

An Oral History of

STROLL AVRUM and STANLEY CHODOROW

On May 17, 1999

1 **CHODOROW:** This tape will remain in the library as a resource. Part of the archive on UCSD
2 and its history, along with a lot of papers. And what we have been doing is talking to primarily
3 founders of department, but often also to the early faculty members—to get their perspective on
4 intellectual questions that have to do with the foundation. What was happening in the discipline
5 at the time? How did the founding chair or the early faculty members who joined him or her—
6 generally, I think, him—

7 **STROLL:** In fact, I can't think of an exception to that.

8 **CHODOROW:** That's correct. I can't either, off the top of my head.

9 **STROLL:** Or maybe— No, that's true. Go ahead.

10 **CHODOROW:** How did the founders think about that? What was their vision in relation to the
11 discipline at the time? What they were trying to accomplish? How did early successes and
12 failures in recruitment—and also, if you want to comment on junior people who got or didn't get
13 tenure—affect the way in which that developed. And the period we focus on is roughly from
14 1960, when the campus got started, to about 1975. By which time, the role of the founders was
15 essentially absorbed, you might say, into the corporate activity and functions of the department.
16 That's our period. So, let me just let you start to talk about— You might talk about how you
17 came here under those circumstances.

18 **STROLL:** This old joke, you know— on a fellowship. [laughter] Well, Stan, as you know, there
19 were no humanists on the campus in 1963. And so, the campus began with seven people being
20 recruited all at the same time in the humanities. Three in philosophy and four in literature. The
21 four included Leonard Newmark, who then started the Department of Linguistics. The three
22 philosophers were Dick [Richard] Popkin, who was the chair; Jason Saunders, who worked in
23 classical philosophy— Did you ever know Jason?

24 **CHODOROW:** No. He left just as I came.

25 **STROLL:** And then I— Okay. So, we set up the philosophy department. We brought with us,
26 each, three graduate students. There were no undergraduate students on the campus until
27 1954. That was the first class that consisted of forty-eight undergraduate students. And I gave
28 the first lecture in the humanities in 1964, which was on Marx. And I had a raging fever, so it
29 was sort of a red-hot day in terms of the topic and also the way I was feeling. Anyway, the
30 humanists worked with the science professors on campus, and they were clustered in three
31 groups; the people in physics, biology, and chemistry. And so, there were probably about fifty of
32 those people. There was a small score of people who actually did the initial recruiting for the
33 science group; people like Walter Munk and others at Scripps.

34 So altogether, we had about seventy-five faculty members on campus. Anyway, we set up all
35 the programs—the whole idea of the Revelle curriculum, you know, the dual culture business—
36 Roy [Harvey] Pearce was involved in that and so on. With respect to philosophy itself, it was—
37 Let me just tell you what the background situation was in the field at that time. The field was
38 heavily dominated by a kind of contrast. There was so-called European or continental
39 philosophy, which we know all about, and also analytic philosophy. And they weren't speaking
40 much to one another. The continental people thought the analysts were clear but superficial;
41 and the analysts thought that none of that stuff made any sense at all to them, you know.
42 *[laughter]* So that there was this huge divide. Analytic philosophy was mostly concentrated in
43 England and America at that time with some outcroppings in Scandinavia and, of course, in
44 Australia in Canada.

45 So, when they decided to set up the campus here, the people who were interested in having a
46 new philosophy department decided that they wanted a department that stressed history and
47 social and political theory, without going over to the sort of nuttiness of the continental tradition.
48 And the motivator for this was Stephen Pepper at Berkeley. And so, he picked Dick Popkin,
49 whom he had known because Dick had been a visiting professor at Berkeley in the fifties, and
50 they got along very well. And Dick represented a new approach. He was interested in the history
51 of philosophy, but he did it in a very clear-headed and analytical way, you know. So, the idea
52 then was to set up a department that stressed those two areas, social political theory and the
53 history of philosophy, neither of which was being done very systemically in the country. So, you
54 had this kind of divide between the continental people and the analysts.

55 **CHODOROW:** Was Dick's view of the history of philosophy as an approach to philosophical
56 problems or as an historian?

57 **STROLL:** You're right—or I mean, that's a good question. Dick himself was trained as an
58 analytic philosopher. He wrote his dissertation on intuitionistic logic, but he never did any of that.
59 So, what he carved out was a field that could be called the history of ideas—the general history
60 of ideas represented that, you know. And then when the general history of philosophy came on
61 board, which Dick edited and founded, it was a somewhat different approach which ran— I
62 mean, if you look at historians of philosophy, they're people who sort of trace traditions. You
63 know, who influenced whom and so on. And Dick was more or less, I think, on that side of
64 things. But there were more analytic people, of whom Henry Allison would be a good example,
65 looked at arguments, you know, but looked at them from a historical standpoint.

66 So, Dick's own work sort of varied between the strict sort of history of ideas approach moving
67 more towards the center of, maybe, of analytic approach. But never reaching the sort of detailed
68 level of argumentation that Henry and people like that did, you know--or Fred [Frederick A.]
69 Olafson. So, he was more in that vein. So, we set up a department that was going to be a kind
70 of different sort of department anywhere in the country; and that's what we did. So, the initial
71 people we tried to recruit were people who represented something like historical and also
72 sociological approach to philosophy. So, the first two people we recruited who were major
73 figures were Herbert Marcuse and Stanley Moore, and I think I've given you some stuff I've
74 written about the difficulties that were involved there.

75 And then— We did that in 1964 and '65. This came out of a conference that Dick and Jason and
76 I organized, which was a response to questions that people like John [Jonathan] Singer and
77 David Bonner and Jim [James] Arnold and others, asked about what was going on in philosophy
78 today. And so, we said, "Well, you know, a lot is going on. What would you like to hear about?
79 Anything that sort of interests you." They said, "Well, what's going on in Marxism today?"
80 Because at that time, there was a lot of ferment about the Vietnam War and things like that. So,
81 neither Dick nor Jason nor I knew anything about Marxism. So, I said, "But I do know Stanley
82 Moore" who had been a teaching assistant at Berkeley and was recognized as one of the
83 outstanding Marx scholars in the country—maybe in the world. So, I called up Stanley, and I
84 said, "We want to organize this conference."

