

# Robert Hamburger Interviews with James Arnold and Clifford Grobstein

## SUMMARY KEYWORDS

medical school, people, david, school, remember, campus, biology, recollection, department, question, discussion, argument, wellman, talked, early, design, research, reason, dave, memory

## SPEAKERS

Robert Hamburger, James Arnold, Clifford Grobstein

## Robert Hamburger Interview with James Arnold

### Robert Hamburger 00:07

It is 10 minutes after 11 am on Saturday, the 15th of September. We are in Jim [James R.] Arnold's living room, recording his remembrances of the period in the early 1960s, when planning and contemplation for a school of medicine was under consideration. Dr. Arnold will be out of the area at the time of our conference on the first of November. And he has kindly consented to respond to questions and perhaps give some of his own ideas about what was going on at the time. As he reminded me at the start of this session, that was 23 or 24 years ago, and I need to provoke his memory with some provocative questions. Jim?

### James Arnold 01:21

Please.

### Robert Hamburger 01:23

The main thing that I would like you to consider is the question of what was in the minds of the planners that permitted a group of individuals, every one of whom were PhDs--only one of whom had ever been in a medical school, and that was Dave [David Bonner] as you recall--to seriously plan design, contemplate a possible medical school at UCSD, which if you recall was not even UCSD at that time?

### James Arnold 01:59

Well, to begin with, of course, in the era that we're talking about it--especially the late Roger Revelle, period, before Herb York took over--we were really planning for the next 25 years or the next 1000 years, depending on, you know, how glamorously we looked at the problem. Graduate education had always been one of the main things--Scripps was a graduate institution--we were planning to do what we did, which was to build the science departments on the main campus from the roof down; that is to have graduate studies with a PhD initiated before we had undergraduates. And so, it was a pretty small step from that to be talking about professional schools. In all our minds, a medical school was, by a good margin, the most interesting, professional school that we could think of. Not necessarily the simplest, not necessarily the easiest to make good, but very, very interesting problem.

**Robert Hamburger** 03:19

We had to--if I recall correctly, we had talked about other kinds of schools, such as law schools and dental schools. And what--?

**James Arnold** 03:31

I mean, when we first started looking at medical school, we were looking at the whole health complex, at least at one point, talking to people in these other areas as well as just a school which would lead to the MD.

**Robert Hamburger** 03:48

Why did we settle on--and by the time I joined the discussion, it was already focused on a medical school--why did we focus on or why did we settle on a medical school, knowing that it was far and away the most expensive type of school one could try to put on a campus?

**James Arnold** 04:09

Well, I think one of the main reasons was our preoccupation with research. Our serious interest in building UCSD into a great research university and it didn't seem to us at this time that the other health-related schools gave us that same opportunity. I think that was the key element.

**Robert Hamburger** 04:34

So, it was to be research-oriented?

**James Arnold** 04:37

That was certainly--

**Robert Hamburger** 04:39

A key thing.

**James Arnold** 04:40

In fact, one of the major issues is, you know very well Bob, you were deeply involved in it. One of the major issues was the location of the school and the decision--I'm jumping ahead a little bit--the decision to fight for a campus location was very much driven by that interest in a top research school. If we had not wanted that we would have gone in a very different direction.

**Robert Hamburger** 05:18

The issue--and maybe we should focus right at the beginning on David. I had said to you half-jokingly on the phone that you were going to have to be David's surrogate since he could not be here.

**James Arnold** 05:35

That's a large order.

**Robert Hamburger** 05:38

Well, those of us in the medical school have a warped memory, we have a--what's the word? A memory that's selective, a selective memory for what Dave espoused and what Dave believed in. So, I was hoping that you would put me back on a more accurate track of recollection of why he took the positions he did. For example, I remember him saying that the design of the medical school had to be

such that the tail wouldn't wag the dog. Namely, the med school would not run, control, or override everything about the main campus.

**James Arnold 06:26**

Yes. Let me try to go back a little and remind you that Roger Revelle and I recruited Dave. And brought him here and the discussions had already begun in a very preliminary way when he arrived. He knew much more about the subject than we. He quickly and in no uncertain terms, straightened us out on various points. Since we were, as you know, a very good team, we meshed very well. We quickly adopted many of his points and maybe he accepted one or two of ours. So, what was originally, essentially Roger Revelle and David and myself. And then a little later, Herb York, and David and myself, were for some period of time--I couldn't tell you exactly how long--kind of carrying the ball.

