I've seen him give speeches and be in big public situations. And, of course, he was a politician, too.

4. Bracketed material added by Mrs. Kent during the editing process.

Jack Kent's Participation in City Politics

LaBerge: He was on the Berkeley City Council, is that right?

Kent: Yes, for eight years. Oh, and that's another thing. When we first came to Berkeley, he had just been appointed to the Berkeley Planning Commission as a citizen, so he was on that until we went to Europe, about six years. And then he was on the council for eight years. As soon as we came back from Europe, he ran for city council. He was supposed to be writing a book. He had been writing the book that whole year in England, but that got put aside for a few years, but it did get published eventually. That whole experience of the council was very exciting. I mean, to see the town shift to liberal.

But then the other interesting thing that happened--I always compared Jack to [Russian Premier Mikhail] Gorbachev. He opened the door, and then he got shoved aside by the real radicals who were coming up behind, which was true. There was--like, a great pressure had been taken off, and suddenly there was all this--well, it was the sixties, and the liberals like us that were sort of in our forties by now, were suddenly cast aside as old--

LaBerge: As old fogies.

Kent: Yes, it was funny. But Jack was very good at that, too. He became friends with a lot of those younger, more radical people over the years and really became quite radical himself, again. He sounds like he's a radical, but he wasn't a radical type--he wasn't a firebrand type of a person, so he--when I use the word "radical", I'm using it philosophically.

Group of Little Thinkers

LaBerge: Wasn't there a group of faculty--it seems to me--that met at the Faculty Club, called the Group of something.

Kent: The Little Thinkers?

LaBerge: Yes. Tell me about that.

Kent: The Little Thinkers. I don't know who thought of that name. Clark Kerr was in that group. See, that started back in the--probably in the fifties, yes. Probably had a lot of them--and Frank Newman was in there. Jack was in it. Jack was very involved in that group for a while, but then he--

LaBerge: What was it?

Kent: They met for lunch, and it was informal.

LaBerge: They didn't have a special topic for the day or--

Kent: I don't know how they did it. Every now and again they'd have a party where they'd include wives or husbands, and I'd meet those people. It was fun. But they became-- Jack thought, I think, that they weren't being--well, he got some younger radical people from the city, like Loni Hancock, before she was mayor, to speak to them. Jack and I were both with BCA by then--Berkeley Citizen's Action--the old club movement had fallen apart and the Democrats had gotten pretty conservative.

They would have speakers. They were not very receptive. They were kind of wrapped up in their own little mental thing. And he stopped going to that. And I was surprised, but I think he felt it was just spinning its wheels after a while, and it didn't mean anything to him. But it was fun in the early days. I enjoyed those people. Who were the others? Also in the Little Thinkers was Pickerell Foley, from journalism. It's a great name.

LaBerge: Well, you might think of other members you can stick in.

Bill and Catherine Wurster

Kent: Yes, I might. Oh, I've just been reading a new biography of Catherine Wurster. Have you heard about that?

LaBerge: No, I haven't.

Kent: Ah. Well, she was--I'm all involved in that. This is a paper that my neighbor friend, Francis Violich, who's a colleague of Jack's, is writing about--a book review of that. It's caused quite an uproar among us old--

LaBerge: City planners?

Kent: Planners. I wasn't a planner, but, you know. She was part of the Eastern hotshots that came. She was charming, but she really shafted my husband, Jack. He should have been--

LaBerge: In this book or--

Kent: In reality. It is told about in this book, what she said about him to Clark Kerr so that he could never be dean. I still--because--I don't know if he really wanted to be dean, but he wanted to be considered in a serious way. It was an obvious choice.

But Catherine--she said something to Clark Kerr. She wrote a letter and said she was not comfortable with his leadership style. "She had serious doubts about his leadership style...gradual and non-flamboyant, with a bias toward local self-determination...too conservative for a cosmic reformer like me." This is a quote of what she wrote to Clark Kerr about Jack, from the biography of Catherine Bauer Wurster.⁵ It was too non-flamboyant (which I think is great), too inclined toward self-rule from--

LaBerge: The masses?

Kent: Well, yes. Jack was a strong home-rule, from the bottom up kind of politician. Catherine was for large central government rule.

LaBerge: Democratic?

Kent: Yes. Too conservative, she said, for an old--I can't remember the word she used. Anyway, she found him--she wanted somebody flamboyant and Eastern, frankly, and Martin Meyerson became the dean. He didn't last long. Well, anyway, that was a wound to Jack, really. I think it was--when that happened, he still had a lot of wonderful things in his career after that, but I think that was when he decided he was going to retire as early as he could, spend time doing things in the area. He got very involved in the Greenbelt Alliance. He had graduate students, but only ones that were doing things he was interested in. I mean, even after he retired he had students. But that was a sort of a turning point. And it might have been a good one. I mean, after all, being dean is just a big administrative headache, I think. But it was a gesture that should have been made to him. He should have been offered it.

LaBerge: And he could have declined.

Kent: Yes. But apparently he expressed interest to Catherine. You see, it was Bill Wurster who was retiring as dean, and they were friends of ours and neighbors, and Bill Wurster had designed our house next door, so this brought all that back to me when I read this. I don't think she ever really understood that this planning scene here--there was a lot going on here that had nothing to do with Harvard or MIT.

There was this group called Telesis right after the war that was marvelous. It had all kinds of interesting ideas about this community after the war and what we must do. It was a California thing. Jack was very active in that at a very early age. He was an early, early bloomer.

LaBerge: It sounds like it, to have had that job at age twenty-nine.

Kent: Yes, it was amazing. And so in a way he retired early. Maybe that was just his time schedule.

LaBerge: How old was he when he retired?

Kent: Let's see, he was about fifty-seven.

LaBerge: Oh, very early.

Kent: Yes, but he kept on--

LaBerge: He had all these other things going.

Kent: Yes. And he kept on. He was emeritus, but he kept on being on the campus.

More Thoughts on the Loyalty Oath

LaBerge: Yes. I think I've asked you all my questions. Oh, one of the other persons who was interviewed that day was James Schevill. Is it Chevel or Cheville?

Kent: Schevill. Oh, James. When was he interviewed?

LaBerge: The same day you and your sister were [during the symposium on the loyalty oath, October 1999].

Kent: Good. You know he had a stroke a few weeks ago. He's slowly, slowly recovering, but I'm glad he was interviewed before that.

LaBerge: Because he didn't sign the loyalty oath. He was supposed to be teaching at UC Extension, and so then he was fired from that.

Kent: I didn't know that.

LaBerge: Yes. But he mentioned that he had grown up with you.

Kent: Oh, yes, we went to kindergarten. That big house across the street is where he grew up. And now his daughter lives there. Her children are grown up. It's incredible. It's a fourth-generation deal. Yes--oh, I didn't know that. I didn't see James at that meeting.

LaBerge: Maybe he was there Thursday and you were there Friday or something like that.

Kent: Yes, right. I wish I had been there the day before, but I didn't even hear about that. Nobody--

LaBerge: I don't know how the publicity went or how it happened that you were not contacted. How did you hear about it?

Kent: A friend of mine in my writers group whose husband is having a sabbatical is taking courses at Cal. He picked up--

LaBerge: The flier?

