

Title

Cold War Culture and Society in Southern California 1945-1965

Date(s)

2004 – Present

Extent

27 interviews

Repository

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Project Abstract**Restrictions**

None

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Interviewees

Tommy J. Alongi	<i>Truck Driver</i>
J. Marx Ayres	<i>Retired Engineer</i>
Raymond Berbower	<i>Chief Harbor Engineer at Long Beach [CA] Harbor</i>
Georginana Brady	<i>Retired Telephone Company employee</i>
Andrew W. Clay	<i>Retired Educator</i>
Msgr. John. V. Coffield	<i>Catholic Priest</i>
Glenn Conine	<i>Retired Sheet Metal Contractor</i>
Bebé Ganaja	<i>Corporate Secretary</i>

Vivian H. Hall	<i>Political Activist</i>
Larry Hughes	<i>Retired Soldier</i>
Paul Jasiukonis	<i>Film Maker/Editor</i>
Christopher Jepsen	<i>Archivist</i>
Taketo Kiriyaama	<i>Retired Restaurateur</i>
Jane Leffler	<i>Former Resort Owner</i>
Patricia Mayo	<i>Retired Social Worker</i>
Daisy McCleary	<i>Political Activist</i>
Geraldine Patricia Mecado	<i>Chaplain</i>
Bobby R. Mecado	<i>Chaplain</i>
Chester Murray	<i>Building Manager</i>
Robert Pluong	<i>Retired Microwave Technician</i>
Barrett Schulenburg	<i>Educator</i>
Marty Sklar	<i>Executive, Imagineering/Walt Disney Company</i>
Gary Smidderks	<i>Educator</i>
Catherine Clarke Stoll	<i>Retired Educator</i>
G. Russell Touchstone	<i>Episcopal Priest</i>
Robert Wada	<i>Land Surveyor</i>
William Waite	<i>Retired High School Teacher</i>
David Wilson	<i>Educator</i>

Oral History Abstracts

OH3496

Narrator: Alongi, Tommy

Interviewer: Shelley Alongi

Title: "An Oral History with Tommy Alongi"

Date: May 4, 2004

Language: English

Location:

Project: Cold War Culture and Society in Southern California

Status: Verbatim Transcript

Abstract

An oral history with Tommy Alongi was conducted on Tuesday May 4, 2004 at the interviewer's home in Fullerton, California. It was done in conjunction with a research paper for *California and the Cold War* seminar (1945 to 1965) at California State University, Fullerton. The subject of my interview, Tommy Alongi, sixty years of age, is the interviewer's father, and was a teenager in the early 1960s in California. The purpose of the interview was to collect information about his leisure and work activities. His life was led contrary to that of southern California culture. Living on the fringes of sun, surf, sand, and drive-in movies, he participated in these events only somewhat, but spent most of his later years working and preparing to raise a traditional family in a suburban setting. During the interview he told stories of trips taken to the desert, family members, his work life, courtship, and the draft. The interview is low key but lends credence to the

hypothesis that not all teenagers were immersed in the stereotypical images that comprise a general understanding of California culture.

OH 3484

Ayres, J. Marx *See* **Chester Murray**

OH3491

Narrator: **Berbower, Raymond**

Interviewer: Eric Holmgren

Title: "An Oral History with Raymond Berbower"

Date: May 19, 2004

Language: English

Location:

Project: Cold War Culture and Society in Southern California

Status: Verbatim Transcript

Abstract

An oral history of Mr. Raymond F. Berbower, retired Assistant Chief Harbor Engineer for the Port of Long Beach. The purpose of this interview is to gather information about Mr. Berbower's participation with the Long Beach Rotary Club from his joining in 1961 until the present day. This interview is part of an oral history project for Dr. Art Hansen's History 572 course "California during the Cold War." This interview deals with Mr. Berbower's early family life and education, his experience of the Long Beach Earthquake in 1933, his enlistment, education and training in the US Navy and his active duty experience during and after the Second World War. Mr. Berbower then relates his professional and community activities during the 1950's and 1960's including his work for the Port of Long Beach; participation in the Naval Reserve; participation in the American Society of Civil Engineers, National Society of Professional Engineers and California Society of Professional Engineers; and membership in various community service groups including the YMCA, Traveler's Aide Society, American Red Cross, and Rotary International. Mr. Berbower told of his participation with the Long Beach Rotary Club, the various positions he held and duties he performed during the years of his active membership.

OH3356

Narrator: **Brady, Georgiana** (b. 1935)

Interviewer: Jennifer Mizzell

Title: "An Oral History with Georgiana Brady"

Date: May 4, 2004

Language: English

Location:

Project: Cold War Culture and Society in Southern California

Status: Verbatim transcript

Abstract

An oral history interview with Mrs. Georgiana Brady. The purpose of this interview is to collect information relative to Cold War and Vietnam era families. This interview is part of a final paper for Dr. Art Hansen's History 572, Seminar in American History course. This interview focuses primarily on Mrs. Brady's memories as a child growing up in a Cold War era family, living in Orange County, and her marriage to a Vietnam veteran exposed to Agent Orange during his tour in 1968-69. The interview also includes a retelling of her experience raising a handicapped child (as a result of the Agent Orange exposure) and her legal suit against the United States government.