**Robert Hamburger 07:41**

May I ask concerning that original early discussion group, which I was not a part of but knew was going on. Did any other people, such as Keith Brueckner, Jon [Jonathan] Singer, Stanley Mills, any of the other people in your department, in chemistry or biology or elsewhere, participate in any of those very early discussions?

**James Arnold 08:10**

In the very early discussions, remember that Singer and Mills came with David.

**Robert Hamburger 08:14**

Yes.

**James Arnold 08:16**

So, if we talk about the period before David; Martin Kamen was the only one I can think of who took part in those discussions, and he did take a very active part and a knowledgeable part. He wasn't interested in kind of getting into the action very much, however. Very witty critic. Although you mentioned several people, Jon Singer certainly spoke up at the time he got here, vigorously. Keith Bruckner was interested and attended meetings, but I don't think was quite as much involved in this matter as he was in some others. Walter Kohn is another one who had a very broad interest in the development of the campus and the medical school's part of it. So, there were quite a few people with whom we were discussing these things. And some others at Scripps--Francis Haxo, Andy [Andrew] Benson, those are people that took part in the discussions and I'm sure I'm leaving out some others.

**Robert Hamburger 09:33**

But those were the key ones I was wondering about. But your recollection is though that it was predominantly you, Dave, and Roger, is that--?

**James Arnold 09:41**

We were sort of on the line. We became the San Diego team that was dealing with the university at large and the rest of the system--the community, especially after Herb's arrival, we were dealing with the community medical groups. That turned into our responsibility, more or less. There were several different committees. You were on one or two of them, or you were present. I can't reconstruct them all

anymore. Bob [Robert] Tschirgi, of course, was chairman of one key committee or perhaps two key committees. But this was the San Diego contingent, as the planning began to take shape.

**Robert Hamburger 10:38**

I've begun to get input from individuals who won't be at the sessions on the first of November. A curious pair of recollections come from oral histories, which I gather are terribly fashionable right now. Bob Tschirgi sent me a copy of the transcript of an oral history that he did for the neuro--something or other--at UCLA. And Harry Wellman sent me two pages from his oral history in which he mentioned UCSD. I gather that since those things usually run 150 pages UCSD wasn't a big item in his memory.

**Robert Hamburger 11:36**

But the curious thing was that both Tschirgi and Wellman mentioned how much trouble they were being caused by the planning for the medical school. Tschirgi damns David Bonner repeatedly for raising issues that, if he did just kept quiet, he'd have had his own way. But the way he raised them kept getting him postponed. And Wellman attributes the loss of John Galbraith--that is John Galbraith quitting in a huff--to the Medical School. And Galbraith confirms this. One of the two issues that was infuriating him was the interference by statewide in our planning activities. This must have all been going on underneath somewhere because I certainly wasn't aware of it. What I was aware of was that pressure in that committee that was subsequently chaired by Dean Mellinkoff, Sherm[an] Mellinkoff. And that there was, at this end, a tremendous amount of agreement--not fighting. All of the fighting was with statewide and almost all of it was not on philosophy or design, but it was on economics, pure money--

**James Arnold 13:13**

Well, my comment on several different comments. First of all, it was not only in the medical school, but it was also throughout the entire system that there was a strong feeling here, of us and them. Us being the people at San Diego, them being statewide, and people from the outside. We wanted to do things our way. We saw them as people who had to be convinced that was the relatively benign part or as obstacles. Now, I must say that reflecting on this, years later, I think we were somewhat unjust. I think that Carter and Wellman supported our peculiar notions, more than we gave them credit for, and were genuinely interested--up to a point--in a school developing its own philosophy and style. And so on. Coming back to the comment about Dave's raising issues out of turn. When you do my memory, I recall that Bob Tschirgi repeatedly said that offline, to David and me. And that we were never convinced. And nor am I convinced to this day by those arguments. There really were issues that could have gone either way on a number of very key points. And while economics was a large part of this discussion, inevitably since medical schools are so expensive. I think at times economics--I know that at times economics was simply a shield for differences of philosophy. In particular, the arguments that boiled over before the Mellinkoff committee was created at an early in an earlier committee. The arguments boiled over about whether the center of the medical school should be at or around the county hospital, or whether it should be on the campus. Arguments which led to estimates being made that the medical school would cost--I don't remember two and a half times as much if it was located on the campus as it would be down below--

**Robert Hamburger 15:48**

Your memory is superb. It was they had locked in this figure \$25 million downtown, and 60 million--

**James Arnold** 15:57

Something like that.

