

Regional Oral History Office  
The Bancroft Library

University of California  
Berkeley, California

UNIVERSITY HISTORY

Doris Maslach

A LIFE HISTORY WITH DORIS MASLACH

An interview conducted by  
Nadine Wilmot  
in 2004

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# S. F. Girl Pays Tribute To Emancipator



Doris Cuneo  
She Represented Galileo High School



## Doris Maslach—Interview Description

Doris Cuneo Maslach and I began working together to conduct her oral history in April of 2004. Ten interviews were conducted in all, over the course of four months, ending in July of that year. Each interview took place at the dining room table of her home in Berkeley. All interviews were recorded on minidisc and digital video. The interview was transcribed and audit edited by our office. Doris then reviewed it for accuracy of names and dates and lightly edited it with an eye for coherence and discretion.

Eleanor Swent had interviewed Doris's husband George J. Maslach in 1998 and 1999 to document his long involvement with the University of California—first as a student, then as a professor in the Engineering Department, and ultimately as a senior administrator who finished off his distinguished career at Berkeley as the Vice Chancellor for Research and Academic Affairs. His daughter, Christina Maslach, joined Berkeley's faculty in the Department of Psychology and now serves as Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education. The history of the Maslach family for the past seventy years has been intertwined with the history of the Berkeley campus.

This interview with Doris Maslach tells the story of the woman who anchored the Maslach family. Because of the times and the social context in which Doris Maslach came of age, her story, that of an educated woman who marries a successful man and raises a family, takes the form of a back story. She lived through and contributed to an important period in the history of the campus, but her name appears only in passing in the institutional record. Yet Doris's thorough engagement with herself and her world, her commitment to examining her experience as a partner and mother, creates this story in a new mold. She reconfigures the "back story" so that it is the central story, one with its own important lessons about the history of the Berkeley campus and the city of Berkeley.

Each interview took place at Doris' home on Panoramic Hill above the Berkeley campus. After walking up the leafy stairway paths that run up and down that hill, I would cut through the Maslachs' backyard, where I sometimes found George watering the garden. In the dining room, overlooking the Bay and surrounded by their son's exquisite glasswork, Doris would have waiting tea and biscotti in beautiful old time tea cups. These were her engagement teacups, she explained to me; her mother's friends had each given her a cup and saucer upon her engagement to George so that she had a collection of different and lovely cups and saucers, to start off their married life. And so begins our journey back to old San Francisco.

Doris felt that an important piece of her history was that she came from a family of immigrants—her father was Italian and her mother was Danish and Scottish—who had come to San Francisco in the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century and stayed and thrived. She speaks of her Uncle Rinaldo, a well known California painter, and her aunt Minnie MacLean, who held a salon for artists, writers, and musicians at her Pacific Heights home, and her mother's family homestead close to where Ghiradelli Square is now, which survived the 1906 earthquake and fire and sat directly on the ocean before there was fill to extend the footprint of the peninsula. Over the course of our work together, Doris was involved in an ongoing excavation of her basement which held many treasures from the past since she acts as "the heritage keeper" for her family. One day when I

arrived for her interview, she had unearthed a beautiful portrait of Tina Modotti inscribed by the famous modernist photographer to Doris's aunt. Another day she shared with me a book of photos by the San Francisco photographer Isaiah West Taber, explaining that her mother had been a close friend to Louise Taber, the daughter of Isaiah, and that she, Doris, had inherited these Taber materials and made a gift of them to the Bancroft Library. Her family had been centrally involved with the arts and cultural life of San Francisco in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Another thread of her discussion of her youth in San Francisco deals with class and ethnic stratification, the ways in which her family sorted and was sorted by others as a function of ethnicity, and the way she was perceived and located socially as an Italian American, and a woman, in high school and college. As a dual citizen of both the campus community and the city of Berkeley over several decades, Doris engaged with and has perspectives on some of the seminal events in Berkeley's campus and civic history. In particular, as someone who was active in Democratic politics, she played a significant role in the desegregation of Berkeley's public schools and was active in struggles around rent control in Berkeley. As a campus wife, she has perspectives on social change and campus activism--including the surveillance and censorship of the McCarthy era, the Free Speech Movement, Peoples' Park, and the controversial development of Clark Kerr campus--and the impacts of these on her family and community. Finally, as an undergraduate at Berkeley, Doris lived in the Co-ops, and was one of the few women Math majors; her experiences illuminate social and academic life at Berkeley in the late 1930's.

This interview was conducted under the auspices of the Regional Oral History Office. The Regional Oral History Office was established in 1954 to augment through recorded oral 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, Director and the administrative direction of Charles B. Faulhaber, James D. Hart Director of the Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.

Nadine Wilmot, Interviewer

Regional Oral History Office  
Berkeley, California  
May, 2006

Interview with Doris Maslach  
 Interview #1: April 5, 2004  
 Begin Maslach 1 04-04.wav

1-00:00:25

Wilmot:

Okay, Doris Maslach, interview one, April 5, 2004. Here with Nadine Wilmot of the Regional Oral History Office. So, well, we start with our first question which is usually where and when were you born?

1-00:00:46

Maslach:

I happened to be born in New York City, in Greenwich Village on June 19, 1921.

1-00:00:59

Wilmot:

I wanted to ask you, I think, just to kind of stay with this theme of talking about your family history, I wanted you ask you if you could tell me a little bit about, actually as far as you remember, your father's history, as far as you know your father's family history.

1-00:01:21

Maslach:

My father's family came to San Francisco right after the Gold Rush. I believe they were here in the early 1860s, and at that time I understand, also, that there weren't that many Italians in San Francisco, there were only 500 families. I had gone to this lecture by a professor of Italian at UC who had given this talk on Italians in San Francisco, and he said the miners came to work the mines and the Italians came and worked the miners. So many of the Italians were then in the produce business or supplying supplies and so forth. Unfortunately, my father was the youngest of eight children in his family, he wasn't born until 1890. So by the time I got to know these relatives, I didn't know I had questions to ask them, and so there are a lot of things that didn't get answered and I still am looking for the answers.

Actually this professor at the university wrote me telling me who my father's grandfather was and why they left, why this family came to San Francisco. It seems, he said, that he thought he was this Italian revolutionary that was a friend of Garibaldi, and introduced Garibaldi to Mazzini, who was the head of the Italian secret society that was trying to mobilize Italians to throw off the rule of the Austrians and make Italy an independent country. So my great grandfather was supposed to have made this connection, and Garibaldi did, there was a battle around I guess 1848, '49, somewhere in there. And they lost and so everybody had to leave. So my grandfather who was born in 1847, up in a little tiny town village in the mountains behind Chiaveri in Italy in Liguria wound up in Philadelphia at age two, so it looked as though this family had to leave. My grandmother, her maiden name was Garibaldi. Also that family must have come to the United States at that same time, because she was born in Boston, which is unusual, in about 1852. And came to San Francisco when she was ten, and so this much of the story seems to fit. Why did they have to leave Italy and where

did they go? Of course San Francisco is so much like Europe, and of course the Gold Rush was advertised as the place to be, so I'm sure that's why the families came here. What is unusual to me is that in this family of four women, and three boys because the first boy died in infancy, all of the three boys in this family were artists: They didn't seem to do what other Italians did, which is to get into some kind of business or whatever, and they all became artists. The reason why I was born in New York—although my father and my mother were both born in San Francisco, was that my father wanted to pursue his art studies and went to Greenwich Village in New York and studied with John Sloan and was part of the artist community in Greenwich Village between 1919 and 1931 when my family moved back to California.

1-00:05:33

Wilmot:

I'm wondering if you can just, at this time, tell me your parents' names?

1-00:05:38

Maslach:

My parents' names? My father's name is Egisto Cuneo. Strange name but all of the members of his family had very classical names. I'd just like to run them off because there was: Rinaldo, Minerva, Clorinda, Evelina, Clelia, Ciro, Cicero, which is Cyrus Cincinnatus, and my father Egisto. I have not run into very many Egistos in my life. Clorinda's children were Romulus, Cressida, Roland, and Claudius.

1-00:06:10

Wilmot:

I've never heard that name before.

1-00:06:11

Maslach:

My mother's family was also an immigrant family. Her father was Scottish and from Glasgow, and he was born in 1861, and was on his way to India and got malaria, and so instead headed for Canada with one of his brothers, James. These two young men worked their way across Canada to the West Coast. My grandfather was doing bookkeeping and his brother was a salesman. So they would just pick up jobs along the way until they got to the West Coast and then heard about San Francisco, and said that's where they wanted to be. So they moved to San Francisco. I imagine that they arrived sometime in the 1870s. My grandfather then got a job working as an accountant for Fontana Company, which was a produce company supplying produce in the area, and he was very good, and worked his way up in this organization.

My grandmother was Danish and her name was Wilhelmina Bruun, and she came to San Francisco when she was seventeen. Some of her other relatives had been here already, and I guess they thought that it would be nice to have a young cousin or something as an au pair girl, and in fact that's what happened to her. She came to San Francisco and was living with these relatives and doing work for them until Mrs. Fontana told her "You know, you shouldn't be doing this. You should go to night school, learn English, and learn to be a secretary." So she did that, the Fontanas hired her, and that's how she met my grandfather. They



were married in 1889 and lived on North Point Street, about two doors away from Ghiradelli Square. They went through the earthquake and fire [1906]. Their house at that time was on North Point Street. The water came up to the house. They were on the beach. During the earthquake and fire, the stories were they saved their house by having the children and other people run down and wet sacks in the bay and my grandfather would toss off the cinders that were on the roof. In contrast, the Cuneo family lived on Telegraph Hill, which my grandfather was very interested in buying. He just loved this place and wanted to buy all of Telegraph Hill. I mean there was nothing on it at the time when he was here, and of course people said that was kind of stupid, so he only bought a little bit of it, and a number of properties scattered around. But their house was on Grant Avenue, 1821 Grant Avenue, and their house was burned down completely in the earthquake and fire. So does that cover enough of who they were?

1-00:09:34

Wilmot:

No, I think we'll probably go back. It will be just fine, we'll go back and forth. I wanted just to return to your father's family and ask you. You said you learned your great grandfather's likely involvement in this rebellion. Had you learned of that from your family at all? Were there any inklings from your family that that was the case?

1-00:10:03

Maslach:

There was no inkling at all from the family, and of course this person died in 1875, and so this was long before my father was born. There just didn't seem to be any documents left, if they had any, or there weren't any stories. Except that I did hear of the particular town in Italy that people would go back and visit called the Cabana. Even my brother and sister visited there and there was nothing there. So it just seems likely that this wasn't a homestead at all. It was just a place that this revolutionary might have stopped, married a young woman, had a baby, and there's no story of him at all as to what happened to him then. Except that his wife, my great grandmother did marry again in San Francisco after—I don't know exactly what year, but she had a whole second family in this area. I used to meet them at parties, but no one ever told me that I was related to them. Only recently, about ten years ago, did I find out that a lot of these people in the Bay Area are my relatives, including—I know everyone buys Mezzetta olives and Mezzetta products in the stores, and that's one of the families, one of the relatives. As I've said, it seems to fit in many ways that this might be true. Because when I was reading some biographies of Garibaldi and Mazzini, trying to find out clues, it turns out that my ancestor sailed on a boat with Garibaldi to meet Mazzini in Odessa. The name of the boat was Clorinda. I also read about Garibaldi, who had a daughter named "Clelia." So maybe there was enough connections in the family that these would be the reasons that they would name the children these names.

As I've said, the thing that really puzzles me the most is why these genetic parts of them made them all artists. It is really surprising. Rinaldo Cuneo, my uncle,

was the one who stayed in California, and he's well known because he was in the group of California artists. He died in 1939, and I only knew him briefly. And the second one, Cyrus, went to Europe around 1900 to study art and became Whistler's pupil. Whistler didn't have many pupils, but there is an article that I just uncovered recently written about 1903 or so, written in *Pall Mall Magazine* that my uncle had written about Whistler's studio. And it is always recorded whenever any book talks about Cyrus Cuneo. He stayed in London and married a British artist and lived continually in London. He was an illustrator for the *London Daily Mail*, and he started out illustrating many, many books and articles. Then since they didn't allow photographers in places like Westminster Abbey, the artists would go in and make paintings of the coronations of kings or the deaths of them. He was very prolific and very prominent, but unfortunately he died when he was only 37, but he did have a seven-year-old son at the time whose name was Terence Cuneo, and he has been a prominent British artist in London. He was given the commission to paint the coronation of Queen Elizabeth, which is a canvas of at least thirty-five feet long and resides in Buckminster Palace or Windsor Castle. Anyway, he has painted the queen about fifteen times, at least, and would paint any kind of ceremony. If the Queen Mother was dedicating Lloyd's of London, then he would be commissioned to paint this occasion. And he painted a lot for the military. They would want a battle scene for their meeting room, so he did a lot of that. In fact, it was the military that talked the queen into having my cousin be commissioned to paint Queen Elizabeth's coronation because they thought so highly of him. As I understand it, when he talked to us about it, there were sixty people in this portrait that had to be recognizable. So he had to make all these portraits of the people. Prince Charles, I think, was about five at the time when this happened. Terence Cuneo also painted a lot of paintings for British Railways, and was again a friend of Walt Disney because he liked model trains and had a train in his backyard and visited Walt Disney, who also had and was interested in model trains. And so he would be the most prominent of the artists in the Cuneo family. He died in, at age 88 in, I think, 1996, and his last commission was painting the Chunnel. In his eighties he went to Antarctica and painted this also. Part of the Cuneo family just has tremendous energy. [In October 2004 a statue of Terence Cueno was placed in Waterloo Station, Princess Ann officiated at the ceremony.]

1-00:16:44

Wilmot:

How did you become familiar with your uncle's artwork? And I mean uncle's—

1-00:16:49

Maslach:

Which uncle?

1-00:16:49

Wilmot:

All of them. How did you come to know this was part of your legacy?

1-00:16:57

Maslach:

My father had a studio in Greenwich Village until my mother was pregnant for the third time. They lived in—believe it or not (I still have these documents)—

an artist's studio in Greenwich Village with two babies, my sister and I, and then when she got pregnant again they decided that maybe they better move to the suburbs. At which point we moved to Pearl River, New York, which is in Rockland County, right on the border between New York and New Jersey. And this is this town of about five thousand people and so he did a lot of painting. He did painting, he belonged to the Kit Kat Club in New York and did painting[s] for them, and also did engraving as well as some lithography, and painted us a lot, so we have a lot of his paintings.

Then we had heard about Rinaldo Cuneo, and of course Rinaldo had visited us on his way to Italy a number of times. We didn't know too much about Cyrus Cuneo at that time, but when we came back to California, of course, we were well aware of Rinaldo, but had not seen all of his work. We had just seen some of the things, and the family did not have too much of it. But when he died in 1939, his widow, Ethel, took almost everything to Los Angeles but left a box of things that was sort of rescued by my father and then I eventually rescued it. It wasn't until 1991 when there was a kind of a revival of Rinaldo Cuneo's work posthumously that I was called by two art historians asking for information about him. What had happened was that all of his paintings had been left to his widow's second husband's family and they were in a storage locker up in Northern California. They were discovered by this art historian who was doing her Master's thesis at San Francisco State and had bought a painting at an auction and it was a Rinaldo Cuneo and she said, well, who is he? Couldn't find anything about him, so she said that that would be her project. She actually did some research on him and then she curated a retrospective of his along with Cadenasso and Piazzoni in the Museo Italo Americano at Fort Mason.

1-00:19:45  
Wilmot:

What's her name?

1-00:19:45  
Maslach:

Her name was Giovanna Riley that's her married name, I don't know what her maiden name was. But I have her address if you ever like to contact her. This was really fascinating, because what it meant was that we started looking in our boxes that we had saved and I had found a lot of Rinaldo Cuneo paintings that I have since framed, some were on paper, some were just left.

The way we made connections with the British uncle's family, was when my brother Gordon Cuneo was a navigator in the Air Force in World War II. He knew he had a cousin in England, and so as young men do, they don't write letters or anything, he just looked him up in the phone book, went and knocked on his door. And of course at that time there were all these blackouts in England, and so my cousin opened the door and when my brother saw him the family resemblance was so striking that all he could say was, "I think I'm related to you," and my cousin Terence said, "How extraordinary!" And so the family connection was made, and Gordon would bring them t things that they couldn't get because he was an officer and could bring from the PX things like cigarettes

or whatever, that was in short supply. So we have kept in touch ever since, so whenever George and I were on sabbatical, we'd stop and visit them. We were also able to bring my mother to visit them.

Terence himself came here on a trip, because he was made the honorary sheriff in a Wyatt Earp celebration in Arizona, and that was another one of his hobbies, he loved to ride horses. So he made this trip, doing some painting, giving some lectures, visiting Walt Disney and then going to Arizona, I forget what the name of the town where they have this ceremony [Tombstone]. They gave him a whole western outfit, which then he would ride in England which was very unusual because everybody used English saddles when riding. Western garb wasn't quite the thing to do. But as I said, he was both a brilliant man and a very fun person.

00:22:21  
Wilmot

What do you remember about your uncle, Rinaldo? What do you remember about his personality or about his ways or—

1-00:22:29  
Maslach:

We didn't meet him that much, because unfortunately this family, as in a lot of dysfunctional families, didn't get along that well. I know that Rinaldo was not that interested in my father's coming out to California. He said, "One Cuneo painter is enough." We visited him at his studio and I knew who he was. It wasn't a very close relationship. And of course I never met the other uncle at all. It is only through my reading about them, my finding out. I think there are a lot more people that know more about my uncle than I do. You know daughters or relatives of any of the artists, you know, Cadenasso, Piazzoni, and so forth.

1-00:23:32  
Wilmot:

I wanted to ask if your aunts were also artists on your father's side?

1-00:23:41  
Maslach:

No, they weren't artists, but they were—One of them at least, the oldest one. Minnie, I understand had a beautiful voice, and could sing, however, she didn't train it. She had a salon in her house in San Francisco, so all of the Italian singers that came would always be entertained by them. So I have a lot of pictures, I can't think of all of the names, but we're turning up photographs, signed photographs of Tito Schipa, Martinelli, and Mascagni. So it was more that they were in the social life of the Italian community. I do have a picture of the[m] entertaining Marconi when he came. The mayor at the time was Angelo Rossi, and so in this picture there would be these prominent people, Italian people plus whatever singer was in town that was willing to sing at this particular reception.

1-00:24:48  
Wilmot

Did you grow up close to your aunts?

1-00:24:50

Maslach:

Not really, because they were all old when we came here. We knew of them, and we knew the younger ones. I knew all of them, at least, but they were such a generation above us, beyond us, that mostly what we came in on was the family disputes, over inheritance, which is very typical. But Minnie was the most gracious of all. When my sister Barbara got married to her husband, David Stone, she had her wedding reception there. When I left for Boston to get married to George Maslach, she gave me a reception there before I left.

1-00:25:35

Wilmot:

Your other aunts, what were their names?

1-00:25:40

Maslach:

The aunts in the McLean family?

1-00:25:42

Wilmot

Sorry, I'm thinking of the aunts on you father's side. On your father's sisters.

1-00:25:45

Maslach:

Evelina, that was Evelyn, she was married to Luigi Mastropasqua, and he was an architect. He's the one that designed Julius Castle up on Telegraph Hill, and we're finding out now more of the buildings that he did design. The one building that remained in the family was the Canessa Building, which was on Montgomery Street, not too far from where the TransAmerica Building is now. That was the location of the Black Cat, which was this very famous bar that all the beats and Herb Caen would visit. I was on a tour once with someone from the San Francisco Historical Society. We met at the TransAmerica Building, and the first stop on the way was this Canessa Building, which was a printing building, then was the home of the Black Cat and the beats, so they considered that part of California history. This Canessa Building, we owned a fraction of it until a few years ago, and we finally sold it, because it needed a seismic retrofit. The people that have bought it have restored it to the way it looked originally, and I think that it's quite a little gem. It's between the—It's next to where the Doro's Restaurant used to be, Doro's Restaurant I think now is the Bubble Lounge.

1-00:27:17

Wilmot:

I think I know where that is.

1-00:27:21

Maslach:

On the other side of the Canessa Building is a, I think an old bank building that is now the offices of the Alioto family. The Alioto lawyers.

1-00:27:33

Wilmot

Isn't there an architecture bookstore very close to that as well?

1-00:27:39

Maslach:

I'm not sure, but recently at a memorial service for a fellow historian, one of the San Francisco archivists named Andrew Canepa, came up to me and said that

someone had come into his office and deposited a big box of plans and things Luigi Mastropasqua had done. And I guess that it had come down from my family, passing it on to generations. Some young man who's some son of somebody said, "What's this?" and turned it in. That's in the process of being looked at.

The Cuneo family—Let's see, Clelia's husband was named Bertini, and when my uncle, my great uncle James—I haven't mentioned this yet. My father's eldest sister, Minnie, Minerva, married my Scottish grandfather's brother, and so she would be my aunt and he would be my great uncle. They married, and he died in 1917, and she married a man named Ettore Patrizi, who owned *L'Italia*, which was one of the Italian newspapers in San Francisco. And Clelia's husband worked for him as a journalist. Clorinda, the other daughter's husband, I guess she had at least three, and they just did different things, she was the one who had the most children in the family, she had four. So I haven't really mentioned the connection between the McLean family and the Cuneo family, because these two families, as I said, were connected through my father's sister, and my grandfather's brother. So I have a picture with both sets of grandparents in this picture because the two families were having some function together. So in this picture there are both sets of my grandparents and my mother was a little girl, one and a half years old, in somebody's arms, and my father was a five year old on the floor in front of them. So these two families knew each other before my mother and father got married in 1918.

I'm just trying to think of what my grandfather did. My grandfather Cuneo, besides buying property, I was trying to guess what sort of work he was in, and I think he probably owned a tavern, and that Minnie used to sing in the tavern. But he had a number of small businesses and eventually became a director of the Columbus Savings and Loan. When he died in 1916, my grandmother was put on the board of directors in his place. And I imagine this was the first time that there was a woman board of director of a bank. She served until 1923. She was sixty-two at the time she was put on the board of directors.

1-00:31:26

Wilmot:

What were your grandparents' names?

1-00:31:30

Maslach:

The Cuneo grandfather? He was Giovanni Cuneo and she was Annie Garibaldi Cuneo. As I said, I found out that he had come to San Francisco when he was six. He'd been in Philadelphia when he was two, and was somehow brought to San Francisco when he was six. She was born in Boston and came to San Francisco when she was about ten, and I think they married when they were probably around twenty. I'm just trying to think of what else I was going to say about them.

1-00:32:15  
Wilmot

So you didn't grow up knowing your grandfather. He died before you were born, and your grandmother on your father's side, did you know her?

1-00:32:24  
Maslach:

She lived until ninety-two, so when we came back—(In fact a lot of the women in the family lived into their late eighties and nineties.)—from New York in 1931, she must have been in her eighties, because she died in 1942 at age ninety-two. I knew her, but she was not a grandmother. I mean, she was just a very old person talking to herself, pretty much, you know, she was always talking about her babies. So I didn't know her, but I did know the aunts and Rinaldo somewhat. Again, I myself was this young teenager growing up and not really connecting too much with these families because both of these families were afraid they would have to support the Egisto Cuneo family. And my father did not earn money through painting. I mean Rinaldo really wasn't really selling paintings in the Depression, either, and so what my father did was buy property, fix it up himself, and rent it out. In fact, he built a whole house by himself out on 47<sup>th</sup> Street in San Francisco in the Richmond District. It took him between one and two years to do this, and I think he had very little outside help in doing it, and he saved everything, so I have all the receipts of all of the materials that he bought. He would buy them from a used places, rescued materials when they would demolish something. And so the property cost \$2000, the lot did. The house cost \$5000, so he had it built and then he rented it out for all these years. That's what we lived on, plus he also invested in the stock market, and again, he was very shrewd about that. So there was income coming in from that.

1-00:34:50  
Wilmot:

What neighborhoods did he buy and sell properties in?

1-00:34:51  
Maslach:

The Richmond District. The first one was on 42<sup>nd</sup> Avenue, he bought a small house and then remodeled it. And then at first we thought we were going to move out there, but then it turned out that we couldn't afford to so we stayed in the house at 1821, on the site of the family house that had burned down in 1906.

1-00:35:16  
Wilmot

This was 1821 what street?

1-00:35:19  
Maslach:

Grant Avenue.

1-00:35:19  
Wilmot:

Grant Avenue.

1-00:35:21  
Maslach:

Yes, and so they put up temporary housing on that and we lived in the temporary housing until 1960s—

1-00:35:30  
Wilmot

When it was condemned.

1-00:35:30  
Maslach:

When it was condemned. So my father had great plans to build an apartment house on it—six units. The idea was that his two sisters would go in with him, so each one of them would have one apartment to live in, and one apartment to rent, to pay the expenses. They just wouldn't go along with this, and he developed cancer so he didn't pursue building anymore. But we were very glad that this didn't materialize, because two of the units would have been for my mother so she would have been in these units taking care of his elderly sisters, and that would not have been a very good life.

As it happened, when he died in '72, my mother was still living in this apartment next door and she did not want to live anywhere else except on that block, she had made friends with the people on the block. So what we did was try to build an apartment house on that site, and we had to buyout relatives who owned a fraction of the property, because every time someone died and owned some of it, they would then divide it among the remaining relatives.<sup>1</sup> So anyway that was one of the jobs that we did. We did get the plans, we got the permit, and the bids came in and they were too high, and we felt we just didn't have the money to do it. So we sold everything to a developer, who had been developing out in the Richmond District. What was significant was that we did have a permit to build, and they were changing the amount of set back, so that if they didn't build when the permit was good, then the plans wouldn't have been the correct plans. So this developer used it. He bought everything, the permit and built the house, and then sold them as condominiums, so we had the pick of the condominiums. So we chose the one on the top floor in the rear, so mother had this gorgeous view of the bay. They had a single garage for one car, and then they had a communal garage for the rest of the units, so we got the single garage. This is where my mother lived. We completed it in 1977, and she lived there until she died in 1997, and she died at the age of 102 and a half. We were so happy that we could keep her in a place she absolutely loved. She would sit by the window and watch the ships come in and out, and watch the Blue Angels when they flew over. It would be like putting on a special performance for her. So this was one of the things that our trust was able to do, and we were very grateful that we didn't have to put her in a home. So this is the last piece of property that the Cuneo family owns in San Francisco, and we're just about to sell it because there's no way that a family, under today's circumstances, can buy the place or doesn't suit any of the family members, either. So—

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1. "We" refers to my brother, Gordon Cueno, my sister, Barbara Stone, and I, the trustees of the Egisto Family trust.



1-00:39:04

Wilmot:

I wanted to ask where were the other properties that your grandfather Cuneo had purchased around Telegraph Hill? Were they on the other side at all? Were they mostly on that West Side?

1-00:39:23

Maslach:

Yes. The ones I know of. I know that they had a big building on Sansome Street, this was before my time, that was bought and sold. I don't think my grandfather was that good a manager, either. Sometimes he would get into difficult situations, and I have a feeling that my father was the one that would rescue the family because he seem to understand a lot better about what to do. But the other big piece of property they owned was the corner of Grant and Lombard. There were two lots on Grant and two lots on Lombard, so it was a whole big corner. And again what we tried to do, what my father when he was still alive tried to do, was he wanted to keep it in the family, so he didn't want to sell it. He rented it to someone, a developer, for ninety-nine years, so that it would stay in the family.

What happened was that we got some very good lawyers to supervise this whole sale of the contract with the developers to develop an apartment house there. Obviously, our lawyers were so good that the developers sold—They didn't want to do the building, and they sold it to somebody else, their rights. So the people that started to build there were not that good. And there was a lawyer that lived in an apartment above this property on Child Street in Telegraph Hill, who got a restraining order because he said they weren't doing it correctly; they weren't shoring up the walls correctly, because he was in the house above it. There was this restraining order. And then the rains came, and these houses fell into this property. So this was into the 1960s, and it made quite a story in the local papers. At that point we decided when my father died that the only thing to do was to sell the property because we were not, none of us were in a position to deal, handle things like this. The lawsuits that occurred after that thing fell in, again if we didn't have as good a lawyer as we had, he happened to be Spurgeon Avakian, that people know. He's an East Bay lawyer; we probably would have been liable for some of this. The best we could say that happened is that we didn't lose it, and it didn't cost us any money, but it certainly was a traumatic situation. So we did sell it to a developer. There is a big apartment house on it now. My grandfather also owned some property near on Bay Street near Ghiradelli Square; there was some property there. And I don't know what other smaller places, but his mother was the wife of the revolutionary and she married again and her name was Dominica. She lived in North Beach somewhere, so I imagine that there would be just scattered properties. We always appreciated the fact that he thought Telegraph Hill was such a good choice of property, and I'm sorry that he hadn't bought more of it, or we hadn't kept more of it. It was hard to keep property, you know, in San Francisco, anyway, with all of the—Either you have to develop it or pay taxes on it or something, and that was really not the focus of any of the heirs.

1-00:43:25  
Wilmot

Now your father kind of did this balance between creating art as well as being a real estate person, and you said that—How do you remember him kind of balancing that?

1-00:43:37  
Maslach:

Well the need for creativity in him was extremely great, because he did some painting here in the thirties and maybe the forties. But then he switched to photography and he photographed Chinatown. He photographed the Embarcadero, the Fisherman's Wharf. He has pictures of the fishermen when they had those little boats that used to go out. Now there are the big Purseiners, boats that go out. So we have this whole bunch of photo negatives of gorgeous pictures that, again, should be looked at. There are people who said we would love to have a show of your father's photographs. He also made boxes. He would create picture frames and boxes, so he was always doing something. And as I say, he was self-taught. He didn't go any higher, I think than eighth grade in school. We were in the east when the radio came and he built himself a radio. He could do anything that he needed to do. And of course, he saved all kinds of things, so he would have things to do things with. I still have a lot of these things. I am systemically going through all the boxes and throwing things out, and realizing that a lot of it are precious things. Certainly all the documents that we've been saving are important. And it is history, and of course this has been told to me so many times. People throw things out. They move and they just say, "let's throw it out." The people who did the I. W. Taber book, for instance, that I was telling you about. Every time they see me, they say, "I'm so grateful you didn't throw those things out."

This Taber book is, again, California history. The surviving daughter in this family was the best friend of my mother's and when she died she left all her documents and pictures and things of her family to my mother. I didn't even know what I had until I started going through the boxes and had recently been able to contribute a lot of things, pictures and memorabilia to people who have just published a book on I.W. Taber, who was a very prominent photographer from 1870 until he died in 1912. He was the official photographer of the 1894 World's Fair, and I have all the medals that he was given by the French government and the state government and so forth, that we're still in the process of trying to find out where they should go. They need a home as part of our California's historic background.

1-00:46:53  
Wilmot:

Doris, how does one get to be the keeper of the family records? How does that happen?

1-00:46:56  
Maslach:

It happens because I was, of all the three children in the Cuneo, Egisto Cuneo family, and that was my brother Gordon Cuneo and my sister Barbara Stone, who lives in Oakland, I was the only one with a basement. And then I think that

I was also the only one who really cared about the—The others cared, too, but not to the extent of sorting and categorizing and so forth. I guess because maybe I was a math major and was interested in organization and records. I know people have made a fantastic hobby of genealogy, and I've been warned about how much time it takes, and it is true. I am the keeper. I'm trying to put together as much as possible, so at least the family, you know, has it somewhere so that the children that are descendents, can see it.

The one thing that I did recently that I'm very proud of, because you asked about the artists in the family, was when we sold the Canessa building. There was a gallery in it. The building survived the earthquake and fire, and I still don't know the history of it, whether it was something my grandparents built or just remodeled. I know Mastropasqua was the architect. My grandfather was the other owner of it, so it belonged to the Mastropasquas and the Cuneos. In this building that has remained, there has been the downstairs where the Black Cat was, and that has become different kinds of food service. I think there was a Chinese restaurant there, and then on the second floor there were a lot of offices and rooms around the center where there was this gallery. The third floor sort of overlooked the gallery and, again, had more offices. What has it been used for? There has been an architect there who has used the gallery to give art showings. Since it's not a legitimate gallery, he will never charge any money for it. He usually does it for people just getting started and just want to show their things and say, "Yes, I've shown it at Canessa Gallery."

So when we had this problem of selling the property, and this was, I guess, how long ago was that? I guess it has only been three or four years ago, we finally sold our share of it, which was a small share. We made sure that the people who had been there bought it because they wanted to, and we liked them and we didn't want a developer to have it. So the architect who had been there for fifteen years, and was then able to stay with this gallery, said to me, "I want to have a showing of your family's paintings." I was with my granddaughter Tanya Zimbaro at the time, and she had just graduated from NYU in photography. We had just gone to a movie together and walked up Columbus Avenue and stopped by, and when he presented this—"I want you to have this show of your family's paintings," I said, "This is impossible, because this is a huge project." Tanya says, "Grandma, we can do it." And we did it, and she was the curator, it was her first practice job. We rounded up as many pictures that we had in the family, and mostly they were mine, so there were a lot of Rinaldo and very few of Cyrus's, because Britain doesn't let them out of England, anyway. We did have about three of his. I had a lot of Rinaldo's and a lot of my father's. So we put on this show. My son Steve, who is a glassblower who lives in Seattle who could not come, said, "I haven't seen a lot of those pictures, I would like photographs of them. But I don't just want anybody to photograph them, you should get a real professional to photograph them." So he knew Lee Fatheree, who is the photographer for the Oakland Museum, whenever they do a catalog. Lee Fatheree agreed to photograph the paintings. We all looked in our houses and we

found sixty-eight paintings of these three artists. Lee Fatheree photographed them all and I made albums for all of the family members. I have albums of these photographs. These, of course, aren't the best paintings that these artists did, because most of the best paintings were sold to somebody. But anyway, you asked if I had paintings, and yes, yes. Not only do we have some, but we also know of what the other people in the family have. My brother and my sister each had a Rinaldo Cuneo screen, he was noted for these screens. When they had this show in San Francisco, this one that I told you about in the Italian museum, the art historian said, "Do you have any Rinaldo Cuneo screens, because I've heard that he's done some and I'd like to see him." I said, "No, I don't." I later found out my brother has one, my sister has one. We got them restored and they're being used now and both of them are showing them in their homes.

What my sister found in her basement was a signed painting by Rinaldo Cuneo, *A Self Portrait*, that was really museum-quality, so we did have that restored by a professional restorer, and it should be donated to some museum. This is one of the jobs that we have, trying to figure out what you keep and who wants it, and then what you contribute to the historic places. So, as I said, both the exhibit itself was fun, because, again, a lot of the art history people in San Francisco, the archivists and so forth, showed up as well as the family. The family didn't even know these things existed, so for them, and especially my brother's children who are named Cuneo, I keep thinking they're going to say, these little boys that are two and six and eight now, they're going to say, "Well, who were the Cuneos?" And they should know.

1-00:54:12

Wilmot

This is your brother's grandchildren?

1-00:54:14

Maslach:

They're my brother's grandchildren, and, his own children.

1-00:54:19

Wilmot:

Well, I have a question for you which is, to what did your father attribute his artistic inclination and talent?

1-00:54:31

Maslach:

They never said, although in the documents there was supposed to be some page about some sculptors way back in the 2 hundreds, and I don't know who got this particular paper, but it's in my book. I just don't know, it wasn't just a causal thing, it was rather strong, because I have articles about Rinaldo Cuneo quoting his mother, saying how he painted the walls, made murals on the walls of their house because he was determined to paint. Cyrus went over to Europe to study art. He supported himself because he was a flyweight boxer, and he earned money boxing in boxing matches so he could pay for his art classes.

1-00:55:22  
Wilmot

Then your father would support himself and your family with this kind of real estate business at the same time as—

1-00:55:31  
Maslach:

It was interesting, because the first remodeling he did was the house we bought when we moved to Pearl River. This was just a frame house, a two-story frame house, so he remodeled that and put in a stone fireplace and so forth. The way he built these houses had a artistic quality to them, but he just felt that earned money to live on. And so he never stopped his photographing and then he even went into making motion pictures. I haven't even seen them. They were eight millimeters. I just have them and I don't even know what's in them. This is the feeling I have, that there's this great treasure trove in my basement and I just get to look at it now and then and as much as I can, but I'm putting together the albums, and I must have eight albums now, of family albums, of documents and so forth. Of when people got married, when they got their citizenship, and letters that were written and things like that. Again, I'm going to have to decide where they go when I go, but that they should be collected.

1-00:56:55  
Wilmot:

I just wanted to ask this follow-up question about your aunts one more time. As I understand there was four of them: There was Evelina, there was Clelia?

1-00:57:05  
Maslach:

Clorinda.

1-00:57:08  
Wilmot:

Clorinda and then—

1-00:57:07  
Maslach:

Minerva.

1-00:57:08  
Wilmot:

Minerva.

1-00:57:10  
Maslach:

Minnie.

1-00:57:12  
Wilmot

Yes, okay. And they were married ladies, they didn't necessarily pursue an occupation. And the artist was Minnie, who was a singer. Is that correct to say that?

1-00:57:24  
Maslach:

Well, again she didn't pursue it financially, this was just an avocation of when she couldn't sing anymore, because I've never heard her sing, that she just cultivated singers. There would be singers in San Francisco that she would encourage to study and so forth, and she really had a salon on Pierce Street, which is now a foreign embassy, you know, of some foreign country. Clelia tried

to for a awhile, because her husband died fairly young, so she tried to support herself by having a tea room, but she just wasn't a good business woman at all, so she ended up living with Aunt Minnie and being a companion, because Minnie was the oldest and Clelia was the youngest sister. So obviously she was left a lot of money when everybody died and things were divided up, she would continue to inherit. She has one son and he's living over in Fairfax.

1-00:58:41  
Wilmot:

Is this Clelia or Minnie?

1-00:58:40  
Maslach:

Clelia.

1-00:58:43  
Wilmot

Clelia.

1-00:58:43  
Maslach:

Minnie had no children, Evelyn had no children, Rinaldo had no children, Clorinda had four, and they were all much older than we were because she was old and I knew them when they were adults and we were teenagers. And Clelia had the one son, Robert.

Cyrus (Ciro) had two sons, Desmond and Terence. Desmond developed schizophrenia and died in a mental hospital. Terence had two daughters, Linda and Carole. Linda's two children, Andrew and Melanie, are in their thirties now and we are in touch with them. Melanie is artistic, she is a film editor, and she has worked with Kenneth Branagh in a number of his pictures, including the one he made in Italy, "As You Like It," and that other one that he made, the Danish film, "Hamlet." Anyway, she also worked on this later picture with Tom Cruise and Nicole Kidman, the one that they made in England that lasted two years. I'm trying to think of the director, because again he's a very famous director.

1-01:01:24  
Wilmot

*Eyes Wide Shut?*

1-01:01:24  
Maslach:

Yes, that's the picture. This is my senior moment, I can't think of the name of the director [Stanley Kubrick – *S.S.*]. Melanie was the one that did a documentary of Kubrick's life, and it was shown at different places and we all went to see it in San Francisco. I don't know whether she's settling down now, because she just got married and had a baby, or if she's still pursuing her work. But at least the artistic thing goes through the generations. Then in my family we have the glassblowers, and what I find interesting is that there is no art form that requires more engineering than glassblowing, so my sons really combine, you know, the art and the engineering from the two inheritances. Terence's daughter Carole had one daughter, Cindy, who has a daughter, Melody and twin sons, Theo and Oliver.

[Minidisc 2]

2-00:00:06

Wilmot:

I wanted to back up and ask you a question about your father's family and education, and ask you about the different education levels. To what extent was your father educated and his sisters and brothers, how far did they go?

2-00:00:19

Maslach:

As far as I know there wasn't that much education in the Cuneo family. My father, I guess, just didn't tolerate education because he quit by the age of—I don't know how old he was, but the eighth grade. He did not have any formal education beyond the eighth grade. I have no idea what the other boys did, like Rinaldo or the girls. I have no idea. None of them became professionals in any way. My father was extremely self-educated. In fact I'm in the process of having to get rid of books that he has bought that we still have. I mean books on history, books on—He could read things and decide how to make things, so he was extremely well-read and he also believed that we should have family discussions about things that were going on in the world. Somehow he would always had interesting friends that would come so we could learn things from them too. They were interested, though, in the children being educated.

My mother did have more education, she actually went to the Phoebe Apperson Hearst Nursery School training, upon Telegraph Hill. She was trained to be a nursery school teacher, and did not have much of a chance to practice it, because the war came, and she spent most of her time rolling bandages and doing that kind of thing. It showed in the way she lived her life, the way she decorated the Christmas tree. The way, if we had a birthday party, she would make all these little favors and presents herself. We did not have any money, but she would still could make them out of crepe paper or whatever. In fact, the ornaments on the Christmas tree were all handmade. She would blow the eggs and decorate them and then make little woven baskets of shiny paper that you put nuts and things in. My remembrance of Christmas up until I was ten, while we were still back in Pearl River, was that they would send us to bed and maybe ring the bells implying that Santa Claus was coming, and then we would go downstairs in the morning and there would be this glorious tree. They just seemed to decide that was important. My father would make some of the things, like if the doll needed a highchair or my brother needed a wagon or something like that, then they would make the toys. It was just sheer magic, and you know I really believed in Santa Claus until I came to California. I guess I wanted to believe, but I think it was just a wonderful thing to do. It just fit her. But as I said, she always just made things. Happy. Always was very optimistic and very giving. Just like she was such a good role model because she was the head of the PTA in North Beach and she was very involved with the Telegraph Hill Neighborhood Center. She was on the Board of Directors, but she would go and serve on the well baby clinic. She would do anything they needed. The last thing that they needed was during the war, when all of the men left, was somebody to teach woodworking to the young boys that came there in the woodshop classes. She did that.

2-00:03:52

Wilmot:

How did she know?

2-00:03:53

Maslach:

She just did, she just did. Years later, they had a dinner for her, kind of they honoring her. She was in her nineties, I think, or at least close to it. And most of the children that she saw weren't living in North Beach anymore, because North Beach children couldn't afford to live in North Beach anymore. I mean, they all moved out to Daly City or other places. But I think that this dinner was in Daly City, matter of fact. But anyway, it was just amazing, the people that came, to be at the meeting, at the dinner. The girls would say, "Oh, my father was so strict, but if I told him that Mrs. Cuneo was going to be the one that was taking us on the trip," he would let them go. So they were just saying how grateful they were that she was there.

She also knew a lot of the basketball and baseball players that came from North Beach. There were not big stars, you know, like the DiMaggios, but there were quite a few of the ones that would play in lesser leagues. So she knew them too.

2-00:05:06

Wilmot

You just showed me those delightful teacups that she gave to you on your engagement to George, and I wanted to ask you a little bit more. You said that either she would get them, or she would coordinate for other people to give them. How many did she give you?

2-00:05:20

Maslach:

I think I must have about, at least a dozen. A dozen. Yes, they would either have an engagement party, or her friends would know that, "Oh, my daughter is engaged," and they just did this for each other. It was just kind of a tradition. I don't know where it came from, but my sister has a set of engagement cups as well.

2-00:05:44

Wilmot:

Little teacups with little saucers, matching pairs.

2-00:05:50

Maslach:

Yes. And it was that part of life, that you know, as I say, you could be very poor, and yet these were the things that were fun to do. And she was a good cook, so her dinner parties were well done. And of course, the Danish Christmas was celebrated Christmas Eve, so originally, we would go to some of the families for the Christmas Eve dinner. But then when Mother, as the McLean family stopped having Christmas Eve dinners, then Mother would have the Christmas Eve dinners for the Cuneo family. We started out having them in that, at 1821, in this place that got demolished, that got condemned. But again, she would always—everything would be just beautiful, and fun. She actually in years later, come to think of it, she was the one that would keep the McLean family together. She was the one that would instigate having a reunion of the McLean family, because none of—she had two sisters and a brother, never did. She started out having



them at Ann and Gordon's swim school in Marin County, because Gordon was married to Ann Curtis, the Olympic swimmer. They did have a big place there, they had a swimming pool, and then they had grounds. So this was something that a big family picnic could go to, so Mother was the one that would arrange those.

The last one, I believe she was in her nineties, and so was her sister, who died at 103, also would be there. So it's a kind of a tradition that I feel that I'm following without even knowing it, but it was just a great thing to make me think so fondly of her. And as I go through all the boxes and find the things that belonged to her, I really feel so good about it. In fact, I'm about to make some albums of letters that people have written her that have been—just showed how much they loved her. One of the person that was big in her life was her massage therapist, because she was bedridden for her last five years. This therapist had been—I guess she has had him maybe for ten, fifteen years, because she did have arthritis in the legs. Of course, when she was getting older and older, everybody would come to her: this massage therapist would come to her, her doctor and her hairdresser would come to her and take care of her.

So this massage therapist that she had was from Vienna, and he was this—he just looked and was this really traditional, elegant, gracious European gentleman. He absolutely adored coming to give her the massage. They had a real friendly relationship together. And when he got a heart attack and had to stop for a while, until he recovered, when he was able to go back and give massages, she was the only one he would take for a while, because he thought so much of her. He had this beautiful calligraphy, so I have these gorgeous cards that he would send her, notes he would send her. It meant so much to her. I just think this is something that—well, what I'm thinking of when kids are in elementary school, they almost always have an ancestors unit. So they have to start asking something about, What did your ancestors do, and so forth. So I think that there will come a time when the girls especially in the family will want to know more about their great-grandmother or great-great-grandmother. So I think I should have these for them.

I know that when Zara and Tanya [Zimbardo], who were Christina's children, had this to do, they would go and interview Grandma. What Zara did for her project was to pretend that she was Wilhelmina Bruun, my grandmother, my mother's mother, and write what it was like coming at age seventeen from Denmark to be in San Francisco. What Tanya did for her thing was to find out when Grandma and Grandpa got married. So it turned out that this was the time of the Pan Pacific Fair in the Marina in San Francisco. This was around 1915, I believe. My mother was right at the age where she just had a wonderful time going to that. So right after that was when she met my father again. I mean, it was somebody in the Cuneo family—arranged it that Egisto would pick her up using carriages, horses and carriages then, in 1916, '17—I think it was 1917. They drove out to the Cliff House to have lunch. So they started dating after that.

So Grandma would be telling Tanya about this, and said that they would also walk on Fort Mason, the park at Fort Mason. And then she said to Tanya, she said, “You know, the first time Egisto kissed me was on a bench in this park.” So Tanya photographed every bench and said, “Which one is it?” until Grandma pointed out which bench it was. [laughing] So that was Tanya’s project on her grandparents.

2-00:11:40

Wilmot: That’s so beautiful.

2-00:11:40

Maslach: Is that cute?

2-00:11:42

Wilmot: Yes, that’s so beautiful.

2-00:11:42

Maslach: So my granddaughters are very imaginative, too. And had quite a joy.

2-00:11:50

Wilmot: Well, I wanted to ask you, do you know your mother’s family past, Wilhelmina Bruun and McLean? How far back do you know your mother’s family?

2-00:12:05

Maslach: Well, let’s see. I didn’t know any of the—many of the other relatives. There were some cousins that were here that I knew that were related, but I didn’t know exactly how. One of them was a woman who was in dramatics, for instance, and knew all the dramatists that came through, and actors and—she herself acted. When was, I think I was fourteen or fifteen, I was given the honor of speaking at a [Abraham] Lincoln’s Day program in San Francisco. This was in the Civic Auditorium. I don’t know how it happened, but they wanted somebody, a student, to speak on “what Lincoln means to me.” So I seem to have gotten that job, and so I wrote a speech. I can remember this cousin helping me, how to speak and so forth, so that I could do it.

But other than that, the close family members, like my aunts and uncles and cousins, we were very close to in the McLean family, more so than in the Cuneo family, because there weren’t that many of our age in the Cuneo family. We’re still in very close touch to all of them now. One family is in Santa Rosa, one is in Inverness. We just visited my cousin in Carmel. Then I have other more distant McLean cousins in San Diego. They were the descendents of one of the other brothers, the sea captain brother. I feel very strongly, like Mother did, that you keep in touch with your family. It just seems that a lot of people just let it go, and somehow, I feel it is—it’s very good for the children too, to know that, “Look, there are all these people that are connected to us in some way,” it’s a sense of security.

So anyway, I've been sort of taking Mother's role in doing that. I'm the one that usually engineers a lot of these get-togethers. Except for the Christmas Eve of the Cuneo family, that gets rotated among my sister, my brother, and I. The last one I had was three years ago in this family, and at that time, I said, "I can't have it here again, because they're all too big and too many." All of the men are over six feet. I mean, my nephew, one of Gordon's sons, is six-five. I guess he has two of them that are that tall. So every year, everybody gets bigger, and so there just isn't enough space. I think I had about forty people for dinner here. It was a bit crowded.

2-00:15:01

Wilmot: Sounds like lots of fun.

2-00:15:02

Maslach: So I do have a son, my son James, who lives in Novato, and they do have a large house, so he said that yes, we might be able to have it there, if it works out. The son from Seattle said, "Hire a restaurant." [laughs] But the point is, I just can't do it here, it's just too much.

2-00:15:23

Wilmot: A lot of people. So as far as—let's see. You know that your mother came as an au pair, is that right?

2-00:15:37

Maslach: Grandmother.

2-00:15:38

Wilmot: Grandmother came as an au pair to her family.

2-00:15:41

Maslach: Yes.

2-00:15:40

Wilmot: And then?

2-00:15:43

Maslach: To relatives.

2-00:15:45

Wilmot: To relatives, also Danish. Do you know what part of Denmark they came from?

2-00:15:54

Maslach: Yes, Ribe. In fact, my mother, right after my father died, my mother had never been to Europe, and when my father, who knew he was dying, stashed money all through—at least \$16,000 in different places in the apartment, and told George especially to find the money, because he didn't want on his death the money to be tied up so Mother wouldn't have it available. He said to George, "Be sure that Grandma gets her trip to Europe." He never wanted to go to Europe as my mother wanted, because he had been there as a young man, and he remembered

it as a young man, and he just knew this would just destroy his memory of it, so he wasn't interested in going back to Europe.

Mother wanted to go, not only to see it, but both of her sisters went frequently on trips to Europe, and of course, Mother didn't. So my father did agree before he died to take a ship, a sailing trip. They went to New Zealand, stopping in Hawaii and the Fiji Islands. This was around their fiftieth wedding anniversary. So he said he was willing to make that trip with her, so they did that. But the first thing Mother did after he died in 1972 was arrange a trip to Europe and there were cousins in Denmark that she visited. In fact, she stayed with them for two or three months. Saw the place where her mother was born. And these cousins, believe it or not, I can't tell you how many lived to be 100. Wilhelmina had a sister that was 100, and her daughter was 100. So there were at least three or four of them that lived to be 100, so the longevity is actually on both sides of the family, because the Cuneo women also lived until their eighties and nineties as well.

2-00:17:40  
Wilmot

There must be something special.

2-00:17:42  
Maslach:

I don't know. You wonder, you wonder. They do say that it's partially genetic. But the other thing is that we are in different living conditions. I mean, there is more pollution and more things that might make it so that you don't live as long. But in general, people are living longer. This is no question.

2-00:18:04  
Wilmot:

You said that, of course, Mother had not gone to Europe, though her sisters had.

2-00:18:08  
Maslach:

Yes.

2-00:18:08  
Wilmot

Can you explain to me what that—

2-00:18:12  
Maslach:

How that happened?

2-00:18:12  
Wilmot:

Yes, why was it that they had gone but she had not gone? Was it different financial circumstances?

2-00:18:17  
Maslach:

Well, here are these—my mother's family, there were three girls and a boy. The eldest girl married a Frenchman, and he had relatives in France. So they did take some trips. And of course, what was ironic about those trips is was that my aunt didn't like foreign food. [laughs] So imagine going to Europe and wanting American food. But anyway, Aunt Hazel did get to go.

And the second one was Evelyn, another Evelyn. She was married to Frank Cuthbertson, who was a Scotsman and very involved in plant breeding. He was looking for—they still sell Cuthbertson sweet peas, because he would get new colors. So because of his connection with all of this plant thing, they would go to Europe frequently, both on professional trips, and also they were wealthy enough to go on vacation trips. So they went often and would tell Mother about it, so Mother felt very—we were just too poor to go. In fact, we were too poor to do anything but camp, on vacations. We rarely went on family vacations when I was a teenager. It wasn't until I went to college that we started going to Blue Lakes. The reason for that was that I had finished one year at Cal, and my father felt that I needed a vacation, and so he and my brother and I took off for some lake, and the car couldn't make it. So we went down the hill and found Blue Lakes, and then we just camped there from then on as a family.

And we still, as I said, it wasn't until—well, my father never did want to go and spend money vacationing. But when my father died, my mother just indulged her interest in traveling. She would go first class. It was wonderful, because she would get one of these agents from Thomas Cook and Son, and she was very pro-British. So there would always be the flowers greeting her when she arrived somewhere, a box of chocolates and so forth. So she went on the *QEII* to England, and then visited these relatives.

George and I, at that time, what we did was meet her in London. She flew from Denmark, and that was the first time she ever flew in a plane. We picked her up in London, visited Terence Cuneo's family, and then drove her through Scotland. She had never been to Scotland. It was such a wonderful trip, because it was a late growing season that year, and I think we were there in September, and the heather was still in bloom. So she could see the heather. Another wonderful thing that happened is the first time that we crossed the border from England into Scotland, we went to dinner at a hotel. It was overlooking the town square, and that was the night that the bagpipers came out to pipe and march in the square. So she literally was piped into Scotland. We hadn't planned it; it just happened.

So that was the kind of thing that really worked out so well, so she got to see that. So she has made trips since then, too. When my daughter Chris[tina] and her husband Phil[ip] [Zimbardo] went on sabbatical in 1978, I went with them, because they had this little baby, and even George said, "I don't see how you take a baby that young," two and a half, two years old, "and think that you can do anything professionally. You can't leave her in a hotel with strangers." So he said to me, "You'd better go with them." So I said, "Okay," so I said to my mother, "Mother, I'm going to be over there, don't you want to come over?" She had never been to Italy, and so I stayed with them for a while in Italy, and then Mother flew over to London, and so I left them and then met her in Brown's Hotel in London. We had a visit together, came down the Rhine, and then joined

the family again in Italy, and wound up on the Island of Capri. So she was able to do that.

Then we also took her on a trip to Alaska. She loved to be on ships. She was eighty-four, I think, the last time we took her on a trip. As I am not eighty-four yet, I'm close to it, I realize that even any kind of traveling when you're over eighty is not easy. But she loved it.

2-00:23:28

Wilmot

She was committed.

2-00:23:30

Maslach:

Yes.

2-00:23:30

Wilmot:

I got confused at a part of your story, when you told the story of, I think it was your mother's brother or uncle, who had a memory of Denmark that he didn't want to destroy by going back a second time.

2-00:23:48

Maslach:

Oh, that was my father.

2-00:23:50

Wilmot

Oh, that was your—

2-00:23:51

Maslach:

It was my father not wanting to go back to Europe, you see, because he had traveled as a young man, and obviously had a wonderful time. He must have been in his teens, and he didn't study art as much as he—he seemed to have some kind of a companion, that took him to a lot of these places. So he did a lot of traveling. He would stay with Ciro who was living in England, and Rinaldo and Ciro were kind of jealous. They were saying, Here he gets to do all this, and here we are painting. And of course, I think at that time my father was telling them what they should be doing painting, you know. [laughs] Officious young guy. I have these letters where Ciro is writing to Rinaldo saying, "Who does he think he is anyway, telling us how to paint?" But anyway, he did have this wonderful, wonderful time, and then came back—the reason he came back was that war broke out. So he came back in I think about 1916 or 1915, then was drafted in 1918.

So in 1918, he was down at Fort Rosencrans, San Diego, getting prepared to be sent overseas, and that was the point that my mother who had been dating him for a few years, said to her mother, "Take me down there, I want to get married to him." So Wilhelmina took her down, and there was the outbreak of the flu down there. So a lot of it was in quarantine, but somehow or other, the army had taken over the Coronado Hotel, and they were married there.

2-00:25:43

Wilmot:

In San Diego.

2-00:25:43

Maslach:

In San Diego, and I think spent maybe a night or two together before Wilhelmina got a message that some relative had gotten the flu and they needed her right back. So then my father was about to be shipped over, supposedly, so Wilhelmina took Mother home to San Francisco.

Then the war ended. They were married in October 1918, and the war ended just shortly after. So then he came back to San Francisco, and in just looking at the situation, decided it was time—that he could not bring up his family in San Francisco, or his marriage wouldn't work in San Francisco. In fact, I have a letter that he wrote to his mother, saying, "You people are always squabbling and criticizing, and Ruth is—"

2-00:26:48

Wilmot

The Cuneos?

2-00:26:48

Maslach:

Yes, the Cuneos, that "Ruth is a wonderful girl, and I just hope that you will make everything fine for us." And he decided not to risk it, so this is why he moved to New York, and why we stayed there. And he was right, because when we got back, again, there was this feeling, as I say, of being the poor relations in two families that were so afraid they would have to be responsible for us. They weren't. My father took care of us. But being the poor relations was rough, at Christmas time, giving presents, you didn't have money to give them presents, the kind of presents that you got from them. And we also felt outsiders, because we weren't there with the cousins from the beginning. So it was kind of a second-class status for us as children, but the sad part was that my mother and father always had a fight about these Christmas Eve dinners, whether we would go or not. My father would say no, and my mother would say yes, and they would have arguments. No matter who won, we lost, because the other person would be unhappy, and usually we would come home crying from the—

2-00:28:04

Wilmot:

McLean Christmas Eve dinners?

2-00:28:05

Maslach:

These would be Christmas Eve dinners, yes.

2-00:28:06

Wilmot:

For the McLean family?

2-00:28:09

Maslach:

Yes. And the Cuthbertsons, the ones lived in Burlingame, and they were the wealthiest ones of the family. I believe Wilhelmina, this was her idea of how it should be. So she never really accepted my father, both because she was very

jealous of Minnie, when Minnie was her sister-in-law, and then she just didn't think an Italian was proper. As I said, one of them married a Scottish person, the other one married a French person, and then Mother married the Italian person. So we did feel out, and it wasn't until we then started going to school and being adults that we really arrived.

And I know that between my Aunt Evelyn and Mother; there was this rivalry, who's got the brightest child. So this feeling that I had to keep getting good grades, to be sure that—because my cousin Kenneth was the bright child in the Cuthbertson family. He became student body president at Stanford, and then was very associated with Stanford. He was one of their financial vice presidents as he grew up, and he really did a great deal. I mean, I admire him tremendously, because at his memorial service a few years ago, they had all of these ex-presidents and people in the Stanford family saying that he was the one that supplied the money, got the money, so that Stanford could develop after the war into the leading university that it is now. And that's quite an accomplishment.

2-00:29:53  
Wilmot:

And that was your childhood rival?

2-00:29:54  
Maslach:

Yes. [laughter] And guess what?

2-00:29:56  
Wilmot:

What?

2-00:29:56  
Maslach:

He told me that he thought that I was the smartest one, because he was in economics, a business major. For some reason or other, he decided when he was a senior to take a math course, calculus and analytic geometry. And it just didn't click. He had to work so hard in this course to get it, and he had to work hard so he could drop it. Because if he dropped it before he had a passing grade, it would be a negative grade on his record. So he did drop it, and then told me, well, I guess I was the smartest one after all, because I was a math major and took all these courses. But of course, this is so silly. People are smart in different ways. But anyway, as I said, I really admired him and his family. He was, I would say, one of the ones that was the nicest to us in that family.

Evelyn was a very domineering person. She would just make these pronouncements. When we talked about femininity, I mean, her philosophy of being married was, a woman becomes what the man she marries allows her to be. So she shouldn't have any aspirations of her own. She should just accept whatever the man she marries decides how it should be. I was a little shocked about that when I heard that, but that's the way she lived.

2-00:31:32  
Wilmot:

How did that contrast with your mother's philosophy of marriage?



2-00:31:36  
Maslach:

I don't think my mother had one. Mother, she was—my father unfortunately was a very critical person, because he grew up as the youngest child, and all of these—this Cuneo family were all demanding, and so I'm sure he was totally criticized. So he was very critical. He was critical of us as children, he was critical of Mother. I can remember a time when Mother cooked a meal, and he criticized something about it, and I remember my brother getting very annoyed and saying, "Mother, next time, burn the chops." That was his reaction.

I guess that was his defense, because as I say, he knew what people thought of him. So anyway, he was very prudent with what he did. He did inherit things, some things, some property and some stocks from his family. He also bought stocks himself with money he had. So he died a wealthy man. Some of the Cuthbertson grandchildren couldn't believe it. How did he do this? And so they really thought he was kind of remarkable. They also, the Cuthbertson children wondered, where was this Aunt Minnie? How come they didn't know her? And sort of regretted the fact that the families were not closer together. They didn't realize this until they were older.

2-00:33:10  
Wilmot:

Was there the sense that your parents were of an equal social class, or was there a sense that one married up?

2-00:33:17  
Maslach:

Well, I think Italians were looked down upon, in general, at that time. Anyone who was WASP, which the Cuthbertsons were in particular, they just belonged to the Burlingame Country Club and all of this sort of thing. So you were very aware that there was a difference, but yes, I grew up feeling that my grandmother Wilhelmina disapproved. My Scottish grandfather was a sweetheart. A domineering woman marries a milquetoast, in a way. So he had his wonderful qualities, and he was very good to us. Whenever we saw him, he would give us a dollar or a half-dollar or something like that. So he was very friendly, but he let his wife make all the decisions. And I was very aware that my father was not approved. And especially during these fights over Christmas Eve.

Wilhelmina died at age seventy-two, so she was not one of the ones that lived very long. She was a Christian Scientist, and had some kind of sciatica—or something in her, pain, neurological pain in her face, and I understand just spent many years practicing Christian Science to cope with it. People said that she died of a broken heart. Her beloved child was her son Harold, and this was the child she wanted, but got Mother instead. Mother was very aware that she should have been a boy. But anyway, when Harold finally was born, and Mother was the one who was chosen, since she was still around, to sort of take care of him. Harold married a woman just like Wilhelmina, a very strong, self-willed woman, who decided that when Wilhelmina wanted to go down and live next to her son, in the Monterey-Carmel area, she said no. Her oldest child—Hazel had married a Frenchman, Emile Cuenin and they had a place up in Inverness. She

was swimming at a beach called Heart's Desire and had a heart attack at age seventy-two.

That was in 1935, and so I had known her only then, really known her, from—

2-00:36:00

Wilmot:

Four years.

2-00:36:00

Maslach:

Yes, about four years. Although she would come to Pearl River visiting, because she would take trips to Europe and would stop by and visit.

2-00:36:07

Wilmot:

Where did your grandparents live? Your maternal—were they the ones who were at Ghirardelli Square?

2-00:36:16

Maslach:

Yes, and they lived there until my grandmother died, and then my grandfather sold it, and then would be living with either Evelyn or Hazel. I think briefly he tried to stay with us, which didn't work too well. Hazel and Emile Cuenin owned this very famous cafeteria in Oakland, Colonial Cafeteria. Their children are still alive, and actually, their oldest daughter, Catherine McCarthy, now is the oldest one of that group of grandchildren that includes me. Both the Cuthbertson boys have died. But Harold McLean's children are still alive, Cuneo children are still alive, and the Cuenin children are still alive. So we have grandchildren—this is why family gatherings get bigger and bigger. [laughs]

2-00:37:22

Wilmot:

Did you ever kind of hear about your grandmother's life when she came here at seventeen, what that was like for her to come—did you get that story from her? I know you were very young then, early teens.

2-00:37:33

Maslach:

I didn't get it from her. What I did hear, which I thought was very interesting, that she was willing to leave Denmark because she didn't like—she didn't get along with her mother. She was the second daughter in the family, and so came over because there were some cousins that were here already and said yes, that they would take her. So I always find that interesting, that she didn't get along with her mother, and so she didn't get along with my mother. Because they did not—they were always fighting too, over whom Mother married and how things were going.

But I think it is really remarkable that my cousin Ken Cuthbertson was such an important person at Stanford, to make a contribution to Stanford, and then for me to have married George, who made this big contribution to Cal, that one family would be this important in education in the Bay Area, especially to these two institutions is impressive.

So this is part of why I feel that I wanted to do this oral history, just because all of my—I come from all of these immigrant families who came to this area with nothing. I mean, none of them had anything. And this was what we consider opportunity, both of the United States and the Bay Area. They all were in the San Francisco area, they made their contributions to the San Francisco area, and worked hard, and it just seemed to carry out what the American dream is. I'm just very grateful to have had them as ancestors. I know there's genetic—obviously, I'm aware of the genetic inheritance that comes from them. But then, to have been educated at the University of California, sent there on scholarship, because my family could not afford to send me to college, and living in the co-op as I did, allowed me to live on the campus, and that made all the difference in the world. I mean, I don't think as many students have as great a campus connection to their university as we did at that time. Mostly because it was the time of the Depression. There still were a lot of students there, there were at least 25,000 students I think, but there wasn't quite the divisions of people. I mean, there were just easy ways to connect.

Although I guess a lot of them did commute, too, at that time, now that I think of it. But anyway, for me, it was absolutely one of the most important things in my growth and development. I'm just very, very appreciative of it.

2-00:40:50

Wilmot:

May I ask you two more questions today?

2-00:40:53

Maslach:

Sure.

2-00:40:53

Wilmot:

The first one is just, what were the stories or the myths that your family liked to tell about themselves? What did they like to share as their qualities as a family? What did they consider their familial attributes?

2-00:41:14

Maslach:

Well, to tell you the truth, most of the stories are negative ones. I hate to say that, but—. I mean, one of the ones I think of, of my mother, just to show how rigid a background she had, she was really a very adorable little girl. She had curly blond hair. I remember when Christina was a child, and I said something very—we were having dinner with my mother and father, we were at the same table. And I was very complimentary to Christina who was four. I said something flattering her about how pretty she was or something like that. And afterwards, my father gave my mother a lecture about, my not bringing my child right, since that isn't a good thing to do.