Kent: The little paper, the *Californian* or the *Daily Cal* or something, and saw this picture of my father and said, "Isn't this your friend's father?" She brought it to me. It was just pure chance. I never would have heard of it. So then I--well, Deborah had heard about it from somebody else. But it was just sort of hearsay. I'm sorry I didn't because I would have liked to have been--

LaBerge: There's a video, and if it's available I'll let you know.

Kent: Yes, please do!

LaBerge: Or when I find out how to get hold of it.

I don't want to keep you, either, too long. Shall we end this, and if you have something else that you think of, you can add to it.

Kent: Yes.

LaBerge: Okay.

[End of Interview]

TAPE GUIDE--Mary Tolman Kent

Interview 1: November 8, 1999

Tape 1, Side A

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Tape 1, Side B

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Tape 2, Side A

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Berkeley, California

Deborah Tolman Whitney

THE LOYALTY OATH CONTROVERSY AT THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA,
1949-1952

Interviews conducted by
Germaine LaBerge
in 1999

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Regional Oral History Office
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University of California
Berkeley, California 94720

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

(Please write clearly. Use black ink.)

Your full name Deborah Tolman Whitney
 Date of birth 2-24-18 Birthplace Evanston, IL
 Father's full name Edward Chace Tolman
 Occupation Professor of Psych Birthplace West Newton, MA
 Mother's full name Kathleen Drew Tolman
 Occupation Teacher + Housewife Birthplace Shanghai, China
 Your spouse James Goodrich Whitney, M.D.
 Occupation Psychiatrist Birthplace San Francisco, CA
 Your children Kathleen Whitney, Peter Whitney,
Nicholas Whitney
 Where did you grow up? Berkeley, CA
 Present community Oakland
 Education B.A. Radcliffe College, 1939
Reading program, Holy Names College, Oakland
 Occupation(s) Teacher, Housewife
 Areas of expertise Reading, Basic Education for
Adults, English as a Second Language
 Other interests or activities Reading (for myself) Fiction
Writing, politics (formerly), ^{the} outdoors,
movies, theater etc.
 Organizations in which you are active Friends of Berk. Public
Library (many others formerly, e.g. P.T.A., Girl Scouts)
 SIGNATURE Deborah T. Whitney DATE: 12-8-99

INTERVIEW WITH DEBORAH TOLMAN WHITNEY

I. BACKGROUND

[Interview 1: December 2, 1999] ##¹

From Evanston, Illinois, to Berkeley, California

LaBerge: This is December 2, 1999. I'm at St. Paul's Towers in Oakland, interviewing Deborah Tolman Whitney.

To begin with, we'd just like a little background, your very own background, so if you could tell me the circumstances of your birth, the date, the place, a little bit about your growing up.

Whitney: All right. Well, I don't remember the place of my birth at all, which was Evanston, Illinois, where my father was teaching at Northwestern [University]. When I was only a few months old, he was asked to come to Berkeley and be interviewed, I guess, for a job, and so I was brought out to Berkeley by train. I remember my mother talking about bringing the formula in a special carton or boxes, some company that provided formulas for several days.

When they got to Berkeley, they loved it immediately. So he took the job.

LaBerge: What year was this?

Whitney: I was born in 1918. This was the fall of 1918. I was born in February; this was the fall. I don't know if he started teaching the fall semester or after, the new year, but anyway--

1. This symbol indicates that a tape or tape segment has begun or ended. A guide to the tapes follows the transcript.

LaBerge: When I talked to your sister, she mentioned that your father had taught at Northwestern. She wasn't sure about why he left. She thought there was a story about it, and she didn't know it.

Whitney: I just thought that he was--well, he wasn't terribly happy there. They didn't love the Middle West. They were from the East. I think maybe there wasn't too much chance of advancement and his pacifism had some bearing on this. Anyway, he was very thrilled to be asked to come to Berkeley. And then they just loved it, and they thought it was so beautiful and so unlike anything they'd ever seen. They had never been to California before, and they immediately loved it.

They lived in small apartments in various places in Berkeley at first, and then they bought a little house on La Loma, which was later burned in the fire of 1923.

LaBerge: Were you living there when the fire occurred?

Whitney: Actually, my father was on sabbatical, and we were abroad. He and my mother were studying--I mean, he was studying on the Continent, and my mother was with him, and Mary and I--my younger brother had not yet been born--were staying in England with some nurses and some other children. It was a special place for children to stay, outside of London. It was called the Grange.

LaBerge: Do you remember that?

Whitney: I was five so I remember a lot, but Mary probably doesn't.

LaBerge: She remembered another time maybe going to Switzerland when your father was studying.

Whitney: That was a lot later.

Tolman Family Background

LaBerge: If you could tell me a little bit about the family background that you think might have had reflections in the loyalty oath. I mean, any kind of philosophical leanings or--

Whitney: Well, my father was brought up in a Quaker family. He, himself, never became a Quaker. I think maybe his mother even had become a Unitarian by the time he was born, but his background, his ancestors were Quakers. His grandmother had a station in the underground railroad in their home in Providence [Rhode Island]. I mean, outside of Providence. And my father visited there a lot. I think he was very influenced by the liberal atmosphere and her work for peace and for justice, that kind of thing. He grew up in that atmosphere, and he always believed in those things.

He was very much opposed, I think, to getting into both World War I and World War II, although by the time World War II was underway, I think he thought it was the right thing to fight the Nazis. That's not what you asked, but--

- LaBerge: But it all has a bearing on it. He went to MIT. Is that right?
- Whitney: Yes, he did. His father was--well, he was a technological expert, I guess, and had started a mill. A particular kind of rope called Samson Cordage was developed there, and that was very successful, so we all profited by that. It was a very small mill, but it's been taken over many times now. But the name Samson Cordage is still around. It's supposed to be the best kind of cordage for ships and for Venetian blinds.
- Now, what was your question?
- LaBerge: About going to MIT.
- Whitney: So anyway, I believe his father had gone to MIT. Both his brother and he went also--it was hoped that they would go into the family business, but neither of them did. My father got interested in philosophy there and then went to Harvard for his graduate work, which--I think maybe philosophy and psychology were pretty much together.
- LaBerge: And what did your uncle go into?
- Whitney: Physical chemistry.
- LaBerge: What was his name?
- Whitney: Richard Tolman. Richard Chace Tolman--well, they're both--
- LaBerge: Both Chace.
- Whitney: Spelled with a "c." Yes, he was very well known, actually. He had something to do with the bomb, I think.
- LaBerge: Oh, really? Did he work in the Manhattan Project or something?
- Whitney: He was involved in some way. He taught at Caltech, and I know he knew [Robert] Oppenheimer because I met Oppenheimer at his house. I don't know exactly how involved he was, but I'm sure he went to Los Alamos.
- LaBerge: Do you know what prompted your dad to go into psychology?
- Whitney: He just liked it. I think he was going to go into the business sort of out of duty, and he just found that wasn't for him, and he just got interested sort of by chance--because MIT has a very complete liberal arts program as well as science. I know he was interested in William James. That's one of the people who I believe was still at Harvard when he went there.

Meeting Kathleen Drew in West Newton, Massachusetts

- LaBerge: And do you know how he and your mother met?