85 **CHODOROW:** He was in Canada then?

86 **STROLL:** No, he was at Barnard.

87 **CHODOROW:** Oh, he was at Barnard? He had gotten back into this country.

88 **STROLL:** Well, he was never in Canada. He taught at Reed for many years.

89 **CHODOROW:** Yeah, but then he was fired—

90 **STROLL:** That's right, but then he went to New York.

91 **CHODOROW:** —during the McCarthy period.

92 **STROLL:** That's right.

93 **CHODOROW:** And then where did he go?

94 **STROLL:** He went to Barnard.

95 **CHODOROW:** Oh, so Barnard actually appointed him right after—

96 **STROLL:** Yeah, but it was only a part time thing. He wasn't really working full time. So, I called
97 Stanley and said, "What's going on? Who are the important people?" He said the most
98 interesting figure right now is a figure named Herbert Marcuse. None of us had ever heard of
99 Marcuse. *[laughs]* So we organized this conference and we had Lewis Feuer from Berkeley
100 representing kind of a right-wing Marxist thing—you know, people who had given up on that—
101 Stanley Moore as a highly analytic person looking at the text and so on; and then Marcuse, who
102 thought that he was writing Marx, you know; and Joe [Joseph] Tussman was the moderator.
103 That conference caused an absolute sensation on campus. It was a three-day conference and
104 all the faculty members attended, you know. And it was the biggest thing that had ever
105 happened on the UCSD campus. So, Keith Brueckner, who was then the dean, and Herb
106 [Herbert F.] York insisted we hire Moore and Marcuse. So, we made offers to them, then we had
107 trouble getting—

108 **WESTBROOK:** Just on the basis of the controversy or the substance of those favors?

109 **STROLL:** Well, they were so brilliant in discussion, you know, that they just dominate
110 everything.

111 **CHODOROW:** Moore was a remarkable intellect.

112 **STROLL:** Absolutely, yeah.

113 **CHODOROW:** Very, very sharp—very powerful. Seemed to know Marx by heart; quote
114 something from Marx, he'd tell you what was on the next page.

115 **STROLL:** That's right, yeah. There's a famous story about Stanley— I was actually president
116 when this happened. There was a meeting of the APA [American Psychological Association] at
117 the Claremont Hotel in Berkeley. And I got there a little late and Stan was giving a talk, and I
118 wanted to hear what he was doing. And as I got there, he was walking back and forth—you
119 know, he held his lapels—and there was a dead silence in the room. There were two hundred
120 people there. And the first sentence he uttered was this: "There is no place in which the word
121 'true' occurs in the first chapter of capital." *[laughter]* That was Stanley—he's got a flypaper
122 memory, you know.

123 And Marcuse and Moore were always— Marcuse would say, "I remember reading something
124 that Marx said about such and such, but I can't remember where it occurred." So, Stanley would
125 say, "I'll find it." And about three days later, he would come back and say, "It was in a talk that
126 Marx gave to the second international *[inaudible]* in 1865," or something like that. Unbelievable
127 sort of textual scholar, and very, very sharp; and a great teacher, you know, of course. Anyway,
128 so, this sort of set the tone for the department because we had here two heavyweight political
129 theorists. And both of them were historians in a certain sense, so it was really the ideal thing.
130 What we lacked in the department, of course, was more power in what was main-stream
131 philosophy; which is the sort of thing I was doing—analytic philosophy from [Gottlob] Frege to
132 what was going on at that time. And I was the only one teaching that kind of material, so we
133 made an effort to then recruit somebody else.

134 And we did, a few years later, get a hold of Zeno Vendler, whom you know, of course, very well.
135 And Zeno was one of the outstanding analytic philosophers of our time. So, we had him. We
136 also recruited—adding to the social and political group—Fred Olafson, you know, whom I
137 recruited—I was a chair at that time. Also, one of the outstanding social and political theorists,
138 you know. So, we had, at one moment, Marcuse, Moore, and Olafson, which is probably the
139 most distinguished group of social and political theorists ever assembled in America. And that
140 was the nucleus of the group that was developed. From that, we also hired a number of
141 assistant professors. Unfortunately, only two of them in that period made tenure—I won't
142 mention the names of the people who didn't. You probably met some of them—Stanley
143 Milanovich, Rudy [Rudolf A.] Makkreel, others, you know; Ron [Ronald] Kirkby but—not for the
144 record—but mention these names. But Dave [David] Norton got tenure and he was a man who

145 worked on Descartes; later has written a lot on people like Shaftesbury and others, you know.
146 True historians, sort of the in the style of Dick Popkin. And the other person who got tenure was
147 George [Georgios H.] Anagnostopoulos who was a classicist. And those were the only two—

148 **CHODOROW:** And Jason had left, and George in effect replaced him, is that right?

149 **STROLL:** Jason left—I can't remember when Jason left—but he and George overlapped. And
150 then we hired Ed [Edward] Lee afterward to replace Jason, basically. And so, we had two
151 classicists on board for most of this time. So, at one time we had a pretty strong group in the
152 history of philosophy, because we had Ed Lee and George—earlier Jason—and then we had all
153 these distinguished people in, you might say, the continental tradition, like Marcuse, Moore, and
154 Fred Olafson. And then we had Zenon and I in the sort of analytical tradition, so it was a pretty
155 solid group.

156 **CHODOROW:** When did Paul Henry come?

157 **STROLL:** He was one of the first that we tried to recruit, and he was an expert on Plotinus. He
158 turned out to be—and this is not for the record, but you know this Stanley—a real alcoholic, you
159 know. And so, in order to get him appointed here, we had to go through the diocese. And he
160 had interacted with them, and they refused to allow him to be here because he was
161 embarrassing. He gave an introductory lecture at Sherwood Hall and almost fell off the podium
162 three times—there were people running around trying to make sure he didn't fall off the thing.
163 He actually gave the same lecture twice. But he was the world's authority on the Plotinus text,
164 you know. We could never get him into the country on a permanent basis.