And what my mother remembered was that when she was a little girl, she shook her head like this [demonstrating], because someone said, "You have such pretty curls." And her mother cut them off. And Mother had never shared that before. So it made me understand where she was coming from.

My father, again, he just wasn't appreciated in his family at all. I don't know. I mean, he was the one, he was almost like the one with the most spunk and most spark, not to put up with any kind of the nonsense that was going on in this family. And leaving, or rebelling in some way. He would run away and so forth. In looking back on it, it's because he knew this was the best thing for him, not to give into this family. The example of that is this cousin of mine Bob Bertini, who was Clelia's son, and then lived with Minnie and Pat. He would be turned on and off like a faucet. They would have friends over, have him come in and perform and do something, and then dust him off.

I talked to him a couple of years ago, and he said, "I hate the Cuneos." He said, "Because they treated me so badly. I had more friends with the servant girl than I did with any of them." Because they were just too old and too self-centered. They were not outgoing people. Minnie, of course, was the oldest, and so it wouldn't register with her. She wouldn't be the one that would be a factor in his life. She didn't have children of her own, didn't know how to bring up children.

So I really sympathize with my cousin. But when we owned the Camessa building together, he handled it so badly that we just said there's just no hope in including him as part of our family. He owned the largest portion of it, because the Mastropasquas left him their half, so that we only had a fraction of my grandfather's half. He had no sense at all, and he was again, he was a wealthy man, but didn't want to spend any of it. So when it came to renting it, he was the one who chose the tenant. A friend of his in the Grubb Ellis Company arranged a thirty year lease on that building so we had to pay all of the thirty years worth of their fee, based on the total rent for that period of time.

So he chose the tenant. He chose the tenant for the wrong reason, but it turned out to be a good tenant. So when it came time to sell it, the tenants said—they'd paid rent for fifteen years—they still had fifteen years to go on the lease, and they said they would like to buy it. So I told my cousin, "I'll get an appraiser and you get an appraiser and we'll talk over what we were asking for it, and then let them see if they want to buy it." Well, he didn't want to pay for an appraiser, so he knew somebody who was a realtor, maybe a Little League parent or something like that. So this realtor thought, Well, here's a chance to get a property to sell, and so they brought in some high-powered people, and didn't even respect the current tenants' rights to listen to their offer. We didn't like these high-powered people that we thought might even gut the place and really destroy it.

So we wound up loaning the money to the tenant, the current tenants, so that they could buy it, and then they did buy it, then paid us back within a year. We gave them a five-year time. But we just thought that this cousin was just so unreasonable that—and so cheap. In other words, his feeling was, he hates the Cuneos so much that why should he care about how this legacy is maintained?

2-00:47:11

Wilmot: So that was a hard time for him.

2-00:47:13

Maslach: Yes.

2-00:47:13

Wilmot: Okay. Well, let's close for today.

[end session 1]





Doris Maslach's mother, Ruth McLean Cueno at the time of her marriage to Egisto in 1918  
Photo courtesy of Habenacht





Interview 2: April 12, 2004  
 Begin Maslach 3 04-12-04.wav

03-00:00:14  
 Wilmot:

Interview two, Doris Maslach, April 12, 2004. So today I wanted to focus more on your early childhood, last time we talk mostly about your family background and history. I wanted to ask you a little bit about—we spoke briefly about how you came to be born in New York City. And I wanted to ask you to flesh that out a little bit more for me. What were the factors that brought your family away from New York City, away from San Francisco?

03-00:01:04  
 Maslach:

Well, my father had just been discharged from the army, this was in 1918, and he had married my mother during the time that he was down in Fort Rosencrans. And so when the war ended that November, the idea was to decide where would they go and what were they to do. I think that he felt that the two families did not like each other, and especially my mother's mother did not think that this was a good marriage. So he felt that it would be better to be away from the family. And of course, he was always interested in art and wanted to study more. So he thought going to New York and studying in Greenwich Village would be ideal. So he took off for New York. My mother stayed in San Francisco, and she was pregnant and had my sister Barbara. And when sister Barbara was nine months old, the grandmother MacLean, put Mother and Barbara on the train and said "go!"

They lived in Greenwich Village in an artist studio for which I still have the lease arrangement. It was twelve dollars a month, and it was just a room, it was not supposed to be lived in. There was a bathroom down the hall. They lived in this room with two children, because then I was born and Mother used to tell me about having to hide the hot plate that she had to use for cooking whenever an inspector came by, and so I can't imagine what this must have been like for her to have lived there. When she got pregnant again, they decided they'd better move, and they did move to Pearl River, New York, which is on the border between New York and New Jersey. My father could continue to commute to New York, and my brother was born in Pearl River. I do remember, I was about two and a half when he was born, (and I do remember that far back,) and I do remember seeing him when he was born.

03-00:03:25  
 Wilmot:

Do you have a sense that your father knew people in New York? Was there a community of artists that he was already plugged into that he could go?

03-00:03:35  
 Maslach:

There was one name in the Spencer Mackey book that I just read named, Leo Lentelli, who was a person here, and he had left and moved to New York. That is a name that I knew that my father was in contact with there. That might have

been one of the reasons that he chose that place, but other than that I don't know. (That wasn't known as a place where artists lived and studied.) He was very involved in the Kit Kat Club, and involved with all the other artists, and as I say, I can remember names of number of the artists that were in that association, and were our friends when we were there. We lived in Pearl River until I was ten, and at this time just had 5,000 people. It was a very small town. All of the amenities of a small town; you knew your neighbors, it was very idyllic in my memory.

03-00:04:43  
Wilmot:

On the lease agreement for the Greenwich Village, basically the work loft, do you know what street that was?

03-00:04:55  
Maslach:

Yes, I have the address. It's something like Fifteenth or something like that. My granddaughter Tanya Zimbardo went to NYU, so she went looking for at least the location because, of course, the building is gone, but she wanted to know where it was located and also where the Kit Kat Club was located, and a number of the other things that were in the family history.

03-00:05:20  
Wilmot:

What other stories have you heard, because of course you were actually so young when you were living in that Greenwich Village apartment, what other stories did you hear about that time in your family's life from your parents?

03-00:05:30  
Maslach:

Well, it was mostly from Mother, who did not know how to deal as a poor person, and felt that she was cheated a lot when she would go out to buy things in the store. But my mother was basically an optimistic person, even though she felt it was really awful and it was hard for her, she didn't dwell on it. She was much more comfortable in Pearl River, of course. She joined the Eastern Star and she was involved in activities in the community, and so we really, as I said, had a very positive upbringing at the time. My father didn't support himself with his art. He had jobs. He was an etcher, as well as a lithographer. He had jobs with doing some of that, and then also he had friends with property, rental units in New York, and I believe that he helped on that, was paid for it, because when he eventually came to San Francisco, he did build a house all by himself out in the Richmond District.

03-00:06:49  
Wilmot:

It's interesting. The reason why I'm asking about if you knew people out there, because it is so rare that people make a move like that without having some mechanics in place. It's just kind of a—so I was trying to figure out what—

03-00:07:05  
Maslach:

It's true. I guess he felt that, as far as he was concerned, he was always comfortable in a community of artists. I don't think he thought much about Mother, and of course she knew nobody. I don't think that she—she was too

busy with two little children in New York, it wasn't until she got to Pearl River that she became involved in the community, and made a life for herself. We were very close to the neighbors next door, and she kept in touch with them into her nineties. They came out and visited her in San Francisco. So she seemed to be a very positive person. She did complain somewhat, but in general—.

03-00:08:05

Wilmot:

Can you tell me a little bit more about the community of Pearl River? Who lived there? Was it a commuting town?

03-00:08:07

Maslach:

I really don't know what the people did, because I only knew the children. They had a little bit of industry. There was a train in that went into New York, and people did go to work. It was, in general, pretty middle class, maybe even lower middle class, rather than upper middle class. There were a few people who were wealthy, because they owned some of the companies in the town, but we felt we belonged. I had a lot of friends that we kept writing to for some years, but—

03-00:08:53

Wilmot:

Who were these friends, who were your friends growing up?

03-00:08:57

Maslach:

My girlfriends?

03-00:08:59

Wilmot:

Yes.

03-00:08:59

Maslach:

Well, my best friend was named Ethel Jacobson, and there was Evelyn Wichelen and Mina Perry. We had the Kast twins, they were mostly Barbara's age. But of course the most interesting one was a woman that we knew was a girl, I think she was in Barbara's class, who became very, very prominent because she was a spy for the OSS (Office of Strategic Services, later the CIA) during the war, and has subsequently written stories about the spy war we're in. She was a model originally, and then when they were recruiting people for the OSS, they wanted attractive women, and she operated mostly in Spain and was, from her stories, obviously was set out to disseminate misinformation, because in Spain there was just a gathering of people from all other countries and there were other spies there.

03-00:10:20

Wilmot:

She was more than just a pretty face, she used her pretty face to get the intelligence information.

03-00:10:24

Maslach:

Then subsequently she's been in the high society in Europe. She married a Spanish count, so it was—

03-00:10:39

Wilmot: What a dashing tale.

03-00:10:39

Maslach: Yes. Matter of fact, I did meet her once because she came here on a lecture tour, and I was able to say hello to her.

03-00:10:51

Wilmot: What was her name?

03-00:10:52

Maslach: Eileen Griffith.

03-00:10:54

Wilmot: Eileen Griffith.

03-00:10:54

Maslach: And she is the Countess de Ramenones. They owned one of the factories in Pearl River, It was a paper factory.

03-00:11:09

Wilmot: Did all your friends live fairly close to you? Were they in walking distance?

03-00:11:11

Maslach: Oh, yes, yes. And the school was—it was funny, we thought it was quite a distance, but when we went back as grown ups, we realized what a short distance it was to the school and to the downtown. Yes, there was lots of walking and there was ice ponds that people skated on in the winter. And of course there was a gathering of the skaters and hiking. We had an acre of ground, and my father planted a lot of produce, and not so much flowers, but fruit trees, and grapes, and so forth. I can remember his idea of us snacking was to buy a barrel of apples and put it just inside the cellar door so that any time of day we were free to help ourselves to apples.

03-00:12:05

Wilmot: Both healthy and efficient.

03-00:12:06

Maslach: Very good, yes. We were not well off, but we had a car, and we did drive to different places. One of the things that I remember is that there was a town near us called Tappan, and in my small mind I had it mixed up with Japan. And I kept thinking that I thought this was further away then this. These are the kinds of things that you do remember as a child. I was the smart girl in that class, too, and what I remember were spelling bees where, the side that won a particular round, would choose someone from the other side. I don't think I ever did any spelling, I was just at the back of the rows going back and forth as each team would miss a word.

03-00:13:16

Wilmot:

Do any teachers from that time stand out to you?

03-00:13:25

Maslach:

No, but what I do remember is—you asked about religion.

03-00:13:32

Wilmot:

Off camera I did.

03-00:13:35

Maslach:

What was interesting was that my father was Catholic and my mother was Presbyterian, and there was no Presbyterian church in the town, so Mother had us join the Methodist church. What I remember from the Methodist church was that I was told to repent, and this was a word that I didn't understand and didn't know, but it was just emblazoned in my mind that this was obviously something I was supposed to do.

03-00:14:09

Wilmot:

But you were so little!

03-00:14:09

Maslach:

I know.

03-00:14:11

Wilmot:

What were you supposed to repent?

03-00:14:14

Maslach:

But that was the puzzle and this was what bothered me. When I found out, I was very, very angry. So I was not that interested in churches for children. This is the philosophy that you're born sinners in the Protestant religions, so you're supposed to redeem yourself, but they really started young.

03-00:14:44

Wilmot:

Were you a church-going family, like an every-Sunday kind of family?

03-00:14:47

Maslach:

No, no.

03-00:14:49

Wilmot:

Or a Sunday school kind of family?

03-00:14:51

Maslach:

My father didn't at all. I mean, he really rejected his religion. My mother was involved in the social activities involved. In fact, they had a mock wedding and I was the bride at five years old. I remember that there were craft classes and things like that, so we were involved in that, which was all right. We never did then, even when we came back to California, be involved in any religious church.

03-00:15:22

Wilmot:

And you say your father really rejected his religion? He was a Catholic who just really—

03-00:15:27

Maslach:

Well, the family was Catholic, and I don't think that they were that active religious either. He certainly philosophically didn't believe in religion as something to be involved in.

03-00:15:42

Wilmot:

Do you remember the circumstances? Did you ask him about what you were supposed to repent for? Or do you remember the circumstances in which you were there for?

03-00:15:52

Maslach:

No, I just—this is just one of these things that I carried in my mind and felt very disillusioned when I found out what they were asking of me as a little child. This sort of shapes your attitudes towards religion in general, which is why when we had children, George and I had children, again, he had been born a Catholic, and in fact his mother had asked us to be married in a Catholic church, and I said, “No, I can't.” She said at least can we be married in a church, and I said, “Yes.” So I was married in a church in Boston in the New Old South Church on Copley Square by a Unitarian minister, and George was perfectly happy about that. Then we had our children, and again I thought that one should have some religious background, and that's when we explored the Quaker religion. The philosophy that my children have been exposed to has been the Quaker philosophy, which has seemed to work well, because it still gives them the option to decide anything they want to for themselves, which is what the Quakers believe.

03-00:17:14

Wilmot:

I'm unfamiliar with what the practice really entails. What did that really mean for your family, being Quakers?

03-00:17:21

Maslach:

We didn't really join the Quaker religion, we were called the attenders, which we were allowed to do, but you still involve—this was the Quaker meeting where there was no minister; they don't believe that anyone should tell anyone else what to do. So in a Quaker meeting you just gather and sit silently, and if someone is moved to say something, they do. So I guess the Quakers do insist that you practice what you believe, and that God is in every person, whatever your interpretation of God is, and this is why they are nonviolent and don't believe in killing anyone, because there is always that part of them. It did, it took; my son Jamie became a conscientious objector based on this, on his experiences being a Quaker, but again that was only for their early childhood. Again, we stopped going when our son Steve did not want to be in the children's class any more. Our philosophy was that unless we all went, we didn't split off.

But we've kept in contact with our Quaker friends, and as I've said that once you accept the philosophy, it's part of your philosophy and your beliefs.

Wilmot: Why did you feel it was important to have some sort of faith to give to your children?

03-00:19:04  
Maslach:

Because I saw too many instances where they might be influenced by a friend who was very religious in some ways. I just thought that it was better for them to feel that they did have some religion, and have something to judge it against. It seems to have worked out, because they all have very strong—I think strong philosophies of belief and action of how they treat people, and so forth.

03-00:19:35  
Wilmot:

And when your son Jamie was a conscientious objector, was that during the Vietnam War?

03-00:19:40  
Maslach:

Yes. He was prepared to go to jail if that was what it had to be. He was not going to leave the country, he said. They had the draft then, and his number never came up. His draft board was Berkeley and he never seemed to get—he never was a conscientious objector because they never approved him. So while he was waiting to be drafted, he did what a conscientious objector would do, which is volunteering in Roxbury in the Boston area. He had graduated from Harvard, and just did the kind of things a conscientious objector would do. Volunteer work. I think he was working with the organization that gave out food, supervising people that gave out food to other people, so that was how that ended.

03-00:20:49  
Wilmot:

How would you contrast the kind of experience that you gave to your children around faith and religion with the one that you had growing up earlier?

03-00:21:01  
Maslach:

I think I gave more thought to it than my parents did, but they didn't seem to object to my deciding things for myself. Because I recall that when we left at age ten, that we just left that community and that church, and so we never joined another when we came back to California.

I was trying to think of other things that happened to me when I was little that seemed to affect my attitude about a lot of things. One was—two instances of my losing faith. One was obviously when I was very little, my father would play with me on the floor, he would be on his hands and knees and I would drag a stool over to get on his back, and he would move and then I'd get down off the stool and drag it. I heard stories later of people saying, "I couldn't believe how persistent she was, that she would keep never giving up." What I remember is that I never got the ride, and so there was a combination of being persistent and

still being disappointed. And the other one I remember, and I must have been pretty young because I was playing “London Bridges Falling Down” and I was caught and I was asked, “Do you want a silver castle? Or do you want a pony and a cart?” and I was smart enough to think that, “You can’t get a silver castle, but you can get a pony and a cart.” So I chose that, and that put me on one side and we had a tug-of-war. But I didn’t connect it, I waited for that pony and the cart. I can remember looking up the street and wondering when it was going to come. Then there was this slow dawn that it’s never going to come.

So I grew up not asking for anything, not wishing for anything, and really having a fear of being disappointed, and that led into how I felt at the time as an adolescent in the dating scene, that I never wanted to be involved because I would be disappointed. This was when I thought that because I was smart, I could be “one of the boys” and just have my contacts with the males, you know, in adolescence as being a peer rather than in a competition of any sort where I might be disappointed.

03-00:24:03

Wilmot:

Did that hold true for you that you were kind of able to, you know, crash these relationships in which you were a peer?

03-00:24:10

Maslach:

Yes, yes, I could, but what it does was that even when a boy was interested in me, I would not let myself be interested in them, until I felt that they were so, so smitten and then I could consider whether I was interested or not, and usually I was not. This was not a very healthy way of going through adolescence, but that is what I did. So you asked why we left? One other thing—

03-00:24:47

Wilmot:

I have more to ask you about Pearl River, too.

03-00:24:48

Maslach:

Well, one of the things that I do remember is that family members would be traveling to Europe and they would stop by, and so we did have contact with the families, and my mother wrote a lot to them. They would send us things and so forth, so we stayed in touch with our San Francisco families.

03-00:25:14

Wilmot:

I wanted to ask you also that you mentioned that you were playing with your father. Was your father that type of father who liked to, you know, play and kind of tumble and play games?

03-00:25:30

Maslach:

Not too much, no, but he really wanted, he wanted to prepare us in a world that we would learn things.

03-00:25:44

Wilmot:

Would you say that again? Sorry.



03-00:25:47  
Maslach:

He wanted to have a world where we learned things. He was very solicitous about our having experiences where we would talk about things or see things. So even on a limited income we did. And driving to different places of interest and taking us to New York, and so forth. But he wasn't emotional, in fact he was more on the emotionally crippled side, and he didn't show affection easily. But, as I recall, he was very much there for us, especially at that time in our lives. When we got to San Francisco it sort of changed, he was more critical because we were adolescents, and more restrictive, I think, as typical as families are. Maybe it's because it's a more difficult scene, city scene is more difficult to bring up children sometimes.

03-00:27:06  
Wilmot:

You've become young people, young women also.

03-00:27:09  
Maslach:

Yes, yes.

03-00:27:12  
Wilmot:

I wanted to also ask you do you recall if there was a lot of back and forth between New York City and Pearl River when you were growing up? I know you were very young at the time, but I know you mentioned about going on trips with the family.

03-00:27:29  
Maslach:

Well, most of the trips are trips we can remember, like going to the Ringling [Brothers] Barnum and Bailey Circus and having a day in New York to do that. There were a few other times that we visited other artists living in New York, and then of course there were other artists that also lived in the countryside too, which is why maybe they chose Pearl River. So I don't think that I had a picture of New York as a city, but as I had picture of Pearl River as a town.

03-00:28:09  
Wilmot:

Do you have memories of these visits of the homes of the artists?

03-00:28:12  
Maslach:

Do I remember them?

03-00:28:15  
Wilmot:

Yes.

03-00:28:14  
Maslach:

Oh, sure.

03-00:28:15  
Wilmot:

What was that like?

03-00:28:19  
Maslach:

On one of them that was in the city, I can remember being surprised being in a tall building with a fire escape, and I think it was warm and we were sitting on the fire escape to cool off. And the artist that I remember the most was one of that lived in the country, and they lived by a brook, and the name was Costigan.

03-00:28:41  
Wilmot:

Costigan.

03-00:28:42  
Maslach:

Costigan. And they had small children, and that's where I learned to swim by just floating down their brook. Then there were people that we knew in Patterson, New Jersey, that again was another area where we visited often, and this was an Italian family. Then another Italian family on the Pacific Palisades, so there was quite a lot of visiting with friends, and so we felt very comfortable, except for the one thing is that my father loved to talk, so the leaving was always a very long process before we got out the door into the car, because there were still more things to say. Anyway, there was nothing bad—we were successful at school, we had good friends and fun times, and my mother always made Christmas magic no matter how little money they had. She had been a nursery school teacher and so she knew how to decorate things out of nothing and as I've said, our Christmases were to come down Christmas morning and there was this gorgeous tree and usually something that we really wanted. I did believe in Santa Claus until I was ten, which I think was unusual. Abruptly we moved to San Francisco and things just changed, very abruptly.

03-00:30:23  
Wilmot:

Well, it helps on the East Coast because there's really snow and seasons, you know. You mentioned that your father had planted vegetables and fruit trees. Do you remember which was growing in your yard?

03-00:30:39  
Maslach:

Corn.

03-00:30:40  
Wilmot:

Did you eat from your yard?

03-00:30:40  
Maslach:

Oh, yes. Any time we had visitors, they were out picking corn, and eating it is so different than buying it in the store, I don't care how quickly you get it in store. And beans, and Mother used to do a lot of canning. Tomatoes, the smell of tomatoes on the vine is something that you never forget, a ripe tomato. It was part of how we lived, and again it was very positive.

03-00:31:18  
Wilmot:

Were these fruit trees that you could climb or were they smaller saplings?

03-00:31:24  
Maslach:

Well, we didn't climb the fruit trees, we had a big rock in the backyard, and that was what we climbed on with sort of a crevice in the center where you could sit. We used to think it was this huge rock until we visited again and then found out how small the rock was, but it was the center of our play area. We had swings, you know, on the tree and an old garage to play house in. I mean it was— obviously we did hear a radio, I guess, because radios were made, I think my father made a radio in the twenties. But mostly children had much more time be out and do things on their own and read, we read a lot.

03-00:32:25  
Wilmot:

Do you remember any stories that stayed with you? I'm asking you to reach back quite a bit.

Maslach:

Not so much then, but there's one that I remember called the *Wide, Wide World*, and I understand that they've been reprinting it, but I'd love to see a copy of it. But Mother would read to us all the time; we went through the Bobbsey Twins, we went through all of the Mother West Wind stories, I'm trying think of the name of the author [Thornton Burgess], but he wrote all these stories about Reddy Fox and so forth, and it would always be a chapter that you would then be looking to the next chapter. Mother would just have a whole series of these, and so this was our nightly routine.

03-00:33:22  
Wilmot:

What was your house like?

03-00:33:25  
Maslach:

It was a very ordinary two-story house, and my father remodeled it into something very beautiful. He put in a stone fireplace and an attached garage. I have pictures of it, of the before and the after. He, again, put his abilities to work as to his remodeling, and I remember that there was this beautiful dogwood tree out in front, that this was always really beautiful every year.

03-00:34:07  
Wilmot:

Do you remember what the layout of the house was?

03-00:34:08  
Maslach:

There was only one strange thing, and that is that you have to go through the dining room to get to the bathroom. There was only one bathroom, and some of the houses there had outhouses, and didn't have bathrooms. My father had put in a sort of winding, not a winding staircase, but it's a visible staircase that was part of the décor of the living room to get to the upper floors. There were three bedrooms and an attic, and of course that was a fun place to play in the attic. He had bought the house from a man that lived on the street and sold it back to him when we left.

03-00:34:54  
Wilmot:

So you were owning and not renting.

03-00:35:01

Maslach:

Yes. And of course, in 1931 when coming back with a huge sum of like \$2,000 was considerable money, even though it wasn't a lot of money. It was enough for my father to get started doing what he did to support us in San Francisco, which was buy property, remodel it, and rent it, and then he built a house by himself.

03-00:35:25

Wilmot:

I wanted to ask you also a little bit about, in your household growing up, and I know you grew up in two different places, but in your household growing up what kind of foods did your mother prepare? Was your mother the cook? Or was your father the cook?

Maslach:

My mother was the cook.

Wilmot:

What kind of foods were you eating, was she preparing for the family?

03-00:35:52

Maslach:

It was just straightforward, although she would try to work in as much Italian food as she could. She learned how to make ravioli to please my father, and this has become a family tradition that on Christmas Eve the family gets together to enjoy homemade ravioli. And now with our family, the Cuneo family, is now forty-plus, as a regular routine to meet a week ahead of time and to have these ravioli-making parties and having ravioli for dinner. But this was a tradition that she started, and I would say that our food was quite straightforward, but my father had a lot of, I think, a lot of good ideas about food that came into practice later. He just felt that we shouldn't eat that much meat, and he didn't like white bread, and it always had to be whole wheat, if you could get it, and lots of fruits and vegetables.

03-00:37:00

Wilmot:

Where do you think he got that from?

03-00:37:02

Maslach:

I think he figured it out himself, just because he had asthma like I do, and he just found out what works. A lot of it, during the Depression, you couldn't afford much else, you know. We rarely had meat, but as I said we always had a healthy diet, you know, of fruits, vegetables, milk, oranges.

03-00:37:31

Wilmot:

And did you share a bedroom with Barbara, or did you have your own room?

03-00:37:37

Maslach:

No, I've always shared a bedroom with Barbara. So we only needed three bedrooms, even in San Francisco.

03-00:37:49

Wilmot:

Well, now I wanted to also ask you, and this may be a question that spans both coasts, but were there any kind of political affiliations in your family that you

recall? Your father, your mother? You mentioned that your mother was part of this group called the Eastern Star.

03-00:38:08

Maslach: Eastern Star.

03-00:38:08

Wilmot: I don't know what that is, but I'd love to hear about it.

03-00:38:12

Maslach: The Eastern Star is, again, an organization connected with the Protestant religion, and she could get in because her father was something. I don't know whether he was a Mason, I really didn't follow it. It really was just something that was a social organization, and they do have men's organizations, but this one was where they would have—I don't know what they did at these meetings. They would always dress up and have—I can remember mother making crepe paper garlands, and things like that. It was basically a social thing with a certain amount of prestige because I think somewhere along the line somebody had to be nominated or invited in. Then the women followed in terms of being eligible. There were youth groups too connected with in this way that the young people belonged to, which I never did because I was never interested.

03-00:39:29

Wilmot: Was there other political orientations, or do you recall there being discussions around the dinner table about politics?

03-00:39:36

Maslach: Not at the time, but of course in 1929 came the Crash, and of course that was a lot of people being fearful and worrying and so forth, and I think it effected the San Francisco people a lot. You asked why did they come back to San Francisco, and I think that the Crash of 1929, again, started the Depression, and so I think that my parents felt that New York was not a good place to be if the times were really hard. Besides, my mother really was getting homesick. Every time she heard the song "Going Home, Going Home," she would cry, and so my father took a trip out to San Francisco to visit the family and see what he might do, and so we did take off in 1931 in a Model T.

03-00:40:42

Wilmot: You drove across country?

03-00:40:44

Maslach: Drove across the country in three weeks.

03-00:40:46

Wilmot: What was—do you have a memory of that trip?

03-00:40:48

Maslach: Oh, absolutely.

03-00:40:50

Wilmot:

What was that like?

03-00:40:51

Maslach:

Well, in terms of what we saw, it was a country that was at a complete standstill. You would go into a town or city and there would be all kinds of produce that couldn't be moved. I remember being offered, I think, in Ohio, three bushels of Georgia peaches for one dollar, just because the railroads weren't working to move them. Watermelons, huge watermelons, five cents apiece, that we could only eat the center of. It really was frightening to see a whole country at a standstill. Prices were very cheap. The most expensive motel was \$2.50, but we had camping equipment, and were prepared to camp if need be. We had car troubles. I kept a diary of how many flat tires we had. We had a car trouble in Kansas, and my father had to get the car repaired, and I can remember leaving the motel, because my mother found that there were bedbugs in the bed, and packed us up and put us in the car and we drove on. We were able to visit a lot of beautiful places, and we did take the Southern route through the panhandle of Texas, I mean after Kansas, through the panhandle of Texas and into Oklahoma. And then to New Mexico, and I can remember, again, my first Mexican food in Tucumcari, Mexico. When we got to Los Angeles, again Valencia oranges were seven dozen for a dollar, and they were dumping them in the ocean to try and keep the price up.

So the trip cost us, and again my father kept records of everything, about \$125 for five people to get from New York to San Francisco. And it was a scary time because we wound up in San Francisco with two families that liked us far away, I guess, but were so afraid that they would have to support us and we felt a negativity about it. When I was in training to be a psychotherapist, one of the exercises we were told to do was to think of a metaphor of our childhood, and then ask the other members of the group to act out this metaphor. The people acting out would then tell you what they felt acting it out, and then the other people would observe what they saw and then tell you, and this was a way of helping a person find things out about themselves. My metaphor was an island that in Pearl River, the five of us were on an island having a wonderful time together, playing together, and enjoying each other. When we moved to California, the island was transported except that we were now facing the world, our backs to each other, and sort of fending off the world, because we didn't feel that welcome in San Francisco. So that was the way I went through my adolescence with a number of relatives who were prominent in their own ways, but were really not that positive influences in my life.

03-00:45:01

Wilmot:

When you first arrived back in San Francisco, was there a family that you stayed with, was there a household that you joined?

03-00:45:09

Maslach:

We stayed for a while with McLean household, which was down on North Point Street not far from Ghiradelli Square.

03-00:45:17

Wilmot:

This is the house that almost burned but didn't?

03-00:45:21

Maslach:

Yes, yes.

03-00:45:21

Wilmot:

That's forever in mind, that house that almost burned.

03-00:45:25

Maslach:

It was still there, and Grandma Wilhelmina, my Danish grandmother, was still there, and my grandfather. And she died in—I only knew her four years, as I was thinking back, because she died in—we were there in 1931, and she died in 1935, but she again was very domineering in the family. And we didn't stay there very long, we moved into one of the properties on Telegraph Hill that the Cuneo family had. Again, there were two different places. They had one on the corner of Grant and Lombard, and then they had one at 1821 Grant, and we lived in both of them, the Grant and Lombard one for short period, and then I lived all of my adolescence in the 1821 location, which was temporary housing put up on the site of where my father's family house had been. It had been burned to the ground in 1906, so again my father remodeled it again somewhat, and it was a very attractive little cottage, with a beautiful garden in front, that everybody would notice as they walked by Grant Avenue. But it was still temporary housing without central heating, without—I think we finally put in a water heater, if you took a bath you would have to turn on the water heater to get bath water. In the kitchen there wasn't running hot water, you would have to heat this kettle on the stove for hot water to wash dishes, so it was fairly primitive, but that's where we lived.

As I said, my father had remodeled these places, and we just lived on rentals. And he also had bought some stock, so I don't know whether there was enough money from the stock, except that I knew about it and felt that this was a very secure thing, the fact that we had some stocks that we would always be all right. It was quite a change to come from a small town and then be put into a city situation. The question was where do we go to school? My sister was due to go to a junior high school, she was twelve. They didn't think it would be good to separate the two of us, so they gave us both intelligence tests to see if I could be put into the junior high school with her, and so the decision was that, yes, I could into the seventh grade. I was only ten years old, and my sister was put just one semester ahead of me, so that is how we started.

03-00:48:43

Wilmot:

Did you somehow look like you were in the same age range, you and your sister, or did she—

03-00:48:49

Maslach: Yes, sort of.

03-00:48:50

Wilmot: Why did they feel it was important not to separate you?

03-00:48:56

Maslach: I think they felt that maybe it wouldn't, that maybe it would be hard for her to be alone in this big school in a new situation, it would be better if we were together. My sister and I have always been close and good friends, and so I could do the work, but I don't recommend being that young anywhere, because it's a disadvantage.

03-00:49:24

Wilmot: In what ways?

03-00:49:28

Maslach: Well, there are just things that you haven't learned socially. I graduated from high school before my sixteenth birthday, and it affects your dating situation, how you feel about it and so forth. So I graduated from Cal before my twentieth birthday, and I can remember someone sitting next to me in the class saying, "You're either a lot younger than I think you are, or you're a case of arrested development." Even in studies, I can remember since I was a math major, I remember being in advanced algebra having to prove something, and I looked at it, and I said, "It's obvious." I couldn't understand what there was to prove, and I remember this big click, "Oh, that's what you have to prove." I think that's a maturation of the brain, I swear, and not that you're not trying enough, or having the ability to understand. I think the whole process of young people growing up is difficult enough, that they should not have the handicap of being underage. When I hear of a twelve-year-old going to college, you just know that that isn't real life at all.

03-00:50:58

Wilmot: Did you start going to school while you were living with your grandmother Wilhelmina, or did you have a little transition time while you got situated in the apartment on 1821 Grant Avenue?

03-00:51:12

Maslach: I think so. I can't remember how much time we stayed with her at all. It probably was not too long. I remember two things about San Francisco was the foghorns, I'd never heard foghorns before, and if you come into a place, you hear them much more loudly, because now people tune them out. The other thing I remember about California is the fleas. San Francisco. The people at that time, with anyone who hadn't built up an immunity to fleas would get fleas, and so you'd have to live through this period of fleas, getting fleas, which was really shocking to me.



I will say that I felt that I had a good education at this Francisco Junior High School, it still exists and it is called a middle school now, I believe. We had very good teachers, because during the Depression this was one place where talented people could be employed, and we had wonderful teachers. I really enjoyed— It took me a while to get used to the mixed student body, because there were a lot of Asian children that were in school. They did have tracking at that time, so that the better students were in the same section of the same class with the others— again, it was mixed. Again, there were the Asian children were extremely bright, and so forth. I think that there probably weren't as many bright Italian children as there were Asian children. Again, I did my work and did it well and I enjoyed it.

03-00:53:20

Wilmot:

As far as the ethnic makeup of Francisco Junior High, as you remember, you mentioned Italians and Asian. Were there Chinese?

03-00:53:31

Maslach:

There were Chinese, mostly Chinese, some Japanese, a very few Koreans. My best girlfriend became, was a Korean and—

03-00:53:41

Wilmot:

Was this Carol?

03-00:53:41

Maslach:

Carol, who lives in Berkeley now and I still see frequently. There were very few blacks at the time. There were a few, but very few. They didn't really come into this area until the war started and then they came in heavily.

03-00:54:04

Wilmot:

Portuguese or Irish or—

03-00:54:08

Maslach:

Some Mexican, there were some Mexican. Ethnic identity was not as big a thing that's noticeable—I didn't feel that there was any discrimination among the children. And of course, most of the Chinese classmates would have to go to Chinese school after they left the regular school, public school, so there was still that tradition, you know, of teaching the culture. It probably exists somewhat today, but not to the extent that it did then.

03-00:54:56

Wilmot:

And when you say that ethnic identity wasn't as strong a marker, do you think that it was different when, for example, your mother and your grandmother, - your father's mother-in-law, had kind of issues with your parents' marriage because your father's Italian? How did ethnicity kind of evolve?

03-00:55:21

Maslach:

That in the broader culture definitely. I was just thinking about how we felt in school. Oh, definitely. The Italians, I don't think, weren't looked upon very

carefully, and my father would tell us of cases of discrimination. They were called dagos and they were called wops in a derogatory way, and I'm sure, as I say, not only because the two families had issues with each other, which they would have had even if they were[n't] of a different ethnicity, but I think that also culturally the feeling was that Mother marrying an Italian was really not a very successful marriage.

03-00:56:07

Wilmot:

Because you were a family of mixed ethnic heritage, was there ever situations where you children felt like you needed to articulate yourselves one way or the other, or how did you kind of begin to identify yourselves?

03-00:56:20

Maslach:

Well, there were quite a few Italians that we were in school with, and when we went to high school, again, there were a lot more upper-class Italians who lived in the Marina that would be in the school. But there were still times when I felt, I remember one of the girlfriends that I made in high school was a blond, blue-eyed girl who lived in a wealthier part of San Francisco, and her mother making a remark about her Shirley was so light and I was so dark. I think that probably the discrimination, again, was more on the amount of money you had. Economic. I can remember in the school paper there was a write-up about a party that was held. It said that everybody who was anybody at all was there, and this wasn't a party that I was invited to. Again, there were cliques and groups from the different parts of town, because Galileo had quite a mixture since some students came from the wealthiest part of town, as well as some of the poorest parts of town.

03-00:57:51

Wilmot:

I wanted to ask you, what neighborhood was Francisco Junior High in? How close was it to you?

03-00:57:58

Maslach:

Francisco Junior High was at the base of Telegraph Hill. It's on Powell Street, which is not too far from Fisherman's Wharf. Powell Street cable car. It didn't go in front of the school, but it was in that general North Beach area. As I said, it was a good experience. I can remember putting on plays—but then for us the schools didn't provide any of the after school activities unless it was sports, which I was not involved in. But for us the important thing on North Beach was the Telegraph Hill Neighborhood Association. This is a building, it's a Maybeck building that still exists on Stockton Street between Greenwich and Filbert. Matter of fact, I was able to visit it with my granddaughter the other day, when we were in San Francisco. It was a three-story building around a courtyard, Maybeck style. We would have, there was a gym, we would have classes. There would be a well baby clinic. It was literally the ultimate in a neighborhood association, providing classes for the young children, and then for the babies and adult education for the parents, and so forth. The women that were in charge of this were considered some of the important women, social workers in San

Francisco, and they lived in these quarters. So we always had a place to go after school, you know, to meet other people and have fun.

03-01:00:11

Wilmot: Did you take classes there as well?

03-01:00:12

Maslach: Oh, absolutely. There were drama classes, gym classes, craft classes.

03-01:00:20

Wilmot: And you took these?

03-01:00:20

Maslach: Yes, yes. So we built up, again, a whole group of friends that were there. The Telegraph Hill Neighborhood Association Center still exists, but they sold the Maybeck house property because it wasn't functional for today's needs, and they've built a larger plant down across from the playground near Columbus Avenue on Lombard and Columbus. The Maybeck place is now a series of well-appointed offices, architects and professional people, and it is really beautiful, and it was fun to go into it and see the pictures of the children in it years and years ago.

03-01:01:10

Wilmot: Was this all walkable? Were you able to walk to school?

03-01:01:16

Maslach: Oh, I walked to school. There was a streetcar when you got to Columbus Avenue, but I would be almost there by the time we walked down the hill to Columbus, so we walked to school, and the Telegraph Hill Center was only a block and a half, two blocks from our house. The kinds of things that you didn't do was have bicycles or roller skates, especially if you were living on a hill, but even then I wouldn't have had them anyway. A very positive experience that I remember quite fondly, was my mother being the Camp Fire Girl leader. She was again, very active. She was on the board of director, of the neighborhood association, she served in the well baby clinic. During the war when the men left, she even gave woodworking in classes to the boys.

03-01:02:14

Wilmot: That was such a delightful story.

03-01:02:15

Maslach: Yes.

03-01:02:15

Wilmot: I imagine her just showing them how to whittle away.

03-01:02:21

Maslach: She loved doing this, and being a Camp Fire Girl was important, too, because again you were involved in learning things that these groups teach you. Also we

went to camp. One thing my grandmother did, she sent us to camp one year. Then they had an office out on Arguella Boulevard that you would go and then meet the other leaders from the other Camp Fire groups, so it was also a training program.

Wilmot: It's so interesting because I read in your husband's oral history that Camp Fire or Boy Scout were very important to him, and then you were in the Camp Fire Girls. It is interesting that there is, I'm calling them parallel experiences though they may not be at all.

[End tape 3]

[begin audiofile 4, begin Shannon Page as transcriber]

04-00:00:01

Wilmot: You were going to tell me about one of the honors you earned as a Camp Fire Girl.

04-00:00:06

Maslach: One of the honors was to do all of the family shopping for food, for one week. So the honor that I earned was, I spent five dollars buying the food for five people for one week. I still remember what I bought, what we could get for five dollars to feed—well, there were three adolescents by then. My brother was growing and eating a lot. So what we would get, we would get day-old whole wheat French bread for about three cents a loaf. I would go up to the corner, and you could ask them for five cents' worth of soup vegetables. He would wrap up a carrot and a leek and so forth in newspaper, and that would be the basis for a soup. You might have some—you would buy soup bones and make soup, or use small pieces of beef brisket, so you would have some brisket for a meal, and then the rest would be soup.

04-00:01:15

Wilmot: What is brisket?

04-00:01:16

Maslach: Brisket is part of the—I don't know what part of the anatomy it is, but it has bones and fat and meat, in kind of layers. It's almost—the meat itself is very tasty, because it's there, it isn't just a big slab of something. The brisket of corned beef is also sold like that, and it's very good. That's what we used to get for five cents a pound down at a particular market.

We would each have an orange a day. We would have a glass of milk a day, and a big bowl of salad, and then pasta. We used to cook three pounds of pasta at a time, which is [laughs] as I say, with my brother, who used to eat just courses of—[laughs] But anyway, this was so successful that my parents kept saying, "I think you better keep doing it," and I think I was asked to do this more often.

04-00:02:18

Wilmot:

Did you then take over the job of being the grocery shopper?

04-00:02:23

Maslach:

I did a lot more. I didn't take it all. I know I continued for a while, but then I was doing more, yes.

04-00:02:32

Wilmot:

How old were you?

04-00:02:34

Maslach:

Oh, thirteen, twelve.

04-00:02:35

Wilmot:

At that time, was economizing kind of a focus in your household?

04-00:02:42

Maslach:

Oh, yes. Oh, yes. My mother was an absolutely poor manager of money. Whatever money my father would give her, she would spend it. So he almost had to dole it out, say, "Okay, this is for this, and you can spend this much for this." And that was true of most of my life with her. I understand she didn't write a check until he died. So all of a sudden, she lived twenty-five years after he died, and so it was on a very different basis. She all of a sudden began to manage money, although she was always very generous. And she was able to be generous. Maybe this was left over from her difficult days when she was first married, I don't know.

But anyway, as I said, our lunches, our school lunches again were very sparse, too.

04-00:03:41

Wilmot:

Did you bring your lunch?

04-00:03:43

Maslach:

We would make our lunch with this day-old French bread, whole wheat French bread, and we would buy some kind of a spread. It was a mayonnaise spread, I think they still sell it, and that would be the filling for the thing. Then we would have either an apple or an orange to go along with it.

04-00:04:02

Wilmot:

Mayonnaise, bread, and apple or orange.

04-00:04:06

Maslach:

Well, it was a mayonnaise spread. I'm just trying to think of how to describe it. As though you would have a pickle relish spread, mixed in mayonnaise, but they used to sell it in jars. It was a regular product. So that's what we would use.

04-00:04:37

Wilmot:

Could you put a little meat in your sandwich?

04-00:04:38  
Maslach:

Very rarely. We didn't have meat. But sometimes, I guess the family would buy salami, but we didn't use it for lunches. Everything was very sparse. In fact, when you went out to dinner, and we did go out to dinners now and then—I mean, there would be a Basque place called Des Alpes on Broadway. The meals would be twenty cents, or twenty-five cents for a big meal. Then I think when they had a chicken dinner on Sunday, they might charge fifty cents. But this was where we ate out. And then there were some—

04-00:05:17  
Wilmot:

On what occasions? Was there a special occasion to eat out, or you'd just—

04-00:05:23  
Maslach:

No, it would be just, they just decided this would be a time to do this. Whenever we celebrated something, that would be something we would make ourselves. A fancy cake—my mother loved to bake fancy cakes and things, and pies. She was very good at that, too. So she was a good cook.

04-00:05:42  
Wilmot:

Did a fancy cake mean icing?

04-00:05:44  
Maslach:

Yes.

04-00:05:46  
Wilmot:

Flowers?

04-00:05:46  
Maslach:

Yes. But a lot of these fancy cakes would be things like a Danish nut cake in layers, or some kind of a Dutch apple cake with custard and applesauce and layers. Another one would be an icebox cake.

04-00:06:11  
Wilmot:

What's that?

04-00:06:11  
Maslach:

Well, [laughs] what you do is get these ladyfingers, and that would be on the rim of the cake, and then there would be some kind of a gelatin cold mixture inside, depending on what kind of a cake it was going to be. But this would be a cold cake, not a baked one. But she would be collecting these recipes from relatives, too. I know that—one thing I can say about my Grandmother Wilhelmina, she made the most wonderful fish pudding from striped bass, which was a fish that was collected that was a delicacy in this area. She would make this wonderful fish pudding.

04-00:07:00  
Wilmot:

What is fish pudding?

04-00:07:02  
Maslach:

Well, you sort of cook the fish, and then you take all of the filet and mix it up, and bake it, and then have kind of a lemon sauce on it. But the flavor of the fish came through, and it was absolutely delicious.

04-00:07:16  
Wilmot:

Can you make that?

04-00:07:18  
Maslach:

No. [laughs] I wouldn't be able to get the striped bass to start with, but—

04-00:07:22  
Wilmot:

What of the dishes that your grandmother and your mother made can you make?

04-00:07:26  
Maslach:

Oh, I usually evolved most of my own favorites. But I do have some of my mother's, and again, I don't know where they came from, which would be a crab dish with fresh crab, and let's see [pause] I don't think it was baked, but it could be with eggplant and crab, or minced clam and crab—I mean, these combinations that were really great.

04-00:08:12  
Wilmot:

Any other ones that you can think of? Or ones you wish you could make?

04-00:08:16  
Maslach:

Well, I avoided all of the rich foods, the pies, because they were just high calorie, and I've always had to watch my weight. So it's as though it skips a generation. I just didn't do anything that she did. So my favorites are simple things that I pick up. One of my favorite desserts that I make is called Mrs. Truman's Ozark Pudding. What it is, it comes out like a—it's made with apples and nuts and eggs, and it comes out like—I forget the word! When it's baked, something—kind of crisp, and there is a name for it, but I can't think of it right now. And it's just wonderful, very easy to make. No one has ever had it. You can always serve it with whipped cream or ice cream, and it's quick. So these are the kinds of things that I enjoy doing.

04-00:09:22  
Wilmot:

I'm so sorry, I got so kind of delighted by the fancy cake story that we left a little bit, we kind of went off on a useful tangent, but I wanted to go back to this, I had asked you, did your family—this was in the Depression, and I was asking you if your family was economizing.

04-00:09:43  
Maslach:

Oh, yes.

04-00:09:44  
Wilmot:

And what did that look like.

04-00:09:48  
Maslach:

Well, economizing meant that you just didn't have very much for anything. I know that when I went to school, I had to buy cheap shoes, wear cheap shoes. This girlfriend of mine that I told you about that was this blonde who was wealthier could buy good shoes. Well, her good shoes lasted so much longer than three pairs of my poor shoes that she probably paid less for shoes than I did. So this is the way it was. We sewed a lot. We made our own clothes. So you just never had everything you wanted. You just made do with what you had. And sewing, of course, helped a lot, being able to sew your own clothes, and I did.

04-00:10:45  
Wilmot:

Does this time in your life, like and this is the Depression, do you remember that being a time when you were more conscious of money and needing to save and—

04-00:10:55  
Maslach:

Oh, yes.

04-00:10:55  
Wilmot:

—scrimp than before or after? Was there a marked difference there?

04-00:11:01  
Maslach:

Oh, yes. And I was very aware, I would never ask my father for anything, because I knew he didn't have it. But when I visited my Grandfather McLean, he would give us fifty-cent pieces or something like that. That was always just a big treat. You could do a lot of things with that.

04-00:11:22  
Wilmot:

How did your immediate family weather the Depression, in terms of the mechanics, or how did your father and mother kind of support your family during the Depression?

04-00:11:34  
Maslach:

Totally on the rents. We never thought of going on welfare, but by today's standards, we definitely were a welfare family. But we managed.

04-00:11:46  
Wilmot:

By those days, by that era's standards, where would you locate yourself?

04-00:11:54  
Maslach:

Oh, I would say we were poor. He did not have money to send me to college, for instance. So I got a scholarship and was able to live at the co-op. Then I started working. I don't think I did any, had any jobs before I went to college. But I worked all the time when I was in college. They had the, I think it was called NYA, which was a government program.

04-00:12:27  
Wilmot:

I do remember that, yes. I know about that program.



04-00:12:28  
Maslach:

And they were paying twenty-five cents an hour, so I worked as much as I could doing that to get extra money. So as I said, he just didn't have it. It wasn't until the war came, this changed everything.

04-00:12:54  
Wilmot:

World War II.

04-00:12:54  
Maslach:

World War II. And then the members of his family died, and two of them, his mother and his sister, left him some assets, some stock. So he was very careful playing the stock market. So when he died in '72, he was a wealthy man. It was really interesting.

04-00:13:21  
Wilmot:

Do you know what kinds of stock he was investing in way back? Because you mentioned that you had an awareness that your family was secure, in terms of the stock.

04-00:13:31  
Maslach:

Well, I felt that—I knew he had stock so I knew we wouldn't starve. One of them was Magnavox; another one was a copper stock. [loud telephone ringing, interruption]

04-00:13:46  
Wilmot:

I also wanted to ask you, how did the Depression impact the rest of your extended family, your aunts and uncles and grandparents who were in the area? How did they weather it?

04-00:13:55  
Maslach:

Well, they were doing well. The Burlingame people, my uncle was with the Ferry Morse Seed Company, and they had quite a bit of money, and earned quite a bit of money. My mother's other sister, Hazel, her husband owned the Colonial Cafeteria in Oakland. So they worked hard, but they were better off. My uncle, the other sibling lived in Monterey, and again, I think he was helped by the family, because he was the son, but he did run a restaurant during the war and did very well. Then afterwards had a men's clothing store in Monterey and did well. So the McLean family did well.

The Cuneo family—

04-00:15:00  
Wilmot:

During the Depression.

04-00:15:02  
Maslach:

During the Depression. They all seemed to be doing well. I mean, either they had had assets—I don't know how well they were doing, but I don't know whether I mentioned that Minnie McLean, Minnie Cuneo McLean, when her husband, when James died in 1916, she married this Italian man, Ettore Patrizzi.

He ran the Italian newspaper called *L'Italia* in San Francisco. So they had assets, and they seemed to be well off. Rinaldo died in '39, and I think he just—I think the only reason that Rinaldo could paint as much as he could is because his wives always worked, and his second wife, Ethel, was some kind of a secretary, so she supported him.

04-00:16:01

Wilmot:

I wanted to return to, we started off down this road, and you were talking about being a Camp Fire Girl, and I wanted to know what other kinds of activities do you recall? As a Camp Fire, when you—what kind of activities, because this one is a very specific activity, to be teaching a young woman how to, or a young girl how to run a household. What other activities were there for the Camp Fire Girls?

04-00:16:32

Maslach:

Oh, well, these honors that you earned, and with the Camp Fire thing, they weren't medals, they were little beads; so you would use these beads to decorate your Indian outfit, because you had an Indian name and an Indian outfit. Just like in the Boy Scouts, you could earn badges or honors in a choice of different things. It could be in brushing your hair consistently for so many days or something like that, whether it was a health thing, or it could be a service activity, or it could be an artistic activity, it could be an athletic activity. So you would choose among these different things, because you wanted to earn so many beads so that you would be advancing and so forth. So it was that kind of a situation.

The other activities, I was in school activities, because in the high school, they did have clubs and things that you could join. But I don't recall having anything like that in the junior high level. So mostly at junior high, it was going to the neighborhood center, and then the Camp Fire.

04-00:17:54

Wilmot:

Where did the Camp Fire Girls meet?

04-00:17:58

Maslach:

They either met in school, or they might have met in the neighborhood center, in the Telegraph Hill Center.

04-00:18:02

Wilmot:

Who else was in the Camp Fire Girls?

04-00:18:05

Maslach:

Well, Carol was, and there was a Japanese girl named Miyako Ono. There were a number of Italian girls, Pauline DiBernardi, Alma Morosoli. I'm trying to think about how many we had, but it was something like eight or nine or ten or something like that. I was the one that showed the most leadership. My sister was in it too, with us, and she had some friends who were also in it. But anyway, I became the head of it that went out to the city center, the Camp Fire center and

so forth. There were just opportunities to show your managerial skills or your leadership skills, which I did.

Wilmot:04-00:19:09 And you told me that your daughter was also a Camp Fire Girl when she was an adolescent she was one of the Camp Fire Girls.

04-00:19:18  
Maslach: I was willing to be the leader, but I wanted to do something I was familiar with, because I was not in Scouting at all. So that's why I chose Camp Fire, and in fact, I think we started when pre-Camp Fire was—I mean, the younger group, called Blue Birds. That was in elementary school, and we sort of worked our way up. [laughs] What was funny was being the adolescent Camp Fire leader, because these girls were just—you prepare something, and they'd go, "Oh, no, I don't want to do that, I can't do that." So I thought, Well, gosh, maybe our time is up. So I said, "Hey, look, we don't have to continue this." "Oh, no, we have to!" So it was just part of their growing up, that they would like to express themselves as being against something, and then wanting—having some say as to what it should be, and so forth.

04-00:20:12  
Wilmot: It sounds like that they were kind of affecting this disenchantment.

04-00:20:15  
Maslach: Yes. But they still wanted to meet, they still wanted it to go on.

04-00:20:20  
Wilmot: What kind of activities were you proposing as leader?

04-00:20:22  
Maslach: I just can't remember exactly, whether it was some kind of—it wasn't a social activity, as I recall. I was thinking it was more of a kind of an artistic proposal or something. I'm vague on some of these areas, especially ones that I didn't consider that successful. Usually I'll remember any disasters or successes, and this was just part of the procedure.

But I learned something from it, though, that this is the way adolescents are. You have to respect it.

04-00:21:06  
Wilmot: It's also interesting, because I kind of imagine you being in that leadership role having also been the person who was the little Blue Jay or the Camp Fire Girl, so it's so interesting that you had both experiences.

And it also strikes me that that's a time in people's lives, and I'm not sure if it was true then, but when you're thirteen and fourteen, when you're really starting to learn about sex, just from hearing about it from other people, and perhaps there's people who, either your mother or your Camp Fire leader, who were

supposed to tell you about the birds and the bees, and was that—did anyone kind of tell you about things like that when you were that age?

04-00:21:53

Maslach: When I was that age?

04-00:21:55

Wilmot: Yes.

04-00:21:55

Maslach: No! I can remember asking my mother questions, and she said, “You’re not old enough yet.” I kept thinking, Well, I wonder how soon I can ask her. She never told me, so I had to learn elsewhere, which was difficult for someone who had to learn elsewhere.

04-00:22:14

Wilmot: You had to learn from friends or books or—?

04-00:22:17

Maslach: Books, and friends. I mean, I would read books and not get half of it, and then have to go back and figure out, Oh, that was what that was about. But no, she would say—I definitely remember being stonewalled. And I think I once asked my father what rape meant, and he wouldn’t answer me. So as I said, those were those times, were not comfortable at all.

04-00:22:46

Wilmot: Talking about issues of sex and sexuality.

04-00:22:49

Maslach: The one thing that my mother did tell me about was how horrible childbirth was, which I didn’t think was very helpful, and did not help me when I started delivering children.

What was good about working with these girls, though, and I can think of one girl in particular, that I seemed to be her lifeline. She had very difficult parents. Her sister was a schizophrenic, and she was close. All of these—I remember her asking me to write a recommendation for college, and so I said, “Sure, I’ll write a recommendation.” It was Antioch, and they came back with a questionnaire, and I looked at the questionnaire, and if I was honest—I said, “Look, Cheryl, I can’t. You’d better get somebody else to do this, because I would have to tell the truth, and I don’t think it would help you.” And she just said, “Well, you’re the only one I can ask.”

So what I did was answer honestly, and then write and say how much this girl could overcome this, had overcome this and so forth, explained it. And they did accept her. And then her parents wouldn’t let her go, which was heartbreaking. But anyway.

04-00:24:20

Wilmot:

I also, this was kind of a follow-up question, you had mentioned that when you moved to San Francisco Bay Area from New York, politics for your family became much bigger than it had been in Pearl River. I just wanted to ask you to tell me a little bit about that.

04-00:24:42

Maslach:

Well, we came here in '31, and of course, Roosevelt was elected in '32. We had seen what the country was like. So we were, my parents were very positive about hoping he would get—Roosevelt would get elected. Of course, he was, so for at least while I was an adolescent and in the household, there was a very positive feeling about the government and so forth. It did change later, and I don't know why, but my father became very conservative. Then he became very nervous about the university, because he had had some artist friends in New York who were accused of being Communists. I got great lectures to be careful when I go to the university to be sure not to do anything that will ruin my life forever. That would be being involved in any kind of a demonstration, at Sather Gate or something like that. And pretty much for the rest of my life, he always seemed to take the position that we were just too radical.

And of course, what is ironic is on campus, the engineering faculty is considered the conservatives, and you're pilloried for being too conservative. So it was really funny, to have this combination of being considered both conservative and radical at the same time. But I don't think—I wasn't the kind of person that would get involved in something without deciding where it was headed and what it was going to do, although I was open to things, as happened later in our life, when we lived in Boston.

04-00:26:44

Wilmot:

We're going to get to that. Let's stop for today.

04-00:26:53

Maslach:

Okay.





The Maslach family moves to Berkeley in 1951: Christina, 5 years; Stephen, 18 months; and James, 4 years  
Photo courtesy Doris Maslach





Interview #3: May 6, 2004  
 Begin audiofile 5

05-00:00:19  
 Wilmot:

Interview three, Doris Maslach, May 6, 2004.

So I thought today we would start off talking about Galileo. Actually, first I want to ask you, was there anything you wanted to add from either of our previous two interviews?

05-00:00:41  
 Maslach:

I guess I wouldn't know unless I sort of reread them and found out, what I had left out. But I think it's time to go on to Galileo. I had three years at this Francisco Junior High on the base of Telegraph Hill, and had very good teachers, because it was Depression time and this is where very intelligent people had jobs. And I had a lot of opportunity. I directed a play, and I can remember in English class when we had to write book reviews, instead of just making a book review on a paper, I would make a book. I think *Huckleberry Finn* was a straw hat, and then I would illustrate it, and I can remember my father being very happy and very impressed that I was willing to tackle some hard work. I just did it because it was fun; it wasn't because I thought I would ever be a budding artist.

But anyway, I went on to Galileo, and again, I was young. I guess I was thirteen in the ninth grade. I had poor eyesight, and I would always sit in the front of the room to be sure that I could see the blackboard. I think I got glasses, but it was just a habit of being up near the front of the room. I was very aware that Galileo people came from all over the city. There were a lot of Pacific Heights students, and students from the Marina, and then the students from Francisco, which were Italian and a lot of Asian students.

So I guess my whole experience, I never felt I was with the "in" group. I mean, I made friends and so forth, but I don't know whether I mentioned this before, but I can remember when the student newspaper wrote a story about a party, and they said everybody who was anybody at all was there—

05-00:03:10  
 Wilmot:

You mentioned that. But you didn't know about that party.

05-00:03:15  
 Maslach:

Well, I wasn't invited to the party. I wasn't a part of that group that had the parties.

We had a homeroom teacher. I was in the homeroom, and they had an election class secretary. I was elected. The teacher was very unhappy, because she seemed to have wanted somebody else. So she said to me, "Well, your grades are

going to have to be good to continue having this position.” So I started working and so on, but the next report period she said to me, “Have you been working harder?” I said, “Well, yes, a little.” Because I had gotten straight A. So from then on, I just had to keep getting straight A, because I was so afraid of what would be said if I slipped, the kind of derision that would happen—I mean, there was no place for me to go but down, is the effect. [laughs]

05-00:04:15

Wilmot:

What was this teacher? What was her background that she was so—I mean, usually teachers don’t participate in student clique-ish-ness, but somehow she seemed to be very committed to a social hierarchy, and I’m wondering who she was, what was she about?

05-00:04:28

Maslach:

Well—I don’t know. It struck me as strange, because she must have had a guilty conscience. I mean, she was an English teacher and actually taught speech and I think she was instrumental when, a year or so later—it was either in my junior or senior year—they wanted a student to be a speaker at a citywide celebration of Lincoln’s birthday and I was the one that got it. So I gave this talk in the civic auditorium, in downtown San Francisco, on what Lincoln means to me. So then I was established as one of the class speakers, and was chosen as one of the two speakers at our graduation.

So once I had gotten straight As things sort of worked out, yes. But anyway, as I say, I don’t remember all the other details, except—oh, the interesting thing, too, about this, to show you what my position was in the school: because I did have a reputation then of being one of their good students and so forth. I was chosen to be the salutatorian at our high school graduation. We were supposed to have a rehearsal of our graduation, and were told to go to this particular auditorium.

Well, the boys were having a rally at the same time. Someone had mis-scheduled it. These were the thirties, you know, and a lot of strikes had been going on. So a bunch of us said, “Well, let’s strike, because we need to use the auditorium.” And some of the teachers even helped us, making the placards. We put on this strike, and then of course, the administration was furious. But guess who was blamed? Me! So I was the one that wound up sitting in the principal’s office, and I think they even said, “We might not let you be the speaker.”

05-00:06:37

Wilmot:

You must have been devastated.

05-00:06:37

Maslach:

I was, I was—and so, somewhere along the line I asked, “Well, why me?” “Well, because you should have known better.”

05-00:06:48

Wilmot:

Oh.

05-00:06:48  
Maslach:

So that was kind of the situation.

But anyway, the other thing was—because again, because I was so young, I graduated before I had my sixteenth birthday—

05-00:07:04  
Wilmot:

Were you littler than the other people, were you always smaller?

05-00:07:07  
Maslach:

No, no. I was just not as knowledgeable about anything, because of my age. So I was not into the dating game particularly, or wanting to particularly. As I said, I did the usual things that teenagers do. I used to have crushes on everybody, and have a girlfriend, and we both had a crush on the same guy, who was older than we were and a locker nearby and so forth.

05-00:07:31  
Wilmot:

Who was that?

05-00:07:34  
Maslach:

Which one?

05-00:07:34  
Wilmot:

The one you had a crush on.

05-00:07:37  
Maslach:

His name was Clarkson Russell. Isn't that an official name? [laughs] I don't know what ever happened to him, but he was very tall and handsome and quiet, didn't say anything.

05-00:07:47  
Wilmot:

Ooh!

05-00:07:50  
Maslach:

But anyway, I just—I really feel this is the way it should happen, before you get into, as a young girl, get involved in dating one-to-one, situations that you really don't know what it's all about. So what else was I going to say about that?

05-00:08:13  
Wilmot:

Can I ask the name of your best friend?

05-00:08:15  
Maslach:

My best friend was Shirley Hicklin. She came from not a Pacific Heights family, not an ultra-social family but a very well-to-do family. She was an only child. And again, her mother would say, "You're such a contrast, Shirley is so blonde and you're so dark."

05-00:08:44  
Wilmot:

I remember that, I remember you telling me about that.

05-00:08:48  
Maslach:

Shirley went to Stanford, and of course, I went to Cal, but we stayed in touch. She died about, oh, less than ten years ago. We still had meetings with our—with my Galileo classmates, and we still do that. I have another luncheon with these women in a couple of weeks. I'm the youngest, and so at eighty-three, you can imagine, everybody—I guess the average age is more like eighty-five. They just seem so young and so active, so good-looking, you just don't think of us as a group of eighty-year-old women.

So I kept a lot of friendships, but again, Shirley was my closest high school friend. I did have a friend in junior high who was a Korean girl—

05-00:09:46  
Wilmot:

You mentioned her.

05-00:09:48  
Maslach:

Carol Shon, yes, Carol Woo Shon, whom I still see.

05-00:09:54  
Wilmot:

You mentioned her. I wanted to ask you, so when you said, "I wasn't part of the in crowd," were you part of an out crowd? Were you part of a crowd?

05-00:10:02  
Maslach:

Well, I was part of the Camp Fire Girls, and of course, a lot of the Camp Fire Girls—

05-00:10:06  
Wilmot:

Through high school?

05-00:10:06  
Maslach:

Well, we continued, but they were still the junior high girls. We didn't take in anybody from the high school, we just sort of petered out in the high school. But yes, when I went to the Telegraph Hill Neighborhood Center after school, they would again be all local North Beach girls. So they were my friends. So we did things together, so I never felt as though I didn't have a friend in the world. I had friends, but I just felt I wasn't part of the establishment, I guess is what I should say.

And then, as I started getting all these straight A's, and people started mentioning college, this had been nothing that people had really spoken much about. But as I got close to graduating, then it became a discussion in the family, and my father's sisters—these are the Italian sisters—just said, "It's ridiculous to let that girl go to college. She's just going to get married anyway." I know that my family couldn't afford to send me to college, but there were colleges you could go to. My sister went to San Francisco State, and she lived at home and commuted. But anyway, I did get a California Alumni scholarship so that I was able to go over to Cal, and then stay in the co-ops so I could afford to stay in Berkeley. I just never went back home. I mean, I worked my way through, I'd

take summer jobs. There were NYA jobs, this was part of the government program.

05-00:11:56

Wilmot: You mentioned that.

05-00:11:56

Maslach: And so literally, I put myself through college. I don't recommend it. It's an awful burden, because this means that you have this terrible pressure on to make grades.

05-00:12:09

Wilmot: Did that mean you were paying for your tuition yourself, and how much was that?

05-00:12:15

Maslach: Well, the first year, the scholarship was \$250, and I can't calculate what the value of that would be in today's money, but that covered everything. It covered all—there was no tuition at Cal. There was kind of a fee that you paid, that you got your medical, and then I think at that time, the ASUC would collect money because they would print the newspaper, and this would give you a card to get the newspaper for free. So that \$250 covered everything.

But then, since the Cal Alumni scholarships only lasted one year, the one I got the next year was just \$100. So that meant I did have to augment it, so as I said, I don't know whether I put it on the record about my working as a maid one summer, that first summer? Being paid a dollar a day for doing all the cleaning and cooking. [laughs]

05-00:13:16

Wilmot: I think that we talked about it off tape, but I may be wrong. But yes.

05-00:13:20

Maslach: And then I would also take jobs. I didn't live in the co-op, I lived for ten dollars a month in a room that had housekeeping privileges. So either you could buy your own food and cook your own meals, or, this is why I would take jobs not as a waitress not in an establishment, but in a private home. The women in Berkeley would call up and they would be giving a luncheon or a dinner, and they would ask for some college girls to help.