Whitney: Yes, they met when they were two years old! [laughs] My mother [Kathleen Drew Tolman] was brought up mostly in China, but they were home on leave in West Newton, I believe. That's where my father was born. This is the story, that they met in the sandbox when they were two--somebody's sandbox; I don't know whose. But their families knew each other somewhat.

And then later my mother came back from China to go to high school at a school called Newton High School, which was supposed to have been an outstanding public school in those days. You know, they had Latin and Greek and everything probably. And so they met again there, in high school. And then they knew each other off and on and then didn't see each other for a long time, and then met again, I believe, in Cambridge after they both graduated from college. My mother did some graduate work, too. She went to Radcliffe. And so inevitably they met again because, you know, their families knew each other, and they went to some of the same dances and so forth. But they didn't marry until they were, like thirty-one and thirty-two, respectively.

Deborah Whitney's Education, at Home and Abroad

LaBerge: Well, let's get back to Berkeley, when they first came to Berkeley, and your growing up. Tell me a little bit about your education, besides going to England when you were five. And a little bit about that, what you remember.

Whitney: Well, before we went, I remember this little house, little brown-shingled house. I remember--I have an idea of what it was like. It was a cute little old-fashioned Berkeley house. There were many like that before the fire, and some were left after the fire. I think I had a room sort of under the eaves because I remember at night I used to jump up and down on the bed before I went to sleep, do sort of acrobatics, and almost hit the ceiling. I mean, it wasn't unpleasant; I just remember it was there and it was kind of all enclosed, and that was kind of fun. I don't know if my parents knew I ever did that. [laughter] Anyway, it was a nice little house. Quite small, I believe. Had a front porch, I think.

LaBerge: Is this the one on La Loma?

Whitney: Yes, it's the one that burned down, yes. I don't remember any house before that, although we did live in some other places.

LaBerge: How about preschool or kindergarten?

Whitney: I went to I guess it was a preschool. It may have been a kindergarten, before public school. It was called the John Dewey School. I think it was on the campus. I think it was sort of an experimental school, and everybody was supposed to "express" themselves [laughs]. I remember we were supposed to--there was a dancing class, and just whenever you were moved, you were supposed to get up and dance, and I was scared to death. I don't know if I ever did it. [laughter] I used to just dread that.

- LaBerge: Oh, dear. And then you went to the Grange when you were five. What do you remember about that?
- Whitney: Well, I was one of the older children, so I was allowed a few privileges. There were maybe six or eight children--I think they were probably all or mostly all English. And there was a great big beautiful garden. First I hated being left there and being bossed around by nurses. They weren't trained nurses but nannies. They wore long white--I don't know what you call them, sort of like a nun's coif. But there was no religious order or anything like that. It was just the way nannies dressed, I guess.
- So I hated it at first, but then I got to like it. Beautiful, beautiful grounds. And we took walks around in the little village, sort of a country village near--very close to London, called Bishop Stortford. We went through it many years later on the train, and you can hardly see it now; it's just part of something else, bigger. But it was very rural, and we saw pigs and cows and horses. It was just very pleasant.
- We played battledore and shuttlecock, a game like badminton, and I remember the long evenings--because we went in summer and then we came back--it was just a six-month sabbatical, so we came back in winter.
- LaBerge: Now, you wouldn't have known then, but did you know later what your dad was doing, what he was studying that time, or not?
- Whitney: Later, probably not then.
- LaBerge: What about schools in Berkeley?
- Whitney: After we came back we went to Hillside School, and we had to live in various places till our house--we rebuilt on the same lot.
- LaBerge: Oh, you did, okay.
- Whitney: Yes, a stucco house--because everybody built with stucco after the fire. It's still there. It's a very nice house, 1530 La Loma. Various professors have lived there since. So we went to Hillside--everybody from Hillside School went to another school at first called University Elementary, which later--well, it's where the Jewish Community Center is now. Rose and Walnut.
- LaBerge: Yes, yes.
- Whitney: That used to be called University Elementary School.
- LaBerge: Was this because Hillside School burned also?
- Whitney: Yes, that was why, so we had to be there. I forgot, our house was burned but also the school was burned.
- LaBerge: All your belongings were in the house, then, too.

- Whitney: Well, it was rented to some people that my parents knew who saved a lot. But I don't think they saved any of the papers and personal things. But they did save some furniture. Of course, we were away when that happened. And I wasn't with my parents when they first learned of it, so I don't know what their reaction was. I thought it was sort of exciting, to come back and our house was gone. I wasn't sympathetic at all, I don't think [laughs].
- LaBerge: So when Hillside School was rebuilt, is that where you continued?
- Whitney: Yes. It was rebuilt just behind our house on the adjacent property, so we went there. I went there all six years. My sister didn't go there very long.
- LaBerge: Oh, she told me the story about [laughs]--
- Whitney: Having her ears boxed or something?
- LaBerge: Yes! [Laughs] And then after that, did you also go to Anna Head's?
- Whitney: Did I go? Yes, in the seventh grade.
- LaBerge: So seventh grade through twelfth.
- Whitney: Yes, except for the year in Switzerland.

Father's Graduate Students and Family Friends

- LaBerge: Okay. Just in those years, what do you remember about the atmosphere in your household as far as, oh, discussions, other faculty coming over, graduate students, that kind of thing?
- Whitney: Well, there were lots of very interesting people that my parents knew, colleagues as well as graduate students. I remember sort of listening, probably not taking in too much. But one of the things I remember most is that many Thanksgivings--I don't know about every Thanksgiving--we had graduate students for dinner in the middle of the day, a big Thanksgiving feast. We had quite a big living room, so we put tables in the living room. There might have been twenty-five or something like that people, and we went down and played baseball in the Hillside playground before--probably--I don't know how we could do it after a Thanksgiving meal, but--

Anyway, it was daylight. I know that. Whether we did that first and then ate, I can't remember. That was kind of fun. I was a little in awe of all these graduate students when I was--I mean, they were a lot older than I was. I don't remember ever being almost as old as they were. I always felt quite a lot younger.

And then we had wonderful plays at our house because one of the university section clubs was called the Drama Section, which still goes on, and Mary and I are still in it. Both my parents liked to act, so they met in different people's houses, and we were

allowed to watch when it was at our house. I remember President [Robert Gordon] Sproul being there one time and just roaring with laughter. You probably didn't know him, but he had a really very hearty laugh. Later, of course, he and my father were on opposite sides. I think they were always fairly friendly. I'd like to think that. I'm not sure, but I think so. And Mrs. [Ida] Sproul was a lovely lady. Our family and some of our friends also had great charade parties.

LaBerge: Who were some of your parents' friends among the faculty?

Whitney: The Peppers, Professor [Stephen] Pepper of philosophy, and Professor [Jacob] Loewenberg of philosophy. And psychology--Warner Brown was sort of his boss when he first came, as head of the department. He or George Stratton. It was a very small department when he first came. They were colleagues. They weren't as close friends as some of the others. Professor [G.N.] Lewis in chemistry. And let's see. Well, the Peppers lived the nearest, and I was a good friend of their daughter. We knew them very well. Professor Ivan Linforth, of classics, and his family were also good friends. We still know the children of the Linforths and Lewises and one of the Peppers.

You know, that was called Nut Hill, that part where we lived.

LaBerge: Oh, no, I didn't know. Nut Hill? Because of?