165 **CHODOROW:** So, he was a temporary here?

166 **STROLL:** He was here— We did get an initial three-year appointment. And I can't remember
167 the dates, but I think 1966 or so to 1969, maybe, or '68—in that period. And we tried to—
168 everybody liked him. He was a wonderful person, and during the day, he was sober.

169 **CHODOROW:** He was a regular priest. He was one of the orders—and I can't remember. He
170 wasn't a Jesuit, I don't think.

171 **STROLL:** No, I don't think so, but I can't remember what it was. His permanent base was
172 Louvain. Does that help?

173 **CHODOROW:** Yeah, that wasn't be Jesuit.

174 **STROLL:** No. He was interesting. We also had a lot of continental visitors at that time—Paul
175 DeVone [?], who was an expert on Descartes; Anne Marie Feinberg's[?] father, you know. So,
176 we had a succession of people coming in. It was very exciting period at the time. And, of course,
177 the Vietnam War was going on, so Marcuse became the real guru of philosophy at that point. At
178 one time, we actually had seven or eight faculty members and seventy-seven graduate
179 students—about sixty-five of whom were working with Marcuse. Angela Davis, Fania Jordan—
180 you know, a whole coterie of people who were doing all this stuff. It was a quite fascinating
181 period.

182 I was chair from 1960— Let's see was it '68 or '67 to around '72. And one night, I got a call from
183 the Solano Beach police department saying that there was a shooting involving Fania Jordan
184 and her husband Sam Jordan— I don't know if you ever met either one of them. They were both
185 members of the, you know, sort of—I don't know—the kind of radical group of black power in
186 this kind of stuff, walking around with dark jackets. So, I got out there— Apparently, Fania and
187 Sam had an argument. He shot her three times—was not a very good shot, and missed,
188 fortunately. So, I went there with George Anagnostopoulos just to have an independent witness.
189 So, we calmed everybody down; we got the police to withdraw any charges; they took away the
190 gun and all that kind of thing. Later, about two years ago, a man from the Netherlands or
191 someplace made a movie about Marcuse. Did you see that thing?

192 **CHODOROW:** No, never did see it.

193 **STROLL:** Okay. In it, Angela Davis was testifying about an occasion where the Solano
194 Beach police department fired three times at Sam Jordan and Fania and missed. A complete
195 misrepresentation of the actual facts, but that was the kind of thing it was. I used to drive
196 Marcuse every day from his house to the campus because he was always being threatened by
197 people. I would get calls like—would start out by saying—"Why don't you bastards teach
198 patriotism?" So, I would say, "We would be delighted, but what country?" *[laughter]* We actually
199 had some of our graduate students armed, lying on his doorstep, to keep these people away
200 and stuff. Amazing period, so— And you were there Stanley. So anyway, that was sort of the
201 early picture of things. I don't know if you want me to diverge from here, but one of the main
202 ideas that we had on campus was to develop a curriculum, which was sort of a core curriculum,
203 which everybody took; and Revelle was supposed to be the place in which it was housed, you

204 know. And so, the original format of the campus was there was going to be a broad
205 representation in science for every Revelle student; and also, they had to take humanities.

206 At that point, early on, there was no history department, there was no sociology department,
207 and so on. So, the main fields that were represented were sort of standard philosophy and
208 literature, but with a kind of historical tinge to all this. Because the course was presented
209 historically—went back to the Jews, the Greeks, and so forth—and they came up in increments
210 of six at that time. Almost every professor in the philosophy department taught one of those
211 segments. And there was a two-culture program, where you would have the humanities and the
212 sciences interfacing—interacting in sort of mutually reflective ways, presumably and so on. And
213 that went on for a long time, but eventually it became clear for—most of the science
214 departments began to feel that students couldn't spend two years getting a sort of background
215 in the history of science. They had to start punching right into problem-solving and this kind of
216 thing. So, the program became attenuated over the years. I think you were still in it, Stanley,
217 when it was a core program, [*crosstalk*] and you probably saw some of this.

218 **CHODOROW:** Right. And I saw the departments in the sciences do two things. One was to
219 change, somewhat, the nature of the course. The other was to begin to see that, with the
220 multiplication of colleges, they were going to give different kinds of courses— They were
221 supposed to give different kinds of courses for each of these colleges.

222 **STROLL:** That's right.

223 **CHODOROW:** And we began to say, "Chemistry is chemistry is chemistry, and physics is
224 physics is physics, and so on. We'll give one course and everybody from different colleges can
225 take it." That changed the whole nature of the interaction with programs like the humanities. The
226 humanities were the only departments that tried to maintain different kinds of courses.

227 **STROLL:** That's right. The humanities course in Revelle, I think, is still a model of what every
228 university should have. Because you know, the main problem for us is to get people out of the
229 trees. You know, John Singer and I have been teaching this special course for Revelle
230 students—they're fourth year science students in Revelle and they have to have a 3.6 grade
231 point average to get in the course. It's a seminar whose content is the impact of science on
232 western culture. So, it's the interaction between science and its implications for western culture.
233 And we raised a lot of interesting problems like, for example—what is the difference between
234 science and technology? Why is it, for example, science arose in the west in a serious way only

235 in the seventeenth century, basically with Galileo and others? Why was there never any science
236 but enormous technology in China, for example? So those were the kinds of issues we deal
237 with.

238 **CHODOROW:** Well, there was science in the Islamic world—for a time.

239 **STROLL:** That's right. But it never really got off to the—or it never reached the level that we
240 have in the seventeenth century, you know, where the experimental basis— It was mostly
241 observational—

242 **CHODOROW:** It was highly observational.

243 **STROLL:** Yeah, that's right. It did great work in astronomy.

244 **CHODOROW:** Astronomy and medicine.