**Robert Hamburger** 15:57

--out here had just got--it was just as absurd to think you could build a total medical school for 25 million downtown, as that you could do it any place on Earth. Campus or not.

**James Arnold** 16:11

Of course. Well, what I'm saying is that the most passionate disagreements that I remember, in the discussion, were those that surrounded those estimates. And I believe we were correct in seeing them as policy statements. We want a medical school that will turn out middle-class physicians to treat middle-class people to caricature the other side. And to repeat some, perhaps warrant slogans from our side. The idea was that if you really want the best medical care, you go to the best research medical schools and that these things really work together. So, in fact, we ultimately prevailed in part--I can't altogether know the reasons why we ultimately prevailed. But we did. And I think, on the surface, the way the battle went was to show what was always pretty obvious, that medical school was going to cost not that much more or less at one place than another--if it was the same set of buildings and the same kind of people.

**Robert Hamburger** 17:45

That makes me want to ask you about your recollection. My recollection, which you feel free to correct, was that this economic argument got pushed aside in terms of the underlying philosophy, and that quote led to these remarkable increases in cost. In other words, we were accused down here of having designed something that had to cost a fortune. Gold plated, they were not going to build a quote, another gold plated UCLA, unquote. So then, during that brief interim when Tschirgi was chairing this planning committee, I remember the fear being expressed that they put him in that chair in order to get us to back off this incredibly experimental design and go back to something totally traditional, which we know how much that will cost. So even the dollar argument ended up being an argument over the contents of the medical school design.

**James Arnold** 19:09

I think all these things are interacting, and I'm probably writing together in my memory, you know, different stages of it. Coming back to your remarks about Mellinkoff. I think by the time he took--his committee existed, first of all, many of the major issues had been settled. Secondly, he was a remarkable consensus builder, the kind of man who can take clashing views and make people see reason. My recollection of that period is that it was more or less the seal on what had more or less been fought out at other times. Although I don't want to underrate the importance of that stage. It was what really found everything in the end. But I think you're saying the same thing I am, that at several earlier points, the issue of not building another UCLA came up because UCLA was seen at that time, perhaps correctly, as an extraordinarily expensive way to build a medical school. Of course, ours ended up being pretty expensive too but then I don't know that anybody else's has ended up much less so. Unless you go to the extremes, which have been tried elsewhere, of taking over something existing. So, yes, I think that we did find a design, which had to cost a lot of money because it had to create major research facilities. Once those major research facilities were created, we got a major research faculty, and we were off and running.

**Robert Hamburger 21:01**

Yeah, I think you've brought the discussion full circle in that you started out pointing out that if you were going to have a research-oriented medical school, it would fit on this campus. And it would be more expensive than a clinical--pure clinical medical school built adjacent to a county hospital, which was certainly not designed to be a teaching institution. That was another bone of contention, which we haven't touched on. But I really would prefer since there are other people who will be able to speak knowledgeably about the hospital situation. And I would rather bring us back to the question of what in your recollection was so unusual or unique about that early planning? What was different about it in your mind?

**James Arnold 22:05**

Well, perhaps we should come back to David Bonner. Because more than certainly, any single one of the rest of us--perhaps more than all the rest of us--his vision was, was the most important. And David was a very special person. You knew him well. He loved a good fight. He had, I don't know, I'm sure he did not have Irish ancestry primarily. But there is this Irish tradition, you know, enjoying the fight because it's fun. That was part of David's personality, and it helped a great deal. I think, although troubled the people he was fighting with, including myself when he fought with me from time to time, which he did. Nonetheless, it helped to unify the vision a little bit. I mean, of course, the real medical school, like the real campus and everything else in the real world, results from the compromise. Results from ideas, many people not acknowledged. But when everything is all finished, I think it's David Bonner's ideas and visions that in my memory, really dominate the early period. He was a person, very enthusiastic about his own research, very enthusiastic about building a strong Department of Biology here, which he certainly did. And absolutely unafraid of difficult challenges. In fact, reveling in difficult challenges. So that he came from Yale with very definite ideas about what he wanted to avoid. He had a way of sorting people into those who are asleep and those who are awake, or you have various other ways of defining them and he had very clear preferences. I think if when asked what was unique, I mean, that's really where I begin. A sense that the best advances in health care--which is a matter he had every personal reason to be deeply concerned about--that the best advances in health care would take place in a climate where new discoveries and fundamental biology were being made. And that would be a strong mutual enrichment between biological research science research on the campus and the medical research that went on in the medical school. In particular, the idea which survives to this day, that some of the teaching in the medical school would be done by members of the biology and chemistry department. Would not, I think likely have arisen in any other context. But that at least, maybe you can enlighten me, but I'm not aware of any other example of a school in which that is done.