Whitney: I don't know. I wrote a little story about it I could show you if you want, but I don't know where it is right now. Anyway, I think it was called Nut Hill because people were considered rather eccentric. [Bernard] Maybeck--he wasn't a professor, I don't think, but Maybeck the architect lived there, and Professor Lawson of geology, and then there was the Temple of the Wings. Do you know about this?

LaBerge: Yes.

Whitney: Those people at the Temple of the Wings, the Boyntons, were very eccentric. And Jaime de Angulo, who taught--I believe he taught anthropology and maybe even Jungian psychology, although he didn't have an advanced degree. He had been trained as a medical doctor. He was a fascinating man and knew a lot about California Indians, studied California Indians in great depth, and had them come to stay, and he learned their languages. He was quite a-- what would you say?--bon vivant, free thinker, free liver.

LaBerge: Do you know how to spell his last name?

Whitney: d-e--small d-e and then capital A-n-g-u-l-o, Angulo. And their children were brought up rather--I don't know--the little girl went around in the nude. [laughter] She told me later that it was very hard. She had a very difficult childhood. She was just so different from everybody else. He was a very handsome guy. Everybody was fascinated by him, but they didn't really approve of him, I guess. They were not close friends of my parents, but I knew them.

LaBerge: But they were some of the eccentrics--

Whitney: Yes. They were on that hill.

LaBerge: Isn't that funny? I've heard of Holy Hill.

Whitney: Then up at the top of the hill was--it's not really the top, but the top that you can see from below, Buena Vista, is the Hume's Castle. Sam Hume was an actor, and he and his wife built a medieval castle sort of thing, which is still there. It's quite beautiful.

LaBerge: Is it a monastery kind of castle?

Whitney: Yes, it looks kind of like that. Fundraisers and things have taken place there.

I don't know who lives there now, but I've been to several events there. It's quite beautiful. I think they had quite an art collection. They were kind of eccentric, different, interesting--a lot of very interesting people. Mrs. Hume [Dr. Portia Bell] was a Freudian psychoanalyst. Sam Hume produced plays which my parents often attended.

Political Background

LaBerge: What kind of political background and/or religious did your parents have?

Whitney: Well, they were both Democrats.

LaBerge: Were they involved in politics?

Whitney: Somewhat, yes. They were involved in a group called the Berkeley Interracial something. Maybe Mary told you about that because she knew more about it.

LaBerge: No, that one I didn't.

Whitney: Well, that was, you know, semi-political. It wasn't to do with political parties, but they were trying to get more equality for the Negroes in Berkeley specifically, and met regularly, I guess. I don't remember too much about it except sort of after the fact. That might have been during the beginning of World War II, and Jim and I were away at that time, so I don't know too much about it, but the Adams--oh, I didn't mention Professor Adams of philosophy, a very good friend. They were in it.

They were aware of Berkeley politics, but they were Democrats, and the whole Berkeley City Council was Republican for many, many years, believe it or not. Isn't that funny?

LaBerge: It *is* funny, yes.

Whitney: In fact, Jack Kent and Jim [Whitney], my husband, and other people that we knew had quite a bit to do with turning that around.

- LaBerge: In fact, I think I read that in Bernice May's oral history--²
- Whitney: You probably did.
- LaBerge: --that the two of them were active in trying to get people to run.
- Whitney: Yes, we did get a lot of people to run. They started to win, and they took over.
- LaBerge: Around your dinner table were there political discussions or philosophical discussions? Anything that you remember?
- Whitney: I'm ashamed to say that I don't remember very well. I don't think that we children participated as much as I wish we had now. I really regret--
- LaBerge: Oh, we all feel that way [laughs].
- Whitney: I'm sure *they* were talking about--but I just don't think we paid enough attention. We weren't really drawn in enough. I don't know whose fault it was, if any. We didn't have TV.
- LaBerge: That's right, so it would be discussions.
- Whitney: We used to listen to radio programs.
- LaBerge: You did? Okay.
- Whitney: We listened to the news and saw newsreels and listened to other programs just for fun. Eddie Cantor and One Man's Family. And then we listened to popular music. We kids would buy something they used to have called the "Hit of the Week" records, and we would play them over and over and over till we memorized every word. They were cheap plastic records, 98 rpm, of course, but my mother liked those, too. I guess my father did, too.
- LaBerge: Well, your sister told me your mother was involved in the ACLU [American Civil Liberties Union].
- Whitney: Oh, yes, she was. She was on the board of the ACLU. And she did talk about that some, but I didn't seem to absorb very much.
- LaBerge: It must have had some kind of--
- Whitney: Well, I always belonged to the ACLU and believed completely in its principles except lately I haven't been a member because they get a lot of money from the tobacco industry, and I just don't know what to do about that because that upsets me. I've written to them, and they seem to think that that doesn't influence them in any way, but I still don't approve of that. But I do approve of almost everything they do. Sometimes

2. Bernice Hubbard May, "A Native Daughter's Leadership in Public Affairs," Regional Oral History Office, The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley, 1976.

it seems as if they go almost too far, but--you know, sort of petty little things that they defend.

Radcliffe College, Teaching and Writing

LaBerge: After Anna Head's, what did you do?

Whitney: I went to Radcliffe.

LaBerge: Had you always thought you were going to do that?

Whitney: It was kind of in the works from the time I can remember. My mother had wanted me to go. It was sort of assumed that I would go. I didn't rebel. I remember I had to write an essay, as one does, about why I want to go to Radcliffe, and I suddenly said, "I can't write this! I don't want to go to Radcliffe! It's not my idea. How can I possibly write this?"

LaBerge: [laughs]

Whitney: That was just one side of me that suddenly felt that I had been trapped. Actually, I think I had always kind of wanted to go because we'd gone East a lot to see our Eastern relatives, who lived all around the Cambridge area. I really just loved it. I wasn't a very good student, but I loved it.

LaBerge: [laughs] So what did you study?

Whitney: I majored in psychology. My father tried to stop me. He said, "I don't think you'll find that psychology is what you want"--I was thinking it would be clinical psychology, and there was very little of that at Harvard at that time. So he was right. I shouldn't have. He said, "You're identifying with the wrong parent." [laughter]

Now I wish I had majored in English, which my mother did. I really think that would have been much more appropriate--because I love to read and I think it would have been a better background for what I do now.

LaBerge: Did you end up being a practicing psychologist?

Whitney: No, no. It was just strictly academic. I taught for a while. This you don't want to know, about me.

LaBerge: Well, I want to know a little bit about you, so just tell me.

Whitney: I took a one-year course after college in the East at a private school called Shady Hill School, which was considered to be an outstanding school. They had an apprentice course, so I took that, and then I taught one year in San Francisco after I came back.

LaBerge: What did you teach?

- Whitney: I taught second and third grades. That was a progressive school.
- LaBerge: Your sister told me you've written a children's book?
- Whitney: Yes, it's about my father's family outside of Providence.
- LaBerge: What's the title of it?
- Whitney: It's called *The House at Valley Falls*. That was the name of the little town, which I believe is now called Central Falls.
- LaBerge: And is it still in print?
- Whitney: Well, I have one or two copies, and that's it.
- LaBerge: So it was written for children.
- Whitney: Yes, twelve-year-old type children, middle school. It's about two little girls, one of whom was my grandmother and one was her older sister. It's fictionalized.
- LaBerge: But it's kind of based on that.
- Whitney: Yes, definitely based on that.

