

UC Santa Cruz

Institutional History of UCSC

Title

Clark Kerr and the Founding of UC Santa Cruz

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Authors

Kerr, Clark
Jarrell, Randall
Regional History Project, UCSC Library

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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

February 2, 1989
Regional History Project
University Library
University of California, Santa Cruz

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Kerr's Undergraduate Experience at Swarthmore and the UCSC Collegial Idea

Jarrell: This is February 4, 1987, and I'm with Clark Kerr, who is here visiting the campus, for an interview session on the origins of UC Santa Cruz. To start, I'd like to know in what ways did your undergraduate experience at Swarthmore College influence your thinking about what later came to be UC Santa Cruz?

Kerr: Well it was one of the two big impacts on me in relationship to [UC] Santa Cruz—that I had gone through a college small enough so that everybody could know everybody else if they wanted to make the effort. Not just other students but faculty members as well. And that there was a chance to participate in all kinds of activities as compared with a big campus where you had to be a specialist in football or journalism or whatever it was. That was a big impact. A second big impact was that [later on] when I was Chancellor at [UC] Berkeley, I had a series of open office hours—two hours in an afternoon which I would do as often as I could arrange—any student could come in and talk about anything. And I heard all of these grievances—this was in the '50s I might say, before any of the student troubles in the 1960s—they were called the apathetic generation which was a misnomer, let me say. But they were apathetic in terms of external politics and they were not carrying any ideological causes but just their own reactions. And I sat there hearing mostly their grievances about Berkeley—something had gone wrong or there'd be things like well . . . "I listened to a professor in a class of 400 students and he has no idea in the world," you know, "who I was" . . . and . . . or I'd be asked, "I want to get a job and I'm being asked for references, and I don't know a single member of the faculty, and no member of the faculty knows me."

Jarrell: Or remembers me.

Kerr: Right, yes . . . or that they were just lost in a great big student body and didn't know where to go for friendships and so forth. And so those would have been in terms of thinking about Santa Cruz, the two big impacts—having been in a smaller community and then hearing the grievances of students in a quiescent period about a big campus.

Now of course there are great advantages in the big campus too, let me say. And some students, you know, would come in, you know, very pleased and happy with themselves. They were . . . they tended to be the more aggressive, energetic people who made it. But there were just an awful lot of people who felt they were lost souls in a big campus of that sort—that nobody knew them, nobody cared about them, etc.

Jarrell: So you perceived this enormous difference between that more intimate, social kind of experience that was possible for a student at Swarthmore or at a small liberal arts school.

Kerr: That's right, yes.

Jarrell: And the [inaudible] alienation or isolation that could be experienced by a young person as an undergraduate . . .

Kerr: Yes. But let me emphasize that it wasn't [experienced] by everybody. . . people who were on a sports team for example, they had a community. Or if they belonged to a fraternity or sorority, they had a community. But the vast majority of students at [UC] Berkeley did not have a community to which they related.

Jarrell: And then I suppose that the influx of the students from the GI Bill also changed the kind of students that you were getting?

Kerr: Yes, that's true.

Jarrell: When did you begin seriously thinking about the sort of place that UCSC would become, but prior to the enactment of the Master Plan . . . or had you for decades been sort of thinking and imagining a place of this kind within the UC system?

Kerr: No, I hadn't . . . well . . . you know, just like academics do . . . you talk about a whole lot of things . . . but I had never expected or wanted to be an administrator. And so I didn't do any planning—suppose I were an administrator, what would I do?

Kerr's Administrative Career at the University of California

Kerr: I became Chancellor at Berkeley under rather unusual circumstances. I was head of a small institute ¹ . . . I'd had my research program laid out for ten years ahead; I was a leading arbitrator of labor disputes on the West Coast; and the last thing in my mind ever was that I would be an administrator. And I gave no thought to what I would do if I were an administrator. When I began thinking about Santa Cruz, or what became Santa Cruz, was when I was appointed President of the University which was in October, 1957 at a meeting of the Board of Regents at [UC] Davis. They decided to have three new campuses—Santa Cruz was not by any means chosen then.

Jarrell: Yes.

Kerr: Three new campuses—one in the area south of San Francisco, and then the two others.² And on the same day as it happened, they adopted a policy of getting ready to start three new campuses and appointed me the new President to take effect July 1. And so after that I began thinking, you know, what could be done for the new campuses. And one of the things I felt quite strongly about was each one should have its own personality.

At Berkeley when I was Chancellor and before the Regents agreed to put a [student population] ceiling on [UC] Berkeley at 27,500, we had some long discussions, I had some long discussions with the Council of Deans and also with my Academic Advisory Committee as to whether or not Berkeley . . . well, what size Berkeley could be, we decided 27,500 and won on that . . . but also whether Berkeley would want to set up a satellite campus. There was something called the Gill Tract nearby used by agriculture for some field station work that could have been a satellite campus. [Also] there was some land undergoing urban redevelopment on the border of Berkeley and Oakland that could have been put together for a satellite campus, that is to say the students would be at [UC] Berkeley but on this other campus—only nominally at Berkeley. But unanimously in both the Council of Deans and the Academic Advisory Committee we came to the conclusion that as the Berkeley campus we didn't

¹ The Institute for Industrial Relations at UC Berkeley—Editor.

² The two other new general UC campuses were UC Irvine, which opened in 1965; and UC San Diego (established around the nucleus of the Scripps Institution of Oceanography) which enrolled its first undergraduates in 1964—Editor.

want anything to do with that. Because anybody who was sent off to a satellite campus would feel kind of downgraded. And after all, who's going to teach in Oakland willingly, when they are on the Berkeley faculty? And how would students feel about being on the subservient campus? And that made me begin thinking even then, before I was President, how important it was for whatever the University did, to make that campus feel it was unique and different and something on its own and not a satellite either of UCLA or of Berkeley, but to have its sense of independence and of its own self-worth.

Jarrell: That's interesting . . . I'd never heard of the satellite . . . idea for Berkeley.

Kerr: Yes, right.

UCSC Site Selection

Jarrell: So once the incredible site selection process began . . . something over a hundred sites came to be reviewed . . .

Kerr: There may have been a hundred . . . I remember something like seventy or . . .

Jarrell: I don't know . . . several things that I have read indicated it was quite incredible.

Kerr: Right.

Jarrell: But not that they were all deeply examined, but certainly that it got down to Almaden and that . . .

Kerr: Well, it got down to Almaden, Santa Cruz, and Evergreen [these] . . . were the last three. And we took the Regents to see all of those three [sites]. It didn't start out as a project of selection incidentally—it started out as a process of rejection. The ones that we rejected for one reason or another—too close to Stanford, for example, or too close to San Jose State, or that it would be very difficult to put the properties together—many considerations of that sort led to rejections. And we didn't start selecting until we got to these three last possibilities.

Jarrell: So there were all kinds of reasons that were discovered quite quickly?

Kerr: Yes. And of course, you know, not too close to an earthquake zone was another one that was of concern. There was some property, very attractive property, in the . . . do you know where the Crystal Springs area is between Stanford and San Francisco?

Jarrell: Yes.

Kerr: Well, in that area there was some property up there, but the Crystal Springs lakes were made by an earthquake zone, you see. And so there were just a whole lot of different factors that eliminated one site or another until we got down to selection after rejection and that was these three.