05-00:13:50

Wilmot: What was that like for you?

05-00:13:52

Maslach: That was nice, because they would always—naturally have asked about me, and so then they would be whispering to their guests at the table while I was going in and out of the kitchen, saying what a wonderful person I was, and—

05-00:14:08

Wilmot: College student, and—

05-00:14:09

Maslach: College student, getting good grades and working her way through, and so forth. So I didn't mind that at all. And then since I kept getting good grades, by the time I was a senior, then I got another big scholarship, \$350. Then I would get summer jobs. I had made Phi Beta Kappa in my senior year at Cal, and I can remember the only time I've ever put the pin on was for a job application. They were looking for someone to run a children's camp. This was under the Community Chest camps, you know, sponsored by the city, and this was down in Ben Lomond, down in the Santa Cruz area. They were hiring three people to run this camp for I don't know how many five-year-olds. So I was chosen to be the head of the operation, and the two of other people that were hired were older than I was. But that was a good experience.

05-00:15:11

Wilmot: Doris, I have a question, it goes back to high school. Were you working in high school? Were you working as a sales person at one point?

05-00:15:16

Maslach: Not while I was in high school.

05-00:15:19

Wilmot: You were not working in high school.

05-00:15:20

Maslach: No.

05-00:15:20

Wilmot: And I wanted to ask you also, what were the attitudes in your family around work? Your father had a somewhat untraditional job, and then there was this real artist kind of—

05-00:15:36

Maslach: Well, my father never—I understand that he dropped out of school in the ninth grade. He ran away from home, and I can understand why he might, because he had a very unusual family but—I mean, they might have been talented people, but they just were not very supportive people. I think he tried at some point to work in a bank or something like that, and he just was not a nine-to-five person. So he just learned how to support a family without having to have a job. He did that by studying art, and then he worked with people—and while we were in New York, he worked with people that had rentals. And I think he did some engraving, some lithographing, and so forth. But there would be jobs. They would not be a regular job; it would be a commission job.

When he came to California, he started buying stock. I think he started out with about \$2,000, but he was able to invest some of that in the stock market, and

then obviously was very good at it, because the stock kept getting greater—improved in value. But he was sort of gambling, because I still have all the records, and notice there was a lot of buy and sell, which is what you do when you are speculating rather than investing for the future.

So then he remodeled a house, bought a house and remodeled it, and we lived off that rent. Then he built another house himself. So the family had these two properties that we lived off the rents all during the time that—well, I guess that and the stock market. But there was never that much money to go around, to have a lot of extra things. I would rarely ask him for money, because I knew he just didn't have it.

5-00:17:50

Wilmot:

The reason why I asked that question is because it strikes me that you were just really hard-working during college.

5-00:17:57

Maslach:

Yes.

5-00:17:57

Wilmot:

So I was trying to kind of get at what was the culture of work in your family that you were—and I think it may be just a question of—yes, so that's why I was asking that question. I was just wondering where attitudes around work—.

5-00:18:12

Maslach:

Well, the situation was different, because again, there weren't the same kind of jobs available for kids at that time that there is today. You wouldn't think of working for a McDonald's and flipping burgers or something like that, because just, there weren't that kind of thing. Some students worked as waitresses, but in general, it didn't cost that much to go through college. I did not wind up with a lot of debts to pay, which is what would have happened if I were going to college today. So as I said, I never had this sense that I couldn't do it. I just felt it was always something I could do. And I would take jobs—my junior year, I actually lived with a family, got my room and board, and I don't think I made any money, but at least I didn't have any room and board to pay. I just would have so many hours a week that I would have to work for the family. They had little children, and so, as I say, I tried everything.

5-00:19:23

Wilmot:

I know. I can see that. I wanted to ask you also, this is going back to high school: at one point I asked you this question about what did you learn about being a woman, a woman in your family, and I'm going to paraphrase your response, but you said something like, "I struggled with that, especially in high school."

5-00:19:41

Maslach:

Yes.

5-00:19:41

Wilmot:

I wanted to ask you to please say a little bit more about that.

5-00:19:45

Maslach:

Well, since I felt I wasn't in an in group, I just felt that if I were in the dating game, that I wouldn't be winning. You know, that it would be everybody else, that I just was not anybody that I thought anybody would be interested in. Culturally, I was from the part of town, and the wrong ethnic background and so forth, so I just said, Well, I won't be involved in that. So this is why I said I would like to be treated like one of the boys. I knew I could compete with them intellectually, and still be able to talk to them and interact with them.

And then also, I was pretty much of a prude. I was young, but my family didn't help at all. My father was not a demonstrative person, and yet he had these sisters who were extremely beautiful and popular and were undoubtedly—might have had a number of liaisons, and he wanted to be sure that this didn't happen to me. So you just got these messages, you know, that you just don't go out with boys, you have to be very careful, and so forth and so on.

So as I said, at least through the high school years, it just wasn't a part of my life. I just decided I wasn't going to be bothered with that. I was invited to the senior prom by a boy that I didn't particularly—he was a nice boy, but I didn't particularly have a crush on him. But we went. He was probably a lot like I was, somebody that wasn't "in" in the crowd, and so forth. The same boy, previous to that, had taken me ice skating, and he didn't skate very well, so who he asked to go with him was George, my husband, who was a good skater. So George sort of tagged along on this date with me and this other friend, which was sort of strange. But George wasn't in the social crowd either. He was a Boy Scout and a Sea Scout, and actually, he had a job. He did work. He worked, as a printer's apprentice.

5-00:22:12

Wilmot:

What are your memories of George from high school? I know that you weren't at all—

5-00:22:18

Maslach:

Well, first of all, I had his name mixed up with somebody else's, because he was very tall, and he was in the back row, and then I'm in the front row. This is when I was thirteen, and this was in geometry class. So he was just the type of person that would just horse around a lot. If he was sitting behind you and you leaned back like this, he'd give your arm a tug, or something like that. But he was in all my classes, and so I knew him and would talk to him. He had a crush on a Greek girl named Angie, and so this again, everybody was sort of joking about that. I noticed in his senior book, a lot of people wrote remarks about Angie.

So as I said, he was just somebody I knew. When I finally saw him again at Cal, we were both juniors. In my sophomore year, I had two guys that really liked



me. They were pushing me. I was not in a position to handle it. I knew that I would not marry either one of them or take either one of them seriously. One of them in particular I enjoyed because he danced, he was a good dancer. We went to an awful lot of dances, which I enjoyed.

5-00:23:50

Wilmot:

Were you a dancer?

5-00:23:52

Maslach:

No, I had to learn. [laughs] I learned starting as a freshman, because they would have what they called mixer dances. Mixer dances were usually the ones that they would have in the afternoon. But they would have them in the gym, at night and they would have one of these great big balls that had the little mirrors on it. So I was in the Stebbins Hall Coop, and a bunch of us would go over. You stand around until someone comes up and asks you to dance. And since I couldn't dance well, I would keep trying out my chatter on them, trying to figure out how you talked to boys.

5-00:24:31

Wilmot:

What did you figure out? [laughter]

Maslach:5-  
00:24:34

Well, as I said, I just tried to be interesting so that they wouldn't notice that I didn't dance very well. But anyway, I did learn to dance, and then of course with my friend Charlie, we danced a lot. I can remember going to five dances in one week my sophomore year. Because they had them all over the place. They would have mixer dances, they would have the Masonic Club, which is again the semi-religious order that again had a building over on Durant Avenue, and they would have dances in the afternoon. So I could go to that.

So when I ran into George, it was wonderful to be able to go and have a Coke with somebody and not feel that you were being pressured for anything else. Matter of fact, I really didn't fall in love with George until he went with my family up to Yosemite. This was after my junior year. He had talked about Yosemite a lot. We had never been there. So my parents liked the idea of doing something with me in the summertime. So I just said, "Would you go to Yosemite with my father and sister and I?" and he said, "Sure." So he told his parents that some professor had asked him to go to Yosemite. He didn't tell his parents that it was a girl that had asked him to go.

But anyway, we had a wonderful time, and I still have the pictures of our trio. At that time, I fell in love with George because he didn't particularly seem to be in love with me. So it gave me a chance to decide whether I really wanted this person to be interested in me. And then I think it also happened for him too, he decided that—he fell in love with me at that time. So we started dating more seriously in our senior years. Actually, he had an extended junior-senior period because he had come from a community college. That was because he didn't have his language, the right language for Cal entry, so he went to community

college. The engineering program was pretty rugged, and for someone who hadn't been here before, he had to spend three years. I had that extra year, because I was getting my credential to be a high school teacher, so we were able to both leave Cal about the same time, though I graduated a year earlier than he did.

He did not get to graduate from Cal, because the war had started, and they had just organized the radiation laboratory at MIT. So they just took twenty Berkeley graduating engineers, because they were so desperate to have people to work with the people at the radiation laboratory. When George got there, because he was mechanical engineering rather than electrical engineering, he was able to work with a group that was developing radar. The electrical engineers wound up in Los Alamos, working on the Manhattan Project. This was the big division.

Anyway, two things that I—well, to go back to Galileo, when I did make this—the Lincoln speech, it was all about education. The story that he worked in a log cabin. Well, if he would work that hard to have an education, it must be important, so obviously it made me feel that education was very important. The graduation talk, which I had no memory of, I could always remember what I said, in the Lincoln speech—but what I did find a copy of was women's lib. It was women have a right to go to college too and be educated. So it really tickles me that that's what I thought at the time.

5-00:29:14

Wilmot:

Did you think of going anyplace besides Berkeley? Was there ever another alternative—

5-00:29:20

Maslach:

No.

5-00:29:19

Wilmot:

—in terms of your college option horizon?

5-00:29:23

Maslach:

Berkeley was the place to go as far as I was concerned. Stanford didn't even have a reputation. It was more like a country club, because Stanford wasn't built up until after the war. When my son-in-law, Philip Zimbardo, was hired as a psychologist from NYU [New York University], it was because, and this was in the seventies, they still had a lot of their departments that weren't top-notch. So no. And besides, Stanford was expensive. It was a private school. But Cal had a wonderful reputation, and I was just lucky that I wasn't a commuter, because Cal started out as a commuter college. It never was a residential university. So there were a lot more people commuting, and I would have had to commute, as my brother did for a while, from San Francisco. You had to go on the ferry, until they built the bridge.

But no, I was very happy with Cal. And really again, had some top-notch professors. I mean, I even had a Nobel Prize winner as the—not the teaching assistant, but the assistant in a chemistry class. There were so many really outstanding professors.

5-00:31:01

Wilmot:

I wanted to ask you a question just to back up quickly: your sister. Did she go to college?

5-00:31:07

Maslach:

Yes, she did. She went to San Francisco State, and she became an elementary school teacher. Her first assignment was way up in Modoc County, which is in northern California. Then she married somebody she met at San Francisco State who was also a teacher, and then he became very interested in special education. He did additional work at Stanford to be a specialist in special education. So this was their background.

And my brother did come to Cal. He commuted for a while. He played basketball in his freshman year, and then came the war, and he had to leave. So he served in the 7th Air Force, flying over Germany from England. His plane crashed, and he was the navigator, so he was not—he was shook up but not dangerously hurt, the way the pilots were. The pilots were the ones that were hurt; the tail gunners and so forth were not. He was in training to become a pilot when the war ended. He wasn't that eager to go back, but I think he had served about twenty-three missions.

But then he came back and finally went back to Cal and graduated from Cal. Met and married Ann Curtis, the Olympic swimmer, and so they're a very athletic family.

5-00:32:46

Wilmot:

I wanted to turn now to ask you, I just wanted to get that information. I wanted to know if all the children in your family went to college.

5-00:32:55

Maslach:

Yes.

5-00:32:57

Wilmot:

Just to help me understand.

I wanted to turn now to ask you about academics at Berkeley. Now, you came out of Galileo this young mathematician, with as I recall you telling me—I recall you telling me that you loved geometry.

5-00:33:19

Maslach:

Yes.

5-00:33:19

Wilmot:

And I wanted to ask, if there was a continuum, how did that take shape in college?

5-00:33:28

Maslach:

Well, everybody was so impressed that here was a girl that was good in mathematics, and as I said, in my last class at Galileo was in solid geometry. There were about fourteen boys and me. Here's me with all these empty seats around me. [laughs] Of course I would be—yes.

5-00:33:48

Wilmot:

What was that about?

5-00:33:49

Maslach:

Well, the boys didn't want to sit next to a girl. Especially mathematician boys, who are obviously on their way to become scientists and engineers. Oh, this was the way it was. I mean, they would talk to me, but—and then of course, I was very competitive. I really worked on my problem sets. The classic story I tell is one day—because when you come in, you check with everybody else, “Did you get this problem, did you get that problem,” and so forth. So there was one hard problem that I had done, and some of the others had not. So Cuneo comes early in the list, so I was sent to the board to put on one of the previous problems. So when it came time for this last problem, everybody was saying, “No, no,” no they didn't have it, until they called George. So George knew I had done the problem, so he got up, walked by my desk, took my paper off my desk, and put my problem on the board.

I remember worrying that if it was wrong he'd say, “Well, it's hers.” [laughs] So anyway, I've always teased him about that. But he did not spend time—he got all of his work done in school in the study hours. He never did any homework, and could get away with it, because he was that bright. Then he wanted to spend his time with Scouting or whatever else he was doing, which he did. I would put up to four hours studying sometimes at home. But I loved doing it. It was ridiculous, because the person who could do the work isn't the one that needs more practice and should be doing more and more. But anyway, I did.

So when I got to college, I was put in the honors section in mathematics. In the freshman class, there was probably only about a dozen in this honors section. One of the people in the section later became the university scholar for our graduating year. I mean, he was that good. What I found out was that I was an A student in high school, but at Cal I'm a B, I'm at the B level. I'm not at the scientific level. So what I found out, I did well in mathematics still, but I didn't really enjoy it. I didn't particularly like any of the part of the mathematics that was associated with engineering and science, which was calculus and so forth. What I did like was logic, the theory of numbers. I liked statistics, I really enjoyed taking statistics and understanding that. So it just seemed to me that it was more the analytical part of it that appealed to me.

I found it was the same thing that made me be interested in psychology, because I hadn't even heard of the word psychology before I got to college, but I had to take a class in psychology to be a teacher. I absolutely fell in love with it. I wanted to change majors, and of course, they absolutely said, "Oh, no, no, no, psychology is nothing and mathematics is so important." So I stayed on in mathematics, took chemistry, which I wasn't particularly interested in, but you needed a minor to go along with mathematics if you were going to be a teacher, and then took as many psychology classes as I could fit in. Again, some awfully good people happened to be there as professors.

So when I had a chance to go back to college, I got my degree in psychology. That was during the war, when—

5-00:37:46  
Wilmot:

At BU?

5-00:37:46  
Maslach:

At Boston University, yes. I couldn't figure out a way of using my mathematics for the war effort. They wouldn't either pay me enough to make it possible, or would have such hours that it wouldn't fit for a married person who had just been married to someone who was at MIT.

5-00:38:10  
Wilmot:

Can you tell me a little bit about faculty that stood out for you at Berkeley? You mentioned that there was this one assistant to the chemistry professor who was a Nobel—

5-00:38:20  
Maslach:

His name was Giauque. And of course, I had Hildebrand for freshman chemistry, and Latimer—they have a building named after Latimer. I had Latimer for one of my chemistry classes. These are all top-notch people.

The math people, there was a woman that was there named Sophia Levy, and she really felt that—she literally took over as my mentor, and was always [laughs] pushing me to do things. Another mathematician that was there was Hans Levy.

5-00:39:07  
Wilmot:

So they weren't connected to each other, I was just wondering about that.

5-00:39:10  
Maslach:

No, no. And Hans Levy was one—this was the time of the loyalty oath—that, subsequently, left Berkeley. But I'm just trying to think. What happened to my brother when he came over, because he was—I think he was in engineering, or at least pre-engineering, when he had to take a math course. The course he happened to take was with Sophia Levy. It seems that everywhere Gordon went, because he was two years behind me, people would say, "Oh, you're Doris' brother!" He said that he thought that at least when he got to Cal and there would

be so many people there, there would be somebody that wouldn't have known his sister Doris. It was Sophia Levy, she said, "Oh, your sister is so wonderful!"

Another thing Sophia Levy did for me was get me my job at Mills College. Did I mention that?

5-00:40:11  
Wilmot:

No.

5-00:40:12  
Maslach:

Well, Mills College had very few students taking advanced math, so what they would do was get a graduate student from Cal to come over and teach, and usually it was a man. And here it's wartime, and Sophia Levy was the one that would send the people over, and she didn't have a man that she could send. So she said, "You should go and take the job." So this was in my fifth year, the year that I was training for getting my high school credential. So I was twenty. I can remember going over on the bus to Mills College to be interviewed by the head of Mills College, and this was a woman who was obviously very prominent named Dr. Aurelia Reinhardt. She was this very officious person, conducting this interview, and at the end of the interview she said, "Well, you must be an awfully confident person, because you haven't even asked what you're supposed to teach." She just made the assumption that I didn't ask because I just assumed I could teach anything, which of course you can, at the freshman and sophomore level.

So I had a total of three students in two classes: one in one class, and two in the other. I just didn't feel that when they had any kind of a faculty ceremony, as faculty, I was supposed to be able to walk with my cap and gown. I just didn't feel that I was faculty. It was just too soon. But at least it was a job that I took and held.

5-00:42:04  
Wilmot:

Was it a good learning experience, in terms of learning to teach?

5-00:42:08  
Maslach:

Oh, yes. Because you can pass a course, but for you to know it well enough to teach somebody else how to do it means that you have to review it and then really understand it. So that part of it was possible. My only problem as a teacher was that I would be a little too tough on the students, tougher than the Mills College people wanted me to be. Whether it was because I was feeling that I was really too young for the job, or whether I was measuring it to the way I had been—the standards at Cal, I don't know. But anyway.

5-00:42:44  
Wilmot:

Was Sophia Levy, was she an instructor or a professor?

5-00:42:49  
Maslach:

She was a full professor.

5-00:42:51

Wilmot: She was a full professor in math?

5-00:42:52

Maslach: Yes. And you see, there were [women] full professors in math that had come up over time, but then Cal seemed to just stop hiring women as soon as the war came. They just stopped giving women opportunities. Not too long ago, I guess in the sixties maybe, one of the professors at Cal made a study of what was happening to women professors, because the number of them had dropped considerably. She found out that one of the worst departments was psychology, that they hadn't hired a woman in a line position, line meaning leading to professorship, in fifty years. Every woman was an instructor, research assistant, or something like that.

5-00:43:44

Wilmot: Who did this report?

5-00:43:46

Maslach: Susan Tripp. Susan has a middle name—

5-00:43:50

Wilmot: Irvin or Irwin?

5-00:43:52

Maslach: Irvin Tripp, yes. So my daughter Christina [Maslach] was one of the first women that was finally hired in a line position; she and one other woman in 1972.

5-00:44:05

Wilmot: Can I ask you about Sophia Levy, what kind of person was she? How would you describe her?

5-00:44:12

Maslach: She was just a very folksy professor. She was intelligent, but she didn't carry on professorial airs or something like that. She was a person, and treated people like people. So I liked her very much. I can't remember how many courses I took from her or if I did, or whether she was just my advisor. I have a lot of amnesia for a lot of things that went on. I mean, you remember a few things that happened to you, but—.

5-00:45:01

Wilmot: I want to ask you, and as far as being one of the few women, were there other students who were math majors?

5-00:45:09

Maslach: Very few women, very few.

5-00:45:12

Wilmot: Did you remember them, were they people that you knew? Studied with?

5-00:45:18

Maslach:

No. And actually, most of them came after I did. Would have battles with the university about being hired. I can't remember the name of one classic case, of a woman that really was that brilliant in mathematics and should have been hired and wasn't.

5-00:45:39

Wilmot:

I mean just as students, were there other students that you recall who were women who were math majors?

5-00:45:44

Maslach:

No.

5-00:45:43

Wilmot:

And then I wanted to ask you what kind of attitudes did you encounter from your male counterparts, other students who were math majors, and professors perhaps?

5-00:45:57

Maslach:

Well, I didn't run into any problem. The good math students in that class would know each other. One of the things I remembered, because when they would have these scandals about kids cheating in exams, for this type of student, the professor would walk out. Because he knew that the students wouldn't want to admit to anybody else that they didn't know an answer to a question. It would be so—it was just a different group.

5-00:46:35

Wilmot:

So the honor system was kind of enforced by people's egos, people's self-concepts—

5-00:46:40

Maslach:

Well, yes. The fact that you just won't admit you didn't know something, or that you needed help or something like that. I can remember one time waiting for, I guess it was a history exam that I took, and you study, but you don't study everything equally, you emphasize more things. So while we were waiting for the thing to start, there was one guy just rattled off a whole lot of things about something that he thought was important, and it turned out that that was what the test was about. So I just picked up a big review while I was waiting.

Another time, I took a number of survey courses to fill out my curriculum, and one was a survey course I think in zoology. The professor had said—and this was a huge class, a thousand or something like that—and he said that the test was going to be a different kind of a test, for the final. So I tried to figure out, what would he have for a different kind of a test? And decided he was going to give us pictures and we would have to do the labeling, and the questions would be mostly that, labeling these diagrams. I turned out to be right on.



5-00:48:16

Wilmot:

Diagrams of?

5-00:48:17

Maslach:

Of different zoology things. So I came out with one of the top three scores in this whole thing, at which point he writes you a letter and tells you how well you did, because—but I mean, again, I had trouble with tests, because in the sense that I knew how important they were, to get the grades. I would sort of work myself into such a state that I would stop studying, and then feeling that the last minute, Oh, my gosh, I really have to pull this out of—. And which I did, but it was really painful. The one time or two that I prepared properly, I didn't do as well. Because I never had that energy level up.

5-00:49:11

Wilmot:

The anxiety that helps you succeed sometimes.

5-00:49:12

Maslach:

Yes. So I would say that there was a lot of pain connected to my college.

5-00:49:33

Wilmot:

For academics, or—

5-00:49:34

Maslach:

Well, the whole thing. First of all, I don't believe that a person should be young. I mean, I think that there is a maturation level that you have to achieve. In fact, I experienced it in a higher algebra class, where we were told to prove this, and I looked at it and I said, "Well, it's obvious, there's nothing to prove." And I can remember the click in my head when I realized, Oh, that's what we have to prove. It was as though my mind wasn't ready yet to accept a certain maturity. So I don't believe in children being younger, too young to go to college, because other things are important that are happening to you. I don't think a child should be burdened with putting themselves through college. So our contract with our children was, "You get yourselves in," because we weren't going to help—during the wars, you know, people were pulling strings, parents were pulling strings to make sure their kids got into a college so they didn't have to be shipped off to war. So I said, "It's your responsibility to get in. You get in, and we'll pay for it." It worked.

So Christina went to Radcliffe, and that's where she wanted to go, even though she wasn't accepted on the first go-around. She had to wait until—I think she enrolled in Smith while she was waiting, and then when Radcliffe said, "Well, we have an opening after all," she got that telegram back so fast. So she went where she wanted to go. Jamie went to Harvard, and then Steve didn't want to go to college, and then went to California College of Arts and Crafts, because he wanted to be an artist. That worked for all of them.

They all—Jamie was the one that helped the most, because what he did, because we had two kids in college at the time, we didn't qualify for scholarships at all,

as a professor's family. So what he did was join the co-op. They had a one-house co-op at Harvard, and in this house, it was only for men, but they had all four years and graduate students. So Jamie joined the co-op, and then also became the steward. He was paid extra to be the steward, and this meant purchasing all of the food supplies. His roommate, who also came from California, became the activities head of the co-op. They both had a reduction of like \$500 a year in tuition for doing this. So I think Jamie learned almost as much or more from living in the co-op, because—and he wrote a paper about it, there were three groups. There were the jocks, and Jamie was a marathon runner, so he could participate in being a jock for a while. There were the radicals, the intellectuals that were always into current things. And then there were the ones who just wanted to have a good time, and I have the feeling play cards, and have parties, and so forth. I think Jamie got involved with each one in turn, and learned from them. Seemed to do all right with his grades. So I thought that was really interesting. I think he said if you go to Harvard Yard, you're with a whole group of student body presidents from all over the country. [laughing] Maybe it's not like that now, but at the time—. In fact, Al Gore was one of his classmates, as a matter of fact, back then.

5-00:53:37

Wilmot:

I'm going to ask you, you've kind of just outlined kind of a social map of Harvard for Jamie. What was the social map at Berkeley at that time? If you were to kind of say there were different types of people, what kind of social groups were there, in terms of the intellectuals or the—

5-00:53:57

Maslach:

You mean for me when I was at Berkeley?

5-00:54:01

Wilmot:

Yes.

5-00:54:00

Maslach:

Well, what dominated Berkeley at the time were the Greeks. I was not a part of the Greeks, and suffered from it, matter of fact, I don't know whether I mentioned this. I suffered from it because one of the activities I chose was the housing board. I worked very hard on that housing board. We were literally the housing agency for rentals for students in Berkeley. We would go around to places and ask owners, "Do you have a room or an apartment to rent?" We would evaluate it, and I can remember keeping this card file with these little colored tabs. The color of the tab would tell you whether this was a good rental, a good place, and so forth.

So I worked very hard on this, in fact so much so that I gave up my other activity. I had started out with two activities, but just couldn't—didn't have the time to keep up both. The other one was Freshman Orientation. So I gave that one up and then concentrated on the housing board. And when it came time to choose the secretary, they chose one of the women that was in a sorority.

5-00:55:18

Wilmot: Did you ever think of pledging a sorority?

5-00:55:20

Maslach: No, I couldn't afford it.

5-00:55:22

Wilmot: It was a money issue.

5-00:55:23

Maslach: Oh, yes.

5-00:55:29

Wilmot: Did you have any kind of ideological—?

5-00:55:33

Maslach: Well, it just didn't fit for me, because this was like the Pacific Heights students that I went to high school with. You know, who were clique-y and had their own set and so forth. I just didn't want to be a part—or I couldn't be, but I didn't want to be either. The same way with the sorority and the fraternities. And in fact, being in the co-op did give you the same kind of a group of like-minded people who just didn't consider those kind of values as being more important, whatever the sororities and fraternities stood for.

5-00:56:17

Wilmot: Were the boys you were dating at that time, or young men, were they fraternity people, Greeks, or—?

5-00:56:23

Maslach: Well, when I went to the freshman—they have a freshman ball or something, you know, welcoming the freshmen. A guy, I did meet somebody that—I don't know whether I went out with him very much—but it turned out that he was a fraternity guy and he was told that, You don't date women that aren't in a sorority.

5-00:56:50

Wilmot: So you became off-limits to him.

5-00:56:52

Maslach: Yes. So the people I dated were people that were like myself, they weren't fraternity people. They were people that I had met at the dances or in class, and as I said, some of them came from Galileo. My friend Charlie came from Galileo, so I dated him. But then I met—I had taken an art class. Again, you had these opportunities to take other classes to fill in your curriculum, and I took an art history class and found out that what you knew didn't count; it was how you wrote in your blue book, so I had to write very—half as much information but in beautiful penmanship.

5-00:57:44

Wilmot: Beautiful prose, beautiful flowery prose.

5-00:57:45

Maslach: So then I wanted to take an art class, so I enrolled in a class with a professor named Earl Loran. He is looking down the roster and he said, “Cuneo? Are you related to Rinaldo Cuneo?” I said, “Yes, that’s my uncle.” “Class: her uncle—” and he goes through this big diatribe about my uncle, what a wonderful artist my uncle was. I dropped out of that class. I mean, I just knew I wasn’t an artist.

5-00:58:17

Wilmot: Was there that pressure in your family, or that thought that you would be part of that continuum?

5-00:58:22

Maslach: No, and I just wanted just to do it for fun. I wasn’t seriously thinking of being an artist, but I would be judged as being from an artistic family, so I didn’t like that.

5-00:58:34

Wilmot: So you dropped out—

5-00:58:39

Maslach: And took a different art class—

5-00:58:40

Wilmot: —because he had identified you as a relative of this famous artist uncle?

5-00:58:44

Maslach: Yes, right. And I took—

5-00:58:48

Wilmot: That’s hard, it was a deterrent.

5-00:58:50

Maslach: [laughs] Well, I took a class instead with Chiuro Obata, and he’s a very famous Japanese artist. This was before he was interned because he was Japanese, and it was a shock, because of all people, to have this person—and of course, he painted pictures of the camp that he was sent to, and wrote books about it. But anyway, I learned his particular technique, which is Sumi, they call it, this black technique and so forth. I got at least one picture with his stamp on it, because he would only stamp it if he thought it was any good.

5-00:59:44

Wilmot: Do you still have it?

5-00:59:45

Maslach: Yes.

5-00:59:45

Wilmot: Oh, I’d love to see it, if it’s not in a box somewhere.

5-00:59:49

Maslach: [laughs] It's probably in a box somewhere. But anyway.

5-00:59:53

Wilmot:

Well, I want to ask you, so when you say that it was the fraternity members, and then there was the non-fraternity members, or the Greeks and the non-Greeks. Was there any further kind of differentiation that you want to make in terms of that kind of social geography in college?

5-01:00:09

Maslach:

Well, what I did notice was that when you look in your class book as to who the officers were, who were on the committees and all that, I mean, it was all the Greeks. So even though you were on the committee as a committee member, you didn't have much chance of leadership. If you were a leader in the women's thing, you would be inducted into the Prytanean Society, which was the honor society for women. Later, when I was in Berkeley as a housewife and doing all these leadership things in the PTA [Parent Teacher Association] and campaigns and so forth, I met a woman who lived in the Claremont area. I worked closely with her on getting the Clark Kerr Campus, incidentally, for Cal. She was in Prytanean, and she said, "I can't believe that you were never in Prytanean. I'm going to see that you get to be an honorary member of Prytanean." She died, she died of a heart attack shortly after, so I never did even make honorary Prytanean.

But this was the way it was, and I don't think it—well, it hurt in some ways, but I didn't obsess about it.

5-01:01:31

Wilmot:

You had your own world. You had a rich social world.

5-01:01:35

Maslach:

Yes. And I knew what I wanted to do, and so it was okay.

5-01:01:43

Wilmot:

It kind of sounds also like you went from this kind of self-concept of being kind of the, not in the in crowd, to being someone who was kind of—and not dating—to being someone who was kind of socially in demand and going to dances during this period. It sounds like you moved into that.

5-01:02:06

Maslach:

Well—.

5-01:02:10

Wilmot:

Maybe I'm reading—

5-01:02:11

Maslach:

No, because my social life was never in a crowd social life. It became individual. Whereas, if you were in a sorority or fraternity, you'd be going to parties and big gatherings. I was never into that.

[begin audio file 6]

6-00:00:01

Wilmot:

I'm sorry, the question I was trying to ask was just kind of this transformation, not so much vis-à-vis the fraternities or the Greek system, but just coming from Galileo, and feeling like you were not social, and kind of academic entirely and not on the in crowd, but then becoming a young woman in college who was not only an academic but in demand by two different people to go to dances. That's kind of what I was asking about, just what that was like in terms of the transformation of self, if it was one.

6-00:00:36

Maslach:

Well, I'll tell you an incident that maybe describes it. After my freshman year at college, and I got this job working as a maid for one month, my father was very interested in seeing that I got a vacation. So he and my brother and I—

6-00:00:56

Wilmot:

Because that was like a very traumatic experience?

6-00:00:58

Maslach:

Yes, he was unhappy with—he knew it was traumatic for me, but he was really feeling guilty, I guess, about the fact that I felt that I had to earn money this way, that he couldn't give me the money. So anyway, we drove up to Lake County, and the car couldn't make it to some Lake Pillsbury that we were aiming for, and so we went back down the hill. Right on Blue Lakes there was a little resort, and so we stayed there. While we were there, there was a young man came over and was talking to us. So I assumed he wanted to talk to my father, and I couldn't believe, and actually, he came over because he wanted to meet me. [laughs] It took me the longest time to realize that I was somebody that people really liked. He—

6-00:01:54

Wilmot:

That was attractive.

6-00:01:57

Maslach:

Yes. He liked me that much that he even came over to Cal—he didn't go to Cal—and tried to set up some dates, but then I was busy with these two other people, and so it didn't go anywhere. But I just remember very clearly that it didn't occur to me that—. So after having outlawed myself as somebody that I wanted to be involved in this, it just was hard to accept that other people really liked me. It turned out that quite a few people did wind up liking me. [laughs] I would say at least four people wanted to marry me, five maybe? Yes.

6-00:02:45

Wilmot:

That's huge! I don't know how many people can say that.

6-00:02:50

Maslach:

Yes, I—

6-00:02:52

Wilmot: You were a catch.

6-00:02:54

Maslach: Well, one of them was in the neighborhood, was right on the block we were living.

6-00:02:58

Wilmot: I remember your story about him and how your neighbors were upset that you weren't going to be with him.

6-00:03:03

Maslach: Yes, yes.

6-00:03:05

Wilmot: I guess it was a community decision or somehow. [laughs]

6-00:03:10

Maslach: And my friend Charlie again assumed that we would be getting married, and that when I broke up with him—because he already knew George—he went to an engineering alumni meeting and sat next to another professor at Cal, and I think the meeting was honoring George, because George had just been made the dean or was leaving the deanship or something like that. Charlie just spent this whole dinner telling the professor sitting next to him that I had ruined his life, because he said, “I was supposed to marry her.”

6-00:03:54

Wilmot: And then that's Charlie, and the person at home—

6-00:03:56

Maslach: That was the dancer, yes.

6-00:03:59

Wilmot: And then there's two other—if you want to tell the stories. If not, I'm just—you said four, and I was like, That's a lot.

6-00:04:05

Maslach: Well, the other one was at the same time that I was dating Charlie, I had taken this art class with Chiuro Obata. This guy Bob was in the class, and this was the time of the World's Fair in 1939. So I started dating him, so he—

6-00:04:27

Wilmot: 1939? 1929?

6-00:04:29

Maslach: '39. I was there '37 to '41. So Bob knew about Charlie, but Charlie didn't know about Bob, that I was dating both of them at the same time. So Bob made friends with Charlie and started talking about, “Well, maybe we should double date with our girlfriend.” All of a sudden—and this is one reason why I ditched them both,

because I didn't know whether they were colluding or what, and so that was when George arrived, so I wanted to get rid of this—

6-00:05:03

Wilmot: Doris, that's like a disaster! For any double dating—for any kind of situation.

6-00:05:08

Maslach: Yes.

6-00:05:09

Wilmot: Oh my goodness.

6-00:05:09

Maslach: But the interesting thing about Bob is that he joined—I guess he joined the, in the war, he wasn't drafted, because he was over early in Italy. I kept getting these letters. First he started writing me to my parents' home, and by that time, I either was engaged, or at least I had gotten married. So whenever I would write back to him, I would say, "Look, you know, I am married." But I kept getting these letters. I still have them, and I just read them the other day, and what I found out was that this was a man in the service. He was an officer, in the Italian area, which was rough, and he needed somebody to talk to, and just thought that I was a person that he could—this image, which didn't really—I didn't feel that I was what he was thinking of.

It wasn't until he came back to California to see me, and I had three little kids [laughs], but that was the last I ever heard from him.

6-00:06:20

Wilmot: Then it became real for him that you were not his Doris.

6-00:06:24

Maslach: Yes, I was not.

6-00:06:28

Wilmot: How did you dress?

6-00:06:32

Maslach: In general?

6-00:06:32

Wilmot: Yes.

6-00:06:33

Maslach: Well, in high school, they just wore these long skirts with white blouses.

6-00:06:43

Wilmot: Dark skirts?



6-00:06:43

Maslach: Yes, they would be dark skirts.

6-00:06:45

Wilmot: Ankle-length, or mid-calf?

6-00:06:48

Maslach: I think by that—during the high school years, they were pretty much down to the ankle. Sometimes they would be pleated, but it was something we didn't have to do, we just chose to do it, to be like everybody else.

6-00:07:02

Wilmot: Uniform.

6-00:07:02

Maslach: Yes. In college, just whatever people were wearing. Skirts would go up and down. I do remember once being invited on a date, and when the guy showed up, it was supposed to be some fancy thing, and I again asked around what would be the proper thing to wear, because you never knew whether you should have dressy short or something long. So anyway, I decided that dressy short was the thing to wear, and it was a very lacy type of dress. When the guy picked me up, he expected me to be in a long gown, and it was very obvious.

So we went to the party, and it turned out that more people had short on than the long. The long people were—. So again, you had the feeling, well, you were right after all. But I didn't appreciate—I didn't date him very much any more.  
[laughs]

I made a lot of my own clothes, now that I think of it, in high school especially.

6-00:08:13

Wilmot: At that time?

6-00:08:13

Maslach: Yes. Just didn't have that many changes, but it never bothered me. I never had the sense of, that I don't have enough money to buy clothes or something like that, or dress like anybody else. The only thing I knew was that my clothes didn't last as long as other people's clothes, and in particular my friend Shirley, you know, in high school, who could get cashmere sweaters and the best shoes and so forth, that my shoes would wear out, because they would be cheap shoes, and she would be able to keep her shoes much, much longer. So she actually paid less for shoes than I did in the long run.

6-00:08:53

Wilmot: Did you sew skirts? Did you sew skirts and blouses?

6-00:08:58

Maslach: Oh, everything.

6-00:09:00

Wilmot: And beautiful dress-up things too?

6-00:09:02

Maslach: Yes, except that I wasn't dressing up that much. But I have always sewed a lot, and I knitted, too. I used to knit things.

6-00:09:10

Wilmot: When you bought things, where did you buy?

6-00:09:14

Maslach: Mostly in the department stores. There would be, I can't remember the name, but there would be some dress shop chains that you could go to. As I said, I didn't wind up with much money to have to pay back. I think the only money I had to pay back was that I was on the school retirement system, and when I left, I knew I wasn't going to go back to teaching, and so I wanted my money back. So—. But no, this wasn't a problem.

6-00:09:59

Wilmot: I missed something when you just said you were on the school retirement system, and when you left, you knew you weren't going back to teaching. I'm confused about that, could you explain that a little?

6-00:10:09

Maslach: Well, I'm just trying to think, that—[pause] it has something to do with you have to keep a certain account, and as I said, I somehow knew I wasn't going to go back to teaching once I left. So it wasn't as though I owed them money; I guess it was the other way around. But I would have owed them money if I had gone back to teaching, I would have owed them money plus interest, et cetera, et cetera.

6-00:10:42

Wilmot: How did you make that decision, to move over—oh, one question I haven't asked you yet is best friends in college. We've talked a little bit about your high school best friend, but your social network with close friends, just friends and—

6-00:10:59

Maslach: They were mostly the girls in Stebbins Hall. I did have a roommate that I'm still in touch with. She's down in the Los Angeles area. Most of the other ones I was close to, one of them has died early, of breast cancer, and the other one is so conservative that—and she does live in Berkeley—that we're just sort of not friends any more. [laughs] It just doesn't work.

6-00:11:30

Wilmot: Were they Galileo folks at all, or San Francisco folks?

6-00:11:32

Maslach: No, no. These are all new people. And then one year when I lived with another family down on Chilton Way, I became friends with the daughter of that family,

and again have—was in touch with her until she died. I also met a woman, and I can't remember exactly where I met her, but we wound up going ice skating together. She lives on this hill, so I still see her.

6-00:12:04

Wilmot: Here, on Panoramic?

6-00:12:09

Maslach: Yes. But again, none of these were really as close as either Carol or Shirley, in terms of getting to know them well and exchanging confidences with them and so forth.

6-00:12:25

Wilmot: And visiting each other's families?

6-00:12:27

Maslach: Yes, I mean, I don't think we visited any of the families of people that I met in college except, as I said, the one that I went ice skating with, they had a place in Spain, and when we were on sabbatical, we would visit them in Spain. But the friends I've made over the years have been made in activities as an adult. I do have a bunch of friends that I've met either through the university wives or through activities, either campaigns or PTA, or League of Women Voters. I usually wind up with more friends than I have time to have lunch with.

6-00:13:20

Wilmot: I can imagine.

6-00:13:20

Maslach:

6-00:13:27 I LIKE TO KEEP IN TOUCH WITH PEOPLE, AND DO.

Wilmot: I want to ask you a question. You've mentioned several times where you lived while you were in college. I wanted to ask, how did the choices in the difference residence options in college, how did they kind of play out? How did they impact the kind of lifestyle that you had? Your first year, you were in Stebbing Hall?

6-00:14:02

Maslach: In Stebbins, yes. And that was just typical college stuff.

6-00:14:11

Wilmot: Would your family come visit you? Your parents and—?

6-00:14:17

Maslach: No, this wasn't part of it—nobody's parents did.

6-00:14:22

Wilmot: Were you back and forth a lot? Did you go home?

6-00:14:23

Maslach: I would go home occasionally.

6-00:14:27

Wilmot: On the ferry, or—?

6-00:14:27

Maslach: Well, depending on what was happening, whether—at Christmases and so forth. So yes, I kept in touch with them. But they would just come to any kind of a ceremony. For instance, when I was here, JFK was here. And of course, they came to that. [pause] Again, I lost the train of thought.

6-00:15:01

Wilmot: That's because I asked you a bunch of questions that were distracting. But I asked you about how the residence options, the choices that you made, played themselves out.

6-00:15:09

Maslach: Yes. Well, as I said, I kept trying something different each time, and then after Stebbins, I lived in this housekeeping apartment on Durant Avenue.

6-00:15:22

Wilmot: With a family.

6-00:15:23

Maslach: No, no, this was—it was a house, a big house, but they rented the rooms separately to people, and I had a roommate. We had the big bedroom, the master bedroom, which was in the front of the house. It was huge. So I did that for a year, and then the third year is when I joined this family, living with a family on Chilton Way, and I did that for a year.

6-00:15:53

Wilmot: How was that?

6-00:15:53

Maslach: It wasn't—well, there were two things that were good about it. First of all, the work was easy, doing it. The woman was a little strange, because she had some dietary things that she was hooked into. But I got to meet people that lived on either side of the house, and one of them was this girl that I said that I became friends with and eventually went to live in that house later on. Then the other side was a guy that was in one of my classes, one of my chemistry classes. So again, I had a new group of friends living there, and it was good.

Then I also took a job in my senior year living with families, and I was living with a very prominent pianist, and the husband was a photographer. They lived on Etna Street in a Frank Lloyd Wright house.

6-00:17:02

Wilmot: Can I ask who this family was?

6-00:17:05

Maslach:

Yes, the name was Cedric Wright. They had two children, and I was there to help take care of the children, because the wife was this pianist who was studying, playing all the time. They were an unusual family, and the children were having a hard time. The way this house was constructed, there was only one bedroom, and I was in it. Everything else, the beds were drawers that came out from under benches and stuff like that. And part of the house was this huge performance room. It's down on the first block, it's just off Dwight Way. But I don't think I stayed there the whole semester, or I didn't stay there longer than one semester, because it wasn't working out for them, and it wasn't working out for me.

And I guess it was in my graduate year that I had gotten the big scholarship that I was able to get an apartment. So I literally tried everything, to see what would work. It was flexible.

6-00:18:23

Wilmot:

I want to ask you about this transition from math to teaching. How did that happen for you, and how did you—

6-00:18:34

Maslach:

Well, that's what a math major would do, a woman math major would be doing, would be teaching, because there really aren't that many teachers in the high school that have had a math major. A lot of people are trying to teach math that haven't had the background.

6-00:18:49

Wilmot:

So the career horizon for you at that point looked like teaching?

6-00:18:52

Maslach:

Oh, yes. Definitely. And matter of fact, I had gotten good recommendations and so forth, and got a good job up in Yolo County teaching in the high school. At that time, in the average school and in elementary school, the wages were \$1,200 a year. I was paid \$1,800, so I was a cut above.

6-00:19:21

Wilmot:

How long did you stay up at Yolo?

6-00:19:22

Maslach:

I only stayed six months, and the reason was that when I got up there, I found out that the teachers—well, first of all, my schedule was to teach three math classes, two chemistry classes with laboratories, and one physics class with a laboratory, per day.

6-00:19:44

Wilmot:

Sounds very arduous.

6-00:19:45

Maslach:

Per day. And I found out that, because of the war, and a lot of the men had left, the teachers there were given the option of getting an increase in salary and

giving up their preparation period. That's what they voted. So my preparation period was voted out by the faculty originally. So I didn't have a prep period, and I didn't—obviously they didn't increase my salary particularly. So I was up until midnight every night preparing for my classes. The hard part was the fact that the only physics laboratory course I had ever taken was high school physics. But at Cal, I again took the survey course in physics, because I wasn't interested in that, but just reviewed it.

So to be put in a high school with fantastic amounts of equipment, equipment that I didn't even know what it was for, like a Tesla coil, was very different.

6-00:20:52

Wilmot:

Tesla coil?

6-00:20:53

Maslach:

Tesla coil. And then being required to teach these laboratories—. So luckily, there was a very wonderful vice principal who used to teach these courses before he became vice principal, so his advice was, "Don't bluff these kids, don't think you know more than you know." But I already knew that. He said, "Let them help you." So what I did was, instead of trying to figure out how to carry out these demonstrations in physics, I would assign them to the kids to do. So they did it. So they all wound up on my side. I just told them, "It's a war effort, and you've got me. What I know is what you have to know."

The chemistry was okay, because I had had good preparation in chemistry. And math I didn't even prepare, I just assumed that I would be able to figure things out—I was putting problems on the board that I had never worked out, and I remember wondering, Is this going to come out right in the end? But anyway, as I said, I had a good relationship with the class, and with the students. I ran into a number of them subsequently.

6-00:22:03

Wilmot:

Who were your students?

6-00:22:05

Maslach:

One was collecting tolls on the bridge, and I went through and he said, "Oh, Miss Cuneo, how are you?" The other one became a chemist and lived in the Peninsula, and then was associated with the Cal Alumni Association. He was one of the leaders that interviewed students for scholarships. So I got to meet him up at the Alumni House at some meeting for all of the people in the area on scholarship committees for the California Alumni Association. So he said to me—and it was really funny to meet him, because he looked older than I did. When I met him, of course, I wasn't that much older than he was anyway. But anyway, he said to me, "You know, I had a crush on you." I said, "I knew that." I can remember when I was leaving, his father was a baker, and I saw him biking to school with a pie, holding a pie to give to me as a going-away present.

6-00:23:06

Wilmot:

Oh, that is so sweet.

6-00:23:09

Maslach:

But what I learned teaching though, was not that the subject matter was important. It was your connection with the kids. Because here I'd be fixing up these labs, and all of these boys would be hanging around. I knew that there was something I should be saying to them, trying to figure out what it was. I knew that they were there because they liked me, but some of them were having difficulties with their families, or in life and so forth. So this really gave me the impetus to want to go back and then study psychology and figure out what was going on.

But when we lived in Berkeley, and I thought, "Well, maybe I should go back to teaching after the kids grow up. My son Steve said, "Mom, you cannot be a teacher in the Berkeley schools, or any school like that. It's just too rough." By that time, I was into psychology anyway, and was going to try to become a family therapist, which I thought was much more useful than teaching high school.

6-00:24:25

Wilmot:

Did you ever think to volunteer in the schools? I know you volunteered, I know about the school board, but did you ever think of being in a classroom as a volunteer person?

6-00:24:34

Maslach:

No, but I did help organize volunteers. I was more of an organizer of programs, and in the PTA I worked on the county level as well as the local level. I really was working on teacher training, because the counselor in Berkeley High told my daughter, "Don't ever be a teacher. It's the last thing you want to be." I was shocked, that someone who is a teacher telling somebody, "This is the last thing you want to do." Christina didn't know what she wanted to do, and I said, "Well, at least prepare for teaching, because it's just a good background to have. You can then go into almost anything else."

6-00:25:23

Wilmot:

I want to ask you just to go back to Yolo. Where were you living while you up there? Was this a semi-rural place? I'm not sure I've been there, and that's why I'm asking these questions. [laughs]

6-00:25:34

Maslach:

Woodland in Yolo County was the county seat. A friend of my mother's knew a musician and his wife that lived in Woodland. So they arranged for me to live there with them originally. The guy started making passes at me, and I decided, enough is enough. So then I had met the other teachers there who had an apartment, so I moved in with them. But that was—as I said, outside of the fact I was worked too hard, because not only did I have that heavy load of teaching, but they would assign me to be the person that should supervise the students that

were collecting tickets to the football game. All of the experienced teachers would walk in with their blankets to watch the game, and here this brand-new teacher was stuck outside with the students to supervise them, as an extra duty. And then also, when they had a March of Dimes campaign, they said, “Okay, you be in charge of it.” I just felt that that was a bit much.

6-00:26:50

Wilmot:

Sounds a little exploitative.

6-00:26:51

Maslach:

It was, and I was really unhappy about it. The other thing was that I realized that teaching high school classes, it takes time to prepare the tests and the curriculum, because you don’t know when you give a test whether this is measuring what you want it to measure. If everybody gets the answer right, well, obviously that wasn’t a good question. So you have to be thinking in terms of five or more years. I knew, being engaged to George, I knew we were going to get married sooner or later. He was about to be sent over to England, and I thought—so I just decided I wasn’t going to stay. So I just ended that semester, I finished that semester. My father was very unhappy. He said, “You’ll regret this for the rest of your life that you quit this job.” So I said, “So, I’ll have to regret it.”

And it turned out that I was able to go back and get married in March instead of in the summer, and that meant I was ready to go into school in the fall semester, to start my graduate work. So it worked out for me.

6-00:28:05

Wilmot:

And you and George were already engaged at that time, how did you decide to be married to each other?

6-00:28:09

Maslach:

When did we decide?

6-00:28:12

Wilmot:

How did you decide? How did you make the decision that you were going to marry each other?

6-00:28:18

Maslach:

I guess it was in our last year while we were still at college. I remember he said that he didn’t know what he was going to be doing for the rest of his life, he said, “but if the only job I can get is digging ditches, I will be best ditch-digger that there is.” And he is that kind of a person. He actually did work on building one of the buildings in San Francisco during the summer.

6-00:28:46

Wilmot:

Was he kind of assuring you that he would be a good provider in saying that?



6-00:28:49

Maslach: Oh, yes.

6-00:28:52

Wilmot: That's very sweet.

6-00:28:53

Maslach: Yes. And his father again, this was one thing about his family, they were very good hard workers and good providers. That year was the year that I worked as this summer camp person. What George did with some of his earnings was to buy a boat that you had to build yourself over in Marin County. So he worked that summer and built this boat. I paid for the sails, I think. So we did have a chance to sail it around a little bit before he then had to take off, and it was in my family's back yard until we came back to California. We sold the boat to pay for Christina when she was born. [laughs] But anyway. He's had boats ever since, and we still have a boat right now.

6-00:29:46

Wilmot: Well, I think we should close there for today.

6-00:29:47

Maslach: Okay.

[end audiofile 6, end of session]



Interview #4: May 13, 2004  
 Begin audiofile 7 05-13-04.wav

7-00:00:14  
 Wilmot:

Interview four, Doris Maslach, May 13, 2004, with Nadine Wilmot of the Regional Oral History Office.

Doris, was there anything you wanted to add from our last conversations?

7-00:00:29  
 Maslach:

Well, I was thinking about the discussions we were having about things that were happening in high school. This was in the thirties, during the Depression, before I went to college. Talked a lot about the things I did in school and so forth, and I thought what I didn't mention was what kind of family life we had at the time.

We were still the poor relations in two families, so that was a mild negative, the fact that we never really enjoyed positive relationships with all of our relatives. But my father was a person that loved to talk and loved to discuss and made a lot of friends, so whether they were tenants that we had, and one of them was a journalist named Dwight Newton who lived in our house at 660 47th Street. Or tenants in some of the family properties, and then people that we met through the fact that our relatives did know a lot of people, especially the Italian relatives. They were very involved in the cultural life, especially of Italians, in entertaining singers and musicians. I mean, they knew [Pietro] Mascagni and Martinelli and Tito Schipa. Then they entertained Enrico Marconi in the early thirties when he came, made a trip to San Francisco.

So some of these people that we met, and my father and mother stayed in touch with, and who was important, was a woman named Louise Taber, the daughter of this photographer that was a very prominent photographer from the 1870s through the early 1900s. She was a historian herself and was on the radio giving talks about California history. So this was a wonderful contact for us as children, to know her. When she died in 1946, Mother was left with all of her family memorabilia, and recently we were able to contribute this both to the Bancroft Library for their archives on I. W. Taber, her father, and to a book that has recently been published with early photographs that were remaining of I. W. Taber.

So even though our life with our relatives wasn't all that happy, we did have very interesting people to meet and talk to. My father thought this was important. When I left for college, then that pretty much ended. I would be home occasionally, but after college went on to teaching and then on to marriage. So that was my leaving-home period.

7-00:04:01

Wilmot:

What does it mean to you to have all these kind of exciting artists and orators and singers and kind of cultural fixtures in your immediate vicinity as a young person?

7-00:04:16

Maslach:

Oh, it meant a lot. I mean, we really enjoyed it, and we learned a lot, and it just kept our interest in the arts. Of course, my father would take us to museums a lot. But I even took a few courses at Cal when I could, in art history, and then I took a course from Chiuro Obata. So I think that, as far as parents go, I think perhaps my parents did more of this than the average family does with their children.

7-00:04:53

Wilmot:

Well, one of the things is when I just came in today, we were reviewing some materials that you had saved, and you and I together noticed some ways that the story was different, particularly around the story of you going to college and working.

7-00:05:08

Maslach:

Yes.

7-00:05:08

Wilmot:

And I wanted to ask you, how do you think that happened? How do you think it came to be a different story over time?

7-00:05:17

Maslach:

I had said that my mother and father both supported my going to college, even though my father's sisters did not, and would tell him that it was a waste of time. But obviously, his opposition was not as though I had to fight to get away, but I just subconsciously knew that going to college would be my way of separating from the family, which is what adolescents are supposed to be doing. [laughs] And I think he was like any father, that they hate to see their children go, and they're afraid that they're going to be subjected to these outside influences that might do them in. I think that because he had these four glamorous sisters who had quite an involved life, with their romances as they grew up, that he was concerned. He didn't want me to be like them. He seemed to think that if you get too involved with a boy, you're going to wind up having to marry him.

7-00:06:30

Wilmot:

So do you think he associated pursuing a college education with somehow being a woman who was out in the world, around, and kind of fraternizing with young men?

7-00:06:45

Maslach:

[laughs] Absolutely, because Cal has always had a reputation as being this—on the cutting edge, as far as students go, and he just felt that there was just too many influences that I might not be able to handle.

7-00:07:02  
Wilmot: And then what were his attitudes around dating for you? I mean, was he kind of welcoming to your gentleman callers--

7-00:07:10  
Maslach: Never, never.

7-00:07:11  
Wilmot: Did he interrogate them?

7-00:07:12  
Maslach: No, but he just disliked them. I don't know whether I mentioned that one occasion where one of them, I had one of the boys to dinner, and he put his hand on my chair, and my father chastised me, "What do you do—you allow this in public, what do you do in private?" And he had done nothing else but put his hand on my chair, sitting next to me.

7-00:07:33  
Wilmot: Did he say that to you in front of the young man?

7-00:07:33  
Maslach: No, after. No, he just—and in fact, he didn't like anybody that I was seriously involved with, and didn't like George, and didn't like my sister's husband either, so it was kind of uniform. In fact, as he was ill in his later years, he told both of his sons-in-laws never to come into the house again. But this was attributed, I think, to two things. The fact that they were very capable and were a threat to him, and the fact that he just was not feeling well at all.

7-00:08:19  
Wilmot: It's so amazing, that after decades, he hadn't found a way to come around, especially when you tell me the story of how George went on a vacation with you, your father and you.

7-00:08:34  
Maslach: Well see, I wasn't serious then.

7-00:08:35  
Wilmot: To me, that spoke to a real kind of rosy picture.

7-00:08:37  
Maslach: Yes. But again, George was not dating me at the time. We were doing this just, a boy I knew who went with us to Yosemite. Well, my father, as I said, he had his problems. His ego problems, and always liked to be consulted. The fact that he had built houses himself, he felt he should be consulted when George and I started building, and when my sister and her husband started building. And of course, his advice was, "This is not the right time, wait a little while, when things get better." And of course, [laughs] things never get better in terms of what it's going to cost to build. So he never would admit that they had done a good job, which both of them had, obviously.

7-00:09:32

Wilmot:

Interesting. How did your mom kind of respond to you becoming a young woman who had a social life and a romantic life?

7-00:09:41

Maslach:

She was always supportive. I mean, the way a mother should be: whatever we decided was fine. She was always helping out when I had children. She was there when I had Christina, and this was in San Francisco, and when George was still back East. Then when Jamie was born in White Plains, New York, she came to help me and to take care of Christina while I was in the hospital. So in the same way, when Steve was born out here in San Francisco, and again she was nearby. But she did this not only for us, she did it even for her nieces and nephews who needed help at the time. She was just a very positive, giving person. I think of her, the expression is that everybody has part of the child still in them, and of course, as they grow older, it gets tromped on and cast out, but her child remained, and this is a very positive thing.

The contrast was interesting, to have both parents, one very critical and one very, very supportive.

7-00:10:58

Wilmot:

Do you have a sense that your mother kind of tended her child, or do you have the sense that—

7-00:11:04

Maslach:

That was the way she was.

7-00:11:06

Wilmot:

She just was that way.

7-00:11:06

Maslach:

She just was that way. That's the way she felt. She was almost too childlike in the sense that she could never handle money. If she had any money, she'd spend it—all. When she did inherit money from her father in the forties, she spent it all. A lot of it was in securities. She could have put it in the bank and then had an income that would be hers for some time, and she just—I think my brother was getting married at the time, and so she was buying him all kinds of things. But she never wrote a check until my father died and she was seventy-eight, seventy-nine years old.

7-00:11:46

Wilmot:

I wonder what, then, where you came by your kind of financial acumen?

7-00:11:56

Maslach:

Well, because I was good in mathematics, and that I inherited from her father. She was good at bookkeeping, as long as she didn't have to be responsible for the spending of it. Because she would keep mostly the books not only for her family, but also for my father's family, doing taxes for her sisters-in-law. Of

course, my father was also very good. He had like forty securities, and we found these books he kept of all of these. He would write down each day what the stocks had done, so it was as though he was calculating how much money he had, day by day, which was weird. But he did do very well, and left the family in very good shape when he died.

7-00:12:51

Wilmot:

I wanted to ask you, you mentioned, you said on a couple of different occasions that you were kind of marginalized by both of your—from both sides of your family, your family was kind of cast out by both sides. When did that start to shift? Was there a time when that started to change, when people just started to say, Okay, we can see you've amounted to something?

7-00:13:23

Maslach:

[laughs] Well, let's see. I guess I mentioned the fact that I was in competition with my cousin Kenneth Cuthbertson as to who was the smartest child, and I think this was my mother's need to prove herself, through her children. But my mother's family never liked my father, never accepted my father. So that was always in the background, the fact that they just never thought he was a good father or a good person or a good husband. So that's hard for a child to live with. So it isn't until we went to school, to college, and of course, that side of the family went to Stanford, most of them went to Stanford. We, I and my brother, went to Cal, and one of the other cousins also went to Cal. So there was that kind of rivalry.

But I think it was just people getting old, and doing other things. And what was interesting was that Kenneth Cuthbertson's children in particular were amazed when they found out about my father, and what he had accomplished in life, and that he was a painter. So that a lot of them said, "Well, how come we have not known more about these people?" That's even expressed today by one of Ken's children. I guess we should be touch with them more, just to share more, which I plan to do if there's enough time.

7-00:15:25

Wilmot:

Well, I wanted to ask you a question about wartime, and being—you went to college at a time when the country was at war. I wanted to just kind of ask this broad question of how was that war—how did it occur differently in one's consciousness and awareness and everyday life than the one we're currently in now in Iraq?

7-00:15:59

Maslach:

Very, very different. The things I remember about World War II was the fact that we heard about the fall of France while we were on this vacation in Yosemite with George and my father and sister and I. So that immediately was kind of a frightening thing, to face. I was still at Cal when Pearl Harbor came. That was in 1941, that was in my graduating year. So then with the rapidity with which George was shipped off to MIT to be part of the radiation lab there, to work on

radar, made us realize that this is the real thing. So living in Boston, which is a lot closer to Europe than San Francisco, we had a different perspective. When I was in San Francisco, they were putting nets to make sure the Japanese submarines didn't come in the Golden Gate, but in the Boston area, everybody assumed that the Germans would land in Mexico and then move up the coast. At one point, we were not winning the war from the beginning, and things were still chancy.

We would go to the movies to see the newsreels, and they would show the flame throwers and the kinds of things that were happening. So there was quite a period of being very frightened, as to what might happen to us. But I will say that there's no question that the whole country was involved in this war and felt it had to be supported. There were a few people, Father Coughlan I guess it was, that would be against the war. But we felt that they were more pro-Nazi, and this is why they opposed the war.

But in fact, I think because the war had gone on for some time before we got in, there were a lot of people thinking, You know, we shouldn't stay out, because again, there was a reluctance to get involved in the beginning. So there was not a big movement against the war, in general the country supported it. (And of course, the Vietnam War.) People were not in favor of the Vietnam War, just like so much of the country is not in favor of what's happening in Iraq. While a lot of people agree with the objectives, that maybe Saddam Hussein should leave his country, this wasn't the way to do it. And of course, people deplore the fact that there's been no real planning as to what you do after your troops go in and crush the enemy—in twenty days or whatever it took, but that isn't the war. The war is what's happening now, and it's frightening, in a different way. Mostly because you feel that there's a whole destruction of the American way of life, because of this war.

7-00:19:39

Wilmot:

The current one that we're in.

7-00:19:41

Maslach:

Yes. I mean, the kinds of things, the civil liberties, the cost, the sacrifices that people are asked to make, without knowing what the point is. And the fact that there could have been another way of doing it. But the wartime in Boston is very vivid in my memory. We would force ourselves to go to the movies to see the newsreels, because we felt we just had to know how things were happening. It took a while before the outcome was obvious that we were going to win.

7-00:20:29

Wilmot:

Did you have knowledge of what was really going on in Germany in terms of the concentration camps, or did that kind of emerge as popular knowledge after the war?



7-00:20:38

Maslach:

There was knowledge of it, at least in our circles, and this was, of course, of all university people, educated people. Yes. Because you kept hearing more of the ships with refugees that weren't allowed to land, a lot of things like that were happening.

7-00:21:06

Wilmot:

Did your social circle come to include people from European Jews who were fleeing the Holocaust?

7-00:21:18

Maslach:

Not really, except some of the scientists, of course, that George worked with were ones that had gotten out of Europe. And I guess we did know some. I can remember an artist named Fritz Eichenberg who was German, and he was a cartoonist. He fled, and we met him through the Quakers. We were exploring the Quaker religion as a possible religion.

7-00:21:53

Wilmot:

This was in Boston or here?

7-00:21:55

Maslach:

No, this was in New York. It's just hard to think back, as to what an impact it was going to be having on our lives. Back then, as I said, we were really frightened as to what the outcome would be.

7-00:22:19

Wilmot:

And the scientists you mentioned, are you thinking of anyone in particular?

7-00:22:25

Maslach:

Well, there were a number of them at MIT. One was Hans Bethé but there were just a whole roster. These are not my area of knowledge.

7-00:22:54

Wilmot:

I'll go and see, perhaps I'll check through George's oral history and see \_\_\_\_\_ as well. [talking very softly]

And do you remember the kind of conversations that people were having socially about what was going on? Were people ...

7-00:23:16

Maslach:

Well, I think it was just the way it is now. People will check on what's been happening and what could happen, successes, and we were following the campaigns in Africa, and then in Italy, which were rather brutal. Again, just wondering where it was going to—how it was going to end. But then most people keep busy doing the things that they do, as a way of working on this. And of course, with George and the scientists at MIT, they were working overtime, trying to make sure the things that they were working on were successful. George's work on radar, the thing there was to have radar down at the Panama

Canal, so that it wouldn't be destroyed. But that's the way the thinking was, that this could happen to the Panama Canal.

7-00:24:18

Wilmot:

I wanted to come back to Berkeley and ask you, you said—and do you remember when Pearl Harbor happened? Do you remember hearing about Pearl Harbor?

7-00:24:27

Maslach:

Oh, yes. Yes, I was living on Chilton Way, and we just heard it on the radio. The horror of what had happened was the turning point where the America says—we're going in, we're really going to be in this war. I think this is the point at which there was no doubt at all, no question about whether the United States would be involved.

7-00:25:02

Wilmot:

Did you have friends, young men, or family who were conscripted—or not conscripted, but in the military in this war?

7-00:25:16

Maslach:

Well, my brother. [laughs] He was in the 7th Air Force, flying—he was a navigator flying B-27s, I guess it was, over Germany, until his plane crashed. It crashed coming back, it had run out of fuel, I think. So I think he was on like his twenty-third mission, and at twenty-five you get a rest. That was the way it was operating. I can remember his saying that when the plane crashed, he could see himself getting out of the plane and walking away from it, and then the whole thing exploding and for naught. Anyway, he escaped with minor injuries. The pilots were badly wounded, and the tail gunners were fine, and were placed in another plane. He was given some time, he came back to the United States for a while, and then was about to go into pilot training before the war ended.

7-00:26:19

Wilmot:

What did he tell you about his experiences in the military?

7-00:26:23

Maslach:

In his letters that he wrote back, he would be very funny. You would think he was cheering us up rather than our cheering him up, because he could see funny things happening. For instance, there was one story about a plane, was having some difficulty landing, and here the people in the tower were telling him what to do. So to whomever was on the intercom, he said, "Look. You land your tower, we'll land our plane." [laughs] So as I said, he just had a very positive attitude about it, and did his duty. This was when he met our cousin who lived—we had this artist cousin who lived in London, and so he got to meet him, and was in contact with him a lot, which was good for him, to have some family nearby.

