

ORAL HISTORY OF ELLEN MARCUS OSHINS

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Introduction

I set out to record an oral history of a Democratic power broker, trailblazer for women in politics, wife of a member of the diplomatic corps, and not incidentally, my dear friend's mother. I walked away with a portrait of a woman and a time that is far more complex and nuanced than I had anticipated.

At eighty years old, Ellen Marcus remains devastatingly smart, wickedly funny and a gracious hostess. After just a few minutes of conversation, it is easy to understand how she was able to wield such influence at the highest levels of government at a time when most of her female contemporaries were the wives of politicians either disinterested or incapable of articulating any political ambition of their own. Notable exceptions emerge, however a dearth of opportunity for women in Washington D.C. coupled with a lifelong interest in journalism shed light on the friendships she cultivated with members of the press, where women were gaining some inroads, even if it was in 'the women's pages'.

She is a queer mixture; part grand dame and self described "intellectual snob," part civil rights champion and critic of US foreign policy. On occasion, she still refers to people of Asian extraction as "Orientals" and to African-Americans as "Blacks" or "coloured," while being passionate about her role in the passage of the Japanese Reparations Act of 1988 and fighting Harry Byrd for desegregation in Virginia.

Raised in the Republican enclave of Hillsborough in the 1930s and 1940s, she horrified her family by becoming a Democrat. This may in part explain her success. Ms. Marcus simultaneously embraces such diverse figures as Condoleezza Rice and labor leader Harry Bridges socially, yet politically, remains unapologetically partisan. She has no trouble navigating between seemingly disparate worlds.

Despite a lifetime of world travel and the majority of her life spent in Washington or abroad, she is very much a Californian, a Stanford woman and a product of Hillsborough. Foreign cities are referenced for their likeness (or not) to Carmel, Santa Barbara and Palm Springs. She speaks frankly of sex and bedroom politics without sounding vulgar, due in large part, I believe to a life spent among the modern American

aristocracy. It is only those who know the rules of the game that can get away with breaking them and she seems to relish this privilege.

Although occasionally brittle when she doesn't like a question, it doesn't appear to be an unwillingness to answer but annoyance at my occasional unfamiliarity with people she considers very important to United States history. However, her greatest shock at my under-education was reserved for the moment that she found out that I don't have cable and thus can't watch C-SPAN, which provides the soundtrack of her retirement.

My one disappointment after reading the final text is that the conviviality of the experience may not be properly conveyed in quite the same way I experienced our time together. Our conversations were punctuated by frequent laughter and knowing glances over glasses of chardonnay. The gaps in the text will be filled in over the coming months as we continue the project we have started. For now I give you, Ms. Ellen Marcus Oshins, in her own words.

Notes on Text and Methodology

This oral history was conducted with Ms. Eillen Marcus in two sessions, the first on March 11, 2006 and the second on March 26, 2006 at her home in Menlo Park and in the presence of her son, Keith L. Oshins, who was indispensable to the project. An iPod with an iTrip digital recording attachment was used to capture the audio. The files were then downloaded to computer where they were saved as .wav files and burned to CD, a copy of which is included with the final text. The unedited transcript is also included so that the original conversation can be read exactly as it occurred and compared to the final version.

I have made every effort to preserve the integrity of Ms. Marcus' observations. I have, however, cut entire anecdotes and stories and inserted them into the text where they are thematically relevant to the subject matter or time period. This oral history is not strictly chronological as I feel that a thematic approach best serves the material, although wherever possible I have tried to make sure that the material is chronological within the various topics.

I have omitted my questions to Ms. Marcus and I have also excised certain words or phrases that occur in the normal course of speech, such as, "You know," or "As I was saying," for the sake of readability. In addition, conversation deemed irrelevant to the subject matter such as exchanges with her son, or asides to me that were not germane to the record, have been edited out of the final text.

Wherever words appear in bold type and within parentheses indicate an item inserted for continuity. Some of these words come directly from Ms. Marcus but from other portions of the record, and on a very few occasions I have chosen the words, although solely for the sake of clarity. In the case of pronouns I frequently inserted the person's name, again, solely for clarity. I neither added nor deleted anything that would

alter the meaning or intent of the subject, including a few portions of the record that I now believe to be factually inaccurate.

Oral history is the recollection of events that a subject is somewhat removed from, otherwise it is journalism. The fallibility of memory is inherent in any oral history, regardless of whether the purpose is academic or personal. 'Truth' is not the goal of this project, and for this reason I have not extensively fact checked the text as would be appropriate for a journalistic exercise or an academic research paper. There is however one topic where I recognize that the story related could not possibly have occurred as remembered. In this instance alone, I added a footnote detailing the discrepancy because the recollection so contradicts the historical record.

In the case of people that are (or should be) known such as Presidents and public figures, I have made no effort to expand or explain their importance, however, I have used footnotes to give brief background on people, agencies, acronyms or events that are lesser known or are not explained by Ms. Marcus. The only criteria for this distinction is my own familiarity, and whether the amount of information relayed was sufficient for the reader to understand the reference within the context of Ms. Marcus' life. I obtained the information for the footnotes from government websites with biographical data, encyclopedias (including Wikipedia,) and the many books loaned to me by Ms. Marcus from her personal library. I have not used academic citation methods for this information, as it is all a matter of public record and not attributable to any individual author, or because it was background information relayed to me by a third party.

POLITICS

Because I grew up in Hillsborough I never knew a Democrat socially. The only Democrats were the gardeners and the maids. There were only 3,300 people in Hillsborough when I grew up. When I went to register [to vote as a Democrat] the Registrar, [Wisnom] was also the Fire Chief and the Clerk of the Court and everything. The Wisnom's were a very large Irish American family, the Chief of Police, the hardware stores, the music store, you know. He had known me since I was yea high so he was filling out the forms. He didn't have to ask me any questions because he knew. I looked over and he's writing Republican on the card. I said, "No, Chief Wisnom, I'm not going to register as a Republican, I'm going to register as a Democrat." He said, "Oh, Ellen, you will have your little joke." I said, "No, I'm serious." He said, "What will your father say?" I said, "My father knows, we've already had many arguments at the dinner table." Then he looked at me and said, "But Ellen, there aren't any Democrats in Hillsborough except the gardeners." So people said to me, "How did you ever get to be a Democrat?" I said, "I went to Stanford and I got educated." I fell under the influence of absolutely marvelous professors and they molded my thinking. I kept in touch with most of them over the years until they all died. One of them is still alive. I give Stanford credit for that. Now, everybody always thought of Stanford as being a Republican institution, but every time they would have a straw vote, you know, for President, the student body would vote Republican and the faculty would vote Democratic. So, very few professors, have I ever met, are Republican because scholars are free thinkers, they're open to new thoughts and suggestions and most Republicans are so stodgy. They know it all, just like Bush thinks he knows it all and he knows nothing.

I was a senior in high school when Pearl Harbor occurred. I had it in my mind that I was going east to college. I had applied to Vassar, Wellesley and Smith and I'd been accepted to Wellesley and Smith and was waiting to hear from Vassar. I just made this pronouncement to my parents and they never argued with me. They knew me well enough that if I said I was going to do something I would probably do it. My mother's birthday was December 8th, the day after Pearl Harbor and we had a birthday

party for her. At the dinner table my father said, "I hate to tell Ellen this, but she's not going to go to Hawaii for her graduation present." I said, "I'm not?" He said, "No, it got bombed yesterday. Also, she's not going to go east to college because the transportation system will be taken over by the federal government." So, several people at the table said, "Where are you going to go?" He said, "If she will agree to go to Stanford, I will give her a Packard convertible." Now, I'm easily bought off, see. So he bought me a Packard convertible if I would agree to go to Stanford! I didn't really have any other choice because of the war. And I wasn't going to go to Cal Berkeley. All of my cousins had gone to Berkeley and they had done very well, PhD's and the like. My father didn't want me to go to Cal because he thought I was so much brighter than my cousins, who were mostly male, so he really put the pressure on me to go to Stanford. He very seldom told me what to do, but there were times when I knew I had to do what he said. So I went to Stanford. Guess what? I loved it! I was so glad I didn't go east, and I was so glad later that I hadn't gone to a girls' school. And now I'm going to talk professionally. I found out in my profession, which is politics, both in the Capitol and in the White House and the Democratic National Committee, that those that I hired as staff or vetted for candidates, if the women went to a coeducational school, they were much more capable of fending for themselves. Women who went to girls' schools looked upon men as weekend things, they didn't know how to talk back to them. If you're going to be a candidate for the Congress of the United States, you've got to talk back to a lot of men. So, I am very glad that I did go to a coeducational school and I have over the years recommended that to many young people who were back and forth between, "Do I go to boys schools, coeducational girls' schools?" I say it all depends on what you want to do afterwards. If you want to live in a co-educational world, go to a co-educational school.

One of the things that really annoys me to this day, whenever we have a reunion, and I'm going to have my 60th this Fall. They send out brochures about what everybody's doing now and forms that you're supposed to fill out and 2/3 of my very good friends of the female variety say, "I am a housekeeper." That's their profession. They've never had a profession. My husband used to kid me when we were first married and living in Europe, because every time we went into another country we had

to sign a form and it always said, 'profession.' He would say 'housekeeper,' and I would say, "Not on your life." I would always write 'political consultant' because that's what I had been before I was married and that's what I intended to be after I was married. I was never going to call myself a housekeeper; anybody can keep a house. I really didn't want to have any children. I really just wanted to have a career.

I graduated [from Stanford] in 1946 with both a Master's and a BA at the same time in Political Science and Economics. But I also was on the Stanford Daily, so I consider myself a journalist as well as a politician, which is why I was a Press Secretary. I could write press releases for the newspapers that they would take and print verbatim, because I could write in journalistic style. After I graduated, I spent the summer in Mexico with a Stanford group and then went back with one of my oldest friends from grade school and college to Washington. We went to New York first because we had a whole bunch of friends from Stanford who were in New York and we had a wonderful couple of weeks. You know, these country girls – we lived in the country, you know Hillsborough was considered the country. Betty was from Hillsborough, too, so we were the country girls going to the big city, New York.

So then we flew down to Washington and I remember we arrived on the 15th of September of 1946 and we flew into National Airport, which they now call Reagan Airport, but I call it National Airport. Seeing Washington from the air is just fabulous. The Jefferson Memorial and the Lincoln Memorial and the Capitol and the White House. When you fly in you fly over all of that. What was new to me was seeing Washington from the air. I had been to Washington with my parents, we had driven there, and it is a different thing. It is inspiring to see it from the air, if you are patriotic. I eventually got [a] job at the Senate.

You know, I didn't know any *coloured* children at all [growing up] except we did have a wonderful cook. Daisy Bell was the name. She'd come from Washington D.C. originally. She left to go back to Washington when she inherited some property so she had to leave to go take care of her property and she went to work for Nelson Rockefeller. When I arrived from Washington, Daisy Bell found out I was there and she came over to our apartment and said, "Any time you girls would like me to do your

cooking for you, just let me know.” My Stanford roommates and I said, “Main thing is, none of us know how to cook.”

We learned the hard way. I was great at making salads. Scottie Lanahan¹, in the article she wrote about me, said that we had a house rule that you couldn't eat at home more than 4 nights a week, to save money. So that made us very aggressive finding men to take us out to eat. I don't remember it; I think she made it up. We didn't have to be aggressive; we had so many men wandering in and out of that apartment! You know, four attractive college graduates. Most of the young women in Washington at that point were secretaries, clerks. There were very few professional women.

I met [my husband when] he was a Special Assistant to Truman in the White House and it was quite a thing in Washington. I was working at the Senate for Robert Taft² and he was working in the White House for Harry Truman, who were at each others throats, and we were dating. Washington was really a very small community at that point. Everybody knew everybody else's personal life, particularly their sex life. It was quite a piece of conversation around town about how the two of us got together. He was just so brilliant that I was very impressed with him. He was 11 years older than I, and a graduate of the University of Chicago and to this day, probably the smartest man I've ever known. He didn't want me to take that job with Taft, but it was offered to me and I knew damn well that it was an opportunity. I was only the second woman in the Senate who would have professional status. The other woman was 60 and I was 21 when I was hired and they could tell the difference between the two of us. She worked for a Colorado Senator and she had been his secretary. He was about to retire so he promoted her to professional grade but I was hired as a professional so I got to eat in the Senator's dining room and have my fanny pinched by Joe McCarthy. I used to call him a Greek, Roman hands and Russian fingers! Repulsive man and the hairiest man I'd ever seen! He and LBJ were the two most repulsive men that made passes at me.

¹ The only daughter of F. Scott and Zelda Fitzgerald, Scottie Lanahan was a journalist for the Washington Post and other publications.

² Robert Taft served as a Republican Senator from Ohio from 1938 to 1956 and was a prominent opponent of the New Deal.

They turned my stomach. LBJ had the largest derriere of any man I've ever been up close to.

Because I was on the professional staff I could eat in the Senator's dining room, I could go on the floor of the Senate whereas the secretaries, staff they call them, can't. So this was a golden opportunity that was offered to me and I wasn't about to turn it down just because of this young man. He said, "To thine own self be true and then thou canst be false to any man." Shakespeare said that first. Then he read all kinds of things to me from Thomas Jefferson, trying to talk me out of it.

After a year and a half of being proposed to I finally accepted because he was in Paris with [Averil] Harriman [working on the Marshall Plan.] He was in Foreign Service and you can go in and out of civil service and diplomatic service. They lend you back and forth, and so you can wear two hats. You can both be a civil servant and a diplomat at the same time. I wanted to be in the Marshall Plan, which was *the* thing at that point. I wanted to go to Paris and my parents wouldn't let me go alone. He called me on my birthday from Paris and I was at a hotel with a group of friends who were celebrating my birthday and a call came through to the hotel. I accepted over the phone. He always said it cost \$50 to make a long distance call at that point and if I had said, "No." *Again*. Can you imagine?

So I went back to Hillsborough because I was going to get married at home. I wanted to get married at Mem Chu, Memorial Chapel. Stanford, it's right over there.³ But [with] the complications of having the reception in Hillsborough, we finally ended up getting married in my parents' garden, which was a beautiful garden and the chaplain from Stanford married us. So I had the best of both worlds. Then we spent a couple of weeks touring California because he had never been West of Milwaukee. He'd grown up in Michigan and went to the University of Chicago, went to Washington and to London with Harriman during the War. And he was in SHAEF⁴ with Eisenhower, so he'd spent a lot of time in Europe and the Rhine, but he had never been west.

³ Stanford's Hoover Tower is visible from nearly every window and sliding door in the home.

⁴ The Supreme Headquarters of the Allied Expeditionary Force (SHAEF) was in use from 1943 until the end of WWII. Originally located in London, it was moved to Versailles, France within a few months of the landing at Normandy in 1944. As Commanding General since its inception, it was essentially Eisenhower's office. The word 'Expeditionary' was eventually excised from the title.

It was just before the 1948 election. I was married October 16, 1948. We flew across the country on Election Day, and we had both voted absentee. We got to Washington and I had invitations to the Republican election party and he had invitations to the Democratic election party, so we went to both! Of course the Republican one got to be a wake after a while. Dewey expected to win walking in. The Democrats had a very small reception in somebody's office. The Republicans had taken over a whole hotel. I remember, we walked in very late at night to the Democratic one and one of Truman's cabinet members came running up to my husband and he said, "Bob, can you believe it? Even so and so," some awful Democrat from Iowa who was the last Democrat in the world anybody expected to win, "*he's* even winning. It's a sweep!" The Republicans had kept control of the Congress for the two years before and the Democrats, when Truman won, got it back. Therefore, Sam Rayburn⁵ became Speaker again. Then, we went up to New York and got the *Queen Elizabeth* and went to Europe, all of this being paid for by the United States government. It was very nice of them to give us such a nice honeymoon! Of course, the whole time we were in Paris was an extended honeymoon. Except I did something foolish and I got pregnant.

Number One son was born two years after I was married so I really was delighted when my husband got a call from the man who was then head of the CIA asking if he would come back and set up a new program. The call came to our house, I picked it up, and he said, "Do you think you can talk Bob into coming back to Washington?" I said, "Only if you promise I can have my baby at George Washington University Hospital! If you make the arrangements at the hospital, we'll be there!"

⁵ Known as "Mr. Sam," Sam Rayburn was a Democratic Representative from Texas from 1913 to 1961. During that time he served as Speaker of the House for all but two sessions when he served as minority leader during Republican control of the House. Ms. Marcus still has a signed gavel that he gave her upon his retirement.

Jeffery was in 19 countries before he was born, a world traveler.⁶ A year later, I had Stephen. Each time I expected a girl, and each time I got a boy. So, when I got pregnant a third time, I called it Diane. When Keith was born, the two older boys went around the neighborhood saying, "Our baby sister, which is a boy, got born last night." While I had all these little boys, I couldn't work full time. I worked part time for Adlai Stevenson in 1956. Adlai Stevenson was my absolute hero. He was so brilliant. I worked for Adlai Stevenson in 1952 but I couldn't go to the convention because I had just had Stevie Robert Oshins, my second son. So, we got our first television set so I could watch the convention. I stayed on the phone and lined up delegates for Stevenson from Virginia and from California and from Michigan and all the states that I had some influence, but I didn't go to the convention. I went to the 1948 convention, the Republican convention. I missed 1952, but after that I went to every convention, in different roles. In 1956, I was on Stevenson's staff. That picture was taken before the convention when we were planning, lining up the delegates. Then, I put the first big fundraiser on for Stevenson in Virginia after we got back. I mostly was working in local politics because of having all of these little boys. I didn't take a full time job until Keith was sent to nursery school. Once I got him off to nursery school I could go back to work. I was relieved. I really felt released from being a housewife. From there on in I worked full time and I never stopped. I'm still working on the phone. I can't give it up. I thought I'd retired (**in 1990**) but I really didn't.

I went to the convention in Chicago in 1956, which is the year after Keith was born and the first time I felt unleashed. That's when Jack Kennedy ran for Vice

⁶ The birth announcement for Jeffery was, appropriately, written by Bob Oshins in the style of a press release and is a fine example of his particular brand of humor.

"Before a small but intensely interested audience, Jeffery Marcus Oshins made his first public appearance at George Washington University Hospital here early this morning. Described as the youngest world traveler on record, Oshins looked fit after a tour that covered 16 countries and 4 continents. "I'm awfully glad to be here. You really appreciate the good old USA after a trip like mine." The countries covered in his recent tour were France, Belgium, Germany, Holland, Sweden, Norway, Switzerland, Italy, Greece, Egypt, Lebanon, Syria, England, Ireland and Canada. The youthful traveler commented briefly but forcefully on world developments. "Everywhere I went on my tour," he said, "things looked very much the same to me. The outlook was dark and the situation fluid. Denying reports of bad food conditions abroad," he said laughingly. "Look at me, I gained 7 lbs. and 13 oz. while I was on the road!" Oshins was non-committal about plans to write a book about his adventures. He let it be known however, that he plans to spend the next few months resting quietly at the home of his aged parents, Ellen and Bob Oshins at 210 Midville Street, Falls Church, VA. During the upcoming summer, he is arranging for a coast-to-coast tour of the United States. He will do some lecturing but said, "This trip will be mostly for observation."

President and he was defeated at the last moment by Estes Kefauver. I was in his box with Eunice and the family when that vote took place. It was one of the heartbreakers because Estes Kefauver was a goddamn fool. Talk about sex, I could tell you stories about Estes Kefauver and sex. Jack was bad enough but he was so cute! Estes Kefauver was so ugly!

The best politician I ever saw in action was Jack, he was born to it. He grew up in Boston politics, his grandfather Honeyfitz was mayor, and he just knew how the system worked. When LBJ was running against Jack for the nomination in '60, LBJ kept telling everybody that he had it sewn up because he had all the senators lined up to support him. I can remember saying to some of the Johnson people from the Virginia delegation, "He may have the Senators, but Jack has the governors and it's the governors who control the delegation!" LBJ just didn't think ahead. He didn't bother with governors; governors were useless to him because he was strictly a Washington senator type, whereas Jack was bright enough to know that his fellow senators couldn't deliver their states.

You asked me the other day, what was the thing I thought was most useful in politics. I think I said intelligence, didn't I? I have dealt with so many politicians over the years who are good politicians in a hail Mary moment, but are not very bright. I could never support them. I could like them as friends, but I could never trust anyone who didn't have more than two brain cells to rub together. [I am] an intellectual snob and my husband was an intellectual snob. That was one of the reasons we got along so well! He was much brighter than I, had an IQ that went through the roof, I learned so much from him, but he wasn't as outspoken as I was. I got away with it, because I was cute! You'll never believe it but I had a very good figure.

I was elected a delegate for the 1960 convention from Virginia even though I was a native Californian, you know the newspapers had a lot of fun with that in California, as you can imagine. As a native Californian I ended up in California as a Virginian. I had lots of interviews with California papers [and we were] on the front page of the Washington Post at the convention. Johnson ended up with the Vice Presidency but when I went to sleep that night everyone thought it was Stuart Simington and when I woke up in the morning it was Johnson. It was Sam Rayburn that arranged it. Sam

Rayburn was sitting with the Texas delegation just across the corridor and he expected me to vote for Johnson. I had to explain to him that I had known Jack Kennedy since I was a child, and I knew the whole family, and I was not going to support Johnson. Plus I couldn't stand Johnson, which I didn't tell him. But I was very close to Lady Bird and worked well with her, but I couldn't stand Johnson. Crude, rude and unattractive and again, he thought he was God's gift to woman. He thought he could lay every woman in sight. Why do I keep talking about sex? Well, that's Washington talk, though.

The 1964 convention [was in] Atlantic City after Jack was assassinated, when Bobby gave the famous speech about "the stars still in heaven." I was Press Secretary of the Democratic National Committee at that point so I helped make the arrangements for him to speak to the convention, because Bobby and LBJ couldn't get along. They didn't get along at all.

The direction was all coming from LBJ and supposedly Hubert Humphrey was our candidate. LBJ kept sending messages up from the ranch countermanding everything that Hubert announced. Hubert wanted to come out against the Vietnam War and LBJ had a fit. In fact, they moved me out of my room at one point, which was right underneath the Humphrey's suite, because I was holding Muriel's hand through all of this. Even though I was no longer an employee of the DNC, I had come back to help her and Jane Muskie, Edmund Muskie's wife. Both of them had worked with me at the Democratic National Committee as volunteers. We were all social friends as well as political friends. We all knew each other's children and went to each other's homes. It wasn't a standoffish situation of who was Staff. I came back to my room at one point with a couple of friends and somebody said, "Somebody's been in this room because everything is changed." I said, "It has?" I looked in my closet and all my clothes had been taken. The Secret Service had moved me because LBJ wanted to come up to celebrate his birthday. The convention had been planned for his birthday and there wasn't anything that Humphrey could do about it because LBJ was president. He could call the shots.