**Robert Hamburger 25:43**

No, you're absolutely right. And not only that, but it's a question I'm going to raise on the first of November. Why is it that a design that we have attributed to one of the reasons--as one of the reasons that has produced the unique success of the place? Why has it never been duplicated? Why is nobody else imitating it?

**James Arnold 26:09**

Right.

**Robert Hamburger 26:09**

And I think that's a question I'll ask of some of the medical types that have been there. I have some suspicions myself.

**James Arnold 26:18**

I, too.

**Robert Hamburger 26:19**

You touched on three items, or you touched on two items. And I want to raise three with you about David Bonner. One was his illness, which as you recall, I was overly intimately involved in. And a very sad and difficult problem. But the other two were ones that are a matter of style and technique of his that you and I got a lot of doses of. And one was the use, deliberate usage of vulgar language, strongly vulgar language at a time that wasn't very fashionable as it is now. The other was his little cute trick of playing the hayseed when he was in fact, a highly sophisticated, well-traveled international type. Would you comment?

**James Arnold 27:17**

Those are certainly fair descriptions. Though, perhaps, given what we've lived through, since I wouldn't know that his language was so highly vulgar. The one phrase that everyone associated with him--shall I quote it?

**Robert Hamburger 27:35**

Sure.

**James Arnold 27:36**

Piss and vinegar.

**Robert Hamburger 27:37**

Yeah.

**James Arnold 27:37**

You know, it seems--pretty mild today.

**Robert Hamburger 27:41**

So mild today--but it used to stop conversation, totally for at least five seconds every time he used it in a formal conference-type situation. And he delighted in it.

**James Arnold 27:52**

Right. And as you say, the--I would say the innocent, simple to whatever, whatever. There was also, with all this--and I think that it was one of the things that helped him prevail--a shining sincerity of purpose. He wasn't doing these things for his own aggrandizement. The illness made that clear if nothing else did, but his whole attitude toward life, as one got to know him, made that very clear. Because he was unselfish and not narrow--although sometimes, I found that in the heat of a discussion, but it really was not. And while he--I'm not surprised that some people who worked with him and us their bruises, you know, over a long period of time. Because he could make his disrespect for people abundantly clear. It wasn't just a matter of the language; I mean in terms of profanity or whatever. I

mean, it doesn't matter. He was a very articulate guy. And he could find words that hurt. But I think even the people he was hurting, I don't think we ever would have gotten as far as we did if they hadn't, perhaps reluctantly agreed that he was pushing for something worthwhile and that he was doing so in a broad spirit. The illness was one of the aspects that amazed me. I have never--I've known some other people who have been going up extraordinarily well under severe illness, my own mother. But David was really--what was quite exceptional about it was his eager willingness to look ahead and fight the battles of the future. And battles, trying to shape an institution as it might be now in 1984, with the clearest indications that he wouldn't be around to see it happen. And it was not a subject that he liked to talk about or philosophize about. Not something that any of his friends liked to press him on for obvious reasons. But just the way he lived from day to day was remarkable.

**Robert Hamburger** 30:29

He was, to my recollection, Jim, an extremely optimistic man in the face of what would for most of us be a very pessimistic future.

**James Arnold** 30:39

Right.

**Robert Hamburger** 30:42

But he had, I think, something that was very consistent in his personality and that--I saw it both in his research and his lifestyle--that is, he was an extremely daring man.

**James Arnold** 30:54

Yes.

**Robert Hamburger** 30:55

He took risks. He was delighted. I remember when he was, there was a stage in his treatment when he had a bleeding tendency. And I cautioned him about not even picking his teeth, for fear it would set bleeding in motion, and he deliberately got on his motorcycle and rode up the side of a cliff, very steep incline, taking enormous risk. He did that in his whole style. And I suspect that along with this other quantity that you brought out of going right to the mark of a weakness or a defect in your reasoning or your plans or your ideas, or your behavior--[audio cuts off]

**Robert Hamburger** 31:42

--It was a consistent way of getting what he wanted done.