Early UCSC Planning

Jarrell: Now, in the early conceptualization, the idea of a residential college-based university, with the emphasis on undergraduate education and close faculty-student interactions . . .

Kerr: Yes, right.

Jarrell: . . . that cluster of ideas you came to. Where did these emphases come from? I have read that you had ongoing, casual, informal and serious discussions with Dean McHenry for quite a few years.

Kerr: That's right.

Jarrell: I know you had been students together at Stanford.

Kerr: That's right.

Jarrell: But this was like . . . it's fun of an afternoon to talk and imagine and think of these things, but as we're talking about say, 1960 here, things started to clarify in terms of these sorts of emphases I've just outlined. And whom did you share these ideas with? Who were the people in this early conceptualization besides yourself who shared some of these interests and emphases?

The Davis Conferences and New Campus Planning

Kerr: Well, particularly Dean McHenry because I'd made him Dean of Academic Planning. As I said when I was appointed [President] at the same time the Board [of Regents] decided to go ahead with three new campuses. And Dean had been Statewide Chairman of a Committee for the All University Faculty Conference talking about new campuses. You see Berkeley got its request of a ceiling set at 27,500 students and once the Regents accepted that, at Lake Arrowhead, in August 1956, I mean there had to be a new campus. I might say UCLA then immediately asked for 27,500 plus a medical school which meant 32,500. So with both of these campuses having [enrollment] ceilings accepted by the Regents, it meant that there had to be new campuses. And so at the subsequent All University Faculty Conference or what were called the Davis Conferences, because they were normally held at Davis, although not always, Dean had been selected by my predecessor, Robert Gordon Sproul, to be chairman of this committee on the possibilities of new campuses. And he'd made a report which was the one that was before the Regents to establish three new locations. And also then the possibility of a Fresno campus down the line.

Jarrell: Yes.

Kerr: So it was natural when I became President since the purpose of an academic dean was really to do the new campuses . . . you know, not to be the dean at Berkeley or UCLA or whatnot, to ask him as the chairman of that report committee to be the academic dean working on the new campuses. He also worked on the Master Plan, let me say.

Jarrell: Yes.

Kerr: And so it was the two of us that did the most discussing. I brought the Regents into it very early also. Once they decided on the three new campuses, and I was still Chancellor at Berkeley until July 1 of 1958, I began thinking . . . although making my presentations to [the Regents]—I wasn't [yet] the President—about how we might go. And so one of the first things I raised with them . . . my own feeling was after this thing about satellites, was if we wanted to make them successful, and remember Berkeley and UCLA needed to have them be successful, [in order to] take the load, and take the pressure off of them, that they'd have to be campuses that could be viewed as existing in their own right.

Jarrell: Yes.

Kerr: And not just as overflow pails . . .

UC Berkeley and the German University Model

Kerr: . . . yes, that would just hold the overflow water. Then of course the Regents agreed with that as being a good idea. And then we had to think of what the alternatives were. Berkeley is, has been, until recent times, built very much on the German model. Benjamin Ide Wheeler had been educated in Germany and he had the German model. When I was Chancellor I began switching more toward a kind of German/British model. And so I'd given some thought then to the difference between the German model which emphasizes research, graduate students, neglects undergraduates, provides no residence halls, etc., to the alternative British . . . and so Santa Cruz . . . one alternative was to have a campus which was on the British model which Santa Cruz is. San Diego we did differently also . . . we built on its existing strength, [which was] not the graduate, but the post-graduate level. The only students at the Scripps Institution [of Oceanography] really were post-docs. And built down from the top.

Jarrell: An unusual way to . . .

Kerr: Which was the exact opposite . . . we started there giving first the Ph.D. and here we gave first the undergraduate degrees. And then Irvine in general was more a standard type campus although we did make some innovations in teaching literature, you know, clear across the board to have comparative literature. Rather than teaching public administration and business administration, to teach administration; putting the biological sciences together not in the usual way of classifications, parasitology and all the rest of that, but in terms of the level of the organism, you know, genetics and then cellular biology and working up to the environment. We did do some different things there but Irvine was, for the most, more nearly like the standard institution, and . . .

Jarrell: So the curricular innovations . . .

Kerr: And there were curricular innovations within the standard model, yes.

Creating Diverse, Autonomous Campuses

Kerr: Now . . . we wanted to have this variation not only among the new campuses but the existing campuses for a couple of main reasons—one, it gave more choice to students. Too bad to give them, you know, just one model [that they could] choose from. And we thought it was better for them to have several models. They'd be happier that way if they had the choice and got a closer fit to what they were interested in and what they could do compared with the institution. Likewise, I was very much concerned having seen the terrible battles between Berkeley and UCLA—who got one percentage ahead of the other . . . to have them think in terms of, you know, what do we need to do, what we want to do to be different from anybody else rather than one per cent ahead or one per cent behind.

Jarrell: So there was that competition between the two?

Kerr: Oh, it was terrible between UCLA and Berkeley; they just absolutely eyed each other like hawks. And there was a real fear that they would bust the university apart because of their antagonism. There were efforts among UCLA alumni and some professors to break out of the University of California, incidentally. So we put a great deal of emphasis on UCLA getting its own place in the sun. So that picking, trying to get a special personality for Santa Cruz was part of the effort to get a special personality for each of the new campuses but all of the existing ones too.

Jarrell: So it seems to me, now that we have 25 years to kind of retrospectively look back . . .

Kerr: Yes, right.

Jarrell: That was an incredible, singular opportunity for you as President.

Kerr: That's right.

Jarrell: It happens once in a lifetime, an opportunity like that, and that you could initiate and oversee and help to shape such a social investment, three new campuses for the system . . .

Kerr: That's right, all at once. And then [there was] also the revision of UC Santa Barbara: which had been a teacher's college.

Jarrell: Yes.

Kerr: A revision at UC Davis which had been an agricultural school.

Jarrell: Yes.

Kerr: A revision of UC Riverside which had been bifurcated between the citrus experiment station and a small 4-year college. It was a very unusual opportunity, yes.

Jarrell: So McHenry and you both saw eye-to-eye on this kind of a possibility for UCSC.

Kerr: Well we saw, yes, we saw eye-to-eye on the idea of trying a campus which would have the advantages of a big university in terms of the library, cultural programs, laboratories [but] also the advantages of a series of small colleges with sense of community and a better opportunity to make friends than on a big, homogenized campus. We saw . . . we had some disagreements incidentally, but . . .

Jarrell: I was going to of course ask you about those . . .

Kerr: Yes. (Laughter) What they were?

Jarrell: Well, yes, we can get onto that a little later.

Kerr: Yes. But we agreed, we agreed totally, I might say on the development of the Master Plan. Dean was my right-hand person on that. We agreed totally on the general approach of Santa Cruz. We disagreed on some of the details.

Selecting UCSC's Founding Chancellor, Dean E. McHenry

Jarrell: Details, yes, which I'll ask you about. I would like to know first, if we're going to start talking about Dean McHenry, when and why you selected him to be founding chancellor—a very important choice.