7-00:27:35

Wilmot:

You told me about the one young man who kind of went away to war, and imagined himself to have a continuing relationship with you.

7-00:27:47

Maslach:

Oh, yes.

7-00:27:49

Wilmot:

And that was one person who was kind of in your immediate social circle. Was this kind of a widespread—were there other people that went away, or \_\_\_\_ high school—

7-00:28:00

Maslach:

A number of our classmates were killed, so you would be getting messages, hearing about that.

7-00:28:09

Wilmot:

High school classmates?

7-00:28:10

Maslach:

Both high school and college. This particular guy that I had been dating, I guess for some reason or other, maybe he was in ROTC, I'm not sure, but he seemed to have gone over early and was connected with the British, who again were already—I think he was in Italy—were already there long before the United States went in. I kept getting these letters, because I just had the feeling that he needed to talk to somebody, and whatever time he had, what he would do with free time, he would write out conversations with people. So this is what he was doing, so this was his way of handling it.

7-00:28:57

Wilmot:

Do you recall the Japanese, the internment of the Japanese after 1941?

7-00:29:09

Maslach:

Oh, yes. And in fact, Chiuro Obata, my professor, was sent to a camp after a while. The architect who did our house had been—we didn't know him until, of course, after the war, but when we got to know them, we found out that his family had been sent to Tanforan, and as a matter of fact, one of their children was born in a stall in Tanforan. What is also interesting was that, and it's not as widespread, was the fact that the Italians were interned as well. And again, some of my relatives were, and it was quite frightening. The one in particular was the husband of my father's eldest sister, Minnie. She had originally been Minnie McLean, when she had been married to my grandfather's brother, and he died in around 1916. Ettore Patrizi married my aunt shortly after, I guess about 1918, and he had been a representative of the Italian government in the 1894 World's Fair. He had come to San Francisco, sort of organizing the Italian exhibit, and fell in love with San Francisco, as many Italians do, and decided that he wanted to live here instead of going back to Italy, although he had connections with Italy. So he became very involved in North Beach Italian life. He was on the

chamber of commerce. He ran one of the newspapers called *L'Italia*, and did things like, he was the one who was responsible for the statue of the composer Verdi in Golden Gate Park. This is why the Marconi visited them, and they had a beautiful home on Pierce Street that is now a consulate, I believe.

But anyway, they did a lot of entertaining in the Italian colony, and this is the way they would entertain, the singers and musicians that came. There were other newspapers in San Francisco that were more liberal. He was considered the conservative Italian newspaper [telephone rings, interruption]

So Mr. Patrizi was still an Italian, and he was very supportive of things that Italy did, and so when the war came, while he still—he had his citizenship, and still as a loyal American, he really felt divided loyalties. But anyway, there were people that accused him of being unpatriotic and a threat, and so before I went to Boston to marry George, and that was in 1943, I visited him. He really looked like death warmed over.

7-00:32:37

Wilmot:

Where did you visit him?

7-00:32:38

Maslach:

In his office in *L'Italia*. I had no idea that he had been served a notice that he was being deported to Reno, Nevada. I think he died shortly after. But since then, I've belonged to the Italian Historical Society, and learned that people did not know how many Italians had been interred or under house arrest. Only recently the documents have been released from the government. This took a lot of energy on the part of people to get them released, and they found out that they were breaking up families where anyone that was near water who was Italian was supposed to be suspect. Well, there would be families up in Antioch or towns near the water there where the husbands were Italian and had gotten citizenship, and would be working in the steel yards or working in the war effort, but their wives who were born in Italy did not get their citizenship, and so they would separate these families. They would send the wives inland, and so here these working families would have to support two households. Children would then be uprooted from their schools to go with the mother inland somewhere, and it seems that there was one general, the same general, that decided that the Japanese should be interned had decided that the Italians should be as well.

What they found out when documents were released was that the attorney general of the United States at that time, Francis Biddle, was against this interring. However, this army general did it anyway. So just recently, they've been able to have workshops and write books and tell about this, in conjunction with the Japanese. The two groups have sort of worked together, because it really was a sad thing to have done.

7-00:35:05

Wilmot:

And when you were—you were in your late teens, no, you were in your early twenties at that time, the time of the internment of the Japanese and the Italians. Did your social landscape change, or did you kind of see neighbors or--

7-00:35:25

Maslach:

I wasn't close to anyone that was under house arrest or house internment, other than, as I say, my uncle. And again, I didn't even know about it, before I left for Boston, so I had no idea the extent to which this was happening. I've only just learned this in the last few years, matter of fact.

7-00:35:45

Wilmot:

And were there any other students, \_\_\_\_ students or--?

7-00:35:52

Maslach:

It wasn't so much, I don't recall the effect on the students, or whether they said much about it, other than it would break up a household or make it more difficult financially for people to survive. But I know it had a lasting effect on the family, such as the Hachiro Yu Asa family. He was our architect, and he was the one that did a number of the co-op buildings in Berkeley. I think the son that was born in Tanforan is still a very alienated person, and the family doesn't talk about their lives. We saw them recently, and there's no word about him at all. So it's almost as though this was a destruction of a person. He was in the Boy Scouts, and only later learned that he had been born in Tanforan because of the war. So it did touch a lot of lives, and as I say, more than I personally know.

7-00:37:11

Wilmot:

I think there were a couple other kind of follow-up questions that I had, I'm looking at. I wanted to ask you, when you came to Berkeley, did you have the sense of the lay of the land in terms of the Italian community in the East Bay, and how perhaps it may have been different than San Francisco, or was your life very campus-based?

7-00:37:34

Maslach:

It was very focused on the campus. I mean, I was young and had a lot to learn, and just surviving the campus environment was new to me. As I recall, very—I enjoyed it. I guess I enjoyed being away from my family and realizing that this was my chance to become my own person. The people in the co-op were wonderful. I still know a number of them, that I met there. It was just a very supportive community. So I was able to learn and grow in what I would consider a protected environment. This is what everybody deserves. I really don't like the fact that so many kids opt for apartment living, and not have the opportunity to be in a group, that both teaches them things and supports them.

7-00:38:46

Wilmot:

And I know, we talked before and we had talked about going back and forth to San Francisco to see your family, and you said that you didn't do much of that. They did come see you. And I want—and forgive me if I'm putting words in

your mouth or misspeaking your intention—but I wanted to know, did you go back and forth to the city just socially, like go out and go to parties and--?

7-00:39:10

Maslach:

Well, the interesting thing is, my family did not come over to see me, because we were so close. And because we were so close, you know, you could go over there any time at all, so you never had really a need to go. Whereas like if you were at a distance, I think, you might say, Gee, I'd better go back and visit the family. So I would go back for holidays, and summers, I remember being home during the summertime. Usually spending the whole summer reading, because I was very prescient at college, because I was both working and also trying to get those straight A's again. So it was nice to just do nothing for a while. So I spent a lot of my summers just reading, or even—I guess we did a little vacationing too. I mean, the time we went to Yosemite.

7-00:40:10

Wilmot:

And the other thing I wanted to ask you, and this seems very frivolous, but you said that you went dancing a lot, and then I was wondering, what kind of music, what kind of dances? I had asked you this frivolous question of what did you wear, but now I want to know what kind of music and what kind of dancing.

7-00:40:27

Maslach:

[laughs] The music was the big band music, all those classics that you still hear today. I mean, that was when they came out, in the thirties. Benny Goodman, and—can't remember all these names. But the classic—as I say, I can't remember the names of the songs, but it was just beautiful swing music. I guess they were starting to do some jitterbugging at the time, but that wasn't the kind of dancing that I did. This was just the swing dancing to good music, and very popular tunes. Everybody knew the words to all the songs, which we still do.

7-00:41:21

Wilmot:

Do you remember any?

7-00:41:23

Maslach:

Well, as I say, one has a senior moment at this time. [laughs] So I really—if I had a chance to stop and think of it, I could give you a list when I see you next.

7-00:41:38

Wilmot:

Were you one of those dancers who kind of got—who was lifted up and carried around in the air, or was it not that kind of dancing?

7-00:41:45

Maslach:

No, no. It was regular ballroom dancing.

7-00:41:48

Wilmot:

Swing dancing.

7-00:41:49

Maslach:

Yes.

7-00:41:52  
Wilmot:

Okay. Jitterbugging would have been the other, okay.

7-00:41:54  
Maslach:

Yes. In fact, the ice skating that I did at the time was just again, just to be able to make these long sweeps to music. This was what was fun. And at these mixer dances, you just wore the regular school clothes that you had. And of course, if you went to an evening dance, you did dress up, but again, the dance itself—I forget the name that they called them, that they had in the gym—were really wonderful, because anybody could go, and you could have as good a time as you wanted to, meeting people. It was fun to meet people and learn how to talk to people. So that was a good part of, plus part of college.

7-00:42:54  
Wilmot:

Okay, that was my last frivolous follow-up question.

Well, I wanted to move on to Boston. I wanted to ask you about your journey to Boston, and your wedding day, and I'm wondering if you can just kind of tell me about preparing to go. Were you worried at all about going so far away from home to get married?

7-00:43:18  
Maslach:

No, no. George had sent me a wedding ring from Boston. This was after he started working a while and had some money. So this wedding ring—I mean, this engagement ring came from a company called Trefry and Partridge, and that is so Bostonian [laughing]. So this was a ring that was, the diamond was cut from an estate diamond that they had and so forth. So I wore that ring for sixty years, and the diamond fell out just last year, when I was married for sixty years. Because I never took the ring off. It was just that, the single diamond in the setting.

Anyway, I knew what I didn't want, was to have a wedding in California. Because then I would have had to invite these relatives that I didn't really like that well. [laughs] So what we did instead was decide to get married in Boston, because it was really hard to travel back and forth anyway. I mean, we didn't have many airplanes that were flying at that time. So the compromise was to have a going-away reception at Aunt Minnie's house, this lovely house that she had. The whole middle story, it was a three-story house, and the whole middle floor was nothing but a salon, for entertaining.

7-00:45:02  
Wilmot:

Where was her house again?

7-00:45:03  
Maslach:

It was on Pierce Street. It was just above—it's just a little bit above the Marina. Pierce and Steiner or something like that. So they did give me this going-away reception, so then I could invite everybody and not feel that this was my wedding day that I'd have to have people there that I really didn't want to see.

So the dress that I had for that was the same dress that I got married in in Boston when I went back.

So I went back to Boston, and it was interesting, because that year, sometimes we have a very mild January. It doesn't feel like winter here at all, before it used to rain or something like that. So it was a very mild January, and I got packed up to leave, and I can remember having this beige gabardine suit and alligator pumps, really—and even a hat, I guess. So what had happened was that George had a draftsman working for him, because of the war effort, she was actually one of these Beacon Hill socialites, from one of these old New England families. When she heard that I was coming there to get married to George without my mother, she and a friend of hers who ran a guest house on Beacon Hill decided that they would help me with our wedding.

So when I came to Boston, I got to live with her until the wedding, in her houses on Louisberg Square. They had two houses, not just one house on Beacon Hill, they had two houses on Louisberg Square that they made into one big house. This house just housed Libby Blaney, who was George's draftsman, and her father, and then the servants to run the place. The house had so much furniture in it, because her father was a collector of early American furniture, it just looked like a junk store or something. But all of these were really, really very expensive, elaborate pieces of American furniture. It turned out that everybody years ago had been buying Victorian furniture, and didn't realize that the American furniture was really much, much better.

7-00:47:39

Wilmot:

Was this like very rustic furniture—

7-00:47:40

Maslach:

No, no, no.

7-00:47:41

Wilmot:

—or was it very—

7-00:47:44

Maslach:

No, it was early American, but elegant. These pieces just were fabulous. I mean, when all of the family died they had to get rid of it, they had so many pieces at auction that were so expensive, the family could only keep a few pieces. I stayed there. I stayed there longer—we were going to get married on March the seventh, and we had to—I think George got a rash or something like that, and so he couldn't get them to sign the certificate that he could get married. It was something that disappeared in a few days. So anyway, we were married on March 12 instead of March 7 as planned, so I was staying with Libby that much longer.



7-00:48:28

Wilmot:

So why didn't you move directly into George's house when you came to Boston?

7-00:48:35

Maslach:

Well, first of all, you don't do that at that time. And then George had a roommate anyway, he was living with some other fellows. So the idea was that we would find a place for ourselves, which we did. It was on Joy Street on Beacon Hill. This was on the back side of Beacon Hill, and this was probably where ladies of the night lived years ago, and that is why they called it Joy Street. Anyway, it was just a very, very old and interesting place. It had a little courtyard in back, and our apartment was off of it.

George's mother said that we should get married in the Catholic church. Well, I'm not Catholic, and I said no, I couldn't do that. She said, "Well, at least get married in a church and not just the justice of the peace," and so I said I could do that. So what we did was we found the Children's Chapel in the New Old South Church on Copley Square, and this Children's Chapel held thirty people. I did not want to be married in a cavernous church, and be down in the first three aisles. And actually, I knew nobody except George and then Libby, whom I had met, who was my attendant. So everybody else were friends of George's. They filled the chapel, which is what I wanted. I wanted to be in a room that was filled with people.

Libby had gotten a harpist, so that was our music. She had gotten the minister, who was a Unitarian minister, who was an old friend of the family, who had come in from Cape Cod to be there. Then she hired a livery firm that used to carry this family, horse and buggy, years ago, and now had cars. The person who was retired who ran that was the one who came and took us to the church and back.

The reception was on Beacon Hill, at Libby's house. The only scary part of it was when some of George's engineer friends who were rather exuberant had a package of confetti that they were going to throw. They tossed it up on the mantel, and on this mantel was a matched set of antique Steuben glass tumblers. I could just see one rock a little bit, but it didn't land, it didn't knock it off. [laughs] They just didn't know that this was in this house. But anyway, it went off well.

We had our honeymoon in the Blaneys'—one of these old early American farmhouses out in the country, in the suburbs. It was in a town called Weston, near where the Wellesley College is, not too far from there. So in this farmhouse, there was no central heating, just a fireplace in every room.

7-00:52:17

Wilmot:

And this was March.

7-00:52:20  
Maslach:

Well, but they had a couple that lived there during the winter, and so they were the ones who did our cooking and kept the house warm and so forth, and that's where we spent our honeymoon. That summer, they invited us up to their island. They had an island off Bar Harbour [Maine], it was called Ironbound Island. So we spent our summer vacation up there with them. So we got to know them—and the reason for this was that Libby Blaney, not only wanted to contribute to the war effort, because she knew that they needed draftsmen, but also, when she saw all these young men coming from California, she thought they probably would like to know something about New England. So she would offer opportunities to take them places. Well, George was the one who, whenever he goes anywhere, he's a great traveler, he reads every book available. So he was the most enthusiastic one about finding out what New England was all about. So this is why they developed this close friendship, besides the fact that he was her boss.

So we were able to really, by knowing this family, know what the whole New England culture was about. The idea wasn't how much money you had, it was when you came over on the *Mayflower*. How you could trace that back. And then how many glass panes you had in your windows. This glass turned purple, tinged purple with age. Well, if you had a house that had that original glass in it, that just meant you were just up on the ladder.

7-00:54:13  
Wilmot:

So the Blaneys were actually Libby Blaney and her father? Was there—

7-00:54:19  
Maslach:

Her mother had died, and in this family, Libby—there is a Blaney Beach, so he came over, not with the *Mayflower*, but that family came over a little bit later. Mr. Blaney was an artist and a good friend of John Singer Sargent. When he married Mrs. Blaney, she was the one who came from the family with money, and this is the way it usually happened: somebody had the name, and then somebody had the money. So this was the combination. Of course, this happens in Britain as well, in the royalty, you marry someone who has a lot of money to support the way of life.

And everything in New England, in this group, is patterned after England. It's as though they were just modeling. But anyway, Libby's older sister had left home. She just wasn't about to be part of this rather rigid family tradition. So she left home, and I understand was very prominent in the American Red Cross. I think she was in California, and had a leadership job in that. Libby had a brother, David, who lived in Weston, which was right near where this home was. We got to know that family, they had four children, so we got to know that family quite well. And then she had another brother who we never met, and I don't know whether he died early, but anyway, there were some relatives there living around Cape Cod or something like that. But basically, Libby and her father lived alone

in this big house, and they would go up to Ironbound Island for the summers and spend the time there.

7-00:56:18

Wilmot: Did Libby ever get married?

7-00:56:20

Maslach: Libby had a wonderful boyfriend, and her father just did not like him, and so she did not marry him. But she had a girlfriend that she introduced them to, and so her girlfriend married this man that liked her. He was Edward Meyer, and he lived in Nahant [spells]. So we became very friendly with this family and with their children, so that whenever we went back East, we would usually stay with them.

7-00:57:11

Wilmot: So did you enter culture shock when you kind of ran into this kind of East Coast version of the social hierarchy?

7-00:57:22

Maslach: It wasn't culture shock; it was just a learning experience, because I hadn't realized what it was like. What interested me—I guess I told you that I was getting my master's in psychology at that time—was what these people believed, how they lived and so forth. It seemed as though the Boston people pattern themselves after the British, and then I found out that the San Francisco society pattern themselves after the Boston society. I could see the differences and also the things that were the same.

7-00:58:03

Wilmot: Was that a familiar thing, then, to you?

7-00:58:06

Maslach: No.

7-00:58:05

Wilmot: Or was it that the kind of Blaneys—

7-00:58:08

Maslach: This was total learning.

7-00:58:09

Wilmot: That social circle, was that familiar, or was that kind of a, in terms of—

7-00:58:15

Maslach: No, I had no idea it was like this at all. And just studying the whole New England scene and how influential New England people have been on our government, deciding things for our government, I mean, I was really amazed. So for me, it was a fantastic learning experience, and of course, we were totally accepted, because we were academics. I mean, they did admire the fact that we

were intelligent people, and of course, people that were interested in them. So there was no feeling of inferiority. [telephone rings, tape interruption]

—as I did with my own relatives. Because in other words, the social thing that I felt in California, and what you read about society in California, just seemed to be so—well, it was patterned after the same sort of style that they had, but they were just small potatoes, compared to the real aristocrats of our country. And so, as I said, it probably helped me a lot in accepting the fact that we had not been accepted in California, in the long run.

But anyway, it was just an opportunity there to meet some very nice people, and as I say, we remained friends. Both of the Meyers have died, but their son was in Christina's class at Harvard, so we still are in touch with him. As a matter of fact, one of the Blaney nieces, David's niece, lives in Daly City. I try to keep in touch with her; at least we have phone conversations.

I guess I should really say that there was another strange thing that happened. Libby Blaney, when she went to Vassar, had a roommate named Helen Pope. Helen Pope was from San Francisco. Years later, Libby was the godmother of Helen Pope's son. And years later, that godson married the daughter of Berkeley's architect, Robert Radcliffe, who lives on Panoramic Hill with us, and is a neighbor. He married Lucy, and I got an invitation from Evelyn Radcliffe to come to dinner one time. We went there and found my maid of honor being entertained by a neighbor on Panoramic. The thought of that kind of a connection 3,000 miles apart to happen blows my mind.

7-01:01:12  
Wilmot:

It's pretty mind-blowing.

7-01:01:13  
Maslach:

It is! [laughs]

7-01:01:15  
Wilmot:

I'm also thinking of you as kind of socially a new person to the East Coast, a new young wife, a new young wife of—and an academic. How did you kind of make a transition socially? Were you hosting parties, were you having people over at your house on Joy Street, were you going out to dinner a great deal with colleagues? How did that work?

7-01:01:45  
Maslach:

Well, I'm trying to—

7-01:01:47  
Wilmot:

Did you feel like it was something that came easy to you?

7-01:01:50  
Maslach:

Yes. We didn't have to do too much entertaining, because things were pretty grim. They didn't heat that apartment. The heat would go on one hour in the

morning and one hour at night. The landlady said to me, “Do you work?” and I said, “No,” and she said, “Well, it’s going to be pretty cold.” I thought, that’s all right, the cold doesn’t bother me. Until the cold hit! I would have to go to libraries or something until I started going to college, to keep warm. So there wasn’t—people did things together. They might go to dinner together or something like that. But I don’t recall much entertaining, other than when we moved, we only stayed one year on Joy Street, and then we moved to Hereford Street, which was on the Boston side of the Massachusetts Bridge. So George just had to walk across the Massachusetts Bridge to get to MIT.

In that building, we met a family where the husband was a very well-known cartoonist, and so we had a whole new group of friends just because they lived next door to us.

7-01:03:18

Wilmot:

Let’s take a quick break while I change our tapes and disks.

[begin audiofile 8]

8-00:00:12

Wilmot:

So, for you as young marrieds, you weren’t necessarily socializing at home as much, because of the war?

8-00:00:20

Maslach:

That’s correct. We would do things together, maybe take trips together, people would plan things together. And of course, we saw a lot of the Blaneys and their families, their extended families.

I should finish the story about Libby, you asked me whether she had gotten married. Subsequently to being, I don’t know exactly how many years after I got married, she did find someone who had the correct family name, which her first boyfriend did not, and so it seemed as though this would be a good idea that she did get married. However, her husband lived way out west in Detroit. We used to laugh, because that was their concept of Detroit as way “out west.” So Libby was living in Detroit with her husband, and her father then would get sick, so she would have to come home, because he would stop eating. So she would come home until he started recovering again, and then she’d leave and he’d get sick again.

So one day, one time she just didn’t come back, and he died. He had that much control, or was trying to have that much control. He was a curmudgeon. He was like Monty Woolly [?] in the picture *The Man Who Came to Dinner* or something like that. I was terrified of him, but George, my husband George had a good time with him. He knows how to handle people like this. But he always dumped on women, made it very difficult for women.

8-00:02:23

Wilmot: Sounds like a hard person to be a daughter of.

8-00:02:24

Maslach: Yes.

8-00:02:27

Wilmot: Well—

8-00:02:30

Maslach: And then what Libby did when he died, because then they had to get rid of the houses and all the contents of the houses, that she bought a house in Marblehead, one of these historic houses of some general in the Revolutionary War, and so she kept enough of the furniture that was in the house to completely furnish this house. And then I think she probably left it to the city of Marblehead as an historic house that people could visit, because she just restored everything as it was. And as it was, this family had the largest collection of Paul Revere silver, which again, they left to one of the museums.

Anyway, it was, as I said, a terrific learning experience for us to have known these people and to have learned about our country this way, because I just learned a lot about California and a lot about Britain and a lot about the influence of the New England people on our government.

8-00:03:41

Wilmot: I always say that people who are from the Bay Area, it's very important for us to get out to the East Coast so that we know about power, essentially. So, yes.

8-00:03:55

Maslach: And you appreciate California more, because of the freedom, because they're so constricted by these rules and regulations and so forth that they've set up for themselves.

8-00:04:08

Wilmot: Now, I understand that there's also, did you kind of explore Boston on your own at all?

8-00:04:15

Maslach: Oh, yes.

8-00:04:16

Wilmot: Did you get out into the world at that point?

8-00:04:16

Maslach: Oh, yes. George and I had bicycles, so we would not only tramp all over Boston, but we would take, put the bicycles on a train, go down to Cape Cod, and then bike all around Cape Cod. Or else go up north, up to Salem, Cape Ann, and then stop at bed and breakfast places for overnight. So we did a lot of exploring.

8-00:04:44

Wilmot:

Did you ever go to Martha's Vineyard?

8-00:04:46

Maslach:

Not at that time. We did subsequently, like in 1991 we went—I finally got to Martha's Vineyard. But not at that time. We did run into a situation where we stopped at a bed and breakfast place, and the woman said—this is in the middle of the war—“Maslach, Maslach, what kind of a name is that?” If she decided it was Jewish, we were not going to be allowed to stay. That's the first time I ran into that.

8-00:05:21

Wilmot:

What do you think that's about?

8-00:05:21

Maslach:

Oh, that was the way it was in the East. I mean, they weren't Jewish, and there was very strong anti-Semitism. And the fact that it was so—it was still prominent during the war was unbelievable to me. We're not Jewish, but the fact that this made the difference. If we were, we couldn't stay; if we weren't, we could. And even when we went skiing one winter up in New Hampshire, there was a young man that we met, and we were then talking to him and friendly with, and I asked him, “What are you doing?” He got very furious with me, he said, “I wouldn't even tell my wife what I'm doing. Why should I tell you?” Because I knew George was working on radar, and that was supposed to be secret.

So I found out later—and incidentally, in this particular resort, which was called Kandahar, one of the owners was a man named Pabst from Pabst Blue Ribbon beer, and he and a bunch of friends, we heard one night at dinnertime, we heard them again spouting against Jews, and they were very pro-German. So we left, we just moved. We went to another resort. Later I found out that this young man who was Jewish was working on the Manhattan Project. Just this juxtaposition of his working on the Manhattan Project for our government, and how these people expressing this tirade against Jews was very disturbing.

8-00:07:07

Wilmot:

What was his name, do you remember? The young man?

8-00:07:11

Maslach:

The young man's name I do not know. It might be in my records somewhere. I didn't know at the time. It was only later that I found out that he had been one of the people that was named that had worked on the Manhattan Project.

So as I said, it was a different world. Even Christina, when she went to Radcliffe, and she came home and she said, “You know, Mom, it's so funny. Whenever I go out on a date, and girls ask me about the boy that I dated, they don't say, ‘Was he handsome, did he have blue eyes,’ or what. They want to know, ‘Well, what religion was he?’” And she said, “And if he was Protestant,

they would want to know what denomination.” Well, this isn’t California at all! [laughs] I mean, people don’t ask, they don’t care. So it was really—and that was in the seventies, late sixties, that this happened to her. As I said, there’s just these different parts of our country are so different.

8-00:08:17

Wilmot: Different culturally.

8-00:08:19

Maslach: Yes. And what’s important, and what kinds of things that they believe in. So what else can I say about that period? Well, what I could say about it was the fact that I tried to get a job as a mathematician. They were advertising, they were saying they desperately needed mathematicians.

8-00:08:42

Wilmot: Who’s they?

8-00:08:41

Maslach: People on the radio. I mean, obviously people that were hiring, companies that were hiring. So I thought, well, I hadn’t intended particularly to get a job, but I thought, well, I really should. So I applied in two places. One was in the Harvey Radio Company in Waltham, and that was in the suburbs of Boston. I went to see the personnel director, took an examination, and then we started talking about whether I was going to work there or not. He said, well, I was qualified, except that the shift I had to work on would start at six in the morning. Well, this meant a commute from Boston, and I can’t imagine how early I would have to get up to get there at six. We had just been married. And so I said, “That really doesn’t fit, can I work part-time?” “Oh, no, no, we can’t make any special concessions at all.” I said, “Well, it really doesn’t fit.”

Incidentally, the salary they offered me was less than I had made in the wintertime at Cal, working as a clerk in a San Francisco department store. I mean, the whole wage differential was just so low, compared to California.

8-00:10:06

Wilmot: Was that, do you attribute that to like region or was that gender issues?

8-00:10:13

Maslach: No, it was region, it was region. Because we met other women, again had very important jobs who were paid very little.

So I told him that I was sorry, that it just wouldn’t work out. So on my way out, he said, “I’d like to ask you a question,” and I said, “What?” And he said, “Well, these tests show, have you ever thought of being a psychologist? These tests show that you would have been a good one.” So that immediately decided, Well, maybe this is what I really should do, is follow my interest in psychology, because I wanted to change my major at Cal, but everyone talked me out of it, because mathematics was so important, and what’s psychology anyway?



The other interview I had was with Harvard Underwater Sound Laboratory.

8-00:11:09  
Wilmot:

Oh, how fun!

8-00:11:09  
Maslach:

[laughs] Well, the thing is that both of these jobs are calculating formulas and doing things in relation to the engineering aspect of it, and this wasn't the part of mathematics that I really liked. I liked logic, theory of numbers, and things like that, rather than the calculus and so forth. So at Harvard Underwater Sound, when I applied, we talked about it, and I decided that I would ask for a salary. I asked for the same salary I was getting as a teacher in Woodland, a high school teacher in Woodland. That at that time happened to be \$1,800 a year. So when I told him that, he was absolutely shocked. He said, "Well, for that amount of money, you would at least have to be a Ph.D. not just a bachelor's. And besides, you should be a man. Women, they can go home and just forget about what they're doing at work, but a man keeps working on it."

That really made me think, Well, I'm going to go back to school and get my degree in psychology. They did call and say, "Yes, you could have the job if you wanted it," but I had decided it was much better to go back and get a master's in psychology. That's what I did, and absolutely loved it. I mean, it was the first time I was taking courses I really wanted to take, I was learning things I wanted to learn, and people would say to me, "Doris, you've already got an A in the course. Why do you keep working at it?" I'd say, "Well, I want to know it." Usually a master's degree, you're reviewing a lot of material that you've already taken. Well, so much of it I hadn't taken in the first place, so it was all new to me. So I really enjoyed that year thoroughly, and I had some interesting experiences there, too.

8-00:13:04  
Wilmot:

Tell me, please.

8-00:13:03  
Maslach:

[laughs] Well, one of them was, there was a young girl named Beatrice Silverman. She was really chastising me and also another one of the teaching assistants, (I had a job as a teaching assistant to the psych prof,) saying, "Oh, why did you get married, why did you feel you had to get married?" So we didn't say anything. But Bea Silverman later told us about her boyfriend. She said, "You know, I have a boyfriend that's been in the war, and he's written a book. I really think it's a good book." Her boyfriend was Norman Mailer. Not only did Bea Silverman marry him once, she married him twice; she married him in a civil ceremony and then she also married him in a religious ceremony. She was the first of his, what is it, nine wives or something? He had so many, having them and dropping them.

One of the papers I had to grade was by a student who said she was a Jewish student in the Nazi Jeugen program, youth program. Of course, she had escaped from Germany—they had left. But that again, when you pick up a paper to read, you don't expect to see something that powerful. So that did happen.

8-00:14:32

Wilmot:

Who were your professors? Do you remember professors from whom you especially—

8-00:14:37

Maslach:

Well, I only had one professor, because he was my—well, no, I did have other professors, but the one that I was working under, who was the head of the department, who also was the one that was supervising my master's program, his name was Wayland Vaughan. He wasn't very good in mathematics, and he had just written a book, and his whole chapters on statistics were something that he must have gotten help on, because when people would start writing him asking him questions about a particular thing in the chapter, he would hand it to me and say, "Answer this for me," because he wasn't able to. The sad part about getting my degree was that because of the war, he had decided that the master's candidates were just going to have a comprehensive review in psychology, rather than do a research project. So I felt a little cheated.

8-00:15:45

Wilmot:

What was the research project you had in mind?

8-00:15:45

Maslach:

I didn't have any in mind, I just felt that I would like to do something, because I like statistics, and I like to analyze things. It would have been really something that I looked forward to doing. Because I didn't have any of that kind of experience at Cal. Everything that I took was straightforward math problems and chemistry.

Anyway, as I said, I really enjoyed it. Then when I graduated in '44, when I got my degree in '44, I had a choice. I could have gone to MIT and worked, because a lot of the wives did, but I would have been paid a higher salary than George was getting, because I had a higher degree. So I decided not to do that, and tried to do things that would carry out my psychology interest. I literally set up a field program for myself, going to institutions in Boston and starting out volunteering. So really learned a great deal. I was in touch with a lot of the prominent psychotherapists in the area. The two places I worked, one was the Douglas Thom Habit Clinic. I mean, what a horrible name for a childrens clinic.

8-00:17:15

Wilmot:

Can you say that again, Douglas—

8-00:17:15

Maslach:

Douglas Thom [spells], and it was called the Habit Clinic. They were treating, it was a treatment center for children. They had on the staff psychologists,

psychiatrists, social workers. The people there let me try out almost every position, so I was allowed to do some social work and found out I didn't like doing social work. What I really liked to do was be a therapist, and then analyze the cases. What I was doing for them was I was in charge of the playroom. This was the waiting room where parents and children would come until they were called by their therapist. So I was ostensibly just keeping the toys in order and so forth, but I was really observing them, and I would write observations of what I saw of a mother-child relationship.

They found this so helpful that when they would have the case conferences, they would accept my report. I was invited to the case conferences, and then they would accept whatever I had observed as part of their discussion. The beauty of that was that I was allowed to read the cases before the case conference, so I had a chance to see what was going on and what people were saying, and then try to figure out what I would do. Then I would go to the case conference and then hear their suggestions, their thoughts on what to do. So it was really fun, it was--

8-00:19:07

Wilmot:

Sounds like a good education.

8-00:19:11

Maslach:

Yes. They liked my work so much, they said, "You know, we really should pay you." I didn't want to be paid, because it would be such a low salary—this was next to a nonprofit situation—that I thought this wouldn't be good to have this on my record, to have a job at this infinitely low salary. So what I did was leave and go to another place, which was called the Children's Center in Roxbury--

8-00:19:38

Wilmot:

I want to stop and ask you a question about the Douglas Thom center, which is what was their population was, and was it a private facility or was it government-sponsored or was it kind of private, geared towards families paying for their care for their kids, or was it more public?

8-00:19:57

Maslach:

Actually, I never knew that part of it. But I would guess that, because of the clientele that came in, that these people could not afford psychiatrists. I'm sure it was something that the community would take over as part of the service to the community. One of the cases that came in was a woman who was the wife of a postman, and she came in with two sets of twins under four years of age. All of them were girls except one of the younger twins, who was just under two, maybe about a year and a half, eighteen months, was a boy. He was the identified patient, he was the one that was giving them all the problems. She would have to bring in all the children when she came, because there was no place, there was no day care for them.

So the psychiatrist was treating the little boy, and then one day the psychiatrist said to me—her name was Dr. McNaughton, "I would like you to do something

for me. When this family comes in, I would like you to take the twin of this little boy and take her in a room." I said, "And do what?" She said, "Just be with her." So the little girl came in, and I would try to talk to her, and she just sat there. So nothing happened. The next time the mother came in, she said, "I don't know what you're doing, but it's working!" [laughs] I thought, What's going on? Obviously, she just needed some attention. Even though nothing was happening, it was just that she had—she was getting what her brother had. So this made me understand this whole dynamic thing, that everything has to be in balance.

Anyway, as I said, this kind of learning experience was priceless, priceless.

Another little boy was five, who came in, and he was only thirty-five pounds. Now, thirty-five pounds at age five is pretty, pretty small. This little boy had stopped, kept himself from growing, because he had a stepmother that he was really in conflict with. He could not get her attention and love, and what he would do is stand in the corner all day long, voluntarily, to annoy her. I couldn't believe that a child would punish himself, and yet, and be so demanding. And yet it worked, because finally they took him in for some psychiatric help, and of course, the social worker works with the mother, to tell the mother what is needed. So these were really, for me, fantastic learning experiences. I would have liked to have been a psychiatrist, but I could not have ever given up that much time to go to medical school and be this. So I settled for being a family therapist instead. Maybe we should end at that point today?

8-00:23:18

Wilmot:

Do you want to? Okay.

8-00:23:20

Maslach:

Yes, I think so. [tape interruption]

8-00:23:27

Wilmot:

Doris, I wanted to ask you about pursuing your M.A. at Boston University. Actually, I have two really kind of quick questions. One is about the students, your students that you were studying with. Who were they? Did you learn from them as much as from your professors?

8-00:23:45

Maslach:

Well, yes, as I said, I already told you about two of them, that really hit me. Bea Silverman was one of the students, and then so was this other young woman.

8-00:24:02

Wilmot:

And were there a lot of women in the program?

8-00:24:05

Maslach:

Yes, there were. Because again, this is wartime, and there weren't that many, especially from the East. I guess the men were being in the service, so there were a lot of women.

8-00:24:26

Wilmot:

Were people focused around specific disciplines? For example, were people focused around child psychology, marriage and family counseling, early education? Where was the--

8-00:24:38

Maslach:

Well, again, you could choose what area, and my area was child development. So this was really studying how children grow. I continued learning even after I left there, because I was so interested in it, and Gesell from Yale was one of the people. Of course, Dr. [Benjamin] Spock had come in around that time. So there was a lot of studying, and then previous to that was this Harvard professor that put people in boxes, almost, and studied them. He was considered a—how do you explain it?—a pretty strict behaviorist, that everything is behavior, that genetics is not very important. And this idea that you can make anything you want out of anybody was sort of prevalent.

So for me, to really survey the gamut of what has been done, starting with the salivating dog.

8-00:25:57

Wilmot:

Pavlov.

8-00:25:57

Maslach:

Yes, Pavlov's experiments all the way up. What was also happening at that time, too, was the study of groups, the fact that people were then studying them because of the war, I guess. They were beginning to study what was the interaction of people in a group. So as I said, there was just a lot to learn.

8-00:26:18

Wilmot:

In terms of hierarchies or roles that different people would take in a group, or how different groups would interact with each other?

8-00:26:22

Maslach:

Yes, and how groups would influence people.

8-00:26:27

Wilmot:

Internal group dynamics, or--

8-00:26:28

Maslach:

Well, how group dynamics would mold a person's growth, being part of a group and being—whether they just accepted what the group said, or whether they were a person that would not accept what the group said. It was just part of the whole thing, and I think they were trying to explain why people would follow someone like Hitler.

8-00:26:57

Wilmot:

Were you looking at pieces like Adorno's Authoritarian Personality?

8-00:27:04

Maslach: I don't remember that.

8-00:27:06

Wilmot: I think I actually, it may have been later. I may be putting it in the wrong time frame.

8-00:27:11

Maslach: Because again, a lot of my studies then conflict with what I started to learn in the sixties, when I decided to try to get licensed as a family therapist, deciding that that's really what I wanted to do, when I finished being a mother and a community activist. So I did have a fling at trying to go back to being in the field, and what I thought was most important, and I still do, is the fact that almost every normal family could use learning something about family dynamics and how families work. It isn't because they're wrong or bad or sick or mentally ill or something; it's just the nature of the thing. There are things you have to know about how people work.

8-00:28:04

Wilmot: Well, and that's one of my—that's my last question for today, is about you, in a very short period of time, in two years, gained all these new tools for thinking about other people and potentially yourself and your family. How did that affect you? Did it kind of facilitate a reevaluation of kind of your family dynamics.

8-00:28:36

Maslach: I don't think I concentrated on my family dynamics as much as I concentrated on my task in life, which was bringing up children. I think that I was able to develop a very strong idea as to how children grow and what to do, whereas a lot of my friends were reading books to try to figure out what to do with a child. I'll admit that at times I was tested, where I was the only one in this particular toilet training phase, where everyone believed you toilet train your children as soon as possible. I was willing to just let it happen, but I was the only one that thought that and when you're living in a group of a dozen families, all with children the same age, it was hard to hold to the things I believed. But it really served me in good stead.

8-00:29:34

Wilmot: I can't wait to get to that. You're talking about Pleasantville, yes?

8-00:29:36

Maslach: Yes.

8-00:29:36

Wilmot: I can't wait to get to that. So it didn't kind of like help you think about yourself as a child so much at that time?

8-00:29:44

Maslach: Not really, because I think most of the analyzing I did of myself, I had done for papers that I had written before, either for myself or I did take some psychology

classes, and then I analyzed something. But I was not focused there, because I was not unhappy with myself any more. The only problem I had in my life was this one aunt, the Cuthbertson aunt. I was able to deal with her as an adult some years later, and became a good friend of hers, even though she was the one who was the one that was making all the pronouncements as to who was good and who was bad, and what you should do, and so forth. So no, as I said, it was important to me to know how to bring up children, and I think I did pretty well, when I stop and think of it, even though we had our problems. I married a man that was not in sync with what I believed. He was still left over from the pattern, you know, that Father is the authoritarian person in the family.

The two things I had learned, especially—and I love to tell people that there's two things that should happen in the family, is that everybody should have a chance to give an opinion on any decision the family makes as a family, like where do we go on vacation. Doesn't mean that it's going to happen, but they should be heard, they should be asked. And then the other thing is that every person in a family should be able to comment on how other people affect them, and that should be listened to in a way that's accepted. Again, it doesn't mean that anyone has to change their behavior, but they just have to know what people think. Because so many times people have said, "Well, I didn't know they thought this way." And of course, children who are never asked, it's really hard, you know, that you're not that important to have an opinion. Again, the chances are that in a loving family, when people hear what people think and what people want, they usually try to accommodate as many people as possible. But this is at least the basis for a feeling of openness in a family. So anyway, as I said, I think a lot of problems would be avoided if that happened.

8-00:32:23

Wilmot:

Okay, well, shall we close there for today?

8-00:32:26

Maslach:

Yes.

[end audiofile 8, end of session]





Interview #5: May 20, 2004  
Begin audiofile 9

9-00:00:32  
Wilmot:

Well, this morning I wanted to start off by asking, was there anything that you kind of recalled or wish to add from a previous session, is there anything you just wanted to say before we got started, were there things that you brought to mind in the interim?

9-00:01:06  
Maslach:

Well, just a little more, I think you were asking me about what it was like living in Boston at the time, and I don't know how much I elaborated on it. But it was quite a culture shock for me to come from sunny California—well, reasonably comfortable California—and to have survived through a really, really cold winter in Boston. This was even in March, because I had gone back there the first of March and gotten married March 12. The fuel shortage during the war was so bad that they would only have the heat on one hour in the morning, so people could get up and have breakfast and get out, and then maybe at the most two hours at night, between six and eight, say. So the rest of the time, it was absolutely, we're talking like below zero temperature. I know that the landlady was very upset that I didn't have a job and wasn't working somewhere, and of course, at first it kind of was—the cold snap hadn't hit in, and I said, "Well, I'm used to it," and I wasn't used to it, and had to get used to it. I would do things like go into libraries during the day to read and so forth, just to keep warm.

9-00:02:29  
Wilmot:

Why was the landlady upset that you didn't have a job? Just because you got—

9-00:02:33  
Maslach:

Well, she worried about my being in this cold apartment all day long.

9-00:02:42  
Wilmot:

This was when you were on Joy Street?

9-00:02:44  
Maslach:

We were on Joy Street, yes. I've been rereading some letters that I had written then, and Joy Street, this was obviously a very, very old historic little alleyway, and in the front of this complex was a theater. They would actually have plays, and so I could almost tell the time of day by the time that the different plays let out, because everybody would be walking in this little court. It was like a courtyard right outside our apartment, and it was the source of a lot of humor and a lot of jokes. We didn't stay there more than one year. There were actually rats running in the walls, and I remember one morning I got up, and the bath mat was pulled underneath the bathtub. So I told the landlady about it, and she said, "Oh, mice." [laughs]

The other thing that was funny was there was not an electric refrigerator but an icebox, and this was very typical of the times. So an iceman would come and put in the big hunk of ice in the top of the icebox, and it would melt during the day to keep things cold. Well, in this apartment, the water at the bottom that had been collecting would freeze overnight, so I could just pick up the ice and put it back in the top and have it run through again the next day, it was that cold.

Anyway, as I said, this was all part of the charm, I guess, of living there, and we were young, and we did move after one year.

9-00:04:27

Wilmot:

That rat story just stopped me in my tracks. Because mice don't drag bath mats underneath the tub.

9-00:04:36

Maslach:

No.

9-00:04:36

Wilmot:

Only rats do that.

9-00:04:37

Maslach:

But even in the next apartment that we had, which was on Hereford Street, which was just on the Boston end of the Massachusetts Bridge, and the other end was Harvard and MIT, again, when the garbage men would come to empty the garbage cans, which were down in the back yard, they would have big sticks and bang on the sticks so that the rats would get out so that they could collect the garbage.

So there were articles about how severe the plague of rats were, and people with babies in baby carriages were supposed to be careful that the rats could attack children, and there were stories of that. So that was just typical of—and this wasn't a particularly slum area. This was the residential part of Boston.

Anyway, you asked something about did we do any entertaining, and I couldn't remember, but in reading the things, obviously I did, because I was writing my mother back about the people we did entertain. A lot of them were George's colleagues that had come from California, but also people he began to meet as he worked—he was working on radar at MIT. One in particular was a man named Francis Heggarty, who lived in Cohasset and had one of these very, very modern houses that had been built by one of the German architects. He was quite prominent in the sailing fraternity, and also he had a big business. I think he was making some of the parts for the radar. I think he had made shells for professional crew racing boats. We got to meet him, as well as the Blaneys. So in one of my letters, I just said to my mother that I was really impressed about all of the interesting people that we had a chance to meet while we were back there.

9-00:07:05

Wilmot:

What kind of things was your mother writing to you about?

9-00:07:10

Maslach:

Well, I just, I didn't have her letters. I had the letters that I had written to her. But the kinds of things I was asking, because she was very disappointed that this was her first child getting married and she couldn't be there. So she was always very helpful in saying, What can I do to help, and so I was writing back saying, "Send me this, or see if you can get that." Because I was doing things like making my own curtains, I asked her to buy the material for it and send it to me and things like that.

9-00:07:51

Wilmot:

That's lovely. Did you have a sewing machine?

9-00:07:54

Maslach:

I don't think I did. I probably just hand-hemmed them.

9-00:08:01

Wilmot:

So that was kind of the tone of those letters back to your mom? They were just kind of—how would you describe that tone?

9-00:08:06

Maslach:

Well, they were just describing what we were doing, and how things were going. I described the wedding preparations and the fact that George had gotten German measles, so instead of being able to be married on the seventh of March, we had to wait until the twelfth before they would sign the application to be married. Just the details, some of which I had forgotten, of the different things that had happened. So it was fun remembering again, sort of putting yourself back in that position where everything seemed possible. I mean, there was no problem that came up that you couldn't figure out a way of solving it.

Also, the money was rather tight too, so we were very concerned about it. I don't know what George's salary was, but again, it was a routine thing. Some of the salaries at that time were—we're talking like \$2,000 a year maybe, or something like that. So I was always very careful. And then they also described the trips we took, the bicycle trips we took down to Cape Cod, and also our visits to the Blaneys' island, Ironbound. So it was just a reminiscence of what it was like.

9-00:09:39

Wilmot:

One of the things I asked you off camera and off tape last interview was about, was there an Italian community—I know that historically Boston has this kind of, or had this Italian community, and I wanted to ask you if that was a presence in your life.

9-00:10:05

Maslach:

No, not at all. Our community was definitely just the academic community. I think the other strong groups that I was aware of, that I wasn't a part of, was the

Irish community. A very famous mayor named Mayor Curley was very prominent in politics at the time, and I think we even voted for him when we first had a chance to vote, because he still was the best candidate, even though he did all these outrageous things. But he was very good to his constituents, made sure that the poor families got coal and so forth. It was a period where the Democratic and all the political bosses were really—and union bosses were very prominent and sort of ran things.

But we were not—we just were observers of this and not a part of it, as I said, because our social life was again with the other academics, and they came from all over the country. So we made friends from Louisiana, from New England, from—and I guess just a lot from California, and then the New England people that were there. Because Libby Blaney would have friends that introduced us to friends, and again, we got along very well with them and enjoyed the kinds of things that were happening with them, like one family in particular lived on Tea Wharf, which was a very famous wharf in Boston. He was an architect, and so he had made an apartment in one of these buildings that was on the wharf. His heat and hot water came from the hot water pipes that ran through the building, and it was really fascinating to see what people could do.

9-00:12:07

Wilmot:

So he was someone who didn't suffer from the fuel shortage?

9-00:12:11

Maslach:

[laughs] No, not at all.

9-00:12:11

Wilmot:

That's so interesting, to contrast those stories that you've told about the fuel shortage with where we are today. I mean, the kind of, the way that we consume fuel today.

9-00:12:21

Maslach:

Whenever we have a shortage here, even of gasoline, people don't think of what's happened to the people back East, because they need the fuel also for heating, not just for gasoline. Their bills are horrendous. It's really a problem.

What I did also find was a couple of menus from the time. One place in Boston was called Durgen Park, and it was a very famous place for seafood especially, lobsters and so forth, and complete dinners for \$3.75, lobsters and strawberry shortcake and whatever else. I mean, you just have to laugh. I think a dozen oysters were seventy-five cents. But those were also—I mean, universally, this was before inflation times and so prices were low. Which is why the salaries were low.

9-00:13:26

Wilmot:

I wanted to just also explore this question, and I think it was different then than now, however: for myself as someone who's from the Bay Area, one of the

things that I encountered that I thought was really interesting and a sharp contrast was the ways in which identity functioned differently on the West Coast than from the East Coast, specifically in terms of actually having like—and I think it may have been different then, but now, actually seeing that there are large groups of ethnic white people with identities when you go to the East Coast, whereas you don't see that kind of differentiation and identity articulation on the West Coast as much at this time. Did you encounter that?

9-00:14:15

Maslach:

Yes, I mean, I felt that in California—in fact, I really didn't get to appreciate California until I went to New England and experienced the restrictions in so many ways. The fact that women's salaries were so low, and these were intelligent women, because when I took my psych course, I was giving them the Wexler Bellevue Intelligence Tests, and then to have someone who was a supervisor be paid fifteen dollars a week was really pretty bad. So as I said, I think this is why so many people came to California, and especially the G.I.s going through, they could experience the difference and then say, "Well, this is where I want to live," because you had so much more freedom. But there, they questioned your race, your religion, your ethnicity, and this would be held against you. And of course, being a woman too wasn't—I ran into that. That they felt that women just weren't as capable as men.

You also asked me about how was it in graduate school.

9-00:15:31

Wilmot:

I'm going to ask you about that next, but you're going, so let's go.

9-00:15:33

Maslach:

Well, I did become a T.A. for this psych professor, who was—and I don't know whether I told you that he had written a book and had—

9-00:15:52

Wilmot:

And asked to you to answer all—

9-00:15:53

Maslach:

Answer all the statistical questions.

9-00:15:53

Wilmot:

Yes, and didn't really know that, had gotten help writing the book and so actually didn't know how to answer the questions he had posed in his own book.

9-00:16:04

Maslach:

Well, what I found out was that—and again, this was looking through my papers, I did find out not only the—in other words, we didn't do a research project, which I wanted to do. Instead we had this examination that was supposed to cover all of psychology. Well, I found the questions, I found the examination. Then I also found my grades. So the only time I was marked down at this time was by this professor. He had the leeway, because it was an

examination, and even though I had gotten all A's in all the courses, he had given me a B. I had felt that this was again a feeling of resentment that here is a woman that might know more than he did, and sort of was a put-down.

9-00:17:05

Wilmot: Were any of your professors in graduate school women?

9-00:17:12

Maslach: I don't think so. Not in Boston. The best women that I had for professors were the ones I had at Cal, and these were all women that had been there, they probably were hired in the twenties, in mathematics and in psychology in particular, there were some really, really eminent women. One of them was named Bridgeman, and then there was another woman who was named Brunswick, and her husband was a statistics professor.

9-00:17:45

Wilmot: Hmm, interesting.

9-00:17:46

Maslach: I was well aware that subsequently, they didn't hire any more. In fact, I think that when Christina was hired at Cal in psychology, they hadn't hired a woman in a line position for fifty years. They were always hired as lecturers or researchers or consultants or whatever else. And in particular, there was a very, very prominent woman that should have been a professor and just never made it. I just can't think of her name right now, but people know it in the department.

9-00:18:29

Wilmot: One of the other—and did you have the sense that the professors in graduate school, you've mentioned some of the names, were comfortable with women? Were they comfortable around women?

9-00:18:42

Maslach: I think it depended a lot about what particular field you were in. I think in the sciences, no. Because you rarely heard of many women, really eminent women scientists. But maybe in the social sciences, it just seemed more, you know, women are thought of as teachers, and helpers, and so forth. So I don't think there probably was as much of a prejudice against them from other people in the department.

9-00:19:17

Wilmot: And something I've asked you before, but I'm going to—well, I've asked it in a different way before, but I really was interested in this idea of being in a psychology graduate program and learning all these theories for child development. Were there any that particularly made sense to you, that kind of lit up a situation for you and said, "Oh, this is what's going on." Was there that kind of an aha moment where you said, "Ah, this theory is really right on target, this is going to really help me be a good mom," or?

9-00:20:07

Maslach:

Well, obviously I like children, people, and I did express the fact that even when I was teaching math and science, I was more interested in the students than I was in the subject matter. I mean, my passion wasn't the subject matter. I felt as a high school teacher, I really felt inadequate, because I didn't feel I had the answers. I hadn't studied enough psychology. So I was really primed to get a degree, to go back and get a degree in psychology, because I did want to know. I found out that the type of things that I liked about psychology was taking in data that you observed, and in making an analysis. And that's the part of mathematics that I was good at, analyzing statistics, for instance. I mean, right now I still cringe when someone reports a study with eight subjects as if this was something that was significant. As people say, you can lie with statistics, which you can. Depending on how you interpret the questions you ask and so forth. As I said, so my interest in psychology certainly stemmed from the same kinds of interests that I had in being good in mathematics.

Also, problem-solving. Again, the first thing that turned me on was geometry, and I just found these just like puzzles. You just had this puzzle, you had to figure out the answer, it was really great. So I still like problem-solving, and so as I said, I was surprised that in reading a lot of my things that I had written, that it seemed that I was really heading in that direction. Somewhere I was asked what I wanted to do, and I just said that I wanted to be a psychologist. And that was even before this, when I had applied for that job that I told you about and he said, "Did you ever think of doing that?" And of course, that just reinforced it.

And then in the field work I had confirmed it. I know I didn't like social work, so it wasn't that part of psychology that interested me, which is dealing with the conditions that the family is living in, and what kinds of obstacles they had. But I was more interested in the child—how did they get this way, what do you do about it, to help them and so forth. This certainly was confirmed with my work at this Children's Center in Roxbury.

9-00:22:51

Wilmot:

And that was your second internship or volunteership?

9-00:22:53

Maslach:

Yes. And again, I don't know how I thought of going there. Obviously someone must have told me that this was the place to go. As I said, I really didn't know at the time, I just assumed it was an establishment that was there for a long time. It had just been going for about a year, and they had really gotten a lot of very high-powered people to run it. The idea was to study severely disturbed children in the first five years, and to have them diagnose a schizophrenic really blew my mind, because you think of schizophrenia as something that emerges in adolescence. And yet there was this child that was obviously schizophrenic. He was obsessed with arrows. Arrows frightened him, and so how he lived in a place with one-way signs, you wouldn't be able to eliminate arrows. And yet, this child was able to—and I guess he was under five—he was able, with a stick,

to write words in the sand, in the sandbox. He wrote “Tchaikovsky,” he wrote—it wasn’t Mozart, it was another very complicated musician. Where he got this knowledge, I don’t know. But you don’t see children like that very often.

The child that I had in particular to work with, which was just a case study in itself, was a little boy that wasn’t quite two. He had an older brother who was in a wheelchair, because the mother saw that when her children started to walk, they would either toe-in or toe-out and she would take them to a doctor to have him operate on the child’s feet, to correct it. The older child, he wound up in a wheelchair, because obviously it wasn’t correctable, and the operation probably made it worse.

Well, the second little boy was not about to have this happen to him. He was very strong and very physically active. They said that when the doctor tried to examine him, he almost tore the room apart. So he was in this nursery school, and the idea was to observe him to try to find out what was going on. Well, he would not let anyone take off his shoes. He came to the nursery school to sleep, because he would stay awake all night, pacing, because he was so afraid someone was going to hurt him. My job was to just keep my eye on him while I just did ordinary nursery school things, helping the children with their play. He would get these impulses to hit out, and I was to intercept it before he hit another child or did anything dangerous. I know that he was capable of throwing a chair over a wall; he did that at one point. So all I was supposed to do—my instructions were to just pick him up and cuddle him and love him.

It was amazing, that this is what he needed, this kind of reassurance. And by the end of my work with him, he let me take off his shoes. So I knew that we had made some progress and he had—. Of course, I would have loved to have known what had happened to this little guy, but obviously, he was going to take care of himself. Unbelievable.

9-00:26:37

Wilmot:

Yes, it sounds like he was just fighting for his life.

9-00:26:40

Maslach:

Yes. Which children are able to do this. Did I mention at the Habit Clinic this little five-year-old boy that was only thirty-five pounds?

9-00:26:47

Wilmot:

You did mention him.

9-00:26:49

Maslach:

Kept himself from growing. So this need to survive is very strong. The kids might do horrible things to survive, but that is what the crux of the matter is, this is what they feel they have to do.



9-00:27:04

Wilmot:

In a situation like that, where you've been brought in to diagnose and treat a child while in fact there is a family situation or the adult or the parent is in fact the one that needs some diagnosis and treatment, how do you communicate, how do you work with that situation?

9-00:27:30

Maslach:

Well, this was what the center did, because they had very high-powered people, including Freud's daughter, Beata Rank as one of the psychiatrists. So I wasn't as close to how they worked with the families as I was at the Thom Clinic, because since that was a smaller situation, I could observe everything, and also sit in on the case studies. I was not invited into the case studies at the center. I was just a helper, an observer. I just had a duty to do, under the supervision of the nursery school teacher. So I really don't know. And then, of course, I had gotten pregnant by that time, and then the war ended.

9-00:28:24

Wilmot:

I want to ask you about your pregnancy in just a minute. But I think I'm trying to understand with this question that I'm asking, I'm trying to understand when you're given, as you said, a problem to solve, and the solution to the problem actually lies not with the child but with the parent, then what are thoughts or strategies around that?

9-00:28:47

Maslach:

Well, people do work with the parent. And again, I don't know—obviously this woman was very far out, this mother, and had some problems. I understand she considered herself very refined, and she considered her older son very refined, and she had married a man who was a butcher. So the younger boy obviously took after the father: big, strong, husky person. But I'm sure when the staff people worked with her, as they did at the Thom Clinic, they would again use their techniques to try to have the mother see what was going on, understand herself, and also recommend how to handle the child, so that things would be better for the child. But I would think that besides studying these people, these, I think, were long-term care people that you'd have to follow for some time.

9-00:29:49

Wilmot:

Are there any other cases that kind of stick out for you, within that second experience?

9-00:29:56

Maslach:

No, I think I mentioned the one, because that was the only child I had—the only job I had at that one time was with this one boy. But what was useful to me was that whenever I had my own children, and they would be doing something naughty, and I usually had the impulse is to punish them, because I would think, this is you teach them right from wrong. I learned that with children it's the reverse. They need comforting, they need love. There's a reason that little children misbehave. What they need is reassurance and the feeling of being loved and so forth. So it was almost instinctive that I would just not punish them

but just pick them up and love them and calm them down, and then talk to them later. It was very helpful to me as a parent, to have gone through this kind of training.

Well, the other thing about what I did in this volunteer work was that we did get to meet the different staff people, socially. I still write to one of the women who was a social worker in the Thom Clinic. She's living, she's in a rest home near Wellesley, Massachusetts. So we've kept in touch over the years, which I usually like to do when I meet people that I have a connection with.

You were going to ask me about why I didn't work at MIT, possibly.

9-00:32:08

Wilmot:

I was going to ask you about that, and then I was wondering, so I'm not knowing so much about psychology in this era, or even in the current era. However, what—so would you say that the Thom Clinic and the Children's Center that you were working at, were they both kind of very progressive or at the forefront in terms of their thinking about child psychology and development?

9-00:32:34

Maslach:

Yes, they were. Yes, they were. And of course, I think the Children's Center was more research-minded. The Thom Clinic was actually helping to solve the problems, trying to treat people, especially people with low incomes who couldn't afford psychiatric help. And I imagine they got city funds. As I say, the Children's Center was definitely a research organization. It would be an interesting thing to do, to sort of—for me to look up to find out what kinds of studies or what kinds of conclusions they had come to. In fact, I don't even know how long they—whether they still exist. I do know that when I came to California and I was involved in psychotherapy, that people had heard of it and known of it. It did have a reputation.

9-00:33:26

Wilmot:

How long were you there?

9-00:33:27

Maslach:

I was just there for a year.

9-00:33:29

Wilmot:

You were there for a year, and then at Thom as well?

9-00:33:31

Maslach:

Yes. I got married in 1943, spent the next year getting my degree, then one year at the Habit Clinic, and left because they wanted to pay me, and I didn't want to be on their payroll and thought it would be better, then took this center appointment. It was just three years before the war started winding down.

To answer the question about taking a job at MIT, I was not that interested—I mean, I was kind of turned off by the attitude of both the people at Waltham

Harvey Radio and also at the Harvard Underwater Sound Laboratory. That kind of mathematics was not my passion at all. So I would just be doing it because it would be a contribution to make. So if I took a job at MIT, again, it would be the same kind of a job. I would be calculating formulas for exotic problems.

Besides, I realized—because I had a higher degree than George did, that I would be paid more than he did. I just didn't think that was a good idea. I mean, he was working very hard and very industrious, and I just think that it wouldn't have been a good idea to do that.

9-00:35:05

Wilmot:

Did you know other couples where that was the situation, where the woman in the couple had a higher degree than the husband?

9-00:35:14

Maslach:

Not there. Because most of the women took more routine jobs, as a drafts person or as a writer or something like that. Almost all of the men outranked them in terms of their professional degrees, in engineering or science or whatever.

9-00:35:38

Wilmot:

Why did you feel like it wouldn't be a good idea?

9-00:35:42

Maslach:

For me to work there?

9-00:35:43

Wilmot:

For you to take on a job that outranked or paid higher than your husband because you had a higher degree?

9-00:35:53

Maslach:

Well, because I think this would have bothered him. I mean, we went to high school together, and I was the smart girl in the class. I've always felt that that was a problem in our marriage, because there's been a sense of competition, as to who's right, even over things like child-rearing. So I think it just wouldn't have worked. I would have been doing something I really didn't like to do, and we didn't need the money that much. That wasn't a problem. I just decided I would rather do something that pleased me. Obviously, I chose correctly.  
[laughs]

9-00:36:35

Wilmot:

Yes, you did. Well, I wanted to—when you left the job at the Children's Center, was that because—

9-00:36:48

Maslach:

Well, it was a combination. This was the third year, it was approaching—it was in 1945, and we could see that the war was winding down. By that time, we knew we weren't going to be invaded and that we were going to win, and so it would be winding down. So this is the point where I got pregnant. Obviously it was something I really wanted, having children—in fact, in my letters, I kept

telling my mother that while the war was on, this wasn't something that we would want to consider.

9-00:37:24

Wilmot: Being pregnant?

9-00:37:25

Maslach: Being pregnant. So then when we finally decided yes, maybe it would be possible, it took me three months to get pregnant. During those three months, I thought that maybe I would not ever be able to have children, and I was just devastated.

9-00:37:42

Wilmot: You were worried?

9-00:37:42

Maslach: Yes, and I thought, wouldn't that be ironic, somebody who really wants children, not to be able to have them? So I was very happy when I did get pregnant, and I was pregnant most of the time I worked at the Children's Center. Then in the fall of that year, 1945, when at least the European war seemed to be over, the government was willing to send me back to wherever I came from. So we decided that it would be best if I went back to San Francisco and had the baby there. I went back in the fall, maybe September, and Christina was born in January, so I was considerably pregnant.

9-00:38:33

Wilmot: You were then eight months [?].

9-00:38:31

Maslach: Yes.

9-00:38:33

Wilmot: Well, let me ask you, how did you enjoy being pregnant? What was it like to kind of watch your body change and—?

9-00:38:39

Maslach: I handled it very well. It wasn't a problem, and at that point, I stopped taking cream in my coffee, because it was too sweet. I just liked the black coffee. And the other thing I remember was how much I liked tomato sauce. They would serve this canned Rice-a-Roni type of stuff to the kids at lunchtime at the center, and I just loved it, I thought it was the most wonderful thing in the world.

9-00:39:13

Wilmot: And that was your craving.

9-00:39:14

Maslach: Yes.

9-00:39:19

Wilmot:

Did you have morning sickness at all?

9-00:39:20

Maslach:

No, I didn't. No, I was really okay. We decided, that George was going to stay in the East, and try to find some kind of a position, because although he wanted to come back to the West Coast, nothing was happening here. So he knew he had to get a job back there, and so he stayed, and the idea was that I would go back and stay with my family, and then he would come take his two weeks' vacation at the time that our baby was due.

9-00:39:55

Wilmot:

Did all those plans, did the timing work out?

9-00:39:57

Maslach:

[laughs] Well, the worst timing was my trip back on the train to California, because that was the week that daylight saving changed. So when you're going west, the days lengthen anyway. And then to add another hour on, and I was ravenously hungry the whole time I was on the train. Then I would have to walk through these cars and open these heavy doors to get to the dining room. My seat was next to a guy in uniform, so everybody thought that we were a couple. I can remember finally meeting some people, because it was such a long and boring trip, it took five days, you know, by train. And so I was talking to some of the other people on the train, and I said something about "I would have loved to have been able to play bridge with you," They said, "Well, we were afraid to ask you, because we thought you were a couple." Anyway, that was the first thing.

So then the second thing was that when George came, Christina did not. So he came and left, and I still hadn't delivered. The birth date was two weeks late.

9-00:41:13

Wilmot:

She was just kind of enjoying staying inside.

9-00:41:16

Maslach:

Well, it probably was my rhythm, because this was true of all my children, they were always two weeks late. The negative part of it was that I had gone to the doctor, I had been seeing a doctor in the East, and so I said, "I'm going to California, to San Francisco. Can you recommend somebody?" So he gives me the name of a doctor, and when I get here, I find out he's the head of gynecology at University of San Francisco. So I'm thinking, Well, why did he give me this man? There must be something wrong. I was really very, very apprehensive about why I had this particular doctor. So I went to see this doctor—I really didn't know a thing about childbirth. Nobody had told me. The only stories I had heard were my mother's case of when I was born, because my parents were in Greenwich Village, where my father was studying art. When she went to the hospital in New York she got there between shifts. So one shift put her in a room and left, and didn't tell the next shift that she was there. So my mother was by

herself and about to deliver me, without being prepped or anything else. The story was that they had to hold me back until they were ready.

Well, the thought of when you're about to deliver a baby and told that it is not time is just horrendous. But that's all she told me. So I had absolutely no idea. I did ask the doctor, I said, "Well, what is it like, having a baby?" And he said, "It's like falling off a log." So that's all he told me.