OH3352

Narrator: Clay, Andrew W. (b. 1935)
Interviewer: Ryan Woods
Title: "An Oral History with Andrew W. Clay"
Date: May 4, 2004
Language: English
Location: Anaheim, CA
Project: Cold War Culture and Society in Southern California
Status: Verbatim transcript

Abstract

The oral history of Andrew W. Clay focuses around his experiences as a teacher and Principal in the Fullerton Elementary School District [changed to the Fullerton School District in the 1980s]. Clay was born in Azusa, California on 2 July 1935 and later moved to Whittier, California where he went to high school for two years. After completing his junior year at Anaheim High School in 1953, he finished his last two classes the following year while attending Fullerton Junior College. Later, Clay transferred to San Jose State University earning his B.A. in the Social Sciences. Clay started teaching at Nicolas Junior High in 1957, during which time he went back to school to earn his elementary teaching credential, his elementary administrative credential, and also his M.A. After teaching for four years, Clay served as the Vice Principal of Nicolas Junior High for six years before becoming the Principal at Ladera Vista Junior High School from 1967 to 1984. Clay then taught five years at Hermosa Elementary School followed by fifteen years at Acacia Elementary School. The specific focus of the interview is Clay's recollections of Sputnik [October 4, 1957] and its impact on education on both the nation and Orange County. Clay recalls the mixed reaction to the launching of Sputnik and discusses how the satellite increased federal spending to the public schools, increased parental involvement in the classrooms, and altered school curriculum both on a personal and objective level.

OH3498

Narrator: Coffield, John (1914-2005)
"An Oral History with Monsignor John Coffield"
Interviewed by Michael Chavez
May 4, 2004; June 23, 2004
Language: English

Project: Cold War Culture and Society in Southern California

Status: Verbatim transcript

Abstract

Father Coffield's involvement in Catholic Social Justice throughout his adult life, particularly 1945-65 (the focus of this project). He led quite the life of an activist priest. He met Dorothy Day when she came out to the Los Angeles area in the late 1930s to spread the Catholic Worker Movement, and he assisted in the first Los Angeles area Hospitality House. Ordained at St. John's Seminary in Camarillo, California in 1941, and eventually assigned to a parish in East L.A., he played a key role in the integration of a school in El Monte in his early years as a priest. Well known in Catholic Social Justice circles, he might be most famous for his opposition to Proposition 14 in the early 1960s, with which he experienced some turbulence with the L.A. Archbishop James Cardinal Francis McIntyre, who ultimately disciplined him, apparently for his outspokenness in opposition to Proposition 14. Whether a self imposed "exile," or a mandatory "vacation," he spent quite a few years in regions outside of California, where he continually involved himself in various forms of social work. In this interview, Coffield also discusses some of his experience up through the 1980s, when he finally served again in the Southern California Orange County Diocese (created in 1976) at his current home parish in Dana Point, San Felipe De Jesus.

OH3489

Conine, Glenn

"An Oral History with Glenn Conine"

Interviewed by Jeffrey Aultman

May17, 2004

Language: English

Project: Cold War Culture and Society in Southern California

Status: verbatim transcript

Abstract

An oral history of Glenn Conine, a retired sheet metal contractor who resides in Templeton, California. This interview centered on hearing testimony of Mr. Conine's experiences growing up in Oklahoma and Kansas and what ideological values he brought with him in his trek to California in 1952. This whole interview was done for a larger term paper that was assigned in Dr. Arthur Hansen's History 572 American History Seminar course. Subjects in the interview ranged from discussing what life was like in Oklahoma and Kansas, what political, social, ideological and cultural values he grew up with and how those ideas followed him when he came to California during the early 1950's. The interview then focuses on earlier years prior to the Cold War and even extends into formative years beyond 1965. Ideas on cultural tastes are covered in detail as well as to what working class ideas Mr. Conine had as an oil refinery worker in Oklahoma and Kansas as well as to the identical work he found once he came to the Golden State.

OH 3485

Ganaja, Bebé

“An Oral History with Bebe Ganaja”

Interviewed by Gisela Shimbukuro

May 6, 2004

Language: English

Project: Cold War Culture and Society in Southern California

Status: Verbatim transcript

Abstract

An oral history with Bebe Ganaja, a former internee of Crystal City, Texas one of the four camps of the Department of Justice during World War II. After being released from camp, Bebe's family was among the small group of Japanese Peruvians to fight deportation to Japan and stay in the United States. With the help of attorney, Wayne Collins, Bebe and her family were taken to Seabrook Farms, New Jersey to live and work. After staying there for two years, Bebe's family relocated to Los Angeles in 1948 following several other Japanese American and Japanese Latin American families. As part of Dr. Arthur Hansen's History 572 final research paper of Cold War Culture from 1945-1965, I decided Bebe Ganaja was the perfect candidate to share her experiences of being an a former internee once the war was over. The purpose of this interview is to gather information on the Japanese Peruvian resettlement after the war. Japanese Peruvians had a disadvantage after the war. Although they were brought to the United States out of their own will, once they decided to stay after the war was over, the U.S. government forbid it because they had no proper resident or citizen documentations giving them the right to stay. I asked her about her recollections of how her parents were able to fight deportation, why they chose to settle in Los Angeles after Seabrook Farms, and how they were able to establish a lifestyle in Cold War Southern California without knowing the English language and the American culture. In addition, she reflected on her experience being a working-class teenager of the 1950s and shared the activities she engaged.