**James Arnold** 32:32

There was always a little bit of a smile there, you know. Even when things got cut very tight. And there was a focus. That's what we're talking about. And he wouldn't have--and probably other people around here, there are a lot of other strong personalities around here. You've mentioned [unclear]. And the fact that he was as influential--dominant would not be too strong a word--in this company, meant that there was a lot of recognition by other people who were quality types themselves and capable of battling for their ideas--that in this area, he was the appropriate leader.



**Robert Hamburger 33:19**

You mentioned that tenaciousness too. That stick-to-itiveness in a point when he believed he was right. I remember that and I can't even remember what the argument was about, was between he and Brueckner. And he is just infuriated that Brueckner did not see his point of view on it. As you know, Brueckner did not lack intellectual capacity. On the one hand, David would express this enormous respect for his brightness. And absolutely unable to understand why he didn't accept his point of view. If he's all that bright, you know, why don't you do things--the right things. What is the way he used to say that? You don't think right. But you don't think--.

**James Arnold 34:11**

Of course, he could be kidding. If it wasn't as if he--

**Robert Hamburger 34:14**

Oh yeah.

**James Arnold 34:15**

--I think he could give it back as good as he got, but he could be--you could poke fun at him pretty hard and he would take it. He wasn't stuffy.

**Robert Hamburger 34:30**

How about his relationship with his co-workers, peers, and co-workers? Did you have any--?

**James Arnold 34:40**

Well, I could talk about--for a while the biology department was actually in the chemistry department. When we hired him there was no biology department. And the first four, I guess, were senior people, were David and Jon Singer, and then Stan Mills and Jack [John] DeMoss. I guess that's the four.

**Robert Hamburger 35:02**

And they brought a couple of graduate students. Burt Schulman and I can't remember who--a young woman and another young man--whose name escapes me at the moment.

**James Arnold 35:13**

Anyway, there was a group on the third floor of Sverdrup [Hall]. And we, of course, are hiring biochemists on our side of the line. Stan Miller, who was in was here early, and so on and so forth. One of my pleasures, when I was recruiting, was to take people to the third floor of Sverdrup so that they could find the line between the chemistry department and the biology department because there was enough overlapping interest. And that was just fine with Dave. I mean, that just suited him very well. Naturally, he was unhappy that he was unable to get space quickly and hence was unable to build as quickly as he wanted to do. But he certainly was not a man to direct barriers. He was very pleased that there were a lot of mix-ups between his little family and the larger family. And I think he enjoyed meeting with Brueckner and these other people and mixing it up with him and got some stimulation out of it. I never found him unreasonable in our inevitable arguments about resources resource allocation. He always presented his point of view strongly and in a very well-thought-out way, but there was always give and take. I think that it comes back again to this sort of we-they are feeling that I was talking about earlier. The reason that the arguments were in a certain period--so much more strong and

so much more continued in the larger arena in which we were in assessing the medical school than they were in this smaller arena--as the campus developed was not fundamental, on the campus it was weak. And David came into that. He didn't invent it. It was here already when I came, and I certainly joined that feeling.

**Robert Hamburger** 37:33

Was that Roger?

**James Arnold** 37:34

Yes. Well, the people around Roger in particular. Roger attracted great loyalty from people. And as always, sometimes the followers are more extreme than the leader. So that was that was part of it. But there was also that at rubbing shoulders as we did every day, the place was very small. We had lunch, we saw each other constantly. We worked out our philosophy we had, we had come to an understanding among ourselves about what matters and what were the things that you could fight for and what were the things you could give away. And when we got in with larger groups, there was this team sense. You sat in on some of those meetings, you surely must have felt if people could be sitting around the room. But there was a San Diego position. And many times--

**Robert Hamburger** 38:41

It wasn't collusive, but it surely sounded like it.

**James Arnold** 38:43

Well, no it wasn't collusive in the sense that we got together in advance and said, Now when I say this, you--

**Robert Hamburger** 38:49

Yeah, right.

**James Arnold** 38:50

Not at all. But it was in the sense that the philosophical position and the major tactical questions of the day had been thrashed out among us in advance. Sometimes, I must say, David would surprise me and I would be under a little strain to, quit following him as he took a dairy leap beyond what we had discussed beforehand. But there was enough trust that that just happened pretty automatically. When such surprises occurred, as they did now and then, the instinct was always to go along and take up any questions or difficulties you've had later in another private arena.

**Robert Hamburger** 39:37

Let me ask you about the--you mentioned the business of this blurred line between Biochemistry and the Biology Department or the biology group at that time. And I remember a very powerful argument going on. I can't remember who the protagonists or antagonists were, but somebody wanted a department called the Department of Molecular Biology and David was violently opposed and wanted to call the Biology Department period. No--codifying it.