245 **STROLL:** Yeah, right. That's right. Well, they were the ones who discovered that the morning
246 star and the evening star were the same planet, among other things. Let me just come back to
247 something that you asked earlier, Stanley, which I never got around to—namely, how did I get
248 here? Dick was asked to form the department, and, of course, he and I had written a book
249 called *Philosophy Made Simple*. What happened was that we— Dick was approached by a
250 publisher, which was a satellite, I can't remember the name of it, but of Doubleday. And they
251 said they want to do this series, called the *Made Simple* series, in different fields—like Italian
252 Made Simple, Mathematics Made Simple—and they did. They produced forty or fifty books.
253 These things were to be sold in drugstores and so on, and we wrote the first book in the series.
254 And so, they said, "Why don't you write a book that anybody can understand." So, Dick and I
255 said, "Okay, why don't we do that. But let's lay down one condition for this—if we have to look
256 anything, it's already too complicated for the audience. So, we're going to do this just from
257 memory." So, I had just gotten married, and we each got a flat fee of \$1,000—this was 1955,
258 which was quite a bit of money in those days, you know. I mean, a full professor was making
259 \$15,000 or something like that—to write this thing. So, I—

260 **CHODOROW:** In 1955, I want you to know, a full professor was not usually making \$15,000-

261 **WESTBROOK:** I was going to say around \$5,000.

262 **STROLL:** Something like that, that's right. I think you're right, actually, now that I think about it.
263 So this seemed like a lot of money to us. And we never had the idea of any royalties—we
264 thought nobody would read this thing, you know. By 1960, it was already in its seventeenth
265 printing. It sold over a half a million copies all over the world. It's incredible. Now it's in a third
266 edition. So anyway, I was on a honeymoon, we went to Laguna Beach, I got a typewriter, and I
267 just sat down and wrote everything. I cheated once because I wanted to quote something on
268 liberty. And, of course, I had to look up some major passage, so I went to the Laguna Beach
269 library where I got a copy of *On Liberty* [by John Stuart Mill] and copied that down.

270 **CHODOROW:** Well, you see, that's another test. If it's in a public library— *[laughter]*

271 **STROLL:** That's right.

272 **CHODOROW:** You would have really cheated if you had gone to a university library!

273 **STROLL:** But Dick, I don't think, cheated—he did everything from memory. So that's how I met
274 Dick. And then, in 1961, we were approached by Holt, Rinehart, and Winston—because they
275 had realized this book was selling all over the place. They wanted us to do a textbook which sort
276 of mirrored this but didn't copy any of it. So, we were very reluctant to do this because we
277 thought we had made this book about as simple as it could be made, you know. But finally, we
278 accepted the challenged, and we wrote this book called the *Introduction to Philosophy*. And, you
279 know, a philosophy book text usually has a five-year run. That sort of initial period where people
280 are looking at it and you get a lot of returns on sale. And so, it sort of staggers along for another
281 couple of years, in which it some use of a new text, and then the old are circulating and people
282 buy those. And finally, at the end of five years, they can't sell any more copies. That book was
283 first published in 1961 and it's still being used today. It's gone through three editions.

284 At one time, I figured out that we made—each of us in something like fifteen years, \$100,000
285 each in royalties on that one book. So, in 1961, Dick and I had published together two books.
286 Subsequently, we've done I think it's now five other texts, so we have six or seven texts out. So,
287 when Dick set up the department, he wanted somebody in analytic philosophy that he knew and
288 felt confident with, and so he asked me to come down here. I was teaching at the University of
289 British Columbia at that time, and that's how I got here. And that was a very traumatic thing.
290 Mary went to bed for a week trying to make a decision about it. The reason for that was that I
291 was publishing a lot of stuff, but the academic year in Canada, especially the University of
292 British Columbia, started in late September and ended about the middle of April. And it was one

293 continuous year interrupted by about a month of vacation at Christmas time. So, it was an ideal
294 situation. I was teaching eight hours a week or something, which meant two courses and a
295 seminar, but the preparation stuff was very, very elementary. And the period was short. And you
296 didn't have this constant interruption. You could really get into a topic. In fact, a lot of stuff I
297 wrote was based on courses I was giving. The main problem was we didn't have very many
298 graduate students. But, at that time, the Canadian dollar was worth \$1.10 U.S., so I was making
299 probably twenty-five percent more than I could make at any American university. So, when I got
300 a salary offer to come down here, which I think was sort of the range of \$15,000—which was a
301 top salary at that time—I lost money to come down. But as a native California, I thought, you
302 know, I'm tired of driving the same streets and living in a foreign country. Mary was very
303 reluctant because the Vietnam War was just underway, and a lot of hassle down here—was it a
304 good place to raise kids? And all that kind of stuff. So, we came, and I'm glad we did because it
305 became a much more exciting adventure to come down and set up a whole university. So
306 anyway, that's sort of a background of things. Anything else you'd like to ask?

307 **CHODOROW:** Brad, do you have any questions?

308 **WESTBROOK:** Not right now.

309 **CHODOROW:** My sense of the department is that it had a very clear vision of what it wanted
310 to do in the early years. And, in fact, my sense of it is that the vision was so clear that I can't be
311 right about that—no department is that coherent.

312 **STROLL:** I think you are right, actually. *[laughs]*

313 **CHODOROW:** Well, okay. And that then it started to disintegrate. Do you want to talk about
314 when that started, and what the signs were?

315 **STROLL:** What happened— Let me start with the point you were making. The department was
316 coherent, it had this focus. And the idea that gradually emerged as it got larger, was that we
317 would have three clusters. One strictly in the history of philosophy, because there wasn't any
318 place in America, except possibly at Columbia, that was doing serious work in history—the
319 history of philosophy. Secondly, there was no place in the country that had the group of social
320 and political theorists that we had here, so we want to keep those two clusters. The big problem
321 was what to do about analytic philosophy because we didn't want to become a counterculture
322 department, so we had to build up in those areas. So, we had two senior people—Zeno and I—

323 and then we got some younger people. And we had a number of these. So, we did have these
324 three clusters that were working, but the weight was in the two other clusters, not the analytic
325 clusters. Was just that Zeno and I did this kind of thing. All that continued very well until we ran
326 into problems with the Marcuse reappointment—and I've given you some stuff I've written about
327 that. The way that worked, to summarize it briefly—

328 **CHODOROW:** It was a published article in a local—

329 **STROLL:** San Diego magazine.