OH3353**Hall, Vivian H.**

“An Oral History with Vivian H. Hall”

Interviewed by Christine Eubank

May 11, 2004

Language: English

Project: Cold War Culture and Society in Southern California

Status: Verbatim transcript; collateral material

Abstract

An oral history with Vivian Hall of Irvine, California. The purpose of this interview is to gather information regarding Hall's political and social activism in southern California during the postwar ear, specifically her activities in Orange County. This interview is part of a project in fulfillment of the requirements for successful completion of Dr. Art Hansen's History 572: Graduate Research seminar at Cal State Fullerton. Hall recalls her and her husband's involvement with the Johnson-Forest Tendency, a Trotskyist Socialist movement co-founded by C.L.R. James, when they lived in Los Angeles in the early

1950s. She also recalls the Federal Bureau of Investigation's interest in and pursuit of her husband Thomas Charles Hall during the late 1940s and early 1950s, while obtaining his Ph.D. at UCLA in physical chemistry, and then later in the aerospace industry in New Jersey and California. In spite of the FBI's hounding, Tom worked in the aerospace industry during the postwar ear and eventually became Chief Scientist at Hughes Aircraft in El Segundo, California. The Halls eventually sued the federal government and Tom's name was finally cleared in the 1960s. Hall shares memories from the 1950s and 1960s of living in Palos Verdes and becoming involved with the Friends of the Library. In 1968 the Halls moved to Irvine, California and Vivian became increasingly involved in politics and liberal social organizations as her children grew to school-age. Hall remembers teaching English and beginning women's studies courses at Westminster High School during the 1970s. IN 1973, Hall became involved with the National Women's Political Caucus, and served as its First Vice President from 1975-1977. In 1976 Hal ran a grassroots campaign as a Democrat for a seat in Congress (40th District) and, with bi-partisan support, won 42% of the vote in an overwhelmingly Republican district. Hall shares memories of the campaign, its organization, and aftermath. During the 1970s, Hall was a central figure in the formation of the Women's Network Alert and Women's Coalition – liberal grassroots organizations who engaged in letter writing campaigns and lobbied on behalf of candidates who supported liberal issues. Hall's activism continued into the 1980s with the establishment of the Women For: Orange County chapter, in which she is still very active.

OH 3497

Narrator: Hughes, Larry (b. 1938)
Interviewer: Anna Acker
Title: "An Oral History with Larry Hughes"
Date: May 12, 2004
Language: English
Location: Harley Davidson Motorcycle Shop in Fullerton, California
Project: Cold War Culture and Society in Southern California

This oral history spans 1930s-2004. Bulk dates: 1960s-1970s.

An oral history of Larry "Bear" Hughes, Vietnam War veteran and longtime resident of Orange County, California. This interview was conducted as part of the Cold War Culture and Society in Southern California Project for California State University, Fullerton and the Center for Oral and Public History. The purpose of this interview was to gather information regarding Hughes' experiences in Vietnam, as well as his life in Orange County before and after the war. This interview includes discussion about being raised in Orange County, including his love of sports, and the region's rural past; mentions his father's service in World War II, and his willingness to open his home to soldiers; speaks about American Cold War politics before the Vietnam War, mentioning the Domino Theory, and claiming that real opposition to the war began in 1965; comments on joining the Ninth Division LRRPS of the Seventy-fifth Army Rangers, and going to Vietnam in 1967 for twenty-two months, saying he wanted to be a "leader, not a

follower;” discusses basic training, including conditioning, as well as his anticipation of adventure; shares stories about his wartime experiences, including facing mortars upon arrival, suppressing emotion in order to survive, and making “a game out of” death; recalls returning home after being shot and affected by disease, saying his family and friends were supportive, unlike friends who experienced antagonism; explains that while he once disliked draft dodgers and protestors, “I can’t blame nobody no more;” discusses building motorcycles for a living and joining clubs such as the Outlaw Motorcycle Club and a Christian motorcycle club; discusses the psychological trauma he sustained as a result of the Vietnam War, including flashbacks and a breakdown; explains that he utilized opportunities available to veterans, including the G.I. Bill and veterans’ hospitals; speaks extensively about working to improve the lives of Vietnam veterans, including working with psychiatrists to aid in mental health recovery, his work as the Commander of Disabled American Veterans, and especially forming the Brothers of Vietnam; discusses current American politics, saying that patriotism has become a fad, and that the war in Afghanistan is reminiscent of Vietnam; insists upon correcting “the record” as to the character of Vietnam veterans, saying, “We weren’t losers and baby killers;” believes that much of the negative media attention towards Vietnam veterans came from *The Los Angeles Times* rather than *The Orange County Register*; speaks about Vietnam War atrocities, including the Battle of Hamburger Hill and the Tet Offensive.

OH 3494

Narrator: Jasiukonis, Paul
Interviewer: Michelle Baker
Title: “An Oral History with Paul Jasiukonis”
Date: May 11, 2004
Language: English
Location: Mr. Jasiukonis’ home in Los Angeles, California
Project: Cold War Culture and Society in Southern California

This oral history spans 1930s-2004. Bulk dates: 1940s-1960s.