Meeting Jim Whitney; Early Marriage Years, World War II

- LaBerge: Okay. Well, tell me how you met your husband [James Whitney].
- Whitney: Well, let's see. He's a native San Franciscan. I met him at Inverness, where we went in summers. That's also where Mary [Tolman] met Jack [Kent].
- LaBerge: Right!
- Whitney: Each of us has a child now who still lives in Inverness. It just was a great family place. Jim's family didn't start coming there till after we did, but his ancestors, the Shafters, actually had owned the whole Point Reyes peninsula at one time.
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- LaBerge: What year did you get married?
- Whitney: Oh, gosh! [Laughs] Oh, Lord. 1941.
- LaBerge: I know by the time of the loyalty oath you were back in Berkeley, but what were you doing during those war years?

Whitney: We were in San Diego. Oh, first of all, Jim went back to medical school. He had had one year at Yale, and then he had taken some time off, so when I married him he wasn't quite sure if he was going to go back or not, but then when the war broke out he was able to get the rest of his training and his medical degree at UC Medical School, under the navy, in the navy.

LaBerge: At UC San Francisco?

Whitney: UC San Francisco, yes. And so that was speeded up. They went all summer long. It took him I think maybe two and a half years to complete what would have been a three-year [program] in peacetime. So we were living in Berkeley. We lived in San Francisco first and then Berkeley. He commuted. After he got his degree, he did his internship at San Diego Naval Hospital. He was sent; he didn't have any choice about that.

We had two children by then. We went to San Diego and were with him. Well, he had to stay every other night, I think, at the hospital. We found a little rental house, so we were there just for nine months. Then he was stationed at Treasure Island, where he was attached to a destroyer which had not yet been commissioned, but it was getting ready. The kamikazes were starting to destroy a lot of destroyers, and so I was very worried, but luckily his ship wasn't commissioned until just after V-J Day. He was sent on a troop ship to bring back wounded men from the Asian theater. Went to the Philippines primarily; that's the main place I remember his going [to] because he wrote a lot about the Philippines. And then, when they came back, they went through the Canal and [were] stationed on the East Coast for a little while, and then he was finally decommissioned.

LaBerge: So all that time you were here in the Bay Area, in Berkeley.

Whitney: Well, first San Francisco, then Berkeley. And then when he came back, we decided to stay in Berkeley, even though he practiced partly in San Francisco, but eventually all his practice was in Berkeley.

LaBerge: Where was his office?

Whitney: He had one on Telegraph and then later on Ward Street. He was called a clinical professor at UC med school, but that is a volunteer job, really. It didn't take much time.

II THE LOYALTY OATH, 1949-1952

Jim Whitney, Psychiatrist at Cowell Hospital

LaBerge: What was he doing at Cowell Hospital?

Whitney: First he was at Langley Porter, then Cowell. That was his residency. Cowell Hospital had a very fine student health center for psychological problems. It was supposed to be the outstanding one in the country; now it doesn't exist at all. I think it's very sad. They had outstanding psychiatrists there. Jim thought it was a very fine institution.

LaBerge: Was he a clinical psychologist there?

Whitney: No, he was a psychiatrist.

LaBerge: He was actually practicing--

Whitney: Yes, that's what his residency consisted of, seeing students who were in trouble.

LaBerge: I guess I'm trying to get at his involvement with the loyalty oath. Was he considered an employee?

Whitney: He was, so he didn't sign it [the oath], but it was no big deal.

LaBerge: He wasn't a professor and not a part of the Academic Senate.

Whitney: No he wasn't, but he wasn't fined or anything. I think he was invited to sign it. I just remember he didn't, but he thought that it didn't take much courage because he didn't lose his job, but he was definitely against it and supported the non-signers completely.

First Remembrances

LaBerge: Tell me what your remembrance of the loyalty oath is as far as your father--when do you remember first hearing about it?

Whitney: I was so involved with my own children.

LaBerge: See, that's what your sister said, too, and I totally understand that.

Whitney: I should think she'd remember more than I do because Jack was very involved. Well, I remember hearing them talk about it and hearing Jack talk about it. There was no question that he eventually had to sign. He didn't feel he could jeopardize his family, young family. My father--I remember very vividly his saying that it didn't take any great courage on his part because he could afford to lose his job, but he just thought the younger men who put their livelihoods in jeopardy were much braver than he was. He was very modest. He never took any great credit for it. At least I never heard him take credit.

And as far as I know, he never disliked President Sproul. He just thought he was wrong. But they did used to hate--they all hated John Francis Neylan. He was the 'bad regent'. And they did talk about the good regents and the bad regents; I remember that. And then I remember reading George Stewart's book as soon as it came out. That was called *The Year of the Oath*. I learned a lot from that.

And I know that my mother, I think, was really quite unhappy. It spoiled some of her friendships. It was harder on her than it was on my father, I felt. In fact, it wasn't too much after that that she began to have serious asthma problems, and she never was really healthy after that. I honestly think that had a lot to do with it.

Effect on Mother

LaBerge: Obviously, just from what you say, there were strong feelings in the campus and then spread over to the families. What kind of relationship was there?

Whitney: My mother felt that some of her erstwhile friends were no longer friendly. None of her really close friends, but she just felt--

LaBerge: Because she was involved with the faculty wives and the Section Club and things like that?

Whitney: Several sections, I believe, in addition to the drama section. I forget what other ones. Probably the tennis section. She used to love to play tennis. And probably some literary ones. No, I don't think she felt any of her close friends turned against her, but she just felt--I don't know who, but some wives that she didn't know that well--she just felt uncomfortable. She wasn't invited some places anymore and things like that. She didn't talk about it. I just sensed it. Well, she probably did some. I can't remember

anything specific she said. She never said, "Mrs. So-and-so won't speak to me anymore." But I just had the feeling that she felt unwelcome in certain places.

I know that she was not asked to join the Town and Gown Club, which an awful lot of her friends were in. I think that was probably the reason. I don't think it would have been particularly her cup of tea anyway, but just the same--

LaBerge: To not be asked.

Whitney: Yes. I don't remember her ever saying anything about that, but I, looking back, realize that she wasn't.

LaBerge: How did she feel about the loyalty oath?

Whitney: I know she was completely against it and felt that my father did the right thing. No, she never in any way felt he did the wrong thing. She was very proud of him, actually.

LaBerge: Did he lose friends through it, do you think?

Whitney: I don't think he did. I didn't have that sense. Or maybe he had so many people that were praising him all the time that he didn't notice. He was sort of a hero. I never noticed that he had any feelings like that. He would just say, "Well, they're not worth having"--I'm guessing. He didn't say that. I just don't think it got to him in any deep emotional way because I think he was so into what he was doing and believed in it so strongly.

LaBerge: Do you know anything about the relationships in the psychology department? Were there other people that were also non-signers or supported that?

Whitney: Let's see. I don't think there were any other non-signers at the very end. There may have been quite a few that protested. I don't remember hearing of any that were in favor of it. A few professors went on record saying, "I would sign a loyalty oath every day of my life if"--you know, because they were so against communism. They just felt very differently. But I don't think any of his friends felt that way.