Hale Boggs was the head of the Platform Committee and he wrote [the platform] that was all set to be approved. LBJ called Hale back to the ranch and told him that under no circumstances would he approve that platform and the whole platform had to

be rewritten. LBJ just handed them a platform that they had to accept! He was a terrible man. LBJ was so officious, you couldn't argue with him about anything. He was a real dictator. You think Nixon was bad, ha! [LBJ] could control the world. That's one of the reasons he and Bobby hated one another; Bobby wouldn't take it. He resigned as Attorney General and became Senator. [Humphrey] thought that once he was President he would have control, but LBJ cut off all the money for Humphrey's campaign and turned all the fundraisers into raising money for his library instead. He got screwed! LBJ screwed everybody. We were all bitter. I don't know of anybody other than Lady Bird, who made excuses, and Sam Rayburn. Really the most disliked person in politics other than Nixon that I've ever known. Nobody liked Nixon, nobody liked LBJ. They'd work for them.

Then Jimmy Carter comes along and he was even worse! Because he was dumb. At least LBJ was very bright, [but] he was so gross, so unmannerly. [Jackie] was born a lady and was ladylike to his advances but she wouldn't have anything to do with him. She wouldn't go back to the White House all during the time he was there. Lady Bird, it really broke her heart because she had the Rose Garden redone as the Jacqueline Kennedy Rose Garden and had Jackie's great friend, Whitney, her nickname, she was a landscape architect. She was the one who helped Jackie find the estate out in Middleburg. Jackie had her do the landscaping of Glen Oaks. She had planned to redo the whole White House gardens. Then Jack was assassinated so Lady Bird took that up as a peace offering to Jackie, she invited her several times to come back to the White House and see the garden, and for the hanging of the paintings of both Jack and Jackie, and she wouldn't go, wouldn't have anything to do with the Johnson's. She didn't want to have anything to do with politics. She lived in another world completely, a Park Avenue world.

I knew Jackie when she worked as a reporter/photographer for the Times Herald. She had graduated from Vassar and she spent her junior year in Paris, and that was her world. The men that she went with were all the Ivy League types, the Hamptons, New York, Park Avenue. She didn't know anything about Boston or politics and she didn't know anything about the Irish at all. She really didn't have much good to say about the

Irish and here she married one and her children were therefore half Irish, but she looked down on the Irish and all of Jack's courtiers. We used to call them the Irish Mafia, the assistants that went into the White House with him, Kenny Donald and Larry O'Brien. Their fathers were all friends with his father. They were the ones who elected him, they were campaign officials during his campaign. They were all very close friends of mine and I got a couple of them to move out to Lake Barcroft⁷ where we lived. So we had a little Irish Mafia circle at Lake Barcroft and Pierre Salinger lived around the corner.

One of the things that I did at the Democratic National Committee was recruit wives of candidates and wives of office holders to work as volunteers for me so that we would be in the same ballpark. Some of them were very, very helpful to their husbands. Some of them were the *worst* thing that could have happened to their husbands. They just could not accept the role as 'wife of' in a political sense. Now Jackie was one of those. Jackie hated politics, she just fought tooth and nail not to have to do anything politically. We had to put tremendous pressure on her to show up at political functions or to open the White House for receptions. There were national conferences of Democratic women every other year and they always were invited to the White House. I have lots of pictures of me wandering around the White House with all of these women. It was only at the last moment that Jackie agreed. It was really Hale and Lindy Boggs that put the pressure on her and put the pressure on Jack. He said, "You've got to do this," and she didn't want to. It was not her cup of tea. You know, she had a lot of other talents but she was apolitical. Muriel (Humphrey) was very political; she had grown up with politics. Lady Bird was the best politician of any woman other than Lindy Boggs. The two of them have always been very close friends and they still are in contact. I'm in contact with Lindy regularly and she's in contact with Lady Bird so I hear about Lady Bird from Lindy. I wrote a television script called *Coffee with the First Lady*, it was on CBS, and that picture was taken on the set. LBJ wanted to rewrite that whole script.

⁷ Lake Barcroft, Virginia was a planned community around a man-made lake and the Oshins family became the first residents to occupy their home. The neighbourhood is notable for its large lots and extraordinary custom built homes, many of which were designed by notable architects. The Oshins' exact address was 3620 Stanford Circle, a tip of the hat to Ms. Marcus' alma mater. <http://www.lakebarcroft.org/as/hist/story.shtml>

[In] 1967 we went to Vienna, so it was in 1966 [that] CBS offered me a job as a commentator. [Bob] was negotiating going to Vienna and I kept telling CBS I'd let them know. It was on Valentine's Day that he finally said I could make the announcement that we were going to Vienna. I remember that we went to the National Theatre to see *Man From La Mancha* with a number of friends of mine from the press corps, I guess the performance was given by the Press Club. I was a member of the Press Club as well as a member of the Democratic Club. I always said I held hands with Moses and Mohammed at the same time.

My husband 'released' me to make the announcement that we were going to Vienna on Valentine's Day 1967. Of course it was in all the papers the next day. Not that *he* was going to Vienna but that I was leaving the Democratic National Committee to go to Vienna. Poor man! Oh, he always got a big kick out of it, he never was jealous. We were such different personalities. He was very much behind the scenes, quiet, pull the strings, never took stage front and I was always in the front stage. We were brought up [that way.] He wrote the plays when he was at the University of Chicago for the Honorary Dramatic Society, which is called The Black Friars. At Stanford it's called Ram's Head. I never wrote anything, I performed in all of them. That's the difference between the two of us. So that's why I didn't take the job with CBS. My dear friend Nancy Huntsman, Nancy Dickerson did. She was a very famous correspondent.

Working in politics I used my maiden name. When I used Oshins, I used to sign my name 'Ellen M. Oshins, (Mrs. Robert L.)' but politically I used Marcus because I didn't want to embarrass him, although, I managed to quite regularly! Pierre (Salinger) had this advertisement put in the International Edition of the Herald Tribune announcing that I was going to be in charge of the Americans Abroad for Humphrey-Muskie. So he asked me, and boy my husband got in so much trouble over that. You know, in the Foreign Service you can't participate in politics.⁸

California is glamorous and the thing that was interesting in Europe, we had to stand in so many receiving lines or go through receiving lines. The first question everyone asks is, "And where are you from?" I would never say I was from Washington

⁸ According to family lore, they found out about her appointment when they read the newspaper, and by all rights, Salinger should have known what a compromising position that would put Bob Oshins in.

or I was from Virginia. I would say, "I am from San Francisco," and the receiving line would stop because, as far as the Europeans are concerned, their favorite city is San Francisco and their second favorite city is N'orleans. They can't stand New York and they can't stand L.A. because they're so un-European, un-cosmopolitan. It used to amuse my husband, make him jealous that I would always stop the receiving line when I would say, "San Francisco." [Bob would say,] "There she goes again!" Just to annoy me, when they'd ask him, he would say, "I'm from Escanaba." Of course nobody knew where Escanaba was, Escanaba, Michigan.

He used to get annoyed when we were traveling around Europe and I'd say that someplace reminded me of Carmel if it was artsy-craftsy. Portugal reminds me of Carmel. When we first lived in Athens, we lived outside of Athens, next to where the King and Queen lived in Kapithia, which is like a suburb, like the Hillsborough of Greece. King Constantine [was] the last King of Greece. I had met Constantine when he was a teenager, when we were in Athens originally, in Kapithea. His mother, Queen Frederika arranged for me to have her obstetrician in case I was going to have the baby in Greece. Then, years later, when we went back to Greece, he was King Constantine. But when we went back, my husband was in charge of the United Nations conference. There is a wonderful picture of Robert falling asleep while King Constantine is addressing the conference. During the conference, the King abdicated and flew out and they had a small revolution. They were the Colonol's they called them, the military force. I was on a plane going back to Vienna to pick up my children from school. They were getting out of school and I was going to bring them to Athens and then we were going to Rhodes for Christmas. The pilot came back to me in the plane to tell me that the King had just abdicated and had flown out of the airport in Athens right after our plane had left. The airport was now closed down and the 6th Fleet was now moving in, *our* 6th Fleet. So I left my husband there, he had a lot of protection from the United Nations there and the United States Embassy. When I got to Vienna, I had to get in touch with all of his staff people's families to tell them what had happened, and to assure them that they were being protected by the 6th Fleet. Then, I had to wait a couple of weeks until things quieted down so that I could take the boys, and join him in Athens.

So every once in a while there are articles about King Constantine, he's married to a Spanish princess, a very beautiful young woman. They lived in Lisbon for a while. All of those former royalty live all over the Mediterranean. None of them have to work for a living but not being in office anymore they have a different life. Lisbon is fascinating because it is the home of so many former Kings, former royalty. Portugal was neutral during the war. Spain was under Franco. Portugal is one of my favorite countries. And it will remind you of Carmel. The *flora* and *funfa* of California is duplicated in Portugal and the architecture, all of the tiles and the gardens, the layout of the gardens is so much like Santa Barbara and Carmel. Most of that influence comes from Arabia because of the Moors invading the Iberian Peninsula and what they left behind was not only arithmetic, but architecture.

I love Syria, Syria's the most beautiful country in the Middle East. One of the things about Lebanon that was absolutely amazing, you go from Beirut, which is on the beach, and a 45-minute drive up the Sud Lebanese Mountains and there'd be skiing. You could look down and see everybody on the beach. If that doesn't remind you of California! It used to drive my husband crazy, and then my children because everywhere I'd go I'd say this reminds me of Carmel or Santa Barbara or Palm Springs. Everything always reminded me of some other place in California!

Morocco is the North African country that I know the best. Casablanca is nothing now, but Agadir, which is south of Casablanca, is very much a modern city. And Rabat, and Tangiers, which again, like Lisbon, was an international city where all of the former heads of state retired to when they were kicked out. And it's right across from Gibraltar so that you could just visualize how these horsemen got on ships and came across the Straits of Gibraltar and into Spain and straight into Portugal and into southern France. The Basque country is originally from that same civilization. That's why they never get along with the French and they don't get along with the Spanish and they are very independent. My very best friend, when we lived in France, had a summer home in Saint Jean de Luz, which is the most Southern French city on the Atlantic on Biscayne Bay, 10 miles from the Spanish border. It's on the ocean but on the hills behind Saint Jean de Luz, is the Basque country. We would go up to watch the jai alai game and sit in the restaurants overlooking the dividing line between France and Spain which was a

very small river and watch the *contrabanistas*, they called them, the Basques, go back and forth between Spain and France. They were the original *mafioso* as far as that part of the world goes, absolutely lawless. They had no allegiance to either Spain or to France. They just thumbed their noses at both countries and all their laws, fascinating people. They are like gypsies in that they have no allegiance to any formal government. Governments are a relatively recent, modern thing. We think that everybody has one, but they don't. Just because we have it doesn't mean that the rest of the world does.

We have been a part of everything that has happened since WWII, to our detriment, including the port problem in Dubai.⁹ All of our chickens are coming home to roost because we sent the oil people into the Middle East and established those Middle Eastern governments out of paper. Truman had something called the Truman Doctrine, which was that we would move into Greece and into Turkey to take over from the Brits because the Brits had to pull out because of their economic problems. Everything that's happening right now could have been foreseen, all the stupid things, but both the British and the American government both feeling as though they were 'king of the mountain,' they could push other countries around and tell them what to do. I was furious with Truman. I was at a Democratic dinner when he announced that he had recognized Israel. I knew that was going to blow up the Middle East. Ever since he did that there has been nothing but war. People have been killed on a daily basis and that was 1947. That was also in 1947 when he announced the Truman Doctrine, the year before I was married. I had enough world history that I was aware of the trials and tribulations of that part of the world even before I had visited it. I've been to Damascus and Beirut, loved both of those cities and they are in ruins now. There are a lot of things around here from Beirut and Damascus. That lamp, you see the tray? That round thing is from Egypt. That's from Italy. I love brass and copper and artisan stuff. The first time I went to Egypt, I was pregnant with Jeffery.

The Marshall Plan is the only good thing the United States government has done in the last century that we are proud of. To this day, every politician in the United States, Democrat or Republican will always talk about the Marshall Plan as the high point of our

⁹ **ADD NOTES ABOUT WHAT THIS WAS**

endeavor. If you want to understand WWII, which is what we're living in, [you should read] Tom Brokaw's *The Greatest Generation*. We're living in the aftermath of WWII. All our problems in the last 50 years have come out of WWII because we felt we were 'king of the Mountains.' We defeated Hitler. The French didn't have anything to do with it, the Brits didn't have anything to do with it. We did it. The Soviets just lost 22 million people. When you drive into Moscow from the airport, just as you get into the city, there are these crosses, great big steel crosses on the hill that indicate the 22 million Russians who were killed in WWII. Boy, the Russians want to make sure that everybody in the West is reminded of that. They're talking about what they did to defeat Hitler. Just like Napoleon was defeated by Mother Russia. All they had to do was wait for the winter.

[The coming of the Cold War] was obvious. Churchill came and made his speech about the 'Iron Curtain.' There was so much anti-communism, much more when I was growing up than anti-fascism. Communists were the main enemy because they were going to take over free enterprise. All of the trouble in San Francisco with the docks and the general strike was because they were under the control of Harry Bridges, who was a communist! Did you know Harry Bridges was a Communist? Charming man. I got him to come to a party for Teddy Kennedy, a couple of years ago. Teddy was absolutely fascinated, because he had read about Harry Bridges and didn't know he was still alive. So I got some old friends in San Francisco to talk him into coming out of retirement. In 1980, when Teddy was running for President we had a party for Teddy at the Irish Center over by the Zoo on Sloat Boulevard and Harry Bridges came. He lost to Jimmy Carter, who lost to Ronald Reagan. If you want to know who was an absolute fool, it's Jimmy Carter.

When Bobby (Kennedy) read that we were going to Vienna, he came over to me the next morning and he said, "What are we going to do? You're our last friend in the Democratic National Committee. You can't go to Vienna!" I said, "If you and Ethel come to Europe, I'll be an advance man for you! I'll make your travel arrangements for you!" Then he got killed before I had a chance. That was the last time I saw Bobby, the day after it was announced that we were going to Vienna.

I was horseback riding out in a *schloss*, at a castle that had been turned into an international country club called Enzesveld.¹⁰ My husband was in Vienna, this was just in the outskirts, and he called and had the manager of the country club find me and tell me that Bobby had been shot. We went into the manager's house, he had the only television set at the country club and watched while they televised all of the scenes from the Ambassador Hotel. I just couldn't believe it. To have lost Jack and then to have lost Bobby, and in betwixt and between, Martin Luther King. That was a terrible year, 1968, and [then] the convention.

I flew back for (the 1968 convention) and got stink bombed along with everybody else. I was at the Conrad Hilton, the big hotel, the headquarters hotel and the yippies, anti-war hippies, came storming into the hotel. I was with Paul Newman at that moment and they started throwing stink bombs. For weeks after I couldn't get the smell out of my clothes and my suitcases. When I got back to Vienna, the family was in Vienna but I flew over for the convention. All I did was take all of my suitcases and put them out in the garden to try to get the smell out. I could send my clothes to the cleaners, but my suitcases, there was nothing I could do. I could either throw them away or air them. That was terrible that experience.

If you ever really want to know what's going on in the world without having to listen to a lot of stupid advertisements, you get C-SPAN. C-SPAN is the only station that's worthwhile. When C-SPAN first started we were having a mini convention in Philadelphia and they tried it out at the mini convention. That's when I met Brian Lamb¹¹. Some great catastrophe happened and we didn't know about it because we didn't have commercial television, we only had C-SPAN, which was covering the convention. So we all knew what was going on at this mini convention, but we didn't know what was going on in the rest of the world. As soon as I got back to Washington where I was living at the Watergate at that point, after my husband died, I immediately arranged cable so I could get C-SPAN. I'd wake up in the morning and turn it on and

¹⁰ http://www.enzesfeld-lindabrunn.at/golf_club.htm

¹¹ Brian Lamb is a founder and CEO of C-SPAN.

find out what was going on, on the Hill, before I went to the Hill. Then I'd run into members of Congress and say, "Oh, I just left you in my bedroom. I woke up with you this morning."

I was a contact for C-SPAN. I would get members of Congress to appear and they asked me several times, they wanted to interview me. I kept saying, no. I really wanted to be behind the scenes, pulling the strings, I didn't want to be out front. So, I set up an interview with Lindy [Boggs] when she was going to be Chairman of the convention. I was in her office and apparently one of Brian Lamb's original staff, a beautiful, bright gal, said, "Now look, as long as we're here, we've got the camera and you're here, so sit down!" That's how come you have that videotape, because she had been told that I could give background on the 1960 convention and Lindy was talking about the 1976 convention, of which she was Chair. She was the first woman Chairman of any political party's convention and I was her Special Assistant, in charge of everything she didn't want to be in charge of. So, I was giving the background and she was talking about the here and now. The reason [the videotape] has Harriman [written] on there is because the Harrimans set up a studio at the Democratic National Committee and I took the tape that C-SPAN gave me and they did duplicates for my parents. I think that was the one I sent to my parents. I mostly had duplicates of these things to send to them. The reason I have so much stuff is because they were insistent that I would let them know what I was doing, besides not taking care of their grandsons, so I would fill my letters with clippings and pictures.

Lindy Boggs is one of my very closest, *personal* friends. We've always been aware that she and I had so much in common. She always treated me like one of her children, still does. My darling Lindy, she really helped me raise my children. She got Jeff a job as a page to Hale Boggs, her husband, when he was 16 and he was there when Johnson signed the Civil Rights Act with Martin Luther King. We have pictures of Jeffery with Martin Luther King and Lyndon Johnson.

I've got so much stuff from Lindy and the darnedest thing, Lindy was so generous with me all of the time. She gave me so many things, my lamps in the bedroom, sheets, pillowcases, bedspreads. When I moved into the Watergate she was determined that I was going to get feminized. When I lived with my husband we had a very tailored

bedroom, everything was very tailored and she knew that I liked things wuffy. So she said, "You need some wuffles." Wuffles, you know, it was a joke. So she went out and got me all of these wuffles for my bedroom at the Watergate. I just can't get around to getting rid of anything that she gave me. She and Sala Burton, you know who Sala Burton was? She was a Congresswoman from San Francisco, widow of Phil Burton, brother-in-law of John Burton, who **(Keith)** put on the phone with me a couple weeks ago in Sacramento. His second wife was my very good friend in Washington when John became a member of Congress. I was sort of adopted into the Burton family when I got back from Austria. He was Majority Whip if you know what that means. I think Lindy introduced us. She said that Hale picked him to be a Whip when he first came to Congress. Then when I heard he was from San Francisco, I said, "Well, I was born in San Francisco, were you?" "No." He was born in Iowa. Of course, I always gave him a hard time because he wasn't a real San Franciscan. Then his wife sort of adopted me, like Lindy, and she gave me so much stuff. I have very generous friends that I am at a point where I wish they hadn't been quite so generous because I am so cluttered!

Hubert Humphrey was a dear friend of mine, I had worked with him for years and always stayed in very close personal relations with Muriel and with Hubert and I knew all of their kids, who were the antithesis of the Johnson girls. I finally had to learn to take Lynda¹² because she married Chuck Robb¹³ and he wanted to become active in Virginia politics and he asked me if I would help him. I was very fond of Chuck so I said, "Only if you tell Linda that she's got to do what I tell her to do." He said, "Will you teach her how to play tennis?" "No, she's too clumsy, she's no tennis player." But I used to play tennis with Chuck all the time. All that he wanted out of me was that I would teach his wife to play tennis. I learned to control Linda but Luci, (Baines Johnson) uncontrollable. I always felt so sorry for Lady Bird, who was such a lady and her daughters were so much like her husband who was no gentleman. She's still with us you know, she's not well at all. She's in her late 90s now. Of all the married people I

¹² Lynda Bird Johnson is the daughter of Lyndon and Lady Bird Johnson and sister of Luci Baines Johnson.

¹³ Chuck Robb served as Lieutenant Governor of Virginia from 1978 to 1982 before becoming Governor from 1982-1986. He successfully ran for US Senate and served from 1989-2001. He was an early supporter of Common Cause and now sits on the President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board.

know she had the toughest married life. He was just awful, just awful. I think that's one of the reasons I was probably so helpful to her any time she needed it.

You can't be bothered with these LC's, these Lower Classes as you go through life. You asked me, what made it easy for me [in Washington.] I knew who was LC, who was Lower Class, and I just never bothered with people who were LC's. Thank you Hillsborough. I admit that I'm a snob, but I think that's necessary in life, otherwise you waste an awful lot of time with people who aren't worth it and are not going to speak your language and who are going to end up trying to knife you because they're jealous. LBJ was an LC. Very much so, and Lady Bird was of my class. We got along very well, "Just fine, thank you." (speaks in a southern drawl) We were both brought up by mammy's and LBJ came from nothing, *rien de tout*. *Vous parles Francais?* It means, 'nothing at all.' They had to move one of his brothers, to the White House and put him in a dark chamber to keep him out of jail or something, Sam Houston Johnson. His mother was very common. Poor Lady Bird, having a mother in law who hardly spoke the King's English.

Bill (Clinton) is so bright that it makes up for a multitude of sins. And *she* is so bright. Now Hillary and I don't get along at all. She's cold, calculating, and it's so obvious, but she is so bright. I think that by and large 90% of his decisions, I agree with, but he made some terrible mistakes. Foreign policy mistakes as well as Monika whatever her name is. When that all came out, she moved into the Watergate, where I lived, Monika! Alan Cranston was living there, John Warner¹⁴ was living there, and Monika!

John Warner is on television all the time now, on C-SPAN. He drives me crazy, he is such an asshole, so full of himself and all he's done is marry up. He came from nothing too, and he married into the Mellon family. When he divorced her he started courting Lindy. I said to Lindy, she better keep her eyes open, there's always a method to his madness, but then he met Elizabeth Taylor. The last time I was with the two of them together was out at Wolf Trap. It's an outdoor symphony park outside of Washington. It's the only national park where they have symphonies and plays. It's

¹⁴ John Warner has been a Republican Senator from Virginia since 1979

very much a part of the Washington scene, especially in the summer. When spring comes, Wolf Trap opens. There was a group of us talking and [Elizabeth Taylor] came up and said, "Where is Senator Horse's Ass?" We looked at her. She said, "Oh that goddamn John, where in the hell is he?" She's very common. We all just dropped our teeth. Even if she felt he was a horse's ass she shouldn't have said so in public, loudly, clearly. When they got divorced he moved into the Watergate and she used to come see him from time to time. They were very much better friends after they were divorced than they were when they were married. She hated being the wife of a Senator. It imposed restrictions on her that she wasn't used to. Talk about a free spirit.

I came across some old society pages as they called them before there were the women's pages that will give you an idea of what Washington was like in the 1960s. Somebody sent this to me because I'm mentioned here in this articles, but as you can see, it's very interesting about the Eisenhower's and these are both two good friends of mine who worked for me at the inaugural. This is Bess Able who was Lady Bird's social secretary and still my good friend, I hear from her every Christmas. And that's Norman Mineta.

One of Keith's friends wanted me to lobby Barbara Boxer. Well, I am not about to lobby Barbara because, when she decided she wanted to run for the Senate, she just expected me to be one of her supporters. She was going to use my name. I had a terrible go-round with her because I had already told Bob Matsui, who was a Japanese Congressman from Sacramento, that I would support him for the Senate. She was so presumptuous, Barbara. You know she is presumptuous, that's her talent; that I really just had to walk away from her. This was at a formal dinner. She just couldn't understand why I would support a man and not a woman. As much as I support women in general, I'm not going to support what I consider a less talented woman against a talented man, particularly one who I had worked with for years and knew very well.

