

TRANSCRIPTION RE:

**CSUMB Founding Faculty
Oral History Project 1995-98
Rina Benmayor, Project Director**

**Interview with Gerald Shenk, Professor Emeritus
School of Social, Behavioral, and Global Studies
College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences**

**Interviewer, Rina Benmayor
School of Humanities and Communication, College of Arts,
Humanities, and Social Sciences**

Transcribed by:

**Carol Roberts
carris.roberts@gmail.com**

Narrator: Gerald Shenk
Interviewer: Rina Benmayor

1 **Benmayor:** *Okay, today is January...*

2 **Shenk:** 25th.

3 **Benmayor:** *25th, 2017. I am Rina Benmayor and I am here with Gerald Shenk. We're going to be*
4 *doing an interview with Gerald about his participation as a founding faculty member at CSUMB. And this is*
5 *for the CSUMB Founding Faculty Oral History Project. Gerald, first of all, do we have permission to record*
6 *this interview?*

7 **Shenk:** Yes.

8 **Benmayor:** *Okay. So could we start out by asking you to state your name and tell us a little bit,*
9 *something about yourself.*

10 **Shenk:** Gerald Shenk. I came to CSUMB from Marymount College in Los Angeles, which is a small
11 two-year liberal arts college run by a group of nuns. Before that I had taught at Earlham College, a Quaker
12 college in Richmond, Indiana. Before that I taught at University of San Diego for one year, another Catholic
13 university, and for one year as a graduate student at UC San Diego, I taught several of my own courses. So
14 that was sort of the teaching background that I had. My field before coming to CSUMB was African
15 American history which is interesting since once I got to CSUMB I never got to teach African American
16 history. Again, there is a whole set of political reasons for that. But I had been at Marymount College for
17 three years. There are basically a group of nuns that run that college. I got along with all of the nuns except
18 the one that was Chair of the History Department. She did not like me at all. She was on the committee that
19 hired me but when I arrived she told me, "I voted against you." That's the first thing she said to me when I
20 got on campus. [chuckle] So that was the beginning of my relationship with Sister Helen. Towards the end
21 of my third year at Marymount, which was Spring of 1996, Sister Helen approached me in the hallway and

22 said, "I put something in your mailbox. Please go check." And I went and looked and there it was, it was a
23 job announcement for CSUMB. [Laughs]

24 **Benmayor:** *Oh, wow!*

25 **[3:06] Shenk:** I read through this thing and I was totally amazed. I had never seen a job description like that
26 before. I was both inspired and curious because I did not think there was anybody else in the whole country
27 that had that combination of skills and background other than me. It was a really strange conglomeration.
28 You were on the search committee and we've talked a little bit about that. I've been unable to find that job
29 description.

30 **Benmayor:** *What year was that?*

31 **Shenk:** It was 1996. It was in Spring Semester of 1996. I'm not sure exactly what month I saw that.
32 But the first thing that jumped out at me was the commitment to the Vision. That was the beginning thing.
33 And there were two things. One was the Vision Statement of CSUMB. The other was the Mission Statement
34 of the Social and Behavioral Sciences Center. The commitment to community, the commitment to ethical
35 standards, the commitment to justice that was expressed through both of those documents. . . . I had been
36 teaching at a Catholic college. I had previously taught at a Quaker college. And I had never seen such an
37 explicit commitment to social justice. Both of those colleges were committed to social justice. Interestingly
38 enough, both of those colleges had spent years, the years that I was at both of those colleges, trying to
39 establish Service Learning programs. They had been unsuccessful. I had been on committees both at Earlham
40 and Marymount to create Service Learning programs and we had spun our wheels. We had been unsuccessful.
41 It seemed as though this new university, that was a year and a half old at this time, already had a successful
42 Service Learning program going. The materials that they sent me after I applied gave me all this detail. At
43 that time, Marian Penn was running it [Service Learning Institute]. I was so impressed with her and so
44 impressed with the way in which this was started up and the way in which there was buy-in from the entire
45 campus. This was the big problem at both Earlham and Marymount. You couldn't get buy-in. Even at

46 Marymount they tried to do it through the Political Science Department and most of the Political Science
47 faculty didn't want to have anything to do with it. Sociology didn't want to have anything to do with it.
48 History didn't. You could get a faculty member here and there to do it but you didn't have campus wide buy-
49 **[6:04]** in. So the fact that CSUMB started with this, that it was foundational for CSUMB, I remember that
50 being so impressive. And I thought, "I would love to be there." Because there's an entire institution that's
51 committed to social justice, that's committed to equity, that's committed to student centered learning. That
52 was before I read the rest of the job description. I saw all of that. Then the job description went through all
53 of this stuff. They wanted: a historian who had a whole range of skills, who could teach all of U.S. History
54 but could teach a non-U.S. History area. I had Latin American history as a secondary field. Who understood
55 social science research methodology. Fortunately, I had gone to UC San Diego and history at that time was
56 in the social sciences. They've now moved it into the Humanities but it was in then Social Sciences. In the
57 Ph.D. program there, you are required to take the same research methods courses that sociologists took. So
58 we took the qualitative and the quantitative research methods courses there. I came in trained in those research
59 methodologies. I knew I could talk to them about SPSS, Statistical Package for the Social Sciences. I had
60 learned that on a mainframe computer where you put in all the commands at the very beginning. I remember
61 George Baldwin being impressed by that piece of it, that I could do quantitative research using SPSS. This
62 was way before Windows. So all of these programs, every time you signed on for it you had to put in every
63 single command. They were called "dot commands." The manual for using SPSS was probably five or six-
64 hundred pages long. For anything you wanted to do you had to look it up and then put in the command into
65 the computer. So that was an issue, the technology piece of it. They wanted somebody who was competent
66 with the technology and with the research methodology. They wanted somebody who was competent in social
67 theory, which again, this was an emphasis at UC San Diego. My friends who went to graduate school at
68 UCLA and Berkeley at the same time I went to UC San Diego, did not get that research methods background

69 and they did not get the social theory background. So UC San Diego was much more interdisciplinary. And
70 my dissertation committee had an anthropologist, a political scientist and a sociologist on it. It was a
71 [9:04] requirement to have that interdisciplinarity. So I came in with that interdisciplinarity, with the social
72 theory background, the technological background, the social research methods background and the historical
73 background. Since then, George has told me on a number of occasions when I've given other reasons why I
74 was hired, "Well, really, you were the only historian who applied for the job who could use a computer," in
75 1996.

76 **Benmayor:** *[Laughs]*

77 **Shenk:** I know two other people who were candidates for that job and they dispute that. They say
78 they knew how to use computers. But I was on email at the time. So 1996 was very early in the email era. I
79 could correspond with email and I had an email address and George says he was impressed by that. The one
80 thing in there [job description] that I did not understand anything about was outcomes-based education.

81 **Benmayor:** *You and everybody else. [Chuckles]*

82 **Shenk:** Right. So you may or may not recall this, you were on the search committee that interviewed
83 me. Anyway, I responded to this job description with a really flippant letter. It was really long. I went through
84 each of the things that they said they were looking for. I said at the beginning, "This is an absurd job
85 description. To think that you could find anybody in the country that has all of the things you're asking for,
86 I have all of them and I think I might be the only person in the country that has all of these." So I went
87 through point by point, there were eight or nine points, explaining how I had them. It was a long letter. I
88 didn't even expect to get a response because the job description was absurd, I said it's absurd in my letter.
89 And I got a call from Lily Martinez in May saying, "Can you come *next week* for an on campus interview?"

90 **Benmayor:** *When did you submit the application?*

91 **Shenk:** I don't know. It seems like it was quite a while. It seemed like I had almost forgotten that I
92 had applied for this job. That's what I'm remembering now, that when I got the call I was surprised because

93 I had assumed that I was not a candidate. It seemed like it had been a long time. I had been on the job market
94 frequently before while I was in graduate school and right out of graduate school. Usually, you submit your
95 letter of application, within a month you'd be told whether or not you're on the shortlist. And I hadn't heard
96 anything. I hadn't been told I was on a shortlist. But I got called like out of the blue, "Can you come next
97 week for an on campus interview?"

98 **Benmayor:** That happened to a lot of us, by the way.

99 **[12:11] Shenk:** Okay, all right. [Chuckles] So I said, "Oh, yeah, fine, I can do that." So it's the end of the
100 semester at Marymount, so I had to take a couple of days off and fortunately Sister Gregory, who I got along
101 with there, agreed to step in. I told her what was going on. She said, "Oh, fine." So she taught my classes for
102 me. And I flew up here. I remember flying in. I had only been to Monterey once before in my life and that
103 was when, in the 1970s, late '70s, I had just moved to San Francisco. I was working for a veterans counseling
104 organization, a military counseling organization. It was the beginning of the all volunteer army post Vietnam
105 war, when there were tens of thousand of poor inner city youth that were being recruited with huge enlistment
106 bonuses to join the Army. And they knew nothing about what it meant to join the Army. So they'd be given
107 \$10,000 in cash. You know, in 1976, '77, something like that, that's a huge amount of money. It's a huge
108 amount of money now. But they'd be given that in cash and they would end up at Fort Ord for Basic Training.
109 The first time they talked back to the drill sergeant they'd get a non judicial punishment. A lot of these kids,
110 you know, we saw a lot of them from Oakland and from Bayview in San Francisco, virtually all African
111 American recruits, who got there, talked back to a drill sergeant ,who were not court marshalled, just sent to
112 non-judicial punishment. Then they'd go AWOL. The Army wouldn't chase after them. They'd just put the
113 name in FBI computers. If they were ever stopped by a cop or something like that, they would run through
114 the computer. So we would get calls from judges in San Francisco saying, "Hey, I've got a guy here. He was
115 stopped for something and they ran his name through the computer and he is AWOL from the Army." We
116 had a lawyers panel and we'd request their files, look through it. If there was only an AWOL then we would

117 call them in and we would get their records. We would call Fort Ord and we would say, “We would like to
118 bring so-and-so down there and get him discharged under Chapter 10 Discharge.” And at that time, late
119 [15:06] ‘70s, early ‘80s it was an assembly line process. There were so many of these kids getting recruited
120 and then out. The Chapter 10 Discharge is a general discharge. It’s not a dishonorable discharge but it’s also
121 not an honorable discharge. So we would bring them down here. I brought this kid down here, probably 18
122 years old, an African American kid from Oakland. I brought him down here for the first time, Fort Ord. We
123 went to Martinez Hall, sat there for about four hours, they processed his papers and then I drove him back to
124 San Francisco. At that time, we coordinated with the Friends Meeting of Carmel, on Cherry Street, I think
125 it’s called, the Friends Meeting. There was a Pacific Counseling Service that also had a group of lawyers so
126 if we ran into any problems we could check with them. So, the Quakers we dealt with lived in Seaside. They
127 were all white. They lived in a predominantly African American community and they dressed in granny
128 dresses and traditional Quaker dresses and they talked with *thee* and *thou* and all of that! I’d never seen
129 anything like that before! [Chuckles] But anyway, that’s my first time to Fort Ord and my first time to
130 Monterey. Actually, I’d come down here several times. We had a prison visitation service and we came down
131 here and we did visits to the stockade here as well. The situation there was really bad at the time. The
132 stockade is being used for horses now, I think, or something.

133 **Benmayor:** *So what was it like for you, then, to come.... Set the scene for me in terms of what time*
134 *of day you arrived and what you felt when you came back onto Fort Ord, to the campus.*

135 **Shenk:** So here’s where it gets a little touchy, so you tell me if I start talking about things that
136 shouldn’t be talked about! So this is what reminded me to go back and do the sort of flashback, because when
137 I was here before Monterey was just really beautiful and Fort Ord was meticulously manicured. You know,
138 all those green lawns and everything. It was an Army fort that was well maintained in the ‘70s and ‘80s.
139 Flying in over Monterey Bay, it was as spectacular as ever, just flying into Monterey airport. I looked down
140 and I said, “Ah, this is paradise. It’s so beautiful.” I got to the airport and there was a faculty member there

141 with a woman to pick me up. I thought this was a faculty member and his wife. It turned out it wasn't. It was
142 one of his students. But they picked me up, they took me to lunch in downtown Monterey and brought me
143 [18:25] to Fort Ord, to CSUMB. It was so different. It looked like a desert. There were weeds everywhere
144 and where there weren't weeds it was just sand. The buildings were rundown. All these old World War II
145 buildings with paint flaking off of them, I mean, it looked desolate. I remember that we drove onto the
146 campus, we went on some backroads. It turns out that the road that we drove on and I thought was a sidewalk,
147 was a road that goes in behind the Black Box and Building 82, 84 and 86. SBSC [the Social and Behavioral
148 Sciences Center] was in Building 86A at the time. That building inside was bare concrete floors, bare concrete
149 block walls. I mean it was a depressing looking area. It was not anywhere near the center of campus. Well,
150 okay, I'm getting a little ahead. That's where SBSC was by the time I got here to teach in the Fall. When I
151 came for my on campus interview, SBSC was still in Building 12 which is now Heron Hall. We came up
152 behind there. We parked in behind where the parking lot is and you could go in and out those back doors at
153 that time. We went in there and the offices where Psych is now, was were the SBSC faculty were there and
154 Lily Martinez and I am trying to remember the name of the woman who was head of HR at the time. She was
155 so good. I think her last name was Rogers.

156 **Benmayor:** *Mary Rogers?*

157 **Shenk:** No. It wasn't Mary Rogers. And it wasn't Linda Rogers because Linda was a psych faculty.
158 I could be wrong about that last name. [Chuckles] It appeared to me as though everything was in chaos. It
159 appeared to me as though nothing was organized. This one person, she had everything organized. She knew
160 everything. She was somebody who had come from another CSU. She knew how all the paperwork that had
161 to be done.

162 **Benmayor:** *Was she sort of a heavyset woman?*

163 **Shenk:** Not very. She might have been a little over but she kind of had reddish hair.

164 **Benmayor:** *I don't remember.*

165 **Shenk:** She's the one that took me back to the airport after my interview. So I was brought in. I was
166 introduced to Lily and to Ruben [Mendoza]. Then I think I was shown around [chuckles] what passed for a
167 campus at the time. This guy, you probably know him or knew him, everybody knew him, he was a Mexican
168 student who went by the name of Chuy. He was from Salinas. And he was a transfer student from Hartnell
169 **[21:40]** and he came in and he owned this place! He was so proud of this place that any new person that came
170 in, he wanted to show them around. He gave me a tour. Took me everywhere. After I was hired, I came here
171 for the next two years while he was finishing up. I saw him everywhere. He just completely loved this place
172 and it belonged to him. That was, to me, one of the most inspiring things. Here was a kid from a migrant farm
173 labor family and this was a university that was being created for him. That's the message I got from him.

174 **Benmayor:** *Was he an SBS student?*

175 **Shenk:** No. He was not an SBS student.

176 **Benmayor:** He was probably Liberal Studies or something like that.

177 **Shenk:** I think he might have been Liberal Studies. I'm not sure.

178 **Benmayor:** *I think I know who you mean.*

179 **Shenk:** I think about him a lot. I wish I could remember his last name. I'm sure it's in my notes
180 somewhere when I find those, because I know he gave a lot of other people tours. Later on he did tours for
181 students coming in. [Chuckles] I was just so inspired by that.

182 **Benmayor:** *So what was your interview like?*

183 **Shenk:** That's where I met you. You were on the search committee. It was in a conference room
184 there in Building 12. I can almost tell you the order in which people were sitting around the table: George
185 Baldwin to my left. Manual Carlos, Christie Sleeter, you, Lily Martinez. There's somebody else that was on
186 that committee. There was a student on the committee. It might have been Greg Balza.

187 **Benmayor:** *And a community representative.*

188 **Shenk:** And a community member. It was a big committee, like seven people. I remember getting
189 stuck. People went through and they asked me about my background and what I thought about the Vision
190 Statement and things like that. I've been through a lot of job interviews. This was the only place I've been
191 interviewed by that referenced a Vision or a Mission Statement. Not even Marymount or Earlham College
192 ever brought up what they stand for as an institution.

193 **Benmayor:** *I think that they no longer do here, too.*

194 **[24:36] Shenk:** No, you're absolutely right. Yeah. That's one of the things that has changed here. A little
195 aside on that: A few years ago, quite a few years ago, maybe eight, I was on a search committee for an
196 administrator. Vice President for Finance and Planning. Planning and Finance. Caroline Haskell and I were
197 on that committee. When we looked through the questions for the candidates, we both said, "There's nothing
198 about the Vision on here. That needs to be the first question. Have you read the Vision and what do you think
199 about it?" This was a large committee. This had three faculty members and the rest were administrators. If
200 Caroline and I had not been on the committee those candidates would never have been asked about the Vision
201 Statement. So it was during the time when Dianne Harrison was President when that search took place. I
202 don't know if I am saying something that shouldn't be said because what happens on these committees is
203 supposed to be confidential. But I think in terms of what questions get posed, that should be public. What we
204 realized was that we were the only two people on this large committee to whom it occurred that you need to
205 start with the Vision. What is this place about? Why are we here? So I think what Amalia [Mesa Bains] has
206 always referred as "Vision slippage," had occurred by that time. But this was very impressive to me. It also
207 was a danger sign because it appeared to me as though each person on that committee [his interview
208 committee] had a different piece of the Vision that was important to them. So technology was a big thing for
209 George. I remember being tremendously impressed with – I should maybe not be naming people but – with
210 Manuel Carlos really pressing me on my experiences mentoring students one-on-one. He said, "We do a lot
211 of that here and a lot of our students need one-on-one mentoring. How do you do that?" He pressed me on

212 that, pushed me quite hard on whether or not I would be a good mentor. Then where I remember you coming
213 [27:35] in on this was when George asked me, “In your classes what are the outcomes that you are looking
214 for?” I had never heard this language before. I had been teaching for eight years and I never heard anybody
215 say “what outcomes.” I said, “I don't know what you mean.” Can you explain to me what you mean by an
216 outcome?” He gave me an answer that I didn't understand. I tried to answer it. You obviously saw that I was
217 having trouble with this. So you tried to help me with that. You tried to help explain to me what outcomes
218 were. You're the first person I ever heard use the phrase “outcomes-based education.”

219 **Benmayor:** *[Chuckles] I had never heard of it before coming here myself!*

220 **Shenk:** Right. As I said, memory can be faulty and so maybe you weren't the person who said it but
221 that's my memory. I can actually picture you sitting -

222 **Benmayor:** *Are you sure it wasn't Christie because she -*

223 **Shenk:** It was not Christie.

224 **Benmayor:** *Oh, okay.*

225 **Shenk:** I know that it was not Christie. I actually had a conversation with her about this years later.
226 I even think that you were wearing red and she was wearing white.