Edward Tolman's Philosophy

LaBerge: Could you articulate what his philosophy on it was? That may be an unfair question.

Whitney: No, it's not unfair; I wish I could. Gosh, well, he just--I guess I was even amazed--at first it didn't sound to me that it was such a horrible thing because there was already a state oath that everybody had to sign, and so I was kind of amazed and impressed that he immediately just thought this is a terrible thing and that it would cause all sorts of future problems. Of course, it had a lot to do with tenure, and it had a lot to do with the faculty versus the regents--you know, faculty being self-ruling: their own lives and their own teaching. He felt that the faculty should be in charge of the faculty, and the regents had no right to tell them how to behave.

LaBerge: Was there any discussion about communism and the attitude towards that, or not?

Whitney: Well, a lot of people we knew before the war, really, were Communist sympathizers, who idealistically supported the revolution in Spain. But I never heard my father say anything that would indicate that he was anything more than--well, I guess you might say his philosophy--and my mother's, too, I think--were socialist. In fact, they were. They voted for--oh, that guy that ran all the time--Norman Thomas. And so they were definitely inclined in that direction, but they never considered that they would advocate the overthrow of our government. They thought that was just ridiculous. He knew perfectly well that people--after he didn't sign, people probably thought he was a Communist. But, I mean, I was never under any impression that he was. But I know people did think that.

In fact, our dentist, who was really an awfully nice guy, but he was very old-fashioned and very conservative. He would sort of tease us a little bit about "your Red father," "your dad sure is a Red-hot [...]." [laughter]

LaBerge: What was your dentist's name?

Whitney: Gerald Stoodley, S-t-o-o-d-l-e-y. He was our dentist until he finally retired. He was a great sort of friend, but not really outside of dentistry, but we all went to him, the whole family. We just really liked him; he liked us, but we didn't share very many political views. He was, I guess, a big Elk or belonged to one of those organizations. He tried to get Jim to join when Jim was running for office, which was very sweet of him. He didn't probably share any of Jim's political views, but he was just a sweet man.

World War II Service for O.S.S.

LaBerge: During the war, what did your father do during World War II?

I thought I read something, like doing something for the O.S.S. What do you remember about that?

Whitney: Well, yes he did. He went to Washington, and then they went to a secret place called "S," and we never knew where it was.

LaBerge: And you still don't?

Whitney: We still don't know exactly. A friend of mine here at St. Paul's was married to a guy who also was there, Krech. He was one of my father's graduate students, David Krech. His widow, Hilda Krech, told me that "S" was outside of Washington, D.C. I'll ask her. This was off the record. I'll just ask her if she knows where it was.

So during that time, it must have been when we were in San Diego because I remember my mother writing me about how--when my father was gone, and several husbands in the neighborhood were gone, some of the wives got together and--maybe Mary was part

of that because she lived at home for a little while. Anyway, they hired a cook, and these ladies all had dinner together every night. They called it the Tolman Arms.

LaBerge: [laughs]

Whitney: I guess that went on for a few months--I don't know--while Daddy was away. I thought that was kind of a neat thing to do.

LaBerge: Do you know what kind of work he was doing?

Whitney: Yes, they were testing people--I mean, either actually testing or working on what kind of tests would be useful for determining who would be good in certain kinds of overseas jobs, probably spying and things like that. The psychological testing of potential intelligence personnel-- what would you say?--I don't know--for certain types of army and maybe navy employment. Hilda Krech told me that they were devising tests to test the ability to stand up under pressure, to be able to lead and also to follow, to cooperate, to be resourceful, and to be able to invent projects. The O.S.S. eventually became the CIA.

LaBerge: So supposedly, by working for the O.S.S., he had to have all kinds of government clearance.

Whitney: Yes, he must have, yes.

LaBerge: His loyalty was already proven, et cetera.

Whitney: Right, so you'd think that would have made a difference.

LaBerge: It seems to be the case with most of the people who are non-signers: all of them had done something for their country.

Whitney: They had some kind of clearance, yes. I can't remember the dates of that O.S.S. thing in relation to the loyalty oath. That must have been first, I guess.

LaBerge: Oh, it was certainly first, yes.

Whitney: Of course, because the war was over, right.

LaBerge: Did you have a lot of contacts on campus just because your husband was working there? Like, what was your social group during that time?

Whitney: Well, some old friends that I'd grown up with, and then both Mary and I were very involved in a cooperative nursery school where our children went.

LaBerge: She told me about that.

Whitney: I met many friends through that, some of whom I've kept up with ever since.

Repercussions, Friends and Foes

- LaBerge: Was there any spill-over from the loyalty oath in your life? Like, did you lose friends, or did people question you or anything like that?
- Whitney: No, I don't think so. Probably a few Piedmont types. [laughter] That's not very--but people I knew from Anna Head's I wasn't particularly friends with anyway. Anyway, they probably thought my father was a Red or something. I mean, I say "probably." I must have gotten some inkling that some of them did. But they were not my friends by then; they were just girls that I had gone to school with. Nobody that I really liked was ever in any way hostile or anything--except that I learned the other day that I was blackballed from the Town and Gown.
- LaBerge: Oh, you were also!
- Whitney: Yes! I knew I had never been asked to join, but I learned recently that I was actually blackballed, so somebody evidently brought my name up, and--
- LaBerge: Because of this?
- Whitney: That's what I wonder.
- LaBerge: What about your sister?
- Whitney: It might have been partly to do with Jim's being in politics, too. Well, my sister said she was not asked to join until after Jack was a city councilman, and then she was so annoyed about that, she didn't join. She just thought, "They only want me for that." A lot of people I know belong, and I've been to events there. Maybe you belong, for all I know.
- LaBerge: I don't belong, but I've been to an event there. [laughter]
- Whitney: Anyway, it's fun, but it's purely social. It's not the kind of thing I would want to spend a lot of time on because you have to work quite hard, even though it's not for anything except your own--I mean, it's supposed to be for fun, but yet you have to work hard.
- LaBerge: It's not for charity or for a cause.
- Whitney: No. If I'm going to work, I'd rather have it be for a cause. Just have fun be for fun.
- LaBerge: Yes. Well, what do you remember about the lawsuit and what your parents did after your father was fired?
- Whitney: Well, the lawsuit came later, after--
- LaBerge: Right, it came in, like, September 1950. You may not remember because you might not have been involved in it.