I left a book out over here. I came across this letter and suddenly realized that this book had been given to me by the author, and I'm in it! This is Theda (Henle)¹⁵ who

¹⁵ The political thriller, *Death Files for Congress* was written by Theda O. Henle and published in 1971. The book is dedicated to Mary Rice Marshall, Ellen Oshins, Lois Van Valkenburg and Shirley Elder, all of whom were Washington insiders.

wrote the book, and this is Lois (Van Valkenburg.) She and Lois came into Washington to help me in the Johnson-Humphrey inaugural. Here I am giving a speech at the Washington Women's Democratic Club. I was introducing [Joe Freehill.] I ran his campaign for Congress. That's Lindy's [Boggs] head. I took Keith over to his headquarters. Keith was 3 years old. He picked up the phone and instead of saying, "Freehill for Congress," he said, "Freehill forever!" Brought down the house. [He didn't win but] he came awfully close. It was one of those where the Republican had been in office forever, was a Dixiecrat and Joe was for integration of the schools when that was a big thing. He came so close that everyone was sure if he ran again that he could make it. We were just starting to set up his campaign and he died of a heart attack. Darling man, Joe Freehill. Those are the men who worked for me. I always had a bunch of men as assistants so I'm not used to men telling me what to do. Men are always telling women what to do.

Oh, and this was at Arlington. We gave a party at Lee's mansion for the General Assembly of Virginia. Dorothy McDermott was a member of the General Assembly and I worked on the committee to arrange the function.

This [picture in the Stanford Daily] is when I was at Stanford and the United Nations Conference was in San Francisco, I covered it for the Daily, which is the Stanford newspaper. That's Dick Stennius, he was Secretary of State. This is Tom Connolly, he was Chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee. This is my favorite, Anthony Eden, who was the Foreign Minister of Great Britain and the handsomest man other than Averil Harriman that I'd ever met at that point. Well, he came up to me in the hall and I wasn't expecting to interview him, I was interviewing the Americans. He started to talk to me and I was a young, little girl at that point so he I guess he was a dirty old man interested in little girls. He was very handsome, and then when he became Prime Minister he was a flop. He was second in command to Winston Churchill all during the War. He was a very good second banana but he was a very poor Prime Minister. He's the one who was really responsible for the invasion of Egypt and the Suez Canal, which was a terrible mistake that the Brits made after the War. That was

Eden's baby. He went from being just grand and glorious and respected and admired to being looked down upon when he became Prime Minister.

I was offered a job at the New York Times while I was still at Stanford and I was a stringer for the Chronicle. I was always involved in journalism; I edited the newspaper at my grammar school and the yearbook in high school. It was just like riding horses and playing tennis, it was just part of my life.

The bible of Washington is the Post, not the New York Times, which is the only paper I can get delivered here. [I met Katherine Graham] when I first came to Washington. She was working at the Washington Post. I dated some of the reporters for the Washington Post. She had gotten married at that point, but she was writing a column reviewing magazine articles. She wanted to be a part of her husband's profession. I knew her mother, Agnes Meyers, long before I knew her, brilliant woman, absolutely brilliant. She married Eugene Meyers who bought the Washington Post and was very, very wealthy. He was a Californian. Kay had spent a lot of time here as a child so we had that in common. Her main assistant at the Post, the person she was closest to at the Post other than her husband was Al Friendly, whose son is Jeffery Oshins best friend. We're all related you know, it's a very small world, very, very small. Al Friendly was the Managing Editor of the Post and then Ben Bradlee took over and Ben married my friend Sally Quinn, who used to work for me and they lived at the Watergate before they got married. Sally Quinn has written a number of wonderful books about entertaining in Washington, good background for just the kind of things I'm telling you. What a small world it is and everybody knows everybody and their children.

The Washington Post always referred to me as 'Reliable Source.' I would get my articles printed in the Washington Post, I could just send in my press releases and they'd print them. That's what I mean about holding hands with Moses and Mohammed. I got along with politicians and with the press.

I met Helen [Thomas] during the Kennedy campaign. So all of the press knew who I was, particularly the women's press. She had just come to Washington from Detroit to cover Jack, after he was elected. She was supposed to cover Jackie, that's right, and Jackie didn't want to be covered. The press had a terrible time with Jackie, she was really nasty to them. They had a job to do and she would just make it so

difficult for them. Frances Lewine was assigned by AP to cover Jackie and the two of them became very good friends, best friends. They both were short. I should speak, huh? We're all about the same height. Lady Bird always called them Gemini because the two of them were always together and to this day they're always together. Anyway, I got to know Helen at that point and then Pierre Salinger was our neighbor and old friend and Press Secretary. They were very good friends. He had great respect for her. I think every Press Secretary has had great respect for her. [Now] they're afraid of her! They come and go but she stays on forever. She's always introduced as having covered every president since Kennedy. We were at lots of functions together, you know Washington is very social, was very social. I understand that it isn't because the Bush's are so unsocial. You don't have the pages in the Post anymore to cover all the parties because there aren't any parties anymore.

During the Nixon presidency, Helen came out to San Clemente to cover him when he was at his estate. You know, they called it the Western White House and I was living in Santa Barbara at the time. So she said, "Why don't you come down and stay with us," meaning Fran Lewine and Doug, her husband. "Let's have a reunion, we haven't seen you for so long and you're just up the coast." So, down I go, and my first day on the beach, I remember, Fran introduced me to Tom Brokaw and I thought he was gorgeous. This was before he ever came to Washington. We sat on the beach and we'd chat. Then, we were going to go out for dinner that night and Helen got a tip, she always had spies, that the President and Bebe Rebozo, were going to have dinner in San Juan Batista at their favorite restaurant. So she said, "Why don't you come with us? We'll get all dressed up and we'll go out to dinner and pretend as if, you know?" So I went back to her room to change clothes. Oh, she and I went shopping together I remember, she used to love to go shopping with me. She's a clotheshorse. She had more clothes than just about anybody I knew. She used to have a good figure but she doesn't anymore, she's really gotten bloated. Anyway, I was in her room getting dressed and the telephone rings, right? And I thought it was she calling me to hurry up, now I'm ready to go, you know? She was in the Press Room. And so I picked up the phone and this very southern voice says, "Ellen," and I said, "Yes, what is it?" "It's Martha." I said, "Martha?" She said, "Martha Mitchell, Ellen, what's the matter with

you?" John Mitchell's wife, Martha Mitchell, who spilled the beans on Nixon. She kept me on the phone for about 15 minutes. She wouldn't stop talking long enough to tell her it wasn't Helen. So I took notes during the whole time. As soon as she stopped for a breath, I said, "I gotta go now, bye!" I took my notes to the Press Room and gave them to all the press. I was a reliable source for the press.

So then we drove down to San Clemente. We were in Laguna [and went] to San Juan Batista. I remember we were in this photographer's car, because the main thing is she wanted to bring this photographer with us. It was a Volkswagon Bug and I was in the back seat all scrunched up in my long dress. She had told me to dress up. Anyway, we get to the restaurant and of course we didn't have reservations. So she said, "I'm Helen Thomas of the White House Press." So, the manager just took it for granted that she probably was with Nixon's party, so he sat us on the main floor and there were about 2 or 3 steps and a little balcony where the Nixon's were to sit. So we were right below when they came in and if you don't think Pat and Dick dropped their teeth. You could hear them clatter all over the floor! So Helen kept turning to me, "You can't laugh now." I said, "I won't laugh if you won't laugh," so we were like this (turns her back) talking to one another. We were laughing because they were so uncomfortable. Oh, and Tricia was with them, Pat and Tricia and Bebe Rebozo, who picked up the check. He paid for everything for Nixon, he supported him. They were a pair, they had an affair, you know. I'll tell you all the sex, see. Nixon and Pat hadn't slept together in *years*. You're dropping your teeth, they're going to clutter to the floor! So, when we got back to Washington, we told that story all over town. Oh, and a couple of months ago, Jeff was in Washington in a restaurant and Helen came in, and he went over to her. She knew all three of them and she was always trying to get my middle son Stephen interested in one of her nieces. She was a matchmaker from way back. So, he went up to her and said that he had his cell phone and he was going to call me and would she like to say hello, and so she got on the phone and we had a nice long chat. Boy she doesn't like George W. Bush. That press conference earlier this year, it was the first time he's called her this year and she's the senior member. You see where she sits, right in front of him. She's the one that's supposed to say, "Thank you, Mr. President," to stop the press conference. You saw when he said to her, "You did a great job at the

Gridiron?”¹⁶ That was when he was trying to get her off of the question. He said, “Helen, you did a great job at the Gridiron.” Did you hear that? I immediately thought of the first Gridiron I ever went to. Helen did a take off on Jackie Kennedy. She sang a song *C’est moi, Jacquie!* and she was very thin at the time, had a gorgeous figure and she had a pillbox hat on and her hair done up like Jackie’s. Honestly, it was the best impersonation of Jackie I’ve ever seen. But, she’s very clever. She writes all of the words to music at the Gridiron. She was the first woman that was taken into the Gridiron.

I went to her wedding. She was married the same day as I was, October 16th. Her engagement was announced by Pat Nixon at the White House. She worked for UPI, United Press International and she was marrying Doug Caldwell who was the head of Associated Press, they’d been going together for a long time but they couldn’t get married until he retired because they were competitors.

Now, I’m looking at Pamela and Averil (Harriman) here, I’ll tell you a good story about her. My husband met her during the war. He was sent over to set up Lend-Lease with Averil Harriman. She had married Churchill’s son so that everybody at the Embassy was included, by Churchill, at functions. So he met Pamela but so did Averil. Well Averil was married. Pamela was married. Bob was not married, so he became the beard, that was the CIA term, he became her beard. He would escort her to parties and Averil would come alone and then Averil would escort her home afterward, so they had an affair all during the war. Years do pass, she has several husbands in betwixt and between. He’s still married to Marie who I got to know in Paris when we were there, in fact I have a painting that Marie Harriman gave me in the other room.

When she and Averil got married we were invited to a wedding reception for them in Washington. It was given by Al Friendly who was the managing editor of the Washington Post and had been on the staff of the Marshall Plan with my husband. It was in the garden and we walked into this beautiful, beautiful garden in Georgetown and started to go through the receiving line and when Pamela sees Bob, she drops her teeth. I was aware that there was some kind of tension. I knew that they had known

¹⁶ DEFINE GRIDIRON

one another but the reaction was strange. I was talking to Averil [and] she took my husband and went under a big magnolia tree. The two of them were having this very serious conversation for about five minutes. Averil and I were saying, "What's going on?" Old friends, you know, they haven't seen each other in years, so we were drinking champagne and out of the corner of my eye, I know my husband's expressions well enough that I could tell how uneasy he was by what she was saying. So when we left he said "She was asking me, please not to tell everybody in Washington that she and Averil had had an affair during the war and I covered for them." Then she and I got to be good friends because she got to be very political.

She was appointed Ambassador to Paris by Clinton and I visited her a couple of times in Paris as the Ambassador, at the Embassy and also at the residence with Arthur Schlesinger, Jr. Arthur and I had lunch at the Embassy. Her personal assistant, Janet Howard, was a good friend of mine and the three of us went to dinner at this very famous restaurant on the Left Bank. We had gone for a drink at the Ritz Hotel. I can't remember the name of it but I can see it, near Montparnasse. She expected me to come back to Paris, I used to go to Paris quite regularly. You know it was like New Orleans, it was like a second home and I had so many dear friends there who I would visit. Then she died in the swimming pool at the Ritz Hotel. She [had] told me that she tried to make a point of getting over there because it was the only indoor swimming pool in downtown Paris. She was a horsewoman and very athletic and kept this beautiful figure. She had just had her face lifted before she went to Paris. She told me but I wasn't supposed to tell anybody. She gave me the name of the guy who did it in case I ever wanted to have my face lifted. He's in New York and I said to her that I knew some plastic surgeons in L.A. who went to Stanford and if I was going to have my face lifted I'd have a Stanford man! Anyway, it came as a great shock when she was swimming and had a heart attack and died.

She put on a beautiful funeral for Averil. He was almost 90. I think he was 89 when he died. The last time I talked to him, they gave a party at their house in Georgetown and as I was leaving he said, "I'm going to see you next week, right?" I said, "No, I'm going home, I'm going to California." He said, "But it's my birthday, aren't you going to come for my birthday?" I said, "It's my father's birthday, he's going to be

90” or “He’s going to be 95” or something. Averil said, “That’s alright, he’s older than I am, you should go to his birthday.” Well, soon after that he died and the funeral was at Washington Cathedral and it was by invitation. I was really strung out at that funeral because it was ‘This is Your Life.’ All the people I had known in Paris as a bride. I had met him originally at the White House when my husband took me there for a White House Ball when Truman was President.

My roommates always said that the reason I decided to date Bob, instead of all those other people, was because I was so impressed about going to the White House. He was Special Assistant to Truman and he arranged with one of the other Special Assistants whose wife was away. The invitations always came to Mr. and Mrs., no girlfriends allowed. So he arranged that I should pass as this Colonel’s wife. So we checked in at the East Wing, what they call the diplomatic entrance. We checked in and I was the wife of Ronald whatever his name was and then we got into the receiving line and Truman called me Mrs. Oshins. I didn’t correct him. I had long gloves up to here, a very sexy dress. All of my roommates went shopping with me so that I could get a ball gown. [I bought it at a] women’s store in Washington on F Street. [This is the dress.] The sexiest dress I’ve ever owned. Could you imagine I could fit into that? I had to put a piece of scotch tape over my nipples because I couldn’t wear a bra.

Here’s the dress I wore to Jack’s inaugural, the blue one. It was made out of a sari for me. The two handsomest men in Washington were Averil Harriman and Clark Clifford and I got to dance with both of them because I was the only young girl there. Except for Eunice Kennedy and Eunice was never very sexy. She was always gangly, you know and she never cared much about her appearance. I introduced her to my husband and he even mentioned that she wasn’t very well attired, and her with all that money. The (Kennedy) boys *were*, and the girls were not, that attractive. Particularly Eunice, who was my classmate (at Stanford) and my close friend, is really quite ugly. She is Maria Shriver’s mother, you know, Arnold Schwarzenegger’s mother-in-law. She always has been, and she’s always had terrible skin, lots of wrinkles. In Washington, when we’d be together, we’d tell people we were classmates and they’d look at her and look at me and always make some crack. I really got to know her here [at Stanford.] I had met them all in London when I was there as a child, but the only one I really wired

in on was Bobby, who was the same age as I. My husband brought this sari back from India and I had it made for Jack's inaugural because I was the Chief Hostess at the Mayflower Hotel. That was 1961. I wore the black pearls. They're called black pearls but they're blue. I remember I had a special pair of glasses that were gold that my mother bought for me. She was always after me to wear fancy glasses. She always hated me in glasses but I couldn't see! Boy that brings back memories. See, this goes over the shoulder. I also have the dress I bought to be presented to Queen Elizabeth in Vienna.

I used to like sling pumps. I started at 4 1/2 and I went to 5 and by the time I had my first child I was 5 1/2. I had 4 1/2 B all during. It was great because the shoe stores used to get the 4 1/2 B's for the window, for the displays, so whenever I would give my size they'd say, well we have some on sale. I got more shoes on sale because they'd been in the window! I couldn't ever get shoes in Vienna because they have such big feet! The Austrians are known for their big feet, so I used to go down to Venice to buy my shoes! I'll tell you another place they have beautiful shoes is Greece. Right next to the Acropolis is my favorite shoe store. I used to buy shoes there every time I was in Athens. And Ferragamo's. I can't wear high heels any more because of my balance. That's why I asked you what size you wore, because I would give them to you. I have alligator shoes. I also have a pair of shoes I came across not too long ago while I was cleaning, that I wore to Jack's funeral. For some reason or another I put them in a plastic bag and I've never worn them since. I could show you the suit I wore to his funeral. It was raining. It had been raining. Arlington was just a sea of mud. Wait a minute. These are the shoes that I wore to Kennedy's funeral. They have the dirt from Arlington...

EARLY CHILDHOOD & FAMILY

My grandmother's house [was at] 1045 Cole Street. Parnassus is right there on top and Gratton was one of the cross streets as you go up the hill and Haight Street was at the bottom of the hill. That was the shopping center on Haight Street. They had one of the first houses that was stone and brick after 'The Fire.' There were 4 children, 2 boys and 2 girls. My mother was the youngest and everyone was running around trying to find Ellen. I called her Lala, which is what Leland¹⁷ calls me, now. Her name was Ellen Louise and I'm the fifth Ellen Louise in a line and the eighth Ellen. They finally found her, she had gone over to some friends' home that hadn't been hurt by the earthquake or the fire and she was fine! She liked staying with her friends better than camping out in Golden Gate Park.

¹⁷ Leland Oshins is her only grandson by her eldest son, Jeffery Oshins.

Keith¹⁸ has been after me for years to go to the anniversary celebrations of the 1906 Earthquake because both of my parents lived through that and they told him stories about it from the time he was a little child. I have never felt like going because I heard all the stories from the time I was born, ad infinitum from all members of my family on both sides. Where they were relocated to and what they lost – they lost everything. So this year I have promised him, just to shut him up, that I will go in April. My grandmother, who was from N’orleans originally, she never called it ‘The Earthquake,’ she called it “The Fire” (pronounces it with a southern accent) because that’s what did all the damage. That’s why she lost all of her jewelry, in ‘The Fire,’ which would have gone to me, except for ‘The Fire.’ They saved a piano stool, a kitchen chair and a couple of forks. They were told to get out and they just grabbed. They got relocated to Golden Gate Park and my father’s family got relocated to the Presidio, so they never met until years later.

I am so bored with the earthquake! Every morning my father would come down and say do you know what today is? It is the something anniversary of the earthquake and then I would have to listen to these stories ad infinitum, ad nauseum. They were so annoyed at the movie, you know, Jeanette MacDonald, *San Francisco*. My grandmother used to always say, “That is *not* the San Francisco song.” (Sings) ‘San Francisco, open your Golden Gate...’ That is not the real song. She had a song she sang for San Francisco. Also, she used to get annoyed at *California Here I Come* because the official song of California is (Sings) “I love you, California, you’re the greatest state of all, I love you in the summer, winter, spring and in the fall.” See, I learned that from my grandmother. They were just so annoyed with the movies taking over San Francisco and California and Al Jolsen who never had anything to do with California, he introduced that *California Here I Come*. Then of course, Tony Bennett, he isn’t a San Franciscan. He’s a New Yorker!

The first movie I ever went to, my grandmother took me. She did all kinds of things with me that my parents would never do, so that’s why I spoil Leland. She took me to a movie at the Haight Street Theater and I stood up during the whole movie,

¹⁸ Keith Oshins is her youngest son and my dear friend and was present at all of the sessions.

according to her. It was *Skippy* with Jackie Cooper. I think my parents were away. They did a lot of traveling because my father had a branch of his office in L.A. and every year he went to New York and sometimes my mother would go with him, so I got dumped with my grandmother or with Lala, my aunt. So, it was as if I had three mothers. So, my first movie was *Skippy* with Jackie Cooper [at] two or three. I have very clear recollections of things that happened when I was two, two and a half.

We spent the summer I guess when I was three, in Burlingame, in the country. That's where you went for the summer, to the country. My mother decided that she wanted to live in the country, she didn't want to live in the city and that meant my father had to commute twenty miles every day, you know, going and coming. But he was willing to do that, he thought that it made sense. He wanted to build a house. They'd been renting because they weren't sure whether they were going to permanently settle in L.A. or in San Francisco. We bought a house in Burlingame right near Our Lady of Angels. North Burlingame is the Hillsborough part of Burlingame; it connects to the hills. Anyway, I went to Our Lady of Angels, which was just a half a block away off of Adeline. I met the Shaw girls, (Joan and Clair) whose father was Buck Shaw. He was a very famous football coach who later started the 49ers. He was the coach for the 49ers and everything at Santa Clara where he was the coach is named Buck Shaw. Poor Leland hears about Buck Shaw more than he ever wanted to know. The two Shaw girls were very tall and their father was absolutely gorgeous, one of the handsomest met I've ever seen, and they were very good looking. They used to take me along whenever they were going off; they used to ask if I could come along. I was so much shorter than they that they always looked as if I was a little puppy dog that was coming along after them. Anyway, they were my very close friends because we went to second grade or something.

Then, my mother finally decided I was old enough to go to public school, so I went to Hoover Grammar School. Of course, when the election came along, 32, Roosevelt ran the first time, everybody I knew was for Hoover. We were proud of our grammar school. I can remember the morning after the election, I think it was the second grade, the teacher writing on the blackboard, 'Franklin Delano Roosevelt was elected president last night,' and the whole class went, "Ugggghhhh." Of course my

parents were Republicans so it was a shock to me, I just assumed that Hoover would be reelected. When he came back to California, after the inaugural, there was a parade down El Camino. My father took me down under the eucalyptus trees and he put me on his shoulders so I could see Hoover. I thought I'd never see another president, you know, so he wanted me to be sure I got to see what a president looked like. Years later he introduced me to Hoover at Yosemite, my grandmother knew him, and I thought he was the most pompous man I'd ever met. He walked into the dinner at the Ahwahnee in *front* of his wife. She walked behind him, you know, like Elizabeth and Phillip. He came over to the table where we were sitting, to say hello to my grandmother. Then he was introduced to my parents and to me and he said something about, blah, blah, blah. I just glared at him. I thought he was the ugliest, most pompous thing I'd ever seen. I couldn't figure out why everybody thought he was so great. He had this high collar [and] his face was pushed up above the collar so his face was out of alignment. If you see pictures of him, you'll know what I mean. He always had this very round face with the high collar. So that was my first president and I didn't really think very much of him, so it wasn't very difficult for me to change.

[That was probably my first political memory.] It was the second grade, it was 1932, and then we moved. During that time that I was in Hoover Grammar School my parents were building the house in Hillsborough. So I transferred from this very public, public school to Hillsborough Grammar School, which was public but like a private school because only kids who lived in Hillsborough could go to it and there were only 3,300 people in Hillsborough at that point. It was kindergarten through the eighth grade and there were only 220 kids in the school so everybody knew everybody else. Everybody knew everybody's parents. I grew up finding out whose mother was sleeping with whose father, it was like a small town at the grade school. So anyway, I graduated from Hillsborough Grammar School and I edited the newspaper. You asked me about journalism and I thought of that afterwards. That was the main thing I wanted to do, I didn't want to be on the council, I wasn't that interested in the politics of it as much as I was interested in journalism. It was like a private school so that when I got into high school it was a great experience because it was a *public* high school where there were (in a whisper) Orientals and there were even a couple of Blacks. I can

remember just being astounded. In Hillsborough, the children of the gardeners couldn't go to the public school, so I knew what segregation was like before I went to Virginia and fought against Harry Byrd and massive resistance and closing all the schools. People would say to me, "You're not a southerner," but we had it in Hillsborough, we had segregation. As fond as I was of Joe the gardener, his children couldn't have gone to grammar school with me. [They went to] San Mateo or Burlingame. But Hillsborough was this enclave. It had been six estates. I've got the history of Hillsborough if you ever want to read it.