9-00:43:05

Wilmot:

What's that!? What kind of advice is that?

9-00:43:07

Maslach:

And I did all the wrong things. The present Lamaze method teaches you how to relax, but what I would do is tighten up, which was exactly wrong, every time. It happened the night that I delivered was when there were just a lot of other women there also, and so they were very, very understaffed and really busy. So I can remember the resident there giving me a bell, and he said, "Whenever a pain comes, ring the bell." Well, I thought this meant somebody would come, but all they were doing was listening so that they knew how soon I would deliver. I can remember banging this bell, and then when the second stage arrived, and I had no idea about the second stage, I just started to scream. I just couldn't believe that I would be screaming.

The good part about it was the fact that the doctor did not believe in too much medication. That was good. I assumed that I was going to go in and go to sleep, and wake up and there would be the baby. But they only gave me the minimum amount of anesthetic, so that you come out healthier, and don't have bad reactions.

So I delivered Christina, finally. What was so charming was in the letter I wrote to George describing her, I said—and I don't remember this—I really fell in love with her. She had this cute little pointed face, but she had black hair starting right above the eyes, and of course, this hair drops out shortly after. But anyway, the doctors, because of the strong heartbeat, kept saying, "You're going to have a boy, you're going to have a boy." And this would have been the first boy in the Maslach family, so they were very disappointed that it turned out to be a girl. When my mother-in-law came to see me, she said, "They get better looking in six weeks."

So I can remember saying, "Well, she's going to have a wonderful personality, even if she is this ugly little thing." Anyway, that was the way we started out. So I would be writing George letters saying how—describing this, how much I liked Christina, and saying, "You'll be in love with her when you see her," and so then he would write back responding to my letters.

On the tenth day, I hemorrhaged. I was doing well as a recovering person. I was walking and doing all the things I should and feeling wonderful, and for some

reason, I just started to bleed one night. I lost so much blood that when Mother came to see me the next morning, I just said, “I just want to die, I want to go to sleep.” She said, “Oh, you can’t, you have a little baby.” So then they started putting in blood transfusions, so you come back to life.

But the letters that I wrote to George were completely out of sync. He would be thinking everything’s fine, and I would get these letters saying how happy he is that everything’s fine, and here everything isn’t fine. Then he hears what happened to me, so then when that letter comes back, I’m on the way to recovery again. But anyway, it took us sixteen days before we got out of the hospital, which was unusual. Unfortunately, they hadn’t told me Christina had a breast infection, and so she couldn’t sleep on her stomach. It was rather a rough situation for both of us, but anyway, it was a delightful product, because her black hair dropped out and she was a little blonde with curls, and absolutely adorable.

9-00:47:13

Wilmot: That’s amazing how that happens.

9-00:47:16

Maslach: Yes. So anyway—

9-00:47:22

Wilmot: So how long did you stay out here on the West Coast?

9-00:47:26

Maslach: Well, she was born January 21, and I went back in March. She was about six weeks old when I took her back, and that was the first time I had ever flown in a plane. We flew down to Los Angeles and got on a Constellation, and then flew to New York. I was nursing her.

9-00:47:46

Wilmot: Did you, you did breastfeed?

9-00:47:48

Maslach: Yes. My mother was an extreme advocate of breastfeeding.

9-00:47:58

Wilmot: What were her reasons for thinking it was a good idea? Was it just health of the baby, health of the mother, or—?

9-00:48:03

Maslach: I don’t know why she—she just said it was the thing to do, just like she didn’t like beer and she didn’t like smoking. [laughs] But anyway, it was much, much earlier than other people were saying it was important. I can remember sitting on this plane, trying to figure out when I could nurse her. I can remember she cried a little bit, and I remember that somebody sitting next to me—saying, Well, this is a little too much, to have a crying baby on board.

It was a long flight, it wasn't one of these quickie flights, it took quite a while.

9-00:48:54

Wilmot:

Was it just one quick flight, or did you stop over?

9-00:48:55

Maslach:

No, I think we had to stop, because I recall that something—it couldn't be twelve hours, but it felt like it, at least. So I was pretty much trapped, although there was a very nice woman on the plane who decided to be my helper, so she would hold the baby while I could go to the bathroom. But anyway, we did arrive, and she was six weeks old.

9-00:49:21

Wilmot:

And so that in March was when George got to meet Christina, is that right?

9-00:49:28

Maslach:

Yes. And he really wasn't interested in her. [laughs] I mean, he was just more interested in—I guess he was more worried about me and more interested in me, and it took him a while. The job that he finally had was—see, there were about fourteen companies that decided that they would use these MIT scientists to form a research laboratory for them. So they organized this research lab and then hired these engineers from MIT, engineers and scientists, to staff it. What they did was buy the Hiram Manville estate in Pleasantville, New York. They remodeled the horse stables, which were wood paneled, beautiful old stables. They remodeled them into apartments. So twelve families lived in this U-shaped apartment house on the estate. Ours was two-story. We had two bedrooms upstairs.

9-00:50:42

Wilmot:

It sounds gorgeous. At one point, so this was right after you got back that you went to Pleasantville?

9-00:50:47

Maslach:

Yes, in '46.

9-00:50:49

Wilmot:

In 1946, like in that April or March? Was there a transition period when you were in Boston?

9-00:50:54

Maslach:

No, I went from Boston to San Francisco in, say, September, 1945, and then to Pleasantville in 1946. We stayed there until 1949. We just stayed there three years.

9-00:51:13

Wilmot:

Okay, I think I'm confused about something. So that is just—were you in Pleasantville when you went to—when you were pregnant?



9-00:51:20

Maslach:

No, no. They were just closing up the laboratory at MIT and we decided this was the best time for me to go to San Francisco, before I got more pregnant. Pregnant just enough so that I could travel and get back home. And the fact that it would be nice to be with my parents when the baby was born was helpful, very helpful.

9-00:51:43

Wilmot:

Did your mom fly out to help as well, did she come to visit you on the East Coast at that point?

9-00:51:49

Maslach:

No, because I went home, I lived with her.

9-00:51:51

Wilmot:

For those six months.

9-00:51:51

Maslach:

But when our second child was born, when Jamie was born, he was born in White Plains, New York, and then Mother did come. We have video tapes of that, because she was wonderful playing with Christina. I was so afraid that it would take me a long time to get pregnant again, that when we decided to have a second child, we started early. So I got pregnant immediately. My second child was only eighteen months younger than Christina.

9-00:52:22

Wilmot:

So you started right, like about nine months—when she was nine months old.

9-00:52:29

Maslach:

And I have learned since then that this is not recommended at all. [laughs] I mean, I literally had two babies then, because Christina just stopped growing, she just regressed, and started being a baby as well. So I had two babies. It was really fascinating, because almost everybody in this U-shaped group had a baby, so there were about a dozen babies within one year. So you had a chance to observe. No one child did everything first. I mean, one child would walk first, one child would talk first, one child would be toilet trained first. There was no one child that did all of these things first. It just seemed to be different patterns of growth. So again, that was another learning experience for me, to observe this. It was a little hard for me to hold out for what I believed, because what I believed in child development was not what the group felt. Toilet training was the big thing; everyone assumed you toilet trained your child as early as possible, before a year if possible, which is ridiculous.

So it had its difficulties, but then it had its pluses too. But I decided early on that this was not the way I wanted to bring up children. I didn't want to live this close to people because your family lines got blurred. I mean, people would get together for Thanksgiving, or get together for Christmas, so there was no feeling of, This is your family and this is where you belong. You were just—well, it was like a commune, I guess. If one family bought a bicycle, why then, you had to

buy a bicycle too, or else your kid was going to be taking this other little boy's bicycle. So there was a lot of group pressure on what you did.

And of course, the thing that bothered me the most was everybody knew everybody and could see everything. You could have another couple come and visit you, you could have an evening with another couple. But if you invited a third couple, then the fourth and fifth and sixth couples will say, Well, how come them and not me? So I wound up either having a party for everybody, or else just having one couple at a time come.

9-00:55:01

Wilmot:

Who were these couples? What were they like? Where were they from?

9-00:55:05

Maslach:

They were the people we all knew in Boston.

9-00:55:07

Wilmot:

The same group?

9-00:55:07

Maslach:

Yes. Only I didn't know them as well. Some of the other people knew each other better than I did, but you got to know them very well. They were—again, they were physicists, they were electrical engineers, they were—. There weren't many mechanical engineers, and this is one of George's unhappiness with the situation. There wasn't any kind of a challenge for him, because mostly it was working for film companies and doing things that didn't fit for him. When he was at MIT, working on radar was very mechanical, and so that was a big challenge. So he was not all that happy with what he was doing. He went, a meeting of his engineering society at a conference I think in New York, and they said—this was about '48, I guess—they said, "Hey, look, we'd like you to come back to Cal, we're looking for teachers."

But George felt that he had this loyalty to the company, that he couldn't pick up and leave. I think they wanted him for like February of '49. He said, "I just can't come until the fall, I have to give notice." So we didn't leave—and so by the time we got there in the fall of '49, the teaching job wasn't available, so he did research for two years before he then went into teaching.

9-00:56:40

Wilmot:

I want to ask you some more about this community in Pleasantville, and that is, was this like a semi-rural place, or a rural place, or was it suburban, or was it a town, was it a city?

9-00:56:52

Maslach:

This was a very upscale Republican area. The town itself had only about 5,000 people, and then I think the *Reader's Digest* had its headquarters in Pleasantville. That was the only other claim to fame. But these were very, very reactionary people, and well-to-do. And of course, living on this estate was

unbelievable, because there were all these gardens, clay tennis courts, swimming pool, and the big house was where they had the laboratory. They made the laboratory there. So the husbands would come home for lunch, and so they were around all the time.

I started exploring the schools, because naturally, that's my interest. I got to meet some of the people in the community, and found out that in the schools, the two things that bothered me were that they chose the room mother in a class by what kind of a silver service she had. And the better the silver service, the more chance she had of being a room mother.

The other thing was that when the kids graduated from eighth grade to go to a high school, the boys wore tuxedos. I thought, Oh, no. I would be just so out of place here with my children, that either you would face the fact of having to really fight to have your values and your things, and you just wonder, that makes it so much harder. It's difficult enough bringing up children.

So the kinds of people we met in the community were some of the intellectuals, they were liberal intellectuals. There were a number of them. They had belonged to the Woodrow Wilson Society [laughs], and we met them. We met some Quakers, and we explored the Quaker religion, because George had been Catholic, I had been—well, I guess I had been Methodist. But neither one of us felt that this was something we really believed in. So the people we met in the Quaker meeting were just wonderful, and in fact, one very prominent man named Fritz Eichenberg, who had come from Germany and was a well-renowned etcher and illustrator of books, was somebody we met that was just very impressive. He was a person, I've never experienced this with anyone else, who when he walked into a room, and without even being introduced to him, you had the feeling that he accepted you. It just blew my mind, that somebody could have that kind of a quality about him. So we remained friends with him until he died.

But anyway, we liked the Quaker philosophy, because it put the onus on you, to find out and to live the kind of life—to decide what was important. Nobody else was teaching you, there's no minister, no one tells you how to live your life or how to interpret religion or anything else. You have to discover this for yourself. But they also insisted that you live what you believe, and that I thought was a good thing.

9-01:00:27

Wilmot:

What has that meant for you in your family?

9-01:00:28

Maslach:

If they ever asked Christina what her religion was, she would say Quaker. We never really joined; I mean, we were attenders, which Quakers allow you to do. There is a whole ceremony for officially joining and being a Quaker, but we never did. But even when we came out here, we again attended the Quaker

meeting and met the Quakers that were in Berkeley, and were involved in a lot of their activities for quite a few years, and still have friends with some of the people that we met in the meeting.

I felt that the children needed some sense of religion, and that this gave them an option, that if they didn't accept this, then they would then find something else. But they wouldn't be just influenced by a best friend who was in a particular religion, so they would automatically, unthinkingly, join that religion.

Christina, as I said, always put down she was a Quaker, and some people said, "I can't believe you're a Quaker." Jamie was a conscientious objector when the war came, the Vietnam War, and was willing to go to jail if that's what the draft board said. Luckily, it didn't happen. But anyway, they believed—they learned what they believed, from that exposure.

9-01:02:01

Wilmot:

Were you raising all three children in Pleasantville?

9-01:02:04

Maslach:

No. Jamie was born in Pleasantville, and incidentally, in childbirth, I told the doctor about what had happened to me with Christina, the hemorage, and he said, "Oh, they were just careless, they left some of the placenta in. So we'll certainly watch that."

10-00:00:09

Wilmot:

They had been careless, leaving a portion of the placenta—

10-00:00:10

Maslach:

Yes, that's what the doctor said. And so they said that, We'll just be very careful, as if this head of gynecology at UCSF would make a mistake like that. Anyway, by that time, people just stayed in the hospital five days. This was the usual time. And incidentally, because of this problem I had with Christina, I started reading books, and I found a wonderful book called The Psychology of Women, by Helene Deutsch, M.D. that talked about childbirth. This was the book I should have read before I had any children, but she said that she really thought that women in childbirth should be under care, psychological care, because it was such a traumatic experience in their life, and had so much meaning to a woman. She also believed that the pain of childbirth was important, that you don't mask it and not have it, because pain in the production of something positive is really a growth experience for women.

So what I did was start reading books about natural childbirth, and there was a book by Grantley Dick Reid, M.A.M.D. in particular, Childbirth Without Fear, and told the doctors that I believed in it, so I didn't want any anesthetic, because—and of course, this was the fore-runner of the Lamaze method, that teaches you how to relax and so forth. Anyway, I did deliver Jamie, and—

10-00:02:05

Wilmot: With no anesthesia?

10-00:02:06

Maslach: Again, they gave me a whiff at the very end, but most of the time, I could just hear them saying, “I can’t believe this,” because it was going so well.

So anyway, Jamie was born, and I went home, and in ten days, I started to hemorrhage again. I remember George calling the doctor and he said, “That’s impossible, we checked everything, everything was fine.” Unfortunately, it was on a weekend, too, which was bad, but anyway, George was able to get medication to stop it. But this time, I did not have any blood transfusions, and I had to just grow out of it myself, which was a terrible setback, because I had a new baby and Christina at the same time.

10-00:02:54

Wilmot: You must have been exhausted.

10-00:02:56

Maslach: I was. The other thing that both child deliveries did was stimulate my teeth. I was very slow in my teeth erupting as a child, and I had never had my wisdom teeth. They started coming in at this time, which caused me problems, and I had to have them removed.

10-00:03:29

Wilmot: That’s so interesting. Was George there in that birth, or was that not done at that time?

10-00:03:35

Maslach: No, he was—this was back at Pleasantville, and—I don’t think he was in the hospital with me, but anyway, as I said, psychologically, it was very satisfying, because I did have pretty close to natural childbirth. I think with the three births I had, I’ve been conscious of each stage of it. So as I’ve put it together in my head I know what what it would have been like to have had a complete natural childbirth. And for a long time afterwards, one of my dreams that I would have is—it would be a pleasure dream. Someone would say to me, “You’re about to have a baby,” and I would say, “Oh, no, I’ve already had my babies.” “No, you’re going to have another baby.” So I really enjoyed having babies, and really learned from the whole experience. But I was so glad that they finally have come to this idea of that women need help and need some training ahead of time to make it a good experience, rather than just put them to sleep, or have a—what do they call it, where they anesthetize the lower part of the body—

10-00:04:51

Wilmot: A spinal epidural.

10-00:04:52  
Maslach:

Yes. Because again, I really feel that there's a loss, when that happens, if it isn't necessary.

Anyway, so in Pleasantville, I had then the two children. I was the first one to have the second child, so again, this was a setback to Christina, because she certainly didn't keep up with everybody else. She just, as I said, regressed somewhat.

10-00:05:22  
Wilmot:

Because she had been absorbing all your full attention, and then you had another person to give attention to.

10-00:05:28  
Maslach:

That's right, yes. And she was still a baby, though; she was only eighteen months when he was born. So it had an effect on her. She just was very cautious most of her life, not entering into things quickly in school. She didn't want to go to kindergarten, we had trouble with her getting her started in kindergarten in California.

10-00:05:53  
Wilmot:

Did you talk to her about the new baby that was coming? Did you tell her, "There's a new baby coming"?

10-00:05:58  
Maslach:

Oh, yes. But she would take pillows and dump them on top of him in his bassinet. I mean, it was very understandable, as to what she was feeling. But what was interesting was that when she got over this need to regress, she moved ahead into where she should have been very quickly, in terms of whatever she was doing. She walked fairly early, she took her first steps at eight months. Jamie was phenomenal, because he was what I call really walking at nine months, going up a small slide that we had.

We did have a film camera, so we did film a lot of the children's early years, especially in Pleasantville with all these gorgeous settings. I have one that's called "Walking with Jamie," because he was such an active child. I couldn't confine him, I wasn't one of these people that felt that you could stick children in a playpen and leave them for half the day. So I had all these different places that I could put him. He'd be in this bouncing chair for a while, he could be in the playpen for a while, and usually by eleven o'clock, he had had it. So then I would just walk with him, let him go, and follow him. He was a climber, and very active.

When we finally left New York, I was pregnant again. That was not planned, that just happened. I think George's father had died, and I don't know why it happened, but it did, and it was too soon, because I had three children in four years. I do not recommend that at all. But you just live with it.

So our trip from Pleasantville back to California in 1949 was with Christina at four, almost four; Jamie at two and a half; and me pregnant with Steve.

10-00:08:23

Wilmot:

I have another question for you before we get to that trip back. There's two questions. One is, what do you do to kind of get your body back after having—you've had three children, so what do you do after each pregnancy to kind of get your body back to feeling like—not like the before, it never feels like before, but just getting it back to a point where it feels comfortable—

10-00:08:47

Maslach:

Well, I was very conscious of it, but I was one of these horrible yo-yo weight people that would go up and down and up and down. I do have in one of these folders that I found, I plotted my weight, and what was happening that would make it go up, and then I would diet and exercise and it would go down, and then another crisis—usually the weight would go up because of a crisis of some sort. And then I'd go down when things were going well. But the things never went well for more than two years at a time [laughs], then there'd be another crisis.

I was reading psychology books at the same time, too, so I understood an awful lot about what was happening to the children. There was one book called *The Psychological Birth of the Human Infant* that said you shouldn't have children two years apart like everybody thought was so ideal, because that second year for the older child is a very critical year. That is the year that the children are in the "terrible twos." That is the year the child is venturing away from the family, making the first steps away from the family, and this is why they insist on putting on two different colored socks, or really doing things that parents can't stand. If they're successful and feeling comfortable at being able to take these steps away from the family, this lays the groundwork for their successful leaving the family in adolescence. And if the family has been too restrictive or too punitive, the child is afraid to move, or feels that he isn't loved if he moves away. Then this causes problems years ahead.

So all of my children have had terrible two period—Jamie in particular. He was two and a half when we moved to California. That's considered a traumatic experience for a child, to move, have a new setting or something like that. He also had a baby brother at that time.

So anyway, it helped me understand what was going on with my kids, because I think they all had childhoods that weren't that easy and that smooth, nor did their mother and father. [laughs] It was difficult.

10-00:11:31

Wilmot:

You've talked about, I was really interested when you said that your child-raising beliefs and practices were very different from the community that you were living in. Could you talk to me a little bit more about that?

10-00:11:46  
Maslach:

Well, in particular, toilet training. Because everybody was toilet training the child as soon as they could. I just accepted the fact that you waited until it seemed to be the right time. Unfortunately, with Christina, I let the group influence me, so I was just terribly unsuccessful. I can remember her just literally not doing anything very active, but just defying me, just didn't happen. This was her style whenever we disagreed. There was never a big discussion about it; it just didn't happen. So I learned that it was okay. And the same way with nursing, for instance. They just, "Oh, we don't just keep nursing, you stop." So I asked the doctor with Jamie, I guess it was, when I should stop nursing, and he said, "Well, start now, six months." It turned out all of the children, two of them at least, Christina and Jamie, they stopped nursing about the same time of age, about nine months, even though I think I had—I don't know whether I encouraged to try to cut Christina short or not.

When it came to Steve, which was really weird, he didn't stop nursing. Usually you train a child to drink from a cup, but I had to put him on a bottle, which I hadn't had the other children do because he was still nursing. I can remember going to a pediatrician down at Kaiser. She was very busy and we had to wait a while. Steve was about a year and a half, or less than that. He started unbuttoning my blouse, and she said, "What is he doing?" I said, "He wants to nurse." She said, "Oh! Why do you let him do that?" And I said, "Well, if you have any suggestions, let me know."

So the next time I came in, she had done some research, and told me about the Trobriand Islanders, how they let their children nurse for some time. Years later, a couple of years later when Steve came in and was showing some very enterprising things about her office or asking questions or something, she said, "He's the one!" And I said, "Yes, he's the one." So you take your cues from your children, and they have their reasons. They're usually more right than you are.

10-00:14:52So  
Wilmot:

Was it, in terms of just one last question on Pleasantville, was it a good thing to be kind of in an environment of young mothers? Were you supportive of each other, did you learn from each other?

10-00:15:04  
Maslach:

Well, we certainly learned from each other, because we learned a lot of things just by observing. As I said, I told you that no one child does everything first, and every child seems to do something that makes their parents really proud and happy with them. So there wasn't competition in that sense.

10-00:15:21  
Wilmot:

Was there support for each other?



10-00:15:23  
Maslach:

Yes, except for me, because I was the only one that had a degree in psychology, and so the feeling was, Oh, her child, you know. I can remember one catastrophic time, and I think Chris was—let's see, was she a year, or maybe she was two? That they had a party up at a big house where one of the executives lived, and were giving a Christmas party for the children. So we were all up there with our little kids. One of the workmen was going to pretend to be Santa Claus, and had a big bell. He came around to a window and started knocking on the window, ringing this bell. And at that point, the venetian blind fell on the dishes that were on the table. Well, Christina started to scream, and I just carried her home screaming, because she was just absolutely terrified. I mean, from these combinations of things.

By that time, it didn't bother me any more, because I just knew that we were different, and we were being criticized, but—. When we had a birthday party for her, for instance, what I would do is have her help me, so that she would not be forced to play with kids. We're talking about two-year-olds. So I just would use a lot of the techniques that I had learned, as to how to make life comfortable for her, and I didn't care what other people thought. In fact, it didn't make any difference, it was better if they thought that I didn't know so much about it after all.

10-00:17:10  
Wilmot:

Interesting. You've said in the past that there was kind of a communication as you and George kind of became on the same page about—maybe I'm asking this question wrong—that there was kind of growth, or growing, as you and George became on the same page about child-rearing practices. Does that sound familiar?

10-00:17:35  
Maslach:

No, it doesn't, it sounds exactly opposite. We never were on the same page. [laughs] Again, I have this feeling that this is where competition came in, again. Even though I was the one that had the degree in child development, George was more like the average parent. He would do what his parents did, even though he didn't like what his parents did, he still did it. So he held the kids to a very high standard of behavior that just wasn't realistic, and that is that you weren't supposed to fight. I can remember when Steve wound up the identified patient in our family, because he was the healthiest one. Usually, the healthiest child is the one that will act out and let you know what's going on; the other ones will sort of keep it in.

He was thrown out of grammar school one day, and we had a psychiatrist that we took him to. The psychiatrist said, "You're a funny family. You make your children behave at home, and so then they have to act out in public, and it should be the other way around." So we did differ a lot. And unfortunately, Steve was a very clever little boy, so he knew how to handle his parents. The expression goes, "let's you and him fight," so George and I would start arguing and then he

would be able to walk away. We had a very interesting time, bringing up the kids.

But obviously, it worked out fine in the long run, even though, as I said, we had our difficulties at the time.

10-00:19:24

Wilmot:

Well, I'm thinking we should close for today?

10-00:19:27

Maslach:

I'm just trying to think, was there anything more that I wanted to say about Pleasantville? [pause] I guess I don't believe in communal living, because even with all these intelligent people meeting each other, it was difficult to really have a serious conversation about something that was happening in the world. So what they would do is resort to playing intellectual games, like a person would say, "I'm R," and they would be thinking of somebody whose name began with R, like Rasputin. And so then you ask questions, and then you figure out who it was, and it was like charades. I just found that crazy. [laughs] I didn't like it. I really didn't fit in. And as I said, I guess I was a little bit more, or we were a little bit more liberal as far as politics went, although I wouldn't say George was. But again, it just seemed to be contentious. I was kind of the target for a lot of the things that happened.

I don't know whether I ever mentioned that there was one man that we would play bridge with, and he would keep two scores: one which you made, and the other which you should have made. [laughs] I thought this was really, really far out. George was not that happy with the work he was doing there, so it was easy for us to really jump at the chance to come back to California. And people told George that he would regret it, because he had such a cushy job there, that as one of the heads said, "Oh, you could have your grandchildren here." And yet, it wasn't for us at all, and it turned out that everybody did leave eventually. In fact, we talked some of them into coming to California, who are still here in California.

But it was a nice period, and as I say, I think it did supply the support for the women, because we're still friends, and a lot of them that haven't died, we're still in contact with. And I was a better friend away than I was there, to tell you the truth.

10-00:21:55

Wilmot:

That happens sometimes.

10-00:21:56

Maslach:

Yes. But I think for those first two years, when you are so bogged down, especially me, so bogged down with just household chores, it was nice to have somebody else around, to even just share child talk—what kind of soap do you use, or whatever.

10-00:22:15

Wilmot:

When you say people wouldn't have conversations about real things happening in the world, for example, and I'm wondering if my timing, my chronology might be off, but for example, how were people discussing the kind of issues that—how were people discussing, for example, the bombs that were dropped in Japan, the nuclear bombs that were dropped in Japan? Was there a discussion of that? Did that happen in that time frame and was there a conversation about it?

10-00:22:47

Maslach:

There really weren't that many conversations about things. Now, whether it was because we had young children, and when you have young children, you kind of close in on that. Because I know that when I came to California, when we came to California, the big thing that was happening was the—

10-00:23:09

Wilmot:

Loyalty oath?

10-00:23:10

Maslach:

No, it was the people from Los Alamos that were put to death, the spy people, the Rosenbergs.

And that was happening when Steve was born. I can remember being aware of it, but not really caught up in it. I just thought that it just seemed to be that this is what maybe childbirth does, it protects you. It makes you focus on the problem at hand. And of course, in my case, when I was technically parenting for seven straight years, I mean, that was a long time. When we moved over to Berkeley in 1951, we put Jamie in a parent nursery school, and one of the things they required is that you come to the parent meetings, because this is when they would talk to you about children. I used to adore going to them, I couldn't wait to go to them, because here were adults talking about something I was really interested in, rather than this is a chore that you have to do to keep your child in the program.

I really did feel that you don't have that many children. In other words, this is the beauty of spacing them, so that you do have a little more time for yourself and time in a couple for each other, which again, it really cuts down the amount of time you have to do things together. Having three children, and especially children that need supervision, is difficult. What we did on this hill, Panoramic, was that we would take turns taking care of each other's children. We had kind of a swapping thing, "I'll babysit for your kids tonight," so we did some of that.

But you just didn't feel that enterprising, because it was always such a job.

10-00:25:23

Wilmot:

Okay. Let's close for today, and perhaps next week, we'll start off on the trip across country, and I'll have some follow-up questions about Pleasantville.



Interview #6: May 27, 2004  
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11-00:00:13  
 Wilmot:

Doris Cuneo Maslach, interview number six. May 27, 2004.

Well, first off, I just wanted to ask you about, we were just having a lovely conversation off-tape, off-camera, about the treasures that you were finding in your basement, and I'm wondering if you could tell me about that.

11-00:00:38  
 Maslach:

Well, I seem to be the one—I mean, this whole family collects things. They don't seem to get rid of anything. And I've carried on that tradition. But I've been collecting things not only my family, my family of birth, the Cuneo family and the McLean family, I have things that Mother has saved, and then I've gone on to save things that I have thought was important. So a lot of these are in boxes in the basement, and one of the ongoing projects is to somehow organize it, put things that belong in one era or to one family together, so that they're readily accessible. I seem to be able to find things whenever I need them, but sometimes it takes a lot of searching.

I have a granddaughter, this is Christina's youngest, who is named Tanya, who seems to love to help me do this. She keeps saying to me, "Grandma, I'll come over and help you with your basement." So we made a date to do it, and she came—

11-00:01:41  
 Wilmot:

How old is she now?

11-00:01:43  
 Maslach:

She'll be going on twenty-five. She's the one who graduated from NYU in the Tish School in photography. She's now at the California College of Arts and Crafts, which has changed its name to something else. But anyway, she's getting a master's degree in curating. So of course, she's interested in a lot of these things. But whenever she comes to help me, she just seems to find treasures. She's able to go through things more minutely and spot things. One of the treasures she found yesterday that we were talking about was a photograph of the photographer Tina Modotti, and it's signed to my aunt Minnie, who was my father's oldest sister. It said that, "With great admiration and affection," to my aunt. The date seems to be 1921. So of course, Tanya knew all about her, and she was just so excited that she could find this. She said, "Grandma, this is something that's important!"

11-00:02:53

Wilmot:

It's also, it's just so exciting, too, that she's a photographer, your granddaughter and all, and then she's found this wonderful image, this really stunning image of Tina Modotti.

11-00:03:06

Maslach:

So anyway, it's—as I said, she also, just a lot of manuscripts and books and operas, books that were printed in the 1850s and '60s that are really significant, and of course, it's on the list to find out where they should go, because they shouldn't remain in my basement forever. So anyway, I expect her to help on that too.

But I've been finding things that I had kept, and I guess I would like to add to some of the things we've said here, because you've asked questions about Boston and about Pleasantville. Boston in particular, I've been able to find letters that my mother kept of letters that I wrote. I remember you said, "Well, what did you do socially?" and I think I said, "Oh, we just went out to dinner and went to movies to find out how the war was going." And this is not what my letters said. Obviously, I was a very ambitious first wife and was entertaining these other engineers that had come from California. And also, the people we met through this Blaney family. I think in even one of the letters, I remarked about, Wow, how come we know all these important people? So it was quite different.

11-00:04:31

Wilmot:

You were a young married, a young wife then.

11-00:04:34

Maslach:

Well, I remember, I do remember one thing I once tried in this strangest apartment, this very cold apartment.

11-00:04:41

Wilmot:

On Joy?

11-00:04:41

Maslach:

On Joy Street. Where I decided to have a soufflé and had no idea that soufflés are very, very delicate things. You had to have the right temperature, they have to be served right when they're done. I knew none of this. I still served a soufflé that was very presentable, and only later did I found out all the pitfalls that I could have been in at the time.

But I'm just trying to think of the other Boston—I guess I told you a lot about all the traveling we did, which was one of the things we did a lot in Boston.

11-00:05:27

Wilmot:

And you also said off-tape that you also had found the cache of letters which was your letters to George from San Francisco.

11-00:05:36  
Maslach:

That was when we left Pleasantville. What happened, the war ended, and I was pregnant with Christina. So what we were told was, because we didn't know where we would be living or what we would be doing now, after this MIT position that George had ended. So the decision was that since the government would send us back to where we came from, that since I was about six months, seven months pregnant, it would be best to send me home, so that I would have baby in San Francisco with my parents, and then meanwhile, George would find out what he would be doing, and where we would be living.

11-00:06:21  
Wilmot:

And we talked about this a bit last time. You told me the story, yes. But I wondered if the letters that you found this week were more revealing.

11-00:06:30  
Maslach:

Well, yes, they were, because again, I knew I had a difficult time, but I didn't realize how difficult a time I had had. I actually needed six blood transfusions. My doctor was the head of gynecology, of obstetrics and gynecology, at UC San Francisco.

At first I wondered, was there something wrong? Why was he recommended to me? I don't think that was the reason; I think that was the only doctor that my Pleasantville doctor had ever heard of out here. But anyway, it was quite an experience, because I was able to write the letters back to George telling him almost day by day what was happening. I was in the hospital sixteen days. This doctor believed in keeping women in the hospital for ten days, which was a long time at that time. Obviously, it's gotten shorter and shorter, and people have their children at home, delivered at home. But anyway, he just pointed out that it was a good thing I was in the hospital for ten days, because hemorrhaging on the ninth day was rather severe.

I think the thing that tickled me most in the letters was, I kept saying that I fell in love with Christina immediately. Even though she was not an attractive baby, and George's mother said, "Well, they get better in six weeks."

11-00:08:09  
Wilmot:

You said that last time too.

11-00:08:11  
Maslach:

Yes. So I had reiterated this in the letters, that she wasn't that attractive, but at least she seemed to be a wonderful—she's different, I kept saying, she's different, and I'm in love with her. And of course, it sort of carried out, the fact that she was a wonderful child, wonderful daughter.

Anyway, finally George did decide that he was going to take this position in Pleasantville, and that's where we lived in Pleasantville. I don't know how much we said about that town.

11-00:08:50

Wilmot:

Well, let me—I'll try and tell you. The last time, we talked a bit about Pleasantville, in fact, we were just rounding up on perhaps telling—getting to the story of coming back across the country. So I guess just to start, I should ask you, was there anything you wanted to add about Pleasantville? I have some questions, but I wanted to know if there's anything you wanted to add.

11-00:09:16

Maslach:

I can't remember, did we talk a lot about what it was like, living with a dozen people, each with one baby?

11-00:09:25

Wilmot:

Yes, we talked a great deal about that, and we talked about different parenting styles, and—

11-00:09:33

Maslach:

What kind of community it was, as I recall.

11-00:09:34

Wilmot:

And what kind of community it was. And we talked about your children's development in that time and in that atmosphere, kind of their development as various young people.

11-00:09:48

Maslach:

And the fact that I did not—really was not excited about bringing up children in this particular environment.

11-00:09:56

Wilmot:

Yes, you said, "I had to get out of there," because of the kind of the town, was kind of conservative, and how to be in the PTA required a certain kind of—I don't know—

11-00:10:03

Maslach:

Silver service.

11-00:10:08

Wilmot:

Silver service, all right. So that's where we were with Pleasantville. I had some more questions, if I may ask.

11-00:10:13

Maslach:

Sure.

11-00:10:14

Wilmot:

Well, first off, I wanted to ask you about, you were part of a community of wives and women—wives, women who were married to men who were doing classified work. Is that right, at Pleasantville?

11-00:10:33

Maslach:

That's right.



11-00:10:35

Wilmot:

Or would it be more of the previous—

11-00:10:35

Maslach:

Some of it was still classified at Pleasantville. There was never a discussion of what anybody was doing. I mean, that was off limits, and in fact, I guess one of the things that bothered me was the fact that people didn't seem to want to discuss anything significant [about] the world. Maybe it was because we all had babies and we were all kind of focused on little children. I think that somehow, nature has a way of blocking things out so that you concentrate on just that. But I found it rather stifling myself, and so I would be the one that would be bringing up issues, so I was kind of the target a lot.

They \_\_\_\_\_ were playing intellectual word games, which I thought was a waste of time, because they needed to do something that was stimulating.

11-00:11:33

Wilmot:

What do you mean when you say intellectual word games?

11-00:11:36

Maslach:

Well, there was, I think the name of the game was called Rasputin—

11-00:11:40

Wilmot:

Oh, oh, I see what you mean.

11-00:11:42

Maslach:

You say, "I'm thinking of R," and that was—you ask questions and so forth.

11-00:11:46

Wilmot:

Yes, we talked about that one.

11-00:11:48

Maslach:

Did I talk about the bridge? They played bridge a lot, and one of the men that I played with would keep two scores for me, one that I made and one that I should have made.

11-00:12:01

Wilmot:

Yes. What did that mean?

11-00:12:04

Maslach:

Well, he was telling me, "You're not so hot." You know.

11-00:12:08

Wilmot:

My goodness.

11-00:12:10

Maslach:

It was interesting that he was one of the first ones to die, and we did have a reunion out at Asilomar in California. One of the wives had arranged it. So a number of the, I would say, five or six of these couples met from different—they

were living in different parts of the country at the time. He obviously knew he was dying, and he spent one night apologizing to me. [laughs] I thought that was kind of strange, because we couldn't figure it out, what—

11-00:12:45

Wilmot:

For kind of disparaging your performance at bridge?

11-00:12:49

Maslach:

No, just in general, criticizing me. I mean, if I were talking about something, he might count up how many times I said “you know,” and then tell me, you know, at the end of the conversation. But as I said, we've kept in touch with as many of them that are still alive, and of course, one by one, we were some of the youngest, I would say, so a lot of them were older than we were.

11-00:13:17

Wilmot:

So in that environment, did you know about what George's work was, or were you privy to that, or was that kind of like—

11-00:13:32

Maslach:

No, all I knew in Boston when he was working on radar. I don't know even whether he told me the word, but he did say that what he was working on was, that he couldn't talk about it. That was even more so, but they were doing some work, and I don't know what it was, but we didn't—I guess this involves again being interested in the community, because again, I wanted to meet some of the neighbors that lived in the community.

11-00:14:03

Wilmot:

In Pleasantville?

11-00:14:03

Maslach:

In Pleasantville. And also, I was interested in any kind of a political committee. I had heard about a group that had been called the League of Nations. It was formed after World War I, because the people were concerned about the war and formed a League of Nations Committee, I guess assuming that the League of Nations would help prevent another war. This group had sort of morphed into a current group, and I don't know exactly whether they had a name or not. I think they still used the League of Nations name for the committee. But anyway, we met some of the people, and they were setting up meetings, so that you could hear speakers, because then, the big topic was the United Nations. So of course, again a lot of the people were interested in that, and certainly I was. So we did—but this is embarrassing—what is the name of the man that Whittaker Chambers, that was very involved in the United Nations—that was forming it, that was then accused by Whittaker Chambers?

11-00:15:26

Wilmot:

You know, this is going to be embarrassing for both of us, because both of us will know. I don't know, I'm thinking Ralph Bunche-

11-00:15:34  
Maslach:

No.

11-00:15:33  
Wilmot:

I'm thinking—

11-00:15:35  
Maslach:

No, it's a name that will come to me. But anyway—

11-00:15:38  
Wilmot:

Woodrow Wilson—

11-00:15:39  
Maslach:

No. It was a young man that was very instrumental in setting up the United Nations, and he was accused of being a Communist by Whittaker Chambers. It was a great, great big thing. Well, he was one of the speakers at one of the meetings we went to.

11-00:15:55  
Wilmot:

Taft, Hartley, either of them?

11-00:15:57  
Maslach:

No. But I'll-

11-00:16:00  
Wilmot:

The attorney for him?

11-00:16:02  
Maslach:

I'll figure it out, and I haven't mentioned his name, and I will figure it out, what it was, who he was, and put it in, insert it in a subsequent meeting.

But anyway, there was a lot of interest in, because Roosevelt was still president and running again, and I think another group was formed, whether it was art, sciences, and professions for Roosevelt [proper name?]. So anyway, we attended some of these meetings to be able to hear what was going on, and I think Lillian Hellman had a big estate in Westchester County, and she had given a big picnic meeting for Henry Wallace, who was again, he had been the vice president and was thinking of running for president. So we attended that. But our general impression was that these people weren't going in the direction we wanted to go, so as I say, we attended the meetings but we didn't join anything.

And lo and behold, one day George came home and he said, "They've taken away my clearance." I said, "Why?" He said, "Well, all they say is, you have been known to have been a member of a group that is Communist." So if he had been working for any company but the company he was working with, he would have immediately lost his job, until the matter was settled and he could have been reinstated. This company said, "What we'll do is we'll take you out of the big laboratory and put you in the log cabin." They had a log cabin on the estate, "and so you can do your work there." So they just didn't give him any classified

work to do, and so meanwhile, he had to go to Washington and have a hearing. He had a hearing before a military board to find out whether this charge was true or not. The assumption was, “We think it’s true, and you have to prove—” So they accuse you, and so you have to prove yourself innocent, rather than they produce any information to prove you’re guilty.

So it was a question of George having to research his life as to what he’s done all of his life, and we asked the people—we lived in such close quarters on this estate, all dozen of us families in one building, that you couldn’t invite anybody there without everybody knowing it. So we asked some of the people, “Just say what you know about us.” Some of them were very indignant and said, “Absolutely,” and went to Washington with George, and some of them absolutely refused. They just didn’t want to be involved.

11-00:18:57

Wilmot:

Just turned their backs?

11-00:18:58

Maslach:

Yes. This hasn’t been publicized, but this was one of the most severe civil rights situations that had been going on. It was just before the McCarthy hearings, but everybody was really frightened about communism, and would call people Communists at the drop of a hat. So anyway, George had to hire an attorney, and he did hire the attorneys that had written the Taft-Hartley Act, which was a very conservative measure, and did have this hearing. One of the men that he met in the community, a Mr. [Coggeshall?], was one of the family fathers in the community, went with him, as well as some of the senior engineers that he was working with at Pleasantville.

So he had the hearing, and George continued to work in the log cabin. We didn’t hear from Washington at all. So one day, when George came home for lunch, because this was one thing that happens on this estate, the men could come home and have lunch. The washing machine wasn’t working, so this sort of annoyed him, and he was saying, “Well, I wonder why—we haven’t heard from Washington.” I said, “Well, why don’t we call?” So we called up, and their response was, “Oh, yes, you’ve been cleared, haven’t you heard?” Technically, if it had been somebody else, he would have been out of a job, waiting for this response to get his job back.

11-00:20:36

Wilmot:

And just could have ruined—it ruined people’s lives.

11-00:20:38

Maslach:

Yes.

11-00:20:40

Wilmot:

This was what year?

11-00:20:40  
Maslach:

This was probably about '48.

11-00:20:46  
Wilmot:

And what was the duration of that time of being under suspicion for basically subversive activities?

11-00:20:55  
Maslach:

I think the whole thing lasted about four months.

11-00:21:00  
Wilmot:

Four months. And then that impacted your relationships with your neighbors and his colleagues?

11-00:21:05  
Maslach:

Not really, because they were really shocked as well. I mean, the ones that supported us. The ones that didn't support us, we just said, well, they weren't that close friends anyway, we didn't consider them friends.

11-00:21:22  
Wilmot:

Who was the person who said, "And George Maslach is subversive, God help our country."?

11-00:21:28  
Maslach:

Well, George had to document his early life. He had been very, very active in the Boy Scouts, besides being a Sea Scout as well. He then had summer jobs, packing—setting up camps, Boy Scout camps, and packing in the High Sierra. He knew two people that he worked under very closely, and one of them that he wrote to, wouldn't write a letter saying what he knew about George. The other one, named Vic Foster, wrote back and said, "If George Maslach is subversive, God help this country." Because nobody is as loyal—. So as I said, it was really—looking back on it now, you can talk about it and think about it, but it was kind of scary at the time. Especially when we had two children and another one on the way, and wondering what would be the eventual fallout of this. Because in general, engineers are rarely—there aren't many Communists. Engineers are very practical, and want things to work.

11-00:22:47  
Wilmot:

How would you describe yourselves, how would you characterize yourselves politically?

11-00:22:51  
Maslach:

Well, the first people that we worked hard for was Adlai Stevenson. So I consider myself an Adlai Stevenson Democrat, and have never changed much from the kind of things, positions he had. I didn't think he would make a good president, because he could never make up his mind. I guess a leader eventually has to weigh everything, then make a decision. Adlai Stevenson was almost too intellectual. But anyway, he was somebody that we believed in. So Adlai Stevenson ran against Eisenhower, and we had just—this was in the early

fifties—we had just moved to Berkeley, so we were very active in calling people and taking people to the polls. We realized we took an awful lot of people to the polls who voted for Eisenhower.

But when I did precinct work, which was interesting, I would knock on a door, and if a young man answered it, he would be for Eisenhower, and his parents would be for Stevenson. Because they had lived through the war and they had lived through the Depression, and they had realized how things were. It was very interesting.

11-00:24:09

Wilmot:

In terms of, if you were—in terms of the continuum of kind of conservative Democrat to very liberal Democrat, how would you—where would you put yourself?

11-00:24:24

Maslach:

I'd put myself as a middle-of-the-road Democrat, even though in Berkeley, a middle-of-the-road Democrat is considered conservative. [laughs] I seem to have wound up on the conservative side of things in Berkeley. But Berkeley Democrats are liberals, and the rest of the country doesn't care where you are, so I would be considered liberal as a Democrat across the country. We didn't seem to go for Eugene McCarthy. But anyway, I did like John F. Kennedy, because I had gone to a meeting of faculty wives, and one of the people there was a woman named Ruth Kingman. She and Harry Kingman were people that ran Stiles Hall, I believe there's a building named after them here.

What they did, they were a two-man lobby that went to Washington, and they would lobby for a particular bill or something. They would work with anybody that they could get that would support that bill. Sometimes it would be—I guess more frequently it would be Democrats, but it could be Republicans too. They were extremely effective.

We were at this luncheon, and of course, everybody was talking about Adlai Stevenson running again, and how wonderful he was and so forth. She said, "You know, you ought to give this young JFK a look." Nobody was looking at JFK at that time. She convinced me to see what he could bring to us, so by the time he ran, I was a quite active JFK person. So this is part of Berkeley politics.

But to get back to Pleasantville, a number of things happened there that were sort of fun. We were able to get to New York frequently. I wouldn't say that frequently, but every once in a while, we were able to do something special and go to New York. The two things I remember in particular were being able to see Marlon Brando in *A Streetcar Named Desire* when he first started, with Jessica Tandy, and it was an absolutely wonderful thing I will never forget. The other time we went, we saw Ingrid Bergman in a play, *Joan of Arc*. She walked by us at the stage door.

The other thing that was exciting was—

11-00:27:27

Wilmot:

Wow. That's amazing. Ingrid Bergman in *Joan of Arc*?

11-00:27:29

Maslach:

Yes.

11-00:27:33

Wilmot:

Wow. What do you remember about those productions?

11-00:27:37

Maslach:

Just what wonderful actors and actresses—I was in tears at the end of *Streetcar*. I mean, it was so powerful and so moving. Because it was obviously Marlon Brando's, up and coming best and because I've always admired Ingrid Bergman.

But at this time also, my brother was engaged to Ann Curtis, who was the Olympic swimmer. Because of the war, there hadn't been any Olympics for some time, so she was older than the usual Olympics person. The Olympics were in London, and Ann had won two gold and one silver medal. So on her way back, she stopped in Pleasantville to meet us, because I had never met her before. That was sort of exciting, and impressed all of the Pleasantville people, that we were going to have an Olympic swimmer in the family. We still do, and it has really been a wonderful experience, because Ann has done so much.

I was studying psychology, thinking of how you handle teenagers, and as a swimmer, she would have a swim club, and have the girls in this synchronized swimming groups. She was such a wonderful role model that I can't think of a better way for a teenage girl to be involved in an activity, have such a wonderful person involved with her, as her step away, growing up and growing away from the family. I always thought that Ann was a greater psychologist and accomplished more than probably any therapists did, and I really admired her. And she's still doing it. I mean, she's in her late seventies, and her club still goes on, and she still teaches the instructors. So it's been interesting to see her be such a positive person. And of course, she's very active at Cal, in their sports program, I think. So one of the swim offices is named after her, in the clubhouse.

11-00:30:04

Wilmot:

These visits to New York City, was it just an hour away, or how far away was it?

11-00:30:11

Maslach:

Pleasantville? It was north of New York City, and I would—I just can't remember, but it was, what, an hour, hour and a half by train, or by driving.

11-00:30:24

Wilmot:

I just realized that the name "Pleasantville," after listening to you talk about it, I realized that the name "Pleasantville" is kind of an ironic name, that it actually wasn't that pleasant. It took me a minute, but—

11-00:30:35  
Maslach:

There is a movie named *Pleasantville*, you know, and of course, this was the center of the *Reader's Digest*, which of course was much more popular in those times than it is now. But those are the things that it was noted for. But it was just a very conservative, suburban, small town, and it happens to be very near Chappaqua, which is where the Clintons have bought their home, as you know. So it was bucolic, and so maybe this was a great place to be when you had little children and you really weren't being that active in the world.

The men, it was a wonderful job for the men. Not for George, because most of the work was more for physicists and electrical engineers, and he was mechanical and there wasn't as much mechanical work to do. So he was not that excited about it. So it wasn't hard for him to agree to leave to come back to Cal to teach, and to do research, which is what he did. We came back in 1949.

11-00:31:50  
Wilmot:

Yes, you came back, and you got here in 1950.

11-00:31:52  
Maslach:

That's right. That was '49.

And Steve was born in January of 1950.

11-00:32:01  
Wilmot:

Before we leave this decade and before we leave the East Coast, you were a young family, and I asked this question before in some way, and you talked a bit about being kind of very involved and absorbed by making family and raising a family in that decade. And when it came to talking about significant issues outside of the home politics, they weren't really so much as front and center. But the question I wanted to ask before we leave this decade and the East Coast and head back to Berkeley is about how, in your circle, in your circle of associates and colleagues and friends, was there a kind of a reaction or political—what was the sensibility around hearing about the kind of devastation that had been wrought by the dropping of the atom bombs on Nagasaki and Hiroshima in Japan? Was that—what was the—

11-00:33:10  
Maslach:

You know, in thinking about that, I would say the concern mostly for these people was, what kind of life would we have in this country. Because they have little children, and they're thinking—. So they were concerned about the presidential elections. Dewey was running for president against Truman at that time. A lot of them were interested in Norman Thomas, the Socialist, thinking that this would be a good life. I think there was the big debates as to whether you should vote for Norman Thomas, whether that would be a vote for Dewey.

11-00:33:53  
Wilmot:

Sounds—



11-00:33:54  
Maslach:

[laughs] Similar to what's going on now. But anyway, most of them, I think, voted for Truman, and were happy.

So I think that they considered that as just part of the war. I don't think that they really felt the impact, the fact that so many civilians were killed. I mean, it was just as though our world was small, and it didn't extend—. And of course, when we got back to California, the big issue then was the Rosenbergs. And again, you see, the whole focus of the country, almost the way it is now, is on your own safety and your own well-being, without thinking of what's going on in the rest of the world.

And as I say, I don't know whether that's because they are just young couples having to be concerned with how they're going to take care of these other young beings that they've brought into the world. But I just didn't feel that broader sense; in fact, I was even criticized when I would try to get them interested in the local school board, of what the local school board was doing. They seemed not that interested until I left. Once we left, we became much better friends with everybody, because people would visit us, and then it's almost as though they could do the things that I had been interested as long as I wasn't there to have them feel that I had influenced them in any way.

But we remained good friends with them, it's amazing, with all of them. Some stayed on the East Coast, and a number of them came out to the West Coast.

11-00:35:48  
Wilmot:

Did they head off into careers in the academy as George did, or what kinds of careers did people get into after leaving an environment like Pleasantville?

11-00:35:56  
Maslach:

One of them was head of a corporation, the Litton Corporation. I mean, they were really bright people. Another one worked down in Silicon Valley.

11-00:36:10  
Wilmot:

So they went to the private sector?

11-00:36:12  
Maslach:

Yes.

11-00:36:11  
Wilmot:

Some of them.

11-00:36:12  
Maslach:

I don't think any of them went into academia, that I can recall. Except maybe some of the people that didn't leave the East, would then wind up teaching, but not full-time—they would be an engineer, but then they would be teaching in some college, but didn't make an academic career.

11-00:36:39

Wilmot:

And the wives of the men who were working in Pleasantville, I understand that they were all kind of home makers at the time that they were in Pleasantville, but did any, did people go on and decide kind of in their midlife to have different careers, that you know of?

11-00:36:59

Maslach:

No, none of them did. I mean, they were active in their communities, as I was, but not as a career. It was a different world. There wasn't the opportunity for women to do this easily. There certainly wasn't the moral support, [laughs] in terms of people admiring you if you did. You'd be more criticized than not, and considered selfish. And of course, they didn't need the finances, they didn't need to work. The husbands usually had jobs that more than supported the family. So as I said, it's just different times. There were no divorces, either. And there were no divorces in my family in my generation. But in our subsequent generations, children lived together; they got divorced. So again, it was just a whole different way of living.

Now of course, most of the children of these people there, female as well as male, had careers. Almost all of them. I know one is a lawyer, one is in administration in social service for San Mateo County, and of course, Christina has her career. I'm just trying to think of one of the other girls. I guess I didn't know as many other girls. One of them became a psychiatrist.

11-00:38:55

Wilmot:

What was it like for you to watch this kind of shift in gender take place in your family in your lifetime? What was that like?

11-00:39:05

Maslach:

Well, it was a big surprise to me, because Christina went to Radcliffe because she was a bright student and her counselor said, "She can do anything she wants to do," although her aptitude test didn't show that she was going to be this or that. They just said, "Whatever she makes up her mind to do." So I just assumed that, going to Radcliffe, she'd meet a bright man, and then would be a wonderful wife to a bright man. I never dreamed that she would have such a career herself. It was really strange, because in our family, you don't tell your children things, they just observe. So the boys felt more—not Steve, but Jamie in particular, because he was an extremely good student, and the assumption was that he was headed in his father's footsteps, to be an academic. He probably could have been a very good one, because he loves to do research, loves to write. And yet, he was very influenced by the Vietnam War. He had such good SATs in math that he felt that if he took any courses in math and science, no matter what he did, somehow it would be used to make war. So he was just totally turned off. Instead he became an entrepreneur; he owns a small company.

But Christina, we just never transmitted any expectations, and so she was free to decide. So she decided what she wanted to do, and she's the one who followed in

her father's footsteps. It's strange, because children say that, "I know that you wanted me, you told me I had to do this," and we never said that, but just by being who you are and what your values are, they decide that this is what you think and what you expect.

11-00:41:23

Wilmot:

When you think about the role that your mother played in her life and her marriage and her family, and you kind of think about the way that your role has evolved and departed from that, what kind of thoughts—in what ways do you feel like it's departed and evolved from her, as a woman—

11-00:41:46

Maslach:

I don't think I departed that much from what she did. Because she started out as a teacher, and then became a housewife, but then being very active in the community no matter what community she was in. I just did more of what she did. Actually, my family was not that happy. I can remember our going on a camping trip and their telling me, "Mother, it's all right for you to go out and run a campaign, but do you have to do so much of it?"

11-00:42:20

Wilmot:

Well, there's always—sorry. There's always part of, even today, so often what drops out of the analysis of the valuation of "women's work," making family, making—being a home maker and raising healthy children. That's a huge job, it is a full-time-plus job.

11-00:42:46

Maslach:

It is, it really is, more than people realize. Especially since we really don't teach people how to be parents. This is one reason why I started to study and try to become a family therapist, because I thought this—I wasn't interested in really helping extremely disturbed, sick people. I just felt the average person needed some help along the way. There's no such thing as normal. Well, what is expected? If you're not having difficulties in raising children, then it's not happening. [laughs]

11-00:43:32

Wilmot:

The raising of the children.

11-00:43:32

Maslach:

Yes. I mean, if your child is just a total imbecile in a box that does nothing, maybe that would be simple, you wouldn't have any stress, any arguments, or anything else. So it just seems that, especially when you think of the life tasks of children, which is to separate from the family, families don't want to let their children separate. They don't. And in fact, it's a good thing, because if they threw them out, \_\_\_\_\_ they wouldn't make the effort to leave. He would say, "Oh, I should do the opposite." So as I said, it's a balancing act, but it's a kind of a positive joy that hurts. And you never know how you're doing, which is the sad thing for mothers and parents. You're not aware whether you're making it or not, you just hope it turns out.

11-00:44:32

Wilmot:

Okay. One of the things you've said to me in our past interviews, and I hope I'm not putting words in your mouth, but you said there was something standing in between the way of you becoming a family therapist. I wanted to ask you, what were you referring to, what was standing in the way?

11-00:44:52

Maslach:

Well, as the children started going through their adolescence and I was thinking, Well, what will I be doing when they all leave, so right at that time, I remember Steve saying to me, he was in Berkeley High, and he said, "The last thing you want to do is to go back to be a high school teacher. You're just not cut out for it." Considering how I was brought up and how I was trained, it's a whole new [scene], especially in urban schools. So I was just thinking about my own experience as a parent, and when I went to workshops on family therapy, the bells went off. It was, My gosh, this is what I want to do!

So I didn't know soon enough that I could be a family therapist on the basis of my master's degree in child development. I could have been grandfathered in for a five-dollar fee and an application. So I just went to more courses and thought about it, and at that point, they started organizing in Sacramento. You had to have a license, which I could have grandfathered in. But then they had a two-year program, because the program I thought I would qualify for would be Marriage, Family, and Child Counseling, MFCC license. It was a two-year program, and you had to do so many hours, supervised hours and whatever.

What I was trying to decide, which two years can I give up to study this, to do this, because George had a sabbatical coming up, and I didn't want to stop because of the sabbatical—they changed it again. They made it five years. By that time, the five years, almost everything that is included in that five years would not qualify for me. My formal education, my courses, any work I had done for myself in therapy or with other people didn't count. So it just was an impossible task. And by that time, I was getting older and George was about to retire. If he wanted to do a lot of traveling, as a therapist, you do not have the luxury of just taking up and leaving when you have clients that depend on you.

So what I did was more of a peripheral thing. In 1972, they were just forming what was called the Psychotherapy Institute in Berkeley. I was able to work with them in the initial—not the very, very initial, but it was still in the beginning, when they were still getting organized. So I spent quite a few hours—years—working with them. Was on the board, and took duties. Then I've just stayed with a number of these psychotherapists over the years who formed, after they left the institute themselves, or even when they were still being supervisors in the institute, had a peer group where they would discuss cases and sort of help each other out. I was with them for thirty years. So I still was involved in it as a person without being an official licensed therapist. But that came later. As I said, it was the kind of thing I really enjoyed doing after doing the community

activities, which I enjoyed up to a point, but were still with a political purpose. You're either improving the schools or whatever.

11-00:49:12

Wilmot: And this is a different type of politics.

11-00:49:14

Maslach: Exactly. But politics nonetheless. So that takes us about the time when we took off for San Francisco, for the Bay Area.

11-00:49:25

Wilmot: Okay, let's return there, then. Sorry I fast-forwarded a bit.

So, what brought you back to California, and how did you come back?

11-00:49:41

Maslach: Well, George had gone to a meeting of his mechanical engineering society in New York in 1949 and was told that they were looking for professors to teach at UC Berkeley, and would he come?

He said he would like to come but he had already promised the company that he would stay until August, and so when this thing came up right after that about his clearance, the company said, "We can't go to bat for you, because you're leaving anyway." So that was another sad thing. But anyway, around in August, we packed up and came back, and he was going to be teaching, or doing something starting in the fall. And when we got to California, it turned out that the teaching slots weren't open, but he started doing research. He did that for two years, and then was put on the faculty to teach.

But we did have a wonderful trip back. We took our time, we photographed it, we have movies of it. Jamie was two, and Christina was four, and I was pregnant.

11-00:51:34

Wilmot: How many months?

11-00:51:36

Maslach: By that time, let's see. I guess it would be the same as that with Chris, because he was delivered in January, so it was about six, seven months. We did a lot of camping, and just had a wonderful trip. It was something that the children remembered, and we still have movies of it.

What was unfortunate, though, was that housing was still short in California, and the Cuneo family did have some rentals. I kept asking my father would it be possible that we could have one of those rentals, and he kept saying, Fine, fine, yes, yes. And then other people would write me and say, "I'm not so sure you've got a rental." So when we got back, we did not have this rental. So we were living with my family on Telegraph Hill until the people who were in the rentals

said, “Oh, this is ridiculous,” and they voluntarily moved out so that we could live on Telegraph Hill for two years.

11-00:52:37

Wilmot:

With whom were you living?

11-00:52:38

Maslach:

With my parents, on 1821 Grant Avenue. The site of this condo that’s being sold this week. [laughs]

We’ll know tomorrow, maybe, what the bids are and whether we accept them or not.

But anyway, Steve was born in San Francisco. We moved over to Berkeley when he was a year and a half. That was the length of time we lived on Telegraph Hill, which was near my parents. We were only with them for a few months, but I learned a lot, being near my parents, and how happy I was to have started out away from my parents, because they have a way of criticizing and telling you how to do things. I said, “Look, I’ve been doing it for four years, I know what I’m doing.”

Anyway, we moved over to Berkeley, and we actually lived in a rental around the corner from here, a house that we were able to rent for five years before we had this house built. It started a whole new era for us.

11-00:54:06

Wilmot:

Okay. I’m thinking we should stop for a little while.

[end audiofile 11, begin audiofile 12]

12-00:00:03

Wilmot:

When you and George came to Berkeley in 1949, had you heard about what was going on with the loyalty oath here in—

12-00:00:15

Maslach:

As I recall it, and I don’t know because I didn’t see any documents, George was told that he would not be involved in the loyalty oath. It wasn’t until he started and became an employee that then we were told yes, we did, we were like everybody else, we had to sign it. In which case, we were stuck. We had three little children, and so he did sign it.

12-00:00:42

Wilmot:

Meaning it was an issue of family well-being, livelihood?

12-00:00:49

Maslach:

Yes.

12-00:00:49

Wilmot:

Were you, in your social circle, was there kind of discussion of that loyalty oath?

12-00:00:55

Maslach:

Absolutely. I mean, people were very unhappy about it. A lot of wonderful professors left. In fact, the woman in whose house we were renting was one of the ones who left because of the loyalty oath, which is why we were able to live in the house.

12-00:01:10

Wilmot:

Who was she? Or what department was she in?

12-00:01:16

Maslach:

She was in one of the social sciences, and I don't know her name—I probably can remember her name eventually. I'll think—I can't think of it. Much as I could not the remember the name of Alger Hiss, which [laughter]—. I never did remember it; I asked George and he—.

12-00:01:41

Wilmot:

Understood, understood. Well, and in that time frame, when you first—this was actually the first two years coming back from the East Coast and returning to California and the San Francisco Bay Area, were there other individuals who you know were very impacted by the loyalty oath, in the engineering department?

12-00:02:14

Maslach:

I did not have any contact at all, because as I say, for the first two years, we lived in San Francisco, and I just worried about George having to commute from the university. So when Steve was a year and a half, he was born in January of 1950, so in 1951, we were able to move over to Berkeley and rent a house on Panoramic Hill. Then George was busy with his career, because he went from researcher, he finally got a position teaching, and then worked up to full professor, and I don't know exactly, it was some time in 1955 became full professor.

My focus was again the children and the school situation. Christina was in—I think she started in first grade, and Jamie was in nursery school, and Steve was just a baby at home. So I had a problem of ferrying children around, because kindergartens were just morning or afternoon, so you still had time that, where you had an extra trip that didn't include all the children. So my day was measured by how many round trips off Panoramic hill I had to make per day. Because I had just learned to drive when we had come across the country. I was not an experienced driver. So three round trips a day was kind of disastrous. But once one learns to drive on Panoramic hill, you can drive anywhere in the world with confidence.

Then eventually, as the children moved on, as Steve then went to nursery school—I had seven solid years of baby parenting. I would get these notes from

engineering professors' wives saying, "Do come to our tea," or "Do come to our meeting," and I was in no position to try to find where I could ferry around three children and get to a tea. So the only ones that I knew would be people in George's immediate department. One of them actually was Christina's first grade teacher in Emerson School.

But again, there was not that much discussion of the loyalty oath, other than the fact that people seemed—that this was one of the things they had to put up with. This was the feeling you had, you know, that there was just so much of this—I guess we're almost in it now, anti-communism. People were being called, or threatened with being called, Communists, and it was just a big bugaboo. So again, the kind of issues that I was concerned about, of course, were education. I remember the first PTA meeting that I went to, a woman came up to me (Christina was in first grade) and she said, "Is your daughter going to college?" I said, "Well, I really hadn't thought much about it yet." She said, "Well, she'll never get there from the Berkeley schools." I was horrified. I thought, Is this true, are the schools that bad? Then we'd better get going and do something about it. Or if it's not true, we should do something about people saying this.

This really, again, knowing who I am, piqued my interest in being more involved and finding out what was going on. So that when George and I were asked to be co-presidents of the PTA, I think it was about somewhere in the middle fifties, I don't know the exact date, we agreed to do it. I would do all the work, and he would conduct the meetings. It worked very well, because he was quite a good conductor of meetings. We had the meetings in the evening so that parents, both mothers and fathers, could come. It was not a social event for wives, in other words. It was for families.

12-00:06:30

Wilmot:

When you describe the division of labor—you would do all the work and he would conduct all the meetings—what would doing all the work mean? What would that entail?

12-00:06:37

Maslach:

Oh, just preparing what was to be taken up, you know, checking with people, who was going to speak, what the program was going to be, getting out the notices—this kind of thing. And then he would be given the agenda for the meeting, and then run a meeting.

12-00:06:52

Wilmot:

Were you cultivating new parent activists?

12-00:06:56

Maslach:

I don't think we had to. [laughs] There was quite an active group there already. In fact, the reason we became presidents was that there were two factions that didn't really see eye to eye, and so we were brand-new, and so it was easy to



have us acceptable to both sides, because we didn't belong to one side or the other.

12-00:07:23

Wilmot: Can you describe the two factions?

12-00:07:24

Maslach: Well, one was more social and conservative, and the other was more liberal.

12-00:07:32

Wilmot: With regards to how the children were educated?

12-00:07:35

Maslach: Politically. Politically. Because Berkeley was very conservative at one point. It was ultra-conservative, believe it or not. The school board was all very conservative Republicans. I imagine most of the city council was, too, although I wasn't involved with the city council. Right about in the middle fifties, was when the integration of schools was an issue, and at that time in Berkeley, there was one black teacher in the school system. She was an elementary teacher, her name was Ruth Actee, and she taught in Lincoln School, which was a school that was an all-black school.

12-00:08:26

Wilmot: Where was Lincoln?

12-00:08:28

Maslach: Lincoln is down in south Berkeley. It's off Ashby Avenue, I forget the exact—Harmon, maybe, or something like that. So members of our PTA said, "You know, we really should have a Negro teacher at Emerson." Well, the PTA admonishes you not to interfere with administration, so we had to draft a resolution saying that if they chose to send us a Negro teacher, we would welcome her. So this was passed and then forwarded to the administration.