330 **CHODOROW:** That related to what happened in regard to this appointment.

331 **STROLL:** Right. But just to summarize what happened— Marcuse came here on a post-
332 retirement basis. He had been at Brandeis. And their retirement period began at the age of
333 sixty-five. He came here when he was sixty-seven. The retirement age at the University of
334 California was sixty-seven at that time. So, the initial appointment we made for him, which was
335 1965, was a three-year appointment with a commitment that he could be reappointed on a year-
336 by-year basis. Which was sort of the standard thing Hal [Harold] Urey—and others had that
337 arrangement. As long as he wanted to teach and was capable of teaching, and so forth. There
338 would be the usual assessment every year, you know, with your file and so on. There was
339 thought to be no problem.

340 And Marcuse, he was basically unknown at that point. In that three-year period, of course, he
341 became the guru of the left-wing rebellion—you know, Red Rudi Dutschke and all those people
342 and so on. Anyway, so what happened was at the end of the three years, with the assistance of
343 the chancellor then—Bill [William J.] McGill—we got him reappointed. And the way that worked
344 was that, because there were so many new campuses under way, the regents had decided to
345 allow the appointment of tenure people to be made at the local campus level. The one thing
346 they held back on was people who were overage. And McGill pointed out to them that that was
347 an anomaly— Why would they want to keep this thing when everything else was being done by
348 the chancellor?

349 **CHODOROW:** There was a reason. His name was Marcuse.

350 **STROLL:** Yeah, that's right. That's exactly right. Bill was very clever, and we worked that out
351 together. So, we did that the first year, and the regents were furious because, you know, this
352 was the time of Angela Davis and all kinds of things. So, they took that power back. So, McGill

353 said, "Well, we'll never get him through again," you know. But as a matter of establishing a point
354 of academic freedom, he insisted that the regents reappoint Marcuse at least for one more year,
355 but then not beyond that. So, I think the last appointment we made for him was the academic
356 year of—it was either '69 or '70, or '68 or '69—but in that period.

357 Now that broke up this group, and Stanley Moore, who was a wealthy man, independently
358 wealthy, became very much disaffected with the student radicals on campus. Even though he
359 himself had been a radical in an earlier period. But he thought this was kind of mindless stuff.
360 And he was very annoyed that they turned on the university, which gave them academic
361 freedom to protest this and so on. He thought they should go down and protest governmental
362 agencies or wherever they wanted to protest, but why do this on the campus? So, he decided to
363 retire—I mean, just out of sheer annoyance. He also wanted to spend more time writing. And so
364 sometime around the early seventies, a year or two after Marcuse left, he left. Then Dick Popkin
365 decided that he wanted to be in Judaic studies. Do you remember that, Stanley?

366 **CHODOROW:** That's right. Walter Kohn just told a story about meeting Dick on the campus,
367 and Dick saying to him, "gut yuntuv." [Yiddish for "good holiday"] Walter saying, "What holiday is
368 it?" *[laughter]* When he finally questioned Dick, Dick said, "It's Columbus's birthday." *[laughter]*

369 **STROLL:** That was Dick Popkin. Dick discovered that everybody famous in history—including
370 Torquemada—was a Jew, you know. But Columbus—he had all this evidence for it. Long story.

371 **CHODOROW:** He was sure that Columbus was Jewish, because he left Spain the day after
372 the expulsion of the Jews. And as one of his colleagues said, "If I were Jewish, I would have left
373 the day before." *[laughter]*

374 **STROLL:** So that was sort of the atmosphere here. So, Dick had been trying for years to get a
375 Judaic studies department going here. But you know, the mechanics of the process of
376 development. And it seemed like kind of a minor thing to be worried when he was just starting to
377 go into history and so forth and so on. So, it never did develop here. So, he decided there was a
378 very big group at Washington University in St. Louis, and he got a joint appointment in Judaic
379 studies there, and also in philosophy. So, he left sometime in the early seventies. Well—and
380 then Jason Saunders left—

381 **CHODOROW:** He had left already in 1968—the end of '68—in '67-'68.

382 **STROLL:** Right. He went to NYU.

383 **CHODOROW:** I went to the graduate school—CUNY Graduate Center.

384 **STROLL:** That's right, that's exactly right. So, I was the only one left. And Zeno was here, I
385 think, and I think Fred came on about that time. They all agreed that we should try to rebuild the
386 same department that we had, you know. However, they also—the department has always been
387 under some pressure from various elements on campus to have something that hooked into the
388 science developments on campus. Now what was interesting about that is almost everybody
389 who was in favor of such of an interaction did not like what went on in the philosophy of science.
390 You know, Keith Brueckner would say to me— I would say, "Well, why don't we get some
391 philosophers of science here, like Adolf Grünbaum, " or something like that, you know. So, they
392 would read this stuff, and I'd say, "But it has no relevance to anything that's going on in
393 science," you know. We want people who are doing something which is comparable to what
394 people like Saul Bellow are doing in literature. Who are doing something which is innovative and
395 not just sort of parasitic on science. Well, there isn't anybody in that field—it just doesn't exist in
396 philosophy.

397 **CHODOROW:** Philosophy is a reflection upon the practice of science. It isn't a practice of
398 science.

399 **STROLL:** That's right, exactly.

400 **CHODOROW:** It isn't a type of a practice of science.

401 **STROLL:** That's absolutely right. Now see, the only—

402 **CHODOROW:** Except in one current example in the department. And that's questionable.
403 That's what Pat is trying to do.