227 **Benmayor:** *[Laughs] So was I kind or not?*

228 **Shenk:** You were. Here's the thing, and I wish I could go back and find these emails. Christie was
229 also very friendly to me. I think she took the conversation away from that. You and I went back and forth
230 and back and forth. You kept trying to help me and it clearly was not answering George's question. Then
231 Christie was the one that said, “Let's take it somewhere else.” And I'm not sure where that went. I think
232 Christie asked about teaching philosophy and that sort of thing. So, I thought as a result of that I really blew
233 this interview. The next day I flew back to Los Angeles and was welcomed back by Sister Helen who really
234 wanted to know how the interview went. I said, “I'm sure I didn't get it. It was a bad interview.”

235 [30:20] A pretty bad interview.” And she was disappointed. So we finished up that, and in June I got two
236 calls on the same day. I got a call from Lily Martinez offering me the job, and on the same day I got a call
237 from my mother saying my father was in the hospital and probably wouldn’t survive the week. So she said
238 all the family needs to come home right now. My father’s in the hospital. So I jumped on a plane, flew to
239 Sarasota, Florida. This was my first tenure track job. I’d had a Visiting Assistant Professorship at Earlham
240 College. And Marymount College did not have tenure. Everybody is on year to year. So this was my first
241 tenure track job. So, I was able to go in and tell my father that I got it. That was a really important thing for
242 me to be able to tell him, and he died within a week. So, I connect these things. It’s just a huge change in my
243 life that happened in June of 1996. I remember when he died because it’s the same month that I was hired at
244 CSU – offered a job. I remember when I was hired at CSUMB because it was the week that my father died.

245 **Benmayor:** *Did they give you any time to respond or did you say yes immediately?*

246 **Shenk:** Yeah, yeah. I said yes immediately. Sister Helen wanted me out. [Laughs] I actually really
247 enjoyed Marymount. I don't know if you are familiar with it. It sits on cliffs overlooking Palos Verdes.

248 **Benmayor:** *Oh, yeah, yeah. Because I’m from Redondo Beach.*

249 **Shenk:** Yeah. Okay. So you can see all the way to Catalina [island] from there. It’s spectacularly
250 beautiful. And I love many of the faculty there. I would have been happy to stay there for the rest of my
251 career even though it didn’t pay well and there was no job security. But it was rewarding. That particular
252 body of students that they had there were very rewarding to teach. Those students, incidentally, were mainly
253 from very wealthy families but they were the most needy students I have ever taught. I was frequently called
254 in the middle of the night to go to the psych ward of the hospital or go to the police station. There was a
255 tremendous drug problem there. Frequently the kids would give my name rather than their parents. I had that
256 one time at CSUMB, where I was called by the police regarding a student. So it’s interesting to me that the
257 very wealthy students in Marymount had these huge problems. I think they were just emotionally abused,
258 [33:58] psychologically abused by their families. At CSUMB, our working class students, they come from

259 strong families. The family relationships that our students come from are just amazing. So that was a huge
260 change for me, seeing those students in that first year and forming those relationships with those students.

261 **Benmayor:** *So, you were brought on, and you came, I suppose, August?*

262 **Shenk:** Yes. I moved up here in August. August 8, 1996.

263 **Benmayor:** *Where did you come to?*

264 **Shenk:** To Schoonover. [Chuckles] This is another thing that was interesting to me. Lily Martinez,
265 George Baldwin, and I think Greg Balza and Axel Cricchio, who at the time was Angelic Cricchio, was a
266 student in SBS at the time, they were there waiting for me at my place in Schoonover when I got there to
267 help me unload the truck. There were like five people there!

268 **Benmayor:** *How nice!*

269 **Shenk:** Lily had got all these people together and they helped me.

270 **Benmayor:** *What street were you on?*

271 **Shenk:** The first one was an apartment. White

272 **Benmayor:** *White.*

273 **Shenk:** It was just White?

274 **Benmayor:** *Yes.*

275 **Shenk:** Yeah, okay. It was really a pretty horrible apartment. It was an upstairs apartment. The
276 people living downstairs had several dogs that they kept in the backyard and the dogs pooped in the backyard
277 and they didn't clean it up. There was no grass back there and it smelled bad and it was dusty and all of that.
278 And they were really noisy. Within a few months, I moved over to Patch Court, which was much nicer.
279 Again, people helped me move., I'd moved a couple of times in Los Angeles and did it all by myself. Or one
280 faculty member helped me there. So that was a thing that, immediately I felt that at CSUMB there was a
281 community of people that wanted to help each other. That would very quickly dissipate. I don't know if it
282 was in the process of dissipating for the whole campus between 1995-6 and 96-97 or whether it had to do

283 with the fact that the original 30 or 35 founding faculty from the first year were so beat from that first year. .
284 . . I mean that was one of the things I noticed when I got here. Everybody that had been there the first year
285 just seemed like they were wiped out. And all the new faculty that they had hired, they had screened them
286 because they were really committed to a set of values that were expressed in the Vision Statement. So all of
287 [37:41] this new set of 30 or 35, what they called Second Wave Planning Faculty, that's what they told me,
288 -- that's what Betty McEady told me [chuckles] --, came in for this reason. Many of us looked at the faculty
289 that had been here the first year and they were all beat. They were tired. They were like, "Okay, we can't do
290 anything else." So from the start of Fall 1996, I think there was conflict between the original founding faculty
291 and the second wave. That's a gross generalization. There were specific personality clashes that happened at
292 the very beginning. Maybe I'm getting ahead of myself. The question you had asked me?

293 **Benmayor:** *I wanted you to talk a little bit about what your first assignment was.*

294 **Shenk:** Yeah. Okay.

295 **Benmayor:** *And what classes you were going to teach?*

296 **Shenk:** So let me tell you that the Planning Week took me back to Earlham College. The Faculty
297 Planning Week here in Fall 1996 and for quite a number of years after that was very similar to what they did
298 at Earlham, which was like focus on what we're all doing together as a community. How are we all in this
299 together? What are we doing? There were lots of faculty meetings that involved faculty from all the different
300 Centers. And we were Centers at the time. We weren't divisions or departments. It was all Centers.

301 **Benmayor:** *Centers and Institutes.*

302 **Shenk:** Centers and Institutes. And every faculty member had their own Institute. [Laughs] I was
303 given an Institute and a budget. It wasn't a big budget but I was given an Institute and \$6,000 to do something
304 with. I remember Manuel Carlos saying to me, "You have a Social History Institute and your budget is
305 \$6,000. Do something with it." So every day of that Faculty Planning Week was filled, from dawn to dusk,
306 with meetings. This is where we got to know people from across the campus. But it's also where immediately

307 in the first meeting, I began to sense -- more than sense, I was actually told flat out by various people--, "You
308 won't want to stay in SBSC. Everybody who's gone into there has left within an hour." Right? "They don't
309 stay. People leave." "There's these three guys there that nobody can get along with and you're gonna want
310 to leave." Angie's told me she had the same experience. She was invited to go to Liberal Studies. I was told
311 **[40:56]** by Josina, "You'll be wanting to move to HCOM." Dorothy Lloyd again told me, "You can come to
312 Liberal Studies if you want." Yong Lao was invited into ESSP [Earth Systems Science and Policy]. So
313 immediately, the three of us, Angie [Tran] and Yong Lao and I ,who were hired together that year, our first
314 experience of these university-wide meetings was that we were in a Center that was a pariah to the rest of the
315 campus. When people would meet us and they heard that we were in SBSC there was one of two reactions.
316 There was either just rejection, "We can't have anything to do with you," or "We feel sorry for you. Maybe
317 you can come to our Center." [Sigh] That was rather traumatic for the three of us. That first week the three
318 of us went over to Thai Bistro in Pacific Grove and sat for like four hours talking about what are we going to
319 do about this. "We're in a Center that obviously is not integrated into the rest of the campus, that everybody
320 we meet on campus either feels sorry for us or thinks we're the enemy because we're in SBSC." That's when
321 we found out that each one of us had been invited to go somewhere else. We talked about should we do that
322 or not. We sort of bonded with each other over that. We talked about wouldn't it be nice if all three of us, if
323 we're gonna move, three of us move to the same place together? We had I don't know how many dinners
324 together that we talked about this and we decided we really like what SBSC says it's about in its literature
325 and we see ourselves as social scientists and we want to be in the program. Maybe we can help shape this
326 and make it into something ...? We committed to connecting with the rest of the campus. We immediately
327 **[43:22]** saw that the three people in SBSC were disconnected. For whatever reason they were not part of the
328 rest of the campus. They saw themselves as that way and the rest of the campus saw them as that way. We
329 decided we're going to join the University-wide committees. We're going to participate in these things. We're
330 going to go to everything. And we did. Maybe that's why it seemed like the week was so full. The first

331 campus-wide meeting that we went to was in the Black Box. Steve Arvizu led this meeting, and he started
332 off. There was this big poster in the front with the Vision Statement on it.

333 **Benmayor:** *He was Provost at that time?*

334 **Shenk:** He was Provost at the time. And he said, “Okay, we’re going to do a reading of this. I’m
335 going to read a sentence and then you read a sentence.” It was like being in a Catholic mass, right?! [Chuckles]
336 I was sitting next to Tomás Kalmar and Tomás stands up and says, “I didn’t come here to join a cult. I’m
337 going to outside to have a cigarette.” [Laughs] And he walked out!

338 **Benmayor:** *[Laughs]*

339 **Shenk:** The rest of us stayed there and Steve read the first line and then we all read the second line
340 to him. We went through and did the whole thing. Then everybody went up and signed it. Except Tomás. I
341 think if you look at that original signed Vision Statement, I know it’s in storage somewhere, I’m positive
342 Tomás’ signature is not on there. He was one of the people from outside SBSC that took a liking to Angie
343 and me right away and our connection was music. Somehow or another we had started talking about music
344 and he invited Angie and me over to his house that week to read through Bach. He played the piano and we
345 sang Bach chorales.

346 **Benmayor:** *Wow!*

347 **Shenk:** It was just wonderful. And I thought, “Okay, what do you teach here?” He said, “Well, I
348 teach Music, I teach Spanish, I teach Math. . .”

349 **Benmayor:** *[Chuckles]* “*And I’m in HCOM*” [Humanities and Communication].

350 **Shenk:** Oh, was he in HCOM? He said, “I teach math as a foreign language. The reason that so
351 many students have problems with math is they don’t understand that it’s a language. It’s the language of
352 science. And you have to approach it that way.” So anyway that first week is a really sharp memory that I
353 have. After we finished the responsive reading to that [Vision Statement], we had a little break and
354 everybody came back together and Tomás came back in. Then Steve had the new faculty stand up and

355 introduce themselves. And again, people went around and said who they were and where they came from.
356 And we got to Tomás and he stood up [chuckles] and he said... he studies animal behavior. I forget what
357 the field is. The field that studies animal behavior, but he says, "In this field they study primates and when
358 primates introduce themselves to each other they show them their backside." He turned around and bent
359 over and said, "Here's my backside," and then he walked out again! [Chuckles]

360 **Benmayor:** *Oh, my goodness! [Chuckles]*

361 **[47:48] Shenk:** So from that point on I loved Tomás. He and I had many dinners together. It turned out
362 later, I was so surprised, he was a close, personal friend of Peter's as well. So Tomás was this guy that just
363 would not fit into any sort of structure. He just opposed every structure. Every time people criticized Peter
364 [Smith, the President], he would come out and defend Peter and I was like, "This doesn't make any sense."
365 Tomás is this resistor against everything but he's a defender of the President who from the beginning seemed
366 like he was not on the same side as the faculty? Although, you know, looking through some of my materials
367 I found some letters from him and things like that, given what we'd been through, that he [Smith] may have
368 been more committed to the Vision than some of the Presidents we've had since. He was not necessarily an
369 effective advocate for the Vision but I guess my views on him have mellowed. I made a note to myself. I did
370 want to say just a little bit about my on campus interview. I was also interviewed by Armando [Arias] who
371 was Dean at the time. Or he was a Vice President. And Peter. And when I was interviewed by Peter we talked
372 about faculty relations with the administration. He wanted to know how I related to administrations in my
373 previous jobs. I said, "Well, my experience everywhere that I've taught before here, which was five different
374 institutions, is that faculty are always in some way in conflict with the President. They have sort of different
375 agendas and that's been a pattern." So I said, "I expect that you and I will be on opposite sides of a lot of
376 issues. I would fight very hard for the side that I'm on." And he said, "Well, yeah, I like that." So I was
377 impressed with him at the time, and he did go through the Vision Statement with me. He talked about how
378 the Vision Statement was written and how that whole campus was committed to that. So in that interview it

379 seemed to me like everybody was committed to this Vision Statement. People were committed to different
380 **[50:23]** aspects of it. Then that first week after the University-wide meetings, -- then we had the meetings in
381 the center, SBSC -- that's where my first sort of big conflicts started. The first meeting I literally got into a
382 yelling match with Manuel. That was the start of a very rocky relationship that went back and forth. We took
383 each other out to dinner over the course of the next several years. We went to concerts together in San
384 Francisco and San Jose but then we'd come back and we'd fight tooth and nail over things. We just saw
385 things very differently, particularly in terms of the way classes would be structured. He was a 'banking model
386 lecturer' kind of guy, even though he was so committed to this one-on-one mentorship. But he didn't see that
387 as anything like what happens in the classroom.

388 **Benmayor:** *More like the UC [University of California] model.*

389 **Shenk:** Yeah. Yeah. There was an awful lot of badmouthing of the rest of the campus, I remember,
390 in that meeting. I had made some comment. I said I was curious to know why none of the founding faculty
391 from SBSC were in any of the University-wide meetings that Angie and Yong Lao and I had been going to.
392 At that point Manuel said, "I don't go to any University-wide meetings and for 33 years at UC Santa Barbara
393 I never went to a university-wide meeting." Then we had this whole discussion about the Vision Statement,
394 about is this a community where we're all sort of committed to the same thing? Are we going to be this little
395 island over here? We had this huge battle about that. It was clear that they saw themselves as having been
396 rejected by the rest of the campus. And that they were just, "Okay, you want it that way? That's the way it's
397 going to be? Then we're going to do our own thing." So I had been introduced to the ULRs, the University
398 Learning Requirements, that week. I remember being in a meeting with Christie Sleeter and Josina [Makau]
399 and other people. I don't remember who else was in that meeting. But I think they had small group meetings,
400 I think Marsha Moroh might have been in that one, where the new faculty were introduced to the ULRs. I
401 remember having this really intense conversation with Josina about the language of that. I said, "Shouldn't
402 this be teaching requirements rather than learning requirements? Because shouldn't it be requirements for

403 what the faculty are supposed to do?” It was that conversation with Josina, ironically I think, that first started
404 helping me to understand what we meant by outcomes-based education. So what is it the students are
405 [53:42] supposed to learn? What do they have to know and be able to do when they finish a course? It was
406 still sort of vague to me at that time. But that was where it started to make sense to me, discussing the ULRs.
407 Then Josina gave me a little history of the ULRs at CSUMB. She said, “Okay, the first semester there were
408 22 [ULRs] and there was too many.” So she said, “For the second semester we reduced it to 17. And that was
409 still too many. So this semester, Fall semester of 1996 it’s only 15.” So we went through what they were,
410 these 15 University Learning Requirements, and Josina said, “These are requirements for all students on
411 campus.” I’d come from a two-year college that just put students through the GE, the lower division General
412 Education, to prepare them to transfer to majors. So I really understood the CSU and UC lower division GE
413 requirements. I immediately said, “How does this map on to California GE requirements?” Because I did a
414 lot of advising at Marymount and I knew those things from memory about what those requirements were. I
415 said, “I don’t see how these map on.” She said, “We’re created to be an innovative university and we’re not
416 bound by that.” I said, “I think it’s State law.” She said, “Well the Chancellor says that we’re sort of excused
417 from this.” I said, “I don’t think the Chancellor can excuse it.” This began a discussion that would continue
418 over the course of that Fall semester 1996 about ULRs. Angie and I thought the thing wasn’t working from
419 the very beginning. But we worked with Ross Miyashiro, who was the Head of Advising then, and had come
420 from CSU San Bernardino or someplace like that. He knew the transfer issues inside and out and the ULR
421 system drove him crazy. But he had put together a map. He said, “Okay, here’s how we can [the state
422 requirements], map these together.” Angie and I said, “There might be a way to do this that works better that
423 reduces the number of units so they can double count and things like that.” We put together a proposal and
424 we went around to various departments. I know I gave it to Josina. She didn’t like it. I took it to Bill Head in
425 ESSP. He loved it and he brought Angie and me to an ESSP faculty meeting. They voted unanimously for
426 our proposal. This came back and went to the Academic Senate -

427 **Benmayor:** *Part of that was because the sciences needed more space.*

428 **Shenk:** They didn't present it in that way at the time. They weren't making that case at the time. But
429 this came back to the Academic Senate. It seemed like so many things happened in that Fall Semester of
430 1996. We were getting concerns from students at the same time this was happening. Greg Balza was an
431 Army veteran. He had been in the Army for eight years and then he came to CSUMB. The first year he was
432 a pioneer student. He came in as a transfer student, as a junior and took the SBSC Major Pro Seminar first
433 year. When I got there in '96, he was a senior. As a result of this thing that Angie and I proposed, the
434 Academic Senate said, "Okay, we're going to create a ULR committee, a University-wide committee that is
435 going to revise the ULRs, look at them and come up with a new plan." So there had been one for Fall '95
436 [58:18]. A different one for Spring '96. Another one for Fall '96. And then there's going to be another new
437 one for Spring of '97. So every semester is going to change. So we have a University-wide election for a new
438 ULR committee. David Takacs gets the top number of votes, so he's the Chair. Then also elected to that
439 committee were Josina and me and Christie, Tom Hattori -

440 **Benmayor:** *Cecilia?*

441 **Shenk:** Cecilia [O'Leary], and Greg Balza was elected as a student representative, and Cheryl, she
442 taught English at Seaside High School, was elected as community member. So Greg Balza, the student
443 member, comes into my office shortly after we've been elected to this committee and he has this big
444 document like two inches thick and he throws it down on my desk. And he said, "My degree here is not going
445 to be legal." I said, "Why?" He says, "This is the Title V California Education Code. Look at Section 40404"
446 -- which ironically 404 is the Seaside exit from the freeway. [Chuckles]

447 **Benmayor:** *[Laughs]*

448 **Shenk:** That's how I remember these things! [Chuckles] So, I look and that is the U.S. History and
449 U.S. Government – it's called the American Institutions and American Ideals Requirement. It's the only
450 statutory requirement for curriculum for higher education in California. There are no other statutory