All those things over there on the chair are there because one of the officers from the Stanford Museum is coming to go over those and I am going to donate them because they have what they call a treasure mart where they sell things to raise money for the museum. I worked on this for years with them. You get a good tax deduction, which I need more than the money at this point. I took some of those things to the woman who did the weaving [at] Allied Arts. They want me to come and give a lecture of what Allied Arts was like in the 30s. I'm the only person who's still alive who remembers Allied Arts in the 30s. When I was about so big I used to play there when it was a big ranch. The property is a tenth of what it was originally.

All my mother's furniture was made at Allied Arts. It's not far from here and it's a very well know institution. My mother was so funny, that's my mother over there. Allied Arts wove that [tapestry] as a housewarming gift. That's my mother and me and my sister and our garden in Hillsborough. [My sister's] name is Audrey Elaine. She was named after my Uncle Aubrey. My mother used to be so embarrassed when people would say, "You have two daughters and one of them is named Ellen and one is named Elaine?" as if she had no imagination. We always called her Audie. [The tapestry] used to be very bright, it has faded, but that's pure silk, hand woven and then painted. That's the kind of thing they did at Allied Arts. [The calla lily tapestry is from Allied Arts.] There were several other hangings in our house that have disappeared but these were the two that I asked for when my parents sold it.

Mrs. Roth was a good friend of my mothers. Mrs Merner was also a good friend of my mothers. Mrs. Merner owned Allied Arts and Mrs. Roth owned Filoli. You know,

your mother's friends sort of take you in, particularly if you're cute and darling and adorable. In both instances I remember those properties from when I was just very small and was allowed to run around and get to know all the help, the gardeners. The chief cook at Filoli was always trying to feed me and I didn't need to be stuffed! The twins, the two oldest children were twin girls and the youngest was Bill Roth, who was more my age and we used to run into each other. He decided that he wanted to run for Governor a few years ago and he put me in a terrible bind because I was not about to support him, he just came out of the blue and told me he wanted to run for Governor. He was on the Board of the University of California, very bright, very smart, but a playboy. I haven't seen Bill since I said no!

[You asked me if I thought that being in that very small world where everybody knows everybody's families and secrets in some way that prepared me for Washington.] That's funny, now that I think about it. I was never shocked [that] a lot of my friends' parents got divorced, it was high living, you know. I was much more accepting of people having affairs and having divorces and stepfathers and stepmothers, than my husband. My husband just used to think it was so peculiar when any of our friends would get divorced. People in Escanaba¹⁹ just never got divorced! That's the difference. Also the climate is different. Bob's father had a second family in Iron Mountain but his mother never knew it. Just before he died, my father-in-law told my husband about the second family he had in Iron Mountain, which is not too far from Escanaba, and that my husband should take care of her as well as take care of his mother. So, my husband, being naive, tells me this story and says that we're going to have to take care of her. I said "Not on your life! What do you mean? She went into that with her eyes open. I am not going to share my wherewithal with a mistress." He just thought it was so strange that he had never had any indication of this until just before he died. That's why I say, the difference between Hillsborough and Escanaba was night and day. [Escanaba] was a very small Swedish community.

Edna Ferber wrote a novel about the same time as *The Call of the Wild*, [that] was made into a very popular movie. Anyway, it was where the lumber was, all the

¹⁹ Escanaba, Michigan

lumber mills were, that part of Michigan, and Minnesota, and Wisconsin, and ore mines. I think there were very, very few of my husband's high school classmates that went to college. He was the outstanding student in the high school and was encouraged to go to college. Because he had such extraordinary grades, the University of Chicago, which was a private college, Rockefeller supported it, let him in and gave him a scholarship. So that's the only way he got out of the North Woods. That whole area is called the North Woods, where the lumber came from and the ore. Our childhoods were like night and day, so completely different. Everyone used to think it was amazing that we got along so well, but because we were interested in the same things.

When I was in Hillsborough Grammar School, my parents took me to Europe in 1936. I can remember that they kept it a secret that they were planning to do this for some time but I overheard my mother say something to my grandmother. My mother said, "I'm going to have to get permission from Mr. Romer," who was the principal of Hillsborough Grammar School, "to take you out of school." So, we had an appointment with the principal and it was the first time I'd ever been in the principal's office. I was a good student and had never been called to the principal's office. My mother said that they wanted to take me to Europe and could I be excused. We were leaving in September, and it was in the spring, I guess that we would be leaving. He said, "Don't bother, Ellen, she'll learn more when she's in Europe than she will here. Don't worry about it." He was very casual about the whole thing and she was so relieved, quite rightly about taking a child out of school to travel.

So, we took the *Spirit of San Francisco*, which was the first streamliner out of Oakland, there was no bridge, you know. We had to take the ferry to the mole in Oakland. They called it the mole, where the transcontinental trains only came as far in Oakland. They couldn't get across the bay. They couldn't fit on the ferry! (Laughs) I remember, a whole bunch of people came to see us off, my parents friends particularly because they were just dying to see this brand new streamliner, it was right on the tracks. And Wig and her brother Marshall came, they were my only friends, the rest were all my parents friends. Wig is Marjorie Eleonor Weigel who I knew in Burlingame when we were five years old and I'm still in touch with her. She just turned 81, last

month. She's six months older than I am and she's always told me what to do and how to do it because she's older than I am!

Her brother Marshall, who later was president of the student body at Stanford, was a very tall, handsome, young man. Even at age 11, you know, Marshall really turned me on. I didn't have a big brother so I thought Marshall could be my big brother and I always referred to him as my big brother, and he and Marjorie came to see me off, Margie we called her. Then she developed the nickname Wig and when she was at Stanford everybody called her Wiggie, you know from Weigel. That's her last name, and I was called Marc by a lot of my classmates. It was just a thing at the time, to give everyone a nickname. As long as they didn't call me Ellie or Helen! I can name the people who called me Ellie on a regular basis. Betty Furness. That picture of LBJ and Lady Bird with Betty Furness who had just been appointed Special Assistant for Consumers, she sent me that picture, you know to 'To Ellie.' And I thought Betty, Lady Bird never called me Ellie, Muriel Humphrey never called me Ellie, the president never called me Ellie, why are you calling me Ellie? We were good friends, so that was a way of showing closeness.

So there we were in the mole in Oakland and we got on the train and went to Chicago and stayed at the Stevens, which later became the Conrad Hilton where all the fireworks took place in 1968, the convention when I got stink bombed. When we were there, I met some very good friends of my parents, whose names were Gelb and they owned Clairol. They had two sons and no daughters. Clairol was named after Clair Gelb the wife, and she just thought it was absolutely wonderful to have a girl, so she took me to the beauty shop and showed me how to fix the hair and gave me a manicure. She treated me as if I was a young woman, I was eleven years old and I'd been treated like a kid always. All of a sudden here is this very beautiful, glamorous woman who is making a fuss over me. Then when we got to New York they lived in Scarsdale, she arranged for her sons to take me to a Saturday matinee and Kitty Carlisle was in that matinee and her picture was in the paper today, she's ninety-something now. She had been in the New York Times, she had been at some ball, you know how the New York Times covers balls on Sunday? I looked at that picture and

gosh, I remember her from when I was eleven years old. She was the star of this musical comedy.

Then we got on the Normandy to sail to Europe and those two boys came to see me off. And Clair, she asked me to call her Aunt Clair, gave my mother, a first edition of *Gone With The Wind* right off the presses. They had all kinds of 'ins' in New York society, it was supposedly impossible to come by, people had put orders in. So that was her present to my mother for the sailing party. She brought me, I don't know, a doll or something. Well, I didn't pay any attention to the doll, I got a hold of that book and the whole way to Europe I read *Gone With The Wind*! So much of it reminded me of my grandmother's stories. My grandmother had told me about Ben Butler who was a scalawag as she called him, who occupied New Orleans and who stole all the jewels and the silver from the Southerners and my grandmother was convinced that they named the character Rhett Butler after Ben Butler. Supposedly he was a very handsome, debonair scalawag. Do you know what a scalawag is? A carpetbagger. That's her other favorite term of derision, scalawag and carpetbagger.

My Uncle Aubrey was an old friend of some fascinating people in London who took us to the most beautiful nightclubs and I had never been to a nightclub before. You know my parents had always had babysitters or my grandmother around, so I got to go to a nightclub. I remember there was woman walking around bare, with a tray selling cigarettes and my father took the napkin off the table and put it up in front of my face and I wasn't supposed to see it. A nude woman! I was too young, I was 11 years old and I wasn't supposed to see a nude woman!

I was there when the abdication took place. You've heard about the abdication? It was very sexy and everybody was talking about it. I was 11 years old and I learned about sex, hearing about the abdication. She had raped him in so many words. David was not much of a man's man. She was the manly one. Anyway, enough of sex. It keeps coming up, always.

Then we went to Victoria Station and as far as I knew we were going to take the train to the Channel and then take a boat to France, which is how you got across the channel in those days. We got to Victoria Station and I was told I had to be *weighed*, and I said, "Why would I have to be weighed to get on a boat?" The attendant said,

“Imperial Airlines insists that we weigh all of the passengers.” I said “Airlines! We’re going on a plane!” I was so excited! I’d never been on a plane before. So, we got on this plane and flew across the channel on the Imperial Airline, which was what the British called what later became BEA, but it was called Imperial at that point, from London to Paris. The plane flew about 20 feet over the water and there was a storm and I kept looking down at these waves coming up. The stewardess passed out bags for everybody to be seasick in. I kept saying, “I’m not going to be seasick, this is the first time I’ve ever been on a plane.” I think I was the only one on the plane who wasn’t. My mother was seasick but I guess my father wasn’t. She was looking at me and shaking her head. She was absolutely white and looking at me, and all I wanted to do was look down at these waves. I was so excited. I felt like Lindberg arriving in Paris at Le Bourget, at the airport outside of Paris. We were of an era that if you had the money you did all kinds of things, and my father was very wealthy. I was so excited about that plane ride. Then we stayed at the Georges VI and I had a wonderful time, I just loved Paris. I really liked it more than London because London was so foggy and the Brits were so uptight and the French were so much freer and I thought more like Americans. I had had a French governess at one point, so I knew enough French that I could get along, even at 11. I still know enough French so that I can get along.

When we were in Paris is when we really found out all the juicy gossip about Wally Simpson because the British papers were censored. Stanley Baldwin was the Prime Minister and Lord Beaverbrook was the lord of all the newspapers on Fleet Street. Baldwin called him in and made him promise that none of the British papers would cover anything about Wally Simpson. It was such a scandal, *such* a scandal. So of course the French knew all about it. When we went back to London, I remember talking to these lovely Brits, including the man who was my father’s representative there, who wanted me to go to the London School of Economics after the war, and I would stay with them. They had a beautiful estate in Hertfordshire, a 400 year-old estate. I just thought that would be lovely, but that’s another story. Anyway, I told them all about Wally Simpson because I’d learned it all in Paris.

We took the Queen Mary back and William Randolph Hearst and Marion Davies who was his mistress were on the boat. She thought I was so cute, she invited me into

her suite and she showed me all of her wigs, and I'd never seen a woman wearing a wig before. So, every night, when they would come into the dining room, I'd tell my mother, "That's the wig she tried on me!" I wasn't supposed to know about mistresses like Marion Davies. She and I used to take the Promenade together and she would always get me to run with her, which was good exercise, because its very boring, there weren't any kids, even on the Normandie or the Queen Mary. I was the only kid in First Class, there were some in Second Class and Steerage, so I met a lot of adults that way because I didn't have anybody else to talk to, and I liked to talk. [She was so glamorous] and was so outgoing to me, and she made me feel as if I was a young lady instead of a little girl. She treated me as a companion instead of talk down to me like my parents did. I talked to Hearst at length, too. Then he invited us to San Simeon.

Where we lived in Hillsborough, by the way, we were surrounded by his children. Do you remember when Patty Hearst was (kidnapped?) Well, Randolph Hearst lived just to the north of us and George Hearst lived to the South of us. We couldn't get out of Hillsborough without going by either George Hearst or Randolph Hearst's house. Of course, in San Francisco, Hearst was a big thing because of the newspapers. There were four newspapers in San Francisco at that point and two of them were owned by Hearst; *The Examiner* and *The Call Bulletin*. *The Call Bulletin* was the night paper. *The Examiner* and *The Chronicle* were the morning papers and the Scripps Howard paper, which was *The San Francisco News* and *The Call Bulletin* were the night papers. Most cities at that point had morning papers and night papers.

Then I came back to Hillsborough Grammar School and Mr. Romer had me address the assembled throng of the 220 students and tell them all about my trip to Europe. Mostly what I told them about was that all the statues in the Louvre and in the parks didn't have leaves! I was so surprised when I first saw a statue of a man without a leaf, because in America, 'Merika (with a drawl) we were such puritans that all the statues had to have leaves on them, but not in France. I was telling them about the Louvre and about the Mona Lisa, but then I got diverted. Mr. Romer at the back of the auditorium shaking his head. Here he'd given me permission to go to Europe and here the main thing I reported is that the statues didn't have leaves! Everybody in the school

was, you know, particularly the upper classmates were, “Agggh.” So, I was well known by the upper classmen, which was lucky because we had tennis courts and only the upper classmen could play tennis at lunchtime.

I loved to play tennis so I would make deals with some of the upper classmen to play doubles with them before I was legally allowed to play tennis. We had a cafeteria but nobody brought their lunch; it was like a private school. There was a kitchen and cooks made us lunch and we would eat in 20 minutes so we could play tennis for the rest of the hour. I could remember racing across with my tennis racket following the upper classmen so I would get to play tennis. Everybody had courts when I was growing up, so many of our neighbors and my classmates that I didn’t even bother to play very much at the country club. That was really for the adults. The country club wasn’t really receptive to children. Mostly I played at friends’ courts. I could remember over the years people asking me who was my pro?” I just walked on the tennis court and somebody gave me a racket and I started to play. We didn’t take tennis lessons and we didn’t take riding lessons, we just rode and we just played tennis and we just swam. We didn’t have pros, instructors. That always struck me as a big difference between Californians and Easterners, they all had pros, because we could play all year round. It’s the same thing with skiing, you know, we would just go up to Yosemite and start skiing.

I graduated finally from Hillsborough Grammar School, and I had skipped a couple of grades, so I was very much younger than anybody else in my freshman class at Burlingame High School. I really was not happy there, I felt out of it. Everybody was so much older and more sophisticated. It was really a play school, people went there to have fun. I can remember talking to the counselor and saying I wanted to take college preparatory courses. I wanted to go east to college. I had gotten this idea when we were in New York, all of the children of my parents’ friends, of the female variety either went to Smith, Wellesley or Vassar and the boys all went to Princeton, Yale and Harvard. So my idea was that when I graduated from High School I would get away. I’d go back East. Elsie Northrup was the Dean of Women at the High School. She said the best thing would be if you transferred to San Mateo High School, which is the same district because they have a better college preparatory program than you have here. So

she talked my mother into letting me transfer after a year and a half. So I went to two high schools on the peninsula. I can sing both of their songs. (Sings) "Burlingame with hearts and voices!" and "San Mateo, HMI, we honor and obey!" I finally graduated from high school after the war started, in June of 1942. I was 16, and again the youngest. I was always trying to make up for the fact that I was younger, trying to be very sophisticated. That's why I started to smoke, because I wanted to be sophisticated.

Then we arrived in England and we stayed at the Grosvenor House, which is right on Hyde Park and I used to go across the street and listen to these people give speeches. I thought it was a show put on especially for me! I could walk across the street, my mother was so afraid I would get lost, but she would let me go up to Oxford Street where all the dress shops were, which was straight out of the Grosvenor House. I could turn right to go to Oxford Street. Mason and Florin was there and Selfridge's, all of these fine stores and I can remember being fascinated by all the different kind of clothes that the Brits wore. I didn't think that I was properly attired so I had my mother buy me some fine wool. It was winter, you know, and I was a Californian and I was cold! Then I could cross the street when the policeman, you know, the bobby, would let me, to Hyde Park corner where traditionally all of these speeches were given. You know free speech was invented at Hyde Park Corner. It was great entertainment, you know, I had to get away from my parents once in a while.

My mother was intent upon taking me to every cathedral and every museum wherever we went. I was going to get educated. She was intent. She had taken me out of school, she felt she had to supplement. We were at Windsor or at some castle in a tour being taken around. The guide was mentioning the Kings and Queens of different periods, and I spoke up. I said, "She was not the Queen, she was his daughter!" My mother was so embarrassed and the guide looked at me and said, "Little girl, how did you know that?" I said, "My grandmother told me!" My grandmother prepared me for this trip by making me memorize all the Kings and Queens of England. She was a great Anglophile. As a bride she'd gone to Jamaica, which was under the Brits, the British West Indies it was called. She had picked up all of this knowledge about the Kings and Queens of England and passed it onto me. So I told the guide, much to my mother's distress. He was wrong, I was right.

Also, the other thing that annoyed my mother was that I told the Pope off when I was pregnant with Jefferyrey and we had an audience at the Castel Gandolfo²⁰. My mother and Lala were with us, and my second cousin, Sister Mary was a Mother Superior and one of the cousins was at the Vatican, so they arranged for us to have an audience with the Pope, and I was quite pregnant. There's a picture around someplace, that Lala sent it to us. So, the Pope came over to us after he had given his homily or whatever to meet us and he said to me, "And where are you in school, dear?" According to my mother, I stuck out my stomach and I said, "I am a college graduate, I am married and I am about to have a baby!" My sister who was with us, got the giggles and she couldn't stop laughing. When the Pope turned to her she just couldn't stop laughing. I embarrassed them terribly.

I can tell you the outfit I had on, which my husband used to call my CB outfit, my Child Bearing outfit. I had it as part of my trousseau; he thought it made me look too young. He called it my Child Bride outfit and then it became my Child Bearing outfit. I still have pictures of it around, and I may even have the hat still. I had a cute little hat like a pillbox. The Pope thought I looked so young I was in school. I told him a thing or two!

SANTA BARBARA

Santa Barbara was our summer home during the war. We couldn't travel, so we would take the train to Santa Barbara and rent a car and rent a house and stay there during the summer. Because of the war and gas rationing, we couldn't go to Tahoe, which we usually did during the summer. Every summer up to that point, I had always gone to Tahoe. Yosemite and Tahoe, you know and during the winter, Palm Springs. So my father came up with this idea that we should take the train to Santa Barbara and rent a car. My father was head of the rationing board so he knew all about getting

²⁰ Pope Pius XII served from 1939-1958. Castel Gandolfo has been the summer home for Popes since 1596.

gasoline. So we got to Santa Barbara and rented a car and I remember I got my drivers license in Santa Barbara when I was 16. My mother said, "Do you know how to drive?" and I said, "Yes, I've been driving since I was 14!" My mother always liked to have me drive her because she didn't like to drive and she always thought I was very much a better driver than she. Be that as it may, that's how Santa Barbara became very much a part of my life. All during the war we went to Santa Barbara every summer and I got to know a lot of my contemporaries, many of whom were headed to Stanford. So when I got to Stanford, I knew as many Santa Barbrians in my freshman class as I did San Franciscans. Of course, I knew everybody from Hillsborough. It's so funny, to this day, I'm going to have a 60th class reunion, so many of the people that have been calling me about it I went to grammar school with. Hillsborough Grammar School was highly rated, because it was very small and as I say, treated like a private school. As the teachers used to point out to us, most of us came from families that were very well educated so not to be surprised if we could get into the very best colleges. We were told that in grammar school that we should be thinking of the best colleges. Because of the war, I couldn't go east to college and my father bribed me with a Packard convertible so I went to Stanford. End of story. To this day people will come up to me at different University functions and say, "I remember that car!"

When I go back to Santa Barbara now I always stay at the Biltmore which is in Montecito, because right across from the Biltmore were the Biltmore stables where I used to keep a horse and every morning, a bunch of us teenagers would meet at the stables and we'd ride our horses down to the beach and ride up and down on the sand waiting for the fog to lift, which it always did by 10:00. Then we would ride up to the East West Highway. Do you know where that is? Do you know where San Ysidro Ranch is? We'd ride up to San Ysidro Ranch on horseback, because there weren't any cars. It was during the war and there weren't any cars.

I went there on my honeymoon and my husband fell in love with Santa Barbara. When he retired because of illness, he had several heart attacks. Robert Hutchins was head of the University of Chicago and a very well known academic. He set up the Ford Foundation. He asked my husband to come and work with him at the Ford Foundation in Santa Barbara so he moved out to Santa Barbara and all my children moved out to

Santa Barbara at one time or another and they all went to UCSB at one time or another. They still consider Santa Barbara a second home, which I had always as a child. So that's Santa Barbara.

JAPANESE REPARATIONS

During the war, the Army and the Navy had different colleges where they trained the enlisted men for officers' training school and in specialties. At Stanford they had a very famous foreign language school, to this day. They were teaching Japanese and Chinese and Russian and Polish and all of the languages for the troops training for the invasions. [When] the ASTP came, which was the Army Service Training Program, they were a much more diverse group than the regular Stanford students, they were all white. I don't remember any Orientals. Of course, the war, you know. Well, I guess

there was a Chinese boy. Chang, that's right, he was in our class but there were many more Japanese on the Peninsula. Also, the Chinese stayed in San Francisco and in Chinatown and the Valley. Of course there weren't any Japanese because of the war and in our class there was only this one Chinese boy, because as I can remember they all stayed in the city or went east, there weren't any (Chinese) on the Peninsula. We had many more Japanese on the Peninsula.

Ah Sam²¹ had an ice truck and he used to deliver the ice. Then he bought some land in Half Moon Bay and he started growing vegetables, so my mother used to buy all of her vegetables from Ah-Sam. His son became head of the Bank of America and daughters are very well educated and successful. He didn't speak any English, Ah Sam, but he used to let me climb into his truck and he'd give me a piece of ice to suck and I would talk to his kids. He had all of his kids in the truck.

Now, our housekeeper, Fuji, who knew Keith, (we called him 'the baby') came to us right out of relocation camp. I think she was still in her teens. I was still at Stanford. She spoke very, very broken English, but she and I could understand one another. My favorite story about Fuji was, whenever I would come home to see my parents, she would be so excited about my coming home, she would be waiting right inside the front door. I would come in the front door and then there were a couple of steps leading into the foyer and she would get to me as soon as I got on top of those couple of steps and start undressing me. She didn't think that my maid took proper care of my attire. She was so specific about how I should dress and how my clothes should be washed and ironed. I used to stand at the bottom of the steps leading up to the floor of my bedroom in hysterics. My mother and I would just be laughing at Fuji and she was just a little thing. That was the way she showed her love and affection.

It was in my mind for years to say, "I'm sorry," to the Japanese. One of the things that I swore I was going to do was to make amends to Fuji and my classmates in high school [that had] being taken from us. The only way I could do it was to get the two Japanese American members of the California delegation together. [Bob Matsui] and Norman Mineta and I got put in the legislation the reparations for the Japanese. They

²¹ Ah Sam went on to found one of the largest florist businesses on the peninsula. <http://www.ahsam.com/about.htm>

didn't always get along, but they were both good friends of mine and we worked for a couple of years to get that legislation through. We got \$25,000. You have no idea how much animosity existed in the congress towards the Japanese, except if you listen to the news about the animosity towards the Arabs at this point, and towards the Mexicans because of immigration. You will know that this is a country of bigots. It is! You've just got to work with them because there are so many of them, you can't just ignore them. You have to learn to get along with them. Anyway, we finally got this legislation passed [and] Norman Mineta, who is now the Secretary of Transportation, who they named the airport after, presented her with the check at my request. I remember saying to Fuji's eldest daughter who was a college graduate, very, very elegant, well educated [that I was] almost embarrassed to have the Congressman, whom she had known, present her with such a measly amount. \$25,000 after all of those years, from 1941 and this is the late 1980s, over 40 years. Her daughter said, "It isn't the amount of money, my mother has all the money she needs." Fuji was retired and well-taken care of. Her daughter said, "It's just the idea that you cared that much." Of course, Fuji was thrilled. Me, she saw all the time, but Norman Mineta! He was like a shogun.