Well, the administration was beginning to get criticism, because they only had one Negro teacher in the school system. So they were very happy to send us a fifth grade teacher. Her name was June Long, and a lot of the parents asked the principal, "Please do not put my child in that class."

12-00:09:34

Wilmot: This was at Emerson?

12-00:09:34

Maslach: At Emerson. And then of course, there would be the parents who said, "We'd love to have her, our children in her class." It turned out that June Long was a crackerjack teacher. She was so much better than the other fifth grade teacher that it actually came to pass that parents would go to the principal and say, "I want my children in her class," based on her teaching ability, and not because she was black or not black.

12-00:10:04

Wilmot:

And at this time, was the student population at Emerson, was it mostly white.

12-00:10:10

Maslach:

Yes.

12-00:10:09

Wilmot:

And were there any black students there?

12-00:10:15

Maslach:

If there were, I don't recall them. There were some Asian students, a few Asian students, and we also had an Asian teacher. But I think that Emerson was considered one of, I guess to the administration, a problem school, because they would object to things they didn't like. They had had a principal that they loved, and I don't know his name because he wasn't there when I was there. The new principal that was put in there was very pedestrian, I mean, and rather conservative and rather Milquetoasty. There just wasn't a good rapport between these active parents and this principal. So I remember some suggestion, I can't remember the details of it, but something that was going to happen that the principal was involved with that the other people were very unhappy with, and I went down to talk to these superintendent and say, "This is what's going on, is there a way we could work it out," or something like that. I don't remember the details of the issue.

12-00:11:34

Wilmot:

Who was the superintendent at this time?

12-00:11:37

Maslach:

His name was Norse. So shortly after that, when George and I picked up the mail, there was a letter addressed to "Inspector Charles O'Meara, 301 Panoramic Way," which was our address. I said to George, "This letter is about us," so I opened it.

12-00:12:07

Wilmot:

Even though it did not have your name on it?

12-00:12:09

Maslach:

No, it was to Inspector Charles O'Meara. And Inspector Charles O'Meara was known as the head of the Red Squad at the time.

12-00:12:19

Wilmot:

Where?

12-00:12:19

Maslach:

In Berkeley. In the police department. So what the letter said is, "Dear Chuck, please check for me Mr. and Mrs. George Maslach." I said, "George, he wants to know—" you know. And it was signed by the vice superintendent whose name was Campbell. So I thought, What are we going to do? We plan to live in Berkeley. Our kids will have to go to school here. How do we get out of this? So

we talked it over with some of our friends, and some of them wanted to do drastic things, make an issue of it. I knew that that wasn't going to help us.

So what we decided to do was to go to see Mr. Campbell and give him the letter if he asked for it, and accept whatever explanation he would give us. So I did go; George did not. Mr. Campbell looked at it, "Oh!" he says, "that's a mistake. We wouldn't do anything to nice people like you." And he just was lying in his teeth. I kept a copy of the letter. Otherwise, if he had asked for it, I would have given it to him. But anyway, as far as he was concerned, I accepted his explanation completely. So that was the way it was.

And it wasn't until years later when Mr. Campbell was proposed for the superintendent of schools, because Norse was resigning, and at that point, we had elected one person to the school board. That was a doctor, Dr. Paul Sanazaro. So I went to him and I showed him the letter, and I told him the circumstances. So what he did was say to his fellow board members, because they were choosing the new superintendent, "I think it's important that we have a unanimous decision. I think this is important for the community and it's important for us," and they all agreed it was a good idea. So when Campbell's name came up, he said, "I can't support him." I don't know whether he told them why, but anyway, Campbell did not get chosen as superintendent.

12-00:14:45

Wilmot:

Who did get chosen that year?

12-00:14:47

Maslach:

Someone named Carl Wenneberg was chosen. He was somebody from outside the system, he wasn't somebody in the system.

12-00:14:57

Wilmot:

And it's so, just to return to that story of the letter, it's so bizarre that they administratively just sent you a letter that was about you but not intended for your eyes.

12-00:15:11

Maslach:

Well, I think what happened is that it was probably a telephone thing. He said—you know, that he called—no, it couldn't have been a telephone. Maybe they just didn't read the letter right, that—

12-00:15:27

Wilmot:

They got the addresses mixed up on the envelope?

12-00:15:30

Maslach:

I just don't know.

12-00:15:30

Wilmot:

It's just very strange.

12-00:15:32

Maslach:

I don't think it was intended for us. I mean, I think they really wanted to know—I think Mr. Campbell felt we needed checking out to see—

12-00:15:46

Wilmot:

Because of your activism on the school board?

12-00:15:49

Maslach:

Because of my position as president of the PTA, that we were complaining about something. And as I say, I don't know what the issue was. I know that they had, the previous principal had instituted a violin program where any child who wanted to take violin lessons were given lessons at school. And whether that was in jeopardy or something, it might have been an issue, I don't know.

12-00:16:18

Wilmot:

And this was, do you recall exactly what year that letter was?

12-00:16:22

Maslach:

It's got to be in the middle fifties, and I probably still have the letter in my file somewhere.

12-00:16:36

Wilmot:

I'm sure you do.

12-00:16:36

Maslach:

Because it was after we had elected—let's see, the Sanazaro election was in '57. So this letter must have been before '57. Because then we elected [Spurgeon Avakian?] in 1959. That was our second. But the first election was in '53, and the issue then was social clubs in the high school. This was an issue of great distress to parents, because this was a way of children being segregated in the schools. Actually, it started in junior high. They had social clubs in Garfield Junior High, which is now the Martin Luther King Middle School. So there were three junior highs in Berkeley at the time. Garfield was the elite one, because this had children from Thousand Oaks and west and from the north hills in Berkeley. Willard Junior High was the one that Emerson fed into, and that was a mixture, because it had Emerson children, LeConte children, and then it also had Lincoln children. So that was virtually integrated.

The other school was Burbank, which is now the—I think it's the building for adult education down in west Berkeley.

12-00:18:19

Wilmot:

On University?

12-00:18:20

Maslach:

It's off—yes, it's on University.

12-00:18:23

Wilmot:

And then like, University and close to Acton?

12-00:18:25  
Maslach:

Yes. Or even below that. And that again, was again mostly black students. So Garfield was the elite school, the social clubs started there. So when you joined a social club there, you were in line to be in a social club in the high school. Willard students didn't have social clubs there, and so they would be left out of this social club system. Actually, from what I understand, if you got into the right social club in Berkeley High, then you got into the right sorority or fraternity when you went to Cal, because many Cal students did come from Berkeley High.

So the parents were really upset about this, and felt that something should be done about it, Christina had a friend who was in a social club, and she was forbidden to eat lunch with her.

12-00:19:28  
Wilmot:

The friend was forbidden to eat with Christina?

12-00:19:29  
Maslach:

Right. Because social club members all had lunch together.

12-00:19:35  
Wilmot:

So these were like these early kind of social tracking systems that were in place and were kind of upheld, supported by the school administrations.

12-00:19:45  
Maslach:

I don't know whether the schools—I guess the schools just didn't think they had anything to do with it. I mean, they just let it happen. Now, whether this was because Berkeley High was the first integrated school for the students from the Garfield area, while Willard was kind of a testing ground. You practiced integration in Willard, it worked fine. So there was a lot of discussion. I remember one of the school board members talked about “the Berkeley problem,” and that's what they called it, and it was because of the fact that again, there were integration problems.

12-00:20:32  
Wilmot:

And integration around students and teachers.

12-00:20:36  
Maslach:

Well, certainly there weren't that many teachers that were black. They didn't have any in the school at all at that time. And as I said, we were the first ones to have one in a white neighborhood. But then there became more and more, of course.

12-00:20:58  
Wilmot:

I'm trying to understand this issue better. So that was one of the, when you originally were talking about the Emerson PTA, and you mentioned that there were two factions, one was more kind of liberal and one was more conservative. And then the issue that had them engaged with each other, in conflict with each

other, am I understanding you correctly, was it about the issue of bringing in more black teachers?

12-00:21:29

Maslach:

No, no. The issues were there before. As I said, some of the people in Emerson were very liberal, turned out to be extremely liberal. But we ran the gamut. John Muir was another all-white school, and that was the one that's over by the Claremont. That school didn't even join in the PTA. In other words, they had a mother's club but not a PTA, so they weren't even involved in the city-wide PTA activities. This is where we got to meet other people in other parts of town, through the city-wide PTA.

12-00:22:16

Wilmot:

Why didn't they join in the PTA?

12-00:22:19

Maslach:

They wanted to be elite. They didn't want to.

12-00:22:21

Wilmot:

They wanted to be elite, yes.

12-00:22:23

Maslach:

And they were. And a lot of their children went to private schools and didn't continue on in the public schools. So there was just not—much of an interaction between them. Some of them did send their children to public schools, and then I would get to meet them at Willard, because I was also president of Willard PTA and got to meet some of the John Muir parents. But no, there was a lot of tension in the city. The big shock to me was that the architect of our house was Japanese. His name was Hachiro Yuasa, and he had built all of the co-ops, the three co-op buildings in Berkeley were originally Yuasa buildings. We met them at Quaker meeting—they lived Oakland, and wanted to move into Berkeley. So we gave them the name of one of the parents that we knew in Emerson that we were very friendly with, and said we knew he was a good realtor. Very famous name, matter of fact; his name was Jay Ward, who then was famous for this Bullwinkle cartoon strip that is well known.

So when they went to the Jay Ward realtor, he said sorry, but he did not show minority people houses in the hills. There were covenants on the deeds and so forth that forbade it. We didn't know a thing about it; we felt horrible that we had recommended them. The way they did get their house on the hill was that he was an architect for one of the professors at Cal, who had his house built on Grizzly Peak Boulevard. So then he sold them the house that they were living in and moved from, so they had a house over on San Mateo Road.

But things were that bad back then. I mean, it was amazing, because if there were any elections involving black people, there was just a big, big opposition to them. Lionel Wilson, who eventually became mayor of Oakland, I don't know

whether you remember him or not, ran for city council in Berkeley and was defeated.

12-00:25:14

Wilmot:

Now, were you involved in that campaign in 1950?

12-00:25:19

Maslach:

I was involved in school board campaigns. The school board campaigns were supposed to be nonpartisan. Matter of fact, we found that we got a lot of support from Republicans if we had a good candidate, especially—because they were interested in schools. So we made sure that we were not identified with the Democratic party, but actually, even the city council races were supposed to be nonpartisan, and somehow they had laws in California where it just favored conservative incumbents. So it wasn't until someone named Alan Cranston sort of broke up the system and figured out a way that eventually you could label parties.

So I was always involved peripherally, in city council elections because I would be focusing on school elections, and that was through 1963. That was the last one that I was involved with. We still had a liaison with the Democratic party and we worked together where we could. I feel that I really helped elect the first black councilman in Berkeley, because they had previously run a minister named Roy Nichols for the city council. Again, any time there was somebody like that, there would be this really, really heavy opposition, so Roy Nichols did not win. However,—

12-00:27:08

Wilmot:

From what quarters was the opposition coming?

12-00:27:13

Maslach:

The conserv—the Republicans. There are no more Republicans in Berkeley because they finally all left. But they were dominant in Berkeley. This whole Thousand Oaks district. I remember talking to Mrs. Sackett, a woman on the school board, and we were concerned about an issue we were running for the schools, because the Berkeley schools were not being funded enough, the low end of the scale. So when we were talking about getting support, she said, “Well, this is—” it was a committee that was analyzing it. I said, “That’s not a very representative committee.” She said, “What do you mean? We’ve represented all the banks.” So this was the philosophy, that these were the only people you talked to. She was the one that also said, “the Berkeley problem,” discussing the Berkeley integration problem.

12-00:28:16

Wilmot:

That was her language.

12-00:28:18

Maslach:

That’s what she said. She would never say it was a black problem or a Negro problem, it was “the Berkeley problem.”

So what our strategy was was to start electing people to the school board, and we elected the most prominent people we could. Paul Sanazaro was known as a doctor's doctor, and he had gotten the gold-headed cane when he graduated from Cal, he was that superior intellectually as well as being a doctor. So he had all the support of the doctors. A lot of them were very conservative doctors. And then Spurgeon Avakian as a lawyer again had the same kind of a reputation, so we could elect him.

But when Roy Nichols ran and was defeated, I think that was in 1961, I went to D. G. Gibson, who was the one who was really in charge politically, and started out from a conservative base, as a matter of fact; he wasn't automatically a Democrat. But his goal was in getting black representation on these, mostly the city councils.

12-00:29:42

Wilmot:

In terms of ethnic diversity?

12-00:29:44

Maslach:

Yes. And so he was determined to get a black elected. And again, he was the one that was promoting Lionel Wilson, who got defeated. So when they ran Roy Nichols and he was defeated, I went to D. G. and I said, "You know, he should be running for the school board, not the city council, because we will support him. We have people that know him and support him." We knew his wife, we knew him, because he was involved in PTAs and so forth. So it took some doing, but D. G. finally allowed us to run Roy Nichols for the school board.

12-00:30:24

Wilmot:

What would have been his—what were his kind of—why wouldn't he have gotten right behind it immediately, why did it take some doing?

12-00:30:36

Maslach:

Because he wanted him for the city council.

12-00:30:39

Wilmot:

Even though he lost.

12-00:30:39

Maslach:

Even though he lost. And then he didn't believe me, he didn't think that we had that much clout. I don't know how he got convinced, but he did get convinced.

12-00:30:49

Wilmot:

What was meeting with D. G. Gibson like? What was it like to meet with him? Was he very pragmatic? What kind of person was he?

12-00:30:55

Maslach:

Well, he's a little intimidating for someone like me. But he was quite a person, and very—he knew in his head, he was very determined. So what did happen that year is we ran Roy Nichols, and we elected him, so people that wanted to



defeat a black person were focusing on Roy Nichols, but we had too much support, so that didn't work. But they weren't paying attention to the city council, and D. G. had put up a black person named Wilmot Sweeney, and people didn't really know this was a black person, just thought this was probably some nice Irishman is running. So Sweeney got elected to the city council at the same time that Roy Nichols got elected to the school board.

Sweeney was marvelous. He went on to be a Superior court judge, and he was considered someone really important who was looking after juvenile justice in Oakland, in Alameda County. I don't know how many honors he got for that. Roy Nichols did not stay on the school board, because he went to New York to be a bishop in the Methodist church. So in 1963 they tried to recall four members on the board at that time. Besides Roy Nichols, we had Spurgeon Avakian; we had Carol Sibley, who was a woman that was associated with the university. Robert Sibley had been her husband, and he had been the head of the California Alumni Association for years. She was just involved in all kinds of issues and was considered one of the political people in Berkeley.

And then the other one that we had elected was Professor Sherman Maisel, who was a professor of economics. Because then he was a member of the national board that was a very prestigious position, the Federal Reserve. So the people, right at that point, you see, there had been this plan to integrate the Berkeley schools. I guess I should tell you how that came about.

When Paul Sanazaro was elected—incidentally, Alex Sheriffs did lose the election for the school board in 1953, so the next issue then became more integration issues, rather than social club issues. When Paul Sanazaro was elected to the board, he was the only one out of five, but still he was very effective as a board member. There had been a group that had studied integration of the Berkeley schools and submitted a report to the school board. Well, in the past, the school board would say, "Thank you very much, nice to see you," and that would be it. Paul Sanazaro said, "I think this is an important report. Let's each have our suggestions at the next meeting as to what we should do about it." So this kind of thing would happen.

An official committee was appointed to come up with a program for the integration of the schools, and this was put into effect. It lasted for a number of years, it had a lot of prestigious people on it, judges and people that people had confidence in. So a plan for the integration of the Berkeley schools was started, and a group of the conservatives decided to recall the school board. So that was my last campaign, and I took the chairmanship of that campaign to stop the recall. That was a long campaign, because our first job was to keep them from getting the petitions signed. They wanted to qualify the election in the summer, when everybody would be away, especially university people. So our first job was to see that they didn't get the signatures until as late as possible. And then once they did qualify the signatures and the election date was set, it was set in

the fall, then we had to run the campaign to defeat it. Which we did. So that was my last effort for the schools, and I think we should stop there.

12-00:36:21

Wilmot:

Okay.

[end audiofile 12, end of session]

[Interview #7: June 10, 2004]  
 [Begin audiofile 13 06-10-04]

13-00:00:10  
 Wilmot:

Interview seven, Doris Cuneo Maslach, June 10, 2004.

Doris, I had a few questions for you to back up to from our last conversation. The first one has to do, actually, first with this letter that you got from O'Meara. And broadly, if you could reflect broadly, was it that kind of environment where people were—did you know other people who were being targeted in that way? Targeted as in pointed out for surveillance, or was it that kind of social context where that was happening?

13-00:01:08  
 Maslach:

Not with school people, but this was the time, you know, when there was this great anti-Communist atmosphere and teachers were being accused of being Communists. Just had a lot of demonstrations and so forth. This was a time of just following McCarthyism, and so this was a big surprise, to have the assistant superintendent of schools ask the Red Squad, as he was called, Charles O'Meara was a police officer who was part of what was called the Red Squad, to check on us to see what our affiliations were, or if they could find anything, any reasons for—any reason we would criticize the schools. We were trying to—we've always been in the middle. [laughs] I mean, we have never been as liberal as the liberals, and although I've been in contact with the conservatives. I don't consider myself a conservative.

But throughout all of our relationships in the city of Berkeley, I've always been in the middle. For a city of Berkeley that has turned more liberal all the time, one gets not to be part of the in group any more. I've sort of felt that.

13-00:02:30  
 Wilmot:

You're no longer part of the in group politically?

13-00:02:33  
 Maslach:

I belong to the Democratic Club, and then there was, of course, the more radical club. They would change their names, be different groups, keep changing their names. But they would be the ones that would be putting up really far-out candidates and a lot of the extremists, such as from the Free Speech Movement. In the PTA in general, I would say there would be a lot of pretty middle-of-the-road people. When I was asked by the nominating committee to be the chair of the city-wide PTA organization I had been an officer of a lot of their committees, mostly education committees.

13-00:03:31  
 Wilmot:

This is the city-wide PTA?

13-00:03:33  
Maslach:

This is the city-wide, it was called Berkeley-Albany PTA Council. The PTA is in each school, and then they have a council. Then there is the county organization. So I did serve a lot on the council, and in particular, things like teacher education, teacher training, and any kind of education issue. So unfortunately, PTA is supposed to be nonpartisan, so when you get involved in partisan campaigns, you're not supposed to be an active officer. So I would always drop out of being an active officer whenever I was involved in any kind of a campaign. If it was an issue campaign, like providing money for schools, and I was the head of one of those campaigns, or providing bond issues for schools, that was okay. But if you ran for—if you supported a candidate, you were not supposed to be an active officer.

13-00:04:37  
Wilmot:

A candidate with an affiliation like Democrat or—

13-00:04:40  
Maslach:

Well, it didn't matter, just any—just like the League of Women Voters, they don't support candidates, they only support issues.

So people would resent me, because I was on the other side of a number of people. So when I was nominated, it was in the early sixties, to be the chair, the head of the city-wide organization, I knew that there were people that would resent it, and so I said, "Be sure you ask everybody else who might think that they should be asked, and then come back to me if you still want me to do it." So they did, and they came back and they said, "No one else will take it, but you can have it, so would you take it?" So I said, "Okay."

Usually, a nominating committee in the PTA is never challenged, because they have a hard time just getting people to agree to do these jobs. They usually figure out who is the one who is supposed to do it. But someone was nominated against me, and there was a vote, and it was a tie. Someone said, "We're going to have to vote again," and I got up and said, "No. Look, I don't want to be the head of this organization if half of the group doesn't want me." I just resigned, pulled out, and the other woman became elected.

13-00:06:05  
Wilmot:

Who was the other woman?

13-00:06:06  
Maslach:

I don't remember her name, but she was a conservative woman. But after that, I got phone calls, and I was told, "You weren't supposed to do that. We just wanted to take you down a peg." [laughs]

13-00:06:21  
Wilmot:

Who's "we?" Who would you get these phone calls from?

13-00:06:21

Maslach:

Well, this would be other people in the group, thinking that maybe I was too successful or thought I was too successful or something. Anyway, I did not then ever run again for the head of the local, of the city, but I was very then active on the county board.

13-00:06:40

Wilmot:

I'm sorry, what year was that?

13-00:06:44

Maslach:

It had to be about '61, somewhere in there. I had already elected two people to the board of education, both Sanazaro and Spurgeon Avakian. This was in between times.

When it came to the next campaigns with Carol Sibley and Roy Nichols, I did not run those campaigns. I talked them into running Roy Nichols, but Carol Sibley had her own campaign. So then I really didn't get active again until the recall in 1963.

13-00:07:23

Wilmot:

I just wanted to back up. When you say—I'm wondering if you can kind of paint a picture for me. When you say that there were—I want to go first back to Emerson. There were two factions in Emerson PTA. What did they look like? Were these doctors, lawyers, professors? Do you have names?

13-00:07:47

Maslach:

Well, some of them were very prominent names. There was a Mr. and Mrs. Lindheim. She was an architect, and eventually was very revered. I think she taught in the architect department at Cal. Her husband had an electrical company that again was very effective. But they just took very liberal issues. There was a Dr. Ephram Kahn who again was very prominent doctor, and his wife. They were some of the liberal people.

But then there were other people that were still considered liberals but not extreme liberals, like the Hatfields. Ruth Hatfield was very prominent—she was a former PTA president of Emerson, but she was also a dancer and had dancing classes and was great. Again, revered in the social life in Berkeley.

The conservative people were just—they were people that were well-to-do. Some of them were professional people. But at those times, there was quite a struggle between issues of communism and integration and so forth, and people took sides.

13-00:09:14

Wilmot:

Were the issues somehow conflated? Like being left politically and/or Communist was somehow—

13-00:09:25

Maslach:

Well, anyone that was for integration was considered, you know, far left. Although that wasn't true, but—I mean, the ones that were most vocal and so forth. But as I said, there was—and I can't describe all the issues that went on in the community, but these hearings that they were having, whether there were Communist teachers in the schools. I mean, there was a whole history in San Francisco of hosing people, demonstrators, down the halls of City Hall, because there were demonstrations. So that whole era was pretty touchy with anyone—

13-00:10:11

Wilmot:

Late fifties through sixties, late sixties.

13-00:10:13

Maslach:

Yes.

13-00:10:13

Wilmot:

And then of course became another touchy era.

13-00:10:18

Maslach:

When the FSM, when the war became the next big issue. But the integration, I mean, the fact that they would have people that would sign petitions to recall the board because they integrated the schools, that's going quite far.

13-00:10:36

Wilmot:

Who were your conservative foes? Or perhaps that's the wrong way to—there's an incorrect assumption in there. Who were the conservatives, what did they look like?

13-00:10:52

Maslach:

Well, one of the conservative leaders for whom I've had a lot of respect for, and he had respect for me, but we disagreed totally, was Wallace Johnson, who was a previous mayor of Berkeley. There was an issue of trying to decide what to do about the Berkeley schools, because they were so—Berkeley High was so large, and they felt that they should have two high schools. So there was a number of committees that were formed. I can remember asking to be on the high school committee, but was put on another by Wallace Johnson. But none of the planning that we had ever materialized, because we thought the solution for Berkeley High, or at least I did, was to combine it with a junior college, because we did not have a junior college in this area. This way, there could be ways of giving high school students an enriched program academically, as well as if they were going to go into some kind of a job situation. Junior colleges do provide a lot of training and education in those areas. But as I recall, we spent a lot of time studying the thing, and nothing came of the recommendations that were made.

13-00:12:45

Wilmot:

And when you think of your allies, who consistently were your allies in the different campaigns that you mounted? Be they issue-based or be they—did that change from campaign to campaign?

13-00:12:58  
Maslach:

Well, what I did with some other people was we formed what we called a school district committee. What we did was to have interested people in each school meet together, and these would be the women, would meet together and plan campaigns and plan strategies. This school district committee I guess lasted a good ten, twelve years. But there were like people in every school, and this way, we actually became an integrated group that worked together in political issues that the PTA could not—we'd meet a lot of these people in the PTA, but to work on a candidate, you could not work through the PTA. So it would set aside another committee to do it. This was very useful.

13-00:13:50  
Wilmot:

Okay. Would that mean that you didn't have particularly people that you were working with?

13-00:13:58  
Maslach:

Oh, yes, we did, but as I said, they were other PTA presidents and—

13-00:14:02  
Wilmot:

So when you say "we," who do you mean?

13-00:14:07  
Maslach:

I would be the—one of the women, for instance, that I worked with was named Charlotte Treutlein. I think she wound up on the county board of education, I believe.

13-00:14:28  
Wilmot:

And I wanted to ask also, once you moved from Emerson, were there other people you wanted to mention?

13-00:14:39  
Maslach:

Not really, because there were just—just people we knew.

13-00:14:48  
Wilmot:

Did you work closely with Carol Sibley?

13-00:14:52  
Maslach:

Subsequently, I did. She lived on the other side of town. I became involved in a number of her committees, because she set up housing committees. I supported her—I guess I got closer to her when they tried to recall her. I worked on her campaign, but didn't run her campaign. But when they tried to recall her, then of course, I was running that campaign, and so got to know her quite well. After being on the school board, she also, as I said, had a lot of issues, especially in housing. I don't know whether you've read that in her book or not. But I supported her on many of those particular projects that she had. So I knew her until the end. We were socially involved, and in fact, when I was looking for candidates for the rent control board, Carol was the one that helped me to find people. We needed nine people to run the first election back in 1982, I think it was, something like that.

13-00:16:05

Wilmot:

When you moved from Emerson to city-wide work, be that through the city-wide PTA or actually once you started doing the board of education, how did—if you were kind of going to talk about the different factions, how did they look—how did the city-wide factions look different from Emerson's factions?

13-00:16:31

Maslach:

Well, what we found out, what I found out was the Democrats in general did not support schools as much as the Republicans did in the city. So we definitely were very nonpartisan as far as political parties went. That separated us out from the city council, who were more closely aligned to the political parties. Even though I think the charter will say that they're supposed to be nonpartisan, I mean, this was the big myth in California, that there were not supposed to be political parties. So we had to sort of form other kinds of parties and tell people what they were.

So there was always that separation, and so I was very careful to work with the people that were interested in schools. That was my mission. So if it supported city council candidates, fine, but it was not the main objective. The main objective was the school board people. And I think that electing good school board people, it did help the city council elections. But there was that difference.

13-00:17:59

Wilmot:

When you say what then did that group—what did the array of different stakeholders or interested parties look like when it came to a city-wide or city \_\_\_\_\_ board of education? [mumbling] People who were interested in schools, were they—what did they look like?

13-00:18:14

Maslach:

Well, Berkeley conservatives in general were very poor about supporting the schools. The first issue campaign I worked on was called the N and O campaign. Studies were made that showed that Berkeley teachers were at the low end of the scale compared to all of the other schools in the area, but we couldn't get the school board to support a measure that would raise salaries. In fact, I think—I have to check on exactly what N and O meant, but I think N was to raise it and then the school board put on their own, so it was a question of voting for both of them. But the one that the people wanted was really to raise the salaries. O was to—their attitude was, Well, we won't oppose it, as if the school board should oppose raising things for schools.

So as I said, as time went on, Berkeley became more and more liberal. The Republicans just moved out or died. So there were very few—I don't know what it is now. Of course, things are different now. But back then, there were very few Republicans left in Berkeley.

13-00:19:34

Wilmot:

How many hours a week did your school activity take?



13-00:19:40

Maslach:

I don't know. Combination of PTA and—it was my full-time out of home activity. I mean, I did not have bridge clubs or other social clubs that I did. So yes. I really worked at it, and I don't know how much time—I couldn't, I'd have to stop and think how many hours I spent.

13-00:20:12

Wilmot:

I'm just trying to think if it was like a part-time job or a full-time—

13-00:20:15

Maslach:

Yes, I would say it would be—a lot of volunteer jobs, if you are taking leadership roles, do add up. And I do know that my family complained. They said, “Mother, it's okay for you to do this, but not so much.” This was after a campaign.

13-00:20:32

Wilmot:

Which campaign was that?

13-00:20:33

Maslach:

I don't know which one it was. [laughing] But the thing was that you don't run half a campaign; you either run a campaign or you don't. So you go all out. Of course, there was the classic example in I don't know which campaign it was that—I guess it was the N and O campaign to raise salaries, that we had a parade through Berkeley, and Steve was pretty young at the time. I think he might have been just in first grade or something like that. But anyway, George thought that I had taken care of Steve, and I thought George had taken care of Steve, and we were on the truck doing what we were doing in this parade. So when we finally wound up at around five o'clock, there was Steve, sitting on the steps of the school, waiting for us, because no one had picked him up.

So what did happen was a Girl Scout troop was going in to have a meeting, so they brought him in and gave him cookies and a drink, and then he sat and waited for us. So as I say, that was—kind of shook us up a little bit, to think that we would have spent that much time on the campaigning.

13-00:21:51

Wilmot:

And forgotten your baby.

13-00:21:51

Maslach:

Yes, forgotten our child.

13-00:21:53

Wilmot:

Well, I wanted to ask you also who—was George kind of like the person you were doing your primary strategizing with? Who was your strategizing buddies, who was that?

13-00:22:05

Maslach:

That would be with—no, George did not. He was too busy with his job, but he always, like on this parade thing, he would be involved in an activity. I'm trying

to think, I think that was in 1956, because what I remember about that campaign was that we had just built this house, and we were living around the corner. We were going to move ourselves into our new house, and the people across the street were going to move into the house we were leaving. So there was helping each other move type of situation that was set up. At that time, no houses were ever completed on time, but ours was. This moving had to take place on the weekend before the Tuesday election. So I can remember, because my idea was to bring everything down and put it in its proper place. Instead, we just had boxes in the kitchen, not knowing where anything was.

I can remember about five o'clock Saturday afternoon standing with all these boxes, trying to fix dinner, and the phone rang, and the newspaper had come out against N and O. They had promised that they would support us.

13-00:23:37

Wilmot:

Which paper was this?

13-00:23:37

Maslach:

This was the only paper we had, which was the *Berkeley Gazette*. Teachers were calling, and they were frantic: "What do we do now, what do we do now?" And of course, what can you do now? On a Saturday. But anyway, the measure did pass, in spite of the fact that the newspaper was against us.

But this was the way Berkeley was. I mean, they were very conservative at that time, so the gradual change came in through the sixties, and then with the FSM, and people moving out, and more liberal people moving in. So it almost swung to the other side so completely, but the paper still never supported our position.

I'm just trying to think if there was anything more that happened at Emerson. Because my children then went on to Willard, and I also became president of the Willard PTA, and that was very, very different.

13-00:24:47

Wilmot:

How was it different?

13-00:24:49

Maslach:

Well, because there were parents from all these different schools, on this side of town, such as from John Muir, which wasn't even a part of PTA, because they just seemed to be that affluent, they didn't want to be part of the PTA. But then they were parents down in Willard—if they sent their children to Willard, a lot of them would then go to private school. Then we had LeConte, which was on the way down; Longfellow, which was—LeConte and Longfellow I would say were middle-class people. And then Lincoln, which was more of the poor section and more all-black school. So they would all meet in Willard. So I tried to have activities that would involve everybody, so what we thought of doing was having a school dinner—I guess it was the day that parents visited the classrooms or something like that. So we just asked people to donate things that

they had in their house, and I think we had people frying chicken and so forth. But what I found out was that there were people that didn't have anything in their house to donate. They would say, "What do you want?" and then purchase it. We were having people donate cake mixes and then baking cakes from that. So as I said, it was a real shocker to realize the range, the economic range of people in Berkeley.

13-00:26:30

Wilmot:

How did that socioeconomic range that was different from Emerson change the way the politics or issues were discussed in the PTAs, what kinds of issues were raised? How did it impact the way who got heard and who raised what kinds of issues?

13-00:26:46

Maslach:

Well, I don't think, I don't recall many parent meetings in the junior high, where you would discuss things the way you did in the Emerson PTA. Because the Emerson PTA, these were all neighbors and people that knew each other and did things together. And of course, one of the big things would be fundraising at Emerson, with big carnivals, a big deal, and a lot of active people would really enjoy this big social event and sort of see how much money you could raise for the schools.

I don't recall much fundraising done at Willard. It was more trying to just make people feel that they were a part of the school, and show some interest in their children.

13-00:27:43

Wilmot:

Were there any big issues to campaign around at Willard? Do you recall what were some big campaign issues at Willard? And how long were you there?

13-00:27:52

Maslach:

I was there—I'm trying to think—four, maybe six years altogether.

13-00:28:03

Wilmot:

When your children were there.

13-00:28:05

Maslach:

Yes. And one funny thing, I was president of the PTA, and Jamie was president of the student body, and Steve had just arrived from Emerson. Steve was running for president of the incoming class. He goes to school one morning and there's a big sign saying, "Don't let the Maslachs run your life." [laughs]

13-00:28:33

Wilmot:

Whoa! What do you think—who did that?

13-00:28:37

Maslach:

Oh, I don't know. We always considered it as a joke, because we were so involved. Jamie had to coach Steve as to how not to get involved in a fight. He

said, “If you have a fight and win, you’re going to have three more the next day, and four more, and so forth.” So Steve was more of an outgoing person. Jamie was more reflective. But they got a good education there.

A lot of the issues, believe it or not, at the time were issues with the faculty having girlfriends and having relationships with the students.

13-00:29:31

Wilmot:

Do you mean the teachers?

13-00:29:30

Maslach:

The teachers.

13-00:29:34

Wilmot:

Having girlfriends who were—

13-00:29:34

Maslach:

Well, getting involved with the students. There were a number of scandals.

13-00:29:41

Wilmot:

You mean the thirteen- and fourteen-year-old girls?

13-00:29:43

Maslach:

Yes.

13-00:29:44

Wilmot:

That’s intense.

13-00:29:45

Maslach:

Yes. And I won’t go into a number of specifics of them, but one involved a girl living with one of the teachers. I think there was also some homosexual implications and so forth. Schools didn’t handle these things well; they were just sort of—blame it on the parents or something like that. Matter of fact, Steve was involved in one of them, so we took Steve out of Willard, and sent him to Lick Wilmerding. Because Steve was a very different child than the other two. The other two were very good students and very quiet, pretty much. Steve would ask questions. One of the teachers had a crush on Steve’s girlfriend. So this was—it didn’t end well, and the guy was out of line. So there had to be some hearings, and he had to go on leave, medical leave. There were hearings before the ethical groups, teacher groups that always protect the teachers.

So when the hearing was over and the teacher had to go on leave, I asked the principal if he would tell the teachers about it. And he said, “Oh, no, no, we don’t talk about this.” I said, “Not to discuss the issue, but to say that this was handled properly and this was a correct situation.” He just said no, he wouldn’t do this. So we took Steve out. Because the message was, “Wait till you see this last Maslach.” Teachers in general, and this we found, were intimidated by children of professors. It wasn’t just my children. It was other cases as well. So

the thought that Steve would go into class with this thing, “This is the other Maslach coming in,” so we sent him to Lick Wilmerding, which was at that time a school in San Francisco that was endowed by both Lick and Wilmerding. You had to take shop and mechanical arts classes, because that’s why this school was originally started. It became eventually a college prep school, but you still had to take all these courses in art and mechanical shop classes.

This was where Steve found out, number one, he was an artist, and number two, that he had to learn all these mechanical skills. It really was wonderful for him, because when he eventually became a glass blower, these were the kinds of things that he needed. He only stayed there two years, though, because the students all came from Pacific Heights. It was a very all-white Pacific Heights school. He was invited over one weekend to spend a weekend with one of the boys he met, and he came back and he said, “Mom, this kid doesn’t just have his own room, he has his own floor of the house.” It was, again, an all-white school. So he came back to Berkeley High after two years.

13-00:33:42

Wilmot:

Was that his choice, or was that your choice?

13-00:33:45

Maslach:

It was his choice.

13-00:33:46

Wilmot:

He really didn’t feel like that was the best environment for him.

13-00:33:49

Maslach:

That’s right. The cotillion was starting, and all of the social—and kids had cars and stuff, and it just didn’t feel comfortable for him. For the two years, it was good, because he was also able to play football, which he would never have been able to play if he had gone to Berkeley High. And he would play with other small schools, Lick Wilmerding did. So it was a good hiatus for Steve, and when he came back, he had so many credits, because Lick Wilmerding didn’t require you to take five times a week of any course, so he had taken all these courses, sometimes two and three times a week. But anyway, he sort of breezed through Berkeley High when he got back.

13-00:34:39

Wilmot:

Could you hold on one second?

13-00:34:40

Maslach:

Yes. [pause] Are you still taping?

13-00:35:09

Wilmot:

I am, I’m still taping. [pause] I wanted to turn to this, in 1963, the recall that you defeated. Can you tell me a little bit about, if you could set the stage for me, what transpired that they were trying to recall the school board, what was going on? In shorthand, you said to me last time we talked that it was the conservative

initiative, and they were not pleased with who was on the school board. I just wanted to ask you to please expand and tell me about that context, so that we can then talk about how you defeated that initiative.

13-00:35:57  
Maslach:

Well, this is a good opportunity to explain a little bit about how this whole thing came to pass. When Paul Sanazaro was on the board, the single person we had elected, a report was made to the board about the schools and the fact that they considered Berkeley High a problem. I mean, they didn't ever label what the problem was, they just said—Mrs. Sackett would discuss it by saying “the Berkeley problem.” And so a report was made by a committee called the Staats Report. Normally, the school board, if Paul Sanazaro had not been on it, would say, “Thank you, we appreciate it, come again,” and it would be ignored. Instead, Paul Sanazaro said, “This is important, let's read it over, and in two weeks, let's each come back with our proposal as to what we should do.”

So when they came back, of course, he had a proposal, and he said, “I think we need to have a study committee to study this.” So how could they oppose that? Victor Bottari, who was a hero of the football team from Berkeley, from UC Berkeley, was one of the members of the board at the time. So they did, they set up a committee, and Judge Staats was involved. I guess he was involved in the initial report, Judge Redmond Staats, who was again a very—a superior court judge that everybody thought highly of. I believe the committee that was then appointed to implement the study, the name that I recall was Hadsell, who I think was a minister. So a group of people worked on this problem and came up with a solution of how to integrate the Berkeley schools.

The people that were not happy with this happening started circulating petitions to recall the board. On the board at the time, I believe there were only—no, I guess there were five people on the board. But the people that they were going to recall were Spurgeon Avakian, Roy Nichols, Carol Sibley, and Sherman Maisel. Sherman Maisel was a professor at Cal, of economics I believe, and who was later on the Federal Reserve Board. He was that prominent a person.

While they were circulating the petitions to recall the board, Spurgeon Avakian was appointed a superior court judge, and so he resigned from the board. Roy Nichols was appointed a bishop in New York for the Methodist church, and so he resigned. So it just left Carol Sibley and Sherm Maisel on the board, and those were the two that then they tried to recall.

As I remember this, there was a lot of liberal people that wanted to circulate indignation fliers and things like that. Those of us who were running things sort of calmed this down, thinking that was not the way to go. There was a man on the *Chronicle* named Richard Demerest who ran the pink section, the one that came out on Sundays that had all the book reviews and such. His wife, Dorothy, was a publicist, and we hired her to do the literature. She wrote, she put together

one of the most impressive pieces of campaign literature that I have ever seen, and what her message was, “You just don’t do this to this kind of people.” It really worked. Instead of screaming and howling indignation, we said, “You might disagree with them, but you don’t do this to these wonderful people.”

We had to work hard to keep them from—to slow down the petition-signing, because they wanted to sign, get the signatures soon enough so that the election would be in the summer, when all of the university people would be away. Of course, we wanted it in the fall when they were back. So we at least accomplished that, and then we had the election.

13-00:40:49

Wilmot: How did you accomplish that?

13-00:40:50

Maslach: Well, by slowing down the—by telling people not to sign the petitions.

13-00:40:53

Wilmot: I see what you mean. Do you have any of those materials that Richard Demerest’s wife created?

13-00:41:00

Maslach: I’m sure I do.

13-00:41:02

Wilmot: And it was kind of a soft-pedal kind of way of—

13-00:41:06

Maslach: Yes, it was just very dignified. Because Carol Sibley was a very dignified person in Berkeley. She was noted for being—caring about issues of people and so forth. And Sherm Maisel, again, he was not one of the labeled far-out liberal professors. I mean, he was just a very wonderful professor of economics. This would be something I would keep, and I’m sure I have it. I have boxes of mine in the basement, and I will see if I can find them. But anyway, it was very gratifying that this happened.

As I said, I retired from school campaigns—other than working for the county, because my issue on working for the county was on teacher recruitment. Berkeley even then did not train enough teachers in California to populate our schools. We had to import teachers. I was really shocked when Christina’s counselor at Berkeley High told her, “Whatever you do, don’t go into teaching.” And to have a teacher say this about the profession he’s in is really upsetting. I have pictures of Christina being involved in issues of teacher recruitment as well. And she did go into teaching.

13-00:42:47

Wilmot: So why did you decide it was time for you to leave that work?

13-00:42:52  
Maslach:

Because whenever you are in a campaign, you might be effective because you've learned something from the last campaign, but you bring in a lot of baggage. There are people that dislike you because they were on the other side. So you always have to weigh your effectiveness. I just decided that that was enough. So the kinds of things I went into instead was I became president of the Panoramic Hill Association. I took my turn. George had taken his turn in the fifties, I think, but I took my turn in the early seventies.

13-00:43:33  
Wilmot:

I wanted to back up one quick time. You had mentioned that you were the campaign manager for Paul Sanazaro. Can you tell me what was involved in that?

13-00:43:45  
Maslach:

What the issues were that we ran?

13-00:43:50  
Wilmot:

What the issues that you ran, and then also as campaign manager, what was your work? So let's start with the issues.

13-00:43:57  
Maslach:

Well, the issues were the board was not representative of Berkeley. We wanted people that were more representative, that represented us.

What running a campaign involves is again, this is where the school district committee came in, to getting workers that would do precinct work in the campaign, distribute literature. What was very effective was having house meetings in people's homes, where the candidates would come and speak. You had to raise money, and I always felt that raising the least amount of money was the best way to go, and to try to get people to volunteer. You did have to pay for any printed materials, and you did have to pay for mailing—there were some things you had to pay for. But we would run city-wide campaigns on \$10,000.

This is what we did, and then the treasurer of that campaign was a lawyer named Spurgeon Avakian, because he was a good friend of Paul Sanazaro's. In fact, that's how we got Paul Sanazaro, we had heard that Spurgeon Avakian might be a good candidate, so we asked him, and he said he couldn't do it but he had a friend, and so that's how we met Paul Sanazaro. So two years later, when we needed another candidate, we needed two candidates as a matter of fact, we went back to Spurgeon Avakian. He was a very important tax lawyer, and had clients up in Reno, including Nevada senator Paul Laxalt, and the man who ran the Harvey's casino, and I don't remember what his name was.

But anyway, he said, "I've got a big case going at that time, I couldn't possibly run." I said, "Well, we'll run you anyway." It turned out that when the judge up in Reno heard that we were going to run him even though he couldn't be there,



he set the court case so that he would have some time off. So he did run, and get elected. He did run with a black candidate who really was not an effective candidate the way Roy Nichols would be, because Roy hadn't run then. If Spurgeon Avakian went to a meeting, he would always tell people, "The other person you should vote for to is—" and I forget his last name. I know his first name was Charles something. If Charles came, he just was not as articulate and didn't know as much about the issues.

So when the vote came in, Avakian won but Charles did not. Some of the people on our campaign felt that this was very wrong, that somehow, we weren't working as hard for Charles or something like that. I don't know whether he had his own campaign or not. But at least we invited him to all the meetings that we had set up, and he came to some and didn't to others.

But anyway, at that point, the school board became two to two, because one of the—I think it was Vic Bottari—dropped off the board. He decided he did not want to be involved any more, so a lot of the times, there was just a two-to-two vote on a lot of things. They had to be very persuasive if they were to get a third vote.

13-00:47:53

Wilmot:

What did that mean for the issues? Did that mean a lot of things just were at an impasse?

13-00:47:58

Maslach:

No, because again, these men—I mean, usually, if you don't like an idea, you have to have a better idea. So you have to come up with something better, and these people didn't. So the issues that Avakian and Sanazaro were for was for the betterment of the schools. I think that there were issues, again, when some of the teachers were being attacked for being Communist or something, and then Avakian was very effective as a lawyer in seeing that the board treated the teachers fairly. That was critical for morale of the teachers, to know that somebody was looking out for your interests.

13-00:48:54

Wilmot:

Well, I have one last question for you today, and I wanted to hold and work on this camera for a second, so I'm going to stop for a minute. [tape interruption] So today, just as we close, I wanted to ask you this question which we've been talking about off tape over the past couple of interviews, which is about ingredients in a partnership and marriage that's lasted—is it forty years, sixty years?

13-00:49:21

Maslach:

Sixty-one.

13-00:49:24

Wilmot:

Sixty-one years. So I just wanted to ask you about that. What are your thoughts?

13-00:49:33  
Maslach:

In relation to the time we're talking about, or in general?

13-00:49:37  
Wilmot:

Oh, in relation—that's a very good question. [laughs]

13-00:49:42  
Maslach:

Well, what was happening during these times, as soon as the children got into junior high and high school, and I was involved again in—this was the period where I was mostly involved in my political activities, because Christina graduated from high school in '63, just at the time of this integration, the recall. George had just become dean of engineering. He'd been professor up to that time. He became dean of engineering in 1963. So just as he became dean of engineering, the FSM hit. So his career was again a little frustrating for him, because he had ideas as to what he wanted to do as dean of engineering, and this had to be put on hold. I mean, everything had to do, was to deal with the day-to-day situation, the different demonstrations, the fact that students would come into the classrooms and disrupt things, and so forth. It was just a difficult time.

And of course, the kids are having their own difficult time as teenagers, making their way through the schools. And then I am doing what I can in these—both for the elections and also for the PTA.

I think that the one thing we did as a family was to go hiking in the high Sierra. This was something that George had done as a young man, and he had taken trips there. I had not done anything at all, and so I was a novice, like the kids. But it really worked wonders, because for the first time, we just had to look at each other and talk to each other. I mean, normally at dinnertime, everybody is still in his own world, and you can tell that they're thinking about things that happened to them. But when you go on a two-week trip in the high Sierras, pretty soon each other is all that's there to talk to, and you kind of relate. What I liked about it was that I was never a mother that decided the children had to do certain chores at home. It was just very vague: you keep the house orderly but your own room can be a mess, or something like that. I was never one to say, "Well, it's your turn to take out the garbage." I just didn't want to be a policeman.

But on a high Sierra trip, you didn't have to tell them anything. They knew that everybody had to pitch in, get wood, do this, do that. So they learned a lot on those trips. They learned how to get along with one pair of socks and one change of underwear and that's it, and to get along on a handful of trail mix a day if that's all you had. And then the fact that we then got to talk to each other on the trips was important. So this is the way the children's adolescence went. There wasn't that much time for George and I, but you felt that you were a team, headed in the right direction. So it was a wonderful building experience.

The other thing that I felt that was wonderful about our marriage was the fact that when George got into administration, we were invited to, whenever there was any kind of a dinner, entertaining a visitor to Cal, they would want to have a lot of the administrators and their wives there. So I just got to meet a wonderful lot of people. Prince Charles, I met Robert Rossellini, I met the Russian ambassador Dobrinan; I mean, it was just exciting.

And the other thing that I felt that it was really positive about our marriage is the fact that we both as people grew, in the opportunities we had. He certainly did; he became—he was a very good committee person, so even while he was dean of engineering, he was on all of these committees in Washington, and came home one time saying, “They asked me what to do about the Vietnam War.” [laughs] So as I said, this I think is what sort of builds a very solid relationship. Of course, now that the children are gone, the last twenty years, we are definitely empty-nesters, and he is not involved in the university, because when he left, he said, “I’m leaving completely.” People would call him up and say, “Would you throw your weight against this?” and he said, “No, it’s somebody else’s turn.”

So we have been able to do the things we hadn’t been able to do when he was in administration, because the only trips that we would go on would be ones that he would add on to some official trip he was sent to. However, I did not want to go to Saudi Arabia with him, because I didn’t think there was that much to do in Saudi Arabia while he was doing other things there. He said, “Well, you could always go to Rome and wait for me in Rome,” and I said, “I’m not interested in going alone to Rome,” first-class fare, incidentally, “and waiting for you.” So now we go to the places we want to go, and we’ve had twenty years of doing this. So this has really been wonderful.

We also have gotten to the place where, when you have young children, you don’t know whether you have been a good parent or not, or how they’re going to turn out. So we have a great deal of satisfaction with both our children and our grandchildren. This just makes for a very happy, successful life, it seems to me.

13-00:55:45

Wilmot:

At one time, if you were to kind of—and now I’m going to ask you overall, did you feel, if you were to kind of make ingredients or a recipe for a marriage that lasts over sixty-one years and is healthy, what would you say that recipe is like?

13-00:56:01

Maslach:

Well, it’s one thing that we didn’t have, which is communication. [laughs] For some reason, maybe engineers aren’t good at communicating. There was a lack of that. But since I was a—I did have a degree in psychology, a master’s in psychology, I understood. I also understood George, so that I just didn’t expect more than I was able to get from him, in terms of sharing everything. In other words, this is the one person technically you should be able to share victories and defeats and not be afraid to discuss anything—so this is what I would consider important in a marriage, would make a good marriage.

I think our marriage lasted as well because we both said it was going to. You can't have everything you want, but you should have a lot of the things that are important to you—. And I think the important thing is that both of us were able to grow. I don't think this would have happened otherwise, because I think somebody working as George did at the university needs a wife to take care of everything else. I mean, I've taken care of all of the books, all the details of everything else, and spared him that, so that he could devote his time to what he was doing. So I think we both contributed to an operation that has worked well. So we can end on that.

13-00:57:51

Wilmot:

Okay.

[end audiofile 13, end of session]

Interview #8: June 15, 2004  
 Begin audiofile 14 06-15-04.wav

14-00:00:26  
 Wilmot:

Doris Cuneo Maslach, interview eight, June 15, 2004. In reading—and I had a follow-up question for you, which is that in reading Carol Sibley’s oral history, she mentions that you were very involved in bringing Harriet Wood, first African American principal, to Emerson. I was wondering if you could tell me about that.

14-00:00:58  
 Maslach:

Oh, I think that our ground work for that was the work we did in trying to get June Long, the fifth grade teacher, and that was so successful, and the parents found this was so—such a good idea, that it wasn’t, I don’t believe it was our PTA’s idea to have a principal. But when it was proposed, of course we were delighted. So I think that the school administration that was under the gun to start doing a better job of hiring people in the schools were happy to find a place where there would be no controversy. So this is how this started.

I would like to—been thinking about how all of this PTA activity coordinated with the campaign committee that we had to do, and I don’t recall exactly whether, how the N and O campaign, which was to increase money for teachers’ salaries, came about, whether this was a group of people who decided to do it, or it had to petition—I think we had to petition to get on the board. The school board did not put it on. I think the school board, I think our measure was N and theirs was O. I think the most they said they would do was not oppose it.

But anyway, and I think that our involvement was in particular because we were the presidents of the PTA and we wanted to make sure that there were as many people voting and aware of it as possible in the area. But then when we started to think about school board candidates, this is when we formed this ad hoc committee called the school district committee, I think I’ve mentioned it once before. The people that were on it were people that we met through PTA or through any other organization, and we did have representatives from all over Berkeley. That continued for quite a long number of years, and so was the basis for the Sanazaro campaign, which I was the chairman of, and also the Avakian campaign. Then after that, the Sibley campaign and the Roy Nichols campaign, which we supported, again through the school district things, even though they had their own campaign committees and were running separate campaigns. It seems that all over the city, there would be different groups working to support whatever was on the ballot for schools, if it was something that they were interested in.

I’m trying to think of—I’ve just lost my thought for the first time—.

14-00:03:57

Wilmot:

You had said there were some things you wanted to tell me. I'm wondering, I'll just pose this to you, and then your thought will come back later, but I'm wondering if this week, you've completed reading Carol Sibley's oral history, and I'm wondering if there were any—I know that you covered slightly different terrain, and that you occupied different time frames in Berkeley politics.

14-00:04:24

Maslach:

Yes.

14-00:04:24

Wilmot:

But I wanted to ask you what parts of her story rang true, what was different, what was different about your experience as an activist in Berkeley when compared to hers.

14-00:04:37

Maslach:

I think it was quite different. She seemed to be more in the realm of the city father category. She just seemed to know everybody, and through her husband, Robert Sibley, would meet everybody, and she was part of the whole social fabric of Berkeley, which I never was. I was faculty wife, and wasn't even involved in faculty things until my children got older and I got out of being active in working for education for the schools. She had no idea in her book of how Sanazaro and Avakian got on the board. But then, she didn't come into it until 1961, and her husband had died in 1958, so up to that time, she was not involved in community activities. So from then on, she just was a self-starter, thinking of new ideas, and she certainly had a number of them. She served on the board quite a long time, at least eight years, and then went on into other organizations. Organizations that when I read her oral history, I hadn't even heard of. But that of course was the time when I had stopped being involved in education and was involved in other things.

My memory is of meshing PTA activity and political activity and raising children between, say, 1955 and 1970. So the campaigns in particular were in the end of the 1950s, 1956, '57, '59. And then I understand there was another measure, a Proposition E, that I was the chairman of, that was to raise more money for the schools. Now, this was a really, really funny campaign, because everybody was for it. I mean, everybody endorsed it, everybody took pictures, everybody supported it, publically, but didn't vote for it and it lost. [laughs] It was that people were just not ready to give more money to the schools. They were more willing to give money for school bonds, and of course, that took a two-thirds percentage. Even though a tax increase only took a simple majority, as I said, it was this big defeat in 1960.

I don't know exactly when there was another bond issue that did pass, and I can remember being asked to be one of the speakers when they had a program on television. They were going to have two people from each side. They asked me if I would be the woman on the side supporting the bond issue. I thought that,

Well, my competition would be a little old lady in tennis shoes that would be opposing it, and I thought this would be great. I mean, no problem. So the rules of the thing were that people in the audience supporting one side could ask questions of the other side.

So what happened, actually, I think it was an hour program, that first of all, they did not have a little old lady; they had a black woman. And secondly, they arranged it so that all of their questioners asked their side questions, that they knew about, and were prepared for. It was as though it was a prepared campaign. So I got very few questions, and so our supporters in the audience were absolutely devastated. In fact, nobody spoke to me after the program was over. I remember driving across the bridge thinking, Well, I'll go to our P.R. person and say, "Hey, look, because they didn't adhere to the rules, why don't you cut down the program from an hour to a half an hour and make sure that we got equal time, for the little time we had?" So when I got home and called him, he had taped it, and he said, "No, we're not going to touch it. We're just going to leave it the way it is."

The way it came out was that these people were so obviously not playing by the rules that the sympathy was all for our side. So I thought that was really sort of interesting.

14-00:09:28

Wilmot:

What year was that campaign?

14-00:09:31

Maslach:

I think it must have been around 1961 or something like that. I'm not positive. But it was in the early sixties, it was, I think. This is the one material that I have not found. I found something on Prop. E. But anyway—

14-00:09:51

Wilmot:

What do you think the significance was in the opposition kind of placing a black woman as their speaker? Was most of the group also African American, or was that kind of a—

14-00:10:04

Maslach:

No, they thought that this would affect our supporters, that they would be more willing to listen to their side. I can't even remember, I don't think it was one of the active people in the black community, it was just somebody that was willing to do this.

But at the same time that I was involved and concerned about the political activity, this was when I was also president of the Willard PTA, and that was in '59 and '60, so this was again around the same time.

14-00:10:45

Wilmot:

We talked about Willard the last time, we talked about Willard and we talked about kind of the issues that were unfolding there around relationships, teacher-student relationships.

14-00:10:59

Maslach:

Well, I found some articles about conducting a membership campaign where we involved the students. At the time, we really made an effort to reach out to all of the parents and to try to set up programs that they would be interested in and would come to the school. As I said, I was there for two years, but at the same time, I find out that I was also for three years chairman of the Northern California Teacher Recruitment Committee that was sponsored by the boards of education, the Alameda County Board of Education. The schools were really suffering, because they were not producing enough teachers for the schools of California. They had to import teachers from other states, so the idea was, we should really make an effort to convince our students that they could go into teacher training.

So we put on three large conferences in those three years. It was '60, '61, and '62. We had gotten celebrity people to come and took students to football games, and really made an effort to reach the students. So I felt very strongly about that, so I was happy I could do that at the same time as do these other things.

And then of course, meanwhile, the Staats Committee, was again a committee that was formed in the community, and I think the NAACP was part of it. They were the ones that had gone to the school board, and Paul Sanazaro was the one that said, "Yes, we should do something about this." So the board formed the Hadsell Committee. So meanwhile, the Hadsell Committee was working at the same time. The report was given to the board, and the board then had the job of planning how to integrate the schools. Of course, this is when they submitted that report, this is what triggered the recall campaign in 1964. I think the Hadsell report was delivered in 1963. I was not a part of that, I was not on any of those committees, and I didn't get involved until the recall campaign was upon us, and we've already talked about that.

The other two things that I was doing in the sixties was in 1963, I was on the Alameda County Grand Jury. Edwin Meese was the district attorney that was assigned to the grand jury to work with us. Of course, he later became Ronald Reagan's attorney general, he went all the way. First went to the state with him, and then to Washington. I had a very good experience, because in general, a lot of people that are chosen to be on the grand jury are people that just want the recognition. They would talk about, Couldn't we have a sticker for our car, or something like that. They would come in the morning, have a meeting, and they would want to know when it was time to go home. So a lot of them were not really that interested in doing a job. I was, and so I was given the chairmanship of one of the committees, the social welfare committee. I guess maybe one or



two others, and Ed Meese and I were the ones that produced the report for that year.

14-00:14:58

Wilmot: How does one get to be on a grand jury?

14-00:15:01

Maslach: The Superior Court judges submit names, and nineteen are chosen by lottery. Spurgeon Avakian recommended me to another judge, Lyle Cook as a good name to be put on, and so I was. Then again, my name was submitted by Avakian in 1967. This was after he became a superior court judge, and I was on, and it was an entirely different situation. It was as though I had not been known to the district attorney's office at all, because anyone from the university was suspect. So I was not allowed to be on any committee, because I was from the university, even though I had this record of having been a very successful committee chairman before.

And there was a lot of unpleasantness on this particular grand jury. There were people that were so discriminatory that there was a woman that was on the grand jury, who had a job with IBM. IBM released her to be on the grand jury, because they felt it was important that there be representation of the black community on the grand jury. And this man would not speak to this woman.

14-00:16:43

Wilmot: You mean a fellow jury person?

14-00:16:46

Maslach: She was on his committee, and he wouldn't ever speak to her. I mean, he would always talk to her through someone else.

14-00:16:53

Wilmot: This was in 1967?

14-00:16:55

Maslach: Yes. This was in 1967. And so the kinds of things that would happen would be that in the morning, we would meet, and hear some kind of a presentation, either of a case or a proposition or something like that. And then there would be an immediate adjournment for lunch, and all of the conservative people would caucus and decide what motion would be put on the floor to discuss. So, since they also controlled the head of the jury, there was never any discussions of anything, because they would never really want any discussion. We could only speak to the motion they prepared. It was very frustrating.

Another person that was on there from Berkeley with me was Helen Monsharsh. She was a very active Democrat and a very prominent person in the community. She also was treated as I was. So what we decided to do was to spend our time revising the by-laws, the procedure of the grand jury. I wish I could remember her name, the district attorney that was assigned to us, who later became a

Superior Court judge [Marie Bertillion], also was very sympathetic to this, because of the way the grand jury was going. They didn't seem to be serious about dealing with any problems.

So we did write—we did form a committee to revise the by-laws. We invited everybody on the grand jury who wanted to work with us to be on a committee as well. She rounded up all of the other procedure books from all of the other grand juries, so we technically based our report on other grand juries. So that when it came time to adopt the report, and of course, a lot of people objected, “How come you are doing this?” Well, we could point out that, “Well, you were asked to be involved, and you had a chance.” If they didn't like a proposal, we would tell them this was the Solano County grand jury who thought this was a good idea.

So anyway, we did get this approved, and I understand that subsequent grand juries found that it worked better, because they were able to make sure there would be discussions of issues and not have this kind of short-circuiting that this grand jury did. That again was the sign of the time.

The other thing that happened was that we were getting reports by this time, in '67, there were a lot of demonstrations, because of the FSM and the Vietnam War protests. So we were privy to some of the situations that were going on, reports that were going on. The police department had put some of their people on these committees, and in one case, this person did such a good job that he was the one who was leading the demonstration. He was supposed to be the police undercover man who was supposedly finding out who really was responsible for these things.

14-00:20:27

Wilmot:

And this was here at Berkeley?

14-00:20:32

Maslach:

Well, this was the Alameda County Grand Jury observing what was happening at Berkeley, yes.

14-00:20:37

Wilmot:

So this young, this person basically was won over to the side he was supposed to be—

14-00:20:44

Maslach:

No.

14-00:20:44

Wilmot:

He just was still—

14-00:20:46

Maslach:

He was undercover, but he was doing his job so well to be accepted that they kept giving him more responsibility, and so—. So obviously, there was a lot of

this going on, and it was hard to decide when what is known as an atrocity occurred, or whether the police were provoking it or whether someone on the committee, the activists were doing it. But it was a very difficult time for all, because the university practically came to a standstill.

I remember one instance where the activists wanted to have a meeting, and of course, it was supposed to rally everybody to it. The students in general were not involved, but they were there judging. If the administration made any mistakes, why then, that would be the reason that they would get involved. Not because they particularly believed in what the activists were doing. So anyway, there was to be this meeting planned. Roger Heyns was the chancellor at the time. He's a psychologist. So what he arranged was to have both sides present their positions on this particular issue. The activists went crazy, because that's not what they wanted. They didn't want a logical discussion. The word was "atrocity," "we need an atrocity, we need an atrocity." So this was the kind of thing that was going on, to try to rally the students.

I think the activists were more successful with the Berkeley High students, because they always seemed to be able to parade a bunch of them to walk out of school and to get involved.

14-00:22:53

Wilmot:

From reading George's oral history, it seemed that there was a time when, during the Free Speech Movement, that students were making, activists were making phone calls to your house. Does that sound familiar? I may have that wrong, but—

14-00:23:09

Maslach:

The kind of disruption that—I don't recall that much disruption of our personal life. I do know they disrupted his classes. I mean, they would go to the classes and just to keep the classes from being able to be successful. We knew about it from the beginning, because what really was behind this was the students had a pamphlet that they would publish called SLATE, and they would critique the professors. I found a copy of it, incidentally. I remember flying east with George—this was when he was dean—and he said to me on the plane, "You can't believe what they're going to do. They're going to block the students from having tables at Sather Gate," or something like that. So we observed what was happening in Berkeley by television, from TV in Boston.

This was the first big mistake that the administration had made. Of course, this was the sit-in at Sproul Hall. From then on, it would just escalate with the students. I believe when George Murphy was a senator, they would call up and invite him to a meeting, do something atrocious, or ask him to do something that he wouldn't do so that he would get angry and send in the troops or something like that. So the idea was to always provoke the administration, either the Cal administration or the state administration, to become heavy-handed. It certainly worked with Reagan, because he did send in the National Guard, and that was

when the worst things happened, when they were shooting bullets and this one student was killed. I don't think it was a student; it was an activist. He had been throwing bricks, I understand. But even so, it was not handled well.

The thing was that People's Park wasn't handled well either. The university had bought up these properties, because they needed the land for future expansion. On these properties were a lot of old houses that housed a lot of students. I mean, they were like rabbit warrens. The university took them down without a plan as to what goes up in their stead. I mean, to take them down and then to have a big space left for a parking lot or for—originally, they thought they would make play fields out of them. Again, I remember George saying, "That's not the way to go." It just was a bad idea, and this did lead to all of the controversy over People's Park, which hasn't been settled even today.

Of course, I subsequently in the eighties and in the nineties served on People's Park committees, one under Heyman in the early eighties, and then one when they had the advisory committee. What was interesting about People's Park was that the activists had said, "This should be a city park." And Heyman, when he was chancellor, had a committee formed—and I was on this one for three years—that included students, community people, activists, and Telegraph [Avenue] merchants. Heyman's charge was, "Whatever decision you come to, I will implement." So we worked very hard, a number of us from the community, worked with the students, I would say, and with some of the merchants, to come up with some solutions that would be effective.

The object of the activists on the committee was to not have a report, and they were very good at knowing how to break up any meeting where a decision could be made. I mean, they would either bring in someone who was a mentally ill person who would rant and rave, and so this couldn't be handled, or they would break up, if it was a small committee meeting. I remember being in a small committee room where they just brought in enough people and filled up the room so that we couldn't talk. So I really got quite a course in how activism works.

At the end of this, actually there was—no, there were two reports. The one part of the report that really bothered me was the activists said that there should be no plans made for People's Park that doesn't include a natural surface. Well, the university had already agreed that one-third of it should be for this natural planting area, and another third should be for community gardens where people could grow their own flowers and vegetables, but the middle section was to be for the use of students. Actually, there were more students in that section of Berkeley than any other area, because all of the dorms were surrounding it. So they felt that they needed some sort of sports activities, intramural sports and so forth. First of all, they wanted to put up a handball court, and the activists said, "Oh, no, that would be a surface that wasn't a natural surface." So basketball

courts or handball courts were ruled out. So the only surfaces were either grass, of which they had, and the other surface was sand.