404 **STROLL:** Yeah, that's right. And I don't think she's really considered a scientist by anybody,
405 you know. Her work is very programmatic—kind of an exponent for what goes on in science. But
406 anyway, so we decided though that we would take some people who were sort of—who seemed
407 more innovative—and the two people we picked were the Churchlands [Patricia and Paul
408 Churchland]. So, they came into the department and Zeno was always a major exponent of that.
409 Fred Olafson was always reluctant, because he thought that would happen is that they would
410 then begin to attract more people like them, but who wouldn't be as good, you know. And that
411 worry I think, from Fred's perspective, has materialized. And it finally led him to become very

412 disillusioned with the department, and hardly participate in anything that has gone on since he
413 retired.

414 It is a problem because, you see, it is a second order discipline. The really creative stuff in
415 philosophy has been in—sort of in stuff that I do. You know, people like [Saul] Kripke and
416 [Hilary] Putnam. Well, the greatest philosopher of the twentieth century is [Ludwig] Wittgenstein,
417 who just is a different order—I mean, enormously creative. I mean, to give you some idea of the
418 sort of Wittgenstein. In *Zettel*, I think it's passage 395, Wittgenstein makes an assertion and
419 asks a question. And that one sentence is more profound—everything's been written in
420 cognitive science, you know, thousands of pages. What is the statement he makes? He says, "A
421 man can pretend to be unconscious." Correct. Then he asks the question, "Can a man pretend
422 to be conscious?" *[laughs]* Well, all of sudden, you see immediately the whole logic of pretends
423 to what it is to be conscious. And, you know, it's just unbelievable.

424 And the passages that follow are all about dreaming, and they are just unbelievable. He'll say,
425 "Supposing a man in a dream says, 'I am dreaming'. Should we say he's right?" I mean, it's
426 absolutely unbelievable stuff. So, you know, the great creative advances in this field were made
427 by people like Wittgenstein, who, as I say, just of a different order from anybody. He may be the
428 greatest philosopher, at least in my opinion, since [Immanuel] Kant. And I think maybe lacking
429 the scope of Kant in a certain sense, but much more original. If you measure greatness by
430 questions asked, Wittgenstein is just in a class by himself. Even Plato didn't ask questions like
431 that—questions like the one I just mentioned. But things like, "Does my phone call to New York
432 strengthen my conviction that the earth exists?" "Does a cat know that a mouse exists?" "Does
433 a cat know that milk exists?" Just unbelievable stuff. "Why is the alphabet like a string of pearls
434 in a box?"

435 **CHODOROW:** What is the relationship of a person like Austin to him? J.L. —

436 **STROLL:** Well, that's a wonderful question, because the other most original philosopher of the
437 twentieth century was J.L. Austin. Never been anybody like him. He invented a speech act
438 theory, which was an important thing. His emphasis on ordinary language—you know, things he
439 did with that are just unbelievable. For example, he has a paper called *Three Ways of Spilling*
440 *Ink*. I don't know if you've ever read it but it is incredible because it starts with a scenario.
441 There's a classroom and there's a girl with beautiful blond hair. The kids are about ten or twelve
442 years old. And there's a young man sitting in the desk behind her—and they used ink in those

443 days—kid picks up this bottle of ink pours it in her hair. And then Austin asks the question, "Did
444 he do that deliberately," you know, "on purpose, or intentionally?" That's the thesis of the paper.
445 And then he explores these differences, and they're all connected with different ways of being
446 responsible for something. So, the kind of contrast he drew, for example, when—the polar term
447 for deliberately is hastily. You deliberate, you slow down, and so on. Whereas the polar term,
448 you see, for intentionally is not hastily, it's a different concept.

449 **CHODOROW:** Purely accidentally or unintentionally—

450 **STROLL:** That's right, yeah. Just absolutely great stuff. Austin only published—depending on
451 how you count them—but eight or nine papers. No books. There are two collections of lectures
452 he gave that were formulated into books. One called *How to Do Things with Words*, which was
453 speech act theory. And the other, which I think is sort of the greatest book on the theory of
454 perception, called *Sense and Sensibilia*. And that is a wonderful title because when Austin—
455 The first paper Austin published after the war was called *Other Minds*, and it appeared in the
456 proceedings of the Aristotelian Society. They spelled his name as if it were Jane Austen—A-u-s-
457 t-e-n. Of course, he spells it with an "i" Austin. So, Jane Austen wrote a book, of course, called
458 *Sense and Sensibility*, right? Now in the theory of perception, sense-data, or a sensum, is
459 something that you're actually perceiving; like, if you look at a round coin, it looks elliptical.
460 What's directing your visual is called a sensum or sense-data. A sensibillum is what you would
461 be seeing if you were in a perspective that you're not at, okay? That would be the thing you
462 would be seeing directly. And sensibilia is the plural of sensibillum. This book is all about
463 perception—called it *Sense and Sensibilia*. It's a pun on the—

464 **CHODOROW:** Like Jane Austen.

465 **STROLL:** That's John Austin. He died at the age of forty-nine of cancer. It was a great loss.
466 Had he lived, philosophy today would be quite different from the way it was, because he was the
467 other most original philosopher of the twentieth century. But that's where the work was going.
468 Now compare with these people—the sort of people that are doing philosophy of science, to use
469 Austin's own words—are hacks. They plow in the field of science, you know. And what they do,
470 it takes a lot of information and so on, but they're not doing anything creative or very original
471 interesting, you know. And it's also interesting that they go back to the same old props. They
472 worry about causation, and [*inaudible*] in astronomy, this kind of stuff—or Bell's theorem. And

473 scientists pay no attention to this and philosophers don't. So, it's a kind of intermediate field. I
474 talked to you about this, I think, on a number of occasions, Stanley, when you were—

475 **CHODOROW:** When I was dean.

476 **STROLL:** Dean, yeah, right. And I think it's necessary to have a component in any department.
477 And I think with the Churchlands, we have really outstanding people. But it should be, I think, a
478 fairly small component. Right now, we have something like half the department, in one way or
479 another, in this field. That's too much. So that's been sort of the direction the department has
480 gone.

481 **CHODOROW:** The disintegration took place because, primarily, people left.