An oral history of Paul Jasiukonis, filmmaker, film editor, and resident of Southern California. This interview was conducted as part of the Cold War Culture and Society in Southern California Project for California State University, Fullerton and the Center for Oral and Public History. The purpose of this interview was to gather information regarding Jasiukonis’ experiences as a Lithuanian refugee after World War II, as well as his filmmaking during the Cold War. This interview includes discussion about World War II’s disruption of his life in Lithuania, forcing his family to live in refugee camps from 1941 to 1951; speaks about his father’s imprisonment in Siberia as a political prisoner of the Soviet Union; remembers staying in a refugee camp in the American zone of Germany, fearing he would end up in the Soviet Union’s zone; recalls that the poor diet in refugee camps often made people sick, sometimes killing them; discusses joining a carpenter and artist’s studio at age twelve, as well as later gaining training as a mechanic; tells a story about losing several fingers in an attack by a German airplane during World War II; remembers that immigration opportunities for World War II European refugees

opened up in other countries in the late forties, but his family waited to go to America; speaks about a Lutheran church in Lincoln, Nebraska, which sponsored his family to come to America in 1951, but explains that he did not like it there and subsequently moved with a friend to Los Angeles, California; says that although language was an issue when he tried to enroll in school in America, his European education was good; comments on his abandonment of art school and adoption of cinema in college, saying that he did not feel challenged with the former; speaks about leaving school when he was drafted into the United States Army during the Korean War and worked as a projectionist, briefly mentioning President Dwight D. Eisenhower; explains that he worked at Yale University creating educational films about art and science during the “Space Age,” mentioning Sputnik; speaks about renting a room and equipment in Hollywood, California, where he and his brother-in-law edited films and added music, eventually opening an independent studio; comments on the motivations of immigrants to the United States, saying that they are “looking for something;” discusses his Lutheran faith, explaining that the Catholic Church in Lithuania was not very tolerant of Protestants; recalls visiting Lithuania since World War II, saying that the Soviet influence has altered the country’s moral beliefs; comments on a film he is working on about the cultural teachings at Lithuanian Saturday Schools; briefly mentions cultural tensions between Lithuanians and others, discussing his Pakistani son-in-law; speaks about the Lithuanian population of the United States and explains that Cold War émigrés from Lithuania were prominent in the American defense industry, taking positions with Douglas Aircraft and NASA (National Aeronautics and Space Administration); briefly mentions the Lithuanian propensity for choosing “practical” careers, saying art was too easy and that the film industry involves communication.

OH 3495

Narrator: Jepsen, Christopher (b. 1972)
Interviewer: Tupou Pauu
Title: “An Oral History with Christopher Jepsen”
Date: April 26, 2004
Language: English
Location: Orange County Archives in Santa Ana, California
Project: Cold War Culture and Society in Southern California

This oral history spans 1950s-2004. Bulk dates: 1950s-1960s.

An oral history of Christopher Jepsen, Assistant Archivist for the Orange County Archives, and resident of Orange County, California. This interview was conducted as part of the Cold War Culture and Society in Southern California Project for California State University, Fullerton and the Center for Oral and Public History. The purpose of this interview was to gather information regarding Jepsen’s knowledge of Tiki culture or Polynesian Pop phenomenon in California during the 1950s and 1960s. This interview includes discussion about being a native Californian; speaks about his interest in Google architecture and its relation to California’s car culture, as well as futuristic design and primitive construction, saying that this “has a lot of overlap with Polynesian Pop architecture;” talks about Tiki style buildings in Long Beach and Costa Mesa, California;

believes California has long been on the leading edge of architectural design, discussing both the influence of Hollywood and the outdoor lifestyle in California as influencing the development of Tiki culture; thinks that the addition of Disneyland's Enchanted Tiki Room in the 1960s was influenced by the popularity of the style in mid-century Southern California; discusses mid-century American interests in "exotic lands" as being encouraged through movies and stories; credits Hawaii's statehood in 1959 to an interest in the exotic, especially the musical *Tales of the South Pacific*; comments on his research into the origins of Hawaiian Gardens in Orange County, California, saying that the city took its name from a local fruit stand, and crediting this to the popularity of Tiki culture; points to a change in informational media and knowledge about Polynesian culture as factors in the downfall of Tiki architecture; comments on the importance of Tiki culture as a symbol of leisure rather than an understanding of Polynesian culture; briefly mentions that there are only five people studying Tiki culture in the United States; discusses the Ramona myth in relation to California's Mission Revival architecture, as well as the impressions Mission and Tiki styles made on visitors to California; comments on the modern-day appreciation of styles such as Tiki as being "kitsch" and not historically-minded.

OH3483

Kiriyama, Takeito

"An Oral History with Takeito Kiriyama"

Interviewed by Markus Okuhata

May 20, 2004

Language: English

Project: Cold War Culture and Society in Southern California

Status: Verbatim Transcript

Abstract

The purpose of this interview is to gather historical information regarding the "Resettlement" of Japanese American in the Los Angeles area. This interview is part of a research paper for Dr. Art Hansen's History 572 at California State University, Fullerton which explores Los Angeles during the height of the Cold War Era. Specifically, this interview primarily focuses on Taketo's decision to return to Los Angeles, his challenge of finding housing and employment, his ordeals with racism, and ultimately his feelings about the internment/resettlement period.