The gardener that I grew up with was Japanese. I knew lots of Japanese because, not only were they domestic help, but in high school we had three different majors; college preparatory, general and vocational. There were so many Japanese students in my college preparatory course that I knew both boys and girls my age. The help were the immigrants but my classmates were all American born and they were some of the best students so we were all in these advanced courses together. It was our senior year, Pearl Harbor, the day after Pearl Harbor, Pearl Harbor was Sunday and Monday Roosevelt gave a speech about, "the day that shall live in infamy." You do remember Roosevelt? We all went into the gymnasium which was bigger than the auditorium and listened to him give that speech. The boys particularly, were in a terrible state of shock because they all knew that they were going to be drafted. They were just ready to graduate from high school, which was when they took them. As I recall, the boys were more emotional than the girls. I can remember just looking around at all of my Japanese friends and thinking they're my friends, not my enemies. The next day

when I was driven to school, we passed busses at street corners picking up these students, my friends, my classmates and their suitcases to take them to relocation camps. They were out of there, out of school on Tuesday. Pearl Harbor was Sunday, the speech was Monday and the kids were gone on Tuesday.²²

[The order was passed] in 1941. It was the worst thing Roosevelt ever did and Earl Warren backed him up. Both of them sort of apologized that that is the biggest mistake they ever made. Then, a group of us from high school used to go up to Tanforan. It was the racetrack. They took over Tanforan as the temporary relocation camp for all of the Japanese on the peninsula. We would go up and could only talk to our friends through the barbed wire fence. It was just heartbreaking. Before we graduated, which was in June, they had been shipped all over, to Idaho, to Nebraska, inland.

Years did pass and my husband and I were in the Middle East [on the] trip when I was pregnant with Jeffery, number one son, Primus we called him. Because my husband had a diplomatic passport, we could visit Syria, Lebanon and Israel. Nobody else on board ship could. I can remember standing at the concentration camps that Israel had for the Arabs and feeling exactly the same way I did about the Japanese. I have always been so anti Israel because of their policy toward the Palestinians. There were all of these little kids, crying, holding out their hands, asking if they could have any food. I started crying and my husband couldn't understand what upset me so, and I said "It's the same thing as the Japanese!" We made such a terrible mistake and now we are approving of Israel making an even worse mistake. And that's what we're living with today, the way we have treated the Arabs, and the way we have supported this ridiculous thing of Israel makes absolutely no sense, politically, economically, or anything else. Have you ever been there? It's nothing. It is a desert. We poured all these people in there and we financed it all. No wonder the Arabs love us. They took all the land away that had been in these Palestinian families for generations just like we

²² While I respect Ms. Marcus recollections, in this case, it could not have occurred within the time frame that she remembers. In fact, it wasn't until February of 1942 that Executive Order 9066 was passed. Beginning in March 1942, selected Japanese and Japanese Americans began to be relocated to temporary facilities while permanent facilities were under construction. By May all people of Japanese descent were ordered to places like Tanforan to await their final move to the camps.

took all the property of the Japanese. The Central Valley was the worst place in California where the Japanese were concerned. The Japanese were the farmers, they were the ones who made the desert bloom in the Central Valley.

This is why, when I was growing up in Hillsborough, everybody had a Japanese gardener. Just like in Virginia, everybody had a mammy. You would never think of having a Japanese governess, you had a mammy. It's the culture of the community. I think of this whenever I hear the news. What were we expecting? That it would blow up one of these days. And we've been educating these people and bringing them into this country, giving them special privileges at all the colleges and universities as part of our international policy and then what are they supposed to do? They're supposed to go home and be gardeners, servants? They're doctors and lawyers, professional men, and they're the ones that are leading all the problems in Iraq and Iran, and Syria's the worst.

The gardener, we called Joe, I guess he had one of those names. Joe never really learned English, he was worse than Fuji, but he was a wonderful gardener. When the boys would come he would grab them, lift them up and run around the garden with them on his shoulders. We had a tree down at the end of the lawn that had a V and I can always remember him taking them and putting them on that V as if they were riding horses. Playing with them and chattering away in Japanese, and of course they didn't understand what he was saying. Of course, we didn't have any Japanese in Virginia, we had (in a southern drawl) *nigga's*, we had *coloured's*, but we didn't have Japanese then, no Asians to speak of. Now we have many. Joe is the one who really taught me about gardening, taught me to love gardening. Of course being at Filoli and Allied Arts, I saw all of these people who were expert gardeners.

The funny thing about Joe was that my mother just loved the way he did the garden, but she could never get him to change anything when she wanted to put something else in. She used to love tuberous begonias, and she'd go down to Aptos where they invented tuberous begonias, I swear. They had hanging baskets of tuberous begonias and she would bring back all of these baskets of tuberous begonias and then she'd have a terrible time explaining to Joe where she wanted them to be planted. So whenever I would appear on the scene she would say, "You've got to talk to

Joe.” I could talk to him, but I couldn’t understand him! For some reason or another I was able to get the message over to Joe in a way that my mother couldn’t. I guess it was because he still thought of me as a child even though I was a mother of three sons. In his eyes, I was still a little girl and so he always treated me that way. Every time he’d see me, he’d just smile. My mother used to laugh. The only time Joe used to really smile was when my sister or I were there or my children. He just felt as if he was part of the family and he would just start giggling and smiling.

I have a love of Orientals that goes back as long as I can remember which was very helpful when I was in China in the 70s. I went over soon after Nixon opened up China with a delegation from the National Trust for Historic Preservation. The Chinese Government invited the National Trust to send a delegation to advise them on preservation of ancient buildings. They asked me to go along because I knew the American Ambassador to China appointed by Carter. Leonard was a labor leader, veep of AF-LCIO when George Meaney was President. Because my husband had been in the Foreign Service I knew a lot of the regular Foreign Service people, so that I would have an entrée that the professional preservationists didn’t have. There were 12 of us and most of them were from the south, which is where the preservation movement started. In fact, it started in N’orleans, in the *Vieux Carre*, the French Quarter, that was the first preservation movement in this country. They couldn’t believe that I could understand the Chinese and the Chinese could understand me. I always said it was because I grew up expressing myself to Chinese, we had a Chinese couple for a long time in Hillsborough, and there were Chinese students that I went to high school with. I could tell by their expressions, I didn’t have to know what they were saying, we could mime each other.

Well, the Chinese made such a fuss about me because I had red hair and freckles. Supposedly, in Chinese lore, the number one concubine of the Emperor Shin had red hair and freckles. That illustration was given to me by the curator of the Shanghai museum. He followed me all around. He thought I was Jade Bracelet, reincarnated! Jade Bracelet is what they called her, she must have come from Mongolia and she stood out in the harem, because she had red hair and freckles. I can remember being on the Great Wall and having all of these kids just running after me and

pointing at me at my arms at all the freckles. So, having been exposed to Orientals from an early age I have had no problem in either China or Japan in making myself understood or understanding what people are trying to say to me.

KH = Kayleigh Henson, Historian

EM = Ms. Ellen Marcus, Subject of the Oral History

KLO = Keith Oshins, son of Ms. Marcus aka "Diane"

KLO This is something I've never seen. In fact I've never seen anything with the word Republican on it in your house.

EM You do know I went to the Republican Convention in '48? I worked for **Robert Taft**²³ who was a Republican. See that's all part of the story, which you'll hear in a moment. This is from **Sam Rayburn**²⁴. (Holds up a wooden gavel signed by Sam Rayburn) One of my maids put it in the dishwasher, but see his signature? So it came in very handy with my three little boys.

KH That explains the dent in Keith's forehead!

EM Well he wasn't as bad as his little brother Steven. (Laughter)

EM Oh, of course! I can remember the day I was born. You're going to find it eerie, most people do, but I have complete recall. I can tell you what people were wearing when I was 2 or 3 years old.

I keep saying that I wish my friends would stop writing books because I don't have any more bookshelves. I put all those books out. You can read whatever as part of your history lesson.

SONS

EM They're not shy, that's one thing I can say about them, they are not taciturn or shy.

Pains in the neck, but they're devoted. One thing I have always said is that they never bored me. Wouldn't it be terrible to have a child that bored you?

EM Kayleigh, that's what happened to Stanford during the Earthquake. You were talking about Jack London's pictures. Stanford suffered tremendously. They're still talking about it as if it happened yesterday.

KH I've been transcribing our first session and it's so fascinating, and it's so interesting. It was nice to get a general overview and now I have some more specific questions if you don't mind.

EM That's exactly what I asked you to do. But let me first of all just sit here and point because I really am wobbly, and then you can wander around. In back of you is Jack Kennedy and the **Democratic Digest** which were the magazines that were put out over the years by the Democratic National Committee from the time of Truman, I guess.

²³ Robert Taft

²⁴ Sam Rayburn

They aren't doing it anymore and its sad because it was one of the best ways to communicate with all of the Democrats across the country and to raise money.

KH How do you explain Condi Rice and Khiron Skinner?

EM Well, Condi is a dear friend of mine and I will not be critical of anyone who is a close friend of mine. I've got my personal explanations. I met Condi when she came to Washington and she was staying at the Stanford Center in Washington. She and I played tennis together at the White House when Daddy Bush was President. Now he was a friend of mine, Daddy Bush and Barbara, who I've also played tennis with. Tennis is part of my political life. So there are exceptions that I will make as far as Republicans are concerned because of having been brought up in a community like Hillsborough. Having gone to Stanford I realized that there are some people who were brought up in such a Republican cocoon that they didn't have the nerve, the guts to change. It was worse than changing religions to change your politics. People question you about that much more than anything else. Much more than divorce, or why do you beat your children, how did you change?

Profumo

KH You knew Profumo then?

EM Well, Lady Astor's home in England was where he met Christine Keeler. That was taken over by Stanford, it's a Stanford Campus in England. We have overseas campuses all over. There was one in Vienna while we were living there and I always said that the main thing I contributed to Stanford, it's not the money I raised for them but the fact that in Vienna I had a washing machine and a dryer. All of the students would line up every weekend in front of our residence to use our washing machine and dryer. (laughs)

KH You have their eternal gratitude!

EM I helped get them through their term in Vienna!

KH In what context did you meet Profumo?

EM I shouldn't say that I *knew* him, I was involved with the estate and all of the pictures of him and Christine Keeler were taken there, so I was shown all of these pictures of him from when he was a Cabinet member. I never met him socially. He was someone I knew *about*, I should say, everyone knew about Profumo, but nobody knew about Milosevic, he was a second class citizen.

KEITH'S STORY ABOUT FUJI

KLO Just a little story about Fuji that ties into another story and ties into Kayleigh. You remember the house I lived in, in San Mateo. That was on a street called Wisnom, which was the name of the Sherriff who would not register my mother as a Democrat.

EM

KLO I was riding around the neighborhood and we went to visit Fuji. She was still in her little house, and this is one of my mothers class stories. You remember I had my roommates there? I mentioned to Frank, the tall guy that Fuji had wanted to come and clean the house, take care of me at the house on Wisnom Street.

EM Take care of him, the baby.

KLO Frank, being of a certain class said, "Gee, I don't know if we could afford that." I just got cold, that you would even think to offer her money for that. I spent the rest of the evening sort of explaining concepts of home, honor, obligation, what the heck else. It was just one of those weird things that I never realized before he mentioned it.

EM All Fuji wanted to do was take care of him, as she had from the time I brought him, when he was in arms. Frank, it was an insult. It was an insult to us and it would have been a terrible insult to Fuji. He couldn't understand. Keith said he finally knew what LC meant, Lower Class.

(irrelevant conversation)

INTELLIGENCE – TWO REASONS

KH What do you think was the most important attribute that you had that made you so valuable to the people you worked for?

EM I'm very bright.

KH Intelligence. More than trustworthiness or more than charming, you really think native intelligence?

EM I think it's just intelligence. Too bad my children didn't take after me! (laughs)

KLO Two reasons! Family joke, I once asked my father why he married my mother, and she just looks around (KLO places his hands on his chest) "Two reasons!" I keep that in a little box in my head for when I'm really down.

STANFORD – REPUBLICANS - HILLSBOROUGH

EM I really didn't want to have any children. I really just wanted to have a career.

KH Did you know from the time you were young that you wanted to be in politics?

EM No. My explanation for that, which I've had to make over the years, because I grew up in Hillsborough, is that I never knew a Democrat socially. The only Democrats were the gardeners and the maids. When I went to register **(to vote as a Democrat,)** there were only 3,300 people in Hillsborough when I grew up. The Registrar, **(Wisnom)** was also the Fire Chief and the Clerk of the Court and everything. The Wisnom's were a very large Irish American family, the Chief of Police, the hardware stores, the music store, you know. He had known me since I was yea high so he was filling out the forms. He didn't have to ask me any questions because he knew. I looked over and he's writing Republican on the card. I said, "No, Chief Wisnom, I'm not going to register as a Republican, I'm going to register as a Democrat." He said, "Oh, Ellen, you will have your little joke." I said, "No, I'm serious." He said, "What will your father say?" I said, "My father knows, we've already had many arguments at the dinner table." Then he looked at me and said, "But Ellen, there aren't any Democrats in Hillsborough except the gardeners. So people said to me, "How did you ever get to be a Democrat?" I said, "I went to Stanford and I got educated." I fell under the influence of absolutely

marvelous professors and they molded my thinking. I kept in touch with most of them over the years until they all died. One of them is still alive. I give Stanford credit for that. Now, everybody always thought of Stanford as being a Republican institution, but every time they would have a straw vote, you know, for President, the student body would vote Republican and the faculty would vote Democratic. So, very few professors, have I ever met, are Republican because scholars are free thinkers, they're open to new thoughts and suggestions and most Republicans are so stodgy. You know, they know it all, just like Bush thinks he knows it all and he knows nothing.

I was a senior in high school when Pearl Harbor occurred. I had it in my mind that I was going east to college. I had applied to Vassar, Wellesley and Smith and I'd been accepted to Wellesley and Smith and was waiting to hear from Vassar. I just made this pronouncement to my parents and they never argued with me. They knew me well enough that if I said I was going to do something I would probably do it. My mother's birthday was December 8th, the day after Pearl Harbor and we had a birthday party for her. At the dinner table my father said, "I hate to tell Ellen this, but she's not going to go to Hawaii for her graduation present." I said, "I'm not?" He said, "No, it got bombed yesterday. Also, she's not going to go east to college because the transportation system will be taken over by the federal government." So, several people at the table said, "Where are you going to go?" He said, "If she will agree to go to Stanford, I will give her a Packard convertible." Now, I'm easily bought off, see. So he bought me a Packard convertible if I would agree to go to Stanford. (Laughter) I didn't really have any other choice because of the war. And I wasn't going to go to Cal Berkeley. All of my cousins had gone to Berkeley and they had done very well, PhD's and the like. My father didn't want me to go to Cal because he thought I was so much brighter than my cousins, who were mostly male, so he really put the pressure on me to go to Stanford. He very seldom told me what to do, but there were times when I knew what I had to do what he said. So I went to Stanford. Guess what? I loved it! I was so glad I didn't go east, and I was so glad later that I hadn't gone to a girls' school. And now I'm going to talk professionally. Because I found out in my profession, which is politics, both in the Capitol and in the White House and the Democratic National Committee, that those that I hired as staff or vetted for candidates, if they went to a coeducational school, the women, they were much more capable of fending for themselves. Women who went to girls' schools looked upon men as weekend things, they didn't know how to talk back to them. If you're going to be a candidate for the Congress of the United States, you've got to talk back to a lot of men. So, I am very glad that I did go to a coeducational school and I have over the years recommended that to many young people who were back and forth between, "Do I go to boys schools, coeducational girls' schools?" I say it all depends on what you want to do afterwards. If you want to live in a co-educational world, go to a co-educational school.

One of the things that really annoys me to this day, whenever we have a reunion, and I'm going to have my 60th this Fall. They send out brochures about what everybody's doing now and forms that you're supposed to fill out and 2/3 of my very good friends of the female variety say, "I am a housekeeper." That's their profession. They've never had a profession. My husband used to kid me when we were first married and living in Europe, because every time we went into another country we had to sign a form and it always said, 'profession.' He would say 'housekeeper,' and I would

say, not on your life. I would always write 'political consultant' because that's what I had been before I was married and that's what I intended to be after I was married. I was never going to call myself a housekeeper, anybody can keep a house.

I graduated (from Stanford) in 1946 with both a Master's and a BA at the same time in Political Science and Economics. But I also was on the Stanford Daily, so I consider myself a journalist as well as a politician, which is why I was a Press Secretary. I could write press releases for the newspapers that they would take and print verbatim, because I could write in journalistic style. After I graduated, I spent the summer in Mexico with a Stanford group and then went back with one of my oldest friends from grade school and college to Washington. We went to New York first because we had a whole bunch of friends from Stanford who were in New York and we had a wonderful couple of weeks. You know, these country girls – we lived in the country, you know Hillsborough was considered the country. Betty was from Hillsborough, too, so we were the country girls going to the big city, New York.

So then we flew down to Washington and I remember we arrived on the 15th of September of 1946 and we flew into National Airport, which they now call Reagan Airport, but I call it National Airport. Seeing Washington from the air is just fabulous. The Jefferson Memorial and the Lincoln Memorial and the Capitol and the White House. When you fly in you fly over all of that. What was new to me was seeing Washington from the air. I had been to Washington with my parents, we had driven there, and it is a different thing. It is inspiring to see it from the air, if you are patriotic. I eventually got **(a)** job at the Senate.

I met **(my husband when)** he was a Special Assistant to Truman²⁵ in the White House and it was quite a thing in Washington. I was working at the Senate for Robert Taft and he was working in the White House for Harry Truman, who were at each others throats, and we were dating. Washington was really a very small community at that point. Everybody knew everybody else's personal life, particularly their sex life. It was quite a piece of conversation around town about how the two of us got together. He was just so brilliant that I was very impressed with him. He was 11 years older than I, and a graduate of the University of Chicago and to this day, probably the smartest man I've ever known. He didn't want me to take that job with Taft, but it was offered to me but I knew damn well that it was an opportunity. I was only the second woman in the Senate who would have professional status. The other woman was 60 and I was 21 when I was hired and they could tell the difference between the two of us. Because I was on the professional staff I could eat in the Senator's dining room, I could go on the floor of the Senate whereas the secretaries, staff they call them, can't. So this was a golden opportunity that was offered to me and I wasn't about to turn it down just because of this young man. He said, "To thine own self be true and then thou canst be false to any man." Shakespeare said that first. Then he read all kinds of things to me from Thomas Jefferson, trying to talk me out of it.

Yes. After a year and a half of being proposed to I finally accepted because he was in Paris with Harriman **(working on the Marshall Plan)** He was in Foreign Service and you can go in and out of civil service and diplomatic service. They lend you back and forth, and so you can wear two hats. You can both be a civil servant and a diplomat

²⁵ Harry S. Truman

at the same time. I wanted to be in the Marshall Plan, which was *the* thing at that point. I wanted to go to Paris and my parents wouldn't let me go alone. He called me on my birthday from Paris and I was at a hotel with a group of friends who were celebrating my birthday and a call came through to the hotel. I accepted over the phone. He always said it cost \$50 to make a long distance call at that point and if I had said, "No." *Again*. Can you imagine? So I went back to Hillsborough because I was going to get married at home. I wanted to get married at Memchu, Memorial Chapel. Stanford, it's right over there. (Ms. Marcus points behind me, to the view out of her terrace to the Stanford campus.) But the complications of having the reception in Hillsborough, so we finally ended up getting married in my parents' garden, which was a beautiful garden and the chaplain from Stanford married us. So I had the best of both worlds. Then we spent a couple of weeks touring California because he had never been West of Milwaukee. He'd grown up in Michigan and went to the University of Chicago, went to Washington and to London with [Harriman](#)²⁶ during the War. And he was in [SHAEF](#)²⁷ with [Eisenhower](#)²⁸, so he'd spent a lot of time in Europe and the Rhine, but he had never been west.

It was just before the 1948 election. I was married October 16, 1948. We flew across the country on Election Day, and we had both voted absentee. We got to Washington and I had invitations to the Republican Election Party and he had invitations to the Democratic Election Party, so we went to both! (laughter) Of course the Republican one got to be a wake after a while. Dewey expected to win walking in. If you're a history major, you do know about Thomas E. Dewey don't you? The Democrats had a very small reception in somebody's office. The Republicans had taken over a whole hotel. I remember, we walked in very late at night to the Democratic one and one of Truman's cabinet members came running up to my husband and he said, "Bob, can you believe it? Even so and so," some awful Democrat from Iowa who was the last Democrat in the world anybody expected to win, "*he's* even winning. It's a sweep!" The Republicans had kept control of the Congress for the two years before and the Democrats, when Truman won, got it back. Therefore, Sam Rayburn became Speaker again. Then, we went up to New York and got the *Queen Elizabeth* and went to Europe, all of this being paid for by the United States government. It was very nice of them to give us such a nice honeymoon. Of course, the whole time we were in Paris was an extended honeymoon. Except I did something foolish and I got pregnant.

Number One son was born two years after I was married so I really was delighted when my husband got a call from the man who was then head of the CIA asking if he would come back and set up a new program. The call came to our house, I picked it up, and he said, "Do you think you can talk Bob into coming back to Washington?" I said, "Only if you promise I can have my baby at George Washington

²⁶ Averil Harriman

²⁷ The Supreme Headquarters of the Allied Expeditionary Force was in use from 1943 until the end of WWII. As Commanding General, it was essentially Eisenhower's office.

²⁸ Dwight David Eisenhower, Commanding General of _____ and _____ President of the United States.

University Hospital!” (laughter) “If you make the arrangements at the hospital, we’ll be there!” Geoffrey was in 19 countries before he was born, world traveler. A year later, I had Steven. Each time I expected a girl, and each time I got a boy. So, when I got pregnant a third time, I called it Diane. When Keith was born, the two older boys went around the neighborhood saying, “Our baby sister, which is a boy, got born last night.” While I had all these little boys, I couldn’t work full time. I worked part time for Adlai Stevenson in 1956. Adlai Stevenson was my absolute hero. He was so brilliant. I worked for Adlai Stevenson in 1952 but I couldn’t go to the convention because I had just had Stevie Robert Oshins, my second son. So, we got our first television set so I could watch the convention. I stayed on the phone and lined up delegates for Stevenson from Virginia and from California and from Michigan and all the states that I had some influence, but I didn’t go to the convention. I went to the 1948 convention, the Republican convention. I missed 1952, but after that I went to every convention, in different roles. In 1956, I was on Stevenson’s staff. That picture was taken before the convention when we were planning, lining up the delegates. Then, I put the first big fundraiser on for Stevenson in Virginia after we got back. I mostly was working in local politics because of having all of these little boys. I didn’t take a full time job until **(Keith was)** sent to nursery school. Once I got him off to nursery school I could go back to work. I was relieved. I really felt released from being a housewife. From there on in I worked full time and I never stopped. I’m still working on the phone. I can’t give it up. I thought I’d retired **(in 1990)** but I really didn’t.