451 requirements. All of the others are Executive Orders. This is the only requirement that has been mandated by
452 the State Legislature to be taught in order to get a degree. Actually, the UC have a different set of requirements
453 that are similar but not the same. But for the CSU, for it to be a legal requirement you have to meet American
454 Institutions and American Ideals. He said, "There's nothing in the ULRs ...". The History ULR did not
455 specify U.S. History, it was just like History. Somewhere in my files I have the original description of the
456 History ULR but it was not U.S. History. The American Ideals Requirement is a U.S. History Requirement.
457 So we didn't have that in the ULRs. We didn't have the American Institutions, *anything*. Nothing about the
458 U.S. government. The U.S. Constitution. The California State Constitution. All of that is specified in there
459 and it's quite detailed in the law. That day, Barry Munitz, the Chancellor of the CSU was on campus for
460 **[1:01:45]** a meeting with faculty and administrators. There in Building One, in the conference room in
461 Building One. I was supposed to go to that for some reason. I might have been representing the ULR
462 committee on that. But the room was packed and Barry Munitz was there talking about how wonderful this
463 new university is and we're committed to these values. Peter Smith is sitting up there with him. So there are
464 some questions at the end. At the very end I ask him whether or not CSUMB is bound by the statutory
465 requirements in Title V. He said, "Well, I don't know. What are you referring to?" I said, "Well, Section
466 40404, the American Institutions and American Ideals Requirement, and our GE, the University Learning
467 Requirement system has nothing in it for that. I had a student just come to me today and say 'I don't think
468 my degree is going to be legal because it doesn't include this requirement.'" And he said, "I don't know. Let
469 me check with the CSU Counsel and we'll get back to you." And then the meeting adjourned. Peter elbowed
470 his way through the crowd to the back of the room to me. I mean he was furious. He was red in the face. And
471 he said, "We are an innovative university. We are not bound by that. You should not have asked that
472 question." I said, "But it's State law." And then he said, "Get me Title V." He's from Vermont. He doesn't
473 know anything about California Title V. [Laughs]

474 **Benmayor:** *[Laughs]*

475 **Shenk:** So I go back to my office and I get that document that Greg Balza has left for me and I take
476 it to Peter and I show it to him. I said, “This was passed by the State Legislature signed by the Governor.
477 Back in the 1960’s. Pat Brown signed it.” So at the next meeting of the ULR committee, Josina says, “Okay,
478 we need a letter from the Counsel to the Chancellor telling us whether or not we are required to meet this.”
479 So somebody on the committee was charged with actually staying in touch with the Chancellor’s office to
480 get that. And we did get a letter saying, “You are required to do that.” As an emergency situation, then, we
481 had to get all of our students assessed in American Ideals and American Institutions. And so there was a
482 group of us -

483 **Benmayor:** *Do you mean individuals like outside of -*

484 **Shenk:** Individual students.

485 **Benmayor:** *Assessed outside of the classroom.*

486 **Shenk:** Outside because we had no classes.

487 **Benmayor:** *What did. We used to call those...?*

488 **Shenk:** Well, they were Independent Studies, or they were special assessment ... Independent
489 Assessment.

490 **Benmayor:** *Independent assessments, yeah.*

491 **Shenk:** So what we did was, we created #295 courses. You know, Special Topics. Not Special Topics
492 but Independent Studies courses. So Cecilia [O’Leary] and I and I don’t remember who else, I think there
493 were several people on campus who did assessments for American Ideals and American Institutions.

494 **[1:05:36]** And I mean that was a huge workload! They [students] had to create a portfolio that showed that
495 they met this requirement. So we were collecting these portfolios and reading these portfolios and assessing
496 them. This was a requirement. The students got one unit, I think, for that and they were upset about that.
497 They had to put together a whole big portfolio and they get one unit for it. They had to do all this work. Then
498 we had a ton of challenges. In looking through my materials, I found this email from Cecilia asking me about

499 a portfolio she had assessed and asked me to look it over and did I think that the student had met this and
500 that. So I went through it and gave her the reasons I didn't think the student had quite assessed it. I think the
501 student was really upset. The student had done a lot of work. But it's really hard to do this. They had no
502 classes to coach them through that. They had been told now in order to get a legal degree, and our first
503 graduation was going to be that coming Spring, we had to get all those students through that.

504 **Benmayor:** *Well, actually, it was the second graduation, I think.*

505 **Shenk:** No, the first one was Spring '97.

506 **Benmayor:** *Really?*

507 **Shenk:** Yeah. In fact, I have a document for that here somewhere.

508 **Benmayor:** *Oh, I thought there had been an . . .*

509 **Shenk:** This is something that you and Robina agree with. Robina also says there was a graduation
510 in Spring of '96. There were some students that were given degrees, I think, there was no actual graduation
511 ceremony. Because I have the program for 1997 which says, "First Graduating Class of CSUMB." But
512 anyway, if they were transfer students that had completed that requirement at a community college then they
513 were fine. But quite a number of students had one-half of that. They had either American Institutions or
514 American Ideals. Many of them had the U.S. History but not the . . .

515 **Benmayor:** *The Constitution.*

516 **Shenk:** The Constitution. So it got really complicated. So this committee worked all of Fall '96 and
517 then into Spring of '97. We worked and worked on this so that Dell Felder, who was the new Provost, got
518 really frustrated with us that we were spinning our wheels. She said, "Okay, I'm sending you to – what was
519 it, the La Playa Hotel in Carmel?-- for the weekend? Don't come back till you have a plan."

520 **Benmayor:** *[Laughs]*

521 **[1:08:56] Shenk:** We didn't stay at the hotel. We stayed at our homes. I remember we went to the hotel on
522 Friday afternoon, Saturday and Sunday and we worked all day long I think. So again, it was this committee,
523 you know, Christie and Cecilia and Tom and Armando and

524 **Benmayor:** *I remember.*

525 **Shenk:** Halfway through, by noon on Saturday, we said as a committee: We do not have
526 administrative support for the system that we want to put in place. We don't have any clear indication that
527 the administration is onboard with this. It doesn't appear as though the Registrar's Office understands ULRs.
528 It doesn't appear as though the Admissions and Outreach Office has any idea what we're doing. So none of
529 the people in administration who are responsible for processing students through this, understand what we're
530 doing and why we're doing it. It was very clear to all of us that things were not matching up at all. So Dell
531 Felder was trying to get all this stuff lined up. She came in, she sat with us, she knew what we were trying to
532 do. But the other people that had all been brought in from other CSUs were trying to fit us into the structure
533 of the CSUs that they came from. It didn't work. Dell came from Texas. She had no preconceived ideas about
534 the structure so she was open to that. So, we called her and said, "You need to meet us for lunch Saturday at
535 this hotel and we have a demand. And it's an ultimatum, actually. You meet our ultimatum or we're quitting."

536 **Benmayor:** [Laughs]

537 **Shenk:** So she came, she was all like, "What is this?" We said, "We need a fully funded Office of
538 Teaching, Learning and Assessment and we need the best person in the country to run it. It cannot be
539 somebody who isn't into like all of the things that we are trying to do. Outcomes based education. Student
540 centered learning. Interdisciplinarity. Somebody who has been involved in a leadership position nationally."
541 And Dell listened to us and she said, "We'll do it." We were there for about an hour and a half with her. At
542 the end of that lunch she said, "You got it."

543 **Benmayor:** Wow.

544 **[1:11:51] Shenk:** They went out and they recruited Amy Driscoll who appeared on campus the next Fall
545 and proceeded to piss off everybody. [Chuckles] I mean she came in and looked at what we were doing and
546 she said, “You say you are outcomes-based but I don't know anybody on this campus that knows what that
547 means!” [Laughs] She attended every single ULR meeting. And she sat there and she grilled people on our
548 outcomes and how are you assessing them. I remember people getting up and walking out of those meetings
549 in anger. People, some of your best friends from HCOM, getting up and saying, “I'm leaving and I'm not
550 coming back to this meeting if Amy's going to be there. I will only come back if she's not there.”

551 **Benmayor:** *And I think I know who you mean. [Laughs]*

552 **Shenk:** [Laughs] Right. She did not give up. Amy said, “Well, okay, you're going through your first
553 accreditation. WASC [Western Association of Schools and Colleges] is going to be here. They're going to
554 be looking at this. They're going to ask harder questions than I'm asking.” Of course Amy was able to come
555 in with a million dollar grant that funded the Office. So it was well funded. She had a lot of help from a lot
556 of people on campus but I, to this day, believe that without Amy Driscoll we would not have got accredited
557 the first time around. I don't know if there's anybody else in the country that could have done what she did.
558 I mean she was amazing. I fought with her every inch of the way. She and I disagreed on so many things.
559 She invited me and Josina to go with her to Florida State University for a conference on student learning. I
560 forget what it was specifically about. But the three of us were supposed to do a workshop on outcomes-based
561 education. We had not had sufficient time to work with each other and get on the same page. We had worked
562 some together and we had sort of a broad outline of how we were going to do it. But Josina and Amy were
563 so furious at me after that for the way I described outcomes-based education. I mean, they wanted to have
564 me beheaded for this, they were so upset. [Chuckles] So my memories of those early years are of these kinds
565 of conflicts . . . where you could go through that conflict and then work with that person on something else
566 and be just fine. I mean when we got back, you know, Amy invited me to her house for dinner and we were
567 fine. There are other people on campus, quite a few people on campus, you have one big fight with them and

568 then that's it, you are persona non grata. It comes back to Tomás' concern about whether or not we joined a
569 cult. You know? I grew up in a very religious community. I was Mennonite. I know what it's like to proof
570 text people with the Bible, right. That's what people at CSUMB were doing in those early years, which was,
571 "You're in violation of the Vision Statement. The Vision Statement says this, you're doing that, you're
572 wrong." And so people staked out hard line positions based on their reading of the Vision Statement. It was
573 a good thing, it was a bad thing. It was a two-edged sword. We all had our favorite lines from the Vision
574 Statement. If somebody violated that, they were bad people. So a lot of the conflicts in the early years, a lot
575 of the conflicts in SBSC, were about that. Angie and Yong Lao and I, that whole first year, were basically
576 not on speaking terms with Ruben and George and Manuel. I mean every meeting would just disintegrate
577 into shouting matches. It was miserable. I'll tell you, the person that saved me that first year was David
578 Takacs. He and I are both runners. We would go every Tuesday and Thursday afternoon at four o'clock. We
579 said, "No matter what's happening we're going on a run in the back country." And we'd go out there and
580 we'd run seven, eight miles back there and we would talk about what was happening. So I would tell David
581 what was going on in SBSC and he would just say, "I can't believe it." He said, "You need to leave this
582 place. You need to quit. This is not healthy. It is not good for you. These people are bad people." So he was
583 **[1:17:55]** seeing it only from my perspective. But in that first year I had burned my bridges with George and
584 Manuel and Ruben. Angie had burned her bridges with George and Manuel. Not much with Ruben. It was
585 really, really serious. Ruben stopped coming to meetings. He would not come. He wouldn't even come in
586 while the rest of us were there. So Angie and Yong Lao and I formed these really tight bonds with each other
587 because we didn't hate each other, didn't fight with each other. Manuel [pause] really wanted me to be his
588 boy. Right? And he tried really hard that whole year, put me in charge of things. He just singlehandedly said,
589 "You're the chair of the Curriculum Committee for the Center." Then he didn't like what I did. So then he
590 said, "Okay, we're going to have a Faculty Executive Committee and you'll be on that." He just appointed
591 people. He appointed me and himself and maybe George to the Faculty Executive Committee. Well, the

592 Faculty Executive Committee couldn't work with each other because the three of us didn't see eye to eye on
593 anything at all. But to his credit he tried to incorporate me into what was going on. But I had to agree with
594 him on everything. If I disagreed with anything then it was just, "You're wrong." And you know him. He
595 has a loud voice and he could talk over me if we had debate about something. The thing is, we would have
596 these huge fights and for a whole week or two we wouldn't talk to each other and scowl at each other and
597 walk past each other. Then he'd invite me to go to a San Francisco Symphony concert with him. To go with
598 him and Ann and have a fancy dinner in San Francisco that he would pay for! So it was really a mixed bag.
599 He wanted to be friends but he really wanted the faculty there to answer to him and only to him. If you didn't
600 answer to him, didn't do what he wanted you to do then it just didn't work. So he assigned me my courses.

601
602 **[Break in the recording; resumes on a different topic -- Assessment]**

603
604 **[1:20:44] Shenk:** This is one of the things that I really admire Josina on, all the work she did on developing
605 standards and criteria for the outcomes for EngCom. It took years. It took years to come up with workable
606 standards and criteria for assessing the ULRs. For many years. This is when Amy came in. Amy and Josina
607 I think worked together really well. This was one of the things right at the very beginning that Amy said to a
608 lot of us, "Okay, you have things that you're calling outcomes. Some of them look like outcomes and some
609 of them don't. We can work on that. That's the easiest part of your job. But none of you have any criteria or
610 standards for your outcomes. You have to have those. If you don't have them by the time WASC gets here,
611 you're sunk."

612 **Benmayor:** [Chuckles]

613 **Shenk:** And so we worked on those for U.S. History, for Democratic Participation, for Cultural and
614 Equity. I was on the EngCom ULR committee for a while then. That was the biggest struggle. The biggest
615 struggle, to come up with the standards and criteria for that, for the EngCom.

616 **Benmayor:** *That was English Communication.*

617 **[1:22:22] Shenk:** English Communication A and B. So people worked so hard and people were so tired that
618 I think everybody was on edge. I think that a lot of the conflicts that occurred were because people didn't
619 have time. You did all this work and then somebody said, "Well, you did it wrong." Or "You should have
620 done it this way." "You need to change this," or "You need to change that." I think people got to the point
621 where you could not take criticism. I know I was. Cecilia and I went back and forth and back and forth.
622 Anything Cecilia would say to me, I'd just explode. We eventually worked together on some things that came
623 out really well. We drafted the U.S. Histories ULR and came out with something that I think was really good.
624 We put together the History and Social Science Teacher Preparation program together. People thought this
625 was a big joke when the Provost gave us money and said, "Okay, you have a week to do this. Put it together."
626 And Cecilia said, "Okay, can you come to my house in Berkeley?" This was over the summer. She said,
627 "We're just going to work on this until we get it done. We'll CTC --Commission on Teacher Credentialing.
628 Any problems we have, we'll work out everything, back and forth with them, do it." And we basically had
629 been told, "Don't come back if you don't have a finished program." And we got it done. That's something
630 that I think, to this day, Cecilia and I both, despite all the things we argued over, I think we're both really
631 proud because we worked together on that. But also the thing about that is we got paid to do that extra work.
632 So much of the extra work that we did in those early years, you know. . . . I remember Betty McEady coming
633 into a meeting and saying, "I'm working 80 hours a week! I don't have a day off. Ever." And people sitting
634 there were saying, "Yeah, me, too." And we weren't paid for it. And many of those people were Lecturers.
635 bobbi bonace. She was a Lecturer and she was Chair of an Institute!

636 **[1:25:20] Benmayor:** *And why do you think that was the case that there was such a huge workload?*

637 **Shenk:** You know, Fran [Frances Payne Adler] wrote a wonderful poem about that. It was something
638 like "too few workers on the line." There was this rumor in the early years that there was a million dollars
639 or something that went missing. There was all this talk about somebody has taken some of the startup money

640 and it's gone somewhere and nobody knows where. I never saw any documentation but there was talk about
641 that. We got a ton of startup money but the people that were doing most of the work weren't seeing that
642 money. We weren't getting paid. We were all working double time and we were getting paid single time.

643 **Benmayor:** *Well, I remember part of that period was that we never got the traditional five year*
644 *planning time.*

645 **Shenk:** Exactly. Which is a violation of state law.

646 **Benmayor:** *[Laughs]*

647 **Shenk:** You can look it up in Title V. *[Chuckle]*

648 **Benmayor:** *So we were teaching at the same time that we were trying ...*

649 **Shenk:** Right. Yeah. We were teaching and building the University at the same time. One of the
650 things I liked about that was that everybody on campus could be involved in any project that was happening.
651 So students were on all the committees. Staff people were on all the committees. The community
652 representatives. I mean this is why I know Helen Rucker from Seaside. She volunteered to be on any
653 committee anybody would ask her to be on. There were so many community people that came in. Cheryl and
654 Buzz. and I can't remember their last name. They were public school teachers. They were on so many
655 committees. They were affiliated within NCBI, National Coalition Building Institute. And Cheryl was an
656 English teacher in Seaside for many years and she also taught ESL classes. A wonderful person. So those
657 were positive things about it. There was community being formed there. So some of that felt like there were
658 rewards that were not monetary rewards. There were lifelong relationships that were formed. Like I've been
659 a friend of Helen's ever since then. I see Cheryl and Buzz, they're always out on the rec trail bicycling, I see
660 them out there. It was 21 years ago and I still know them, still see them. Students from those first two years,
661 so Axel is still around. Bethina *[Woodridge]*. Zoe *[Alexander]*. Toi *[Garrison]*. Steven Russell. I just got an
662 email from Steven Russell today. He was one of the pioneer students. He was actually born on Fort Ord. He
663 was Amalia's student. He taught art at Seaside High for many years and was just last year transferred to

664 Carmel High. I still maintain contacts with other students that I've had through the years but those early
665 students are the ones that not only were in your classes but were on your committees. It felt like they were
666 building the University with you. I'm still in contact with Bethtina. Which reminds me, Kathleen Rice as
667 well. Do you remember her? I mean there were so many wonderful people and the lines were blurred between
668 student, faculty, staff, administrators. Sally [Smith] taught Freshman ProSeminar. Peter's wife, Sally.
669 Eventually somebody came down and said staff people can't be teaching that. I don't know if that was Human
670 Resources or Academic Personnel, came down and said you can't do that. But those were positive things
671 [1:30:17] about it. Now with respect to the role of students in planning things, I've just published a book
672 chapter on a course that I taught that first year which was co-designed with students. I'll be teaching it next
673 year for the last time. It's the one course that I'm famous for on campus. It's called "Domination and
674 Resistance, 20th Century U.S. American History." Or now it's "U.S. History Since 1880." Manuel Carlos
675 told me the first semester, "Okay, you're going to teach U.S. History, lower division U.S. History. I want
676 you to teach an upper division History of U.S. Colonialism." I said, "Well, that's not really my field. I can
677 teach a course on that but I think I'd do a broader course on U.S. power and power relations in the U.S." He
678 said, "Okay, you can do whatever you want, design it however you want." I had in my freshman pro seminar
679 class that year Zoe ... what was Zoe's last name? She was Bethtina's best friend. Zoe and Toi, who were
680 SBS majors and Bethtina was an HCOM major. They brought Bethtina to my office, actually repeatedly.
681 They would come and hang out in my office during that first semester Fall of '96. I said, "You know, I need
682 to design a course for the Spring and so I am wondering if maybe you all could get together with me and let's
683 design these courses. You know, what do you think this course ought to look like?" So it was a group of
684 students, five or six students. Some of them HCOM students, some of the SBSC students. Some from ESSP.
685 They were from all over campus. The students came up with the name, "Domination and Resistance." They
686 came up with this article from Rudy Acuña, the founder of Chicano Studies. It was a paper that he gave at a
687 conference. It's called "Sometimes There is No Other Side" and I think about that a lot now in the aftermath

688 of the election. Acuña says sometimes the other side is just wrong and they don't have a legitimate side. They
689 don't have a legitimate argument. So he is talking about the Chicano movement and the opposition, like the
690 growers opposed to the UFW [United Farm Workers]. He said, "They do not have a legitimate side. We do
691 not have to protect their side. When we're teaching Chicano history we present the Chicano side and what
692 we learn about the growers we learn about through the eyes of the workers." The students came up with this
693 idea. They said, "Okay. Why don't we look at the structures of domination in American society from the
694 perspective of the people who resist those structures?" That came from students. The pioneer students at
695 CSUMB. And we've been doing that for 21 years in that course. And every year the course gets changed.
696 When it gets changed it gets changed because students said, "Do this. Why don't you try this? Try this
697 reading." Most of the readings we do in the course are readings students have discovered and they said, "Hey,
698 look at this. This would be great for 'Domination and Resistance'." It changes every year. People ask me,
699 "How many times did you teach this class? I said, "Every time I teach it it's the one time. I don't teach the
700 same course twice because it's always changing." This was what the students wanted. At that time it was the
701 students that introduced me to Paulo Freire.