482 **STROLL:** Yeah, that's right.

483 **CHODOROW:** And then you found it impossible to find people who really were like that.

484 **STROLL:** That's right. Where are you going to find another Marcuse? Another Popkin?

485 **CHODOROW:** There's an interesting question that arises from that from the point of view of
486 strategy. One of the things I used to say to people, both as dean and provost, when they came
487 in with a bright idea about— “we ought to move in the following direction” in this department or
488 that—was “are there good candidates out there? Are there a number of people in that field that
489 you would want to hire because they are terrific?”

490 **STROLL:** Exactly. That's right.

491 **CHODOROW:** And often the question is — no. And that's a non-starter.

492 **STROLL:** That's correct. Absolutely.

493 **CHODOROW:** And you basically have to say to people, “well that was a great idea but if
494 there is nobody working in the field *[laughter]* it no longer matters. It's not a question we can
495 really answer.” So, the question I have is — was that happening — was it the fact that we had
496 brought together all of the people you'd choose to make such a department and when they
497 scattered, retired, went away — that was the end of it. There weren't really — there wasn't really
498 a field of that kind in history of philosophy.

499 **STROLL:** I think that's a very perceptive point. I think you're actually correct. You see, there is
500 no way of replacing Popkin. He's a unique figure. You know, he's the worlds greatest figure on
501 the history of skepticism. And enormously prolific. You know, he's published 400 papers or
502 something. Marcuse was a unique phenomenon. Whatever you thought of him he was, you
503 know, an eminent figure. Stanley Moore — people like that don't grow on trees. [laughter] Fred
504 Olafson, you know, Zeno. I mean they're — they're remarkable. Now we might have
505 reconstructed the department with distinguished people in the area of analytic philosophy,
506 because there were some people around like that. Like Hilary Putnam and Kripke and others —
507 Ruth Marcus. But there was opposition to that —

[END OF PART ONE, BEGIN PART TWO]

508 **STROLL:** —philosophy of science. And that's basically what happened. My own feeling is that
509 the—with the possible exception of the Churchlands—that aspect of the program doesn't have
510 the same visibility that that original group had. You know, all those people had international
511 reputations. Even the visitors like Paul Henry and Paul Dibon, in their own fields had
512 international reputations. So, as you say, it's probably true of the whole campus. If you look at
513 the physics department, well you know, people like Walter Kohn, Norman Kroll, and Keith, and
514 others. Where can you get those people—second generation, you know it's hard. And generally
515 speaking it was hard to get— It is hard to recruit people of that order, you know, second time
516 around. Because there aren't that many usually. And usually they're at places where— They're
517 happy there, you know. So, you don't want to — I mean there are people like that, that don't
518 want to move.

519 **CHODOROW:** Right. Moving Hilary Putnam would have not been an easy thing.

520 **WESTBROOK:** So, there was a happy set of accidents in the 60s that brought Moore and —

521 **STROLL:** Well it was just that we had— Well, yes. The fact that Dick started the department,
522 you know. And that we did this program in social political theory and Marcuse was available, just
523 at that minute. Stanley Moore didn't have a permanent job, you know. Fred Olafson—Fred's
524 career is very interesting because he was very famous in this whole area of, you know,
525 continental philosophy but also in social political theory. Because he had written on Hobbes and
526 others. But Fred was in the School of Education at Harvard. The Harvard philosophers never
527 liked him because they thought he wasn't analytic enough, you know. He resented that, and so

528 we managed to get him because of the fact that he was coming to a regular philosophy course.
529 So, it was a series of lucky breaks, you know, and we were able, I think, to bring this off. But it is
530 a unique opportunity. The other thing is that we had all these FTEs at very high levels, so we
531 were able to— I mean, every one of us came in at the top of the full professor scale. Not
532 Marcuse, because there we had to—I think at that point—I think it was on soft money or
533 something, so we didn't have that. But basically, all the original people came in at very high
534 levels. And so, we had a lot of money for recruitments, you know, inducing people to come.

535 **CHODOROW:** What role did the library play? What interaction, for example, did you have in
536 founding a library?

537 **STROLL:** For those people—for Dick, David Norton, Stanley Moore, and Marcuse—the library
538 was key, absolutely key. And they built up a tremendous collection, you know, they were buying
539 books. At that time, I think we could spend something like \$100,000 a year or something for
540 books.

541 **CHODOROW:** Philosophy books?

542 **STROLL:** Yeah. And they just built up a tremendous collection, not only in classical works, but
543 also in periodicals. We had a very good collection. Unfortunately, it was not true in history. That
544 was a problem we had with [Geoffrey] Barraclough and others— The library was not really
545 adequate for a lot of the people we attempted to recruit in the early days. But the philosophy
546 library, within about three years, was a first-class library.

547 **CHODOROW:** Is philosophy a field in which, like classics, there is a library that people work
548 on? That you can identify and you need to buy those texts?

549 **STROLL:** That's right.

550 **CHODOROW:** And then you have a wall or two walls full of books, and that's it.

551 **STROLL:** That's right, so—except for contemporary stuff. But I mean— So you have to have all
552 Plato, Aristotle, St. Thomas, Augustine, et cetera, et cetera—Descartes, Leibniz— you know,
553 whatever's going [*inaudible*] by a selfless old librarian, and so on. I think, if you just check this
554 library, I'll think you'll find that, in terms of sort of the classical literature up to the twentieth
555 century, it's probably as good as Berkeley. You can look up anything. It's good. Latterly, we
556 have not been able to buy as many books as we could at one time, and the periodical situation

557 has somewhat deteriorated. It's still okay, though. We have a wide number of books you can get
558 here in the library.

559 **CHODOROW:** Brad, do you have a question?

560 **WESTBROOK:** Yeah, I sort of do. You were talking about— I guess at the end of the sixties,
561 you had this very large graduate student body. I mean, it must have been the largest graduate
562 student body by department on campus—

563 **STROLL:** Oh, yeah. Probably in the country.