**James Arnold** 40:12

I think I remember a little about that. See, there was--that was a different problem. The--

**Robert Hamburger** 40:19

No, that was not the biochemistry issue.

**James Arnold** 40:21

No, it was--it was Scripps. You know, the marine biology of its nature, if I understand that correctly, at that time, particularly, was still to a very considerable extent, in a descriptive phase. We knew so much less about life in the ocean--this was my impression--than about life on the land. That people were still discovering new kinds of organisms that they didn't know existed. My neighbor, formerly Carl Hubbs, I was immensely flattered to learn had a whale--discovered a species of whale. Imagine a person that you knew personally had discovered a new species of whale. Hubbs' [beaked] whale. Now, David's kind of biology was, of course, imbued--was molecular biology was imbued with the modern spirit using chemistry, physics, everything, the whole armory. And I think that there were some people who saw this arising on campus and felt it was a threat, as a foreign body. I think this supposition that it would be alright if it was called the Department of Molecular Biology, arose essentially in the context of that difference. It was, I think David's opposition because he saw very clearly where it came from. And also, because he saw very clearly that all biology would be permeated by this spirit that he was developing, including marine biology at the time. And why narrow it in that way? But I think there were actually quite minor differences. Part of that particular discussion.

**Robert Hamburger** 42:08

But that paid off handsomely, in terms of later design in medical school, you see. To win that argument, which appeared to be just where was marine biology going to be? Is it a separate entity, the full department of equal stature? Or was a great to be a part of the main cloud complex? And I think he clearly envisioned right from the beginning. I think I remember, even before we got here, him saying there wasn't going to be under his leadership, the Microbiology and Molecular Biology, a botany, a zoology. But all of those were to be biology. And that then fit beautifully with extending right on into the medical school. I think that's the origins of that--

**James Arnold** 43:02

There was certainly a very consistent philosophy throughout. David was a joiner rather than a splitter. He would, I remember, have discussions about developing anthropology and interest in the in the use of amino acids to sequences to decide evolutionary trends. David thought that would be a great thing to have on this campus and was clearly quite willing to have it under the wing of biology.

**Robert Hamburger** 43:33

That dating and all the rest of it. Yes indeed.

**James Arnold** 43:37

Yeah--

**Robert Hamburger** 43:42

Well--which medic, which I'm sorry non-medical school--but which university did you come here from?

**James Arnold** 43:48

From Princeton.

**Robert Hamburger** 43:49

From Princeton. That's what I thought.

**James Arnold** 43:50

And then Chicago for years before that.

**Robert Hamburger** 43:52

But even in Chicago, the university was well separated from the medical school, was it not?

**James Arnold** 43:58

Well, it was--

**Robert Hamburger** 43:59

Physically.

**James Arnold** 44:00

Yes, it was, of course, a few blocks. It wasn't 20 miles.

**Robert Hamburger** 44:06

No, but it wasn't on the campus.

**James Arnold** 44:08

Well, it was it was within walking distance.

**Robert Hamburger** 44:10

Really?

**James Arnold** 44:11

I remember going over to get my allergy shots in the hospital. We were working there for a while, at least that was three or four blocks from my lab.

**Robert Hamburger** 44:23

The reason I'm asking it that way, Jim, is because I have the impression that most of the people interacting in the early years here have not experienced the--how can I put it tactfully--the strength of the political--politicized, fighting that went on in most medical schools even in that--

**James Arnold** 44:48

You're right, my--for me, at least the learning experience was the planning and the interaction itself. I did not come in here with any such knowledge. David surely did. He had been involved and Martin Kamen had been in medical school at Washington U [Washington University]. So, they were more experienced. Martin--

**Robert Hamburger** 45:13

Martin bitterly. And David, in a more cautionary manner, let's not let this happen.

**James Arnold** 45:20

Yes.

**Robert Hamburger** 45:20

This is that eternal optimism of his that could be stopped or prevented from happening by some miraculous design. A fantasy, I think one of the few.

**James Arnold** 45:31

Yes. The faculty has a very unusual degree of power and control--

**Robert Hamburger** 45:41

Had more.

**James Arnold** 45:42

Much more--had, yes. I was about to say, much more diluted as the institution grows. But still, relatively speaking, the job-- let's say the department chairman, which I see close up every--the department chairman has been a--Chemistry--has been a friend. The job of the dean, even the job of the chancellor, has far less authority than in most other well-established schools. And the faculty is more intent on guarding its turf, most at most still--than most other first-grade schools. The real function of the faculty in planning and creating has, of course, gone down very, very far. But I don't know that if the administrative arrangements were different, that would have changed the scope of possibility.