702 **Benmayor:** *Oh!*

703 **[1:34:45] Shenk:** And it may have come from Bethina. I'm not sure. But through that then I got turned on
704 to Bell Hooks and her book, *Teaching to Transgress*. And I remember that came out maybe in '97, I think.
705 That's a little more accessible than Freire's, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. So we sort of used Bell Hooks'
706 *Teaching to Transgress* as the model for how to teach that course.

707 **Benmayor:** *So who is going to teach it after you retire?*

708 **Shenk:** Well, an interesting thing has happened to this course. I taught it for the first time in Spring
709 of '99. I think it was a Spring course for a while. It might have been Fall of '99 when I taught it. Anyway,
710 this student had transferred to CSUMB from De Anza College, took that course, was an SBSC major, and

711 switched from his faculty advisor to me as a result of that course, and did his Capstone based on Critical Race
712 Theory using Aida Hurtado and Angela Davis as his theorists. You know who I'm talking about.

713 **Benmayor:** *He came from Santa Cruz, right?*

714 **Shenk:** Came from Santa Cruz. So he took that course. His Capstone, which was an elaboration on
715 the paper he wrote for that course, got him into the Ph.D. program in Psychology at UC Santa Cruz and Aida
716 Hurtado snapped him up as her Graduate Assistant for the whole time he was there. He got a Ph.D. there.
717 And he came back here and was hired as the first graduate of CSUMB to be hired here as a tenure track
718 professor!

719 **Benmayor:** *Wow! What's his name?*

720 **Shenk:** Ranu. It's Mrinal Sinha but he goes by Ranu. People know him as Ranu. So, I was Chair of
721 SBGS [Social, Behavioral, and Global Studies] when he was hired in the Psych faculty and Psych was then
722 a concentration in SBGS. So I had the privilege of being the Chair of the department that hired him to be the
723 first graduate of CSUMB to be tenure track faculty member! He goes up for tenure this month. Two days ago
724 was when he had to turn in his tenure portfolio.

725 **Benmayor:** *How exciting!*

726 **[1:37:52] Shenk:** But in 2010 I had a sabbatical. So, I couldn't teach the course that year. I asked Becky
727 Bales, -- who I also had hired, no, George had hired her but I was the Chair of the committee that hired her -
728 -, she was another historian at SBGS, I asked her if she would teach that course. And she said, "Ah, I don't
729 know. It's so different from any other course. So somehow or another we came up with the idea of asking
730 Ranu to team teach it with her because he'd taken the course. Actually when he came back, every year he
731 would come in and do a guest lecture in the course and the students loved him. So he'd kept up with the
732 course. So, he said "Okay." In Spring of 2010 he and Becky Bales team taught the course, which was the
733 only time that the course assigned my book as a textbook! [Laughs] Then I came back. I taught it by myself
734 the first year back, then I said, "You know, this worked really well with Ranu team teaching it. It really does

735 a lot of social psychology. He's a social psychologist. It would be a great interdisciplinary course." So we
736 talked to Jen Dyer Seymour -- by then Psych had become an independent department --, and they agreed,
737 "Okay, this can be part of Ranu's workload."

738 **Benmayor:** *How nice.*

739 **Shenk:** So since then, we have three years in a row we've team taught that course. When CSUMB
740 hires my replacement. . .

741 **Benmayor:** *If they hire a replacement. [Chuckles]*

742 **Shenk:** . . . if they hire a replacement it should be somebody to come in Fall of 2018. We're
743 campaigning now for Ranu to be on the search committee so they hire a historian who can teach that course
744 with Ranu. Keep it going.

745 **Benmayor:** Oh, that's lovely. That's lovely!

746 **Shenk:** So that's what I think my primary gift to CSUMB is.

747 **Benmayor:** *Well, you've talked about many of the projects that you worked on. You know, the ULRs,*
748 *you're always associated with the ULRs.*

749 **Shenk:** Manuel called me "Mr. ULR."

750 **Benmayor:** *Right. Are there any other creative accomplishments that you are proud of, that you feel*
751 *you've left here?*

752 **[1:40:56] Shenk:** Well, I think what Angie Tran and I have done together with the Social Justice Colloquium
753 -- and again this brings Dell Felder back into it. So many things. One of the things I brought with me today
754 in case I wanted to refer to it, was a letter I wrote to Dell when she left spelling out the things I liked about
755 what she had done and the things I hated what she had done. [Laughs] But she was a huge support for the
756 Social Justice Colloquium in the beginning. And this came out of another team taught class that Angie and
757 I had team taught since 1997. Spring of '97, I taught "Domination and Resistance" and the "Vietnam"

758 class I team taught with Angie. When we first met, we got into this conversation about where we came from,
759 our connections to Vietnam. She was a boat person. Her family escaped from Vietnam, from South Vietnam
760 in 1980 by boat and almost died on the South China Sea. They were rescued by a Danish tanker. And I said,
761 “Well, okay.” I sort of come into the study of history through my experiences as an anti war organizer. For
762 six years I was a professional organizer of anti war organizations in Washington, D.C. against the Vietnam
763 war. I’d written articles on it and things like that. And so we started to say, “Well, we have a different
764 perspectives and different life histories that we can bring to bear on a course. And we can bring people in,
765 the contacts that we have for this course.” So we designed this course, to team teach this course on Vietnam
766 and we decided somehow or another that we would put together a big event in March of that year. To bring
767 in like all the people we had connections to, experts. So we called this thing “The Social Justice Colloquium.”
768 We took this idea to [Provost] Dell Felder and we said, “We want to do this and we will bring these people
769 in. It’s going to cost this much money,” and the money just came! So we brought in top people, like Ruth
770 Rosen and her husband. I forget his name now. He was one of the big name leaders of the anti war movement.
771 She was also. She’s a friend of Cecilia’s [O’Leary]. She teaches at UC Davis. Ruth Rosen. She teaches
772 Women’s History. We had Army Veterans from North Vietnam, from South Vietnam, we had American
773 veterans, we had people from the U.S. anti war movement, we had people representing all sides. We had
774 academics. We had soldiers. We had anti-war protestors. We must have had a dozen people who were really
775 experts on whatever the field was they were talking about. We had a two-day [event], all day on Saturday
776 and half-day on Sunday I think it was, or maybe half-day on Friday and all day Saturday. Dell Felder paid
777 for a huge banquet at what was then Stokes Adobe. A fancy restaurant. My recollection is that the wine for
778 that was \$900. [Chuckles] But I might be wrong, but it just seemed like at the time a lot of money. So all the
779 presenters plus the committees who had helped work to put these things together, John McCutcheon, Peter’s
780 Chief of Staff, helped to organize this. Peter was there. Dell was there. And we put these people up at
781 Asilomar and places like that. It was a big event, a *really* moving event. The final session I think had people

782 in tears, with people talking to each other from different sides that hadn't talked to anybody on the other side
783 ever before. So when that was over people said, "Okay, that was the Social Justice Colloquium. Maybe we
784 should do that." We had actually started through the [CSUMB] Foundation, an account now because money
785 had been raised and put in the account. So we had an account and we had some money left over. So okay,
786 "We'll make this an annual thing." So it has been an annual event since 1997. The one for next year, for
787 this coming Spring is combined with the President's Speaker Series, although it's not actually in it. You
788 know a little bit about this, the struggle over that. It brings – oh, what is his name now? The guy who wrote
789 *The Sympathizer*?

790 **Benmayor:** *Oh, Viet* [Than Nguyen]

791 **[1:46:58] Shenk:** A Vietnamese author who Angie really pushed for. So one of his former students is
792 teaching for HCOM, teaching a literature course for HCOM. As part of the Social Justice Colloquium, he is
793 going to come meet with her Creative Writing students. He just won the Pulitzer Prize.

794 **Benmayor:** *Pulitzer Prize, yes.*

795 **Shenk:** Yes. So Angie had been pushing for the President's Speaker Series to have him come. That
796 didn't work out, but she managed to convince them to put money up out of that fund. Because she had been
797 led to believe that they were going to bring him and they had said they would pay half of his fee if Angie
798 could raise the other half. She raised the other half and then they said, "Oh, we decided to pick somebody
799 else." So, you don't put Angie on the warpath!

800 **Benmayor:** [Laughs]

801 **Shenk:** She went on the warpath. She lined up everybody, and before we knew it the Provost and
802 Deans and everybody were going to the President and saying, "This promise was made. You need to stick to
803 this promise." So he is coming and there's two days of events around this guy. It's about how you remember
804 war. About how people remember war. It's about war and memory. There are a couple of really powerful
805 books that he's written, a Vietnamese American. And so that's this coming Social Justice Colloquium. Last

806 year was on Women and War which also involved HCOM and SBS and VPA. So it's always attempted to be
807 across the campus. Some years it's been only SBS but most years it has involved HCOM. Dave Reichard
808 has been on the Planning Committee maybe four or five of the last six times. Fran was on in some of the
809 early years. You know, one year we had Akasha Hull and Chan Khong, who was this Vietnamese Buddhist
810 nun, together we had them together one year. We took a phrase out of Akasha Hull's book. It was about
811 Spiritual Resources for Justice Action, for taking action for justice or something like that. It was a line out of
812 Akasha's book. She had interviewed African American women like Toni Morrison and Alice Walker and all
813 the big names, and asked them this one question, "What spiritual resources do you draw on for your social
814 justice action?" So that was our theme for that year. That was one of the most memorable ones. After Akasha
815 gave her talk, then Chan Khong stood up. Akasha's was a very sort of overwhelming kind of inspirational
816 speech. Chan Khong gets up, she's this very humble Buddhist women, you know? And she pulls this piece
817 of paper out of the gown she has and she holds it up. She says, "I had a speech for you but I don't think you
818 need a speech from me. I think what you need is a song. And I'm going to teach you a song." So, she sang
819 the song to us. There were like 600 people in the ballroom and she sang the song to us. Then she said, "Okay,
820 let's go line by line. I'll sing a line and then you sing it." She went through it and we did it over and over
821 again. Then she talked about where this song comes from. It's a song that during the war in Vietnam, when
822 they were trying not to be on either side and they were just trying to help whoever was being harmed by the
823 war, this was a song that they sang in order to center themselves in times of crisis. It begins like "Breathing
824 in. Breathing out." The song is a breathing exercise. To me, that was maybe the single most moving event
825 I've been at at CSUMB. It's the only time I've ever heard a whole crowd of people in a big room at CSUMB
826 sing together. And I loved that. I remember talking to Amy Driscoll about that afterwards and she just said
827 this was so wonderful. So there are a lot of high points in that. And there are some low points. We tried to do
828 a land use debate over expansion of Salinas into agricultural land. We brought in two groups that were
829 opposing each other on this. We had [Congressman] Sam Farr there and we had Sue Parris from the NCBI

830 [National Coalition Building Institute], who works on conflict mediation. So we knew these groups didn't
831 like each other but they knew each other were going to be there and they agreed to be there. But within ten
832 minutes Sue had completely lost control. These people were yelling at each other and they were standing up
833 and we thought there was going to be a physical battle. We just had to cancel it right there. We just said,
834 "Okay, we're not going to have this discussion between two groups." Instead, Sam Farr agreed to talk about
835 the issue and to take questions about the issue. So it turned into a presentation by Sam Farr. We were very
836 grateful to him for sort of rescuing that, but that was the only one that we said this was sort of a catastrophe.
837 There was one where we brought back all CSUMB alumni. We brought back Bethina [Woodridge]. We
838 brought back Angela Louie and Steven Russell to talk about ways in which CSUMB had prepared them to
839 continue to work for social justice. And we've maintained contact. Those were almost all pioneer students.
840 They were early students.

841 **[1:54:30] Benmayor:** *That would be an interesting project to try to find some of them. Some of them are*
842 *around but it would be a very interesting project to interview some of our early students and see where*
843 *they've gone.*

844 **Shenk:** Yeah. I think you should do that because they would have a different perspective than these
845 founding faculty have on this.

846 **Benmayor:** *Is there anything that you wished you had been able to accomplish that \for whatever*
847 *reason you were not able to?*

848 **Shenk:** Yeah. This is a long interview, as you know, I talk forever. [pause] I wish that I had been
849 more of a conflict avoider. [Chuckles] I tend to be a conflict avoider, but I also fight, as you know. I think
850 that, for example, I could have worked more across Centers and Divisions, with you, with people in HCOM.
851 SBSC in the early years and then SBGS has always kind of seen HCOM as the enemy. There's always been
852 sort of bad blood there except that, when I think about it, on the one hand I see a lot of these battles have
853 been with specific people and I think, "Oh, boy, we fought that battle and I was so mad at so-and-so." But I

854 also think back on this and I think, “She was also one of my best friends.” And, you know, somebody who
855 is still there. We really don’t even speak to each other anymore because the last fight that we had was such
856 a bitter battle, that in the early years we were in each other’s homes all the time having dinner and lunch with
857 each other. You know who it is when I say it.

858 **Benmayor:** *It doesn’t matter.*

859 **[1:57:11] Shenk:** We loved big cabs. [Laughs] What restaurants have the best house Cabernet.

860 **Benmayor:** Oh! [Laughs]

861 **Shenk:** And we just, I mean, we hung out together so much in the early years and we fought so much
862 over so many things. And in those early battles, it was like everybody is fighting over things. So it seemed
863 like we got over them and could go hang out and be friends. It seems like now we can’t. It seems like some
864 bridges have been burned. I think there are some deep scars. I wish that I had been able to avoid that.
865 I think that we accomplished a lot. I think the regrets that I have are group regrets. I don’t think they’re
866 individual regrets. There are things that I could have done differently to help facilitate. I just remember every
867 single graduation that Amalia [Mesa Bains] was at, coming around with the ribbons to put on our hats or on
868 our gowns. The Vision, be true to the Vision. And every year it felt a little bit more like it’s slipping away.
869 I feel like when we had the big battle over the ULRs and GE, before the last one in 2005 or 2006, something
870 like that, we even had somebody from the Chancellor’s Office come down there with us. The battles became
871 so intense, people left in tears. People cried in those meetings. It was basically a battle between, the sciences,
872 math and Liberal Studies, they were all on one side. They said we don’t have enough curricular space for
873 what we need to do. And then on the opposite side were the humanities, the social sciences. . .

874 **Benmayor:** *And the arts.*

875 **[1:59:44] Shenk:** . . . and the arts, languages. Service Learning. So people in the sciences and math were
876 saying we don’t have room for Service Learning. We don’t have room for foreign language. We don’t have
877 room for this. So one of the things that got crunched was U.S. Histories and Democratic Participation got

878 thrown together in order to make more room for science and math or for Liberal Studies. Those were battles
879 that were hard fought and that I feel like the side I was on lost. We now have a fairly standard GE curriculum
880 that I think has strayed far from the Vision. So that's a regret. I share responsibility for that only in that I was,
881 along with many other people, not effective enough in making the case for it, for the way we saw the Vision.
882 I think you were on that same side that I was on. I think the majority of the campus was on that side, but we
883 succumbed. I remember feeling that WLC [World Languages and Cultures] caved. I remember feeling that
884 Service Learning caved. I remember feeling like we fought and fought and fought for this and then we said,
885 "Oh, okay. You win." That's the way I felt about it.

886 **Benmayor:** *I think they had no choice.*

887 **Shenk:** Yeah. They felt like they had no choice. I agree. I've talked to Donaldo [Urioste] about this
888 and he felt that. I talked to Seth [Pollack] about it. They really felt like they had no choice. You know,
889 preserve what they could or lose it all. So I think you're right about that. I don't like to make the sciences the
890 enemy because there are so many really good people there, in what used to be ESSP, but I remember in the
891 early years what saved Angie and me from the real difficulties in SBSC was ESSP. They invited us to their
892 faculty meetings. Angie and I went to ESSP faculty meetings where in every faculty meeting they talked
893 about teaching and learning. They talked about pedagogy. And we were part of their collaborative ... what
894 do they call it... the peer evaluation of each other. I remember that first year, Suzy Worcester and I did peer
895 evaluation of each other's classes. We visited each other's classes and we sat in and listened. We took notes
896 and met with each other. We paired off each semester and did these peer evaluations. Then when we'd come
897 together in the ESSP faculty meetings, each pair would share what we had learned from each other. To this
898 day that has shaped the way... I mean Suzy was so wonderful in helping to see what's going on in my class
899 and help me out with that.

900 **Benmayor:** *That's really so interesting because in many ways that captures the initial spirit of*
901 *interdisciplinarity, the way we were supposed to develop.*

902 **Shenk:** Exactly. Right.

903 **Benmayor:** *I had no idea about that.*

904 **[2:03:48] Shenk:** We begged the other SBSC faculty to join and ESSP invited all of us to come in and
905 participate. Angie and I were the only ones that would. The letter that was written in my first year review,
906 the letter that was written for me was devastating and was basically a letter against me. It came out of SBSC.
907 Because I'd been working in this teaching co-op, basically with ESSP faculty, I showed that to Bill Head and
908 Bill Head said you cannot let that go into your file. He wrote a letter for me refuting everything that was in
909 there. He saved me, and Angie. Without Bill Head, Angie and I wouldn't have lasted past the second year
910 review. He went to bat for us.