So it was the activists that insisted that a solution be volleyball courts on sand. And of course, when that came to be implemented years later, it was the activists who said, “How stupid can the university be, to have volleyball courts!” And of course, they did their best to make sure that the volleyball courts didn’t work, putting needles in the sand and breaking up the building around there. So they finally had to remove the volleyball courts. But it was the activists that insisted on it, and I think that subsequently, somehow over time, basketball courts did get put in. I think they had a gravel surface at first, that was dangerous, and then they put in a surface, and it’s been—that part of it has been successful, although People’s Park has not been successful. I mean, it’s a big piece of property just sitting there, and there were just a lot of drug deals, and this is why the police and the courts were very concerned that something be done about People’s Park, because they were getting so many cases that occurred there, dangerous ones as well as the drug ones.

It was very difficult for the police to police it, because you couldn’t—you had to have some kind of a witness to a situation, and yet nobody would cooperate—they would have an anonymous hotline that people could call and tell them what they knew, but there was very little cooperation in the community.

14-00:32:05

Wilmot:

Doris, why did you feel like it was important to be involved with People’s Park committee?

14-00:32:09

Maslach:

Because first of all, I was in the community. I mean, this is right in front of me. And also, I was—well, I had been part of the Panoramic Hill Association. I was president in the seventies.

It was the Panoramic Hill Association. This was a neighborhood association. We had voted as a neighborhood association, because the university originally wanted to use that site for student housing. We knew there wasn’t enough student housing. So we did approve that. When obviously this People’s Park situation developed and housing was not being built, and Heyman asked for community people to be on it, I had to get the Panoramic Hill Neighborhood Association to change its position on the fact that it should be housing on the site. Which they did.

The second time I was on was much later, because the other thing that Heyman did, when this particular situation didn’t really resolve itself. Everybody was saying this should be a city park, it belongs to the city. So he met with Mayor Loni Hancock, and he decided to rent the property to the city for one year—no, for five years—at a dollar a year. So at the end of the five-year period, they would decide what they would do.

As they were approaching the end of the five-year period, the city said they didn't want it. But anyway, what was part of the agreement was that there be an advisory committee, and the advisory committee consisted of eighteen people, nine appointed by the city council, and that meant that each city council member could appoint a person; and then nine were to be appointed by the university. I did not go on that committee. It was called—it's a very elaborate name, about use—I know I have it somewhere. I was not on that committee in the beginning, but councilmember Betty Olds had an appointment someone had left, and so she asked me if I would be her representative on that committee.

So I was, and that committee never had a successful meeting, because either there was never a quorum, or if there was a quorum, there were activists that broke up the meeting—so again, no decisions could be made. When it came time to end this committee, the city and the university decided to bring in two consultants to work with them to make a final report. These consultants were people who had worked on environmental issues for ages, and were very successful at bringing people together that were 180 degrees apart. I wondered how successful this couple would be with this committee, and they seemed to have started out exactly right, because we spent more sessions not talking about the issues, but talking about procedure: how to do this, how to listen to people.

One of the important things was we were made to sign everything we agreed on. They said that nothing would go in this report that everyone does not agree to. So whenever someone disagreed, they would say, "What would it take to have you agree to this issue?" So again, this was very frustrating to the activists on the group, who again did not want a report made, and so again, there was not a very comprehensive report made, but it did result in the fact that the city said they did not want it, and so the university did have then control of it in a new kind of way. People who wanted to be on an advisory committee had to apply, and they would have certain qualifications or certain constituencies. I think they allowed the city to decide who would be on the committee.

So while it hasn't solved the problem and it's still a big empty site, it's a cleaner site, and I don't know how much trouble they still have there, but certainly not the way they had years ago. So that was a total of seven years on these committees. I think it was necessary for the community, because I think that anything the university decided to do now—would get the support of the community. Before, there would always be people that would support the activists, and it took a while before the community agreed to say, "This is university property, and the university should use it for university purposes."

So that took us through the sixties.

14-00:38:19  
Wilmot:

I had a question from the fifties. Were you about to say something?

14-00:38:22  
Maslach:

No.

14-00:38:22  
Wilmot:

Well, I actually wanted to turn to family for some period of time. I wanted to ask you, in 1958, you and George and the children went on sabbatical.

14-00:38:35  
Maslach:

Yes.

14-00:38:35  
Wilmot:

In Europe. And I just wanted to ask you how did that come about, and what was that experience like for you? And was it the first time you traveled to Europe?

14-00:38:48  
Maslach:

Yes, it was my first. I don't think it was George's, but—. It came about because people, professors were allowed sabbaticals, and you could either have a full year or six months. We decided six months would be enough time. I checked with a lot of the other professors' wives who had gone to Europe on sabbaticals, so we were quite prepared as to what we would run into and how difficult it would be. I think we were fortunate that our children were eight, ten, and twelve, because they didn't miss any significant school, and yet they were old enough to appreciate what they saw and what they did. Other families took children that were little toddlers, and I would think this would be really difficult.

So the planning was a big job, because we sent trunks over. I just had one set of every kind of clothes: one set of dress-up clothes, one set of clothes for the winter, one set of clothes for the summer. We started in the south and then sort of worked our way north. George's project was to give lectures for the NATO countries, because he was a mechanical engineer in aeronautical science, and so this was the interesting thing that was going on in Europe at that time. He was not allowed to go to any Iron Curtain country, we could only go to the European countries.

We started in Italy, and Sorrento. We stayed there a week, while George flew to England to go to a meeting. Then we—I'm just trying to think. We did have a chance to, on the way in, we knew we were going to take a week's vacation after George finished his lectures at the end of the trip, and we decided we'd like to do it in Switzerland. So we went through Grindelwald, Switzerland, and found a place that we thought we might like to stay for a week. We asked the people if we could reserve a week for then, and the people said, "Well, that's when we usually have our regular people come, so why don't you come and then we will see what we can do."

So anyway, we went to France, we went to Germany, we went to Switzerland, we wound up in England, and it was really an eye-opener for the kids. I mean, they just loved everything, they wanted to climb every tower in Europe. I had

brought books that the people who the Foreign Service would use for their children, and I found three of these books. It was A Child's History of the World, Child's History of Art, and then I think it was the Child's History of Geography. They were done like stories, so that I could read them to them, and so it really helped. It covered all the important things that they would be seeing, and then I taught them whatever math they had to know, because I had been a math teacher. It was interesting, because Steve, who was four years younger than Chris, learned everything that I taught Chris.

But anyway, we had flown to New York, and then the four of us went over by ship. We went over on the Constitution, and George flew military air transport and then met us in Genoa. So again, that trip was interesting, because we met interesting people on the trip. The children enjoyed it, and it was economical, because Chris hadn't turned—I think twelve was the dividing line in ship fares. So the four of us had a cabin together, and then we went back the same way. We had bought a car and then shipped the car back.

But I would say it was just priceless, because they—

14-00:43:41  
Wilmot:

You are smiling while you tell this story, so it's clear it's these happy memories.

14-00:43:45  
Maslach:

Well, it really was. Because we only did things that the children would enjoy, and they were really so eager about everything, it was really fun. So they learned how to eat in different countries and so forth. I think it developed their personalities as well, and we found out what an independent person Steve was at eight, because we happened to go to the Belgian World's Fair. This was the time of Sputnik, and everything was big machines. We went to the fair for three days, and the first day, we tried to stay together, and that didn't work too well. So the second day, we said, well, George and I would stay together and the kids could stay together. That didn't work out well either. So the third day, each person could decide what he wanted to do. So George and I were together, Christina and Jamie were together, and Steve was alone. At eight, he just wandered around by himself, and he was the first one there at the Coca-Cola stand when we said we will meet at a certain time. And he was very enterprising on the ship, meeting people and talking to people.

And the same way when we visited, we went to Versailles, for instance, when we were in France, and he got a little tired of museums at his age. And of course, when he heard that the tour guide was going to speak in French and not English, he just said, "I just don't want to go." So we said, "Well, you'll just have to sit in the entry way and wait for us until we get back." Well, when we got back, he was talking to all the guides there and telling them all about the United States, and whatever else. [laughs] And I remember when we went to the Louvre, again, what he would do is run ahead, find out where there was a crowd, find out what



they were looking at, and come back and say, “I found the Mona Lisa!” or “I found the Winged Victory!” So he made his own time.

Anyway, as I said, we were able to actually observe how the education was in these countries as well, and of course, when we got to England, it was really funny, because we left in '58 and integration was a big thing. So they had headlines about school integration. I thought, Well, that's interesting. And it turns out it was social integration. It was, they had private schools and public schools, and whenever they started to change the system there was the same kind of protest that there would be if it were racial integration. I was really amused. It turns out that, as I was looking over my clippings, that when I came back, I was giving a lot of talks about what we found out about education in Europe.

But I think that the children also learned how important it was to learn other languages. I think it was a real heads-up.

14-00:47:06

Wilmot:

Were you challenged by kind of managing the family on foreign land, and creating good educational choices for your children? What was that like, making sure you had a good safe home for them over there? What was setting up home there like? Did you have flats or hotels or—

14-00:47:24

Maslach:

No, no. We were given the name of somebody that worked for UNESCO in Rome. We called this person and they said something about, “Well, we can meet you for a drink.” So we met them, and then they said, “Well, let's have dinner together.” And it turns out that this was the way they screened people. If they didn't want to talk to people, they would just have these obligatory drinks.

Well, these people said to us that, “Look, second-class hotels are fine.” So they gave us the kind of guides we needed. So we stayed at second-class hotels almost everywhere. The children were just like Open Sesame. People loved children, and especially in second-class hotels. Whereas if it were a fancy hotel, they would want them to behave.

14-00:48:24

Wilmot:

What are things—sorry.

14-00:48:26

Maslach:

Well, I was going to say, we were able to spend twenty-five dollars a day for all the room and board for five people. And of course, that was the time that Fromer was writing these books, you know, *Europe on Five Dollars a Day*. But it was off season, you see. We had started in January, and then we came home in the summer. So we were not there at high season, and it was close enough, it was in '58, and it was close enough after the war that people were sort of hungry for tourists. And I think in some places, a little bit too hungry, like in Naples, they sort of so overwhelmed the children when we docked there that they wouldn't

go off the ship, because there were just so many people just wanting to pounce on them and sell them things.

14-00:49:15

Wilmot:

Was there anything you would do to kind of customize each hotel room as you came in, for the family?

14-00:49:21

Maslach:

We just had wonderful accommodations. No, it was unbelievable. We were able to take the children skiing in St. Anton at one point. This was in Austria. And it turned out without our knowing it was the time of the Kandahar ski race, which is a big ski race. So we saw all the big racers that were in the world at this time.

We stayed there a week, I believe, and we gave the children ski lessons. It came to twenty-five cents an hour per child for them to be supervised and taught. They would have two-hour classes in the morning, then they would have their lunch that they had packed from our pensione, and then another two hours in the afternoon. As I said, this was unbelievable that they could be taught by the instructors who were all these international skiers earning money doing this.

14-00:50:34

Wilmot:

What was it like for you to visit Italy? [much noise in background] You were visiting the place where your family was from. Did you go to that region at all?

14-00:50:46

Maslach:

They were from Genoa, so we were definitely in Genoa. I had taken some Italian classes in schools, in junior high and high school, so I could understand and I was comfortable. I had difficulty speaking, but somehow, we were always able to make our wishes known, understood. Our son Steve would go into any store in any country and get what he wanted, if he had something to spend. We had a lot of interesting experiences, really too many to relate, but it was just a wonderful—in fact, we just happened to be in Rome at the time of Easter week, and again, we hadn't planned it. It just happened that that was when we were there. So we saw one of the popes who had died who wasn't a pope for very long, but that was amazing, to be in St. Peter's Square on Easter, to have a pope come out and bless the crowd. To see how many people would be there.

This happened to us a lot. We didn't plan things, and we would just stumble on some kind of a ceremony or some kind of a celebration. It was really just like opening a box of surprises. So as I say, this was really good.

Our second sabbatical was in 1966, and that was just George and I together with Steve, who had just turned sixteen. That was a very different experience, because this was mostly George and I together and Steve on his own, because he didn't want to be with the family—didn't want to be in a school, so we just let this kid roam. He had quite an experience.

14-00:52:52

Wilmot:

The second sabbatical, where did you go?

14-00:52:55

Maslach:

I'm just trying to think. We started out skiing again in Grindewald. Well, the one thing I didn't say about our last week in Grindewald in 1958, when we finally went there to spend our week's vacation, again, the woman said, "I just can't be sure." So after two days, she said, "Yes, you can stay." What she wanted to do was the same thing: she wanted to observe our children and to see whether we were people she'd want to have around for a week. She apologized, she said, "I—" I said, "No, I understand," but our kids were really great playing with her kids, and behaving themselves.

14-00:53:46

Wilmot:

In that second sabbatical, this leads into my next area of inquiry, in that second sabbatical, what would you—again you were in Europe—how were the Europeans kind of watching what was unfolding in the United States in terms of the immense social change and upheaval with regards to the civil rights movement and the aftermath of the civil rights movement?

14-00:54:14

Maslach:

Well, actually, in both sabbaticals, we had a taste of it. In the first sabbatical, we were driving a Mercedes. Again, everyone assumed we were German, and there was still resentment. A policeman would stop us in France, for instance, and then find out—look at the passport and see that it was an American professor, and immediately change. The reason we were driving a Mercedes was that a professor at Cal, Professor Merriam, asked George if he would pick up a Mercedes for him. He had bought one, and drove it around a while, and then shipped it back home. This would reduce the amount of tax he'd have to pay; it would be a tax on a used car rather than a new car. So we did that for him, and decided that that was a good idea, and we should do it for ourselves. So after we shipped his car back, we bought one for ourselves. So we were driving a Mercedes.

At the time of—we were in Paris, what had happened nationally, I don't know, but all the American flags were down. I think it was the time of Eisenhower, and there was some real diplomatic gaffes where the people did not like the Americans. I think John Foster Dulles was the secretary of state, and there were some problems with the Suez Canal. Anyway, there was just a lot of anti-American feeling, and so in Paris, as I said, on Bastille Day, we were told not to go to certain places and not to tell people we were American.

I'm trying to think, in '66, what kind of issues—And I remember when I was subsequently in London, I went to have my hair done, the hairdresser said, "Don't tell people you're an American," because people were angry. In general, though, in France, when you were out in the country and you were American,

you were very well received, especially in second-class areas, but not in the big hotels.

14-00:56:53

Wilmot:

Malcolm X was assassinated in 1965—

14-00:56:57

Maslach:

No, the time that was interesting was in Belgium, at the World's Fair, because the Russians had this big Sputnik display—they had machines going and so forth. This is what was supposed to impress people. The American pavilion was done by a famous architect, and it was just very simple, very plain, but very elegant. What they had was, as you went through the American exhibit, they showed things that we were doing, but they also had America's problems. They had big pictures of the racial situation in the United States, and they had young people who were the guides, hosts and hostesses, and when people would ask them, "Don't you hate to live in America?" this black girl said, "You know, there's no other country where there is a better place to work on these problems."

So our children, were very, very proud of the fact, we were really pleased with the American exhibit, even though in the *Herald-Tribune* there would be letters criticizing why didn't we match the Russians, you know, in showing our strength. But the Russian exhibit was so crude, and done in this way to frighten people and to dominate people, that we were right on target. Our children also were aware of "the ugly American." They hated to see, especially in Italy, people in big Cadillacs driving into these tiny squares, and feeling, This shouldn't be.

In '66, again I just don't recall any overt feeling about racism at all.

14-00:59:17

Wilmot:

In Europe?

14-00:59:17

Maslach:

In Europe, where we traveled. It was less of a working sabbatical than the first one, although we did go to a big conference in England where the Russians were there. But the story of our second sabbatical was, we started out by going back to Grindewald to go skiing, and George broke his leg. So I wound up driving 5,000 miles throughout Europe for six months. That was not my idea of a vacation, because I don't like driving that much. And the driving rules are so different. You swarm in the city piazzas. The British roundabouts are different. I don't think I did much driving in England, because I just couldn't drive on the left side of the street. But in driving in Europe, you know, as I say, you just swarm, and you have to watch out for the guy on your right. So he's watching out for his right, but it's so hard to get where you're going. And of course, in places like Sicily, we were riding in a Mercedes, people were very aggressive, and they would—

they used to have road races with me, to pass me, just because I was a woman driving.

14-01:00:55

Wilmot: So was George there with his leg in the car, bent up, in a cast next to you?

14-01:01:02

Maslach: Well, he got out of the cast fairly soon, and then the leg got infected, and so I still—no, he didn't have a cast that much, but as I say, I did the driving. And I did have an accident in Spain that was kind of scary, because I was just sort of hit broadside. It just damaged the car; didn't damage any people, but it was still sort of scary. I think there was an oxcart in the way, and the way the cars were passing each other, this car hit me.

14-01:01:56

Wilmot: This tape is about to end.

14-01:01:56

Maslach: I'll just say this one thing about this meeting with the Russians, because the Russian scientists that we met were just like scientists in this country. They had the same interests, the same problems. But the KGB would kind of keep circling them, to make sure that they didn't step out of line. It was supposedly one of the first meetings that the Russians were willing to let their people go to.

[begin audiofile 15]

15-00:00:18

Wilmot: I think following up on this question of what was happening when you went to Europe, how the kind of social change that was unfolding in the U.S. was perceived, I wanted to follow up with that and ask you a question of how did the civil rights era, the aftermath of the civil rights era, and the black power movements, and Vietnam War, how did these kind of come home to your family? Your children were growing up during the 1960s, they were in their teenage years, so I wanted to ask you about how—and you were in tumultuous Berkeley. So how did you experience these things from your family, or how did your children experience them from your standpoint?

15-00:01:12

Maslach: Well, I really think that the education that my children got in the Berkeley schools was really wonderful. Both Willard and Berkeley High were completely integrated.

[tape interruption]

15-00:02:03

Wilmot: My question is already on there. Basically, how did these issues of kind of tumultuous social change, how did that era come home to roost in your house and in terms of your family and your children in particular?

15-00:02:12  
Maslach:

Well, first of all, our children were very aware of what was going on. And again, the one religious group that I told you that we were involved with was Quakers, which again is the groundwork for accepting everybody for who they are. And being in the situation in Berkeley High where they did have experiences with children of all races, and matter of fact, each one of them had someone that was almost a best friend, because they would be in leadership situations. I remember Christina going to some leadership conference one fall with another black girl, and so they would visit frequently. I would be picking her up at her home. I was really impressed with this family, because the mother and father both worked for the postal department. But the father would post notes all over the house as to what the children were supposed to do when they came home. These were kids that were college-bound. I mean, they were not wealthy, but they certainly had the ability to go to school.

Jamie was a good friend of Elihu Harris (who later became mayor of Oakland) while he was at Berkeley High. In fact, I think he was his campaign manager when Elihu ran for president of the student body. But again, none of the children showed any prejudice at all. I think that they understood the injustice of what was going on, and again, are very supportive in their lives now. I know that my son Jamie, who owns the local Firelight Glass Company, for instance, when he started his company, which is a very small company, could get extra credits in the CETA program for hiring minorities. So not only was this an impetus, but one of his right-hand men for all of his thirty years in business has been a young man that was not educated but became his manager. Most of Jamie's employees are Chicano, because they are also interested in the glass business.

So as I said, Berkeley is a wonderful place to bring up children. We discussed all those issues. They're still today very outraged about what's happening.

15-00:05:07  
Wilmot:

In terms of what's happening internationally, or what's happening here, or—?

15-00:05:11  
Maslach:

What happens whenever they hear of injustices. So I couldn't be more pleased with their attitudes about people, because they do accept people for who they are.

15-00:05:25  
Wilmot:

In the 1960s, that was—and the late 1960s in particular—your sons were draft age. Can you tell me a little bit about how their interface with the Vietnam War or protesting the Vietnam War?

15-00:05:40  
Maslach:

Well, Jamie believed in Quakerism, and he was a pacifist. He was registered with the Berkeley draft board, registered as a conscientious objector, or tried to, but they never gave him conscientious objector status. He was at Harvard at the

time, and living in Cambridge. So what he did while he was waiting was to do what he would have done had he gotten conscientious objector status, and that was to take some kind of a volunteer job supervising people who were on welfare who were required to do some work to get their welfare checks. He worked in Roxbury observing people who were giving out quantities of food. I remember that all of a sudden, it was decided that all of these people that were getting these benefits had to go into training, and his telling me that these people said, “Look, if they haven’t taught me how to read in fifty years, I can’t go into a training program now.” These people that he was working with were happy to do this for nothing even, because they felt that they should make a contribution. But this idea of then imposing a training program on them was really sad, and he was very upset about that.

Steve just had a high draft number. Of course, so did Jamie, and he was drafted—he was prepared to go to jail. He was not interested in leaving the country. His number did not come up, nor did Steve’s, and then the war ended. So neither one of them had to go.

15-00:07:57

Wilmot:

Were they active in protests? Christina, for example—

15-00:08:06

Maslach:

Well—

15-00:08:09

Wilmot:

I’m asking about her in particular, because she wasn’t a man and couldn’t be drafted.

15-00:08:16

Maslach:

Where would she be at that time?

15-00:08:20

Wilmot:

She would have been at Radcliffe in the late sixties, 1963-1967.

15-00:08:22

Maslach:

She graduated from Radcliffe in ’67, and then went to Stanford, so she was at Stanford studying for her Ph.D. in psychology. And of course, then she became involved in this prison experiment that again—and she was the one, matter of fact, that called a halt to that experiment, because she felt that even in an experiment, the subjects were being abused. But she has, she and her husband have both been very involved in these civil rights issues with prisoners, and did a lot of lecturing or talking to people about caring for prisoners.

Steve, as I said, he was—again, socially, he just had friends of every sort. Of course, especially in the arts.

15-00:09:36

Wilmot:

Well, do you want to close for today?

15-00:09:42  
Maslach:

I'm just trying to think of another, the things that I left out. One of the things that happened when I was on the grand jury was the case of Huey Newton. He had shot a policeman, and I was just trying to think why the grand jury should be involved in that, I suppose. But anyway, Huey Newton was shot as well, and so he was taken to Kaiser emergency, and I understand that the nurse there kept asking him for his card, where was his—she couldn't register him until he showed his Kaiser card. And I thought, this is such a strange thing to have done to Huey Newton.

Again, one of the other jobs I had was working on a study for the Educational Testing Association, and some people were making a study on whether rewards would help performance. They needed to have a population that was a poor population and also a minority population. So they had gotten permission to test in Oakland, and I was given a job testing. These were all black students in black schools.

What I learned—well, I learned a number of things there about the racial issue—and that is the difference between the students and the teachers. The teachers of some of the black students were very punitive.

15-00:11:41  
Wilmot:

And these were white teachers, or teachers of all races?

15-00:11:43  
Maslach:

This happened to be black teachers of black students. The black teachers obviously were of a higher class, better educated and so forth. These students were very poor. This was one of the poorest sections of Oakland.

15-00:12:01  
Wilmot:

This was in west Oakland or east Oakland or—do you recall?

15-00:12:07  
Maslach:

Let's see, it would be in the flats, near the waterfront. I forget the name of the district it's called. But what I found out was that—well, first of all, the ingenuity of these students. First of all, they were given pennies if they gave a lot of responses, but that didn't make any difference at all. It was whether they were engaged or not in the issue. They were studying creativity, and we found a lot of creative students that were unbelievable in their responses to, "How would you use newspaper?" or "How would you use—" some other simple thing. I told these students, 5th graders, that I was testing out some games and wanted their responses, and they would be shown things and asked what could be, or asked how would you use newspaper or how would you use cork, or some common thing. And there were creative children that went on and on and on, because I wasn't to stop them, I was just to take all of their responses. They just never stopped. So it made me realize that when there's creative children, you don't say, "Okay, you do this for ten minutes and then we stop and something else."



Their response was just not to come to school, if they weren't engaged in things. So I don't know whether this has affected any education, but it certainly was an eye-opener to me, to see the children learn differently and should be handled differently.

15-00:14:27

Wilmot:

Who was your supervisor, who did you report to?

15-00:14:31

Maslach:

Well, I reported to the Educational Testing Association, but then all of this data went to the woman, she was from Princeton, who was making the study. She had made the study on all populations in all parts of the United States. But anyway, as I said, it was an education for me too. But it sort of paralleled what I learned when I was at Willard PTA too, that I think I mentioned, in having people participate in, say, to bring something from your kitchen that we can use. A box of cake mix or Jell-o or something like that. And people just didn't have anything in their kitchens. So this is something that I think that people don't realize.

You were asking another question about the effect of the war on the children. The fact that they deplored it and were—they were not active in any demonstrations. Steve inadvertently got involved, because he was a California Arts and Crafts student working on an art project. There was a big demonstration in Berkeley, a very bad one, because they actually broke into offices and destroyed professors' life's work. The thing I particularly remember about that issue was—well, I'd better not go into that, because I can't remember the guy's name, but it will come to me.

But anyway, Steve had worked on his project, and then had heard all of this thing going on at night. So he finished his project about, say, five in the morning or four-thirty in the morning, and it was too late to go to bed and too early to go to school. So he just went out to see what was going on, and that was the point at which the police were conducting their sweep, and they were just picking up everybody that was on the streets and sending them out to Santa Rita Jail. And so I got this phone call from his girlfriend's mother saying he was out in Santa Rita, and I was so surprised because he really hadn't been actively involved in any group to do anything about the war. So we had to bail him out and get him out of Santa Rita, and then he had to go to court, and we eventually got this expunged from his record, because it would have remained on his record when he subsequently applied for a job.

15-00:17:36

Wilmot:

Doris, during this time, during the 1960s, your husband was also kind of ascending the administrative ranks at the university. He became a dean and then later moved up through from there. How did that transform—for example, did you have more social commitments then at the university, as the dean's wife? What kinds of roles did that require you to play?

15-00:18:01  
Maslach:

Well, we were invited to a lot more functions at the university, because every time they would have some prominent person come, whether—especially if it was related to what a particular dean or a particular administrator was involved in, he would be involved in a dinner. So we did meet a lot of people. It was a very privilege, I remember, one of the first ones was Alexander Dobrinen, who was the Russian ambassador in Washington who was here, and Roberto Rossellini was here.

15-00:18:39  
Wilmot:

You told me about that. I'm wondering, did—as far as supporting, did it require you to support him differently in terms of, as his profession transformed, did that require a different supporting role from you?

15-00:18:52  
Maslach:

Well, what was different when you became an administrator rather than just a professor, professors did have a number of months vacation a year, and administrators did not. So I saw even less of him, because he was very busy, and then he was on these Washington committees. He was on a lot of committees in Washington, would take a lot of trips to Washington. So mostly through the children's adolescence, he just wasn't there for our family. I remember going into the Safeway once and meeting a woman who said, "Oh, your husband is so wonderful to my student, my son," and I felt like saying, "I wish he were around a little more for ours." So in general, starting in '63 when he became dean of engineering, and then until '83 when he retired as vice chancellor, he was pretty involved.

And during this time, at '63, Steve was fourteen, and Christina was seventeen. So it really covered all of their high school and college experiences, and their marriages and divorces, and various crises in growing up. I found it difficult. I needed help. I would get depressed at times, and would have psychotherapy, which I believed in. It was very useful, and I think it helped a great deal. So we wind up at this place where we're all good friends, and it's almost as though you have been going down the rapids, and all of a sudden come to quiet water.

15-00:21:21  
Wilmot:

That's a beautiful metaphor. Well, on that note, shall we close?

15-00:21:26  
Maslach:

Okay.

[end audiofile 15, end of session]

Interview #9: June 22, 2004  
Begin audiofile 16

16-00:00:02

Wilmot: And we're recording on both instruments. Good morning, Doris Cuneo Maslach, interview nine, June 22, 2004. Would you say a few words, Doris?

16-00:00:22

Maslach: Yes, it is 2004. [laughs]

16-00:00:26

Wilmot: It sure is. Okay, you had said there was something you wanted to add to our last session. We were talking about—actually, I should just pose the question: was there anything you wanted to add from our last session?

16-00:00:38

Maslach: Well, I think I was telling you that when we talked about the children's sabbatical in 1958, we had traveled all over Europe with them for about six months. We would run into all of these memorials to Franklin Delano Roosevelt. There'd be Roosevelt Plaza, Roosevelt Bahn, and so forth. So this—

16-00:01:06

Wilmot: What does that mean, Roosevelt Bahn? Is that like Roosevelt Road?

16-00:01:06

Maslach: Road, yes.

16-00:01:08

Wilmot: So this would be in places like Germany?

16-00:01:10

Maslach: Yes. And so the children said, "Well, who is this Roosevelt anyway?" And I was appalled, we were appalled that they didn't know. I mean, at that time, in '58, it was close enough after the war, and Eleanor Roosevelt was always criticized by all of the pundits. People hadn't really appreciated what Roosevelt had done for the country, and so there was kind of a negative reaction in this country. So we of course explained who Roosevelt was and what he had done. When we got back to the United States, we arrived in New York with a car so that we could drive across the country. We decided that we would make sure that they knew about American history by visiting all of the Washington—Mount Vernon and all of the Washington type of memorials that we could find, and then when we got to Illinois, doing the same for Lincoln, so that we felt that we were doing our duty as far as keeping our children apprised of the history of our country. So that was all I wanted to talk about for that.

16-00:02:31

Wilmot:

Okay. It's always stunning to me how different generations have a different kind of breadth of knowledge. As you said off tape, there are things that we learn about in books that you actually lived.

16-00:02:43

Maslach:

Yes.

16-00:02:46

Wilmot:

And there's certainly different administrations, Roosevelt and—we were learning about in history, but for you, it was life.

16-00:02:56

Maslach:

And then of course, Eisenhower became one of our presidents too, so that still is a connection to the war.

I think we left off last time somewhere in the early seventies?

16-00:03:12

Wilmot:

I think we did. I think we did, if we're going to be chronological, I think we did. Today I'm hoping we can move to talk about your activities in the housing arena here in Berkeley, which extended to several different projects, several different kind of movements and projects.

16-00:03:34

Maslach:

Well, we'll try to get to that. I think it was important, though, if we're doing it chronologically, the fact that in the seventies, after I stopped being involved in school activities, and I was more interested in my own career as a psychotherapist, and so I was carrying on studies for that as well as working for the Psychotherapy Institute. But also, I was president of the Panoramic Hill Association. It seems that everybody who had been here for a long time would take a turn doing that. There were two big issues at the time that were significant. I guess in one way it was housing, because it was the safety of the hill, Panoramic is a hill that has a one-way egress and exit. You can only go in and out one way. So it's been considered one of the most dangerous fire hazard areas in the Bay Area. For years, one of the projects has always been, Can we have a second access road? So each president in turn tries to see if that could be accomplished, so that was one of the projects that we were involved in.

16-00:04:48

Wilmot:

And did you accomplish that under your turn as president?

16-00:04:53

Maslach:

We did not, as usual, because there are just too many jurisdictions. There's the city of Oakland as part of Panoramic; city of Berkeley; the School for the Deaf and Blind was there, so you have to deal with the state, because they owned all the property up behind the School for the Deaf and Blind; East Bay Regional Parks would sort of meet upper Panoramic; and so you would have to work

through all of these jurisdictions. We came close, and of course, the access road was not going to be a permanent road, because everyone said if you put in a permanent road, this is going to open it up, there will be much more housing up there, and you'll be in a worse situation than you were before.

So this access road was to cut across and go over to the Claremont area and join Stonewall Road. It would only be used if there were a fire and emergency vehicles needed to get in. So we had to, at that point I had to contact and get to know every single member that lived on the hill, because the majority had to sign to have this go through. So we seemed to have gotten everything, with everybody involved—Oakland, Berkeley, the state—except one person who was an environmentalist said that this road would cut across the hill above the School for the Deaf and Blind and spoil the view. It would really spoil the landscape view of that.

16-00:06:28

Wilmot: This was a resident on—

16-00:06:30

Maslach: No, it wasn't, he lives down the flat, on Russell Street. But he was influential enough, and I think it was the—it was probably the East Bay Regional Parks—

16-00:06:41

Wilmot: Was it a professor, or—?

16-00:06:42

Maslach: No.

16-00:06:43

Wilmot: How did he get to have that kind of influence?

16-00:06:44

Maslach: Because this is the way you do in Berkeley. You have constituencies, and you have committees, and you know people. He talked somebody important into opposing it.

But the other issue was one more related to the university, and that was the fact that the Raider games were using the Cal stadium for their pre-season games. That again, from the beginning, had been a controversy of Panoramic Hill, because of the impact of that many people coming into a place where there is absolutely no parking lots associated with this university stadium. So again, the Panoramic Hill people were concerned, the lease was up for renegotiation, and so we talked to the university people and said we wanted to be heard about this. We actually did a lot of research, and we found out that when the stadium was built, and that was in the twenties, they built it where they did because they owned the land and didn't want to buy another site. They said they didn't need a parking lot, because people would just be walking to the stadium. It was really—should have been located somewhere on the flats where there could have been

parking lots. It did alienate a lot of residents, professors too, who left the university because their property was taken to build the stadium.

Anyway, we had a committee, and some people were anxious to get lawyers and file lawsuits, which I didn't approve of. But anyway, a group of us met with Chancellor [Albert H.] Bowker and explained to him that, as residents, we would support anything the university did in any of their buildings, including the Greek Theatre, the stadium, as long as it was university-related, and it wasn't to be used for commercial uses. So this did get passed. But Bowker said that he'd gotten the most criticism for that agreement than for anything else he had done, because a lot of people felt that the university had a chance to make a lot of money, so this was sort of cutting that down.

The university has always been able to raise funds using the Greek Theatre for events, and they still do. But the thought of having a series of commercial events in the stadium was really frightening. And matter of fact, years later, when there was a new manager, new personnel in the university, and Paul McCartney came and said he wanted to use the stadium for a rock concert, that was agreed to with the people not realizing that this agreement had been made. When this was pointed out to the university people, they said, well, they would donate some of the proceeds that they would get for some charitable causes. The Paul McCartney concert went through, and it was absolutely unbelievable. I mean, the noise, the amplified noise actually shook buildings. It took a whole week's work to set up so there were transportation problems in that area.

Paul McCartney took credit for the fact that the university had given some of the proceeds for charity, he took credit that there was this aspect to it, and he also bragged that he made more money on this concert than any other concert he had made in the United States. So we again talked to the university, and then got a letter from [Chancellor Chang-Lin] Tien saying that UC would respect this agreement that it not be used for commercial purposes.

So as I said, that was the one time I was a little bit out of favor, especially with the Old Blues, because they felt that they should use the stadium to raise funds. My objection was that the university got so little money. I mean, something like \$60,000 for a Raider game, and the Raiders would make thousands from something like that.

16-00:11:38

Wilmot:

What does it mean, what's it like to be on the outs with the Old Blues? What does that actually translate to in terms of lived experience and in terms of—

16-00:11:47

Maslach:

Well, David Maggard was the athletic director and I tried to point out to him that he was alienating many people in the area. I said, "You want support from the university people." And he said, "Well, I'd like to see some support from them." I said, "Okay, I will guarantee you that we will spend some time raising funds

for the university.” So after this thing was over, I made an appointment to meet him, and he just wasn’t interested in any kind of fundraising that we might have. I think that subsequently, when the university has had to depend so much on alumni and support of Berkeley to help finance the three-quarters of the money we don’t get from the state, that having Raider games in Berkeley was just the wrong way to go. The Raider fans would park in people’s driveways; because when you have that many people coming into the area, they just have to inundate the area, and it just didn’t fit for the mistake that we think that the California people made years and years ago by locating the stadium in a residential area.

16-00:13:22

Wilmot:

It’s such an amazing idea, of Raider fans in Berkeley.

16-00:13:25

Maslach:

[laughs]

16-00:13:25

Wilmot:

Because actually, in and of itself, it’s quite exciting, it’s quite an exciting idea, and—yeah, interesting.

16-00:13:34

Maslach:

If you’ve been to a Raider game and watch the parties that go on before and after the game, why, it doesn’t fit for Berkeley. But mostly it’s just the logistics. There just is no parking. It’s ridiculous that there would be no parking set aside for a stadium of that size.

16-00:13:53

Wilmot:

We would have to—I don’t know what we’d have to do, they’d have to do some major shuttling, I imagine.

16-00:13:57

Maslach:

Well, this is what happens now. I mean, we encourage people to use BART and buses and so forth, so this is what happens when we have a big game.

16-00:14:08

Wilmot:

And when you talk to people about those issues, who do you connect with? You mentioned the chancellors, you mentioned David Maggard.

16-00:14:25

Maslach:

Actually, what the community people then did was form something called a liaison committee with community people and university people, students, on the committee, with the idea that whenever either group had some kind of suggestion or idea or program, they would discuss it, and work things out before things got to the place where people were interested in getting lawyers and going to court. That lasted for some time, but then as with any kind of an organization of things that get organized, it sort of drops off in interest. There isn’t the same energy. But it would be revived occasionally with Panoramic Hill Association

when there would be other issues that—because what the university does, does impact this community a lot.

The last thing that people were really, really unhappy about were putting these huge stadium lights to light the stadium so that these games could be televised in the evening, in case they ran late. And of course, when you think of how many games a year might be televised from Cal football, we're talking about two, three? To have these monstrosities, because they were very, very high. So as far as I know, this is in abeyance now, but whether they'll be able to again revive it, I don't know.

16-00:15:57

Wilmot:

Do you mean high, do you mean really high wattage, like very bright, or—

16-00:16:01

Maslach:

No, no—well, both, but they're just way, way up in the—bordering the stadium, they were just huge.

16-00:16:08

Wilmot:

I wanted to ask you, I wanted to back up and ask you a question about the fire trail—not the fire trail, but the second access to Panoramic Hill. Was there ever a fire on Panoramic Hill?

16-00:16:23

Maslach:

We've had fires on Panoramic Hill and we meet with the fire department regularly and keep in touch with them. We have a very good committee, especially after both the 1991 fire and the [1989] earthquake. We've trained our people in rescue operations and CPR. What we have done is—well, two things. The university, there is a trail that went from upper Panoramic over to near the botanical garden, an access near the botanical gardens through Strawberry Canyon. That was made an all-weather trail, so that a fire truck could use that.

We ourselves have formed two trails, so that we can walk off the hill if need be. We time ourselves, and we can usually get off the hill, get people off the hill in ten minutes, except for people who are handicapped or something like that. But the committee we have is marvelous; they've stashed tools, they've stashed things to use in case there is an emergency. But the fire department has been very candid with us and said that if there is one fire, they will come up and fight the fire. If there is more than that, they will just be clogging the roads, and so they would be trying to help people get off the hill. So if there were an earthquake—the earthquake fault runs along the bottom of Panoramic, so theoretically, Panoramic would be then closed off—all of our training and rescue training has to be for seventy-two hours. We could not expect any help in seventy-two hours, and so we're supposed to have food supplies and do triage with other people, and only save people that could survive seventy-two hours. So this was kind of a disturbing way of thought, for people living here.



16-00:18:36

Wilmot:

What plans were made for getting the handicapped off the hill within those ten minutes?

16-00:18:41

Maslach:

I don't know. I mean, I guess people who know these people would try to carry them off or whatever. But it's kind of on an individual basis. They just brought the issues to the front. And then, of course, we do a great big campaign to clear the foliage around the houses, to sort of prevent destructive fires. So we're very careful and we work hard at it, but we know that we're living in a risky place.

16-00:19:22

Wilmot:

And the two—you said there's two trails coming down the hill?

16-00:19:27

Maslach:

Yes.

16-00:19:26

Wilmot:

And they don't follow the steps, or do they?

16-00:19:31

Maslach:

Well, it depends on the direction the first was taking. But see, one would be if the fire were coming from this direction, you would get off this direction. If it was coming from this direction, you would go off in the other. The idea is to have at least two trails where you could walk off the hill.

16-00:19:45

Wilmot:

Interesting, interesting.

16-00:19:47

Maslach:

And what is lucky for us is the fact that our hill is not like the hills behind the Claremont Hotel. It takes a long time to get off those hills, because the roads are very windy. So that is one thing that would rescue us. But as I say, we are aware of this, and we make this choice, because we like to live here. It has other amenities.

16-00:20:17

Wilmot:

The other question I had for you pursuant to that discussion was, you said you got to, as president, and when you were trying to lobby to get another access to the hill, you had the opportunity or you had to actually kind of meet every single resident. What was that like? Was it illuminating?

16-00:20:39

Maslach:

Oh, yes. And the sad part is that I don't know them now. It's been a long time; that was in the seventies.

16-00:20:47

Wilmot:

And there's been enough turnover.

16-00:20:48

Maslach:

Oh, yes. Actually, a lot of our residents have died, too, our elderly residents. Yes, and Panoramic has become a very popular place—in other words, all the property sells well up here, because—it is so close to the university. There's been quite a turnover. But we've had artists, we've had architects, we've had even a Nobel Prize winner live on the hill for a while. When we first came to Panoramic in 1950, I can remember seeing a sign on a post saying, "There's a party at such-and-such a house, everybody come." It's been a long time since they've done anything like that. But it's always been a very friendly neighborhood. It still is, matter of fact.

16-00:21:46

Wilmot:

Maybe you and George will have to host the first party in many decades where it's a house party for Panoramic Hill.

16-00:21:54

Maslach:

Well, we've used our house a lot for Panoramic Hill meetings. I have given neighborhood house parties, just to meet the neighbors, especially when new people have moved in. In fact, the last one I gave, someone had just bought a house around the corner, and I didn't even know the guy's name, but I left an invitation for him to come. So he shows up with a bottle of Champagne and he said, "I can't stay, because I have another party to go to, but I think this is a wonderful idea, and thank you very much." I found out later who he was. It turns out that he was a member of a rather now famous rock group called the Counting Crows. In fact, shortly after that, the *San Francisco Magazine* that KQED is associated with wrote an article about the forty up-and-coming young people in the Bay Area. His name was David Bryson, and he was one of the ones that was named. So he is our neighbor up around the corner.

But anyway, I really—I did resign, incidentally, as president of the Panoramic Hill Association, because there was an interracial couple on the bottom of the hill who had a small house, and they wanted to add a room so that they could have children. There were some very strange people on the hill who would object to anything anyone was going to do. So when anyone wanted to build anything, the assumption was they were going to put in a big apartment house and have a lot of extra people and extra parking and so forth. So they tried to make this an issue, of these people wanting to enlarge this house.

It turned out this was a small house built on a piece of property on which another house had already been built, so it was technically a duplex. There's a law that duplexes cannot be greater than a certain size. These people were not told this when they bought the property, so they did have an argument.

16-00:24:25

Wilmot:

It was a free-standing house originally?

16-00:24:28  
Maslach:

They were two free-standing houses on the same lot. So as I said, under the regulations, they claimed it was a duplex, and so they were limited. Anyway, they had a lot of hearings, and there was a lot of consternation on the hill with people claiming that these people were trying to sneak in an illegal apartment that wasn't allowed.

I sided with them, because I knew that what they were asking for was correct and fair. So whenever a president does side with somebody, take a position, you have to resign. So I did resign. This family was Michael and Johnnie Selvin. The *SF Chronicle* reporter of music, Joel Selvin is Michael's brother.

16-00:25:31  
Wilmot:

Michael and Johnnie Selvin?

16-00:25:33  
Maslach:

Yes. And for a while Johnnie had a program on Channel 2, and has been a teacher in both the Berkeley and Albany schools. Matter of fact, on Saturday, we went to the wedding of one of the sons that was born in that room, in this house.

16-00:26:00  
Wilmot:

You mentioned they're an interracial couple. Was that an issue, was race an issue that kind of emerged as a dynamic in this discussion about their expansion on the hill?

16-00:26:12  
Maslach:

It wasn't alleged at all. Everything was in terms of their crowding—doing something illegal and crowding the parking, exacerbating the parking situation, and so forth. But when they appeared before the city council for their appeal, I think the city council people decided that race was the underlying issue, and granted their request. So I think it backfired on the opponents.

16-00:26:42  
Wilmot:

And did you have the sense that that was an underlying issue?

16-00:26:43  
Maslach:

Oh, yes. Oh, yes. We've been good friends over the years. They consider me the one that really helped them—because they had another child, they had two children in the house, so four people lived in that house.

16-00:27:05  
Wilmot:

Two-bedroom house?

16-00:27:05  
Maslach:

It's a two-bedroom house, but it's remarkable, how every inch of that house is used so well, and it's charming. And they're wonderful people.

So the rest of that year, I was just concentrating on my own family and on my own career, until the issue came up of the Blind School site.

16-00:27:38

Wilmot:

What is now Clark Kerr Campus?

16-00:27:43

Maslach:

Yes. And one of the people on our hill is both active in the Panoramic Hill Association and also in Berkeley politics. His name is Pat Devaney, who decided that what was needed was a citizens committee to support the fact that the university should get this site.

16-00:28:03

Wilmot:

Can you describe for me, before we get into your involvement, will you describe for me kind of what was the situation that was unfolding that you got involved in?

16-00:28:11

Maslach:

Well, the School for the Deaf and Blind was on this property for some time. It had gotten to the point where the buildings were not adequate, because there was an earthquake fault in this area, and they needed to be repaired. And this went on long before on the state level, they had to make a decision, do you fix it while you're still trying to house handicapped children, or do you actually move it, move the children to a better place, and then dispose of the Blind School site some other way? I understand there were people who had property in Fremont that had some clout, so the plans were not to have these kind of, what would you call them, almost like prison buildings, but have more cottages. In other words, to care for handicapped children in a different way, more of a homelike setting. So this was the decision that was made in Sacramento.

So when it came time to implement it, that's when all of a sudden, people kept saying, "Oh, no, no, this isn't what you're supposed to do." The city council's position at the time, which was very anti-university, was that this would be a wonderful site for a low-income housing project. If the federal government used it for a low-income housing project, this would mean people could come in from all over the country. I mean, they have drawings, lottery drawings, to see if people who apply can get this. This has happened to other buildings that Berkeley has built for low-income housing.

The people that lived in this neighborhood were concerned about student housing, because at that time, there were not enough places for students to live. The university couldn't house them.

16-00:30:31

Wilmot:

So they were concerned with increasing the student housing?

16-00:30:32

Maslach:

Yes. And so the assumption was that, if the university got this, they would use a lot of it for student housing. At that time, students were being bused to Mills College and the College of Holy Names, because they had empty dorms. We in

the neighborhood felt that this really wasn't a good college experience for Cal kids, to have to be bused that length into Oakland for housing.

16-00:31:13

Wilmot:

But the dynamic then, so the battle lines were then drawn around this issue of student housing or low-income housing, at that site?

16-00:31:29

Maslach:

It wasn't put that way. It was, Does the university get it or does the university not get it? So the suggestion that the city council had, this would be their way of not having the university have it. They had no plan or any way of insuring what would happen, but it was just to say no to the university.

So anyway, we did form these citizens committees, and Fred Weeks and I were co-chairmen. Fred Weeks was a council member and eventually ran unsuccessfully for mayor in Berkeley. But anyway, the idea was to discuss the issues in the community with people and to try to get support for the university. It was not resolved at the time the next election came. And it meant that if the city council were changed to have more people sympathetic to the university getting it, then that would be the resolution.

I had always done precinct work for the Democratic party on Panoramic Hill, no matter what the issue was. But it turned out that in the precinct, I was responsible for, were a lot of students. The students were really confused, because Tom Bates, who is now the mayor of Berkeley, was the assemblyman at the time and had always supported student causes. But unfortunately, he was aligned with the more liberal group that was on the council that was opposing the university's getting it. So the students were really confused.

The other issue that was current at the time was rent control. What the students said to me is that they thought the more conservative, the moderate Democrats were against rent control. I told them the moderate Democrats were against a bad rent control law. I mean, they were not necessarily against rent control. That's what I tried to convince them. What happened was that the students didn't vote in this election, because they were so confused, since they were just bombarded from both sides by so much material. What was interesting is in the dorms, they do not put anything but first class material in the students' mail boxes. So when you went down to where the student mailboxes are, there would just be huge cartons of all kinds of campaign literature, or even the booklets from the county, the campaign booklets, would be left in these boxes for the students to sort through. So it really turned the students off, and they didn't vote. And a more moderate group got into the city council in 1981.

I was very concerned about what was happening with rent control, because this was an issue again that was really bad for Berkeley, the way it was put forth. Any other community usually that says Yes, we want rent control, works through a program that works and educates people. In Berkeley this was done all

by initiative, and it meant that there were people writing initiatives and not really thinking, not really educating people as to what the issues were. So before rent control was voted in, there was one measure that was passed by the city council that said that since Prop. 13 passed, homeowners would be getting a reduction or some break in their property taxes, and that they should return some of this windfall that they got to the tenants.

So statewide—this wasn't a law, this was just a suggestion—but in Berkeley, it became a law that was voted in. They didn't vote any money when they passed this law to tell people, to even tell people who was involved or what was involved, because they thought it wouldn't pass if there was any money attached to it. And yet this one measure became the touchstone of the whole rent control program, because years later, if a landlord couldn't prove that he had reduced the tenant's rent by a certain amount and had all the documents to prove it, his rents were declared illegal and he was then not allowed any rent increases. He could have students claim that the rent was illegal and then be subject to violations and overcharges. A lot of people were put out of business because this had piled up over years. In other words, the fact that this wasn't even known in the community for five years was really tragic.

The city of Berkeley had had what I call a cottage industry in renting apartments and rooms to students. In fact, when I was a student at Cal, I was on the ASUC Housing Board, and this is exactly what we did. We would talk to people in the community into renting rooms and renting apartments to students, and we even became a housing bureau. I mean, we would go around and inspect them, make sure that they were good, and then the students would come to us and we would recommend what places were well kept up. So my interest in student housing started way back then. That was in the 1930s.

But anyway, the rent board was constituted by having a person put on by each of the council members, so that there were nine council members, nine rent board members. They reflected the same philosophy; if it was a liberal council, it would be a liberal rent board; if it was a more moderate council, it would be a moderate rent board. The people that were put on these as rent commissioners spent a lot of time just fighting with each other. One of them was a landlord, and so there was all kinds of lawsuits to try to get this one landlord off the board.

Meanwhile, the landlord community was very unhappy about the fact that a rent law had passed. So they immediately started putting modifications on the next ballot. Well, as soon as they put on a modification on the next ballot, the more radical rent activists put modifications on the ballot, because there was a split between the more liberal people: there was a kind of a rational group and then an irrational group. The irrational group was very upset because they weren't being appointed to the board.

16-00:39:56

So what they did, these more radical members, put on initiatives, and so if it was a choice in the community between something the landlords had put on and something the tenants had put on, without really knowing what was going on, people would naturally vote for tenants. So the tenants activists were able to put on some really horrendous, pass some measures that still exist today. One of them was that no landlords could be on the rent board. Another one was that a landlord was subject to criminal penalties if they disobeyed the law in some way, meaning it's a criminal charge. Another one was that the rent board would then be elected instead of appointed by the city council members.

When Gilda Feller, who was one of the city council members, had her appointee withdraw, she appointed me to the rent board. So I was on for, I would say, a couple of years, I was the chairman for around a year, I guess.

16-00:41:22

Wilmot:

What year was that?

16-00:41:24

Maslach:

It was in—I'll have to look up specifically—but it was in the early eighties, like '82, '83, something like in there.

16-00:41:33

Wilmot:

I want to go back to something, which is that where, I understand rent control is one of the primary issues in Berkeley. Like everyone has an opinion—

16-00:41:42

Maslach:

Still.

16-00:41:41

Wilmot:

—and weighs in one way or another, and people feel fairly strongly about it. I get that. But I'm trying to understand, you aren't a landlord in Berkeley. You may have been then, but I don't think you—I'm not certain that you—you were certainly not a big landlord in Berkeley.

16-00:41:56

Maslach:

No. We had two rental units that we had built, so we knew what it was like to be a small landlord.

16-00:42:04

Wilmot:

And was there a concern around kind of the ensuing property value issues for just whole neighborhoods? What was it that motivated you to get involved in that issue?

16-00:42:17

Maslach:

The thing that motivated me most was the fact that I had promised students when I was asking for their votes that what I was interested in was a rational rent control law, a fair one. Actually, the students were not being helped by this law, because it was so stringent and the property owners could not raise the rents of

anyone that lived in a rent-controlled unit, even though he graduated from Cal, didn't give it up. Even professors would keep rental units, because the rent was so low. They could be teaching in another place, and then have this cheap housing in Berkeley to come back to. So there was never a turnover. People went down to Silicon Valley but continued to live in Berkeley just because the differential was so great and because BART was then in effect, and the transportation was easy. So there were fewer and fewer places for students to live.

As I said, nobody was really looking out for students, and this was really sad, because they just—they would have to live further and further away, commute. There would be some very long commutes that students had.

But anyway, what else I got involved in, was a sense of fairness, because I heard on KPFA one of the people that had put the law on the books said, "We're going to have an election, and they won't find anybody to run against us, because landlords can't run, and there will be nobody else that will be interested." So the idea was that they could appoint, technically appoint nine of their members. I just felt that this was outrageous. I decided to see if I could find nine people, and actually, Carol Sibley helped me, because she helped me find at least two of the people that subsequently won, and that was Betty Olds, who is now a council member, and another woman named Katherine DeVries, who served on the rent board for many years. For a number of years I would find non-landlord, just community people, who would be willing to run for the rent board, who had no interest in it themselves, but just knew that this was a bad law for Berkeley.

Subsequently, I found that there wasn't—the newspapers, it was very hard to get a debate on the issues and to try to correct things that were wrong. So I remember going to the League of Women Voters and asking if they would co-sponsor with the university, who had already agreed, to have a meeting to discuss rent control. This was around, must have been around '89 or '90 or something like that. The board discussed it, and instead, decided that they would not co-sponsor a meeting, but that they would institute a study. They had been thinking about studying the issue for some time and decided that this was the time to make the study of rent control in Berkeley.

It was interesting, because a lot of other leagues had advised them against that. They said, "This broke up our league." But anyway, we did have a study, and I was on it with other people, and we did form a position that the Berkeley League would take. Subsequent to that, a couple of years later, people said we should restudy it to see if our position is again of the same position that we should have.

16-00:46:49  
Wilmot:

Who initiated that within the league?



16-00:46:50

Maslach:

The league, I don't know what people did in the league. Somebody in the league had recommended it, and it was voted on as part of their program.

16-00:47:00

Wilmot:

And the original position that the league had taken in this report was?

16-00:47:06

Maslach:

Well, they were for—it's about a half a page position, but certainly it was a fair position, in terms of having landlord and tenant cooperation. They put in a number of items.

The one thing that was the big issue was something called vacancy control. The Berkeley law was that whatever the original rent was, starting when the rent law started in 1980, subject to the modification that I said, would prevail. Instead, they did not let the rents keep up with inflation. So it was a way of keeping the rents very low, and so our position—

16-00:48:12

Wilmot:

I heard about that, yes.

16-00:48:11

Maslach:

The league position said that if this could be shown that this was not good, that they would not support having this vacancy control. But any changes in this part of the rent law took place in Sacramento. It did not take place in Berkeley.

16-00:48:27

Wilmot:

Well, that's one thing I was reading over Tom Bates' oral history, and one of the things that he said was that consistently, Berkeley residents voted in rent control. And eventually, opponents for rent control took—well, not opponents of rent control but landlords' advocates—took it to the state assembly level and took it outside of the local level, which eventually begat the Costa bill, Jim Costa's bill. And I wanted to ask you how did those dynamics play out, because you've mentioned getting involved at the very local level, and you've mentioned getting involved with the League of Women Voters, which is not local but certainly had arms in other places. And I just wanted to ask you, how would you get involved at the statewide level?

16-00:49:20

Maslach:

I didn't get involved at the statewide level at all. We used consultants from the University of California to advise us, and this is what they said, that whenever the situation does not fit the circumstances, whenever there's an extreme imposition on the amount of money the landlords could change, then you're going to have an explosion somewhere. Usually it will be at the ballot box, and vote people out; or, you could get legislation. So this is what would happen. It would go to legislation in Sacramento.

The Berkeley law, I mean, when we studied it again, I was able to go—

16-00:50:11

Wilmot:

This is with the League of Women Voters?

16-00:50:12

Maslach:

Yes, with the League of Women Voters.

16-00:50:13

Wilmot:

And when you revisited it there.

16-00:50:15

Maslach:

Yes. I had a trip to Boston, the Boston area. It turns out that the Berkeley law was based on Santa Monica, and Santa Monica had based their law on the law that was passed in Cambridge Massachusetts. And again, this is sort of typical: this was also a university situation. Each time there was a transfer, it would become more stringent. So Santa Monica was much more stringent than Cambridge. We could have lived with the Santa Monica law in Berkeley reasonably well. But the Berkeley people took it to another level and made it so extreme that it was really harmful. The cases, and of course, we developed a lot of atrocity situations, where people actually—and this is what hurt me the most: Berkeley has a large minority population, Asian as well as black. And a lot of these people were not educated particularly, but they were good workers and they would set aside enough money to buy some property, and then they would rent it out, some of the property, and then live on the rents.

They did not take the *Berkeley Gazette*, even if the *Berkeley Gazette* told them what was going on. Nobody told them what was going on. They didn't understand the law, they didn't know the ramifications of the law, and yet they would have a tenant who did, who would just say, "The rents are illegal," and these people would lose their property. This happened a lot in Berkeley.

16-00:52:07

Wilmot:

Who would take their property when they lost it?

16-00:52:11

Maslach:

Who would take it? They'd have to sell it. Because they didn't have the money to pay these outrageous penalties that were due, because they overcharged the rent, technically. And they hadn't. We did have two rental units, and again, I knew the way small property owners worked. You never raise a sitting tenant. I mean, you get the best tenant you can, and you hope he will stay there for some time, because then you don't—every time you change tenants, then you have to do a redoing of the place, a repainting or whatever. So usually what would happen is, if your tenant moved out, you would check around to find out what the going rate was, and then whoever could rent your place at that rate was your new tenant. That's exactly what vacancy de-control is. You don't raise the sitting tenant, but then you have this opportunity to raise the rent when somebody moves out. The good part about that is that it means that landlords keep their property up, because they'll never know when a tenant might move out and where they might have a chance to raise the rent.

So what was happening in Berkeley, we had this large population of what I call cottage industry people, and they began to lose their properties, or they were old. Some of the atrocities were really sad. People would have heart attacks because this would be somebody with an eight-unit apartment house that was no match at all for activists. So the whole scene of Berkeley landowners changed. I mean, the kindly people that kept the rents low, and a lot of them had. Tenant activists were screaming about Berkeley rents being so high, so we had to have rent control. Actually, the studies showed that Berkeley rents were not high. One of these landlords of a small number of units wouldn't raise the rent on an elderly person if they couldn't afford it. They were, in general, they were very, I thought, very good to their tenants.

So what has changed in Berkeley is that now we have landlords who are players. To have one landlord have 1,000 units, I mean, we never had anything like that before. If someone had 100 units, that would be rare and it would be unusual.

16-00:54:53

Wilmot:

And did you hear of that person who used to own that Pasand's Lounge, have you heard of that? He owned, they were one of the biggest landlords in Berkeley.

16-00:55:05

Maslach:

Of course.

16-00:55:06

Wilmot:

I mean, I think they may have been the biggest, actually, I'm not certain.

16-00:55:10

Maslach:

He is, this Lakireddy.

16-00:55:14

Wilmot:

What's his name?

16-00:55:13

Maslach:

His name is Lakireddy. And what's interesting about this is, he bought up all the student ones. I mean, he was very wise, and the family still owns it. It's an extended family, and they own all of these units. So they have literally put out of business small people. And what's interesting in Berkeley, people had rental units, because they would be professional people. Maybe they would be psychotherapists, their own clientele, or writers, or something like that. They would have no pension plans, and so this would literally be their pension plan, to buy some income property, because it would keep up with inflation in the long run. So again, a lot of these people were wiped out.

The other people that were hurt, too, were the professors, because a lot of them were concerned about students not having a place to live, and so that they would either rent rooms, or if they had an apartment, they would rent a place to a student. So many of them got really penalized, because the law said that you could only rent your house for nine months without having to register with the

rent board. Well, professors would go on sabbatical for a year, come back, and then find out that they were under rent control and the tenant that they had rented to wouldn't move out. So they would have a lawsuit to try to retrieve their own house after a sabbatical. Even the fact that people had signed a lease and signed an agreement, it didn't prevail—the law states differently. It was useless. So there were just—as I said, there were just countless bad situations.

So I stayed with trying to find rent control members that could be eligible, and we won the case with a black landlady that overturned the fact that landlords couldn't serve. Every other rent control board in the country where they have a rational rent control, they put on some landlords, some community people, and some tenants, and some professional people, so that you would have a balance of knowledge about the kind of things involved. But in Berkeley, landlords were the enemy. Anyone that owned property was the enemy, because activists didn't believe in private property. You really had a group of people that were trying to make Berkeley a socialist community, and Berkeley was supposed to be—the landlord, the employer, was supposed to be everything. People were not, as I say, to own property and to make a living or even get any income from it.

So when the league made its studies, its last study, we realized having an elected board was really the wrong way to go, because when you have an elected situation, you have a constituency, and you have to be concerned with your constituency. Well, the rent board technically is more of a judicial body. So it shouldn't have constituencies. So we recommended against having an elected board, and that's the big part of our position.

16-00:59:22

Wilmot:

In your second.

16-00:59:19

Maslach:

Yes.

16-00:59:22

Wilmot:

And what years—you had a year for these—the interlude between the two reports?

16-00:59:29

Maslach:

Five years.

16-00:59:30

Wilmot:

Five years. Who did you work with there?

16-00:59:32

Maslach:

In terms of?

16-00:59:33

Wilmot:

League of Women Voters? Who did you—

16-00:59:37

Maslach:

Well, the people that worked most closely with me was a woman named Suzanne Adams, and another one was Meda Rechen. Both of these women have died. Suzanne was someone who was very supportive of the Berkeley Rep[eratory] Theater and I think has endowed one of the lounges in it. She was also a trustee of Mills College. She was a college professor herself. Meda Rechen and her husband were very active in environmental issues, the waterfront in particular. They just happened to agree to be on the study. I was in charge of this study; I wasn't in charge of the other one.

But anyway, this was approved by the rent board, and I still think that there are no more elections now for—whenever there's an election coming up, there's only one set of candidates, because there wasn't somebody like me that would find community people to run. Even when we ran elections, I would be labeled the landlord slate. The landlords had nothing to do with it. The landlords actually were not that happy with me, because I did believe in rent control. A place like Berkeley, with limited housing, people should not be subject to frivolous rent increases just because housing is at a premium. But from my study of rent control in the rest of the country, it is possible to have a rational rent control program, and Berkeley still does not have one.

16-01:01:47

Wilmot:

Let's stop there for a minute.

[end audiofile 16, begin audiofile 17]

17-00:00:17

Wilmot:

Okay.

17-00:00:16

Maslach:

I'd like to make a few more comments on rent control before we leave the subject, and that is how it's changed Berkeley, because actually, there were a lot more tenants in Berkeley before rent control. So rent control has had the effect of making more people sell their properties to home owners, and so the number of home owners increased in Berkeley, and the number of tenants decreased.

17-00:00:48

Wilmot:

I'm confused about something you just said. It's made more people sell their properties to home owners?

17-00:00:57

Maslach:

If you had a rental property—I've known of parents of Cal students who will get together and buy a four-unit apartment house so that their students could live in it. Of course, they kept these. Some of them tried to make them into condominiums, and I don't know, they passed a law restricting how many rental units you could make into condominiums. I have no idea what the situation is now. But there would be some houses that had been divided into two or three rental units, and people would restore them to single-family homes.

The kind of situation that would occur would be something like this, because one of the people that came before the rent board was Laura Nader, who was Ralph Nader's sister. She was a professor at Cal, and she had one of these large Berkeley houses. Her husband also had a large Berkeley house. So they decided to live in one of them and rent the other. The rental they were charging for a large old Berkeley house that had five bedrooms and spacious living areas was \$200 a month for each of five students. The rent board told them that that was overcharging and that they should only charge a total of \$500 a month. Well, why should someone continue to rent to five students for \$500 a month, when you could sell a whole house to somebody else? So this is the kind of thing that the rent law encouraged.

Again, we lost population in Berkeley during those years. During the eighties, right after rent control, Berkeley lost population, because the number of people per unit was reduced, since a landlord couldn't charge as much as he wanted to, he would only allow the fewest number of people he could rent it to. So there were fewer people per unit, and no building. There was no building at all for I don't know how many years. So Berkeley lost population. In this one census area, I think it was the 1980 census, the population had dropped so low that Berkeley wasn't even meeting the 100,000 population limit required to qualify for a lot of federal programs. It was just strange. This was the only city in the whole Bay Area—every other Bay Area city was growing, but not Berkeley.

So what has changed has been a number of developers that decided that in spite of rent control there was a way of building housing in Berkeley. In particular, a builder named Patrick Kennedy learned how to build large apartment houses. The Berkeley law required at least 20 percent of these whether for sale or for rent, below market to be for low-income housing. So actually, he provided more low-income housing than the city of Berkeley provided itself, through the number of projects that he had. Lately there have been other developers as well, so there has been more building in Berkeley in the last ten years.

17-00:05:25

Wilmot:

Well, that was going to be my question, was how—again, that balance of rent control and new construction. The balance meaning that's one of the ways that new properties would then come on the market at market rates, with new construction. Have you been involved at all in promoting development in Berkeley, or—

17-00:05:56

Maslach:

Yes, the league's position, because the league has a housing position and has had for some time, that we do believe in in-fill housing around transportation corridors. We are aware, painfully aware, that city employees, teachers and staff, could not afford to live in Berkeley. So many of the people that need to be in Berkeley can't live here, so then people start complaining about the traffic. Well, you have more traffic because more people have to drive into Berkeley. So all of

these problems, it's as though no one has really thought through the implication of all of these different things.

We went into a housing study right after we did our rent control study, because we could see that the answer was not just in putting restrictions on property that was already here, but the answer to costs is to have more available, but done in a way that doesn't change the quality of life in the city, because that is critical. This is what our housing study came up with. I think that it is being used in Berkeley, to provide both low-income and a range of housing. Units at the top of buildings have a view, and there are lots of university people that would be very happy to live in an apartment within walking distance of the campus. Especially new people coming in.