**Robert Hamburger** 46:42

I think we'd be more like Stanford or places where the administration is, in fact, all powerful. It's tokenism that the faculty can do.

**James Arnold** 46:55

That was what it was at Princeton.

**Robert Hamburger** 46:56

Yeah. Well, if UCSD at this moment, in my very highly personalized view, the university, the main campus still has a reasonable amount of power that it doesn't use very much.

**James Arnold** 47:14

That's probably right.

**Robert Hamburger** 47:16

The medical school for the very first time, the faculty has given away or had taken away from it, all of its power. That brings me to ask some of the side questions that I forgot to ask, for example, individuals whose names we didn't mention in the previous in the past hour, such as Walter Munk and Gustaf Arrhenius, did they play any part in the medical school planning?

**James Arnold** 47:50

I think Gustaf to a significant degree contributes his originality--and he is a very original person. His knowledge of the European way of doing things which jars you out of some ruts. And always the Arrhenius hospitality when it came to recruiting, it was very impressive. I don't remember Walter Munk

being so much involved in the medical schools, but he was very much involved in certain other areas like physics. I think there was a stereotype on our side, probably quite false, which picture the County Medical Society or the medical establishment of San Diego, as looking to a new medical school primarily as a source of clinical titles. Something that you could use to--

**Robert Hamburger** 48:45

A little prestige?

**James Arnold** 48:46

--for your prestige.

**Robert Hamburger** 48:47

Right, yes.

**James Arnold** 48:48

Now, I'm sure that element was there. But it was almost the only clear image that I recall that we had of this collective and I'm sure as the only clear image, it was quite false.

**Robert Hamburger** 49:03

Well, no, actually, it wasn't in the sense that they were asking for a medical school--in fact, demanding a medical school in San Diego, for reasons of prestige. Of we're as good as San Francisco and Los Angeles and Sacramento and how dare they have medical schools and we not. And that was one that element, rather than when they stopped to think what it was, they were asking for, they really did get worried because what they were asking for was enormous competition. The med school was half successful. And in their image, if they had succeeded in having--remember the Stahl report? I think it was you that sent me a copy of that. If they had succeeded in getting what Stahl asked for, they would have built their own self-destruction in the sense that we would have been a highly clinical medical school, and thereby highly competitive with them. We have been scientific, as you and your cohorts designed Jim, and therefore have been much less competitive.

**James Arnold** 50:10

Don't you think at least some of those people saw themselves as participants in the glory of the medical school rather than simply a--

**Robert Hamburger** 50:19

Oh yes. And a few were actually. There were several who got us off the ground and got us started in a very handsome manner, because many of our early people were, in fact, better scientists than they were clinicians.

**James Arnold** 50:33

Sure.

**Robert Hamburger** 50:34

And I remember one Arnold Roland was an internist in town. For several years, in the beginning, he headed the kidney service. He ran a practice in town and at the same time was running the kidney

service for the medical schools, we didn't have any money. And there were several other examples. You're right, they really gave us real input, real help.

**James Arnold** 50:59

What I remember is having lunch with Frank Dixon and Herb [Herbert] York.

**Robert Hamburger** 51:10

This was in relationship to the county hospital?

**James Arnold** 51:10

To the county hospital. And the final question of the deed came up--

**Robert Hamburger** 51:10

Oh yeah.

**James Arnold** 51:12

--and the deal between the Regents and the county. Frank, who was also a very outspoken individual was giving Herb the facts of life and gave us an illustrated lecture, took us down to county hospital showed us. Reminding me once again, that I was never cut out to be a physician. Couldn't take it.

**Robert Hamburger** 51:43

Then after he'd take you in the in the pathology section? Because he was a pathologist.

**James Arnold** 51:46

It was down where the postmortems were going on, and happy little parts of the hospital like that and some of the more troubled wards. Anyway, that was that was a somewhat vivid memory. And of course, the university did go ahead because of the medical school's necessities and took over the hospital anyhow.

**Robert Hamburger** 52:14

Yes. Did Frank play any role in the earlier period? I know he played a role later. And I interacted with him after the med school was up and running. And that had to do with recruitment of pathologists and various other chairs and things like that. But did he play any role in that earlier period?