- Whitney: I knew it was enough after so that my father had already gone--he spent either one year or one semester at University of Arizona in Tucson, and I went down to stay with him during spring vacation that year, which was--yes, that would have been about 1940, '39 or '40--no, about '40. Let's see--
- LaBerge: Maybe '49 or '50?
- Whitney: It was probably '41--yes, because I was married in June of that year, I'm pretty sure. Yes, I was teaching in San Francisco, and I went down for spring vacation, so it must have had nothing to do with the loyalty oath. They liked Tucson very much. It was really a beautiful--whole different world, the desert, and they really liked it. And they had a few friends there. Then he went for a while--but I don't remember how long to any of these places--to Wisconsin. They lived in Madison, and they liked that. And then he went to Harvard.
- LaBerge: Did he eventually come back to Berkeley and teach?
- Whitney: He came back to Berkeley, and when the settlement was made, he was about ready to retire, but I think maybe he taught for one semester. I'm not absolutely sure that he did teach, but he was reinstated. They were all reinstated, with back pay. So they were very excited about that, I remember. You know, the principle of actually being proven right.
- LaBerge: That's true. Did any of you go to any of the court hearings or anything?
- Whitney: Well, I didn't. Maybe Mary did.
- LaBerge: I don't think she did. I mean, you had little kids, and you had your life going on.
- Whitney: Yes, but it would have been interesting.
- LaBerge: In retrospect!
- Whitney: Well, even then.
- LaBerge: I know a lot of the papers are in the Bancroft or in University Archives, and you can get them if you ever wanted to.
- Whitney: Yes, I might.
- LaBerge: One of you--I can't remember if it was you or your sister on that video said something about remembering him clearing out his office.
- Whitney: No, I don't remember that. A Canadian professor is writing a biography. Nancy Innes; it's a woman.
- LaBerge: Nancy Innes, okay.
- Whitney: I hope she's going to finish it soon.
- LaBerge: Have you been interviewed for that?

- Whitney: Oh, yes. Yes, we've gotten to know her quite well and had extensive interviews, but a long time ago.
- LaBerge: Is this mostly on his work or his whole life?
- Whitney: Well, it's a full-length book, because she did interview a lot of his friends and relatives. But she is a psychologist, so a lot of it is on his work, too.
- LaBerge: Okay, so we'll be looking for that.
- Your sister mentioned--and I didn't ask her to talk about it--the influence of, is it the Meicklejohns? Is that how you say it?
- Whitney: Yes.
- LaBerge: What was their part in the loyalty oath, or what was their part just in the philosophy?
- Whitney: Well, they moved to Berkeley quite late, so I don't really know at what stage the oath was when they moved to Berkeley, but he was a very well-known civil libertarian himself, so I know that they became good friends, but specifically about the loyalty oath, I don't know.
- LaBerge: You mentioned President Sproul and Regent Neylan. What about Governor [Earl] Warren? Do you know if your father had any relationship with him or what he thought about his involvement?
- Whitney: Gosh, I honestly don't remember. I'm sorry. I'd like to know, actually, because he was considered pretty conservative, but then he became so liberal. He went to the [U.S.] Supreme Court.
- LaBerge: Right, and he was on the side of the faculty during the loyalty oath.
- Whitney: Oh, he was? I didn't know that.
- LaBerge: Yes. But he didn't get involved till pretty late.
- Whitney: Oh. Well, that's good.

Dad's Personality

- LaBerge: Could you describe your father's personality? Was he outgoing? Was he a good orator? The kind of person that the young faculty would come and listen to? How would you describe him?
- Whitney: He had evidently been very, very shy in his youth, but he became, I would say, pretty outgoing. He was very popular with graduate students, I think, but maybe he was not such a good lecturer for undergraduates. I went to one of his lectures once, in Wheeler

Hall--about a thousand people there, and I thought it just wasn't--I don't know--well, they took it because they had to, I guess. [laughter]

LaBerge: But you wouldn't?! [Laughs]

Whitney: No, I just think he was much better with small groups, and he was very encouraging to his graduate students and wanted them to go ahead on their own. David Krech, whose wife lives here, who is such a special follower of his--he considered my father a mentor from the minute he came to Berkeley. I read a little autobiography of his recently. And there were others like that who felt that he just gave them so much encouragement and freedom to develop their own ideas.

David Krech is quite a well-published author and psychology scholar. He's sort of a sample of somebody that was very, very [pauses]--

LaBerge: Influenced by him?

Whitney: Influenced, and also very fond of him, sort of like a surrogate father. And my father was equally fond of him.

Media Attention

LaBerge: What do you remember about the media attention about the loyalty oath?

Whitney: Well, I remember *Life* magazine did a big thing. I still have some of those pictures.

LaBerge: And the newspapers?

Whitney: I probably have--wouldn't they keep those at the Bancroft Library?

LaBerge: They probably do, and I haven't looked at it.

Whitney: Because there are quite a few pictures. And newspapers I don't remember so much, but yes, it was--

LaBerge: Was it a headline in the paper?

Whitney: I can't remember that. I suppose when they finally won the suit, it must have been, but I can't remember. Those would probably be in the library. I wish I could remember. But it was definitely in the news, and people were talking about it a lot.

Religious Background

LaBerge: I'm just going to look at my notes to see what I've forgotten. Is there something else that you want to add? Did you have any religious upbringing? Or do you think that was any part of your parents' philosophy?

Whitney: Well, I guess they both were agnostics, but they did believe that we should know about our heritage, and so I went to Unitarian Sunday school for a while. And then Professor Max Radin from the law school was a friend of theirs, too, who lived on our street, and he gave some of us children lessons in the Bible for a while at his home. Of course, he's a Jew, so it was--

LaBerge: So the Old Testament?

Whitney: Yes, I think it was almost entirely the Old Testament. But it wasn't to indoctrinate us with Judaism or anything; it was to learn about the Bible. He was very good. And then I just on my own with one of my friends went to a nearby Episcopal church, went to Sunday school with her, just because my parents didn't mind if I did any of that sort of stuff. I went for a while, and it was a very pretty church called All Souls, where I was later married, but it's not the same building. It was rebuilt by Bob Ratcliffe. But it had been an old brown shingle church.

LaBerge: In the same place?

Whitney: Yes. It was rebuilt in the same place. I don't think it was burned down in the fire. No, it wasn't, because I went much later than 1923.

##

Whitney: It was filled with Easter lilies at Easter. Yes, I sort of liked that. I didn't believe it, but--

LaBerge: But liked the ritual.

Whitney: I liked doing it. And then Jim and I were actually married in the Episcopal--in that same All Souls' Church, just because I liked the ceremony.

LaBerge: What about hobbies that your parents had? I know they were in the drama section and tennis--any other hobbies your dad had, or other groups?

Whitney: I forgot to say that he was very funny. He had a dance called the scarf dance that he did at parties. People would say, "Oh, Edward, do the scarf dance." I don't know when he first started doing it, but anyway, it was just a funny dance with a scarf that my mother made. It was done to a piece called *The Skaters' Waltz* [by Emil Waldteufel], which we had a record of. It was always a little bit different, but it was just very funny because he had such long legs and he usually was very well dressed. He had nice tailored suits. And so he looked kind of ridiculous. He was very bald. I don't know--it was just awfully funny. He'd kick up his legs, and then at the very end he would sort of get crouched down like a little tiny flower or something. It was hilarious. My father also kept a horse at a nearby stable and loved to ride. He also liked to sail in Inverness.

LaBerge: Did you have two brothers?

Whitney: One brother.

LaBerge: One brother. And was he involved in any of this?

Whitney: Well, he was away in the war, in Burma, part of the time. Well, no, the war was before that. Where was he? Then he worked on a ranch in Lake County. He led a very different life. He was not academic at all. [He went] to [UC] Davis for two years. They had a special agricultural two-year course that he took. So that was what he was really interested in, was farming. Later he went into the forestry service. I don't remember his involvement.

The Whitneys' Political Activities

LaBerge: Okay. You and your husband and Berkeley politics. You mentioned that he ran for office.