OH3355

Leffler, Jane (b. 1933)

"An Oral History with Jane Leffler"

Interviewed by David Peel

May 8, 2004

Language: English

Project: Cold War Culture and Society in Southern California

Status: Verbatim transcript

Abstract

An oral history of Jane Leffler, long time resident of Mount Baldy, California. The purpose of the interview was to gather information regarding the beginning of the Mount Baldy Ski Resort, co-founded by her husband, Herb Leffler, and Jim Chaffee in 1948 on Movie Slope, and the ensuing years as the resort grew under Herb's leadership. This interview was part of a history research project for Dr. Arthur Hansen's History 572 seminar about southern California history during the Cold War, 1945-1965. Specifically, the interview deals with the events leading up to the beginning of a ski resort at the top of San Antonio Canyon in the San Gabriel Mountains, along with its growth and successes through 1969, when it was sold to a new company. The interview also examines the life of Jane as a wife, mother, and community leader of the fledging mountain town of Mount Baldy. Her comments not only reflect on the good times at the ski resort, but also the community support for the local women's club, the school, fire department, and life in general at a time when television and telephones were still new, and women had a certain role to fulfill in their families.

OH3354

Mayo, Patricia (b. 1915)

"An Oral History with Patricia Mayo"

Interviewed by Hong Vu

May 3, 2004

Language: English

Project: Cold War Culture and Society in Southern California

Status: Verbatim transcript

Abstract

An oral history with Patricia Mayo of Leisure World, California. The purpose of this oral history was to gather information about Mayo's life from 1945-1965 during which she was living openly as a lesbian woman in Oregon. Mayo recalls leaving husband of six months for her life partner, Helen, their trips to San Francisco to get in touch with other lesbians, and how they "connected" with other gays in the community. Recounts early childhood, teenage years, working as social worker. Mayo's opinions of Domestic Containment, empowerment of women during World War II, and positive experiences. Discusses organizing lesbian groups – Blities – and current day opinions of gay acceptance among the general population. "Came out" at Leisure World in 1994 and *Los Angeles Times* wrote special article about it. Discusses what type of gay women she might be in 2004, the affect of AIDS, ethnicity, and difference in treatment between Oregon and California. Recalls feelings of attraction toward women and hoped they'd go away after marriage. Discusses married life, divorcing husband for another woman, homosexuality at Leisure World, religion. Speaks about making legal provisions for gay partners, not "marriage" because of religious connotations.

OH3358

McCleary, Daisy (b. 1929)

"An Oral History with Daisy McCleary"

Interviewed by Kristy Danekas

May 21, 2004

Language: English

Project: Cold War Culture and Society in Southern California

Status: Verbatim transcript

Abstract

An oral history of Mrs. Daisy McCleary of Banning, California. The purpose of this interview is to gather information on her involvement in the League of Women Voters. This interview is part of an oral history project for Dr. Art Hansen's History 572, Southern California Culture in the Cold War course. Specifically, this interview deals with her early involvement in the League of Women Voters; the early studies (comparison of cost of war versus cost of building new schools) that she conducted as a member of the organization; founding member of new Garden Grove chapter; work with voter registration; anti-war feelings; Cuban Missile Crisis; reaction to J.F. Kennedy assassination; expectations of the League; and reaction to the McCarthy Hearings.

OH3499

Mecado, Geraldine Patricia

"An Oral History with Geraldine Patricia Mecado"

Interviewed by Sarah Hartman

May 21, 2004

Language: English

Project: Cold War Culture and Society in Southern California

Status: not transcribed

Abstract

An oral history of Pat Mecado, chaplain, Mecado Ministries. The purpose of this interview is to gather information regarding her growing up in Southern California during the early cold war period and her experiences as a self-proclaimed juvenile delinquent. This interview is part of an oral and public history project for Dr. Hansen's History 572 Cold war Culture and Society in Southern California, 1945-1965. Specifically this interview deals with Pat Mecado's adolescent years and what she experienced as a juvenile in Southern California during this time period; what her life was like as a young child, who raised her, where she lived; how she viewed herself in comparison to what was being portrayed on television and in the movies; how her life was in comparison to the realities directly around her, and within the white suburban middle class, the dominant force in Southern Californian society.

OH 3500

Mecado, Bobby R.

"An Oral History with Bobby R. Mecado"

Interviewed by Sarah Hartman

May 21, 2004

Language: English

Project: Cold War Culture and Society in Southern California

Status: not transcribed

Abstract

An oral history of Bob Mecado, chaplain, Mecado Ministries. The purpose of this interview is to gather information regarding his history of growing up in early cold war Southern California and his experiences as a self- proclaimed juvenile delinquent of the time period. This interview is part of an oral and public history project for Dr. Hansen's History 572 Cold war Culture and Society in Southern California, 1945-1965.

Specifically, this interview deals with Bob Mecado's adolescent years and what he experienced as a juvenile in Southern California during this time period; what his life was like as a young child, who raised him, where he lived; how he viewed himself in comparison to what was being portrayed on television and in the movies; how his life was in comparison to the realities directly around him, and within the white suburban middle class, the dominant force in Southern Californian society.