Kerr: Yes. Well, I'd known Dean for many, many years. We had been graduate students together at Stanford, and also at Berkeley. Then I'd seen him from time to time in between because he moved back to UCLA and was Dean of Social Sciences there. But the main reason I recommended him to be chancellor [at UCSC] was [that] in his position as academic dean I talked over what the different ideas were for the new campus and what we should do. And he had this very special interest in the Santa Cruz idea. He'd been a dean at UCLA so he knew the University of California system really well. As I went through the processes of selection—consulting faculty committees, etc., and they all reacted favorably to the possibility of Dean—so he got selected.

Jarrell: Were there any other serious candidates for the UCSC position?

Kerr: Well, we considered, as we did on all of them, several different people. The selection at San Diego was by all odds the most difficult . . . that [was] quite a separate problem because the head of the Scripps Institute of Oceanography was the most likely person to take over the new campus, but that was not acceptable to the Regents and . . . a great and wonderful person but a rather poor administrator. And that was a very, very painful process. Irvine was pretty simple because Irvine was a great land company dealing in agriculture and I had a very good dean of agriculture, Dan Aldrich . . .

Jarrell: Yes.

Kerr: And I felt in dealing with the Irvine people and making that transition from a ranch into a campus that he'd be particularly fitted to work with the Irvine people. And also I knew that Orange County was a very conservative county. And we had some very great difficulties there getting the Irvine Land Company to give up these exclusionist clauses—you know, that no Jews or Blacks and so forth could own land in the area. And Dan would have to, once he got there, have to bear that problem—how to tell the Irvine Land Company,

which wanted us to locate there, because it would help them develop the surrounding development, that they had to remove their exclusionist clauses on all of their 100,000 acres if they wanted to get the university on a 1,000 acres. And Dan is kind of an all-American boy if you know him. Well anyway . . . and so he seemed to fit Irvine and also the problems of Orange County, political problems of Orange County. He was really a kind of a hundred per cent all-American type.

Jarrell: Well, he really became part of that community.

Kerr: Oh yes, very much so. Right. And then with Santa Cruz, in dealing with the faculty committee we had a number of names which were talked about . . . all of the faculty members within the University of California as possibilities, but Dean with his experience, existing experience, on getting new campuses and as a dean etc., seemed from the faculty point of view as well as my point of view, as the best of the possibilities.

It wasn't the San Diego situation and it wasn't the Orange County situation, the Irvine situation, it [the Santa Cruz situation] was one about getting some well-established academic person who could work well with the Academic Senate and who could set up a campus entirely fresh in an area where you didn't have to worry so much about the politics of the surrounding community. [Without any predecessor person like Roger Revelle at Scripps, on . . . the problem with Aldrich which was persuading him to do it. The problem with Revelle was an intense problem for him personally and for me.] But here at Santa Cruz, it was just sort of easy . . . it was talking over a series of potential people, mostly people who had been deans within the University of California. And then the general conclusion that Dean was the most experienced and best qualified.

Jarrell: And subsequently there were political town-and-gown problems, but certainly not of the magnitude that they started right off with in Orange County.

Kerr: No, but there were some town-and-gown problems here, sure.

Jarrell: Yes.

Kerr: But nothing, nothing like the potentials in Orange County, no, no.

The UC Regents and UCSC

Jarrell: Changing the subject here a bit . . . I want to go back to the Regents. And in your early discussions, informal discussions, and then later on when Santa Cruz was going to become a reality, who were the Regents who were particularly encouraging and intrigued with the idea or supportive of . . .

Kerr: The Santa Cruz idea?

Jarrell: The uniqueness and the expansiveness and the challenge . . . since this was a very singular kind of experiment.

Kerr: Right. Well, there were some Regents who were opposed to any new campuses [who thought] that Berkeley and UCLA should take the load. Ed[win] Pauley was the principal one within that group, but he had some followers. In seeing the need for the new campuses then and later, Ed[ward W.] Carter was the person with the greatest vision I found. And then Phil[ip] Boyd became very helpful, a very conscientious person, in helping to look at sites. He was chairman of the New Site Committee of the Board, and he took that responsibility very seriously. I've got to mention one thing because Phil Boyd was the former chairman of the Republican Committee for California, a Republican legislator, a conservative one from Riverside. We ended up [establishing campuses] in three Republican counties. I want to say it had nothing to do with Phil Boyd. He never showed any political aspects.

Although I might say [that] both the Governor [Edmund G. Brown] and the Lieutenant-Governor [Glenn M. Anderson] a couple of times said, "Well, you know, here you're dealing with a Democratic régime and a Democratic Legislature, and you put your three new campuses in Republican areas—Santa Cruz and San Diego and Orange County." But they were very, very nice about it. And we didn't really take into account the political aspects. Although one might say that having as Chairman of your New Site Committee somebody who had been a former chairman of the State Republican party that there might have been an effect, there was none whatsoever. The people who were most sympathetic to the Santa Cruz idea were certain northern Regents—Don[ald H.] McLaughlin, Gerry [Gerald H.] Hagar, Jesse [H.] Steinhart, Ed[ward H.] Heller—all of them have roads named for them around here now. Now Ted [Theodore R.] Meyer has one too, but Ted came in later and he was not involved . . . he was Chairman of the Board [of Regents] later on and got some drive named after

him, but he was not in that group. It was this northern group of Regents that took the most interest in the idea of the Santa Cruz campus.

Jarrell: And it was more based on the innovative ideas of the institution?

Kerr: They were most sympathetic.

Jarrell: I would like to get back to the kinds of negative criticism . . . we talked about the people that didn't want any new campuses . . . among the Regents, those Regents who were supportive of the Santa Cruz idea, and then who among the Regents or politicians were the naysayers? And if you can recall, some of the kinds of criticism from the time . . . prior to Santa Cruz's being built.

Kerr: I don't know really how much I can add to what I've said already. I said Pauley was opposed to the new campuses . . . he was especially opposed to San Diego. He made that a very bitter battle, but I think particularly because some of his friends at UCLA didn't want it. He voted against me on San Diego . . . I think we had a unanimous vote to go ahead with Santa Cruz in the end.

We had this question raised by [Governor] Pat Brown and by Lieutenant Governor [Glenn H.] Anderson about how does it happen that we went into Republican areas instead [of] into any Democratic areas . . . we had that.

We had this grilling in Sacramento as to whether there should be any new campuses at all. There was some . . . generally the Berkeley and UCLA faculties . . . they wanted all the monies that would come . . . they didn't want to share it with new campuses, but they didn't want the students, which was an impossible thing. And there was a fair amount of grumbling at Berkeley and UCLA. More at UCLA than at Berkeley because they were scared of San Diego as a competitor.

Jarrell: I definitely have become aware of the internal scene, strife among the sister institutions.

Kerr: Right.

Jarrell: I even hear that now . . . that Santa Cruz is entrenched and growing and there is talk of a San Joaquin Valley campus that would of course drain away resources from the existing campuses. So I guess that's a perennial sort of . . .