I went to the convention in Chicago in 1956, which is the year after Keith was born and the first time I felt unleashed. That’s when **Jack Kennedy²⁹** ran for Vice President and he was defeated at the last moment by **Estes Kefauver³⁰**. I was in his box with **Eunice³¹** and the family when that vote took place. It was one of the heartbreakers because Estes Kefauver was a goddamn fool. Talk about sex, I could tell you stories about Estes Kefauver and sex. Jack was bad enough but he was so cute! Estes Kefauver was so ugly!

The best politician I ever saw in action was Jack, he was born to it. He grew up in Boston politics, his grandfather Honeyfitz was Mayor, and he just knew how the system worked. When LBJ was running against Jack for the nomination in ’60, LBJ kept telling everybody that he had it sewn up because he had all the senators lined up to support him. I can remember saying to some of the Johnson people from the Virginia delegation, “He may have the Senators, but Jack has the Governors and it’s the Governors who control the delegation!” (laughs) LBJ just didn’t think ahead. He didn’t bother with governors, governors were useless to him because he was strictly a Washington Senator type, whereas Jack was bright enough to know that his fellow senators couldn’t deliver their states.

I was elected a delegate for the 1960 convention from Virginia even though I was a native Californian, you know the newspapers had a lot of fun with that in California, as

²⁹ Jack Kennedy

³⁰ Estes Kefauver

³¹ Eunice Kennedy Shriver, sister to Jack and Robert Kennedy

you can imagine. As a native Californian I ended up in California as a Virginian. I had lots of interviews with California papers (**and we were**) on the front page of the Washington Post at the convention. Johnson ended up with the Vice Presidency but when I went to sleep that night everyone thought it was **Stuart Simington**³² and when I woke up in the morning it was Johnson. It was Sam Rayburn that arranged it. Sam Rayburn was sitting with the Texas delegation just across the corridor and he expected me to vote for Johnson. I had to explain to him that I had known Jack Kennedy since I was a child, and I knew the whole family, and I was not going to support Johnson. Plus I couldn't stand Johnson, which I didn't tell him. But I was very close to Lady Bird and worked well with her, but I couldn't stand Johnson. Crude, rude and unattractive and again, he thought he was God's gift to woman. He thought he could lay every woman in sight. Why do I keep talking about sex? Well, that's Washington talk, though.

The 1964 convention (**was in**) Atlantic City after Jack was assassinated, when Bobby gave the famous speech about "the stars still in heaven." I was Press Secretary of the Democratic National Committee at that point so I helped make the arrangements for him to speak to the convention, because (**Bobby and**) LBJ couldn't get along. They didn't get along at all.

The direction was all coming from LBJ and supposedly Hubert Humphrey was our candidate. LBJ kept sending messages up from the ranch countermanding everything that Hubert announced. Hubert wanted to come out against the Vietnam War and LBJ had a fit. In fact, they moved me out of my room at one point, which was right underneath the Humphrey's suite, because I was holding Muriel's hand through all of this. Even though I was no longer an employee of the DNC, I had come back to help her and Jane Muskie, Edmund Muskie's wife. Both of them had worked with me at the Democratic National Committee as volunteers. We were all social friends as well as political friends. We all knew each other's children and went to each other's homes. It wasn't a standoffish situation of who was staff. I came back to my room at one point with a couple of friends and somebody said, "Somebody's been in this room because everything is changed." I said, "It has?" I looked in my closet and all my clothes had been taken. The Secret Service had moved me because LBJ wanted to come up to celebrate his birthday, see, the convention had been planned for his birthday and there wasn't anything that Humphrey could do about it because LBJ was president. He could call the shots.

Hale Boggs was the head of the Platform Committee and he had wrote that it was all set up to be approved and LBJ called Hale back to the ranch and told him that under no circumstances would he approve that platform and the whole platform had to be rewritten. LBJ just handed them a platform that they had to accept! He was a terrible man. LBJ was so officious, you couldn't argue with him about anything. He wanted to rewrite that whole script that I had done for Lady Bird at CBS. He was a real dictator. You think Nixon was bad, ha! (**LBJ**) could control the world. That's one of the reasons he and Bobby hated one another, Bobby wouldn't take it. He resigned as Attorney General and became Senator. (**Humphrey**) thought that once he was President he would have control, but LBJ cut off all the money for Humphrey's campaign and turned all the fundraisers into raising money for his library instead. He

³² Stuart Simington

got screwed! LBJ screwed everybody. We were all bitter. I don't know of anybody other than Lady Bird, who made excuses, and Sam Rayburn. Really the most disliked person in politics other than Nixon that I've ever known. Nobody liked Nixon, nobody liked LBJ. They'd work for them.

Then Jimmy Carter comes along and he was even worse! Because he was dumb. At least LBJ was very bright, **(but)** he was so gross, so unmannerly. **(Jackie)** was born a lady and was ladylike to his advances but she wouldn't have anything to do with him. She wouldn't go back to the white House all during the time he was there. Lady Bird, it really broke her heart because she had the Rose Garden redone as the Jacqueline Kennedy Rose Garden and had Jackie's great friend, Whitney, her nickname, she was a landscape architect. She was the one who helped Jackie find the estate out in Middleburg. Jackie had her do the landscaping of Glen Oaks. She had planned to redo the whole White House gardens. Then Jack was assassinated so Lady Bird took that up and as a peace offering to Jackie, she invited her several times to come back to the White House and see the garden, and for the hanging of the paintings of both Jack and Jackie, and she wouldn't go, wouldn't have anything to do with the Johnson's. She didn't want to have anything to do with politics. She lived in another world completely, a Park Avenue world.

I knew Jackie when she worked as a reporter, photographer for the Times Herald and she had graduated from Vassar and she spent her junior year in Paris, and that was her world. The men that she went with were all the Ivy League types, the Hamptons, New York, Park Avenue. She didn't know anything about Boston or politics and she didn't know anything about the Irish at all. She really didn't have much good to say about the Irish and here she married one and her children were therefore half Irish, but she looked down on the Irish and all of Jack's courtiers. We used to call them the Irish Mafia, the assistants that went into the White House with him, **Kenny Donald and Larry O'Brien**. Their fathers were all friends with his father. They were the ones who elected him, they were campaign officials during his campaign. They were all very close friends of mine and I got a couple of them to move out to Lake Barcroft where we lived. So we had a little Irish Mafia circle at Lake Barcroft and Pierre Salinger lived around the corner.

One of the things that I did at the Democratic National Committee was recruit wives of candidates and wives of office holders to work as volunteers for me so that we would be in the same ballpark. Some of them were very, very helpful to their husbands. Some of them were the worst thing that could have happened to their husbands. They just could not accept the role as 'wife of' in a political sense. Now Jackie was one of those. Jackie hated politics, she just fought tooth and nail not to have to do anything politically. We had to put tremendous pressure on her to show up at political functions or to open the White House for receptions. There were conferences, national conferences of Democratic women every other year and they always were invited to the White House. I have lots of pictures of me wandering around the White House with all of these women. It was only at the last moment that she agreed. It was really Hale and Lindy Boggs that put the pressure on her and put the pressure on Jack. He said, "You've got to do this," and she didn't want to. It was not her cup of tea. You know, she had a lot of other talents but she was apolitical. Muriel (Humphrey) was very political, she had grown up with politics. Lady Bird was the best politician of any woman other than Lindy Boggs. The two of them have always been very close friends and they still

are in contact. I'm in contact with Lindy regularly and she's in contact with Lady Bird so I hear about Lady Bird from Lindy. I wrote a television script called *Coffee with the First Lady*, it was on CBS, and that picture was taken on the set.

(in) 1967 we went to Vienna, and that was in 1966. CBS offered me a job as a commentator and (Bob) was negotiating going to Vienna and I kept telling CBS I'd let them know. It was on Valentine's Day that he finally said I could make the announcement that we were going to Vienna. I remember that we went to the National Theatre to see *Man From La Mancha* with a number of friends of mine from the Press Corps, I guess the performance was given by the Press Club. I was a member of the Press Club as well as a member of the Democratic Club. I always said I held hands with Moses and Mohammed at the same time.

VIENNA

So my husband 'released' me to make the announcement and it was on Valentine's Day, that we were going to Vienna. Of course it was in all the papers the next day. Not that *he* was going to Vienna but that I was leaving the Democratic National Committee to go to Vienna. (laughter) Poor man! Oh, he always got a big kick out of it, he never was jealous. We were such different personalities. He was very much a behind the scenes, quiet, pull the strings, never took stage front and I was always in the front stage. We were brought up. He wrote the plays when he was at the University of Chicago for the Honorary Dramatic Society, which is called The Black Friars. At Stanford it's called Ramshead. I never wrote anything, I performed in all of them. That's the difference between the two of us. (laughter) So that's why I didn't take the job with CBS. My dear friend Nancy Huntsman³³, Nancy Dickerson did. She was a very famous correspondent.

California is glamorous and the thing that was interesting in Europe, we had to stand in so many receiving lines or go through receiving lines. The first question everyone asks is, "And where are you from?" I would never say I was from Washington or I was from Virginia. I would say, "I am from San Francisco," and the receiving line would stop because, as far as the Europeans are concerned, their favorite city is San Francisco and their second favorite city is N'Orleans. They can't stand New York and they can't stand L.A. because they're so un-European, uncosmopolitan. It used to amuse my husband, make him jealous that I would always stop the receiving line when I would say, "San Francisco." (laughter) "There she goes again!" Just to annoy me, when they'd ask him, he would say, "I'm from Escanaba." Of course nobody knew where Escanaba was, Escanaba, Michigan. (laughter)

He used to get annoyed when we were traveling around Europe and I'd say that someplace reminded me of Carmel if it was artsy-craftsy. Portugal reminds me of Carmel. When we first lived in Athens, we lived outside of Athens, next to where the King and Queen lived in Kapithia, which is like a suburb, like the Hillsborough of Greece. King Constantine (was) the last King of Greece. I had met Constantine when he was a kid, when he was a teenager, when we were in Athens originally, in Kapithea. His mother, Queen Frederika arranged for me to have her obstetrician in case I was

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going to have the baby in Greece. Then, years later, when we went back to Greece, he was King Constantine. But when we went back, my husband was in charge of the United Nations conference there and during the conference, the King abdicated and flew out and they had a small revolution. They were the Colonol's they called them, the military force. I was on a plane going back to Vienna to pick up my children from school. They were getting out of school and I was going to bring them to Athens and then we were going to Rhodes for Christmas. The pilot came back to me in the plane to tell me that the King had just abdicated and had flown out of the airport in Athens, right after our plane had left. The airport was now closed down and the 6th Fleet was now moving in, *our* 6th Fleet. So I left my husband there, he had a lot of protection from the United Nations there and the United States Embassy, and when I got to Vienna, I had to get in touch of all of his staff people's families to tell them what had happened and to assure them that they were being protected by the 6th Fleet (Laughs) Then, I had to wait a couple of weeks until things quieted down that I could take the children, the boys, and join him in Athens. There is a wonderful picture of Robert falling asleep while King Constantine is addressing the conference.

So every once in a while there are articles about King Constantine, he's married to a Spanish princess, very beautiful young woman. They lived in Lisbon for a while. All of those former royalty live all over the Mediterranean. None of them are having to work for a living but not being in office anymore they have a different life. Lisbon is fascinating because it is the home of so many former Kings, former royalty. Portugal was neutral during the war. Spain was under Franco. Portugal is one of my favorite countries. And it will remind you of Carmel. The flora and funda of California is duplicated in Portugal and the architecture, all of the tiles and the gardens, the layout of the gardens is so much like Santa Barbara and Carmel. Most of that influence comes from Arabia because of the Moors invading the Iberian Peninsula and what they left behind was not only arithmetic but architecture.

I love Syria, Syria's the most beautiful country in the Middle East. One of the things about Lebanon that was absolutely amazing, you go from Beirut, which is on the beach, and 45 minutes drive up the Sud Lebanese Mountains and there'd be skiing. You could look down and see everybody on the beach. If that doesn't remind you of California? It used to drive my husband crazy, and then my children because everywhere I'd go I'd say this reminds me of Carmel or Santa Barbara or Palm Springs. Everything always reminded me of some other place in California!

Morocco and Tangiers (sic) are the two North African countries that I know the best. Casablanca is nothing now, but Agadir, which is south of Casablanca, is still very much a **non-modern city**.³⁴ And Rabat, and Tangiers, which again, like Lisbon, was an international city where all of the former heads of state retired to when they were kicked out. And its right across from Gibraltar so that you could just visualize how these horsemen got on ships and came across the Straits of Gibraltar and into Spain and straight into Portugal and into southern France. The Basque country is originally from that same civilization. That's why they never get along with the French and they don't get along with the Spanish and they are very independent. My very best friend when we lived in France, had a summer home in Saint Jean de Luz, which is the most

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Southern French city on the Atlantic on Biscayne Bay, 10 miles from the Spanish border. It's on the ocean but on the hills behind Saint Jean de Luz, is the Basque country. We would go up to watch the jai alai game and sit in the restaurants overlooking the dividing line between France and Spain which was a very small river and watch the *contrabanistas*, they called them, the Basques, go back and forth between Spain and France. They were the original mafioso as far as that part of the world goes, absolutely lawless. They had no allegiance to either Spain or to France. They just thumbed their noses at both countries and all their laws, fascinating people, gypsies. They are like gypsies in that they have no allegiance to any formal government. Governments are really, a relatively recent, modern thing. We think that everybody has one, but they don't. Just because we have it doesn't mean that the rest of the world does.

We have been a part of everything that has happened since WWII to our detriment, including the port problem in Dubai. All of our chickens are coming home to roost because we sent the oil people into the Middle East and established those Middle Eastern governments out of paper. Truman had something called the Truman Doctrine, which was that we would move into Greece and into Turkey to take over from the Brits because the Brits had to pull out because of their economic problems. Everything that's happening right now could have been foreseen, all the stupid things, but both the British and the American government both feeling as though they were 'king of the mountain' they could push other countries around and tell them what to do. I was furious with Truman. I was at a Democratic dinner when he announced that he had recognized Israel. I knew that was going to blow up the Middle East. Ever since he did that there has been nothing but war. People have been killed on a daily basis and that was '47. That was also in '47 when he announced the Truman Doctrine, the year before I was married. I had enough world history that I was aware of the trials and tribulations of that part of the world even before I had visited it. I've been to Damascus and Beirut, loved both of those cities and they are in ruins now. There are a lot of things around here from Beirut and Damascus. That lamp, you see the tray? That round thing is from Egypt. (I pick up an item) That's from Italy. I love brass and copper and artisan stuff. The first time I went to Egypt, I was pregnant with Jeffrey.

The Marshall Plan is the only good thing the United States government has done in the last century that we are proud of. To this day, every politician in the United States, Democrat or Republican will always talk about the Marshall Plan as the high point of our endeavor. If you want to understand WWII, which is what we're living in, **(you should read)** Tom Brokaw's *The Greatest Generation*.

We're living in the aftermath of WWII. All our problems in the last 50 years have come out of WWII because we felt we were King of the Mountains. We defeated Hitler. The French didn't have anything to do with it, the Brits didn't have anything to do with it. We did it. The Soviets just lost 22 million people. When you drive into Moscow from the airport, just as you get into the city, there are these crosses, great big steel crosses on the hill that indicate the 22 million Russians who were killed in WWII. Boy, the Russians want to make sure that everybody in the West is reminded of that. They're talking about what they did to defeat Hitler. Just like Napoleon was defeated by Mother Russia. All they had to do was wait for the winter.

(The coming of the Cold War) was obvious. Churchill came and made his speech about the 'Iron Curtain.' There was so much anti-communism, much more when

I was growing up than anti-fascism. Communists were the main enemy because they were going to take over free enterprise. All of the troubles in San Francisco with the docks and the general strike was because they were under the control of **Harry Bridges**³⁵, who was a communist! Did you know Harry Bridges was a Communist? Charming man. I got him to come to a party for Teddy Kennedy, a couple of years ago. Teddy was absolutely fascinated, because he had read about Harry Bridges and didn't know he was still alive. So I got some old friends in San Francisco to talk him into coming out of retirement. In 1980, when Teddy was running for President we had a party for Teddy at the Irish Center over by the Zoo on Sloat Boulevard and Harry Bridges came. He lost to Jimmy Carter, who lost to Ronald Reagan. If you want to know who was an absolute fool, it's Jimmy Carter. (son brings in picture of Kennedy's) The boys were and the girls were not that attractive. Particularly Eunice who was my classmate (at Stanford) and my close friend, is really quite ugly. She is **Maria Shriver's** mother, you know, **Arnold Schwarzenegger's** mother-in-law. She always has been, and she's always had terrible skin, lots of wrinkles. In Washington, when we'd be together, we'd tell people we were classmates and they'd look at her and look at me and always make some crack. I really got to know her here (at Stanford). I had met them all in London when I was there as a child, but the only one I really wired in on was Bobby, who was the same age as I. **(Later,)** when Bobby read that we were going to Vienna, he came over to me the next morning and he said, "What are we going to do? You're our last friend in the Democratic National Committee. You can't go to Vienna!" I said, "If you and Ethel come to Europe, I'll be an advance man for you! I'll make your travel arrangements for you! Then he got killed before I had a chance. But that was the last time I saw Bobby, the day after it was announced that we were going to Vienna.

I was horseback riding out in a *schloss*, a castle that had been turned into an international country club called **Enzensveld**. My husband was in Vienna, this was just in the outskirts, and he called and had the manager of the country club find me and tell me that Bobby had been shot. We went into the manager's house, he had the only television set at the country club and watched while they televised all of the scenes from the Ambassador Hotel. I just couldn't believe it. To have lost Jack and then to have lost Bobby and in betwixt and between, Martin Luther King. That was a terrible year, 1968. And **(then)** the convention.

I flew back for (the 1968 convention) and got stink bombed along with everybody else. I was at the Conrad Hilton, the big hotel, the headquarters hotel and the yippies, anti-war hippies, came storming into the hotel. I was with Paul Newman at that moment and they started throwing stink bombs. For weeks after, all of my clothes and my suitcases, I couldn't get the smell out. When I got back to Vienna, the family was in Vienna but I flew over for the convention. All I did was take all of my suitcases and put them out in the garden to try to get the smell out. I could send my clothes to the cleaners, but my suitcases, there was nothing I could do. I could either throw them away or air them. That was terrible that experience.

³⁵ Harry Bridges

1976 CONVENTION DNC – C-SPAN

If you ever really want to know what's going on in the world without having to listen to a lot of stupid advertisements, you get C-SPAN. C-SPAN is the only station that's worthwhile. When C-SPAN first started we were having a mini convention in Philadelphia and they tried it out at the mini convention. That's when I met **Brian Lamb**³⁶. Some great catastrophe happened and we didn't know about it because we didn't have commercial television, we only had C-SPAN, which was covering the convention. So we all knew what was going on at this mini convention, but we didn't know what was going on in the rest of the world. As soon as I got back to Washington where I was living at the Watergate at that point, after my husband died, I immediately arranged cable so I could get C-SPAN. I'd wake up in the morning and turn it on and find out what was going on, on the Hill, before I went to the Hill. Then I'd run into members of Congress and say, "Oh, I just left you in my bedroom. I woke up with you this morning." I was a contact for C-SPAN. I would get members of Congress to appear and they asked me several times, they wanted to interview me. I kept saying, no. I really wanted to be behind the scenes, pulling the strings, I didn't want to be out front. So, I set up an interview with Lindy when she was going to be Chairman of the convention. I was in her office and apparently one of Brian Lamb's original staff, a beautiful, bright gal, said, "Now look, as long as we're here, we've got the camera and you're here, so sit down!" That's how come you have that videotape, because she had been told that I could give background on the 1960 conventions and Lindy was talking about the 1976 convention, of which she was Chair.³⁷ She was Chairman of the convention. She was the first woman Chairman of any political party's convention and I was her Special Assistant, in charge of everything she didn't want to be in charge of. So I was giving the background and she was talking about the here and now. The reason it has Harriman on there is because the Harriman's set up a studio at the Democratic National Committee and I took the tape that C-SPAN gave me and they did duplicates for my parents. I think that was the one I sent to my parents. I mostly had duplicates of these things to send to them. The reason I have so much stuff is because they were insistent that I would let them know what I was doing, besides not taking care of their grandsons, so I would fill my letters with clippings and pictures.

Lindy Boggs is one of my very closest, *personal* friends. We've always been aware that she and I had so much in common. She always treated me like one of her children, still does. My darling Lindy, she really helped me raise my children. She got **Jeff** a job as a page to **Hale Boggs**³⁸, her husband, when he was 16 and he was there when Johnson signed the Civil Rights Act with Martin Luther King. We have pictures of **Jeffrey** with Martin Luther King and Lyndon Johnson.

I've got so much stuff from Lindy and the darnedest thing, Lindy was so generous with me all of the time. She gave me so many things, my lamps in the bedroom, sheets, pillowcases, bedspreads. When I moved into the Watergate she was determined that I

³⁶

³⁷ Lindy Boggs was the first woman to Chair a convention for any party. In 1976 she

³⁸ Hale Boggs

was going to get feminized. When I lived with my husband we had a very tailored bedroom, everything was very tailored and she knew that I liked things wuffly. So she said, "You need some wuffles." Wuffles, you know, it was a joke. So she went out and got me all of these wuffles for my bedroom at the Watergate. I just can't get around to getting rid of anything that she gave me. She and **Sala Burton**, you know who Sala Burton was? She was a Congresswoman from San Francisco, widow of **Phil Burton**, brother-in-law of **John Burton**, who (**Keith**) put on the phone with me a couple weeks ago in Sacramento. His second wife was my very good friend in Washington when he became a member of Congress, John. I was sort of adopted into the Burton family when I got back from Austria. He was Majority Whip if you know what that means. I think Lindy introduced us. She said that Hale picked him to be a Whip when he first came to Congress. Then when I heard he was from San Francisco, I said, "Well, I was born in San Francisco, were you?" "No." He was born in Iowa. Of course, I always gave him a hard time because he wasn't a real San Franciscan. Then his wife sort of adopted me, like Lindy, and she gave me so much stuff. I have very generous friends that I am at a point where I wish they hadn't been quite so generous because I am so cluttered!

Hubert Humphrey was a dear friend of mine, I had worked with him for years and always stayed in very close personal relations with Muriel and with Herb and I knew all of their kids, who were the antithesis of the Johnson girls. I finally had to learn to take **Linda**³⁹ because she married **Chuck Robb**⁴⁰ and he wanted to become active in Virginia politics and he asked me if I would help him. I was very fond of Chuck so I said, "Only if you tell Linda that she's got to do what I tell her to do." He said, "Will you teach her how to play tennis?" "No, she's too clumsy, she's no tennis player." But I used to play tennis with Chuck all the time. All that he wanted out of me was that I would teach his wife to play tennis. I learned to control Linda but **Lucy**⁴¹, uncontrollable. I always felt so sorry for **Lady Bird**⁴², who was such a lady and her daughters were so much like her husband who was no gentleman. She's still with us you know, she's not well at all. She's in her late 90s now. Of all the married people I know she had the toughest married life. He was just awful, just awful. I think that's one of the reasons I was probably so helpful to her any time she needed it.