Whitney: He ran first for the assembly. That seat had been held by a Republican for many, many years. This group that we belonged to, which became part of a much larger group called the California Democratic Council, was sort of a grassroots movement all over California. It had a lot to do with Adlai Stevenson. After he was defeated, a lot of liberals got together and just wanted to try to get good people into all offices, from city council to President.

So anyway, Jim was asked to run for the assembly, and he didn't expect to win because this guy Caldecott had been--of the Caldecott Tunnel--had been quite a good assemblyman, but we just wanted to put up somebody to make a good showing, express our ideas. But Jim did so well that he was almost expected to win. He didn't quite make it, but it was a lot of fun. That campaign was lots of fun. And then I've forgotten--I think later, then, Jack [Kent] ran and won--

LaBerge: For the city council.

Whitney: City council. And then later Jim ran for city council and was defeated by Bernice May.

LaBerge: Oh, my goodness!

Whitney: Which was okay. I mean, you know, they were friends. We were all on the same side, but she just--I shouldn't say he was defeated by her, but several people were running--

LaBerge: And she's the one who won.

Whitney: And she's the one who won--yes. Yes, I can't remember if there were only the two of them running for one particular seat or if there were three running for two or something like that.

LaBerge: But it's all kind of a part of this whole issue--a little bit of your philosophy and really what you grew up with.

Whitney: Yes, we were all really wanting to have a much more liberal government and more interracial participation and more justice and peace and so forth and so on, less corruption--you know, all the high ideals. And some of them worked for a while. I mean, I think Jack Kent did a wonderful job for Berkeley. I think it really helped a lot. And I think the present government--a lot of people think the Berkeley government is terrible, and they laugh at it and everything, but some good things have come out of it, I think.

LaBerge: You were in Berkeley for many years after all that.

Whitney: Jim and I lived in Berkeley till he died in 1966; then I stayed on till about eight years ago. The house we had on Spruce Street seemed too big for one person, so I moved to Watergate [in Emeryville] and lived there for eight years, and then I just moved here to St. Paul's Retirement Home this year, two months ago.

The Free Speech Movement, 1964

LaBerge: You were around during the Free Speech Movement?

Whitney: Yes. Definitely.

LaBerge: So did you see any carry-over from the loyalty oath to the Free Speech Movement?

Whitney: It does certainly remind me--the two things--maybe partly because of the emotional excitement and everything, but I do feel that some of the philosophy behind the Free Speech Movement was similar. I mean, those guys certainly would have all supported the non-signers, all the students, I hope. I'm sure they would.

Yes, so I was pretty aware of that because, actually, I was doing some volunteer teaching at a school which is no longer there called McKinley School. It was just down Telegraph, a little ways from the campus. And so one time I got tear gassed. I was just walking. And then another time I was on Sproul Plaza when Mario Savio gave one of his big speeches, and the other guy, whose name I can't think of this minute--Jack Weinberg--was trapped in the car.

And I was very confused. I was in favor of the Free Speech Movement, but I thought some of their tactics were very mob-like and sort of scary.

LaBerge: But you weren't involved with any of the faculty and their positions on any of it?

Whitney: One of my husband's very good friends, our friend, was Vice Chancellor Alex Sherriffs, who became very much opposed to the Free Speech Movement. He had been very liberal, but I think he just personally was threatened by it all. He not only did that, but he went over to the--

- LaBerge: Republican, to Reagan's side.
- Whitney: It was just unbelievable. I don't think Jim knew about that. He would have been horrified because they were very good friends.
- LaBerge: And what about Chancellor [Edward] Strong?
- Whitney: He was my parents' generation.
- LaBerge: Friend?
- Whitney: And friend. But I don't know--I didn't personally know any more than anyone else did, reading the paper and so forth, but I was kind of disillusioned that he seemed sort of weak, I thought. I really didn't know Clark Kerr or those people, just what I read.

The Loyalty Oath Symposium, October 1999

- LaBerge: In that symposium on the loyalty oath, did you learn anything new or were you surprised by anything?
- Whitney: Gosh, well, I can't say I exactly learned anything, but I was very impressed with Charles Muscatine. I hadn't realized what a very good speaker he was.
- LaBerge: Yes, me too. We're hoping to interview him. Did you know him at the time?
- Whitney: Yes, because his wife was active in the same nursery school. And then she became very active in Berkeley and state politics, too, so for a while we knew her pretty well and saw her a lot. Then she went into a whole different thing, writing cookbooks, so I didn't see her so much after that.
- And I never knew Charles very well, just met him a few times, but I was very impressed--
- Oh, I did learn a little bit from Gordon Griffiths, who is a friend of ours. I was very interested to learn about other loyalty oaths in other parts of the country--which I hadn't known about.
- LaBerge: And he's writing a book.
- Whitney: Yes, he is. It's his autobiography.
- LaBerge: I think that it is because there is a whole section--I mean, it isn't out yet, but for some reason we have in our office part of the section on the loyalty oath.
- Whitney: Gee, I hope he finishes that, because he's not very young. He better hurry. [Laughter]

Last Thoughts

LaBerge: Was there anything else that I haven't asked you or that you had reflections on about either repercussions or the roots of your father's philosophy?

Whitney: As far as his psychology goes, I don't really understand it very well, to tell you the truth.

LaBerge: [laughs]

Whitney: I read his big tome called *Purposive Behavior in Animals and Men*,³ and I can't say that I understood it very well. That was the kind of psychology that didn't really interest me, animal psychology and experimental and behaviorist and all that. I was much more interested in the psychiatric side. I was interested in Jim's Jungian studies. He was a Jungian analyst. He and my father used to have interesting discussions about Jung versus Freud and so forth. They both respected each other, but they had a lot of disagreements.

And let's see [pauses]. Well, I was very proud when they named Tolman Hall after my father.

LaBerge: Oh, I bet. Were you there?

Whitney: Yes, we were, but my father had died. Yes, my mother and I--and I guess Mary--were there. It was quite wonderful.

LaBerge: That was I think 1964, which sounds funny because that's the Free Speech Movement, that whole era, too. But I think it was 1964.

Whitney: That does seem funny that it could have been then, yes. Well, it would have been about the right time. But nobody was protesting or anything, thank goodness.

LaBerge: What about also the honorary degree?

Whitney: Yes, I was there for the degree from Cal.

LaBerge: And he was, too.

Whitney: Yes, he was there in person. That was in the Greek Theater. I guess it was Clark Kerr that was the official--well, it was actually Alex Sherriffs who was the vice-chancellor who actually presented him with it.

LaBerge: Glenn Seaborg?

3. Edward Chace Tolman, *Purposive Behavior in Animals and Men* (New York: The Century Co., 1932).

Whitney: Glenn Seaborg might have been the chancellor. I know that Alex was the one who actually came forward, but they were probably both there. And I guess Clark Kerr was president.

LaBerge: Yes.

Whitney: And then he also got an honorary degree at Yale and at McGill [University]. I wasn't there for either of those.

I was very proud of him. He was a really delightful father.

LaBerge: We'll end this, then, and if you have anything to add, you can add it in, in handwriting, or if you think of something--

Whitney: Oh, you mean send it to you?

LaBerge: When you get the transcript, you can add--

Whitney: Oh, I see.

[End of Interview]

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