911 **[2:04:54] Benmayor:** *Wow. This has been fascinating, Gerald. I actually think that if you are willing to we
912 could do a follow-up. It's up to you.*

913 **Shenk:** Sure.

914 **Benmayor:** *Because there are many things here that you've touched on or not touched on but I've
915 been fascinated. It's been really, really wonderful, in part because I am reliving everything with you.*

916 **Shenk:** Yeah. We were in it together.

917 **Benmayor:** *But also to get your unique perspective on it, which in many cases I had no idea of, and
918 so I hope for you it's been helpful.*

919 **Shenk:** It has, yeah. It's therapeutic.

920 **Benmayor:** *As you go through the transition. [Laughs]*

921 **Shenk:** Yeah. Right.

922 **Benmayor:** *Having been there I kind of know what it's like. I want to thank you. This has been really,
923 really lovely. I'm just keeping my fingers crossed that everything is recorded.*

924 **Shenk:** [Laughs] And if you do it again the stories will all be different.

925 **Benmayor:** *It's happened to some of the people in the group, that they didn't put the recorder on*
926 *properly and in the whole interview there was nothing there. And I went, "Well, that's par for the course. It*
927 *happens to even the professionals."*

928 **Shenk:** Yeah.

929 **Benmayor:** *So this is really exciting.*

930 **[2:06:25] Shenk:** I know there is one story that involves you and me and Dave that you and I have a different
931 account of that would be interesting to -

932 **Benmayor:** *Which one is that?*

933 **Shenk:** Well, who takes the credit for bringing him here?

934 **Benmayor:** *Oh. Oh, okay!*

935 **Shenk:** So you do and I do.

936 **Benmayor:** *Okay. That's interesting. I've never heard this.*

937 **Shenk:** Oh, I thought you and I had a conversation about it.

938 **Benmayor:** *We may have.*

939 **Shenk:** I told Dave my perspective and he said, "Oh, well that's not what Rina says."

940 **Benmayor:** *Oh, so what is your recollection?*

941 **Shenk:** My story is I get this call from Ramón Gutiérrez, who was my professor in graduate school.
942 I did the final edit of his book, *When Jesus Came, the Corn Mothers Went Away*. I TA'd [Teaching Assistant]
943 Chicano Studies for him for five years at UC San Diego. This must be Spring of '97. I get a call from him.
944 He says, "You're at this new university. You must be hiring faculty." He said, "I have this friend in New
945 Mexico who is fantastic and he's just finished up his Ph.D. at the University of New Mexico – no, no, at
946 Temple [University]. But he's in Albuquerque and he's waiting tables in Albuquerque. I think you should try
947 to find a job for him there." I said, "Well, okay, have him send his materials to Armando." So I go to
948 Armando and I say, "You are going to be getting some materials from this guy," and I run down through

949 what Ramon had told me about him. Ramón had said, “You know, this guy is a lawyer and a U.S. historian.”
950 So I go to Armando and I say, “This is a fantastic idea. SBS could have a pre-law concentration and somebody
951 to teach history.” He said, “Ah, ah, I don't know.” He wasn't very interested. Then Dave sent his C.V. and
952 he also sent a little brochure about a pre-law program that he had designed at Temple. I went and talked to
953 Armando about it and I said, “This guy's great! We need to bring him here.” And he said, “Ah, I don't know.”
954 And he said, “What courses would he teach? We already have an” – I told him what SBS courses. He said,
955 “Are there any other courses on campus that he might teach?” I said, “Well, there are HCOM history courses
956 he might teach.” He said, “Well, if you can get Rina to pay half of it, I'll pay half to bring him here for an
957 interview.”

958 **Benmayor:** *Oh!*

959 **[2:09:34] Shenk:** So this is my memory of it. My memory is that then I contacted you and said, “There's
960 this guy in Albuquerque that Ramón said we should hire and Armando said that he would pay half the cost
961 of bringing him here for an interview, that he'd share that with you.” And so my memory is that the two of
962 you shared the cost and he came and you interviewed him and Armando interviewed him. And you moved
963 in on him instantly.

964 **Benmayor:** *[Laughs]*

965 **Shenk:** And Armando wasn't interested.

966 **Benmayor:** *Well, that's interesting because I didn't -*

967 **Shenk:** That's my story. That's the way I remember it.

968 **Benmayor:** *You're probably right. You're probably right because I don't have an elephant's*
969 *memory. But my first recollection of Dave was a phone conversation that I had with him. I don't remember*
970 *how I got his Vitae so you are probably absolutely right.*

971 **Shenk:** Yeah. Or maybe I told him to call you. Do you know Ramón?

972 **Benmayor:** *I know Ramón but not well.*

973 **Shenk:** Yes, so he wouldn't have called you.

974 **Benmayor:** *I don't think so, no. Oh, I don't know, that's a very good question. Maybe he sent me*
975 *something.*

976 **Shenk:** Because that's what I thought. You see, Dave is a friend of Ramón. So Dave thought that
977 Ramón called both you and me.

978 **[2:10:58] Benmayor:** *It could have been, could have been. But anyway, my recollection was that I saw his*
979 *Vitae and we needed adjuncts, you know, to teach just a whole slew of classes. Because he had a law degree*
980 *I think we were also interested in for Practical And Professional Ethics [concentration] or something like*
981 *that. You know, some of the classes that we had there. [Chuckles] But I remember we had this phone*
982 *conversation and within two minutes on that conversation I knew that he was a perfect fit for us because the*
983 *way he talked about pedagogy and the way he talked, I mean he was just so right for us., I think maybe that*
984 *was the catalyst that said, "Yeah, let's bring him out." You know.*

985 **Shenk:** Right. Yes.

986 **Benmayor:** *And I do remember that he was the only Adjunct Lecturer that we ever paid to come for*
987 *an interview from afar. And we were right. [Laughs]*

988 **Shenk:** Yeah, and you were right. It was a good decision.

989 **Benmayor:** *We were all right.*

990 **Shenk:** It was a good decision. And I've been pissed off at Armando ever since. We should have
991 had him but...you are so lucky.

992 **Benmayor:** *It's interesting how things -*

993 **[2:12:16] Shenk:** I mean you were right and you had the instinct for it. You knew exactly.

994 **Benmayor:** *But, see, the irony is that poor Dave never got to teach history classes. [Chuckles] He*
995 *was funneled into what the needs were in HCOM until now is when he is able to do that. But yeah. Special*
996 *guy. He was right for us.*

997 **Shenk:** He was right for the whole campus.

998 **Benmayor:** *Yeah. Yeah.*

999 **Shenk:** Even at SBS, when they talk about conflicts with HCOM, people will say, “But Dave
1000 Reichard, I like him, he’s a great guy. But. . . ” They always start off with that.

1001 **Benmayor:** *[Laughs] You know, I think, and this is just my opinion, part of the struggle that*
1002 *continues to this day is really a result of just not having careful and thoughtful time for planning. You know?*

1003 **Shenk:** Exactly. Exactly.

1004 **Benmayor:** *I come from Oral History but I’m not a historian and I haven’t been trained as a*
1005 *historian. I come from literature. I walked into this thing and we had a Cultural Historian there and that*
1006 *seemed to fit perfectly with what we were thinking for the Humanities and to me History has always been*
1007 *part of the Humanities. You know, there’s this thing about Social Science, Humanities...you know. But yeah,*
1008 *and it’s really too bad that we’ve never really been able to find a happy medium for this. But hopefully.*

1009 **[2:14:04] Shenk:** During the interview for my job, I assumed that HCOM and SBSC, were working together.
1010 Because you were on the committee and I don't know if you remember, I emailed you several times. We went
1011 back and forth, because I was really concerned about this question of outcomes. What is outcomes-based
1012 education. Because you and I had gone back and forth about that in the interview, I emailed you and after the
1013 interview I went back and I did some research on what is this, and then I emailed you and I said, “You know,
1014 I think this didn’t go very well.” And you emailed me back and said, “Don’t worry about it.”

1015 **Benmayor:** *Good. I’m glad. [Chuckles] I have a physical memory of your interview and I also have*
1016 *a memory of the things that came before you were brought out to be interviewed. But I don't remember that*
1017 *exact exchange so it’s very interesting. I think this is so much fun. You know, normally this kind of oral history*
1018 *project would be conducted by people who are researchers and not part of it, but I think one of the beauties*
1019 *of this is that I’m hearing these stories and I totally relate to it and I think it’s just an incredible opportunity*
1020 *to do” insider” oral history.*

1021 **Shenk:** Yeah, uh-huh.

1022 **[2:15:37] End of First Recording;**

1023

1024 **Beginning of Follow Up Recording**

1025 **[2:15:41] Benmayor:** *Okay, today is January 30, 2017 and this is a follow-up interview with Gerald Shenk*
1026 *for the Faculty Oral History Program. So, Gerald, following up a little bit on our conversation last week,*
1027 *you spoke a lot about that the Vision meant different things to different people. So I was wondering if you*
1028 *could elaborate a little bit about what parts of the Vision were you particularly connected to and how did*
1029 *that guide your work. You talked about the ULRs but other aspects of*

1030 **Shenk:** Yeah. I think there's a key line for lots of people and I noticed that this was the one quote
1031 from the Mission Statement that was in the program for Peter's [President Smith's] installation. Which was
1032 --I'll get the quote wrong but you'll know what it is. It's that we are a community of mutual respect where
1033 all learn and teach one another. Yeah, "a community where all learn and teach one another in an atmosphere
1034 of mutual respect." Something like that. So it's this idea of, I mean it's really Freirian [ref. Paulo Freire]. It's
1035 the idea that teachers and students are learning from each other. I always think of Christie Sleeter's
1036 commencement address. I believe she was the first one to get the President – no Amalia was the first one to
1037 get the President's Medal and I think Christie was the next year. But in those early years at Commencement,
1038 the faculty member who got the President's Medal would give a Commencement address which is one of the
1039 things that I think is really regrettable that that doesn't happen anymore. I think that it's more important for
1040 students to hear from a representative of their faculty at Commencement than it is to bring somebody in from
1041 outside that half of them don't know about and don't care about. Amalia, Christie, Angie, I think were maybe
1042 the first three to get that medal and their speeches at Commencement I think were just inspirational and they
1043 really closely connected to the Vision. Christie, in my memory, her entire talk was about students as creators
1044 of knowledge. Not as consumers of information. And I think that is where we have strayed. I think we have

1045 not stayed loyal. Many faculty on this campus still adhere to that. But many more don't. I think particularly
1046 faculty that have been hired in the last ten years have not been brought in with that idea in mind, with thinking
1047 about that kind of pedagogy. Some of the new faculty are really inspirational, are really good in that. But I
1048 think it has not been consistent. I think there are certain departments and certain divisions that do not
1049 emphasize that.

1050 **[2:19:14] Benmayor:** *How do you know? On what basis do you know that?*

1051 **Shenk:** I see them in my classes. I see students from those majors in my classes and I don't know if
1052 I can mention those majors or not.

1053 **Benmayor:** *It doesn't matter [to name them].*

1054 **Shenk:** And so much depends on the individual student. But the thing that has been most
1055 disappointing to me and has been consistent over the years is that the students that are most resistant to that
1056 kind of pedagogy are Liberal Studies students.

1057 **Benmayor:** *Resistant to the banking model?*

1058 **Shenk:** No. They want the banking model!

1059 **Benmayor:** *Oh!*

1060 **Shenk:** Particularly after this Commission on Teacher Credentialing eliminated what was called the
1061 Waiver Program. They eliminated the option for Multiple Subject Teaching Credential. That they [students]
1062 could be certified in content by taking a certain approved curriculum. They changed that maybe about ten
1063 years ago, maybe less than that, to say that all students in order to be admitted into a Multiple Subject
1064 Teaching Credential program must pass the CSET exam. They must take the exam. What that has meant now
1065 is that the Liberal Studies students are very focused on getting content they must have to pass that exam. It's
1066 teach to the exam. In the courses that I have taught, U.S. History courses, California History courses, these
1067 are very content specific. There's specific content that they are going to be tested on. They get very upset if
1068 we don't just come into class and lecture and give them that information. When you try to say, "We are co-

1069 creators of knowledge, we are co-learners,” they don’t have time for that. So the system makes it very
1070 difficult. And John Tagg, in his book *The Learning Paradigm College*, studied five universities around the
1071 country and CSUMB was one of them. But all the information he got on CSUMB came from two interviews
1072 with Josina [Makau] and Swarup [Wood]. But if you read what he says we do, it’s fantastic. It’s been a long
1073 time since we did most of what he says that we do. But he points out that the system tends to overwhelm the
1074 commitment to that kind of pedagogy. You know, we have a verb, it’s called “to CSU.” We’ve been CSU’d.
1075 And my biggest disappointment is that we have not fought back against that strongly enough. I know how
1076 difficult it is. A few of us fight those battles, we lose and we give up. Then you get this feedback from
1077 students. I know in “Domination and Resistance” every year we get this feedback from Liberal Studies
1078 students: We didn’t cover the content that they need to pass the CSET exam. So it’s a difficult thing. I mean
1079 I’m sympathetic to that. They can go out and buy a traditional U.S. history textbook and study for that exam.
1080 So I have been unwilling to change that. Somewhere I have a copy of Christie’s speech and that’s sort of my
1081 pedagogical bible. That’s my pedagogical bible in a broad sense. In a much more specific sense my
1082 pedagogical mentor is Deb Busman

1083 **Benmayor:** *Oh! Explain that.*

1084 **[2:24:00] Shenk:** Deb’s been here as long as I have been, maybe one year less than you. I think she came in
1085 ’96 as a Lecturer.

1086 **Benmayor:** *I think it was ’98, something like that.*

1087 **Shenk:** Oh, really? Okay. So it was still early in CSUMB history when [poet] Adrienne Rich came
1088 to campus. So there’s a big crowd showing up in the ballroom for that. And here was this person I’d never
1089 heard of, that was sort of opening for Adrienne Rich, this poet, Deb Busman. She was a Lecturer in HCOM
1090 [Human Communication].

1091 **Benmayor:** *It wasn’t Fran?*

1092 **Shenk:** It wasn't Fran. Fran may have read some of her poetry but Deb was a person I remember. She
1093 read a poem that was so powerful I don't think there was a dry eye in the hall. It was the last thing before
1094 Adrienne Rich. Adrienne Rich was not happy that she had to follow that, because nothing she had had
1095 anywhere near the impact on that audience that Deb's poem had.

1096 **Benmayor:** *Wow.*

1097 **Shenk:** I just made it a point to introduce myself to her as soon as I could and to get to know her. We
1098 talked about teaching every time we met. It was just about every time we met, there would be something that
1099 one of us had had happen in a class and we'd talk about how did we deal with this. Very frequently it was a
1100 racial issue. I just remember, and you might not want to transcribe this, I don't know, I just remember one
1101 time I had an older student, who was actually my advisee, in a class. An older white male student in
1102 "Domination and Resistance." In this class we had a lot of small group discussions, people coming back and
1103 reporting. We were in the Meeting House. This particular year there were 54 students in that class. And it
1104 was also the year that Asya Guillory was President of the BSU [Black Students Union]. She had convinced
1105 most of the members of BSU to sign up to take this course. So we had a large number of African American
1106 students, a large number of Latino students. Probably I'd say 2/3 of the class were racial minorities. This
1107 very conservative older white guy was there. One day we had groups reporting back, and there was an
1108 African American woman reporting from one of her groups. And this guy stood up and walked over to the
1109 side of the Meeting House where there were some tables and chairs and started to move them around. There
1110 was just this commotion going on over on the side and this student was trying to do her presentation.
1111 Everybody was like, "What's he doing?" And I'm just like, I don't know what to do about this. I didn't want
1112 to interrupt her. Some people were listening to her and some people were watching him. Anyway, after class
1113 I walked out and there was Deb. She was walking back from one of her classes. I told her what happened.
1114 And I said, "What would you do?" She said, "I'd say, 'What the fuck do you think you're doing?!?!'"

1115 **Benmayor:** [Laughs]

1116 **[2:28:07] Shenk:** [Laughs] You know, no hesitation. She knew where she stood. She knew what had to be
1117 said in class. And no apologies. To me, Deb was always willing to put her job on the line for her values. To
1118 me, that is the model for what a teacher at CSUMB ought to be. I've never been able to live up to that. But
1119 she has. Every time I had a difficult situation I would seek her out and say, "Okay, Deb, this happened in
1120 my class. What would you do?" You know, some people have bumper stickers "What Would Jesus Do?" My
1121 bumper sticker is "What Would Deb Do!" So she is one of the people I wanted to make sure to mention. She
1122 has been so important to me. She, Christie Sleeter, Amalia [Mesa Bains]. Other people at the
1123 beginning in terms of sticking to the Vision, David Takacs. He and I put together this course on California
1124 Environmental History. It was cross listed between ESSP and SBS. And again, that was built around this
1125 whole idea that we are co-learners with the students. And nobody knows how to facilitate a class like David
1126 Takacs. He is very energetic. He is sometimes a little intimidating to the students. But I learned so much
1127 about teaching from him. I learned about listening. How to listen to students and to respond in a way that
1128 they know you heard them. And to allow them to tell you, "No, you didn't hear me right." There was always
1129 that follow-up. It was not just, "Okay, I heard you." It was this, "This is what I think I heard you say, is that
1130 right?" And it was never that, "Okay, we don't have time for this. We have other things we have to cover." It
1131 was "Okay, something comes up in class, we have to deal with it. You take the time it takes to deal with
1132 that." So again, he was a mentor. Of the people that I've actually seen in operation in a classroom. He is the
1133 best teacher I have ever observed in a classroom, and it was a huge loss when we lost him. He could not deal
1134 with the fact that we were being CSU'd. That was it. It became more and more difficult to teach the way that
1135 he thought we had to teach.

1136 **Benmayor:** *That's interesting because I wonder how that affected the Science Department because*
1137 *ESSP was always so innovative. So it would be very interesting to see what was it in the CSU'ing that*
1138 *really affected the sciences more than -*

1139 **[2:31:37] Shenk:** Well, it came out in 2004-2005. It was a sort of revisioning of ... you were part of that.
1140 That was when actually WLC and Service Learning sort of gave away chunks of their ...