Kerr: Well, Berkeley and UCLA didn't want the three new campuses or expansion of the other existing campuses. And I was working with the Regents to get land for possibly three new ones—San Joaquin, North Bay and North LA. All of the campuses getting together, they didn't want the competition of three more within the system. But the University has to serve the people of the state . . . it cannot become totally elitist. You know at twelve and a half per cent you've cut out most of the disadvantaged minorities—the Hispanics and the Blacks anyway. And you also want a sense of presence in each of the major areas of the state. And contact through your alumni in those areas with the major legislators. So it's very shortsighted . . . it was very shortsighted for Berkeley and UCLA to be against the three new campuses, because the best line of defense for Berkeley and UCLA is to have some strength in San Diego and Orange County and the South Bay Area.

Jarrell: Yes. So that the whole state sees this top tier as its own.

Kerr: That's right.

Jarrell: And identifies with it as part of the public good.

Kerr: That's correct.

Faculty Advisory Committees

Kerr: I might say that I didn't have . . . I had more trouble with Senate committees when trying to do something innovative than I did with the Board. The Board really went along very quickly with the idea that each campus should be different. I mean they saw the arguments in favor of the differences among the campuses and went along really quite easily. I had many more questions asked by the academic people although in the end, they went along and accommodated themselves to the different alternatives that we were putting up at Irvine, San Diego, and Santa Cruz in a very tolerant and very helpful way.

Jarrell: That is, the faculty from . . .

Kerr: Yes. Well, you see [it was] an advisory committee; I had faculty advisory committees for each of the three new campuses before they had any faculty members on them.

Jarrell: Yes.

Kerr: I did that for various reasons—to get their support . . . to have their understanding . . . but also they became the first Academic Senate in reviewing the initial appointments, etc.

Gathering Political Support for the New Campuses

Kerr: But when it [the new campuses] hit Sacramento, the one campus I had to explain . . . because it was the most experimental, was Santa Cruz. And I explained it by a reference to the Claremont system. And that was persuasive.

Jarrell: There was something already native to California.

Kerr: To California. That's right. Yes.

Jarrell: And how was Governor [Edmund G.] Brown . . .

Kerr: Well, he was . . . well, we had some troubles with him initially because he had an assistant, later a Regent, by the name of Fred [Frederick G.] Dutton who was convinced that the University of California was a Republican institution, the State Colleges were Democratic institutions, and the State Colleges were "the wave of the future," which is a phrase that he used.

But we did a lot to help Pat understand the University better and he became a very strong supporter of the University. At one point some of his staff members challenged the idea of the new campuses. With Pat presiding, I had to carry the burden of argument [of] why we should go ahead with the new campuses. I did win that. There was a demographer who said the population wasn't going to grow enough to make it necessary. And the head of the Department of Finance said it was going to be more costly, [that] it [would] be less expensive to expand existing campuses. So I fought eyeball-to-eyeball and fingernails-to-fingernails (laughter) for a whole day preserving the new campuses.

Jarrell: What year would that have been?

Kerr: With this challenge in Sacramento It would have been '59 or '60. Probably '59.

The Demographics of UC Expansion

Jarrell: Had the *Growth Report* come out yet?

Kerr: The what report?

Jarrell: *The 1960 Growth Report*.

Kerr: Well, there was a growth report.

Jarrell: The one by Bolton and Johnson that went to the year 2000. I'm just curious because that's a . . .

Kerr: Yes. I know we had a lot of discussion about the demographics of the thing. And there was a fellow by the name of Frisen, Carl Frisen, who was taking a position on the demographic side which I frankly challenged him on . . . that he was not acting as a demographer, but as an opponent. I think he was quite embarrassed. He was a pretty good man. Somebody must have said to him . . . he worked in the State Department of Finance . . . do your best to challenge this [UC expansion]. I felt sorry for him. I think he was very embarrassed and he resigned shortly thereafter, I might say. But there was a growth report which was predicting 59 million people, something like that by [the year] 2000 or 2020, anyway enormous growth.

Jarrell: I know that in my research that I came across several references to the *1960 Growth Report* done by two of your assistants.

Kerr: Yes. It could have been '60.

Jarrell: It contained the projected student enrollment figures to the year 2000 in which for UC Systemwide, 215,000 students were predicted for the year 2000 which was four times UC's enrollment in 1961. So this report might have come out in 1960 to '61. So based on that, for instance, I guess, UCSC's early enrollment was slated to grow up to 27,500. All right.

Kerr: Well, 27,500 is a separate story.

Jarrell: It is a separate story?

Kerr: Yes, right.

Jarrell: Okay. The connection between those two. But in terms of the new campus program, that was based on demographic projections.

Kerr: That's right.

Jarrell: On the state population and also a subgroup of these student high school graduating seniors.

Kerr: That's correct.

Jarrell: Right.

Kerr: That's right, yes.

Jarrell: So that the three new campuses . . .

Kerr: And the assumption was that one-half of the graduating high school students who were eligible for the University would attend the University. That was the basic figure. I might say one of the reasons for the big pressure on the University now is that attendance is not the 50 per cent which was projected, but 60 per cent are attending.

Jarrell: So although we have a smaller pool, there are more students in that smaller pool, a higher proportion of them are going on . . .

Kerr: Higher. That's right. It went from 50 to 60 percent. That's right.

Jarrell: Yes.

Kerr: We were counting on, and planned on 50 percent and it's now 60 percent.

UC Enrollment Figures: "The Magical 27,500"

Kerr: You might say that 27,500 became a kind of a magic figure.

Jarrell: Yes.

Kerr: [When I was chancellor] at Berkeley we decided (when the Regents were expecting UCB and UCLA to take the total load) we decided the maximum we could take and meet certain conditions we laid out, was 27,500. Without a separate study, UCLA then immediately picked 27,500 as their figure, too . . .

although UCLA has . . . a central campus of 400 acres versus 200 acres and plus a medical school of 5,000, so they were 32,500. Once Berkeley and UCLA had 27,500, everybody else had to have 27,500—they wouldn't take less than 27,500 because they didn't want to be rated as, you know, in any way inferior to the two big campuses. Except for Davis—I did persuade Emil Mrak to set a goal of an ultimate limit of 18,500 which has now been broken under the urging of the President of the University because of the pressure that the University is taking. And at Davis against its will. It's had to go above 18,500. It's now about 20,000 I think. They want to keep the "aggie" spirit and they didn't want to go over 18,500.

Jarrell: Yes.

Kerr: But no other campus would accept less than the Berkeley [figure] . . . even Riverside would not accept less than the 27,500. And I've always looked on that as an artificial figure. Because it didn't fit any campus except Berkeley and we'd gone through the most careful study of the situation—how much land we had, how much land we didn't want to cover with buildings, how high buildings ought to be because everybody moves for 10 minutes and then nobody for 50 minutes. And you can't really handle it well with elevators, or if you do it's terribly expensive. And we made a very careful study to get out 27,500.

Jarrell: And that was a number that originally had real meaning, but then . . .

Kerr: Then for the others . . .

Jarrell: It became a status symbol or an artificial . . .

Kerr: That is right. Yes, it became an artificial figure that everybody else picked up and they wouldn't settle for less. There was some reason for UCLA although it had 400 acres versus 200, it did have a big medical school and much more in the way of parking space was needed because it was much more of a commuting campus . . . you see, lots of students in Berkeley live in Berkeley in rooming houses and so forth which you can't do in Bel Air. So there was some reason why 27,500 could fit at UCLA plus the medical school which takes enormous space. But when it came to the other campuses it was an artificial figure . . . it was not based on anything that they had except that they wouldn't take less, except for Davis.