OH3484

Murray, Chester with J. Marx Ayres

"An Oral History with Chester Murray with J. Marx Ayres"

Interviewed by Sally Ly

May 21, 2004

Language: English

Project: Cold War Culture and Society in Southern California

Status: Verbatim transcript

Abstract

An oral history of Mr. Chester Murray, currently the Building Manager of the Southern California Library, and Mr. Marx Ayres, a semi-retired Engineer who is also a contributor to the Library. The purpose of this interview is to gather information regarding the experiences of these two subjects and their views and opinions about the social conditions of Los Angeles during the Cold War Era, specifically, the period of 1955-1965. This oral interview is a segment to the assigned research paper for Dr. Arthur Hansen's History 572 Seminar in American History course. This interview focuses on the experiences of Mr. Chester Murray, an African American living in Los Angeles during this time frame and his views and opinions about the events that took place during this time, for instance, the Watts Riot. It also tries to seek the opposite opinions of how another ethnic group felt about the events of the time. This is obtained through the narration of Mr. Marx Ayres, a native to California who also lived in Los Angeles during the specified time period. Mr. Ayres, a white man living at that time in a predominantly white neighborhood, contributed his views and opinions about the issues of race and segregation in Los Angeles during the period of 1955-1965.

OH 3490

Narrator: Ploung, Robert

Interviewer: Tim Corse

Title: "An Oral History with Robert Ploung"

Date: May 1, 2004

Language: English

Location: Mr. Ploung's son's home in Corona, California

Project: Cold War Culture and Society in Southern California

This oral history spans 1950s-2004. Bulk dates: 1950-1980s.

An oral history of Robert Ploung, retired microwave technician for Hughes Aircraft Corporation, and resident of Southern California. This interview was conducted as part of the Cold War Culture and Society in Southern California Project for California State University, Fullerton and the Center for Oral and Public History. The purpose of this interview was to gather information regarding Ploung's experiences with Southern California's aerospace industry. This interview includes discussion about moving to California in the 1950s for health reasons and employment opportunities; speaks about doing precision assembly work with North American Aviation for one year and then working as a microwave technician for Hughes Aircraft from 1958 to 1985; talks about his time as a Navy Seabee during World War II, when he worked in construction and making weapon parts in a sheet metal factory; comments on several of his career promotions and pay raises, adding that he enjoyed his work; thinks that working relations at Hughes were good, but briefly expresses dissatisfaction with the union's influence over job assignments; speaks about the mid-century pay differences between males and females at Hughes, and expresses disappointment that men can no longer support a family on a single salary; briefly discusses his work experiences, including installation inside a Swiss mountain; speaks about some of the government contracts Hughes won, including radar systems for ships; explains that he still does not know about some of the secret projects he worked on while at Hughes; talks about his life after retirement, saying that he misses his career and regrets not striving for a better education; briefly speaks about the many friends he met through traveling for Hughes Aircraft Corporation.

OH 3492

Narrator: Schulenburg, Barrett

Interviewer: Eric Keith

Title: "An Oral History with Barrett Schulenburg"

Date: May 21, 2004

Language: English

Location: Mr. Schulenburg's classroom at Northwood High School in Irvine, California

Project: Cold War Culture and Society in Southern California

This oral history spans 1950s-2004. Bulk dates: 1950s-1960s.

An oral history of Barrett Schulenburg, teacher and coach at Northwood High School in Irvine, California, and longtime resident of Southern California. This interview was conducted as part of the Cold War Culture and Society in Southern California Project for California State University, Fullerton and the Center for Oral and Public History. The purpose of this interview was to gather information regarding Schulenburg's experiences with minor league baseball in Southern California, beginning after World War II. This interview includes discussion about moving from San Francisco, California, to Southern

California as a child due to his father's position with Anheuser-Busch; remembers attending minor league baseball games in Southern California beginning in 1958, following teams like the San Francisco Seals, the Hollywood Stars, and the Los Angeles Angels; speaks about the atmosphere at minor league games, describing stadiums, beverages, and rowdy fans; comments on the ability of fans to relate to minor league players, citing the loss of his favorite player, Steve Bilko, to the major league; discusses minor league baseball's creation of a community identity in Southern California; talks about the opportunities minor league opened for minority players, despite the hardships, and the lack of representation of minorities in the crowds; comments on the decline of minor league baseball, saying major teams like the Dodgers and Giants drew bigger crowds and more media attention; remembers when baseball began to be promoted on television, but still would rather attend in person; vividly recalls attending the 1959 World Series in Los Angeles; explains that although he coached high school baseball for fifteen years, he prefers track; discusses college baseball, as well, saying that media attention has made it a threat to the minor league.

OH 3482

Narrator: Sklar, Martin
Interviewer: Mark Schworer
Title: "An Oral History with Martin Sklar"
Date: April 2, 2004
Language: English
Location: Mr. Sklar's office in Glendale, California
Project: Cold War Culture and Society in Southern California
Status: Verbatim transcript

This oral history spans 1955-2004. Bulk dates: 1950s-1970s.