564 **WESTBROOK:** I'm curious as to how that came to be. But then, you also talked about most
565 of the primary figures who were departing somewhere during the seventies, so I'm wondering
566 what effect that had on the graduate students and the—

567 **STROLL:** Well within a few years — A lot of these graduate students were not really serious,
568 you know. They were people who were very much involved in the student movements—the
569 SDS [Students for a Democratic Society], things like that. They were enthusiasts and so they
570 picked out this place to come to primarily because of Marcuse, but also in lieu of Popkin's
571 interest in social and political theory. There were some serious students and some of these
572 people got degrees from here. Bill Lees [?] was one. There're some others.

573 **WESTBROOK:** Gerry Press

574 **STROLL:** Yeah, Jerry got a degree. But on the whole, they sort of vanished without getting
575 degrees. Like Angela Davis. She never got a Ph.D.

576 **WESTBROOK:** Oh, she never finished?

577 **STROLL:** No. She worked with Marcuse for years and wanted to write a thesis on Kant's
578 perpetual peace. And the perpetual part was part of her thesis, but not the rest of it. *[laughs]*

579 **WESTBROOK:** She was hired ABD [All But Dissertation] at UCLA. I remember seeing her
580 UCLA files, and I remember seeing her UCLA files—

581 **STROLL:** I'm not sure that— Do you know if she's ever gotten a Ph.D.

582 **CHODOROW:** I have no idea.

583 **STROLL:** Maybe she got one in Europe, but I know she never got one from Herbert.

584 **WESTBROOK:** I don't remember who the chair of the department of UCLA was at that time,
585 but I remember him—seeing some letters to him—remarking about this young African-American
586 student of Marcuse's who so-and-so thought was the best philosophy student in the world.

587 **STROLL:** Yeah.

588 **CHODOROW:** That she certainly wasn't, I think.

589 **STROLL:** No.

590 **WESTBROOK:** Well, I don't think—

591 **CHODOROW:** She's a very, very bright woman.

592 **STROLL:** She is, yeah—she is. But we've had some very good PhDs. I think I've directed
593 about twenty dissertations since I've been here, and two of my students have really become
594 well-known. Do you know Al Martinich, Stan?

595 **CHODOROW:** Yeah, sure.

596 **STROLL:** A.P. Martinich? He's published nine books. He's become the great Hobbes authority.
597 Just brought out a Hobbes biography from I think either Oxford or Cambridge, I think it is. He's
598 done very well. Another one of my students, Michael White—I don't know if you ever met him—
599 but he's teaching at Arizona State. And he's become a world authority on ancient logic, you
600 know, the sea battle of Aristotle and all this possibility stuff and so forth. He's published three
601 books in that high field. Highly technical things and so on. And some of my other students have
602 done fairly well, but they're much smarter and better than Angela Davis ever was.

603 **CHODOROW:** As a philosopher.

604 **STROLL:** Yeah, right. And are more productive, philosophically.

605 **WESTBROOK:** So, did the graduate students sort of vanish with Marcuse and [Stanley]
606 Moore?

607 **STROLL:** Yeah, they did. They drifted away. We always had, I think, maybe through the period
608 you're talking about 1975. We must have had even around 1975, I would say twenty-five or

609 thirty graduate students. But that huge number, many of whom I don't know—they were
610 registered students. They didn't do anything as far as I could see, and they all sort of drifted
611 away, you know. People like Barry Shapiro and others, you know, vanished. But we always we
612 had something— The ideal of the department for years was to have for each faculty member,
613 three graduate students. Incoming graduate student who was going to work with you in that
614 field. Somebody who was in the process of advancing the candidacy, and then somebody who
615 was actually writing a dissertation with you. And that— I mean, it was an ideal, but we
616 approximated to it pretty well. And so, we had like fifteen faculty members or twelve members.
617 We had around thirty or thirty-five graduate students for quite a long time. I think right now the
618 department has forty-five, and they have sixteen FTEs, I think. Is that what it is?

619 **CHODOROW:** It's about that. There's another thing that impressed me about that
620 department, was what I regarded as its rational discourse.

621 **STROLL:** That's right.

622 **CHODOROW:** It had its department meetings and its departmental seminars—could be very
623 vigorous, but not personal—

624 **STROLL:** That's right.

625 **CHODOROW:** And in some respects, it was like music, where the experience is that they
626 can be yelling at one another in a department meeting, and then go right off to rehearsal where
627 they play music together as if they're best of friends and they are hand-in-glove, because they
628 really understand one another as musicians. The philosophers were, to me at least, very
629 vigorous in their arguments. Sharp in a way in which they formulated ideas and countered
630 ideas, but not acrimonious.

631 **STROLL:** No. Part of that— First of all, let me say you're completely right about that. There
632 could be sharp divisions about the direction of a program or instructions about this or that
633 student—you know, whether that person should be advanced. We had a lot of problems with
634 respect to some of these younger people who were up for tenure. And I would say that those
635 kinds of issues were the most striking cases where there was real division within the
636 department. Some of these people were very good, like Rudy Makkreel, who has subsequently
637 become a well-known figure in Dilthey studies and has had a great career. But there were mixed
638 views about him, as there were with others. But the thing about it everybody— They were all

639 friends, you know, so after a battle like that, they'd all come over, say to my house and have
640 something to eat or drink or something—or the Popkins' place. And there was a lot of enmity in
641 the department on a personal level. And philosophers, in a way, tend also not to get personally
642 involved, because everything is an argument. And for every argument is a counterargument.
643 *[laughs]* If you know anything about the history of the subject, you know that no argument is
644 ever decisive for everybody. So, there's that feeling, too, you know. I think lately—from what I
645 hear, though I'm not much involved in it—that feeling of cohesiveness on a personal level has
646 somewhat eroded, I hear. Maybe you know more about that.

647 **CHODOROW:** It had by the time I was dean— When I was dean that was happening, but
648 what it's doing now, I don't know. I have no other questions. I think this has been very useful—
649 very, very productive. Thanks a lot.

[END OF PART TWO, END OF INTERVIEW]