Jarrell: So, since we're talking about demographics and magic numbers, our growth here at Santa Cruz up to about . . . till just a couple of years ago . . .

Kerr: Yes, till about 1980 was on target with the plan, wasn't it?

Jarrell: Well, we had hovered around 6800, 7000 maximum . . .

Kerr: Yes.

Jarrell: Now . . . and then the campus was truncated . . . I mean the original growth of the colleges we stopped at eight colleges and the enrollment . . .

Kerr: No engineering school, etc.

Jarrell: No engineering school, no professional schools . . . so all of that ceased—for a variety of reasons. But one of the things that I've come across in a number of previous interviews and this, I guess, would go back to the demographics of the new campus program even . . . I've heard that those projections of the '60 growth report were intentionally inflated in order to sell the idea of an expanded UC system.

Kerr: No. They weren't our figures at all.

Jarrell: Okay. I'm really interested because that question always seems to crop up as a suspicion . . .

Kerr: No, the figure . . . no, the basic figure we worked with was the figure of this Carl Frisen who was the demographer of the State Department of Finance.

Jarrell: I see.

Kerr: And he projected the number of students . . . the number of people in the State and then the size of the age cohort, and then the number that would graduate from high school and then the number who graduated from high school who would be eligible for the university and then used his 50 per cent figure to get the number of students the university would have to take in. Projections were made for the State Colleges too.

Jarrell: Right. So you had twelve and a half percent for the UC system and so on down the . . .

Kerr: That's right. And thirty three per cent for the State Colleges and then a hundred per cent eligible for the Community Colleges. No, no, those were state figures, not ours. We never had our own demographic, overall demographic figures.

Jarrell: I didn't know that. Okay.

Kerr: Within the overall demographic figures, we then worked with them.

Jarrell: But you worked with the figures with which you were provided.

Kerr: That's correct, yes.

Jarrell: So you got the raw stats and then you made it applicable to UC's needs and projections?

Kerr: That's correct, yes. Incidentally I felt the 59 million figure, if that's correct, I think it was 59 . . . 49 . . . maybe 49 million was a high figure. But it was the official figure of the State of California. And we had nothing to do with the selection of that figure—that was given us.

Jarrell: Right. So you worked with what you were given?

Kerr: That's right.

Kerr's UC Systemwide Administrative Reorganization

Jarrell: What was the nature of your working relationship with Dean McHenry, after he was appointed Chancellor and he moved to Santa Cruz in 1962 to start this monumental endeavor of building and overseeing this campus? I know that during your tenure as President that you had shifted a lot of power and discretion to the chancellors in the system.

Kerr: Yes [as UC President] I decentralized . . . well, it was the greatest reorganization not only in the history of the University in times past, but times future. It will be . . . you know, 200 years from now it will still stand as the major reorganization of the University and decentralization, yes.

Jarrell: So Chancellor McHenry could take advantage of that new power.

Kerr: That's right.

Jarrell: It was Regental power given to you . . .

Kerr: That's right, yes.

Jarrell: . . . which you decided that in the service of this entire system that . . .

Kerr: I gave to the chancellors. I gave . . . Well, of course, I had to keep the power over the budget, and . . . the appointments of chancellors and things like that, but anything that I could delegate, I did delegate. I reduced . . . at the University-wide level during my period of time in which the University more than doubled, I cut the size of the statewide staff by three-quarters even as we were building new campuses and with all these things to do.

Jarrell: That's remarkable.

Kerr: I might say it's remarkable, yes. But also in a period when there isn't any growth, it's now going up above the level it was when I became President.

Jarrell: Of course.

Kerr: So I went all through those terrible battles of decentralization and letting people go, etc . . . destroying empires and . . . but that hasn't had as much permanent effect as I expected. Now with Dean . . . we were always good friends, we are excellent friends to this day. We did have some disagreements. We had disagreements over the site. He would have preferred Almaden and with some good reasons—it was closer to the population center. That meant also closer to some political support . . . Santa Cruz County which doesn't bulk large.

Jarrell: (Laughter)

Kerr: There were some good reasons. I always favored the Santa Cruz site. It's more beautiful than Almaden, the climate is better, the smog was getting worse in the San Jose area . . . there was only one owner who was prepared to deal with us, and Almaden had, if I remember, something like 63 owners.

Jarrell: Yes.

Kerr: One being the Catholic Church of the Novitiate Winery and I didn't want to, you know, go through all those condemnations and suits and—particularly when you go up against the Catholic Church, you're going . . .

Jarrell: Top dollar.

Kerr: You're going to pay top dollar or you're sure to have a lot of ill-will. And I also thought for the type of campus we were talking about . . . colleges with their own identity . . . that it fit better the Santa Cruz site . . . with its trees and so forth so you had . . . you didn't have a sense of seeing, you know, everything all at once . . . you saw one college at a time . . . And we wanted to have this sense of identity. Also I felt that it'd be easier to recruit faculty members to the Santa Cruz area with the beautiful places that they could live and the fine climate . . . that it would beat Almaden. Dean had strong arguments . . . by strong . . . I don't mean . . . not as disputes, but I mean, we both had strong arguments either way . . . and the Regents unanimously chose Santa Cruz. Partly on good grounds and partly on bad ground—the bad ground being that we visited these two sites . . . we also visited the Evergreen site too which none of them liked . . . Almaden was hot and smoggy and Santa Cruz was as beautiful as it is today.

Jarrell: I've heard that. (Laughter) That it was just a spectacularly beautiful, lovely day.

Kerr: This is right, yes.

Jarrell: And it did . . .

Kerr: And Almaden was sort of at its worst. (Laughter) And Santa Cruz at its best.

Jarrell: (Laughter) So that was serendipity.

Kerr: Yes. And one of the people who rather favored Almaden and became a hundred per cent supportive of Santa Cruz that day was Buff [Dorothy B.] Chandler who was a very powerful Regent and a very good one . . . Well, she made a difference, but they all came around by the time we'd been over here a little while and they'd calmed down and they saw the beauty of the place. And the fact that we could get it. You see, we got it for nothing.

Jarrell: Yes, I know, from the Cowell Foundation.

Kerr: Well, we paid them \$2,000,000, but then they paid us, they turned back the \$2,000,000, for a building.

Jarrell: And the idea of a single owner and without these drawn-out negotiations.

Site Planning: The College/Cluster Idea at Santa Cruz

Kerr: And we were just under terrible pressure to get going. Now Dean . . . things that Dean and I disagreed about . . . I don't know how strongly he favored it, but the original plan for Cowell that came in from Wurster Bernardi & Emmons looked like a motel on Lake Tahoe—scattered all throughout the trees. And the Regents didn't like it. And I didn't like it either. I don't know to what extent . . . I never did know to what extent Dean was committed to that plan. He wanted to get going. That was the plan he had. The Regents were critical and I then said that I thought there was a better way to go about it and that was to have the individual colleges clustered together in small little clusters rather than . . . with the buildings spread out, you know, at great distance, easier for students to walk around from one building to another, easier to differentiate from one college to another . . . you know, you go through . . . well, that's not true with Cowell and Stevenson . . . I mean they're right next to each other, but . . . and then when you're in the forest, you're in the forest . . . and you weren't just in, you know, kind of this mixed-up situation, never in the forest and never in the city. And I gave as my illustration . . . I had that summer been in a little town called Aigues-Mortes, an old fishing and trading village on the Mediterranean in southern France where the town was still within these medieval walls . . . and when you're in the town, it was really kind of exciting, you were just in a town . . . then you went outside and you had this great change. When you were in the forest, you were in the forest, and when in the town, the town . . . as compared, you know, with a suburb where it's all mixed up.