1141 **Benmayor:** *Oh, you mean the move to the GE?*

1142 **Shenk:** Well, that wasn't a move – the move to the GE was 2009-2010. But earlier than that I forget
1143 what we called it. We had a name for this. It took practically a whole year. We had multiple meetings. It
1144 was during the time when Barbara Mossberg was Dean. This boiled down to a battle between certain people
1145 in the Sciences and the Humanities and Social Sciences. 2004-2005. I found some documents -- I didn't think
1146 you wanted me to bring any documents -- but I know you were involved in those meetings. We took it so
1147 seriously. People were afraid we were in violation of Title V. People were afraid we were in violation of
1148 Chancellor's Executive Orders that we actually called the person in charge of GE at Long Beach and asked
1149 her to come sit in on our meetings. She came for two days and she was just amazed. I think this is connected
1150 to the Vision that I think everybody shared at the beginning, which was sort of a moral commitment to
1151 honesty. I just remember talking to this woman, I can't remember her name. She could not believe that a
1152 CSU campus was so concerned about not violating the rules that they would invite her there to sit in on the
1153 discussions. She said, "Nobody else cares about this." She says, "Nobody is checking on you. You can do
1154 whatever you want. Nobody is checking."

1155 **Benmayor:** *Was this about bringing our curriculum in line with the other CSUs and the transfe*
1156 *[students]?*

1157 **Shenk:** Yeah. Well, it was a result of the Facilitating Graduation Executive Order from Charles Reed. So if
1158 you remember that, the whole thing came down, it was a reaction against Cornerstones. If you remember
1159 Cornerstones.

1160 **Benmayor:** *I do.*

1161 **Shenk:** So that was the Strategic Plan for the CSU that Barry Munitz had shepherded through. And
1162 it was a fantastic program.

1163 **Benmayor:** *It was.*

1164 **Shenk:** You know, it fit perfectly for CSUMB and Tom Ehrlich from Carnegie, and other people at
1165 Carnegie, was one of the leaders in helping to put together the Cornerstones Strategic Plan. So what Munitz
1166 had done, is he'd gone to the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching -- called CFAT--,
1167 [Chuckles] and said, "We want your advice on how to create the best university system." To his great credit,
1168 he shepherded that through. But then he left in 1997 and Charles Reed came in. And Reed was completely
1169 on the other side. So, if you read through Cornerstones, Cornerstones is all about students taking charge of
1170 their own education. Students being creators of knowledge. Faculty being facilitators and mentors.
1171 Cornerstone said the CSU is committed to the additional resources that are required because they said it's
1172 more difficult to teach that way, it takes more time to teach that way. It is a big piece of the justification for
1173 the four-unit courses, as I've heard *you* say. You have given some very persuasive arguments for the 4-unit
1174 courses in the early years. Some of the best arguments came from you, which is this type of teaching requires
1175 additional time. The banking model, you can stand up and lecture, you can cover the material and then you
1176 can give them a test. You can do that in 3-unit courses easily. But if you're committed to students as co-
1177 creators of knowledge you need more time.

1178 **[2:37:04] Benmayor:** *Yeah. I think that was in response to the push that was always there at different points*
1179 *to change over to 3-unit courses.*

1180 **Shenk:** Right. We had a name for it and I'm blanking on that name. It's in my files in my office. I
1181 should have gone in and found that. During that time Renée Perry was chair of the ULROP ... what did it
1182 stand for? Anyway. I know she was sort of taking the lead on Freshman Pro Seminar and that sort of thing.
1183 But that was, I believe, where you made the strong case for the 3-unit [4-unit], and it was in opposition to
1184 Rick Kvitek. That was his argument as well as Rob Weisskirch. They said, "We cannot cover the content
1185 we need in Science and in Liberal Studies for our degrees in 4-unit courses. We have to have 3-unit courses
1186 in order to do this." They said, "We don't have room for the Service Learning. We don't have room for

1187 Language.” So that was what that battle was all about. So, in my mind this came down to people who felt
1188 like their life at CSUMB depended on sticking to the original Vision and people who said, “No, we are part
1189 of the CSU and we have to be like the rest of the CSU.” It had a lot to do with issues of transfer. So that
1190 whole issue came up as well. A lot of community colleges were confused. “How do we transfer in?” Well,
1191 you can do the ‘transfer in’ pretty easily. But people were saying, “Well, then our courses don’t transfer
1192 out,” which was wrong. By state law any course at any CSU transfers to any other CSU. But it may not
1193 specifically transfer to meet the particular requirement that it met at CSUMB. But what I could never
1194 understand is why people were interested in making it easier for students to transfer out. Right?

1195 **Benmayor:** *[Chuckles]*

1196 **Shenk:** That shouldn’t be an issue for us. The issue of helping them transfer in is a really important
1197 issue. And we’ve made that so it works for our 4-unit courses now. We can do that pretty easily. In the early
1198 years we didn’t have a good relationship with the community colleges. I think that’s one of the biggest
1199 mistakes that was made at the beginning, is that we did not have the community colleges very much involved
1200 with us in building that curriculum at the beginning, so that there was buy-in from them. It was many years
1201 after I got here, I was at an NAACP meeting where the President of the Board of Trustees from MPC
1202 [Monterey Peninsula College] was there to talk about getting students into college. I asked him a question
1203 about advising for transfer to CSUMB. He just went off in a tirade about CSUMB. He said, “You people
1204 don’t know what you’re doing and until you figure out what you’re doing, my advice to students at MPC is
1205 go somewhere else.”

1206 **Benmayor:** *Wow.*

1207 **[2:40:54] Shenk:** So this was a big mistake. I talked to guidance counselors at Hartnell over the years and
1208 they said, “We can’t figure out what you do. We can’t figure out how to get our students in there or why it
1209 would be a good idea for our students to go there.” This was seven or eight years into CSUMB’s history. So
1210 they should have been involved in actually setting up our curriculum. We didn’t have to give up the Vision

1211 to have them involved. So, to me, that is maybe the single biggest mistake made at the beginning, was not to
1212 involve them really intimately in how we created our curriculum. Because I think there would have been
1213 buy-in if they had been brought in and we think about this. Ann Riley and Juan Olivares, who were long time
1214 tenured faculty at Hartnell taught part-time, were Lecturers in SBS for many years, taught history courses.
1215 They taught SBS 212, Social and Political Histories of the U.S. which met our Democratic Participation in
1216 U.S. Histories, they taught that here and they took that over to Hartnell and they created an identical course
1217 at Hartnell that we taught.

1218 **Benmayor:** *Interesting.*

1219 **Shenk:** And it's there now. And it transfers in perfectly.

1220 **Benmayor:** *How interesting.*

1221 **Shenk:** So we could have done that from the very beginning. It was many years in when Ann and
1222 Juan got together and said, "Well, we like this course. Why don't we create one at Hartnell?" And so they
1223 did.

1224 **Benmayor:** *And why do you think that didn't happen?*

1225 **Shenk:** I don't know because I wasn't here the first year and I don't know. . .

1226 **Benmayor:** *The first year was ... [Laughs].*

1227 **Shenk:** Right. Yeah. There were so many things going on. Maybe it's because we didn't have the
1228 five-year plan. It could be that. But I know, and you probably know as well, many of the faculty at the local
1229 community colleges felt very disrespected by faculty at CSUMB. I know when I became Chair of SBGS,
1230 -- and that was 2009, so that's many years in; Psychology was still a part of SBGS --, I invited Psych faculty
1231 from the community colleges to come meet with our Psych faculty. We only got three of them to come. The
1232 others said they don't even want to talk to us, they were so upset with us. This was like 14 years after the
1233 University opened. The Psych faculty at Cabrillo, MPC and Hartnell were still so upset about the way they

1234 had been treated, they felt disrespected from the beginning. I just wanted to create a cohort of faculty that
1235 could work with each other. They didn't even want to talk about it.

1236 **Benmayor:** *Do you think that the fact that many of our founding faculty did not come from the CSU*
1237 *might have had something to do with it?*

1238 **Shenk:** Yeah. Right.

1239 **Benmayor:** *Or did not come from the community colleges?*

1240 **Shenk:** Yeah. And I think and I'm not going to name any names, but some of the people that I worked
1241 really well with on a lot of issues, this was a stumbling block. They did not understand the CSU curricular
1242 structure. They didn't understand the system. Peter told me to my face that we didn't have to be a part of that
1243 system. We were technically a part of the system. But he said, "No." We were told by Munitz, actually, that
1244 we were going to be an innovative campus and we should just follow what everybody thinks are the best
1245 practices for the 21st century and we'll find a way to fit within the CSU once we do that. So that was a lot of
1246 the people. So I did not have that response from any of the faculty or staff that had come from within the
1247 CSU. Harold Murai, for example, came from Sacramento State. He was willing to give up tenure in order to
1248 help create this university. But after two years he said, "I can't get anybody here to talk to me about what we
1249 need to do to fit within the CSU." And Harold was a guy that believed in the Vision Statement. He was a
1250 good guy, a good teacher. He thought it wasn't going to work. He went back to Sacramento. There were a
1251 number of other CSU faculty, from Long Beach, from San Bernardino, I forget where all. But a number of
1252 founding faculty who came from the CSU's, left after a couple of years.

1253 **[2:46:43] Benmayor:** *That's interesting because I remember when UC Santa Cruz was created. They had*
1254 *a similar struggle within the UC system. Because they were supposed to be different and nobody else was*
1255 *really interested in that. So it was sort of looked down upon by other UC's. Interesting.*

1256 **Shenk:** Yeah. I was invited to participate in the CSU History Department Chairs meetings. They met
1257 twice a year. So I went to those meetings twice a year for many years until [Chancellor] Charlie Reed cut off

1258 their funding, stopped paying for us to meet. But probably up until about 2010, 2011 they met twice a year
1259 at various CSUs. Almost to a person they thought we were crazy. These were History Department chairs.
1260 And you could not talk about learner-centered pedagogy in that group. They were all banking model people.
1261 It was really disappointing to me. The Chair from one of those departments said to me when I was talking
1262 about workload issue and I said, "To me that's the number one faculty issue, is workload." And he said, "I
1263 have no issue with workload." They have graduate students, we didn't. So he said, "I have Graduate
1264 Assistants for my morning classes. My Graduate Assistants just have to go in and turn on the video of my
1265 lecture. By nine o'clock I'm on the golf course."

1266 **Benmayor:** *Oh, my God.*

1267 **Shenk:** That's a chair of one of the largest CSU History departments. They all laughed and thought
1268 that was a funny thing. I didn't. When Channel Islands was opened the department chair from their History
1269 Department there said to me in a meeting, "Our primary instruction has been 'Don't be Monterey Bay.' That
1270 was the number one instruction from the Chancellor's Office." That's Charlie Reed. We were considered
1271 crazy. On the other hand, many of us were going to these conferences, the AAHE [American Association of
1272 Higher Education, Lilly [Foundation], Carnegie [Foundation], conferences on Teaching and Learning. What
1273 we were finding out was that there were really fantastic faculty at all the other CSUs that are struggling like
1274 we are against the system, people doing learner-centered pedagogies, people doing portfolio assessments.
1275 And they are always a small minority at their campuses. But I remember this one guy did a fantastic
1276 workshop, a Sociology professor from Fresno State at a Lilly Conference down at Lake Arrowhead. David
1277 Takacs and I did a workshop at that conference and we went to this guy's workshop and we thought, "Why
1278 wasn't this guy hired for Social and Behavioral Sciences at CSUMB?" We asked him and he said, "I applied
1279 for the job as founding faculty. Didn't get an interview." Who knows why. But we thought History would
1280 have been different. This one person could have made a huge differentiation in one Center, I think. He was
1281 really on the ball, he knew what he was doing, he was charismatic and knew his stuff. So what we found was

1282 that people on the cutting edge of pedagogy nationwide came to these conferences. They all wanted to know
1283 what we were doing at CSUMB. When we told them what we were trying to do they thought it was fantastic.
1284 So, what we were trying to do, and in many cases succeeding, was what the people on the cutting edge of
1285 higher education nationwide, and in some places globally, wanted to do. I mean, David and I went. . .
1286 Carnegie sent us to London. We did presentations in London on our California History course. People were
1287 thrilled with what we did. We had a whole praxis model. It's just a simple praxis cycle. We start with who
1288 the students are and learning about who they are, where they stand. Then we say, "Okay, what matters to
1289 you? "So we move from that to what more do you need to know about what matters to you? "What is the
1290 world you live in and how is that different from the world you would like to live in? What's the real world
1291 versus your ideal world? What are some things that you could do right now that would move us a little bit
1292 towards that ideal world? And how can you learn something from California history? Find something in
1293 California history, some knowledge that will help you be more effective in that action. Then take that action,
1294 informed action." You come back around and you can self reflect again and say, "What have I learned through
1295 this action and how has that action changed who I am?" And you begin the cycle again. David and I presented
1296 that praxis cycle at The Organization of American Historians, The American Historical Association, The
1297 American Association of Higher Education, The International Scholarship of Teaching and Learning
1298 conference in London. People always said, "That's good. That's what you need to do." But you know what?
1299 If you've got content -- what historians call coverage, content that must be covered --, then it's very hard to
1300 find time to do that. Besides, the knowledge students need to be effective in changing the world the way they
1301 want to change it may not be the knowledge that's prescribed. David and I used to talk about this when we'd
1302 come back from conferences where we presented this. We would always say we were so grateful for being
1303 able to go to these conferences because it makes us appreciate CSUMB. If you're only at CSUMB and you're
1304 only in the struggles at CSUMB, you start to feel like nothing is going right. Then you go to one of these
1305 conferences and you say, "Well, this is what we're trying to do. This is what's working and this is what's

1306 not working,” and people were always looking at us enviously saying, “Wow, we wish we could have a
1307 Democratic Participation requirement. We wish we could have a Service Learning requirement. We wish we
1308 could have this Foreign Language requirement. We wish we could have 4-unit courses that give us time to
1309 let students be their own knowledge generators.” So I feel like there is an ever diminishing core of faculty
1310 who are absolutely committed to that kind of pedagogy. I don’t really blame the people who have given up.
1311 I mean after a while you get tired. You just get tired of fighting. And you say, “Okay, I’ll find some other
1312 way to do my work.” I still think that CSUMB, [pause] at its best, [long pause] does it better than anybody
1313 else. Than any other state university, except maybe Evergreen State in Washington. We did some studies
1314 with them. Portland State as well. That’s one of the places that Amy Driscoll took David and me to to do a
1315 presentation on how we did our California History class. They loved it. So we thought, “Oh, we’ve got this
1316 great thing. We’re going to show it off to Portland State.” Then we sat in on their workshops. Wow! What
1317 they do at a university that at the time was many times larger than ours! But they had a state government that
1318 supported them in that. The Chancellor supported them in that. So, we did take a lot from other [universities].
1319 You may remember in the early years in putting together the first WASC accreditation report, we brought in
1320 people from Alverno to help us put that together. That’s a private women’s college in Wisconsin. They can
1321 do things that we can’t do. But it was very helpful. You find out that there are people that are doing this
1322 successfully elsewhere. But very few doing it within the context of a very large state system. So I do admire
1323 CSUMB for keeping a lot of the really good things. I mean Service Learning and Democratic Participation,
1324 they have continued, and I think to advance the original Vision. [long pause]

1325 **[2:58:37] Benmayor:** *I also participated in these national conferences, you know, the Visible Knowledge*
1326 *Project and things like that, that really validated what we were trying to do here. Many of us had never even*
1327 *been trained in how to do this, right?*

1328 **Shenk:** Right.

1329 **Benmayor:** *Because our training was pretty traditional. I don't know, you were trained in the UC*
1330 *and so was I.*

1331 **Shenk:** Right.

1332 **Benmayor:** *But I think we got our validation from other sources, especially in the beginning, in the*
1333 *first ten years perhaps. But I am wondering in terms of your ability to juggle innovative teaching with*
1334 *research. How did you combine those or not combine those two? What were your strategies?*

1335 **Shenk:** Well, I was fortunate in that the Dean and the RTP [Retention, Tenure and Promotion]
1336 committees and the Provost supported me in my making the case for the Scholarship of Teaching and
1337 Learning. So David Takacs and I got a Carnegie fellowship and for two years were part of the Carnegie
1338 Academy for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning, CASTL. So part of the research that got me tenure
1339 was research that we did as part of the Carnegie project. So we did research on our California History course.
1340 What we did is, we asked about the praxis cycle. Was the praxis cycle working? We had staff people at
1341 Carnegie helping us with that. They came down. They did focus groups on our class. They surveyed our
1342 class. So we had these people that were completely disconnected from our class come in and help us do this
1343 external evaluation of our class. An interesting innovation that came out of the inspiration of CSUMB, that
1344 I think then had an influence on other faculty in our cohort at Carnegie was, at the end of the first year --the
1345 Carnegie Project, Scholarship of Teaching and Learning was a two-year project --, we did this evaluation of
1346 whether or not the students had met the outcomes that we had set. Ten outcomes. We read their final papers.
1347 I remember we went down to Nepenthe in Big Sur and we sat on the Café Keva platform there all day long
1348 and read through student papers and checked them against the outcomes. We kept saying, "This is a complete
1349 failure." Almost none of the students met any of the outcomes that we set out. "But," we said, "there's a lot
1350 of fantastic papers here! They didn't meet our outcomes but they wrote fantastic papers!" So we said, "Let's
1351 go back and let's be deductive rather than inductive about this. Let's say, "What did the students do? What
1352 did they tell us they learned?" Rather than, "Did they learn what we told them we wanted them to learn?"

1353 And so we went through and we came up with a taxonomy, ten ways in which students used history to inform
1354 their political action. Not a one of them was one of the outcomes that we had come up with. And we said,
1355 “Okay , if it’s learner centered then you have to be deductive about that. You tell the students up front, “This
1356 is the goal of the course, these are the outcomes, this is why we’re teaching the course. This is what we hope.”
1357 But when it comes down to assessment I think you can’t hold them to that. If you believe that students are
1358 knowledge creators and you are trying to mentor that, then at the end you have to say, “Okay, let’s wipe the
1359 slate clean. What did you learn? Tell me what you learned of value to you and how is it of value to you?” If
1360 it’s completely different from what you intended, that doesn’t mean you were a failure. We took that into
1361 Carnegie and we presented this to our cohort and people said, “Wow! That’s amazing. That’s fantastic, I’m
1362 going to try that in my class.” And we published that in *Radical History Review*. We published it in the
1363 American Historical Association’s *Perspectives on History*, and got lots of feedback from people saying,
1364 “Wow, this is great way to think about assessment.” That got both David and me some publications. Also,
1365 the Carnegie produced three books out of that research. So we were part of a cohort of 40 people. Maybe
1366 there were 30 in ours, there were 40 in the one following which they used as well, that David Richard was
1367 in. So they used our research in their books. So the RTP committee used that. But I also had a book published
1368 and a few articles. That was on my research that was mainly my dissertation, but then the publisher had
1369 asked for an additional chapter which I had to do research on. So that was difficult to find time to do that
1370 research. To this day, it is the chapter in that book that I am least proud of. There’s really good research but
1371 it’s not as coherent as it needs to be because I didn’t have time to get away from everything and say, “How
1372 do I put all this together in a coherent way?” It’s very difficult to do kind of complex analysis on something
1373 that’s not really related to your classes while you are teaching and building this curriculum. I told you I
1374 brought my C.V. from 1998 that I guess went into my two-year review. I was on eight different committees
1375 that year, one of which was that ULR committee that met like *every week* and we spent weekends together,
1376 and it was a huge amount of work. So it was very difficult to do scholarship that was not directly related to

1377 your work for the University. So, I was very fortunate that they [counted my Carnegie work. After David
1378 and I did the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning project, they asked us to come back and do Tom Ehrlich's
1379 Carnegie Political Engagement project. And so that was another two years. So basically we had four years
1380 with Carnegie. We got more things published as a result of that. So all of that helped with tenure.