**James Arnold** 52:30

Well, he was certainly somebody that knew--David knew him, and he was one of probably the most prominent of three or four people not connected to the university, but you know, distinguished research types. Who we talked to, or David talked to, or Herb York talked in various times. I don't remember any--I was not party to any of what I'll call deep discussions or negotiations in the very early period with him, but I'm sure that he was--he gave his opinions to people from time to time. He had [unclear] where he was. [audio cuts off]

**Robert Hamburger** 53:23

End of Jim Arnold recording session.

## Robert Hamburger Interview with Clifford Grobstein

**Robert Hamburger** 53:29

--time of our symposium Cliff. Question, from your point of view, having been in the early deanship in the School of Medicine, that I wanted to specifically ask you concerns the novelty, the uniqueness of the medical school. And why, even though it was unique--which may have contributed to its success here at UCSD--why it was in your view, never emulated at other schools of medicine. Remember, there were quite a number forming at that time?

**Clifford Grobstein** 54:12

Well, that's a hard question to answer, Bob. I mean, I certainly don't pretend to be able to give a substantial answer to it. I think the point that you make in the question is worth considering. I don't have much doubt that the way in which the school was conceived, the model that it was based on, had some significant an impact on future school and probably did contribute to the success and the recruitment of the senior faculty who then proceeded to put the school into real operation. There is something exciting after all about something different And even if some people on hearing about it to look a little quizzical as to whether or not that kind of thing would work, I think they couldn't help but be turned on by it as a kind of challenge to do something new and different. Also, of course, it was a case that a number of the people who were recruited here in the early days were people who for one reason or another, having already achieved and most--many of them an established position in biomedical science. They had to have some reason to want to leave where they weren't, they were pretty well off where they were. And the fact that this was sort of an open system possibility of doing things differently in medical education, I think very likely was a challenge that interested them. In comparison with the established schools that they were in where most of them probably had the experience, but to try to do something new was like find a move a cemetery. It is very difficult. So, in that general sense, I don't have much doubt that it had a favorable effect.

**Clifford Grobstein** 56:08

Now, why didn't it get picked up elsewhere? Well, partly for the reason that I just gave. I mean, the established schools, it would be a difficult thing to do to say, eliminate the basic science departments and to get the clinical science departments to accept people who were basic science in orientation in clinical departments. Very difficult to do. I guess maybe Dave Vonda [?] tried to do things like that at Yale, he obviously ran into things that were fairly severe obstacles. Now as to why other new schools didn't do it, that's a harder one to answer. I certainly discussed it with a number of people in other schools, there was always expression of interest. I don't know that I ever heard any solid reason why any of the other new schools wouldn't attempt it. You remember, the Macy Foundation did brought together the Deans--I think, mostly Deans--of a number of the new schools. At that point--at that time, I described the setup here in San Diego. I don't remember that everybody was dumping on me to find out how did you do it or anything else? They just seem to accept it as one of the things that was happening. But I don't think that many people found that a very attractive thing.

**Clifford Grobstein** 57:27

Now, what are the possible reasons? And I advance to tell you the possibility is that not to have an identification of departments or resources that will be available to the basic science, probably would

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make most basic scientists somewhat uneasy. For them to have to consider that there was no initial allocation except in a very general sense to the campus, the allocation of the campus department. But those who were thinking in terms of basic science departments and standard medical schools, they knew very well that the campus departments were not necessarily dedicated to the objectives of the medical school. So it was precarious in terms of resources. That may have been a reason why we the other schools didn't do it. And that incidentally, I think remains a continuing problem for this school. I'm not sure what's going to happen in the future. It's pretty clear that the kind of people that were recruited to this school in the early days are not being turned out in any great numbers by medical schools today. To find MDS who really basically oriented is not going to be easy in the future. Enough to, perhaps, to keep a school like this at the quality level it was when it started out. I've thought for some time that some consideration ought to be given. And it's been talked about from time-to-time. I don't know if anybody's ever done anything, but that some way concretizing and institutionalizing the basic sciences in the school, continuing not by forming seven new basic science departments or something of that [unclear] put to form some division--perhaps comparable to the sort of thing done at the University of Chicago where they have, you know, the Pritzker School of Biological Medical Sciences. Something of that kind might be a good idea here, in order to give assurance to people coming in without MD degrees that they will have the resources won't have the battle clinicians who live in clinical settings, to get the necessary resources for strong basic science activity. So, that's the best I can do with it at the moment.

**Robert Hamburger** 59:47

End of Cliff Grobstein interview.