An oral history of Martin Sklar, Vice Chair of Imagineering for Walt Disney Company and resident of Southern California. This interview was conducted as part of the Cold War Culture and Society in Southern California Project for California State University, Fullerton and the Center for Oral and Public History. The purpose of this interview was to gather information regarding Sklar's experiences with Walt Disney and the Disney Company, beginning in the 1950s. This interview includes discussion about beginning work for Disney in 1955 after attending the University of California, Los Angeles; talks about Disney's vision for Disneyland as being opposite of other theme parks such as Coney Island; calls Disney a "super patriot" who was against Communism but didn't degrade the beliefs of others; speaks about Disney's consciousness of racial tensions with his inclusion of "noble" Native Americans in Disneyland's Frontierland, rather than "savages;" discusses Disney's compliance with the government in making propaganda films during World War II, including some about the United States' air power and income taxes; comments on Soviet Premier Khrushchev's thwarted visit to Disneyland, saying that Disney staff and the highway patrol were prepared for his visit when he

cancelled on them and used the incident as political fodder; cites slow economic growth as the reason why Disney did not expand into Asian markets until much later; explains that he has been in charge of Disney's creative staff since 1974; says that he is most proud of the people with whom he has worked, and that imagination has helped to build the Disney Company; explains that his favorite ride is Space Mountain in the Disneyworld Resort due to the creativity and complicated process it took to develop it.

OH 3487

Narrator: Smidderks, Gary
Interviewer: Josh Millard
Title: "An Oral History with Gary Smidderks"
Date: May 17, 2004
Language: English
Location: Mr. Smidderks' office in North Hills region of Los Angeles, California
Project: Cold War Culture and Society in Southern California
Status: Verbatim transcript

This oral history spans 1938-2004. Bulk dates: 1960s-2004.

Abstract

An oral history of Gary Smidderks, principal of Pacific Christian High School and resident of Southern California. This interview was conducted as part of the Cold War Culture and Society in Southern California Project for California State University, Fullerton and the Center for Oral and Public History. The purpose of this interview was to gather information regarding Smidderks' experiences teaching and administration in a Baptist high school, beginning in the 1960s. This interview includes discussion about being born and raised in Southern California, as well as attending Fuller Theological Seminary; talks about starting to teach at Pacific Christian in 1960, and then becoming principal in 1967; speaks extensively about Dr. William Lunsford, the founder and former administrator of Pacific Christian and other schools associated with the American Baptist Churches of Los Angeles; discusses his philosophy of Christian education as schooling centered around Christian principles; recalls the origins of Pacific Christian, including its subsidies from the association of churches and the founding of its sports programs; comments on an end to school prayer and "forced bussing" as encouraging parents to look for educational alternatives; speaks in depth about students at Pacific Christian, explaining that they must sign agreements at the beginning of terms, as well as the personal, academic, and spiritual criteria they must meet before being admitted; comments on the need for tuition grants, saying that "Baptists aren't particularly wealthy people;" discusses changes and similarities in school policy since the sixties, including weekly chapel visits and dress code requirements; speaks about shifts in the student population to include more minorities, as well as ongoing behavioral problems concerning drugs and alcohol; discusses the lack of community support for expansion; expresses disappointment in the "passive" beliefs of contemporary Christians as compared to those thirty years earlier; emphasizes the financial independence of Pacific

Christian, as well as its membership with the WACS (Western Association of Christian Schools).

OH3357

Stoll, Catherine C. (b. 1935)

“An Oral History with Catherine C. Stoll”

Interviewed by Diann Moyer

May 20, 2004

Language: English

Project: Cold War Culture and Society in Southern California

Status: Verbatim transcript

Abstract

An oral history of Catherine Stoll, retired educator and counselor. The purpose of this interview is to gather information regarding women’s status in the early 1960s. This interview is part of a research project for Dr. Art Hansen’s History 572 course. This interview investigates Ms. Stoll’s life during the early to mid-1960s. It details her life as a mother, wife, teacher, and a liberal woman. Included are discussions about her educational background, her general view of women during the 1960s; traditional gender roles; opinions about going back to work after marriage and children; awareness of peace movements and women’s movements; and fear of nuclear attacks. Discussed are her opinions about pro choice; radical feminist politics; how the 1960s shaped her as a woman; opportunities; women’s struggles; and changing gender roles for women.

OH3493 Touchstone

Touchstone, G. Russell

“An Oral History with G. Russell Touchstone”

Interviewed by Leticia Gardiner

May 5, 2004

Language: English

Project: Cold War Culture and Society in Southern California

Status: Verbatim transcript

Abstract

An oral interview with Rev. Russell Touchstone, Episcopal priest of St. Francis Episcopal Church in Norwalk, California. The purpose of this interview is to gather information regarding the Kennedy Administration and the Cold War during the 1960s. This interview is part of a paper for Dr. Art Hansen’s History 572 American History Seminar. This interview focuses mainly on Rev. Touchstone’s involvement with Civil Rights activities in Southern California; his involvement with CORE (Congress of Racial Equality) in Los Angeles in the early 1960s; his attendance at several Civil Rights rallies in the Los Angeles area and hearing several politicians, including Martin Luther King, Jr., Robert and John Kennedy, A. Philip Randolph, and Adam Clayton Powell; his recollections of the 1960s and aspects of the Kennedy Administration.