1381 **[3:07:08] Benmayor:** *I wonder how David uses that in his current position teaching law? [Chuckles] That's*
1382 *an aside.*

1383 **Shenk:** Well, actually it's an interesting aside. When he left after eight years at CSUMB, he went to
1384 law school at Hastings and got a law degree. Then he went to London and he got a Juris Doctor in
1385 International Environmental Law. Then he was hired as a tenured professor at Hastings and he is now tenured
1386 there.

1387 **Benmayor:** *Isn't he at Boalt?*

1388 **Shenk:** No. He's at Hastings. So, a few years into his professorship at Hastings, an order comes down
1389 from the top in the UC system that they are going to adopt outcomes-based education. Every syllabus for
1390 every course in the UC which includes the law schools, right, which includes Hastings and Boalt, every
1391 syllabus has to have outcomes and they have to explain how they're assessing their outcomes!! [Chuckles] I
1392 don't know if it's the Dean or the Provost, somebody comes to him and says, "You know something about
1393 this, don't you?" And he said, "Well, yeah, we did what we called outcomes-based education." So they said,
1394 "Okay, here are the syllabi for all the courses in Hastings. We'd like you to convert them to OBE!"

1395 **Benmayor:** *Wow.*

1396 **Shenk:** So this is how CSUMB influenced one of the top law schools in the country! Right? So
1397 David's job then was to revise these law school syllabi so that they're outcomes based.

1398 **Benmayor:** *Wow. That's very interesting. I can't wait till we interview him. [Laughs]*

1399 **Shenk:** Yes, you need to interview him.

1400 **Benmayor:** *We will.*

1401 **Shenk:** Run this by him. Make sure I got the details right on that. Ask him because you know, I'm
1402 almost 70, and sometimes memory is faulty. But that's sort of a mid-distance memory so it might not be too
1403 faulty. But that's the way I remember that he told me about that. The outcomes-based education. I would
1404 like to also do a little shout out to Joe Larkin. Because after the very difficult job interview which I could
1405 not understand what they were talking about, about outcomes-based education, and I emailed you and you
1406 said, "Don't worry about it," Joe Larkin did a workshop for faculty in that first week before classes started
1407 in 1996, a workshop on outcomes-based education. In fact, in going through my things this week, throwing
1408 out things, I found he gave us a handout of his presentation. I found this thing. "What are Outcomes? " To
1409 this day I didn't realize how influential that had been. Joe said basically, "People get really hung up on this."
1410 There's this whole field of Outcomes-based Education that's very quantitative, you know, and Josina really
1411 was against that. I remember Josina said, "We don't measure. We don't measure." She objected to using the
1412 word measure in any kind of outcomes assessment. Joe said, "Well, there's two kinds of outcomes. There's
1413 knowledge outcomes and there's skills outcomes. You ask, what do they know and what can they do as a
1414 result of your learning experience." And that's another thing that needs to be in all of these interviews. We
1415 didn't have classes. We had Learning Experiences, which people made fun of, but I still like that. I like that
1416 we had Learning Experiences.

1417 **Benmayor:** *[Laughs]*

1418 **Shenk:** But Joe gave the example of building a barn, and he distinguished between outcomes and
1419 objectives. So he looked at some of our syllabi, including mine from Marymount where I had been teaching,
1420 and I had objectives listed on my syllabi but no outcomes. So objectives are sort of the things that you
1421 complete in the class. I'm going to complete this research paper. I'm going to complete an oral presentation.
1422 I'm going to complete a work of art, or a music recital, or something like that. Those aren't outcomes. Those
1423 are objectives.

1424 **Benmayor:** *What you guys call deliverables.*

1425 **Shenk:** Yeah. What SBSC called deliverables. Yeah. I had never heard that word before either but
1426 that comes out of corporate America, right? [Chuckles] That wasn't being used across the campus, that was
1427 just SBSC. So he said, "If you're going to build a barn there's certain knowledge you need to have. And
1428 that's sort of engineering knowledge. You need to know about stresses and architecture and physical stresses
1429 on joints and things like that. That's knowledge you need to have. You need to know how to read blueprints.
1430 You need to know where to get your materials. You need to know what kinds of materials are best for that.
1431 That's all knowledge you need to have. So, those are knowledge outcomes for building a barn. Then you
1432 need skills and some of these are really basic skills like, how to hammer a nail. How to cut a piece of wood.
1433 How to measure things properly. How to fit things together properly. So you've got the knowledge and you
1434 have the skills. You don't have a barn. You have the knowledge and the skills. The barn is the objective."
1435 [Chuckles] So since then I've done workshops on that so I'm going to tell you now that I had a Fulbright in
1436 the Philippines in 2009-2010, and I went back two years later and they had received orders from the
1437 Department of Education that they had to become outcomes based.

1438 **[3:14:20] Benmayor:** *In the Philippines?*

1439 **Shenk:** In the Philippines, that all state universities had to be outcomes based. They're using Grant
1440 Wiggins and [Jay] McTighe which we used. Amy Driscoll passed these out to all faculty members:
1441 *Understanding by Design*, you know, "backward design," for your outcomes, to your pedagogy. So, I just
1442 happened to arrive there the week that they received this order. The President of this university was a friend
1443 of mine and she invites me into a social meeting and she presents this order to me. She says, "We don't know,
1444 do you know anything about outcomes based?" I said, "Yeah, well, you know, we said we're outcomes
1445 based." So we sat there and we talked for two hours about outcomes-based education. I tell her the Joe Larkin
1446 story about building a barn. She says afterwards thank you and then I go visit the Dean of Social Sciences
1447 who was also a friend of mine. I'm sitting there in her office and we're just sitting there shooting the breeze
1448 and a student comes in, hands me a flyer and it has a picture of me on it and a notice, and it says, "Dr. Gerald

1449 Shenk from California State University Monterey Bay will be giving a workshop on outcomes-based
1450 education on Friday at two o'clock. All faculty are required to attend.”

1451 **Benmayor:** *[Laughs]*

1452 **Shenk:** [Laughs] They didn't ask me. They just sent it. So I go in and I basically do this thing. They
1453 took pictures. I had all the documents. They took a video. I did the whole thing about building the barn. Then
1454 two years ago I get invited to where Sandra Pacheco teaches now, it's a graduate school. Integrative Studies.
1455 California Academy for Integrated Studies or Institute.

1456 **Benmayor:** *Something like that.*

1457 **Shenk:** California Institute of Integrative Studies. So Judith Flores and I were invited to be external
1458 reviewers for the accreditation. So this is wonderful because I had Judith Flores in Freshman ProSeminar
1459 when she was a freshman and it was like my second year teaching at CSUMB. She was an HCOM student,
1460 as you know. Wonderful. And she's now a faculty member at [New Mexico State University] Las Cruces. I
1461 follow her on Facebook. She's become fantastic! A wonderful scholar. Co-authoring books with Christie
1462 Sleeter and things like that. So anyway, we go there and we have this conversation with them about
1463 outcomes-based education. And again, I tell them the barn story. Then I come back and I get emails from the
1464 President there and an email from Sandra Pacheco saying, “Okay, can you fill out some of these details about
1465 the barn thing?” Everybody likes this barn story! Then I forget, maybe two weeks ago, at the Martin Luther
1466 King Day celebration, I see Joe and Christie. And I tell Joe, I say, “You know what? You told this story at
1467 this workshop on outcomes-based education in 1996 and I've been telling it everywhere and people just love
1468 it.” I told it to him and he said, “I never heard that story. I don't know what you're talking about.”

1469 **Benmayor:** *Wow.* [Laugh]

1470 **Shenk:** I don't know where it came from! If I dreamed it or what. But it seems to be working for
1471 people. But Joe said, “I never used that!”

1472 **Benmayor:** *I don't remember him using it. [Laughs] That's fantastic.*

1473 **[3:18:48] Shenk:** But he did a workshop on outcomes-based education and I remember having a big
1474 argument with him about outcomes. I said, I have one outcome: transformation. It's not my job to say how
1475 they're transformed. I need to provide them an environment and a setting and materials that they can use that
1476 will transform the way they live in the world, but I don't have a right to say 'This is how you are going to be
1477 transformed.'" And Joe said, "That's not an outcome." [Laughter] But Joe was one of those people that
1478 was very influential. He gave us so much on teaching and learning. He is very straightforward. He can
1479 organize things in a really coherent way and do a coherent presentation. I think if Joe had been the person
1480 out there in the world telling the world what we were doing at CSUMB, going to the community colleges
1481 and talking to them, I think we would have been better understood. But one of the things I think needs to be
1482 said, and I think I touched on this last time, but I think it can't be over emphasized, we did not have an
1483 administration that was on the same page with the faculty. I remember when I was on ASEC, Academic
1484 Senate Executive Committee, and we interviewed Dianne Harrison when she was a candidate for the
1485 presidency. And there were several other people interviewed. It was no mystery that the campus did not vote
1486 for her. The ASEC did not vote for her. There was an overwhelming vote for someone else.

1487 **Benmayor:** *It was a man, I think.*

1488 **Shenk:** Yeah. When Reed chose Dianne Harrison, I just remember coming back to ASEC and then
1489 Dianne came to campus and she met with ASEC. She knew how the vote had gone. She came and was very
1490 up front and honest with us, and she said, "I know you didn't vote for me. I know I wasn't your first choice.
1491 But I'm going to try to listen to you. I'm going to try to be part of this community." And I think she did and
1492 she didn't. After she left that meeting one of the members of ASEC, and I won't name that person, said, "If
1493 the first thing Dianne does when she gets here is to fire the Vice President for Finance and Planning then she
1494 has my loyalty. I will follow her anywhere."

1495 **Benmayor:** [Chuckles] *Who was the Vice President of Finance and Planning?*

1496 **Shenk:** Johnson. What was his first name? Dan. Dan Johnson, I think.

1497 **Benmayor:** *There have been so many that who remembers!.*

1498 **[3:22:15] Shenk:** He had come into ASEC with Diane Cordero de Noriega. No, actually with Cathy Cruz
1499 Uribe. And I forget what we were talking about but in the course of our conversation it became obvious that
1500 he knew nothing about our curriculum. He didn't know what an MLO was. He didn't know what a ULR was.
1501 He had never heard those phrases and this is a Vice President of the University. So people on ASEC said,
1502 "We need to have people who know and support our curriculum." I mean we had Registrars who didn't
1503 believe in what we did. We had a whole cabinet of people, whether they understood what we were trying to
1504 do or not, I don't know. But they didn't believe in it. They didn't support it. I think a good deal of what didn't
1505 work didn't work because we were at cross purposes with the administration. Now, my criticism of that does
1506 not go to Peter [Smith]. Peter and I disagreed on an awful lot of things and particularly on the way he handled
1507 issues of race, which he *badly* mishandled the second year that I was here, in 1997-98. But Peter really
1508 believed in the kind of curriculum that we were trying to set up. I had conversations with him about that.
1509 There's one thing that I should tell you. I hope my students all know. So maybe this should go in there. And
1510 you know this, I think. When I was first hired, when you go and you fill out all the papers, you have to sign
1511 an oath of allegiance to the California Constitution and the U.S. Constitution. And it's the loyalty oath that
1512 Ronald Reagan imposed throughout the CSU and UC, back in the sixties. Many faculty lost their jobs
1513 because they refused to sign that oath. I knew people from San Francisco State lost their jobs over that. When
1514 I was confronted – I was startled by that. I didn't know that I was going to have to sign that, I was startled
1515 by that, and I was sitting there down there in Building 84, I think, or 82, and I was asked to read this thing
1516 and sign it. And I said, "I can't sign that." I said, "I can write an addendum to it. I can't pledge allegiance to
1517 the flag. That's considered a sin in my church, it's my religious training and upbringing." And I said, "I will
1518 write a note here saying, 'I will sign this but I owe allegiance to nothing but God.'" And the woman who was
1519 in charge there said, "Well, what's the difference between God and your nation?" Literally, she said that!
1520 She said, "I won't turn this in. This is not legal." I said, "Well, please do," and we had a long argument about

1521 that. I signed it with that note on there. I don't remember how the process went but she basically said I could
1522 not be hired. It went up through the Provost Arvizu, and then to Peter. It also went to the ACLU. So one of
1523 the things that reminded me of this is going through papers I found a letter from, what's her name... Welsh.

1524 **Benmayor:** *Mickey.*

1525 **Shenk:** Mickey Welsh. A letter to me that they had agreed to represent me. But this letter was saying,
1526 "I just learned that Peter has intervened on your behalf to the Chancellor's Office and the Chancellor's Office
1527 has accepted your paperwork." So Peter went to bat for me on that. Peter said, "This is a First Amendment
1528 issue. And it's a freedom of religion issue and you have a right to this and we can't deny you employment."
1529 But I was ready to turn this job down for that. I would not sign it. So I've always been grateful to Peter for
1530 that. He went to bat in the Chancellor's Office. At the time it was still Barry Munitz.

1531 **Benmayor:** *And Peter was very, in my recollection, hands off in terms of the faculty.*

1532 **Shenk:** Very much so. Yeah.

1533 **Benmayor:** *That is your domain. Now the question of shared governance was another issue.*

1534 *[Chuckles]*

1535 **[3:27:53] Shenk:** Yes. So when I was going through my papers, not necessarily for this but just sorting
1536 through what I can throw away, I found the agenda for an Academic Senate meeting with Peter in 2003 or
1537 2004, I forget. It was the first meeting in the Fall. It might have been 2004. While we were all gone, Peter
1538 signed CSUMB up for the NCAA Division 2 athletics. He spent \$45,000.00 for that. When you mentioned
1539 shared governance, the Academic Senate was alarmed about that and there's like a 3-page single spaced
1540 document of questions that faculty had for Peter. They asked Peter to come to the first Academic Senate of
1541 that Fall and answer these questions. "Why didn't you bring this to the faculty? Why didn't you have a
1542 discussion about this with the faculty? You spent this money for this, we don't know that this is what even
1543 faculty or students want, to be a Division 2 school." It's very expensive and to this day we lose money on it.
1544 I did research on that. Peter actually put me on the Athletic Advisory Board. I ran into conflict with Ronnie

1545 Higgs [Vice President for Student Affairs] on this. Ronnie Higgs said, “This is the only way we get African
1546 American males.” I said, “There are many other ways to get them.” But Ronnie said, “We break even on
1547 this.” I did research. NCAA’s own research finds that even most Division 1 schools lose money on it. The
1548 only colleges and universities that do not lose money on athletics are the big Division 1 schools that have TV
1549 contracts. Everybody else loses money.

1550 **Benmayor:** *What are TV contracts?*

1551 **Shenk:** Well, that’s a contract to have their games shown on network TV. Or on ESPN.

1552 **Benmayor:** *Oh, oh. Right.*

1553 **Shenk:** Or CBS or NBC. Fox. And NCAA’s own studies show that the cost comes out of academic
1554 programs. Even big Division 1 schools, if they do not have a big TV contract, they lose money on it. But they
1555 make this whole argument that it’s good for school spirit and it gets the community involved and all of this.
1556 I was actually eventually disinvited from the Athletic Advisory Committee because I did not support the
1557 Division 2. We were club sports until then. That first semester that we had Division 2 athletics, one of my
1558 advisees came into my office almost in tears because the baseball team that he had been playing on, which
1559 was a club baseball team, was kicked off the CSUMB field because the field was now only available for the
1560 official Division 1 team. So intramural sports were basically destroyed by moving to the NCAA Division 2
1561 athletics. What we had in the first eight or nine years was a very healthy intramural sports and club sports.
1562 They played with local community colleges, local other private colleges around. And you had a much broader
1563 range of students involved in athletics. Now students are only involved in athletics if they are good enough
1564 to be part of the Division 2 teams. That was a huge blow to the Vision in my view, even though that’s not
1565 expressed. To me, everything on campus needs to serve the broadest campus population. So you mentioned
1566 shared governance. That decision was made without any faculty or even student government input. That and
1567 Peter’s handling of the racial issue in Fall of ’97 when he made a deal with MPC [Monterey Peninsula
1568 College] to house MPC football players in the CSUMB dormitories or residence halls for the end of the

1569 summer. The football players had to come in before the beginning of the semester for their practices and they
1570 didn't have residence halls for them at MPC for some reason. And so there was an overlap between those
1571 students and the incoming CSUMB students. There was an overlap of two or three days, I think. A bunch of
1572 CSUMB students moved in while these football players were off at practice. Then the football players come
1573 in, the majority of whom are African American and they're football players so they're very big African
1574 American men, just walking into the dorm and I don't know in what numbers, and as you remember, we had
1575 Open Forum at the time. And a number of white women at the time began posting things on Open Forum,
1576 that they're being overrun by threatening black men. I don't remember the details about that. I remember that
1577 Betty McEady and William Franklin became sort of the point people on dealing with that. But Peter just sort
1578 of let that thing fester. The African American students that were CSUMB students were very upset about
1579 that. They were very upset about the language that had been used, the racial language that had been used on
1580 Open Forum, that that had been permitted, and it took Peter quite a while to respond officially to that. So it
1581 just festered for a while. I, and other people, wrote letters to Peter about this. I don't know, you may have. It
1582 was quite a number of faculty knew this. We had talked to each other and said each of us needs to write our
1583 own personal letter to Peter about our concerns about this. I still have a copy of my letter. To his credit Peter
1584 responded personally point by point to my letter. He was very concerned about it but he also did not want to
1585 offend the white women who felt like they were threatened. Eventually they brought in the Monterey branch
1586 of the NAACP to help work that out. But that was, very early on, an indication to me that we had a President
1587 who was not experienced in dealing with these sorts of issues. So, the first lines of our Vision statement, that
1588 we're committed to this kind of multicultural equity, to racial justice, and he was at a loss to know how to
1589 deal with it. I think he was well meaning but he did not come in with the background or skills to deal with
1590 that.