You can't be bothered with these LC's, these Lower Classes as you go through life. You asked me, what made it easy for me (**in Washington**.) I knew who was LC, who was Lower Class, and I just never bothered with people who were LC's. Thank you Hillsborough. I admit that I'm a snob, but I think that's necessary in life, otherwise you waste an awful lot of time with people who aren't worth it and are not going to speak your language and who are going to end up trying to knife you because they're jealous. LBJ was an LC. Very much so, and Lady Bird was of my class. We got along very well, "Just fine, thank you." (speaks in a southern drawl) We were both brought up by

³⁹ Lynda Bird Johnson

⁴⁰ Chuck Robb

⁴¹ Lucy Johnson

⁴² Lady Bird Johnson

mammy's and LBJ came from nothing, *rien de tout*. *Vous parles Francais?* It means, 'nothing at all.' They had to move one of his brothers, to the White House and put him in a dark chamber to keep him out of jail or something, Sam Houston Johnson. His mother was very common. Poor Lady Bird, having a mother in law who hardly spoke the King's English.

Bill (Clinton) is so bright that it makes up for a multitude of sins. And she is so bright. Now Hillary and I don't get along at all. She's cold, calculating, and it's so obvious, but she is so bright. I think that by and large 90% of his decisions, I agree with, but he made some terrible mistakes. Foreign policy mistakes as well as **Monika** whatever her name is. When that all came out, she moved into the Watergate, where I lived, Monika. **Alan Cranston** was living there, **John Warner** was living there, and Monika!

John Warner is on television all the time now, on C-SPAN. He drives me crazy, he is such an asshole, so full of himself and all he's done is marry up. He came from nothing too, and he married into the Mellon family. When he divorced her he started courting Lindy. I said to Lindy, she better keep her eyes open, there's always a method to his madness, but then he met **Elizabeth Taylor**. The last time I was with the two of them together was out at Wolf Trap. It's an outdoor symphony park outside of Washington. It's the only national park where they have symphonies and plays. It's very much a part of the Washington scene, especially in the summer. When spring comes, Wolf Trap opens. There was a group of us talking and **(Elizabeth Taylor)** came up and said, "Where is Senator Horse's Ass?" We looked at her. She said, "Oh that goddamn John, where in the hell is he?" She's very common. We all just dropped our teeth. Even if she felt he was a horse's ass she shouldn't have said so in public, loudly, clearly. When they got divorced he moved into the Watergate and she used to come see him from time to time. They were very much better friends after they were divorced than they were when they were married. She hated being the wife of a Senator. It imposed restrictions on her that she wasn't used to. Talk about a free spirit.

STANFORD - JOURNALISM

This **(picture in the Stanford Daily)** is when I was at Stanford and the United Nations Conference was in San Francisco, I covered it for the Daily, which is the Stanford newspaper. That's Dick Stennius, he was Secretary of State. This is **Tom Connolly**⁴³, he was Chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee. This is my favorite, Anthony Eden who was the Foreign Minister of Great Britain and the handsomest man other than Averil Harriman that I'd ever met at that point. Well, he came up to me in the hall. I wasn't expecting to interview him, I was interviewing the Americans. He started to talk to me and I was a young, little girl at that point so he I guess he was a dirty old man interested in little girls. He was very handsome, and then when he became Prime Minister he was a flop. He was second in command to Winston Churchill all during the War. He was a very good second banana but he was a very poor Prime Minister. He's the one who was really responsible for the invasion of Egypt and the Suez Canal, which

⁴³ Tom Connolly, Democratic Senator from Texas from 1929 until 1953. Served as Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and was involved in the UN Charter.

was a terrible mistake that the Brits made after the War. That was Eden's baby. He went from being just grand and glorious and respected and admired to being looked down upon when he became Prime Minister.

I was offered a job at the New York Times while I was still at Stanford and I was a stringer for the Chronicle. I was always involved in journalism, I edited the newspaper at my grammar school and the yearbook in high school. It was just like riding horses and playing tennis, it was just part of my life.

The bible of Washington is the Post, not the New York Times, which is the only paper I can get delivered here. **(I met Katherine Graham)** when I first came to Washington. She was working at the Washington Post. I dated some of the reporters for the Washington Post. She had gotten married at that point, but she was writing a column reviewing magazine articles. She wanted to be a part of her husband's profession. I knew her mother, **Agnes Meyers**, long before I knew her, brilliant woman, absolutely brilliant. She married **Eugene Meyers** who bought the Washington Post and was very, very wealthy. He was a Californian. Kay had spent a lot of time here as a child so we had that in common. Her main assistant at the Post, the person she was closest to at the Post other than **her husband** was **Al Friendly**, whose son is Jeffrey Oshins best friend. We're all related you know, it's a very small world, very, very small. Al Friendly was the Managing Editor of the Post and then **Ben Bradlee** took over and Ben married my friend **Sally Quinn**, who used to work for me and they lived at the Watergate before they got married. Sally Quinn has written a number of wonderful books about entertaining in Washington, good background for just the kind of things I'm telling you. What a small world it is and everybody knows everybody and their children.

The Washington Post always referred to me as 'Reliable Source.' (laughs) I would get my articles printed in the Washington Post, I could just send in my press releases and they'd print them. That's what I mean about holding hands with Moses and Mohammed. I got along with politicians and with the press.

I met Helen **(Thomas)** during the Kennedy campaign. So all of the press knew who I was, particularly the women's press. She had just come to Washington from Detroit to cover Jack, after he was elected. She was supposed to cover Jackie, that's right and Jackie didn't want to be covered. The press had a terrible time with Jackie, she was really nasty to them. They had a job to do and she would just make it so difficult for them. The woman who was assigned by AP, **Frances Lewine**⁴⁴ to cover Jackie, the two of them became very good friends, best friends. They both were short. I should speak, huh? We're all about the same height. Lady Bird always called them Gemini because the two of them were always together and to this day they're always together. Anyway, I got to know Helen at that point and then Pierre Salinger was our neighbor and old friend and Press Secretary. They were very good friends. He had great respect for her I think, every Press Secretary has had great respect for her. **(Now)** they're afraid of her! They come and go but she stays on forever. She's always introduced as having covered every president since Kennedy, right? We were at lots of functions together, you know Washington is very social, was very social. I understand that it isn't because the Bush's are so unsocial. You don't have the pages in the Post anymore to cover all the parties because there aren't any parties anymore. Anyway the

⁴⁴ Frances Lewine <http://www.press.org/wpforal/int2.htm> , no Wikipedia listing

thing I was going to tell you about Helen. During the Nixon⁴⁵ presidency, she came out to San Clemente to cover him when he was at his estate. You know, they called it the Western White House and I was living in Santa Barbara at the time. So she said, why don't you come down and stay with us, meaning Fran Lewine and Doug, her husband. "Let's have a reunion, we haven't seen you for so long and you're just up the coast." So, down I go, and my first day on the beach, I remember, Fran introduced me to Tom Brokaw⁴⁶ and I thought he was gorgeous. This was before he ever came to Washington. We sat on the beach and we'd chat. Then, we were going to go out for dinner that night and Helen got a tip, she always had spies, that the President and Bebe Rebozo,⁴⁷ you know who Bebe Rebozo was, were going to have dinner in San Juan Batista at their favorite restaurant. So she said, "Why don't you come with us? We'll get all dressed up and we'll go out to dinner and pretend as if, you know?" So I went back to her room to change clothes. Oh, she and I went shopping together I remember, she used to love to go shopping with me. She's a clotheshorse. She had more clothes than just about anybody I knew. She used to have a good figure but she doesn't anymore, she's really gotten bloated. Anyway, I was in her room getting dressed and the telephone rings, right? And I thought it was she calling me to hurry up, now I'm ready to go, you know? She was in the Press Room. And so I picked up the phone and this very southern voice says, "Ellen," and I said, "Yes, what is it?" "It's Martha." I said, "Martha?" She said, "Martha Mitchell⁴⁸, Ellen, what's the matter with you?" John Mitchell's wife, Martha Mitchell, you know, who spilled the beans on Nixon? She kept me on the phone for about 15 minutes. She wouldn't stop talking long enough to tell her it wasn't Helen. So I took notes during the whole time. As soon as she stopped for a breath, I said, "I gotta go now, bye!" I took my notes to the Press Room and gave them to all the press. I was a reliable source for the press, see, I was a good source. So then we drove down to San Clemente. We were in Laguna to San Juan Batista. I remember we were in this photographer's car, because the main thing is she wanted to bring this photographer with us. It was a Volkswagon Bug and I was in the back seat all scrunched up in my long dress. She had told me to dress up. Anyway, we get to the restaurant; of course we didn't have reservations. So she said, "I'm Helen Thomas of the White House Press." So, the manager just took it for granted that she probably was with Nixon's party, so he sat us on the main floor and there were about 2 or 3 steps and a little balcony where the Nixon's were to sit. So we were right below when they came in and if you don't think Pat and Dick dropped their teeth. You could hear them clatter all over the floor! So Helen kept turning to me, "You can't laugh now." I said, "I won't laugh if you won't laugh," so we were like this (turns her back) talking to one another. We were laughing because they were so uncomfortable. Oh, and Tricia was with them, Pat and Tricia and Bebe Rebozo, who picked up the check. He paid for everything for Nixon, he supported him. They were a pair, they had an affair, you know. I'll tell you all

⁴⁵ Richard M. Nixon

⁴⁶ Tom Brokaw

⁴⁷ Bebe Rebozo

⁴⁸ Martha Mitchell

the sex, see. Nixon and Pat hadn't slept together in *years*. You're dropping your teeth, they're going to clutter to the floor! So, when we got back to Washington, we told that story all over town. Oh, and a couple of months ago, Jeff was in Washington in a restaurant and Helen came in, and he went over to her. She knew all three of them and she was always trying to get my middle son Steven interested in one of her neices. She was a matchmaker from way back. So, he went up to her and said that he had his cell phone and he was going to call me and would she like to say hello, and so she got on the phone and we had a nice long chat. Boy she doesn't like George W. Bush. That press conference earlier this year, it was the first time he's called her this year and she's the senior member. You see where she sits, right in front of him. She's the one that's supposed to say, "Thank you, Mr. President," to stop the press conference. You saw when he said to her, "You did a great job at the Gridiron?" That was when he was trying to get her off of the question. He said, "Helen, you did a great job at the Gridiron." Did you hear that? I immediately thought of the first Gridiron I ever went to. Helen did a take off on Jackie Kennedy. She sang a song *C'est moi, Jacquie!* and she was very thin at the time, had a gorgeous figure and she had a pillbox hat on and her hair done up like Jackie's. Honestly, it was the best impersonation of Jackie I've ever seen. But, she's very clever. She writes all of the words to music at the Gridiron. She was the first woman that was taken into the Gridiron.

I went to her wedding. She was married the same day as I was, October 16th. Her engagement was announced by [Pat Nixon](#),⁴⁹ at the White House. She worked for UPI, United Press International and she was marrying [Doug Caldwell](#)⁵⁰ who was the head of Associated Press, they'd been going together for a long time but they couldn't get married until he retired because they were competitors.

SOCIETY PAGES – BESS ABLE

I came across some old society pages as they called them, before there were the women's pages, that will give you an idea of what Washington was like in the 60s. Somebody sent this to me because I'm mentioned here in this articles, but as you can see, it's very interesting about the Eisenhower's and these are both two good friends of mine who worked for me at the inaugural. This is [Bess Able](#)⁵¹ who was Lady Bird's social secretary and still my good friend, I hear from her every Christmas. And that's Norman Mineta.

One of Keith's friends wanted me to lobby [Barbara Boxer](#). Well, I am not about to lobby Barbara because, when she decided she wanted to run for the Senate, she just expected me to be one of her supporters. She was going to use my name. I had a terrible go-round with her because I had already told [Bob Matsui](#), who was a Japanese a Congressman from Sacramento, that I would support him for the Senate. She was so presumptuous, Barbara. You know she is presumptuous, that's her talent, that I really just had to walk away from her. This was at a formal dinner. She just couldn't

⁴⁹ Pat Nixon

⁵⁰ Doug Caldwell

⁵¹

understand why I would support a man and not a woman. As much as I support women in general, I'm not going to support what I consider a less talented woman against a talented man, particularly one who I had worked with for years and knew very well.

You asked me the other day, what was the thing I thought was most useful in politics. I think I said intelligence, didn't I? I have dealt with so many politicians over the years who are good politicians in a hail Mary moment, but are not very bright. I could never support them. I could like them as friends, but I could never trust anyone who didn't have more than two brain cells to rub together. Being an intellectual snob, and my husband was an intellectual snob, that was one of the reasons we got along so well! He was much brighter than I, had an IQ that went through the roof, I learned so much from him, but he wasn't as outspoken as I was. I got away with it, because I was cute! You'll never believe it but I had a very good figure.

My grandmother was so adamant when people would call me Helen because I was named after her mother and her eldest daughter and she kept telling me that I was the fifth Ellen Louise in the line. Whenever anybody tries to be cutesy and call me Ellie, I just hit the roof. I hate it.

EARLY FAMILY

There were 4 children, 2 boys and 2 girls. My mother was the youngest and everyone was running around trying to find Ellen. I called her Lala, which is what Leland calls me, now. Her name was Ellen Louise and I'm the fifth Ellen Louise in a line and the eighth Ellen. They finally found her, she had gone over to some friends' home that hadn't been hurt by the earthquake or the fire and she was fine! She liked staying with her friends better than camping out in Golden Gate Park.

Keith has been after me for years to go to the anniversary celebrations of the 1906 Earthquake because both of my parents lived through that and they told him stories about it from the time he was a little child. I have never felt like going because I heard all the stories from the time I was born, ad infinitum from all members of my family on both sides. Where they were relocated to and what they lost – they lost everything. So this year I have promised him, just to shut him up, that I will go in April. My grandmother, who was from N'orleans originally, she never called it 'The Earthquake,' she called it "The Fire" (pronounces it with a southern accent) because that's what did all the damage. That's why she lost all of her jewelry, in 'The Fire,' which would have gone to me, except for 'The Fire.' They saved a piano stool, a kitchen chair and a couple of forks. They were told to get out and they just grabbed. They got relocated to Golden Gate Park and my father's family got relocated to the Presidio, so they never met until years later.

I am so bored with the earthquake! Every morning my father would come down and say do you know what today is? It is the something anniversary of the earthquake and then I would have to listen to these stories ad infinitum, ad nauseum. They were so

annoyed at the movie, you know, Jeanette MacDonald, *San Francisco*. My grandmother used to always say, "That is **not** the San Francisco song." (Sings, 'San Francisco, open your Golden Gate...') That is not the real song. She had a song she sang for San Francisco. Also, she used to get annoyed at *California Here I Come* because the official song of California is (sings) "I love you, California, you're the greatest state of all," you know that? "I love you in the summer, winter, spring and in the fall." See I learned that from my grandmother. (laughs) They were just so annoyed with the movies taking over San Francisco and California and Al Jolsen who never had anything to do with California, he introduced that *California Here I Come*. Then of course, Tony Bennett, he isn't a San Franciscan. He's a New Yorker. (Laughs)

All those things over there on the chair are there because one of the officers from the Stanford Museum is coming to go over those and I am going to donate them because they have what they call a treasure mart where they sell things to raise money for the museum. I worked on this for years with them. You get a good tax deduction, which I need more than the money at this point. I took some of those things to the woman who did the weaving (**at**) Allied Arts. They want me to come and give a lecture of what Allied Arts was like in the 30s. I'm the only person who's still alive who remembers Allied Arts in the 30s. When I was about so big I used to play there when it was a big ranch. The property is a tenth of what it was originally.

Mrs. Roth was a good friend of my mothers. **Mrs. Merner** was also a good friend of my mothers. Mrs. Merner owned Allied Arts and Mrs. Roth owned Filoli. You know, your mother's friends sort of take you in, particularly if you're cute and darling and adorable. In both instances I remember those properties from when I was just very small and was allowed to run around and get to know all the help, the gardeners. The chief cook at Filoli was always trying to feed me and I didn't need to be stuffed. (laughs) The twins, the two oldest children were twin girls and the youngest was **Bill Roth**, who was more my age and we used to run into each other. He decided that he wanted to run for Governor a few years ago and he put me in a terrible bind because I was not about to support him, he just came out of the blue and told me he wanted to run for Governor. He was on the Board of the University of California, very bright, very smart, but a playboy. I haven't seen Bill since I said no! One of Keith's friends wanted me to lobby **Barbara Boxer**. Well, I am not about to lobby Barbara because, when she decided she wanted to run for the Senate, she just expected me to be one of her supporters. She was going to use my name. I had a terrible go-round with her because I had already told **Bob Matsui**, who was a Japanese a Congressman from Sacramento, that I would support him for the Senate. She was so presumptuous, Barbara. You know she is presumptuous, that's her talent, that I really just had to walk away from her. This was at a formal dinner. She just couldn't understand why I would support a man and not a woman. As much as I support women in general, I'm not going to support what I consider a less talented woman against a talented man, particularly one who I had worked with for years and knew very well.

JAPANESE REPARATIONS

Now, our housekeeper, Fuji, who knew (**Keith**) we called him 'the baby,' came to us right out of relocation camp. I think she was still in her teens. I was still at Stanford. She spoke very, very broken English, but she and I could understand one another. My

favorite story about Fuji, was whenever I would come home to see my parents, she would be so excited about my coming home, she would be waiting right inside the front door. I would come in the front door and then there were a couple of steps leading into the foyer and she would get to me as soon as I got on top of those couple of steps and start undressing me. She didn't think that my maid took proper care of my attire. She was so specific about how I should dress and how my clothes should be washed and ironed. I used to stand at the bottom of the steps leading up to the floor of my bedroom in hysterics. My mother and I would just be laughing at Fuji and she was just a little thing. That was the way she showed her love and affection. It was in my mind for years to say "I'm sorry," to the Japanese, but that's another story about how I and my classmates in high school handled the Japanese being taken from us.

One of the things that I swore I was going to do was to make amends to Fuji, and the only way I could do it was to get the two Japanese American members of the California delegation together. **(Bob Matsui)** and **Norman Mineta** and I got put in the legislation the reparations for the Japanese. They didn't always get along, but they were both good friends of mine and we worked for a couple of years to get that legislation through. We got \$25,000. You have no idea how much animosity existed in the congress towards the Japanese, except if you listen to the news about the animosity towards the Arabs at this point, and towards the Mexicans because of immigration. You will know that this is a country of bigots. It is! You've just got to work with them because there are so many of them, you can't just ignore them. You have to learn to get along with them. Anyway, we finally got this legislation passed **(and)** Norman Mineta, who is now the Secretary of Transportation, who they named the airport after, presented her with the check at my request. I remember saying to Fuji's eldest daughter who was a college graduate, very, very elegant, well educated **(that I was)** almost embarrassed to have the Congressman, whom she had known, present her with such a measly amount. \$25,000 after all of those years, this is the late 1980s from 1941, over 40 years. Her daughter said "It isn't the amount of money, my mother has all the money she needs." **(Fuji)** was retired and well taken care of. She said, "It's just the idea that you cared that much." Of course, **(Fuji)** was thrilled. Me, she saw all the time, but Norman Mineta! He was like a shogun.

EM The other part of that story, and I do have a tendency that one story makes me think of another, and sometime you're going to have to stop me. The gardener that I grew up with was also Japanese. I knew lots of Japanese, because, not only were they domestic help, but in high school we had college preparatory, general and vocational, three different majors. There were so many Japanese students in my college preparatory course that I knew both boys and girls my age. The gardener, we called Joe, I guess he had one of those names. Joe never really learned English, he was worse than Fuji, but he was a wonderful gardener. When the boys would come he would grab them, lift them up and run around the garden with them on his shoulders. We had a tree down at the end of the lawn that had a V and I can always remember him taking them and putting them on that V as if they were riding horses. Playing with them and chattering away in Japanese, and of course they didn't understand what he was saying. Of course, we didn't have any Japanese in Virginia, we had (in a southern drawl) *nigga's*, we had *coloured's*, but we didn't have Japanese then, no Asians to speak of. Now we have many. Joe is the one who really taught me about gardening,

taught me to love gardening. Of course being at Filoli and Allied Arts, I saw all of these people who were expert gardeners.

CHILDHOOD AH - SAM

Ah Sam had an ice truck and he used to deliver the ice and then he bought some land in Half Moon Bay and he started growing vegetables, so my mother used to buy all of her vegetables from Ah Sam. So his son became head of the Bank of America and daughters are all very well educated and successful. He didn't speak any English, Ah Sam, but he used to let me climb into his truck and he'd give me a piece of ice to suck and I would talk to his kids. He had all of his kids in the truck.

The funny thing about Joe was that my mother just loved the way he did the garden, but she could never get him to change anything when she wanted to put something else in. She used to love tubers begonias, and she'd go down to Aptos where they invented tubers begonias, I swear. They had hanging baskets of tubers begonias and she would bring back all of these baskets of tubers begonias and then she'd have a terrible time explaining to Joe where she wanted them to be planted. So whenever I would appear on the scene she would say, "You've got to talk to Joe." I could talk to him, but I couldn't understand him! (Laughs) For some reason or another I was able to get the message over to Joe in a way that my mother couldn't. I guess it was because he still thought of me as a child even though I was a mother of three sons. In his eyes, I was still a little girl and so he always treated me that way. Every time he'd see me, he'd just smile. My mother used to laugh. The only time Joe used to really smile was when my sister or I were there or my children. He just felt as if he was part of the family and he would just start giggling and smiling. I have a love of Orientals that goes back as long as I can remember which was very helpful when I was in China in the 70s. I went over soon after Nixon opened up China with a delegation from the National Trust for Historic Preservation. The Chinese Government invited the National Trust to send a delegation to advise them on preservation of ancient buildings. They asked me to go along because I knew **the American Ambassador to China, (Leonard _____** veep of AFL-CIO when George Meeney was President – appointed as ambassador by Carter) who was a labor leader and because my husband had been in the Foreign Service I knew a lot of the regular Foreign Service people, so that I would have an entrée that the professional preservationists didn't have. There were 12 of us and most of them were from the south, which is where the preservation movement started. In fact, it started in N'Orleans, in the *Vieux Carre*, the French Quarter, that was the first preservation movement in this country. They couldn't believe that I could understand the Chinese and the Chinese could understand me. I always said it was because I grew up expressing myself to Chinese, we had a Chinese couple for a long time in Hillsborough, and there were Chinese students that I went to high school with. I could tell by their expressions, I didn't have to know what they were saying, we could mime each other. Well, the Chinese made such a fuss about me because I had red hair and freckles. Supposedly, in Chinese lore, the number one concubine of the Emperor Shin had red hair and freckles.

That illustration was given to me by the curator of the Shanghai museum. He followed me all around. He thought I was **Jade Bracelet**, reincarnated. Jade Bracelet is what they called her because, she must have come from Mongolia and she stood out in the harem, because she had red hair and freckles. I can remember being on the Great Wall and having all of these kids just running after me and pointing at me at my arms at all the freckles. So, having been exposed to Orientals from an early age I have had no problem in either China or Japan in making myself understood or understanding what people are trying to say to me.