Jarrell: Right. Not one of these things that's neither fish nor fowl.

Kerr: That's right, yes.

Jarrell: Right.

Kerr: And so it went back to Wurster, Bernardi & Emmons to get this consolidated village idea within the forest. And that then became the pattern. And Dean . . .

Jarrell: I didn't know you had such a feeling about this.

Kerr: About what?

Jarrell: About the cluster idea . . . the village and the forest.

Kerr: Yes, right. Well, I took a lot of interest in it.

Jarrell: Yes.

Kerr: Anyway, I don't know that Dean objected to this new approach. He never did really [object] to me. But I know that he was unhappy that it meant a delay in getting . . .

Jarrell: He just wanted to . . .

Kerr: He wanted to get going . . . and Wurster, Bernardi, & Emmons . . . Wurster is a very, was a very famous architect, and here he . . . and this meant going back to the drawing board and holding things up. And the campus did open, you know, had to go in the trailers to start out with rather than have the buildings up. But I never really heard him argue with me or with the Regents that this idea of the little fortified city (laughter) if you want to call it that surrounded by the forest was a bad idea. I just don't know . . . I think if he'd felt strongly against the idea he would have said so. I know he did feel strongly about the delay.

One of the big things which happened as you probably know, the original plan was to put the colleges in what you now call the great meadow. And then the campus architect we had decided to move them back, which I think was a very, very good idea.

Jarrell: Thomas Church, the landscape architect.

Kerr: Tommy Church⁴, yes, right, whom I brought in as a landscape architect for Berkeley and he had a big impact on Berkeley in making it look much more beautiful, as I knew he would. And there was always a possibility, but for reasons I don't understand, the University-wide architects and engineers just assumed Santa Cruz would all kind of be built down towards the entrance and this would be a green belt around it behind. And Tommy Church came along and said move it into the trees. And it really fitted much better, as I said before, what we had in mind anyway. That was a very basic thing in the history of the campus.

Jarrell: I think it was a very imaginative thing to bring somebody of his caliber and renown.

Kerr: Oh yes. Well, he was the best in the world.

Jarrell: That's right.

Defining the Colleges

Kerr: Then also we had a disagreement over the nature of the colleges. He visualized them more like Oxford and Cambridge where they'd have much the same architecture and also much the same programs inside them. And I favored having each of them having their own identity which carried over from the idea of each campus its identity, each college its identity. And that meant that it should have some theme to it. Oh . . . well I visualized UCSC as, say, having a St. Johns here. I visualized having an Antioch of the old style, work-study here . . . each college to have a theme of its own, and also its own architecture. So not only would the campus be diverse, but you'd have diversity within it. Now I did have this view of Santa Cruz as a sort of an alternative campus within a big nine-campus university. Alternative in the sense that people who didn't like a Berkeley—you know, the massive, gigantism of Berkeley or UCLA would have a place to choose, an extra kind of choice. Dean felt that, and I know this was one of the effects, that this would turn the college into what he called a, you know, a ghetto for the engineers or a ghetto for the artists or what-not. He was very

⁴ Editors note. Thomas D. Church (1902-1978) served as Consulting Landscape Architect at UCSC from 1959-77.

much interested in having people from different disciplines meeting with each other within the same college which meant the colleges would be more homogenized from one to the other. And I was more concerned with a sense of diversity . . .

Jarrell: You wanted real diversity.

Kerr: I wanted real diversity, that's right. And he wanted, he went more for the idea of the small community. We both agreed on the small community, but I then wanted, I went more strongly for diversity among the communities than he did. And he had a kind of horror that somehow all the engineers would end up in one college and never meet a student from the humanities—a problem, let me say. I mean this was a, not in any way a personal argument—there are good things and bad things to be said on both sides of it.

Shaping the New Campuses: Santa Cruz, San Diego, and Irvine

Kerr: But that was . . . then Dean was unhappy . . . I did give special, very special opportunities to San Diego with the blessing of the Regents. This was never set as a matter of policy, but . . . to be given the greater chance . . . all of the campuses had become stronger in research, but San Diego with Scripps there to begin with, the third biggest population in the State, an area which was attracting modern industry . . . I did give it a chance to move faster ahead in science by recruiting people, rather than the assistant professor level, which by and large Dean did here as did the other campuses, and they got some very famous people, at the overscale level. And he felt that this was a differentiation of treatment among the campuses . . . which it was.

Jarrell: Yes, Stadtman talks about that in his book.⁵

Kerr Who does?

Jarrell: Verne Stadtman.

⁵ Verne A. Stadtman, *The University of California, 1868-1968*. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1970.

Kerr: And I did give this special opportunity for San Diego to . . . of course they had a quite different plan too . . . they were starting at the Ph.D. and going one department at a time and so forth.

Jarrell: They were kind of top heavy with these very eminent . . .

Kerr: That's right. They were to start with . . . they're balanced now. That's right. But to begin with . . . and neither Irvine nor Santa Cruz was given the same opportunity. And Dan Aldrich didn't like it and Dean didn't like it, but the best chance of establishing a third great research university was San Diego. And this not only caused trouble with Irvine and Santa Cruz as the other two new campuses, but the UCLA people were particularly worried about the competition that San Diego would give them and with some good cause. But it hasn't hurt UCLA. You see Berkeley, when I took the position that UCLA would get the same breaks that Berkeley had had, Berkeley was terribly upset about it. But Berkeley ended up number one in the nation. Then when we gave San Diego a chance to come in as the third great research concentration in the state, UCLA was terribly upset. But UCLA during this period of time had moved a long way up. The first Ph.D. was in something like 1935 or 1937. It's now rated somewhere between about 6th, 7th, or 8th among the research universities of the nation. They weren't hurt, but they were fearful.

Allocating Resources Among Competing Campuses

Kerr: Berkeley was fearful of equal treatment to UCLA. UCLA was fearful of giving San Diego equal treatment. So there was . . . an easier thing would have been for me to, you know, just pass the money out on a formula basis. But I decided—I'm an economist—and I was concerned with the best use of resources which is not always just spreading them out equally.

Jarrell: And also in the larger context of the . . . your notion of the multiversity and the whole idea that this was one huge system.

Kerr: Right.

Jarrell: And that anything to, you know, if you were going to say that San Diego was going to get an extra little push there because it had a stellar, critical mass there.

Kerr: Yes, right.

Jarrell: That that would benefit the whole system.

Kerr: In the long run it benefits the whole system, sure.

Jarrell: Yes.