1591 **[3:37:38] Benmayor:** *Was Dell Provost by then?*

1592 **Shenk:** Hmm.

1593 **Benmayor:** *Because in my mind there is a blurring. I had actually forgotten about this particular*
1594 *incident. What sticks in my mind and my mind is faulty, too, my memory, but I remember there was a big*
1595 *circle around the quad.*

1596 **Shenk:** Yes. Right.

1597 **Benmayor:** *On the grassy area of the quad. Was it over this issue?*

1598 **Shenk:** Yes. I believe so. And I think Dell was here. I think she came out.

1599 **Benmayor:** *Because Steve was gone, I think, by June of ... well, he was no longer the Provost.*

1600 **Shenk:** Right. He stayed around for a while after

1601 **Benmayor:** *Right. But that was June of '97, I think. The big issue happened in November of '96*
1602 *when he was sort of deposed from Provost-ship and made a Vice President.*

1603 **Shenk:** Right.

1604 **Benmayor:** *So Dell must have been here in the Spring of '96.*

1605 **Shenk:** Yes. She would have been.

1606 Benmayor: *Yeah.*

1607 **Shenk:** Actually because Dell handled the grievance that Angie and Yong Lao and I filed.

1608 **Benmayor:** *So in my mind there's this conflation -- and of course we know from oral historians that*
1609 *this is typical, right?-- I am conflating in my memory this moment of everybody, students and faculty and*
1610 *administration standing in a huge circle in the quad with later on the ...*

1611 **Shenk:** CLFSA.

1612 **Benmayor:** *Right. Which started with the business with Steve Arvizu, the Provost, but later on it was*
1613 *over Cecilia Burciaga.*

1614 **Shenk:** Well, between those was, do you remember Octavio Villalpando.

1615 **Benmayor:** *But that was over Cecilia.*

1616 **Shenk:** Oh, it was? Okay.

1617 **Benmayor:** *Yeah. He was the person that called that.*

1618 **Shenk:** He called that. Right. But he called other things. He was also the one that informed us that
1619 Peter's word for Blacks was Italians.

1620 **Benmayor:** *I don't remember that.*

1621 **Shenk:** He said Peter had a code word for – or maybe for racial minorities, I think. He said, “He just
1622 calls them all Italians.”

1623 **Benmayor:** [Chuckles]

1624 **Shenk:** But, you know, that's another one of the huge losses to our campus when Octavio and Dolores
1625 Bernal left here. They have been in the forefront of scholarship on critical pedagogy in Higher Education
1626 ever since then. I mean you see them, they are just published all over the place, particularly Dolores Bernal.
1627 They are the people who should have been here at CSUMB. They are the people we should have been building
1628 our curriculum around. In fact, Judith has co-authored something with Dolores. Judith Flores. So yeah,
1629 Dolores would have still been here. Maybe Judith even had a class with her.

1630 **Benmayor:** *I don't know because she was in Education in Liberal Studies and Judith was in HCOM,
1631 so probably not.*

1632 **Shenk:** Right. But they were just wonderful people.

1633 **[3:41:22] Benmayor:** *I wanted to raise this in terms of the social climate, not just around workload and
1634 things like that but you raised the point about the disconnect between the administration and the faculty. So,
1635 I was wondering, do you have any memories of that time when there was all this campus upheaval over these
1636 appointments or dis-appointments?*

1637 **Shenk:** Well, I remember CLFSA very well and I attended most of the meetings.

1638 **Benmayor:** *CLFSA was...?*

1639 **Shenk:** Chicano Latino ...

1640 **Benmayor:** *Faculty and Staff Association.*

1641 **Shenk:** Yeah. I think that's one of the things that helped to patch up some of the conflicts that I'd
1642 had with Armando. He became very much involved with that and I was involved with that so we found
1643 common ground. Yeah, I want to mention Rose Pasibe, because this was when I became good friends with
1644 Rose. I had worked with her because she had been involved in scheduling and things like that. No.

1645 **Benmayor:** *Academic Personnel.*

1646 **Shenk:** Yeah. Right. Academic Personnel. But that's when I really got to know her because she
1647 was so much out in front on that and she put herself on the line. That was one of the things that struck me
1648 about some of these people in administration. Some staff people were endangered in ways that faculty were
1649 not. And Rose and Petra [Valenzuela] were people who were just, I mean, they were fearless! They said,
1650 "Okay, this is our fight, we're in this." After that Rose and I were friends. She had moved into other positions
1651 where she was dealing more directly with students and she was wonderful with students. So I'm glad you
1652 brought that up because it gives me a chance to mention Rose as well, who was a wonderful friend of mine.
1653 So, to think about the friendships that have been formed here. They're lifelong friendships. [Chuckle] It's
1654 kind of like growing up Mennonite, where you think anybody who didn't grow up Mennonite cannot ever
1655 possibly understand. Right? [Chuckles] So I think anybody who was not here in the first five years cannot
1656 possibly understand what we went through. We made friends and enemies almost on a week to week basis.
1657 Sometimes you thought you were really good friends with somebody and then something would happen and
1658 you'd be enemies for a while. Sometimes people became permanent enemies. I guess it all depended on
1659 personalities or on the issues. I like that I made friends with staff people, so Petra and Rose. I loved Ross
1660 Miyashiro. He left early because he was caught in the middle between administration who wanted us to sort
1661 of be CSU'd and the faculty that wanted the ULR system. He helped write that final ULR system. We were
1662 so close. Well, I think one of the reasons I worked so closely with Ross was because SBSC was such an
1663 outlier on campus. It was so difficult to get SBSC integrated into that system. When I got to CSUMB there
1664 were no SBSC courses designated as ULR courses. When I got here and learned what ULRs were, I went to

1665 the faculty in SBSC and said, “Why are there not?” I was told, “We are only an upper division major, we are
1666 not interested in the lower division and we don’t want to be bound by the rules of the ULRs. We don’t like
1667 that they are trying to impose these things, the rest of the University is trying to impose itself on it.” I said,
1668 “You know what? We won’t survive if we’re not participating in that. That’s where you get your students.”
1669 So I began to work with Ross to go through the SBSC curriculum and say, “What courses can we match up
1670 with ULRs?” Back then faculty could just say, “My course meets these ULRs.” One of the first battles I had
1671 with Cecilia was over whether or not my “Domination and Resistance” course would meet the History ULR.
1672 I had a reading assigned from Franz Fanon about internalized colonialism and she said, “You can’t do that,
1673 that’s racist.” And we had this huge debate. But eventually we got that worked out. But again, another
1674 document I came across was a battle back and forth between Ruben Mendoza and various people on campus
1675 about whether or not one of his courses could meet pieces of various ULRs. Back then we had Culture as a
1676 separate ULR so he said, “This one meets 33% of the Culture ULR.”

1677 **Benmayor:** *[Laughs]*

1678 **[3:48:20] Shenk:** “This course meets 25% of the History ULR.” I think he had three or four different ULRs
1679 and he had met a piece of each one. So students said, “Well, how do I meet the rest of it? How do I find a
1680 course that meets the remaining piece?” *[Chuckles]* And there’s this wonderful email responding to him from
1681 Marsha Moroh. There are really long emails back and forth between him and Marsha is just saying, “This
1682 can’t work, Ruben. This can’t work that way. Your course has to either meet the whole ULR or not.” But I
1683 think that went on for over a year. I think that debate went on for over a year. Ruben really felt like there
1684 was a conspiracy against his courses. Part of the feeling on the part of SBSC faculty that they were, you
1685 know, outcasts on campus. So if something went against any one of us, we felt like it was not because of
1686 legitimate reasons but because we were SBSC. I know he felt that way. But he also kind of blamed me. I did
1687 side with Marsha and Ross on that. So he sent out a public email to the whole campus lambasting me for
1688 undermining SBSC because I attacked his course. But still, Ruben and I are good friends now and we worked

1689 through those things. I want to say at the end of that first year, Angie and I --and I can't remember if Yong
1690 Lao was part of this --, said, "Okay, we don't know if we've burned all our bridges in SBSC or not." But we
1691 did ask Dell Felder if we could leave. Because people were just moving all around. You and Josina had
1692 actually invited me into HCOM. So at the end of the first year, Angie and Yong Lao and I went to Dell Felder
1693 and we said, "Angie has been invited into Global Studies. Yong Lao has been invited into ESSP. And I've
1694 been invited into HCOM. And we would like to move." And Dell said, "I'm sorry, I put a freeze on all
1695 moves. There's been wholesale moving. People just said I want to move and they'd move." That was the way
1696 it was, people just moved on their own. She said, "No more moves." So if we had taken up those invitations
1697 in the Fall of '96 we could have moved. By the end of Spring of '97, Dell said no more moves. So at that
1698 point we said, "Okay, we have to find a way to live within SBSC." So we said, "Who do we think we have
1699 the best possibility of getting along with and dealing with?" And we said, "Ruben." So we called up Ruben
1700 and we said, "We'd like to take you to dinner. To the Salinas Fish House. Take you and Linda to dinner to
1701 the Salinas Fish House." So we went out, gave them a really nice fancy dinner. We just sat there and talked
1702 about all sorts of things, everything except SBS. And we've been fine ever since. I mean sometimes you just
1703 have to say, "Okay, all those battles, they were nasty. People said things they should not have said, wrote
1704 things they should not have written." But you can't continue to refight those battles. You just have to say,
1705 "Okay, that's passed. Let's start with a clean slate and see what happens." And so that's we did and it worked.
1706 I think it would have been nice if a lot more people had done that. Some people just left because there was
1707 no way they could have worked things out. And that's sad. I'm trying to remember the name of the African
1708 American Psychology professor who was a founding faculty.

1709 **Benmayor:** *Oh. Michael....*

1710 **[3:53:01] Shenk:** Yeah, Michael [Connor]. Sometime during the first year that I was at CSUMB, I came
1711 into my office and somebody had slid an envelope under the door, a sealed envelope. I opened it up and
1712 inside was a letter from Michael, whatever his last name was. It was a copy of the letter explaining why he

1713 resigned after the first year. It was a really angry letter accusing multiple Latino faculty of racism. [Big sigh.]
1714 So later I found out that George was the person who slid that under my door and I said, “Why did you do
1715 that?” He said, “I just thought you ought to know that’s part of the battle that’s gone on here, is that Latino
1716 and African American faculty have been at each other’s throats.” He said, “That’s the racial battle that goes
1717 on here.” So that’s that case, and that’s all I knew about that. But that was one of the first things that happened
1718 in the first year. Later on, I took a group of CSUMB students to the National Conference on Race and
1719 Ethnicity in American Higher Education [NCORE] and he was there giving a workshop. So we went to his
1720 workshop. He saw our name tags afterwards and he wanted to talk to the students afterwards about that. I
1721 didn’t sit in on that. But it was Bethtina and Zoe and Toi. But also Christian Crump was part of that. Stephen
1722 Russell, who was Amalia’s student. But I don’t know what he talked about that. I think he mainly wanted to
1723 know from the African American students what the environment was like for them on the campus. They were
1724 glad to have had a conversation with him. I don’t know what the details of that were. Incidentally, in that
1725 group Patti Hiramoto went along with us. She was the Office of Economy Opportunity officer on campus at
1726 the time.

1727 **Benmayor:** *Equal Opportunity.*

1728 **Shenk:** Equal Opportunity Officer?

1729 **Benmayor:** *Something like that. Yeah.*

1730 **Shenk:** Yeah. So Patti went along. It was a really good conference. We went four times and the last
1731 time we were designated *personas non grata*. [Chuckles] This is a very expensive conference to go to and
1732 they pay top dollar for people like Cornell West and Michael Eric Dyson and Dolores Huerta to come. It is a
1733 five-day conference and they have a keynote speaker every day. So, they were paying, back then, like
1734 \$10,000 or \$15,000 per speaker. So it costs \$500 registration for a faculty member and something like \$300
1735 or \$400 for students if they were accompanied by a faculty member. I had taken students from Marymount
1736 for one year, so I went four times. And then I went three times with CSUMB students.

1737 **Benmayor:** *I think I went one year, didn't I? It was with Octavio and I remember a boat trip on the*
1738 *San Francisco Bay?*

1739 **Shenk:** Oh, no. It was never in San Francisco. It was never in California. It might have been a different
1740 conference.

1741 **Benmayor:** *Oh, okay. Okay, a different conference.*

1742 **[3:57:22] Shenk:** They had a reason for boycotting California. I can't remember what it was. But they didn't
1743 boycott Texas. [Chuckle] So we went to San Antonio. We went to Orlando. We went to Denver. We went to
1744 Santa Fe. Well, Santa Fe was the last one. Only three students were able to come up with enough money to
1745 go to that one. So I went. Diane Cordero de Noriega went. She was Interim President at the time. Maybe she
1746 was still Provost at the time. Dell Felder had gone to an earlier one. So we did have support from the
1747 administration on that. A group of students that had gone to two previous ones decided they wanted to protest
1748 this organization that put on this conference because they said, "Okay, you're all about issues of justice but
1749 you're paying these people who are essentially part of a "justice industry," right, they're in it to make money."
1750 You know, Michael Eric Dyson asking \$15,000 and they had tried to get him to come to CSUMB and he had
1751 said, "It's \$15,000 and you have to pay my first class air fare for me and my wife and you must have a
1752 limousine pick me up at the airport." The students were *so* disillusioned by that. They said, "Here's this guy,
1753 that he's out there talking about justice all the time and we can't get him to come here because we can't afford
1754 him. And we can't afford to go to these conferences that pay him what he demands." It's not just him. All
1755 these big name people, they get paid huge amounts. I don't know which student it was but one of them came
1756 up to me and said, "It's an industry. They're in it to make money. It's the Justice Industry." So a group of
1757 them decided they were going to crash this conference. They didn't fly there. Those of us that had registered
1758 legitimately, we flew there and we were participating. We didn't even know that these other students were
1759 going to crash it. Christian Crump was one of them. One of Bethtina's cohorts, Zoe or Toi. I think Bethtina
1760 had gone legitimately. So, they showed up. I didn't even know they were there, and they started going to

1761 workshops without name tags, right, and going into the sessions. They would just crash these things, and
1762 they would be kicked out. I got called out of a session. One of the organizers of the conference came and said
1763 that what's her name -- I can't remember the lady that started this thing and she's been running it ever since
1764 --, "She needs to speak to you." They called me to this room. There were very serious people in it. They said,
1765 "You're from CSUMB, right?" And I said, "Yes." They said, "We're going to have to ask you and your
1766 students to leave immediately. You cannot stay." I said, "Why?" They said, "Your students are not registered
1767 and they're insisting on going to sessions without paying." I said, "The students that came with me are all
1768 registered." In fact, I think Bethina may have put on a workshop. Then they said, "Oh, no. There's a bunch
1769 of students here that are not registered and they're your students." I found out there was this group of maybe
1770 five students that had driven from Monterey to Santa Fe.

1771 **Benmayor:** *Wow.*

1772 **[4:01:43] Shenk:** And we all had to leave early. We were told, "You are not welcome here and you will not
1773 be permitted to attend future conferences." [Chuckles] I was proud of those students. I said, "Good. CSUMB
1774 is working!"

1775 **Benmayor:** *And that was the National Association*

1776 **Shenk:** The National Conference on Race and Ethnicity in American Higher Education.

1777 **Benmayor:** *NCORE.*

1778 **Shenk:** NCORE.

1779 **Benmayor:** *Right. I think they did have a conference in San Francisco.*

1780 **Shenk:** It might have been later.

1781 **Benmayor:** *Later. Because I think I went with Christie Sleeter, now that I'm thinking about it. We*
1782 *gave a workshop on Oral History and Family History. Anyway, yes, our students back then were something*
1783 *else. [Laughs]*

1784 **Shenk:** Yeah. I was proud. I mean I was very upset at first but then I was, “Oh, man, you know what?
1785 There’s an outcome.” So anyway, I talk way too long.

1786 **Benmayor:** *No, it’s very rich, Gerald. It’s very, very rich and it’s wonderful to do this because I get
1787 to relive some of these moments and clarify my own memory of them.*

1788 **Shenk:** Yeah. So you’ll triangulate this with other people’s stories and find out what ... -

1789 **Benmayor:** *Well, I don't know exactly what we’re going to do.*

1790 **Shenk:** You’re the expert on this. People have different memories of things. You know, for me, the
1791 cautionary tale is the barn, building the barn story! Because in my mind, I can sit here and I can hear Joe
1792 giving that talk. I picture the barn and everything. And it’s so clear in my mind that Joe did that, but Joe said,
1793 “No.” It’s not even familiar to him. So that’s my memory.

1794 **Benmayor:** *Maybe it was Josina.*

1795 **Shenk:** No, no. Josina didn’t give that kind of presentation. In terms of the way in which we thought
1796 about outcomes, she and I were more on the same page. But it was harder to comprehend the way she thought
1797 about it because she didn’t think in these sorts of linear ways. What made Joe so clear is that he’s very linear.
1798 And Josina complicates everything. So you’ve got it all figured out in a linear sense and then Josina starts
1799 talking about it and suddenly it’s [swishing sound] and where are you? I don't know! Which I like. I like that
1800 about her. But it’s been frustrating to work with her because of that as well. As you know, we all know. But
1801 anyway.

1802 **Benmayor:** *So is there anything that we haven’t talked about that you think is important that you’d
1803 like to add?*

1804 **Shenk:** I’m just glancing through here. I’d made some notes. Oh. I did want to mention Betty
1805 McEady. I don’t know if I’d mentioned her before. She was also a big part of my early years here and she
1806 was another person that I would go talk to, particularly about racial issues that would come up in class. Betty
1807 told me two things that just stick in my mind. I can hear her saying it. So maybe if you talk to her she’ll say,

1808 “I never said that.” [Laughs] But number one, she’s an educator, she trains people how to be teachers, and
1809 her mantra is, “Think developmentally.” Every time something wasn’t working right, I’d say to her, “We’re
1810 not progressing on this issue.” She would always say, “Think developmentally,” which means, Who are your
1811 students and where are your students? Not where are you. Not where do you want them to be. If it’s not
1812 working it means you’ve lost track of where your students are and you’re not starting with where they are.
1813 Every class period has to start with where the students are that day. That was her answer to everything that
1814 wasn’t working right. On the other hand, she’s a little bit like Deb Busman, on issues of race.

1815 **[recording ends abruptly]**

1816 **[End of Follow up Interview]**

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(END OF RECORDING)

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1823