17-00:07:52

Wilmot:

Would you give me an example of a Patrick Kennedy project, a housing development?

17-00:07:58

Maslach:

Yes. Let's see. The first one, I'm just trying to think of what his—he started out building units down in the flats, lofts and so forth. The first housing that he did, I don't know whether you've ever been to Andronico's and the bank on Shattuck Avenue.

17-00:08:22

Wilmot:

Yes.

17-00:08:21

Maslach:

If you go on Henry Street, you'll notice a bunch of apartments with a trellis behind there, so that was one of his first ones he built. But of the large units he built, he built one on the corner of Grant and University, right across from the Venezia Restaurant, and he has one on Fulton Street, which is Fulton and Berkeley Way. He built the building on Allston, the Gaia. It has a tiled front and has a roof garden. There's another one right across from the Berkeley Rep.

What he has done is go into partnership with people that have some interest in Berkeley, such as handicapped people, I think he makes his units available to handicapped people, so that again there's support from that group. Or support from the Berkeley Rep group, or support from minority groups, or whatever.

17-00:10:07

Wilmot:

Have you had a vantage point and been able to kind of watch how developers go through this process, and who's been successful and who hasn't in negotiating kind of a bid for new development with the city of Berkeley?

17-00:10:21

Maslach:

Well, when we made our housing study, we did interview Patrick Kennedy and observe at least the one—I haven't seen the new building, because it's been built since, but the one that was on Fulton Street, we got to see. But we also, there's a

lot of nonprofit developers in Berkeley too. The way they work is that somebody in a nonprofit organization will see a piece of property where it might be a good place to put a building, so they will go to the city and get money to buy the property. Then they will go to the city and get money to build the building. Then they have a corporation that runs it, and of course, they staff that with themselves and their colleagues, and so they have a job for life, I guess.

What's interesting was that I was interviewing one of the owners of these properties, of a nonprofit, and they were discussing what kind of a raise in the rent that they should charge their tenants. They decided 5 percent was what was rational to charge their tenants of these nonprofits. Meanwhile, the rent board said 1.1 percent was plenty for the for-profit landlords. So the same facts did not generate the same results. The nonprofits are part of these political structure of Berkeley. Some of the places have been very good, but they also cost more, and they claim that it costs more because they pay more and they give better perks to their employees.

So there still is a running battle, but at least there's more housing in Berkeley. The roadblock against in-fill housing I think has been undone, although there will still be, depending on the particular project, people who oppose it.

What is interesting is that along University Avenue, which is one of the main arteries—

17-00:13:04

Wilmot:

It's the main artery.

17-00:13:05

Maslach:

And the zoning along University Avenue is commercial. Well, people right behind it on the same block, just on the same block that fronts on it, will consider this a residential housing area and complain that you can't have things on University that impacts a residential area. So it's hard to believe that that's considered a strictly residential area. It's residential, but not in the same way that a residential area would be a distance from the downtown.

I've also attended meetings where nonprofit developers, said they wouldn't come into Berkeley, a lot of the ones that build in San Francisco and other places, to build low-income housing. Because they said time is money, and the Berkeley system is such that people can object and can submit petitions and so forth, and hold up projects for years. It just costs them money, and so they just won't bother.

So again, in some ways, we're our own worst enemy. I think we get less for the money we do spend because of this.



17-00:14:40

Wilmot:

Today, I wanted to finish up our interview by actually returning to the issue of the Clark Kerr Campus, because we actually went from that to talking about rent control without really finishing the story of it. Is that okay?

17-00:14:53

Maslach:

Sure.

17-00:14:55

Wilmot:

So basically, you described for me the context and the environment, the issues at stake, the idea of university versus non-university uses, student housing. The way that I framed it was student housing versus low-income housing, and then you reframed it as university versus non-university. And I wanted to ask you about, just to return to your involvement. Were you working with people? Was there a group of people who was working—?

17-00:15:36

Maslach:

Well, the citizens committee that was formed that I was the co-chair of, was meeting with all of the people in this area and discussing the issues. In fact, we had people that, when it finally became turned over to the university, we had drafted some—I wouldn't call them restrictions, but some things that they agreed to about their use of the buildings. The kind of thing that happened in the community, because in Berkeley seems to, in my experience, there isn't an issue that isn't an opposition issue to the university. And this goes for People's Park especially, or anything else that happens. It's really—I have a feeling that people come to Berkeley just because the university is here. If not, they would be in Albany or El Cerrito or Oakland or somewhere else. So they come to the university because it is a source of excitement, of riches in terms of what it offers the community, the kinds of people that are around here, and yet, somehow, a lot of them need to assert their disdain of authority by fighting the university. They get great satisfaction out of winning, and winning against the university might mean delaying a project for two years. Which, of course, costs the university more, if it's a building, if it's, whatever. Usually it is a building, because this is what the university has been doing most, to build for its classes as well as build for the housing.

The kinds of things I've heard in meetings are unbelievable. I mean, really, "We don't give a damn about the students." There really isn't any feeling for what the university is or who goes to the university. It's really their own personal interests: how cheaply can they live in a city like this. A lot of them I've run into since I've been on so many of these committees come here with portfolios from their families, or their families send them here and say, "You can live in Berkeley." I've heard a radio talk show about people complaining about how much it costs to live in San Francisco, and they said, "Well, why don't you go to Berkeley? They have all these services." And Berkeley does. Berkeley's amazing. They have even booklets of all the services they offer to people in need. I mean, housing, clothing, food, meals, mental health facilities—it's really

wonderful. We do more than our share, more than the percentage of the people that are here. A city like Piedmont will contribute money so that we take care of these people, as well as the County of Alameda recognizes the fact that Berkeley will have these services for people provided for them.

At the time of the Blind School site, the building was vacant, and so all of these buildings were empty for maybe two or three years, which is always a wrong thing to do. It's better when you vacate something is to move in what's going to replace it. So there were at least 100 squatters in these buildings, destroying the buildings, before the university got it and then could start renovating it.

I think the university was really frightened that another RV might be moved onto the property, and then you would have all of the problems of how would you get that off, the way they had all the problems getting the one off the People's Park property. Just the delay was anti-university. But it turned out that a lot of the people that were against the move and started bringing up that this was not the thing to do were people that worked there, and they liked working in Berkeley, and didn't like the idea of having to move to Fremont to work. They brought up all kinds of issues. They said that the university's secretly going to put a medical school there. In other words, these are the kinds of things that happen in Berkeley. There were people who just fabricate lies and rumors.

So it took some effort to try to get a group of solid citizens, especially those in the neighborhood, to say yes, this was the best idea and to support it. So that's the kind of thing we went through. Berkeley had, previous to this, put seventy-two units on school property. The school acreage was too big for just a school, and Berkeley needed places to put low-income housing. So they designated places on Franklin School and other schools where they could put this low-income housing, which they did. But that wasn't for Berkeley people. People came from all over the country by lottery. And I again remember hearing on a broadcast a woman who was from North Carolina saying how lucky she was that she got this place. So this idea of having a low-income project on this property that would bring in more people to Berkeley, that didn't have to be here, and then not house the people who have to be here, really was a thing that bothered me a lot. And got me as involved as I did.

17-00:22:45

Wilmot:

And you mentioned the opponents being kind of different activists with personal interests. Was there an organized kind of front that was fighting the university housing?

17-00:22:55

Maslach:

Well, it was just the city council and its people.

17-00:23:00

Wilmot:

So they really—wow, so that was—

17-00:23:04  
Maslach:

So it was the issue in the next election, which was in 1981. So what the moderates did when they won the election, they were being very open to any suggestion, because it turns out that the national co-op association had won a legal case against the Richard Nixon administration to have funds to build cooperative housing, low-income housing. The problem was that they had this mandate to build this, and the money to build it, but they didn't have any property to build it on. So when the city council got the property for the university, the proposal was made, could we put this housing on that site? So this moderate city council, I guess working with the university, said yes. So there is on that site a low-income housing project, one building—I guess they extended the building. They actually made it the same kind of architecture, but you access it from Derby Street.

The problem there was that, in the beginning, a lot of university people thought this might be a good place for university, retired university professors who needed a place to live. But they didn't qualify, because I think you were limited to something at that time like \$12,000 a year income. There weren't enough people in Berkeley to fill this place. I think there's something like 160 units. So not only did they advertise for tenants up and down the West Coast, but they finally had people sending for their mothers or relations from the East to come out here and live. But now I understand there is a waiting list.

What was amusing is that some on our committee did not like this idea. They said that really isn't a good place for low-income senior housing, because it's on a hill. After people moved in, we got these criticisms saying, well, there was no—there is a bus stop there, but there are no stores nearby. So even to walk down to Derby and College is quite a walk for some of these seniors, and there was nothing much over in the Claremont area.

17-00:25:50  
Wilmot:

No Whole Foods. No grocery stores.

17-00:25:54  
Maslach:

Yes. So it wasn't the ideal place, for low income housing after all. They talked about that they would have programs with students interacting, and I don't know whether that has been followed through or not. But at least this was done as a concession to the idea that it could be used for more than just student housing. But it's been very successful for some seniors.

17-00:26:17  
Wilmot:

Who engineered that concession?

17-00:26:22  
Maslach:

In terms of the co-op person or the—?

17-00:26:27

Wilmot:

Kind of the architect of that concession. Like who was the person who helped people imagine this concession and—

17-00:26:36

Maslach:

Well, the person that belongs to the co-op association is named Gideon Anders. I've gotten to know him well, because my final activity has been to be on the board of the student co-op association, alumni association and he was also. But anyway, he was the one that knew of this possibility and presented it to the city council, and the city council approved it. I guess they worked it out with the university, but anyway, that's the way it came about.

17-00:27:20

Wilmot:

Okay, let's close there for today, and we'll pick up talking about co-op issues next time.

[end audiofile 17, end of session]

Interview #10: July 1, 2004  
 Begin audiofile 18

18-00:00:12  
 Wilmot:

Doris Cuneo Maslach, interview 10, July 1, 2004, with Nadine Wilmot of the Regional Oral History Office.

Well, I guess I'll start off first by asking you are there any things that you wanted to speak of that came up from the last two weeks since I've seen you?

18-00:00:37  
 Maslach:

Well, I was busy these last two weeks doing other things, but I did read Carol Sibley's book *Never a Dull Moment*, which I had not ever read before. I had asked people that I knew who had copies to borrow them. I just never got a chance to read it, and so I was—it was a very appropriate time to read it.

18-00:01:01  
 Wilmot:

Why do you say it was an appropriate time to read it?

18-00:01:04  
 Maslach:

Well, it was enough distance between when it happened. She had borrowed a lot of my materials to write the part that she didn't know anything about, because as she said, she didn't get elected until 1961. So she didn't know what had gone on before, and didn't seem to know anything about the Sanazaro or the Avakian campaigns, or the issues of those times. But they again were background for what happened subsequently.

18-00:01:39  
 Wilmot:

Okay. So what did reading her book *Never a Dull Moment*, what did it remind you of from your own life?

18-00:01:45  
 Maslach:

Well, what it did for me was—in other words, my last effort for the schools was the recall campaign, and as I said before, it was a six-month campaign, because it took that number of months to keep the election postponed at least until October, because the proponents had wanted it in the summer, hopefully when the university people would be away, and they'd have a better chance of winning a recall. So it was like a double campaign, so that was the first campaign.

Then after it was postponed until October, which was a good time to have it, then it was the running of the campaign. So six months is a long—it's a half year—to devote yourself to this one activity. I was tired at the end of it. This was in 1964, and then George and I went on sabbatical in 1966, so we left the country for six months, which was a way of getting away from it. While we were gone, there was a very significant election in Berkeley for the city council. This was when Robert Scheer ran and challenged, I believe, Jeffery Cohelan in the primary for representative in congress and did very well. So this really became

the change of the city council. Ron Dellums was elected to the—with Congress, from here, shortly after. And then in the early seventies, this was the time of D'Army Bailey and I forget the name of his running mate, which was very contentious, and I believe there were a lot of activists that were running also. Jerry Rubin and Bob Avakian were running for city council at that time too.

So this was not anything that I was involved in at all. I wasn't aware of all the things that were going on in the school district following the successful recall, that the new board members, Carol Sibley of course was there; Roy Nichols had left; Sherman Maisel had left. So there was a whole new group of board members.

18-00:04:21

Wilmot:

Were there any kind of continuations or kind of links between the groups and the people that you knew and had been active in getting elected, and the new members?

18-00:04:39

Maslach:

Absolutely, because—

18-00:04:39

Wilmot:

Yes, what were the continuum, how did that work?

18-00:04:41

Maslach:

Well, because the school board could replace vacancies, there were a number of wonderful board members. John Miller was one who subsequently went on to be an assemblyman in Sacramento. There was Sam Schaaf, who was another mechanical engineer and colleague of my husband's. And Arnold Grossberg, was another parent who was very active in the school integration. So in general, it really reversed the school board. They became at least four to one with people that were for integration, and the one remaining person, named Quayle Petersmeyer, who was on the other side, on the conservative side just quit. I think he moved away or didn't want to be on the board any more, because he didn't believe in what the board was doing.

So the board had the task of then implementing this new racial integration. The superintendent, Wenneberg, who was appointed in the early sixties, was there at the time of the recall, he was then replaced by Neil Foster, who was this superintendent in Prince County, near Virginia.

18-00:06:23

Wilmot:

Was it Neil Foster or Neil Sullivan?

18-00:06:25

Maslach:

Pardon me, Neil Sullivan. Foster was the next one, that Carol talked about. So Neil Sullivan, who had had this great track record of working with integration in Virginia, near Washington, stayed again with the Berkeley schools for a period

of time until he again was offered a better job somewhere else. Then Richard Foster was the last superintendent under Carol Sibley.

18-00:07:00

Wilmot:

Can I ask you a question? So this is what this kind of brought to you, is the never-a-dull-moment, kind of refreshed you on what happened after you were involved.

18-00:07:14

Maslach:

Yes, I didn't know all the details of all of the different proposals and plans that were put into place, and I realized that there was an enormous amount of funds that came into Berkeley from the government, from different foundations, because so many organizations were interested in how you could implement this successfully, and felt that Berkeley was a good place to have this happen, because there was such support in the community for it. So I was just somebody who read about what was happening in the newspaper. I didn't follow it closely. So I wasn't aware of all of the different things that went on.

An interesting aside was that when I was involved with the Psychotherapy Institute and met psychotherapists and became very close to a group that would meet weekly to talk about psychotherapy problems. A number of the therapists had been a part of something called Project Community. At the time, I knew that they were working with children who were having difficulty, teenagers who were having difficulty at that particular time, and didn't realize that this was one of the plans that was proposed, that was written about in Carol's book, that was again supported by the schools. The man who headed that, named William Soskin, believe it or not, was somebody that I had met in Boston when I was volunteering in the Habit Clinic. He was one of the therapists.

18-00:09:08

Wilmot:

Did you ever meet his wife, Betty Reid Soskin?

18-00:09:10

Maslach:

Oh, yes, I did, subsequently meet her. She was quite an interesting person and very active in doing a lot of good works in Berkeley.

18-00:09:21

Wilmot:

Until very recently, she was. She worked in Dion Aroner's office.

18-00:09:28

Maslach:

Perfect place. [laughs] Perfect place.

But in reading about all these alternative schools that were meeting all over the place—I mean, in the basement of Lawrence Hall of Science, for instance; in Y's, in churches, and so forth, I just had the feeling that it must have been kind of chaotic, just keeping track of all of the things that were happening. What I did learn subsequently, that we realized that when Berkeley schools started having financial difficulties, one of the reasons was that whenever you form one of

these projects, you have to hire people to support it and to run it and to evaluate it. So Berkeley wound up with an enormous number of non-teaching professional people on its staff, and some of them were permanent. So this was a big outcry in the community as to why do we have so many administrative people, and we're not paying the teachers enough. But this was one of the, what is it, unintended consequences, I guess you'd call it.

18-00:10:50

Wilmot:

I read about the outcome—it was the outcome evaluation efforts that were actually in Berkeley High, are you speaking of, or UC?

18-00:10:59

Maslach:

Most of the—no, probably the largest number were at Berkeley High, but they were all over the place. I mean, they were for elementary children as well.

18-00:11:08

Wilmot:

As I recall from the book, one was headed by Len Duhl, one camp, and then there was another camp that was headed by another person. And were you involved at all, do you recall this?

18-00:11:21

Maslach:

No, not at all. As I said, I was off on my own separate track. I was on my own psychotherapy track at that point, because I was spending the seventies trying to see if I could get credentialed, get licensed as a marriage, family, and child counselor. Which didn't work out, as you know, because—well, for a number of reasons.

18-00:11:46

Wilmot:

I need to ask you a question. With Superintendent Wenneberg, during the recall, let me try and understand something. So during the anti-recall campaign that you were running, was his job going to be affected by the recall outcome? And if not, was he an ally?

18-00:12:12

Maslach:

I didn't see any negative opposition, is what I could say. But I guess I wouldn't be privy to whether there was support or not. Because subsequently, there were a lot of teachers that were not too happy about how things were organized. Whenever an alternative project was formed, some would get extra money. The teachers who weren't in an extra project were kind of resentful of the fact that they were not also getting extra money. But as I say, I just picked this up from Carol's book. I mean, I was not aware of any of this at all. And I wasn't aware of any great disaffection with Wenneberg, but I guess the people who were close to him felt that it was time to get somebody more—a better person, more talented person, and sought out the one in the country that had that talent, which was Neil Sullivan.



18-00:13:24

Wilmot:

But during the time that you were—tell me if I'm barking up the wrong tree, but during the time that you were running that anti-recall in 1964, Paul Wenneberg was the superintendent. Was he an ally while you were running that campaign? Were there allies?

18-00:13:43

Maslach:

The head of the opposition was Wally Johnson, the ex-mayor of Berkeley, and there were quite a few people that were supporting him.

18-00:14:07

Wilmot:

What were the stakes for the opposition? Rather, when we say opposition, we're referring to people who were sponsoring the recall. What were the stakes for the opposition?

18-00:14:18

Maslach:

Oh, they just didn't think this was a good thing to do, to integrate the schools.

18-00:14:24

Wilmot:

What would happen?

18-00:14:25

Maslach:

Well, they would stay the way they were, with Burbank all black, Willard half black and half white, Garfield all white, and everything comes together at Berkeley High, and people talked about "the problem."

18-00:14:42

Wilmot:

Well, what did that—what was their fear of what would happen? What was their vision or their nightmare about what would happen?

18-00:14:50

Maslach:

I think they would feel that—because this was essentially the more affluent white community—would feel that their children wouldn't get as good an education, because it would just dilute the education. Because actually, Garfield, as I observed children from Garfield, the actual intellectual standards were quite high in Garfield.

18-00:15:27

Wilmot:

And that was an all-black school or all-white or—?

18-00:15:30

Maslach:

Garfield was all white. And this would be where more of the professors' children went, so a child that was just doing average work in Garfield was a C student, but if he was taking a national test, he would be a B+ student. But he would come to Berkeley High thinking he was just an average student, and there's been plenty of psychological research done that people live up to what they think their expectation is. So I thought it was a real sad thing for a lot of good students coming from Garfield who weren't realizing their potential. But Berkeley High was a big school. It had over 3,000 students, and again, unwieldy. Everybody

knew that too. So some children would get a good education and others would be lost in the cracks. This wouldn't just be minority students; this would be all students.

18-00:16:37

Wilmot:

Were the parents, the professors, were there professors from Berkeley who were parents in the Berkeley public school system, were they allied with the anti-recall campaign which you were running, or were they allied more with the pro-recall?

18-00:16:56

Maslach:

I would say in general the professors' children would be more interested in integration, or at least the large—

18-00:17:04

Wilmot:

The children, or the Berkeley professors themselves?

18-00:17:07

Maslach:

Both. But I have at least one paper that a professor sent to George at the time absolutely opposed to it.

18-00:17:16

Wilmot:

They were communicating with George about this?

18-00:17:18

Maslach:

Well, I just found it in the files that I was looking—

18-00:17:25

Wilmot:

What were they saying?

18-00:17:27

Maslach:

I don't know—well, just—I didn't reread it, I read it at the time. But I mentioned it to George, I said, "Do you remember this paper on it?" And he just shook his head and he said it was really off base. But the thing is that it wasn't that—I mean, all I can say is that there was a large group of people in Berkeley, both black and white, that knew that this had to be. That what we had was wrong, especially when at Burbank they weren't even teaching the same curriculum that they taught at Garfield, and even Willard did not have the same curriculum. You couldn't take certain subjects if you were a Willard student. Garfield seemed to be the elite school. So again, this had been going on for some time, and people knew that things weren't right.

18-00:18:27

Wilmot:

Did teachers have a voice in this? Were there teachers who were allied with your campaign, or not?

18-00:18:36

Maslach:

Again, I guess it's because it's so far back, that you don't know. When you run a campaign, you just keep making positive statements or doing positive things that

appeal to everybody, and you just don't notice the opposition in that sense. I mean, you're aware of them and that you don't want to do things that are going to make things worse for you, and there were a group of people that really wanted to say "shame," really be very extreme in their denunciation of people who were opposed to integration. And even Carol mentions that too, and mentions how she thought this wasn't a good idea, and I certainly thought it was a bad idea, that you don't start having a fight—

18-00:19:31

Wilmot: You don't bring shame to their—

18-00:19:32

Maslach: No, right. You just say, as I said, the theme of the campaign is that Yes, we differ, and that's all right, but you don't do this kind of thing to this kind of people, because they were so qualified to run the school board and so forth.

18-00:19:53

Wilmot: Who along party lines were most Democrats—how did the Democrats and Republicans kind of fall around this issue?

18-00:20:05

Maslach: I wasn't aware, because again, I would think the Democrats probably would have supported more, but there were a lot of Republicans, and we always had Republican allies who wanted good schools. Even though they were conservative on many issues, they really wanted good schools.

18-00:20:23

Wilmot: Integrated schools.

18-00:20:25

Maslach: Well, that became one of the issues. But when I was thinking of running the Sanazaro and the Spurgeon Avakian campaigns, we certainly avoided Democratic-Republican issues.

18-00:20:41

Wilmot: Did you bring to bear your connections at the Berkeley Democratic Club at all?

18-00:20:44

Maslach: No. We just—we didn't bring—in the school elections, we didn't bring that in, politics in at all.

18-00:20:52

Wilmot: And in the recall election?

18-00:20:55

Maslach: It was just people and groups. We always would get support from the Democratic Club, but we didn't make it an issue of the Democratic Club. This was a separate committee.

18-00:21:10

Wilmot:

What would support look like from the Democratic Club?

18-00:21:11

Maslach:

Well, they would have a newsletter that they would send out to all of their members, and all the Democrats. They would supply precinct workers, because again, at that time, you still could do precinct work, and it was very critical. Now, no one wants to go around knocking on anybody's door, because nobody is home or nobody will open the door. But for a while there would be more neighborhood groups, neighborhood house meetings and things like that. And we worked through a Council of Neighborhoods, and so there were up to thirty different neighborhood organizations, like the Panoramic Hill would be one of them, the Claremont would be another one.

18-00:22:07

Wilmot:

Which are Berkeley Democratic Club-affiliated?

18-00:22:09

Maslach:

No, no, no. They would just be—they would organize around local issues. Parking, building, you know, zoning, things like that.

18-00:22:26

Wilmot:

In the anti-recall campaign which you headed, whose decision was it to—who chose to bring Roy Nichols back to campaign on that?

18-00:23:10

Maslach:

I don't think it was—that wasn't part of our campaign at all. From what I read in Carol's book, that she was more closely working with Roy Nichols, because they went on the board together. So you just had this feeling that there were just groups all over the city forming and doing things to further the anti-recall campaign. The part that I played in was the raising funds to have city-wide mailings, voter mailings, and maybe organize precinct work, I don't recall all of the things that we did.

18-00:23:56

Wilmot:

When it came to raising funds, how did you do that?

18-00:23:59

Maslach:

You just sent out letters to any groups you know. This school district committee that I told you about, that we had organized, starting with the Sanazaro election, was still in effect, and so these were contacts in every community. So we were just trying to get everybody to do as much as they could.

18-00:24:33

Wilmot:

I want to go back even further, slightly back a little bit further and ask you what was your first inkling that the Hadsell Report was being met by people who were against integration?

18-00:24:55

Maslach:

[laughs] That's hard to say. I imagine, because I was not involved either with the Staats Report, that I understand was something that Roy Nichols had started through the NAACP, with support of other people in the community, or then with the Hadsell Committee which was appointed by the school board. They would report to the school board, and so at these school board meetings, there would be people that would speak in opposition. So you knew that there was opposition. As I said, in the big picture, you knew it was brewing, but until they actually said, "We're going to recall," you didn't realize it was that strong. There was a group that was that strong.

18-00:25:57

Wilmot:

That's very interesting, that's so interesting. It reminds me a bit of SP 1 and SP 2 and Proposition 209, that you knew it was brewing but you didn't realize that there was a really—from my perspective, at least, you didn't realize that there was a real force that had coalesced and was ready to go.

18-00:26:16

Maslach:

Well, the very fact was that, when I told you about June Long coming to Emerson, there were parents that went to the principal and said, "Do not put my children in that class." So obviously, there were all throughout Berkeley people that were prejudiced. What was interesting, I told you about June Long, is the fact that she was such a good teacher, these same people wound up asking to be put in her class. So this is the way things really should happen.

18-00:26:49

Wilmot:

I want to ask you, was this a subject of conversation over dinner parties, at dinner parties, with professors and—

18-00:26:55

Maslach:

Oh, yes, people talked about it, yes.

18-00:26:57

Wilmot:

All the time.

18-00:26:59

Maslach:

I mean, it was—a lot of things were happening in Berkeley at that time. Because then it's—then in the late sixties, we had all the Vietnam War issues, and I told you I was on the—county committee?

18-00:27:30

Wilmot:

Alameda County—

18-00:27:30

Maslach:

On the Alameda County Grand Jury in '67. There were just the big, big issues about the Vietnam War. So this is happening at the same time, so it seems to be all part of it.

18-00:27:47

Wilmot:

I want to ask you something else, which is how were—I mean, you're right, this is plum sixties, this is plum in the middle of the sixties, and how were people kind of hearing and learning about what was happening with the civil rights movement in the South? How was that—was there some kind of reciprocal effect there? Was what was going on in that part of the country impacting the way people were thinking about what was here in Berkeley?

18-00:28:22

Maslach:

Oh, yes, people followed it very closely. And of course, Martin Luther King did come to Berkeley, and I was privileged to hear him speak. So yes, just a lot of interest and activity.

18-00:28:40

Wilmot:

Doris, when did issues of race and racism first kind of enter your radar, your—

18-00:28:46

Maslach:

Mine?

18-00:28:46

Wilmot:

Yes. Where you got involved and felt like it was important to be involved?

18-00:28:54

Maslach:

Well, I went to an integrated grammar school on Telegraph Hill. I mean, the school was half Chinese. At that time, in the thirties, the Negro population was fairly small in the Bay Area, and it didn't increase until the Vietnam War—

18-00:29:18

Wilmot:

World War II?

18-00:29:19

Maslach:

Yes. People came to work in the shipyards, and this is when it increased. So in Berkeley, we were aware of black issues because the people coming in from the South to work in the shipyards really impacted the more stable black population that we had, although it was small. Because then everybody lumped all blacks together, and in talking to people and knowing people, you were aware of that.

18-00:29:56

Wilmot:

And that was in the 1940s, which was when you were on the East Coast.

18-00:30:00

Maslach:

No. It was once I got back here.

18-00:30:02

Wilmot:

In the fifties that you were thinking about that.

18-00:30:03

Maslach:

Well, because the people had already come here, in other words. As they came in, I don't know what was happening as they arrived, but by the time we moved to Berkeley in '51, again, this was becoming a big part of the community.

18-00:30:22

Wilmot:

What kinds of issues were coming up at that time, in the fifties, around this new influx of African Americans from the South?

18-00:30:34

Maslach:

I imagine the fact that people like D. G. Gibson were so interested in having qualified people run for city office, which again in Berkeley, this did not happen on the council until 1961, and some very good—Lionel Wilson himself was a candidate. There were a number of others, too, that didn't make it. Again, there wasn't anyone on the school board, any blacks on the school board until, I think Roy Nichols was the first one. So again, there was this feeling that there were a lot of qualified people that were not given an opportunity, and—. But did you ask about my personal feeling about—?

18-00:31:28

Wilmot:

In some ways, yes, I was trying to understand when did you start to—it's not for granted that people were thinking about race and racism, but at some point sometimes it enters people's awareness in a way that is more pronounced than previous times, and I was asking you if there was a time when that happened, when race and racism issues became more central or more of an issue that you were aware and consciously aware of than before.

18-00:31:58

Maslach:

[laughs] I became consciously aware of prejudice as a teenager, because people would question if I had a Jewish friend, or would question if I had a Korean friend, which I had. My best friend when I came to California was Korean. There were members of my family who were saying did I think this was a good thing to have such close friends as this.

18-00:32:28

Wilmot:

Within your family.

18-00:32:28

Maslach:

So this is when I became aware of it, and questioned it. But I was really basically upset about it as I grew up, because I've always been in situations where there's been a multi-racial situation, and I've had friends—I mean, this hasn't entered into any kind of friendship at all, as a negative thing. I still have my Korean friend, who is eighty-three like I am.

18-00:33:03

Wilmot:

I had another question for you, which has to do with you ran the school board elections for two people. Did you ever consider running for elected office?

18-00:33:18  
Maslach:

No.

18-00:33:17  
Wilmot:

Why not?

18-00:33:19  
Maslach:

I'm just not that kind of person. I enjoyed the organization of running a campaign, and the kinds of strategies that you have to think about, the interaction with people and so forth. So I've just enjoyed doing it, and I've never aspired particularly to be the head of anything. I was Emerson and Willard PTA president, and would become presidents but my interests were more in just being active in seeing things happen. I did wind up being president even of the Panoramic Hill Association as well, and almost of the Berkeley-Albany PTA Council. But I've noticed this in me, that some people latch onto one particular activity, the league or the PTA, and then ride it all the way to national, for instance. And this is true of League of Women Voters people, people become presidents of the local league, serve on the state level, and we've had people in Berkeley that have been on the national board. This just hasn't been me.

And I've really enjoyed being able to be involved in a lot of different kinds of issues. They sort of followed what was happening in my life. I mean, I was interested in the schools while the children were in school, and I think that it served two purposes. Of course, it had plus and minus consequences, your children would be noticed, and sometimes it helped and sometimes it was a hindrance to them.

18-00:35:13  
Wilmot:

Yes.

18-00:35:13  
Maslach:

But it's being a role model, and I think this is important, just observing my children. They accept leadership roles at times; Jamie with small business companies, because he's a small businessman; Steve has been on the board of the arts and crafts council, and of course, Christina's been very active in education at the university.

18-00:35:52  
Wilmot:

I wanted to turn and ask you a question about the Berkeley Democratic Club. Do you recall—what was your earliest involvement with the club?

18-00:36:15  
Maslach:

I don't know when I first joined. But I do know that right after we came to Berkeley, we did precinct work for Adlai Stevenson. Now, whether that was through the Berkeley club—I imagine it was. What was happening, there was a lot of political things going on in the state of California way back then, because they didn't have primaries. So somehow, people weren't designating when they ran for office whether they were Democrats or Republicans. Alan Cranston was



someone who sort of figured out a way of getting around that, so finally it changed so that we do have parties and so forth, and then ran things.

But the very fact that so many public offices were definitely nonpartisan, I mean, you weren't supposed to designate whether you were Republican or Democratic, and that would be for all—in the beginning—for the school board, for the city council. So I have again always been a member, been involved in a lot of the activities. I've always supported what they were doing, and have been a continual member since.

18-00:37:48

Wilmot:

What were some of the activities that were most important to you that you were working on, where you really made sure and showed up for every meeting?

18-00:37:55

Maslach:

Well, again, the Democrats really had to fight for control of the state of California, because the way it had been rigged by Republicans, by conservatives, it was just not something that made it easy for the man in the street to register his opinion. So just working with the different leaders. There would be meetings with Cranston I can remember, meetings with Jeffery Cohelan, and candidates. I guess I told you about the Kingmans, the fact that I was involved when Ruth Kingman told us about how wonderful Jack Kennedy was as a possible presidential candidate.

18-00:38:47

Wilmot:

I do remember that.

18-00:38:51

Maslach:

But I wouldn't say that being a part of the Democratic party was a big part of my life. It was just a constant peripheral situation, and I did whatever I could. I did a lot of precinct work on this hill, tramping all over it for candidates who were having house meetings and things like that.

18-00:39:14

Wilmot:

And do you remember when the Berkeley Citizens Action group emerged? I guess it was—

18-00:39:24

Maslach:

Well, I believe this was the group that opposed a lot of the school bond issues that I was involved with. I think that one campaign where I told you I was the speaker, I have the feeling that the Berkeley Citizens Action were the ones that put up the opponents to see if they could nullify anything we could say on television.

18-00:39:58

Wilmot:

I was thinking the Berkeley Citizens Action was a group that emerged as Dellums' group, and I may be wrong about this, and it's totally possible that I'm

wrong. But they were probably most active in your sphere around rent control issues. Does that sound right?

18-00:40:22

Maslach:

Well, as I said, there were so many organizations with so many names that when you mentioned Berkeley Citizens Action, I just had the feeling that this was a conservative group. But what happened as the conservatives moved out of Berkeley, the two oppositions were between ultra-liberal Democrats and moderate Democrats. Then that was where things—so that the Democrats that I belonged to became the enemy, rather than—the conservatives.

18-00:40:58

Wilmot:

You've mentioned this before, you phrased it in such a humorous way, about starting off on the outside and being on the outside again as the pendulum kind of swung.

18-00:41:08

Maslach:

I never had a newspaper that supported my position.

18-00:41:12

Wilmot:

That's funny. Okay. I had another question, and this is shifting a little bit. Still related to schools, but it's more related to city council and perhaps housing issues. I wanted to—well, no, let me—yes, precisely. In 1964, what was the relationship between the recall election and the city fair housing referendum that happened in 1963? How were those issues linked? Were there people who were kind of very polarizing and acting around both issues, both the schools and—

18-00:41:54

Maslach:

I would say they were. The people we were working with were also for the fair housing propositions. And again, maybe that showed a lot of the incipient racism that was in Berkeley, by the degree to which they fought that. They also, just trying to think, and I can't remember the specific details, because Byron Rumford was involved in that. But again, Byron Rumford prevailed eventually. But yes, we would not run together, but we would have meetings where we would meet and talk about what was happening in each campaign, and figure out how we would help each other. Sometimes we had, in areas we had precinct workers that would take material from both, and some places not. So you'd have to work this out.

18-00:42:52

Wilmot:

That's interesting, I didn't realize they were so linked.

18-00:42:59

Maslach:

Well, again, this particular Panoramic Hill was one of the few precincts that went for Adlai Stevenson against Eisenhower. So always we could count on people supporting both issues. But if you went over into the Claremont area, you'd find people there who would support good schools that definitely would

be on the other side, as far as the national election and Republican issues were concerned.

18-00:43:28

Wilmot: And as far as fair housing, as far as like—

18-00:43:31

Maslach: Well, as I said, I told you how shocked we were that our Japanese architect was turned down by a local realtor who wouldn't show him houses in the hills, because they still had these covenants on the deeds. So—

18-00:43:54

Wilmot: As late as 196—?

18-00:43:58

Maslach: This would have been—yes. This is when it changed, in the sixties. Because then they were changing a lot of the laws.

18-00:44:10

Wilmot: Okay. There's a question I was trying to explore, but I barely have enough information to do it. It's this question of how the districts transformed and the city of Berkeley changed.

18-00:44:24

Maslach: District elections?

18-00:44:23

Wilmot: Yes, but also the boundaries of districts changed. Does that ring a bell?

18-00:44:30

Maslach: Well, I think that what happened at some point, the Democrats decided that they weren't going to get anybody—we lost an election eight to one, and I don't remember exactly when the district election issue was passed. But anyway, the strategy at the time was that it was better to try to elect people by districts, because then you would get at least some representation for people in a conservative district, rather than just having a city-wide vote on these things. So there was always issues of drawing the boundaries, and I think recently, in the last restructure of the boundaries, which was by a liberal city council, they've really tried to make the Claremont-Panoramic district a district that a liberal person that didn't represent us at all would win. So there's been a lot of challenges as to whether the moderates would ever have a say on the city council.

18-00:45:57

Wilmot: So when you say that the way—how did they work on, what was their strategy for—

18-00:46:04

Maslach:

The strategy was where you put the students, and so they did a lot of gerrymandering in all of the district lines. Because the students have always wanted a district themselves, and people wondered about that, because maybe that would be the swing vote every time. Maybe there would be four, four, and one, and so you would be giving a minority a big advantage. So right now, the students are scattered throughout the city, but in general, there is one district down here that is pretty—with the dorms—which is pretty heavily—and one on the north side of the campus. So I don't know exactly how it's going.

18-00:46:58

Wilmot:

I wanted to ask you a question also. Off tape today we were talking about how the second report that the League of Women Voters created regarding rent control here in Berkeley has become of interest again, and I wondered if you wanted to talk about that.

18-00:47:21

Maslach:

Well, I mentioned before that the reason we have an elected board is because it was put on the ballot as an alternative measure to a landlord measure. People said, Do you want this one or that one, and without really thinking it through, people said, Oh, elected board is a great idea. Well, an elected board is not a good idea, because this is a judicial body that has to adjudicate between various people in the community, and it does affect whether you have housing or not. The effect of a very, very stringent law has been to eliminate housing, rental housing. You have a lot fewer rentals and more home owners in Berkeley. Now, of course, it's changing again because there seems to be a lot of building going on, and one doesn't know for a while how this will affect elections.

But right now, there are no elections any more. I mean, I was the one that would put together a slate, and I don't remember exactly what year the last slate that I put together in the nineties, it was about '93 or something like that, was the best slate of candidates I've ever had. Because usually you somehow don't find enough people to represent people and you'll take somebody that you know is a liability. But in this case, it was a balanced board, and in fact, that was our campaign: let's balance the board. The one landlord that we put on the slate was a very liberal Jewish woman who was very active in the Jewish community. So she was absolutely shocked to think that she would lose an election in Berkeley.

We also had a very prominent professor, retired professor, who had been head of the Academic Senate who was willing to run.

18-00:49:30

Wilmot:

Who was that?

18-00:49:35

Maslach:

I can't remember these names. [laughs] Especially under pressure. [John Richards]

18-00:49:39

Wilmot: I'm sorry.

18-00:49:40

Maslach: But it will probably come to me. He has since died, unfortunately. But I was so pleased that somebody would be willing to spend his retirement time being on the rent board who didn't have rental property but just knew that this wasn't a fair law and was willing to put his time on. We had someone—

18-00:50:02

Wilmot: Do you remember what department he was in?

18-00:50:06

Maslach: No. But I will get the name, we'll insert it.

18-00:50:13

Wilmot: I'm sure there's records of this too, so it's not like we're—

18-00:50:16

Maslach: Oh, sure. And we had someone who was handicapped and in a wheelchair who represented the handicapped community and could explain why, what problems the handicapped had in finding—

18-00:50:29

Wilmot: Doris, how did you find these representatives?

18-00:50:34

Maslach: I would just ask around, and ask if somebody knew somebody, call people I knew, "Do you know anybody?" This is how I got the first slate. I'd asked Carol Sibley. She was the one that produced Betty Olds and Katherine De Vries, who served for eight and ten years respectively on the board.

But anyway, right now there is no election, in effect. A group of people just appoint people, because nobody runs against them. They collect three million dollars now from landlords, and I've been at meetings where they're asking, "Well, what do we do with this money?" and think of projects they could spend money on, such as making a television program or a theater project or something like that.

18-00:51:48

Wilmot: And so most recently, there's been an interest in—

18-00:51:51

Maslach: Well, obviously the city council has been discussing it, because I guess people—it's registering on people, and I just learned yesterday, matter of fact, that there will be a measure on the ballot. Because one of the things that the rent board does is supposed to set what kind of an increase landlords get each year. So they hire a consultant for I don't know how much money, who then makes a recommendation, but they are under no obligation to follow the

recommendation. So they have hearings on it, and people will say how inadequate it is, but what they will do is try to give the landlords the least amount of money possible.

So there has recently been some legislation that they're supposed to at least consider certain things, and I understand there has been a lawsuit against the city of Berkeley claiming that the rent board isn't following this, because the landlord group won the lawsuit, and there still has to be more settlement litigation. The compromise was that, Look, we'll put a measure on the ballot which says we don't have to have this study, we'll just make the increase a certain percentage of the CPA, the annual consumer price index. This is being supported by the mayor, Tom Bates; the head of the rent board, Max Anderson; Betty Olds, who was again one of our rent board candidates who is now a council member; and one other person. They're hoping that the League of Women Voters will support it.

18-00:53:51

Wilmot:

Who did you get that call from?

18-00:53:56

Maslach:

A consultant named Greg McConnell.

18-00:54:01

Wilmot:

Who is working on this issue?

18-00:54:02

Maslach:

He came to Berkeley from Washington. He was chosen to be the director of the rent board, and he came from a position of being very, very pro-tenant. When he got to Berkeley and saw how crazy the law was, he became an advocate of trying to have it fair. He was so attacked, he resigned. He did not stay his full term. But he has been involved as a consultant locally and has represented landlords before the rent board. But in his recent years, he's been a lobbyist up in Sacramento to see that no outrageous laws get passed, and that some reasonable things happen.

18-00:54:56

Wilmot:

Very interesting. Okay. I'm wondering if you could tell me a little bit about the work that you're doing with the co-ops currently.

18-00:55:09

Maslach:

Well, when I finished the housing study on the rent board, again, housing has been my concern, obviously, since I was in college. I really felt for the students at Berkeley, especially the—because I again have been on scholarship committees for the California Alumni Association. Some of the scholarships provide housing, but others just provide a modest stipend, maybe \$1,000 or \$2,000. So anyone who gets accepted at Cal and has to live here, they're subject to one of the highest places to live. So the Berkeley co-op, the university Berkeley co-ops, really provide a tremendous service in providing low-income

housing for students, and I think it allows more students who get accepted here to actually decide to come here. Since it was such a big factor in my life, I mean, this was the difference between commuting by ferry from San Francisco and going to Cal, which I would have spent about half my life on the ferry boats and trains coming and going. They allowed me to live on campus, I lived in Stebbins Hall, which is on the north side, and really have a college experience. It helped me in growing up and growing away from my family, because I did support myself and put myself through college.

So you just feel that this was something that should be supported, and at the time I came, there were only three houses. Now they have twenty. They've been able to, there was a point where nobody wanted to live in the fraternities and sororities any more, and so there were a lot of those houses were on the market. So the co-ops bought them, so some of their houses, they have one Julia Morgan house, as a matter of fact.

For a long time, there was no alumni association of the co-ops. People thought about it, but the students do decide everything. They are the ones, the student organization decides everything, and they could not see any reason to help finance an alumni association, co-op alumni association. So every time there would be an anniversary—fiftieth, sixtieth, or whatever—people would get together and have this function, and then that would be the end of it. One of the people who have worked for the co-op professionally all of these years was named Ted Johnston. He was a great fundraiser, whenever they wanted to build a new building, as well as being just supportive in every way. So he was the one that just said it's time to have an alumni association, so six years ago, we actually formed it and convinced the students that this was a good idea.

We have been in the process of raising money for scholarships, getting to find out who the members still are and have functions so that alumni can come back and either visit the houses or visit each other and so forth.

18-00:58:48

Wilmot:

I met another one of your alumni, Michele Woods Jones, who used to be an ombudsperson for staff here at Berkeley. I interviewed her, and she spoke about the significance of the co-op experience in her life. She also was I think a part of the alumni group.

18-00:59:09

Maslach:

Well, right now, we're not concentrating as much on scholarships as we are on raising funds for the seismic upgrading of all the buildings, as well as making them wheelchair-accessible to the handicapped. In some ways, the students like this better, because when you give a scholarship, that just helps one person. But when you do things to upgrade the facilities this is helping everybody. It means that they don't have to take money, raise money themselves. And of course, the only way the student co-op raises money is to raise their rates on the room and board. So it's been a wonderful experience. I mean, we've been able to find out

all kinds of people that we didn't realize were members of the co-op, and they've been very supportive. So I've been very, very impressed with what they're doing.

We had an anniversary meeting held down at His Lordship's last fall, and it was impressive. I just was just so pleased to have so many people and realize the people, some of my high school chums were there that I hadn't seen since high school times, who had subsequently come over and been in the co-op. But I hadn't even known that until recently. It's been an upper for me, because at my age, going to evening meetings is nothing I really don't like to do. But every evening meeting, because they would hold their alumni meetings in the evenings was an upper. I mean, there was always some positive thing that you would hear about that was happening.

And then being close to students, because they participate too, they have student representatives on the board, and just realizing what some of these kids are doing is just awesome. I mean, the expression that most alumni think is, "I would never get into Cal these days," because the standards are so high, but these are brilliant kids, and they take part in co-op activities. And the co-op, one thing about it is that they have a chance to try out a lot of different jobs and get job training, switchboard, cooking. I understand Narsai David, this is where he learned to cook, and he is this famous restaurateur today. In fact, one of our alumni formed Intel. That was Gordon Moore, who is the head of Intel. So as I said, it's been a nice wind-up for my activity career, I think, because I think this is about the last major activity that I will be able to participate in.

18-01:02:12  
Wilmot:

Let's take a break and change our disks.

[end audiofile 18, begin audiofile 19]

19-00:00:33  
Wilmot:

I wanted to talk to you a little bit about being a woman who was really involved and civically very much engaged in the civic well-being and health of your community. Did you tend to be operating in a community of women? Were men very much part of doing this work? And I'm thinking currently of volunteerism.

19-00:00:58  
Maslach:

Well, the organizations that I was involved in, we talked about Emerson PTA, where this was shared with the men. So there were men on the board, which is not that typical. Usually, at least at that time, it was pretty much a woman activity. So this was interesting. But I told you that I still did all of the legwork, and then George, I would brief him as to, he would conduct the meetings. Since we had them at night, so the men could come, it was pretty effective. And when we had fundraisers, like a big carnival, we always made a lot of money, because we always had a lot of people involved.



In the PTA in general, as you moved up, it became more of a woman thing, and not as much—but in politics, what I noticed in politics, and especially this would be when we would have the liaison meetings with the political parties, I definitely felt that I wasn't included. In 19, I think it's '81, Shirley Dean, it was the first time she ran for mayor against Gus Newport. She asked me to be her campaign—I guess she called it a campaign coordinator. The reason I took it was that I felt, well, then I had to be included in these discussions in the Democratic party that I felt did not include at least me, women in the same way. Incidentally, this was the year it was disastrous for the Democrats, because we lost every election, and I think we wound up with just one single person on the council that whole time.

19-00:03:12

Wilmot:

On the city council?

19-00:03:13

Maslach:

Yes. Her name was Barbara Lashley. She was a black woman, and she had won in the previous election. But in general, I really felt, since I didn't have a full-time job, I really felt obligated to do as much in the community as possible. I felt that the Cal Alumni Association had given me scholarships to attend school felt this way too. They expected people that they had helped to educate to give back to the community, as it were.

And it really fit for me, because then I could choose my time, how much time I could give or how I could give it, and still not interfere with bringing up my children, which was very important to me. So I found it very satisfying. And then also, what was also very satisfying was to be associated with the university, because there were just so many opportunities to meet people and be involved in activities that were very significant in one way or another.

19-00:04:36

Wilmot:

I'm going to ask you about that kind of city, being engaged city, in your civic environment at the same time as being a faculty, kind of in the university camp as well, I'm going to ask you about that in a minute. But I wanted to just follow up on what you raised: did you find that serving as campaign coordinator for Shirley Dean did kind of give you entrée into the circles that were dominated by men? Were these decision-making circles? What were these circles about that you wanted to gain entry into?

19-00:05:09

Maslach:

Yes, just how to plan precinct work. Because I felt that you had to do precinct work differently in different parts of the city. In my particular area were the students, and I thought that they should be handled in a very particular way, and because what was happening is that people were just spending a lot of money sending a lot of literature that never got delivered, that they never even saw. And that there were better ways of reaching them. But I wound up not being a campaign manager of Shirley Dean's campaign, because Shirley Dean is a very

capable woman. She's done a lot for Berkeley, but she runs her own campaigns. What she wanted was a talented gofer. So I couldn't even get an hour's appointment with her to plan the whole strategy of the campaign, because it was in her head as to how it was going to go and what was going to happen. I had no say at all, except to carry it out, if I understood what she wanted to carry out. But anyway, I learned from experience.

19-00:06:38

Wilmot:

More generally, we've talked a little bit about the role, very little bit about the role of women in local politics. I would imagine that it's a role that was changing during your involvement, because of the emergence of feminism in the late sixties and early seventies.

19-00:06:59

Maslach:

I would say that there were a lot of women in Berkeley that were active. They would be on the county committees or national committees. They would be elected delegates. When a president is elected, you don't—you vote for his delegates that are going to vote for him. So I have always known a large group of women in Berkeley who have taken political roles, and for a long time, almost all of the people on the council were women. Not too long ago, there were eight women and one man.

19-00:07:41

Wilmot:

On the city council?

19-00:07:42

Maslach:

On the city council. It's changed now, I think, and there are more men. Not many more.

19-00:07:51

Wilmot:

Well, I want to ask you more generally how did, if one can identify it as such, how did feminism as a movement change your life? How did you become aware of it as a movement? Did you feel that it was relevant to you?

19-00:08:12

Maslach:

Yes, I did, but then I guess I've always felt pretty much that I would be making choices for myself.

19-00:08:27

Wilmot:

And that's what feminism means to you?

19-00:08:29

Maslach:

Yes.

19-00:08:29

Wilmot:

To make choices for yourself?

19-00:08:31

Maslach:

Yes, being able to choose how you want to carry out your different roles in life. I've been accused by my husband of being more of a feminist than I think I am. I think I'm kind of a moderate feminist, but for some reason or other, I seem to have a daughter who, this was one of her things that she concentrated on when she was at Cal, as a professor, that she was charged with helping to get more women faculty, and then once they got more women faculty, to see that they were successful. There has been a big increase in that. And I think George too, as an administrator, has really encouraged more women, especially in engineering, which you don't think of women as going into engineering.

I'm not—as I say, I don't see myself as being an advocate of feminism. It just seemed to be kind of natural that if people are capable, they should be hired, and they should be rewarded equally.

19-00:09:54

Wilmot:

When you say make choices about the different roles that one has in life, are you speaking of different choices that one might make about one's reproductive choices, choices that one might make about their partnership choices?

19-00:10:10

Maslach:

Well, the contrast is this: my mother's sister, my aunt, had a philosophy that a woman didn't get to decide anything for herself. She became whatever her husband was, and that that was her role in life. She would articulate this a lot. Of course—

19-00:10:30

Wilmot:

Tell me her name again?

19-00:10:33

Maslach:

This was Evelyn Cuthbertson, Mrs. Frank Cuthbertson. So the fact that someone in my own family was saying this made me think about it a lot and realize that she's all wrong. We do make choices, and you decide how—with the choices you make, how to make it work. And maybe that's the way I feel about being married for sixty years. You emphasize the positive things that happen, and you somehow take care of the negative things that happen.

19-00:11:20

Wilmot:

Well, I'm glad we wandered into that area.

I wanted to ask you, I had said we were going to spend a little bit of time talking about being someone who was both a player in the community of Berkeley as well as being someone who is very much connected to the university. Was that ever something that was at odds for you? Did you ever find yourself straddling a divide that was just too big, basically?

19-00:11:53

Maslach:

Well, I just think that there were a lot of demands. I can remember when we first moved to Berkeley and I had these three little children, that I would be invited to the teas, and people would say, "Could I pick you up?" and so forth. And people being very friendly, but for me, it was just too difficult, to try to farm out three little children at that point for something that I really wasn't that involved with. I did try to serve on some of the committees that they had—

19-00:12:25

Wilmot:

"They" meaning faculty wives?

19-00:12:26

Maslach:

Yes, the faculty wives committee, I think I was on the—it might have been the foreign student committee or something like that. But again, that just didn't fit with my schedule and so—

19-00:12:37

Wilmot:

When was that?

19-00:12:37

Maslach:

Oh, that would have been probably back in the sixties.

19-00:12:42

Wilmot:

So there was a short time in the sixties when you were kind of \_\_\_\_\_ with the faculty wives group—

19-00:12:46

Maslach:

Yes, just thinking that maybe this was the thing to do. Because somebody I knew was on it and said, "Oh, please do come."

19-00:12:54

Wilmot:

Who was that?

19-00:12:53

Maslach:

I don't know her name particularly. But they also have section clubs. These are social clubs where women with interests—. And so I did join a couple of those and found out that didn't fit my schedule either. So I just never was that active. But when George became dean of engineering in the middle sixties, then we got invited to a lot of campus functions. I found these really very interesting. There would be dinners or cocktails parties to meet visiting people that were important, and so it was fun to meet people. So this was, I considered it a real plus.

19-00:13:48

Wilmot:

Were there ever any issues that you recall where they were the university and the community of which you were a constituent were diametrically opposed?

19-00:13:58

Maslach:

Just that one that I told you about, and that was the Raider games in the stadium.

19-00:14:04

Wilmot:

I remember that.

19-00:14:04

Maslach:

The use of the stadium for commercial purposes. I just felt very strongly about it, because a lot of university people were very unhappy, because they thought this was keeping the university from making money.

19-00:14:24

Wilmot:

“You’re holding us back.”

19-00:14:24

Maslach:

But I realized that it was hurting the university, that it would make more money getting contributions from happy alumni that they would be boycotted by disgruntled alumni.

19-00:14:39

Wilmot:

This I raised off-tape, I raised the question of this communication council. Maybe the name is wrong, but it was something that held meetings in the Y building at the top of Allston Way and Telegraph regarding the People’s Park. I believe it was convened twice by Chancellor Heyman, and you told me you were involved with that.

19-00:15:12

Maslach:

Well, I don’t remember which—because he had two different committees. The first one was the study committee, with the activists, with the students, with the community people, and with the merchants. We met at different places, and I don’t remember where all the different places we met. But we were really searching different ideas and so forth, because we had to come up with any kind of a plan [something is being torn up in the background, hard to hear] that we could all agree on that Heyman would accept. And I told you that that just never happened. I mean, it was sabotaged by the activists who didn’t want any decisions made at all, they wanted things left just the way they were. Which I found truly interesting, because their idea is that everybody gets to do whatever he wants to do, so what happens when there’s a conflict? Well, that’s the only time you need an organization, to resolve the conflict. Other than that, everybody gets to do his own thing, whatever it is.

The second one was a more formal committee, and I didn’t get on—that was called the advisory committee, because they had had nine people from the council and nine people from the university, so it was a committee of eighteen. We again met at different places, but I didn’t go on in the beginning of that, because I was appointed by Betty Olds to replace her appointee who did not live in the area. He lived somewhere up in the hills near where she does. He resigned because he said, “Look, I’m not that interested, maybe you’d better get somebody who is more involved.” So at that point, she put me on. As I recall, we would even meet at the senior center down on Hearst and Martin Luther King, I recall meetings down there. But we would meet at different places.

19-00:17:21

Wilmot:

So when you think of university engagement with community issues, do you tend to think of individual professors, or do you actually think of—in your tenure, in your work that you’ve done over the years here in Berkeley—do you actually think of an administrative stance, or do you actually just think of individuals who were engaged via their own interests, their own children, in that way?

19-00:17:51

Maslach:

Well, as I said, there would be different reasons for having these committees. As I told you, after the decision on the stadium, there was a committee formed called the liaison committee, and this was community people and university people and students. I was—again, some would be formal and then some would be just ad hoc. Because now I can remember being on a committee with a number of professors who were planning, I guess it was the time in the sixties when there was all of this trouble with the Vietnam War. They wanted to do something positive, instead of just having a march down Telegraph Avenue or down one of the streets, they wanted to do something positive.

Wilmot:19-  
00:18:49

Such as?

19-00:18:49

Maslach:

Well, the plan was to have a big meeting in Washington, D.C.

19-00:18:57

Wilmot:

About the war? Against the war?

19-00:19:00

Maslach:

Yes. To discuss it, see alternate plans. I don’t know exactly how I got on the committee, but I was on the committee. I was really appalled at how professors didn’t understand how you put together a project, having worked with the PTA and knowing the kind of planning that goes into any kind of an event. If you’re going to have a conference in Washington, D.C., with people from all over the country, college presidents and so forth, you don’t plan to do this in three months. It almost takes a year of planning to get everything organized. So I could see that this thing wasn’t going to work at all, so I didn’t—I just went along with everything they proposed, and of course, it didn’t happen. Because they would write to, say the head of Notre Dame or something and say, “Would you be a speaker?” and of course, he’d write back and say, “No, I can’t.”

And then I noticed, oh, that these particular people that had been asked to do something for this committee would then do something else somewhere else that would be more appropriate for their time and for their inclination. Because I don’t think they had confidence in this group, of being able to really pull something off.

But I think the university has done pretty well, especially lately, any time they have a plan, setting meetings for the community to come. It's been a regular activity on the part of the community to see that they could slow down anything that the university proposed. I guess the university now factors this into what it proposes, because they know that it's going to take so much time before there will be some kind of agreement. And of course, in the end, the university is able to go ahead. They tell the people, they listen, and they modify where they can, and they still go ahead with their overall plans, because they do have responsibilities for building buildings and building new kinds of buildings, and seismic retrofitting buildings. Obviously now, one of the projects is housing students. I think they've been unhappy that students have only been able to have university housing for one year, because they felt that a freshman, after one year, is really not capable of figuring out where to live in Berkeley, in the city somewhere. So I think that a lot of the building that has gone on will provide two years of housing for them, and then maybe after two years, they're a little more familiar with the city and can figure out where would be an appropriate place for them to live for their junior and senior years.

19-00:22:08

Wilmot:

I think there's this thing that I've been doing, in asking you about this, which is perhaps constructing you as this person with dual citizenship in two communities, two discrete communities that potentially were in conflict with each other. I'm realizing that if in fact that is the case, if you are a person with both citizenship in Berkeley the city and the university, the relationship is just more nuanced than that model gives voice to. So I'm just realizing that in asking you my question.

19-00:22:45

Maslach:

Well, as I said, I suffer from that too. Even as a member of the Panoramic Hill Association, we adopted liaison people to deal with the city government, to deal with the university, and so I was the liaison with the university, because when I would phone somebody, they would return my call. They would know who I was, and return my call. Because we've had some people on the hill that have been kind of outrageous in relation to the university. From what I gather, when they sent off a tirade, the university just says, "Oh, there's that person," and ignores it. So after a while, the current president of the association felt that I was just too biased to be the liaison with the university, even though I did not represent anything except what the organization had voted for. I was just to tell them; the liaison was just—and to have them tell me what they were doing, so that I could inform the organization.

19-00:24:03

Wilmot:

So they thought you were too biased in favor of the university?

19-00:24:08

Maslach:

Yes, so that I couldn't be a liaison. But of course, that didn't bother me, because as I said, if they didn't get community support for what they were doing, it wouldn't get any support for whatever it is, for their position.

And some of the issues of the Panoramic Association have been way off base, and some have been right on target. So I support the ones that are on target, and try to counter the ones that are off base.

19-00:24:53

Wilmot:

Looking back over your career of kind of political and civic engagement in Berkeley, what do you consider the most important engagements? What do you consider the highlights?

19-00:25:07

Maslach:

Well, the one single highlight has been my efforts on the part of getting the Clark Kerr Campus for the university, because this is an absolutely beautiful piece of property for people who have ever been on it. It has this gorgeous view, it's a large space with plantings and grounds and recreation facilities. If that had been destroyed in any way, it would have been tragedy. As it is now, the university maintains it better than the state ever did when the state owned it, and it has made its facilities available to the public, because there is a recreation center up there that is available to the city of Berkeley. They have a running track that people use to take their daily walks. They keep up all of the gardens. They have a conference center that is used, that is available to the public if someone wants to rent it out for an event. But it is used for off-campus events. And as I say, it's just a treasure that this kind of open space, especially in a place like Berkeley, that doesn't have that much in order of parks.

19-00:26:39

Wilmot:

Did you know when you were working on this issue of Clark Kerr, did you know you were working on attaining Clark Kerr Campus for student housing? Did you know what was at stake there?

19-00:26:58

Maslach:

Definitely, because as I said, at that—there was so little student housing in Berkeley, and this was before building started in Berkeley, so that there were something like 4,000 or 5,000 fewer rentals because of rent control. So the students were really having trouble finding a place to live. What the university was doing was they found out that Mills College and the College of Holy Names in Oakland both had some empty dorms, and so they were busing some of our students over there, so they'd have a place to sleep at night. But that's really not a campus college experience. The alternative that was being proposed by the city council was to have a low-income housing project of about 700 units. This would mean people could come from all over the country, because a federal project is not restricted to a single location. So knowing how a low-income housing project of people who didn't necessarily want to be here, but just came



here because they needed a place to live and won a lottery, just didn't make sense. And the students who had to be here couldn't be here.

So I felt it was—I had no idea that the university would make it such a part of the community as it has, because I think that there are summer programs for students, they're down in the Strawberry Canyon learning skills and so forth. So they do a big job of summer programs, athletic, recreational programs for the community. As I say, the facility up there is available all year round. And I understand even the people can join the big recreational facility that they have on Bancroft Way, but this again is something that people in the community could join, as they would join the Y if they wanted to use it. So I think the university has done so much for the city of Berkeley that they're really not appreciated as such, and everybody says how much it costs to have the university here. But they don't realize that the university is the largest, has the largest payroll in the city of Berkeley. So they employ people, they provide all kinds of cultural and educational opportunities for people, recreational. And as I said, this is why people come to Berkeley. Otherwise, they would live in Oakland or Albany or El Cerrito or elsewhere.

19-00:29:52

Wilmot:

Well, Doris, I must tell you that when I asked you the question about what you consider your most significant highlight in terms of the different activities that you've been involved in in the city of Berkeley, it's interesting to me that you say the Clark Kerr, because we spent so much time on the schools and on rent control, and proportionally less time on the Clark Kerr Campus.

19-00:30:20

Maslach:

Well, it was a short period in one's life, but it was—I guess for the amount of time I spent, for what was accomplished, it was the most effective thing. Because the rent control was such a drag. I mean, the unfairness of it. In other words, I do believe in rent control, and I've studied other jurisdictions in the country that have rent control, and they have a good rent control, because they do pay respect to everybody involved. They don't consider landlords evil. In Berkeley, people believe that people shouldn't have private property. I mean, so this is a unique place for rent control, whereas in a rational community, it's something that serves a good purpose. And as I said, I don't think that a renter should rent a place and have his or her rent doubled or raised at the whim of a landlord. I think there has to be some control.

19-00:31:26

Wilmot:

When you use that word rational, irrational, I'm never sure if you're using it in the economic sense or if you're using it in a different sense.

19-00:31:35

Maslach:

It's, in other words, a property owner who owns property and decides to provide a service which is providing housing for other people, I think he should be

considered. I'm not for slum landlords and so forth, I'm just talking about ordinary people.

19-00:32:00

Wilmot:

I understand.

19-00:32:00

Maslach:

And so there should be a rational way of duplicating the fact that somebody's providing a service at a reasonable rent, and somebody is receiving that service at a reasonable rent. And there should be some harmony in Berkeley. A tenant is taught to hate the landlord. I mean, they're given literature, told that the landlords are evil and are out to do them in. Well, that isn't the case. There are just too many small landlords—well, there were. Maybe there aren't any more. There still are, there still are.

19-00:32:36

Wilmot:

Well, I think that brings me to my last question for you today, and perhaps for this interview, which is about how has this process of doing the oral history been for you?

19-00:32:50

Maslach:

It has been—I've really enjoyed it so much. The reason is, I guess from what I said in the beginning, the fact that I think that—I'm not an exceptional person that was head of something, or researched something or something like that. I mean, I'm just an ordinary person. But the fact that I came from these two immigrant families who came to California with nothing, and just lived the kind of life that we think that Americans could live, educating their children and so forth, so that you then do what you can as you live, I think that as an example of that evolution, I think it's worth being put down on paper. I mean, it was really important for me for this to happen, especially since it's been the efforts of my family that make this possible for me, to do this. I really feel that, for all of the good works that they did, again just as very ordinary, simple people, that this deserves acknowledgement as well.

So I've always, now that we seem to have more and more family, and you think of how do the younger generations coming on look back at their families, it has to be written down somewhere. And so for me, it wasn't getting written down, so this was a way of doing it. And as I said, I really appreciate the fact that I've had this opportunity to really affect so many things in this very important city, because I think Berkeley is a city that's known all over the world. It has one of the greatest universities in the world. I think the things that happen here do radiate out and are important to other people. So it's been a real positive experience and a very enjoyable one. I really enjoyed—as I say, I see it as talking to you, and as I say, our paths cross at different points, so it's been really fun.

19-00:35:34

Wilmot: Well, it's been a pleasure for me as well. And with that, I think we—unless you have anything else you want to say at this time?

19-00:35:41

Maslach: No.

19-00:35:42

Wilmot: Okay, we're done.

[end of interview]





Doris and George Maslach at the 50th reunion of Galileo High School in San Francisco, 1987  
Photo courtesy Doris Maslach



**Nadine Erika Wilmot**

Nadine Wilmot has worked in oral history for the past 7 years and has been with the Regional Oral History for three years. She began to use orality to explore race, place, and power while directing the Oakland Oral History Project as a graduate student at UC Berkeley. Since then, she has worked in documentary film and with community based arts organizations. Nadine holds a Masters in City and Regional Planning from UC Berkeley and a BA in African American Studies from Wesleyan University. She is from Oakland.