

## INTRODUCTION

In 1986, former Chancellor Robert L. Sinsheimer provided the Regional History Project with a special grant in support of the UCSC Founders Project, part of the Project's on-going University History Series, oral history interviews documenting early campus history. Subsequently we have completed interviews with three significant figures in UCSC's history: Clark Kerr, University President *Emeritus*; F. M. Glenn Willson, former Stevenson College Provost; and Kenneth V. Thimann, founding Provost of Crown College.

This single interview with Clark Kerr was held in the midst of his busy campus schedule on February 4, 1987, at the Stevenson Provost's House, during his visit as a Fellow-in-Residence at Stevenson College. Although I had originally written requesting a half-dozen or so interviews with Kerr in an effort to document not only the origins of UCSC, but the larger historical and political context of UC expansion during the 1960s, he scheduled only a single interview in his written reply to my request. He did not explain why more interviews were not possible. I had read at the time several newspaper articles on his current activities indicating that he was already participating in a series of oral history interviews which were a part of his own autobiographical endeavor.

Despite my initial misgivings that I could not adequately address the subject at hand in a single interview with Kerr, I reshaped and condensed my lengthy topic outline in order to make the best of the allotted time. It became clear as well during the interview that he had already given considerable thought to UCSC's origins as an "alternative campus," and how it dovetailed with his overall vision of the burgeoning family of UC campuses which took shape during the 1960s. In spite of the interview's brevity his synthesis provides both historical context and concrete detail in explicating the origins of the campus.

As President of the University of California during the period 1958-67, Kerr initiated, lobbied for, and oversaw UC's greatest era of expansion—a social investment of unprecedented magnitude in California public higher education. Three new campuses (UCSC, UC Irvine, and UC San Diego) were established; three campuses revised into general UC campuses (UC Riverside, UC Davis, and UC Santa Barbara); and the UC system expanded to fulfill its role in California's three-tiered system of higher education as outlined in California's Master Plan for Higher Education.

In this interview Kerr discusses three aspects of UCSC's history. First, he reviews the thinking and planning which led up to the establishing of three new universities and their integration into the system as equal and autonomous

campuses. In his narration he includes an explanation of the demographics which provided the impetus for UC growth; the role of the UC Regents in the New Campus Program; the internal conflicts among already existing, competing campuses; and his lobbying efforts within both UC and the state legislature to gain political support for this major undertaking.

Second, he outlines in considerable detail his own contributions to the shaping of UCSC and the experiences which influenced his departure from conventional thinking and gave rise to his unusual notion of establishing an "alternative campus" within the UC system. Two major influences were his own satisfying undergraduate experience at Swarthmore College and his tenure as Chancellor of UC Berkeley from 1952-58. At Swarthmore he appreciated the small-scale sense of community and intimacy possible at a private liberal arts college. At UC Berkeley he realized that in spite of the enriching benefits of an immense research university, many undergraduates suffered from lack of community and inadequate contact with faculty. With these two major concerns in mind, the problem then became how to design a major research university in such a way that undergraduates were not given short shrift. Conceiving of a research university built around small residential colleges, with an emphasis on undergraduate education, close student-faculty interaction, and human-scale community life was Kerr's contribution to the system and not incidentally, an imaginative institutional response to the contemporary student movement's critique of the multiversity as a sort of dehumanizing intellectual factory system.

Kerr discusses the selection of Dean E. McHenry as founding Chancellor at UCSC and the nature of their close collaboration in campus planning and design, indicating the specifics of their shared vision as well as their differences. He describes the site selection process, the eventual selection of the old Cowell Ranch, and how decisions on campus land-use, architecture, and landscape design were integral to their overall vision.

In the final section of the manuscript Kerr provides an assessment of UCSC as it has come of age, detailing its strengths and weaknesses, focusing on its organizational, academic, and cultural status as it continues the process of self-definition towards a mature identity. He also gives his impressions of the evolution of student activism here and how it has influenced perceptions of the campus.

The tape-recording was transcribed verbatim, edited for continuity and clarity, and returned to Kerr for his editing. He carefully went over the manuscript and made a number of small changes, adding clarifying phrases or words to inaudible or ambiguous passages, correcting the spellings of some proper names, and adding several comments, all of which have been incorporated into the finished manuscript. Dr. Kerr also kindly provided us with the frontispiece portrait photograph for this volume.

Copies of this manuscript are on deposit in Special Collections, University Library, University of California, Santa Cruz and in the Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.

Randall Jarrell

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