The Master Plan and The University

Kerr: One of the reasons the Master Plan has lasted as long as it has, and how well it has protected the University, is that everytime a state legislator goes around the country or the Governor . . . everyone says how can we possibly get a system as good as the University of California. They get to be proud of it. Pat Brown came in under the influence of Fred Dutton as I said kind of thinking well the State College [system] is the one to push [and support]. Then he started going to Governors' meetings; people would say, "Gee, you've got the greatest University in the world." And he started getting very proud of it, extremely proud of it. At first he was opposed to the Master Plan; he eventually went along with it. I had lunch with him in Los Angeles a few months ago, and he said, "I want to thank you because of what you did with the Master Plan and the University. You made me famous around the world as a Governor for having the best system of higher education, the best university in the world." So . . .

Working Relationship with Chancellor McHenry

Kerr: Now with Dean . . . our disagreements were always very friendly. They were always based, they were always based on legitimate issues where, you know, reasonable people could disagree, or where people in different situations—he as head of a campus, and I having to watch out for nine campuses—might disagree, but . . . overall I always cherished the relationship and I do to this day. Now I know that Dean's had an oral history. He once told me . . . I haven't seen his oral history . . . that I should be aware that he had a section called "disagreements with Kerr." (laughter)

Undergraduate Curriculum Reform

Jarrell: One thing I'm very interested in, when I was looking over materials when you were Chancellor at UC Berkeley, I was surprised by the really dilatory

response of the Berkeley faculty over the years to undergraduate curricular reform, that there were some excellent reports and efforts made over the years, but . . .

Kerr: Nothing happened.

Jarrell: Nothing happened.

Kerr: Well when we started residence halls, which came in my period, I tried to turn them into colleges like Santa Cruz . . .

Jarrell: Yes.

Kerr: And I got no place, for example.

Jarrell: Yes. So I saw that. And I read about those efforts of yours and . . .

Kerr: So some of the things that I tried to do at Berkeley I had a chance to help do at Santa Cruz.

Jarrell: Right. Yes, you had an institutional *tabula rasa* basically.

Kerr: That's right. You could write on a clean blackboard.

Jarrell: And if the faculty doesn't want to, it doesn't happen.

Kerr: That's right.

Jarrell: But you could build it in at Santa Cruz.

Kerr: That's right.

Jarrell: But in looking at the boards of studies at Santa Cruz . . . a strange nomenclature. And I wonder, at the time what did you think of this nomenclature and the kind of curricular and interdisciplinary "fresh start" that these conveyed?

Kerr: Well the boards . . . see, by the time we got to the boards [of studies] . . . I was heavily involved in selecting the site, in selecting Dean, in setting the major themes of the campus . . . well when it then started moving to things like boards of studies [then] Dean would tell me about them or I would get documents. But

by that time, that was his business. I might say that one thing we haven't talked about [that] had some impact, particularly at Santa Cruz but to a lesser extent San Diego, I think none at all at Irvine . . . I appointed a committee of distinguished faculty members to go to England to look at their new universities. In some of their new universities which Dean would have known through that report but also from his own contacts.

Boards of Studies and Colleges at UCSC

Kerr: It was a very distinguished group of people who went. I think John Galbraith was on it from UCLA. They came back with their reports on what was happening in England because there they were establishing at the same time a series of new campuses after the Robins Report—Canterbury, and Warrick, and Norwich, and so forth and so on. And whether Dean got the idea of boards of studies from that report . . . because some of these campuses like Sussex were going in the direction not of departments, [but to] boards of studies. But that really came [through] either Dean's direct knowledge or this faculty report or both. And I knew about it and thought it was a good idea but I was not involved in that.

Jarrell: It just seemed to me, I know that that was under his jurisdiction . . .

Kerr: Yes, right.

Jarrell: But that it was certainly an actualization let's say of how to build in these emphases.

Kerr: You're right.

Jarrell: The undergraduate teaching in the colleges, these sorts of things would be built in by having a kind of a balance between the colleges and the departments or boards of studies.

Kerr: Yes, and that was never . . . there was an inevitable tension there which we knew about.

Jarrell: You did.

Kerr: Between the colleges and the boards, yes. We knew it. I'm not sure that it got handled in the best way [or] that Dean and I ever talked over enough how it would evolve. See, we were doing kind of good things we thought, but I don't think we spent enough attention to seeing whether they all fit together. Like the colleges were a good idea, the boards of studies were a good idea (laughter), but to think through whether they were compatible, well we knew they weren't fully compatible, but whether they were reasonably compatible . . . I don't think we spent enough attention, paid enough attention to that.

Jarrell: To thinking it through and imagining the kind of relationship between them.

Kerr: Yes. And how it would work out in practice, right, yes.

Kerr's Impressions of the "Experimental Campus"

Jarrell: As a kind of coda question here . . .

Kerr: Yes.

Jarrell: Here this campus is slightly over 20 years old—it's at most an adolescent in its development . . . and how does it strike you? You're here as a visiting fellow-in-residence at Stevenson College . . . what are your feelings about the sort of place it has become as you're walking around campus as a founding father?

Kerr: Right.

Jarrell: And I would like to know how do you feel about this place?

Student Activism at UCSC

Kerr: Well, I think it's remarkable that it's done as well as it has. Because it was hardly started before the student revolts came. And the student revolt hit this campus somewhat harder than it did other campuses in the system, except for Berkeley. The Regents were given a bad time here one time which upset them about the campus. And generally there're a lot of people who were attracted in the faculty and the student body here because it was an experimental campus and they tended to be kind of experimental people . . . experimental people are

not as much impressed with other people's experiments as they are with their own. (Laughter) So it had to ride through that period.

Kresge College

Kerr: And one of the colleges from my point of view got quite out of hand and gave a reputation to the place all over the state.

Jarrell: Are you talking about Kresge College?

Kerr: Yes. So Santa Cruz was barely opened in the fall of '65 and the student problems were on their way. They began before Berkeley let me say—Stanford and Chicago were the first big ones, but not publicized as much. Both in the beginning of '62 . . . [this] should have been an early warning signal for us. Then that period goes by, and then the state of California has two governors⁶ who are unfriendly in their budgets.

And the student mood changes, almost completely reverses itself from a generation interested in reform of society to one interested in its own advancement . . . what's sometimes called the "Me Generation"—the "what can I get out of it?" sort of attitude. And they start pushing for vocational courses where they can make a fast buck. And Santa Cruz wasn't devised to be a highly vocational place. And a great tragedy [that] happened [here] was that the school of engineering, which would have been more on the vocational side, was cancelled. I think that was a great tragedy in the life of the campus. The campus developed a kind of a soft image which would have been corrected with some professional schools which would have started with [the] engineering school, which got cut out.

Jarrell: And also the natural sciences took much stronger hold right from the start than anyone could have imagined.