OH 3481

Wada, Robert

“An Oral History with Robert Wada”

Interviewed by Sheri Admiraal

May 11, 2004

Language: English

Project: Cold War Culture and Society in Southern California

Status: Verbatim transcript

Abstract

An oral history of Mr. Robert M. Wada. This interview is part of an oral history project for Dr. Arthur Hansen’s History 572: Research Seminar in U.S. History. The purpose of this interview is to gather information related to his experiences as a Japanese-American living in southern California prior to World War II, some reflections on his internment, and his life after internment. Mr. Wada lived in Redlands, CA prior to the war, was relocated to Poston, Arizona during the war, and returned to Redlands after the war. The intent is to try and draw those three aspects of his life together and examine his thoughts and attitudes during all three stages in an attempt to find ways they may be interconnected.

OH 3486

Narrator:

Waite, William R.

Interviewer:

Kimberley Sorenson

Title:

“An Oral History with William Waite”

Date:

May 23, 2004

Language:

English

Location:

Mr. Waite’s home in Chino, California

Project:

Cold War Culture and Society in Southern California

Status:

Not transcribed

This oral history spans 1950s-2004. Bulk dates: 1950s-1960s.

An oral history of William Waite, retired high school math teacher, lifelong member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS or Mormon Church), and resident of Southern California. This interview was conducted as part of the Cold War Culture and Society in Southern California Project for California State University, Fullerton and the Center for Oral and Public History. The purpose of this interview was to gather information regarding Waite’s experiences with the construction of the Church temple in Los Angeles, beginning in the 1950s, and its impact on the Church and other members in Southern California. This interview includes discussion about the Los Angeles Temple being the first in California, and one of the largest in the Church, as well as its intention to make a “statement that we were no longer a small Utah church;” speaks about the pledge cards for Southern California Mormons that financed the building of the temple, as well as his father, Noble Waite, who was involved with this fundraising; speaks about Mormon missions to developing countries and the recent building of temples there, which aid in conversion; recalls attending the Los Angeles Temple’s open house in his

“stocking feet” at night, as well as the dedication at which the choir sang; expresses pride in the building of the Temple and all the hard work that went into it; explains that the Mormon Church runs on the tithes from its constituents and not on investments, saying that 80 percent of its income is in noncommercial properties such as BYU (Brigham Young University) and temples; tells a story about an apostle who became ill and died during the construction of the Los Angeles Temple, which “cast a shadow” over the Church for a while; praises the Church’s accomplishments and references Joseph Smith’s translation of the Bible, saying that the elect will be found within the temples; speaks about being married in the Los Angeles Temple; describes several buildings on the Temple property, and says non-members like to tour the grounds; explains that many Church members bought homes in the neighborhood surrounding the Temple, so as to be nearer; expresses his belief that the plan for the Los Angeles Temple was approved by the Los Angeles City Council because it would bring in better citizens; comments on the Los Angeles Temple’s benefits for the entire community, citing performances and services such as the genealogical library; expresses concern about the future of Western civilization, citing the study of Zion civilizations as a cure for this.

OH 3488

Narrator: Wilson, David (b. 1936)
Interviewer: Josh Millard
Title: “An Oral History with David Wilson”
Date: May 12, 2004
Language: English
Location: Village Christian Schools in Sun Valley, California
Project: Cold War Culture and Society in Southern California
Status: Verbatim transcript

This oral history spans 1936-2004. Bulk dates: 1960s-2004.

Abstract

An oral history of David Wilson, long-time educator at Village Christian Schools and resident of Southern California. This interview was conducted as part of the Cold War Culture and Society in Southern California Project for California State University, Fullerton and the Center for Oral and Public History. The purpose of this interview was to gather information regarding Wilson’s experiences with teaching and administration in a Christian school, beginning in the 1960s. This interview includes discussion about growing up in Southern California and attending Azusa Pacific University; recounts his beginnings in Christian education first as a youth pastor in Village Church, then as a teacher in the Village Christian Schools in 1961, then as a principal on and off from 1969 to 1990; speaks about the origins and development of Village Christian as an institution, including opening the elementary portion in 1949, its stable finances, and its ties to Village Christian Church; emphasizes Village Christian’s policy of mission outreach, or leading non-Christian students “to the Lord;” speaks about Village Christian’s teaching philosophy, saying that academics and building “character” through Christian values are important; comments on the 1970s as an “explosion” in Christian education due to a

decline in academics and spirituality, such as school prayer, as well as “forced busing;” discusses the current trend of parents starting their children in Christian education only in junior high, encouraging Village Christian to advertise for elementary positions even though there is a demand for student positions; speaks about Village Christian’s accreditation with ASCI (Association of Christian Churches International), as well as the problems of accreditation systems whose requirements are not in the best interest of teachers and students; discusses other Christian schools in Southern California, saying that many have not been able to stay open due to shifting demographics and the inability of students to pay tuition; expresses his belief that school vouchers for parents are the next step in preserving Christian education, but that he has concerns about the federal government’s involvement in private schools; speaks about the importance of sports to schools, as well as Village Christian’s several CIF (California Interscholastic Federation) Championships; believes Christian schools are an important part of the American education system, saying that the values taught in Christian education cannot be taught elsewhere; explains that while Village Christian does not have an evangelistic mission, the school still requires a parent orientation program that delve into values, calling it “proactive” and unlike other Christian schools.