Kerr: Yes. Yes, the natural sciences took very strong hold. But that's good. I think that was a very good thing. So you had this new campus hit by those student revolts, hit by two governors who were unfriendly to higher education

⁶ Kerr refers to Governor Ronald W. Reagan, who served two terms in office, from 1967-1974; and to Governor Edmund G. (Jerry) Brown, Jr., whose two terms were from 1975-83—Editor.

generally and to the University perhaps, in particular. And then this change in student sentiment to vocational training. And yet UCSC comes out probably the most successful of the many experiments tried in the United States in the '60s which was a decade of a lot of experiments in higher education. Most of them failed and were lost without trace. And the last issue of *Change* magazine rates Santa Cruz as one of the three most selective of all public institutions in the United States along with the University of Virginia and the Albany campus of the State University of New York. And when you say the most selective, you mean the best students have selected it. So more of the experiments survived here than . . . well one might say Evergreen College in Washington, Green Bay in Wisconsin, New College in Florida continued some of what they had tried to do. The highest verbal scores within the University of California among the students are found here at Santa Cruz and a lot of students are just fiercely loyal to this place. You know, and the beauty of it . . . and every minute's kind of a privilege walking around the campus. There's been, for those of us who were in on the original idea, the disappointment that the colleges have been losing strength to the boards of studies. And a lot of faculty members have retreated from contact with undergraduates to their offices . . .

Jarrell: Business as usual, or however.

Kerr: As usual. I know. That happens everywhere.

Jarrell: Yes.

UCSC's Self-Definition and Coming of Age

Kerr: Another impression is that the Santa Cruz campus, you called it an adolescent, is not yet a totally formed personality as Berkeley is or Davis is. It has one more chance, one more go-around to decide what it really wants to be.

Jarrell: When it grows up.

Kerr: As when it grows up.

Jarrell: Yes.

Kerr: And it's still in a stage of some flexibility. Riverside is also. And that the appointment of the next chancellor is going to be of extreme importance in the

history of this campus and which way it goes. There's been a tendency for, as with all other reform campuses, to kind of revert to the standard pattern, standard mold. I personally think that Santa Cruz, the standard mold being for a big research University being Berkeley and UCLA, but that Santa Cruz is going to be better off trying to figure out its own personality and not try just to imitate other existing personalities. I hope it does. But that's no longer my responsibility.

Jarrell: I think this interview is a unique opportunity for me as a member of this community to ask you as you're visiting here during this month . . . how you originally conceived this campus, what you had in mind.

Kerr: Yes.

Jarrell: And your assessment.

Kerr: Yes. Well, I've got to be very careful about that.

Jarrell: This is all confidential, incidentally. I think you know that.

Kerr: Yes, I know, sure. Dean and I at one time played the initial role. I said last night⁷ what a wonderful evening it was when the campus was first opened, and the new students were here in their enthusiasm and all the rest of that. It was also a little sad because we'd had the dream and the dream was born, but as soon as it was born it belonged to other people. It had been our dream, and had now become the reality. But the reality belonged to the new faculty members as they were brought in, to the new students as they came, and to the new administrators, so . . . one has to reconcile oneself to separation from one's dream and to recognize that others are going to see things in different ways than you did, and make changes. And that's their business and their right. And . . . however well or ill you think you bent that twig when you planted the tree, that twig gets subjected to sun and wind and shadows and so forth and so on and that it may grow, has a right to grow, must grow in other ways than to some extent than you dreamt. So it was a magic evening, but realizing, as I did that

⁷ Kerr refers to a discussion on early UCSC history, "The Santa Cruz Dream," held on February, 3, 1987 at Stevenson College College Night during his visit as a fellow-in-residence. The transcription is available at Stevenson Provost's office —Editor.

evening, that it was the end of a period. And that what had been our campus to form now belonged to other people to manage for better or for worse.

Jarrell: As a creator who was also a public servant . . .

Kerr: That's right.

Jarrell: You renounced your dream . . . I mean you had to give it up to the people for whom it was meant, right?

Kerr: That's right.

Jarrell: And it is sad. It's like your own children in the same way.

Kerr: Yes. You get a sort of a joy at the birth, but kind of a post-partum depression as well. It's no longer your child. So . . .

Jarrell: Thank you very much.

Kerr: Fine. Any other questions anytime. I'll be glad to . . . I'll try to respond. Let me see if there's anything I ought to say.

Jarrell: Yes. Anything you want to say.

Kerr: Well, if I think of it, next time I'm down I'll see you. I don't right at the moment think of anything else.

1969 UCSC Commencement Visit: A Sad Episode

Kerr: All right . . . let's see what else. Well, among many good episodes, the worst from my point of view was the commencement . . . I guess it was in 1969 . . . I had been invited to come down and give the commencement speech by the graduating class. And I came, you know, thinking back on that wonderful evening when they had arrived here . . . and to be met by the commencement being taken over by guerrilla theater . . . have you heard about that?

Jarrell: Yes, I have. I certainly have.

Kerr: And with people, you know, coming up on the stage, and throwing their diplomas at McHenry and me . . . and one of the speakers accusing us of having

developed this campus in order to reduce the revolutionary fervor of the students by putting them off here in the wilderness and creating a campus which would take their minds away from the revolution. I didn't give my commencement speech, but I made some remarks along the lines of when we began planning this campus that nobody had in mind what the situation would be in 1969. That it would have taken foresight beyond anybody's ability and certainly ours. And that we created this campus to be a beautiful and inspiring place for the students and for no other reason. But that was a bitter experience to have those diplomas thrown at us and [being] accused of being imperialists and fascist pigs trying to destroy the revolutionary spirit of young people by creating a beautiful environment for them. I didn't come back to the campus for two years after that. But that offsets then the many wonderful memories too.

Jarrell: And no one could have predicted the course of the sixties and the unleashing of that period.

Kerr: No, no, no. Then to . . . well I wish I'd been that wise to know it was all coming. But that was a pretty bitter experience to go through. And then they seized the stage and they gave this honorary degree to Huey [P.] Newton⁸ who was in jail, accused of murder and so forth. It was a fascinating afternoon because too, because at one point the people at the guerilla theater tried to get the audience to rise, you know, and applaud what they were doing. And they first faced the students and about a third stood up; then they faced the faculty and one by one that faculty rose until very few remained seated. And then they kind of went like this to the parents out around the amphitheater there in the quarry—not one stood up. And so it was a spectacle to see the different types of reactions. And among the three reactions, the one that surprised me most was the faculty. [Their] not wanting to seem presumably not to be "with it."

Jarrell: I think that at this campus there've been a number of faculty who have found it necessary to identify with students in a very inappropriate, unprofessional way.

Kerr: Yes, right. That seemed true to me that afternoon. (Laughter) Okay.

⁸Huey P. Newton was one of the founders of the Black Panther Party in California.

Jarrell: All right.

Kerr: Thank you for the good questions.

Jarrell: Thank you.

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Randall Jarrell was born in Los Angeles and lived in the San Francisco Bay Area until moving to Santa Cruz in 1970. She received her A.B. in History from San Francisco State University in 1969 and an M.A. in History from the University of California, Santa Cruz, in 1978. She worked as a journalist before her appointment in 1974 as director of the Regional History Project.

Irene Reti was born in Los Angeles and moved to Santa Cruz in 1978. She received her B.A. in Environmental Studies from UCSC in 1982, and has been associated with UCSC as a student and staff member for the past eleven years. She also runs HerBooks, a small press which publishes poetry, short fiction, and essays.

Doris Johnson was born in Terre Haute, Indiana, and moved to the Santa Cruz area in 1965. She started work with the Regional History Project in 1967 as a senior typist clerk. From 1976 until 1988 she served as the editorial assistant for the project. Mrs. Johnson retired from university service in 1988.

Trans: Doris Johnson

Microcomputer: Doris Johnson and Irene Reti