The help were the immigrants but my classmates were all American born and they were some of the best students so we were all in these advanced courses together. It was our senior year, Pearl Harbor, the day after Pearl Harbor, Pearl Harbor was Sunday and Monday Roosevelt gave a speech about, "the day that shall live in infamy." You do remember Roosevelt? We all went into the gymnasium which was bigger than the auditorium and listened to him give that speech. The boys particularly, were in a terrible state of shock because they all knew that they were going to be drafted. They were just ready to graduate from high school, which was when they took them. As I recall, the boys were more emotional than the girls. I can remember just looking around at all of my Japanese friends and thinking they're my friends, not my enemies. **The next day when I was driven to school, we passed busses at street corners picking up these students, my friends, my classmates and their suitcases to take them to relocation camps. They were out of there, out of school on Tuesday. Pearl Harbor was Sunday, the speech was Monday and the kids were gone on Tuesday.**

(Executive Order passed, 9066 was passed) in 1941. It was the worst thing Roosevelt ever did and Earl Warren backed him up. Both of them sort of apologized that that is the biggest mistake they ever made. **Then, a group of us from high school used to go up to Tanforan. It was the racetrack. They took over Tanforan as the temporary relocation camp for all of the Japanese on the peninsula. We would go up and could only talk to our friends through the barbed wire fence. It was just heartbreaking.** Before we graduated, which was in June, they had been shipped all over, to Idaho, to Nebraska, inland. Just talking about that high school class, years did pass and my husband and I were in the Middle East.

I told you about the trip that we took when I was pregnant with Jeffrey, number one son, Primus we called him. I was pregnant with Primus and because my husband had a diplomatic passport, we could visit Syria, Lebanon and Israel. Nobody else on board ship could. I can remember standing at the concentration camps that Israel had for the Arabs and feeling exactly the same way I did about the Japanese. I have always been so anti Israel because of their policy toward the Palestinians. There were all of these little kids, crying, holding out their hands, asking if they could have any food. I started crying and my husband couldn't understand what upset me so, and I said it's the same thing as the Japanese. We made such a terrible mistake and now we are approving of Israel making an even worse mistake. And that's what we're living with today, the way we have treated the Arabs, and the way we have supported this ridiculous thing of Israel makes absolutely no sense, politically, economically, or anything else. Have you ever been there? It's nothing. It is a desert. We poured all these people in there and we financed it all. No wonder the Arabs love us. They took all the land away that had been in these Palestinian families for generations just like we

KLO Hey, look at **Nana and Jeep**. Mother, I've never seen this picture. Where was this taken?

EM In front of City Hall where they got their license. Here's Nana with Primus.

KH Who are these people?

EM Oh I gave an open house. This was in our living room in Hillsborough.

KH Is this your class?

EM No, just an open house.

45:00

KH Is that a picture of you on the wall behind?

EM No, that's my sister.

KH Elaine?

EM No, Audrey, her name is Audrey Elaine. She was named after my Uncle Aubrey. My mother used to be so embarrassed when people would say, "You have two daughters and one of them is named Ellen and one is named Elaine?" as if she had no imagination. We always called her Audey.

KLO Who's this?

EM Stevie puss! With Christine, she was the governess that we brought out to California to take care of him when he was baby. He was 1 1/2 and Jeffrey was 2 1/1 or something.

KLO You were always hauling the servants along, when we moved to Vienna you wanted to bring that Jamaican lady we were employing.

EM She wanted to come.

KLO Who could blame her, it was a good gig.

EM I told her there weren't any *schwartz* in Vienna.

KLO (In a whisper that EM can't hear) I don't believe my mother just used Yiddish.

EM I didn't tell her that, I took her to get a passport, and the people at the passport office told her that they didn't think it was a good idea for her to go to Vienna with us because she would find no friends. And Vienna is white, like white bread. If you ever see a dark face, it's got a sari. This is the stuff I haven't gotten around to filing yet. This is a nice letter from Hubert Humphrey when your father died.

KLO (discussion of her high school reunion) A few years ago I forced her to go to her high school reunion and she was just like anybody ten years out of school. That high school neurosis just affects everyone, but I forced her to go. Let me tell you, it was an experience. Here's this class who went right out of high school, right into WWII. They had a casualty rate that none of us could even think about. The Japanese were there, still there, and they were getting along and they were happy to be there, getting nostalgic. My mother gave me a remedial swing dance lesson so I could dance with all the

KH This birth announcement is a press release?! (laughter) That sums it up.

KLO What can I say, that sums it all up. It's a diplomatic press release, in proper style.

KH (quoting from birth announcement)

5 minute gap and some unrelated conversation

00:55:00

EM Would you believe that I used to be able to get this around my waist? (shows me a woman's belt stamped Kennedy for President)

KH What a great campaign item.

EM That was Eunice's idea, [Eunice Shriver](#)⁵².

KH I'm going through all of your Christmas cards.

EM They were all there together in a file. You see, what I finally got to was my two filing cabinets that are way in the back of the storage area. My sons and grandson piled so much stuff in the front of the filing cabinets that I couldn't get to them.

KH I hope you didn't go to too much trouble, you've done so much.

EM Well, I had to do it at some point. You've given me the excuse that I needed to get organized. Certain things that only I can do, but I was trying to sort things out so that certain things are together. Kennedy is together, Lindy is together, Vienna is over there. I just brought that file out.

I think I told you that my grandmother was so adamant when people would call me Helen because I was named after her mother and her eldest daughter and she kept telling me that I was the fifth Ellen Louise in the line. Whenever anybody tries to be cutesy and call me Ellie, I just hit the roof. I hate it.

EM I think we ought to be chronological. That's why I brought out the picture of the goat. I spent a lot of time at my grandmother's house, which again, is rather historic because it was one of the first houses that was built after the fire. I've shown it to Keith, it's still there, 1045 Cole Street.

KH I used to live not far from there. I lived at Clayton and Waller, so just down the hill a few blocks from there.

EM Parnassus is right there on top and Granger was one of the cross streets as you go up the hill and Haight Street was at the bottom of the hill. That was the shopping center on Haight Street. The first movie I ever went to, my grandmother took me. She did all kinds of things with me that my parents would never do, so that's why I spoil Leland. She took me to a movie at the Haight Street Theater and I stood up during the whole movie, according to her. IT was *Skippy* with Jackie Cooper. I think my parents were away. They did a lot of traveling because my father had a branch of his office in L.A. and every year he went to New York and sometimes my mother would go with him, so I got dumped with my grandmother or with Lala, my aunt. So, it was as if I had three mothers. Anyway, what I was going to tell you about Keith, to annoy him. One summer night in Virginia, it was very, very warm and it was the maid's night off and we decided to go to a movie so we had to take him with us. The older boys had been to movies but he was about two years old. We went to see *Gigi* and he was sitting on my lap during most of the picture. Then, when they got to a love scene, he stood up and put his hands on the seat in front and said, "How do you turn the channel?" in a loud, clear voice. Everyone in the theater turned around and looked at him and I was so

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embarrassed and his brothers were so embarrassed, but he had never seen a movie before, he thought it was television! “How do you change the channel?” (laughter) He wasn’t interested in the love scenes.

KH The horses and the park and the carriages were fine but the romantic stuff.

EM The dancing, but not the gooey stuff. That was his first movie. My first movie was Skippy with Jackie Cooper (**at,**) I don’t know, two or three. I have very clear recollections of things that happened when I was two, two and a half. We spent the summer I guess when I was three, in Burlingame, in the country. That’s where you went for the summer, to the country. My mother decided that she wanted to live in the country, she didn’t want to live in the city and that meant my father had to commute twenty miles every day, you know, going and coming. But he was willing to do that, he thought that it made sense. He wanted to build a house. They’d been renting because they weren’t sure whether they were going to permanently settle in L.A. or in San Francisco. We bought a house in Burlingame right near Our Lady of Angels. North Burlingame is the Hillsborough part of Burlingame, it connects to the hills. Anyway, I went to Our Lady of Angels, which was just a half a block away off of Adeline. I met the Shaw girls, (Joan and Clair) whose father was **Buck Shaw**⁵³, who was a very famous football coach who later started the 49ers. He was the coach for the 49ers and everything at Santa Clara where he was the coach is named Buck Shaw. Poor Leland hears about Buck Shaw more than he ever wanted to know. The two Shaw girls were very tall and their father was absolutely gorgeous, one of the handsomest met I’ve ever seen, and they were very good looking. They used to take me along, whenever they were going off they used to ask if I could come along. I was so much shorter than they, that they always looked as if I was a little puppy dog that was coming along after them. Anyway, they were my very close friends because we went to second grade or something. Then, my mother finally decided I was old enough to go to public school, so I went to Hoover Grammar School. Of course, when the election came along, 32, Roosevelt ran the first time, everybody I knew was for Hoover. We were proud of our grammar school. I can remember the morning after the election, I think it was the second grade, the teacher writing on the blackboard, ‘Franklin Delano Roosevelt was elected president last night,’ and the whole class went, “Ugggghhhh.” (laughs) Of course my parents were Republicans so it was a shock to me, I just assumed that Hoover would be reelected. When he came back to California, after the inaugural, there was a parade down El Camino. My father took me down under the eucalyptus trees and he put me on his shoulders so I could see Hoover. I thought I’d never see another president, you know, so he wanted me to be sure I got to see what a president looked like. Years later he introduced me to Hoover, oh, my grandmother knew him, at Yosemite, and I thought he was the most pompous man I’d ever met. He walked into the dinner at the Ahwahnee in *front* of his wife. She walked behind him, you know, like Elizabeth and Phillip. He came over to the table where we were sitting, to say hello to my grandmother. Then he was introduced to my parents and to me and he said something about, blah, blah, blah. I just glared at him, I thought he was the ugliest, most pompous thing I’d ever seen. I couldn’t figure out why everybody thought he was so great. He had this high collar so his face was pushed up above the collar, so his face

was out of alignment. If you see pictures of him, you'll know what I mean. He always had this very round face with the high collar. So that was my first president and I didn't really think very much of him, so it wasn't very difficult for me to change.

KH When he lost the election and you were in class and everybody responded, would you say that was your first political memory?

EM Yeah. It was the second grade, it was 1932, and then we moved. During that time that I was in Hoover Grammar School, my parents were building the house in Hillsborough. So I transferred from this very public, public school to Hillsborough Grammar School, which was public but like a private school because only kids who lived in Hillsborough could go to it and there were only 3,300 people in Hillsborough at that point. It was kindergarten through the eighth grade and there were only 220 kids in the school so everybody knew everybody else. Everybody knew everybody's parents. I grew up finding out whose mother was sleeping with whose father, it was like a small town at the grade school. So anyway, I graduated from Hillsborough Grammar School and I edited the newspaper. You asked me about journalism and I thought of that afterwards. That was the main thing I wanted to do, I didn't want to be on the council, I wasn't that interested in the politics of it as much as I was interested in journalism. It was like a private school so that when I got into high school it was a great experience because it was a *public* high school where there were (in a whisper) Orientals and there were even a couple of Blacks. I can remember just being astounded. In Hillsborough, the children of the gardeners couldn't go to the public school, so I knew what segregation was like before I went to Virginia and fought against [Harry Byrd](#)⁵⁴ and massive resistance and closing all the schools. People would say to me, "You're not a southerner," but we had it in Hillsborough, we had segregation. As fond as I was of Joe, you know, the gardener, his children couldn't have gone to grammar school with me. **(They went to)** San Mateo or Burlingame. But Hillsborough was this enclave. It had been six estates. I've got the history of Hillsborough if you ever want to read it.

(You asked me if I thought that being in that very small world where everybody knows everybody's families and dark secrets in some way that prepared me for Washington.) That's funny, now that I think about it. I was never shocked **(that)** a lot of my friends' parents got divorced, it was high living, you know. I was much more accepting of people having affairs and having divorces and stepfathers and stepmothers, than my husband. My husband just used to think it was so peculiar when any of our friends would get divorced. People in Escanaba just never got divorced! That's the difference. Also the climate is different. Bob's father had a second family in Iron Mountain but his mother never knew it. Just before he died, my father-in-law told my husband about the second family he had in Iron Mountain, which is not too far from Escanaba and that my husband should take care of her as well as take care of his mother. So, my husband, being naive, tells me this story and says that we're going to have to take care of her. I said "Not on your life! What do you mean? She went into that with her eyes open. I am not going to share my wherewithal with a mistress." He just thought it was so strange that he had never had any indication of this until just before he died.

That's why I say, the difference between Hillsborough and Escanaba was night and day. It was a very small, Swedish community.

Edna Ferber is a very famous author. She wrote a novel about the same time as *The Call of the Wild*, but it was made into a movie, a very popular movie. Anyway, it was where the lumber was, all the lumber mills were, that part of Michigan, and Minnesota, and Wisconsin, and ore mines. I think there were very, very few of my husband's high school classmates that went to college. He was the outstanding student in the high school and was encouraged to go to college. Because he had such extraordinary grades, the University of Chicago, which was a private college, Rockefeller supported it, let him in and gave him a scholarship. So that's the only way he got out of the North Woods. That whole area is called the North Woods, where the lumber came from and the ore. Our childhoods were like night and day, so completely different. Everyone used to think it was amazing that we got along so well, but because we were interested in the same things.

When I was in Hillsborough Grammar School, my parents took me to Europe in 1936. I can remember that they kept it a secret that they were planning to do this for some time but I overheard my mother say something to my grandmother. My mother said, "I'm going to have to get permission from Mr. Roehmer," who was the principal of Hillsborough Grammar School, "to take you out of school." So, we had an appointment with the principal and it was the first time I'd ever been in the principal's office. I was a good student and had never been called to the principal's office. My mother said that they wanted to take me to Europe and could I be excused. We were leaving in September, and it was in the spring, I guess that we would be leaving. He said, "Don't bother, Ellen, she'll learn more when she's in Europe than she will here. Don't worry about it." He was very casual about the whole thing and she was so relieved, quite rightly about taking a child out of school to travel.

So, we took the *Spirit of San Francisco*, which was the first streamliner out of Oakland, there was no bridge, you know. We had to take the ferry to the mole in Oakland. They called it the mole, where the transcontinental trains only came as far in Oakland. They couldn't get across the bay. They couldn't fit on the ferry! (Laughs) I remember, a whole bunch of people came to see us off, my parents friends particularly because they were just dying to see this brand new streamliner, it was right on the tracks. And Wig (x) and her brother Marshall came, they were my only friends, the rest were all my parents friends. Wig is Marjorie Eleonor Weigel who I knew in Burlingame when we were five years old and I'm still in touch with her. She just turned 81, last month. She's six months older than I am and she's always told me what to do and how to do it because she's older than I am!

Her brother, Marshall, who later was president of the student body at Stanford was a very tall, handsome, young man. Even at age 11, I was, you know, Marshall really turned me on. I didn't have a big brother so I thought Marshall could be my big brother and I always referred to him as my big brother, and he came to see me off and Marjorie, Margie we called her. Then she developed the nickname Wig and she was at Stanford everybody called her Wiggie, you know from Weigel. That's her last name, and I was called Marc by a lot of my classmates. It was just a thing at the time, to give everyone a nickname. As long as they didn't call me Ellie or Helen! I can name the people who called me Ellie on a regular basis. Betty Furness. That picture of LBJ and

Lady Bird with Betty Furness had just been appointed Special Assistant for Consumers, she sent me that picture, you know to 'To Ellie.' And I thought Betty, Lady Bird never called me Ellie, Muriel Humphrey never called me Ellie, the president never called me Ellie, why are you calling me Ellie? We were good friends, so that was a way of showing closeness. So there we were in the mole in Oakland and we got on the train and went to Chicago and stayed at the Stevens, which later became the Conrad Hilton where all the fireworks took place in 68, the convention when I got stink bombed. When we were there, I met some very good friends of my parents, whose names were Gelb and they owned Clairol. They had two sons and no daughters. Clairol was named after Clair Gelb the wife, and she just thought it was absolutely wonderful to have a girl, so she took me to the beauty shop and showed me how to fix the hair and gave me a manicure. She treated me as if I was a young woman, I was eleven years old and I'd been treated like a kid always. All of a sudden here is this very beautiful, glamorous woman who is making a fuss over me. Then when we got to New York they lived in Scarsdale, she arranged for her sons to take me to a Saturday matinee and Kitty Carlisle was in that matinee and her picture was in the paper today, she's ninety-something now. She had been in the New York Times, she had been at some ball, you know how the New York Times covers balls on Sunday? I looked at that picture and gosh, I remember her from when I was eleven years old. She was the star of this musical comedy. Then we got on the Normandy to sail to Europe and those two boys came to see me off. And Clair, she asked me to call her Aunt Clair, gave my mother, right off the presses, they had all kinds of ins in New York society, a first edition of *Gone With The Wind*. It was supposedly impossible to come by, people had put orders in. So that was her present to my mother for the sailing party. She brought me, I don't know, a doll or something. Well, I didn't pay any attention to the doll, I got a hold of that book and the whole way to Europe I read *Gone With The Wind*! (laughs) So much of it reminded me of my grandmother's stories. My grandmother had told me about Ben Butler who was a scalawag as she called him, who occupied New Orleans and who stole all the jewels and the silver from the Southerners and my grandmother was convinced that they named the character Rhett Butler after Ben Butler. Supposedly he was a very handsome, debonair scalawag. Do you know what a scalawag is? A carpetbagger. That's her other favorite term of derision, scalawag and carpetbagger. Then we arrived in England and we stayed at the Grosvenor House which is right on Park Lane, Hyde Park and I used to go across the street and listen to these people give speeches. I thought it was a show put on especially for me! (laughs) I could walk across the street, she was so afraid I would get lost, that she would let me go up to Oxford Street where all the dress shops were, which was straight out of the Grosvenor House. I could turn right to go to Oxford Street. Mason and Florin was there and Selfridge's, all of these fine stores and I can remember being fascinated by all the different kind of clothes that the Brits wore. I didn't think that I was properly attired so I had my mother buy me some fine wool. It was winter, you know, and I was a Californian and I was cold! Then I could cross the street when the policeman, you know, the bobby, would let me, to Hyde Park corner where traditionally all of these speeches were given. You know free speech was invented at Hyde Park Corner. It was great entertainment, you know, I had to get away from my parents once in a while. One of the stories that Keith remembers is that my mother was intent upon taking me to every cathedral and

every museum wherever we went. I was going to get educated. She was intent. She had taken me out of school, she felt she had to supplement. We were at Windsor or at some Castle in a tour being taken around. The guide was mentioning the Kings and Queens of different periods, and I spoke up. I said, "She was not the Queen, she was his daughter!" My mother was so embarrassed and the guide looked at me and said, "Little girl, how did you know that?" I said, "My grandmother told me!" My grandmother prepared me for this trip by making me memorize all the Kings and Queens of England. She was a great Anglophile. As a bride she'd gone to Jamaica, which was under the Brits, the British West Indies it was called. She had picked up all of this knowledge about the Kings and Queens of England and passed it onto me. So I told the guide, much to my mother's distress. He was wrong, I was right.

Also, the other thing that annoyed my mother was that I told the Pope⁵⁵ off. I was pregnant with Jeffrey and we had an audience at the Castel Gandolfo⁵⁶. My mother and Lala were with us, and my second cousin, Sister Mary was a Mother Superior and one of the cousins was at the Vatican, so they arranged for us to have an audience with the Pope, and I was quite pregnant. There's a picture around someplace, that Lala sent it to us. So, the Pope came over to us after he had given his homily or whatever to meet us and he said to me, "And where are you in school, dear?" According to my mother, I stuck out my stomach and I said, "I am a college graduate, I am married and I am about to have a baby!" My sister who was with us, got the giggles and she couldn't stop laughing. When the Pope turned to her she just couldn't stop laughing. I embarrassed them terribly.

I can tell you the outfit I had on, which my husband used to call my CB outfit, my Child Bearing outfit. I had it as part of my trousseau, he thought it made me look too young. He called it my Child Bride outfit and then it became my Child Bearing outfit. I still have pictures of it around, and I may even have the hat still. I had a cute little hat like a pillbox. The Pope thought I looked so young I was in school. I told him a thing or two!

It seems like with your personality, you've been pretty much the same person, obviously you've developed and you've learned more, but it seems like I guess I always knew what I knew. You asked me the other day, what was the thing I thought was most useful in politics. I think I said intelligence, didn't I? I have dealt with so many politicians over the years who are good politicians in a hail Mary moment, but are not very bright. I could never support them. I could like them as friends, but I could never trust anyone who didn't have more than two brain cells to rub together. Being an intellectual snob, and my husband was an intellectual snob, that was one of the reasons we got along so well! He was much brighter than I, had an IQ that went through the roof, I learned so much from him, but he wasn't as outspoken as I was. I got away with it, because I was cute! You'll never believe it but I had a very good figure.

⁵⁵ Pope _____

⁵⁶ Castel Gandolfo

Pamela & AVERIL HARRIMAN

Now, I'm looking at Pamela⁵⁷ and Averil here, I'll tell you a good story about her. We were in England a moment ago. My husband met her during the war. He was sent over to set up Lend-Lease⁵⁸ with Averil Harriman⁵⁹. She had married Churchill's son so that everybody at the Embassy, was include, by Churchill at functions. So he met Pamela but so did Averil. Well Averil was married. Pamela was married. Bob was not married, so he became the beard, that was the CIA term, he became her beard. He would escort her to parties and Averil would come alone and then Averil would escort her home afterward, so they had an affair all during the war. Years do pass, she has several husbands in betwixt and between. He's still married to Marie who I got to know in Paris when we were there, in fact I have a painting that she gave me in the other room, Marie Harriman⁶⁰.

When she and Averil got married we were invited to a wedding reception for them in Washington. It was given by Al Friendly⁶¹ who was the managing editor of the Washington Post and had been on the staff of the Marshall Plan with my husband. It was in the garden and we walked into this beautiful, beautiful garden in Georgetown and started to go through the receiving line and when Pamela sees Bob, she drops her teeth. I was aware that there was some kind of tension. I knew that they had known one another but the reaction was strange. I was talking to Averil (**and**) she took my husband and went under a big magnolia tree. The two of them were having this very serious conversation for about five minutes. Averil and I were saying, "What's going on?" Old friends, you know, they haven't seen each other in years, so we were drinking champagne and out of the corner of my eye, I know my husbands expressions well enough that I could tell how uneasy he was by what she was saying. So when we left he said "She was asking me, please not to tell everybody in Washington that she and Averil had had an affair during the war and I covered for them." Then she and I got to be good friends because she got to be very political. Then, she was appointed Ambassador to Paris by Clinton,⁶² and I visited her a couple of times in Paris as the Ambassador. At the Embassy and also at the residence with Arthur Schlessinger. Arthur and I had lunch at the Embassy. Her personal assistant, Janet Howard, was a good friend of mine and the three of us went to dinner at this very famous restaurant on the Left Bank. We had gone for a drink at the Ritz Hotel. I can't remember the name of it but I can see it, near Montparnasse. She expected me to come back to Paris, I used to go to Paris quite regularly. You know it was like New Orleans, it was like a second home and I had so many dear friends there who I would visit. Then she died in the

⁵⁷ Pamela Churchill Hayward Harriman

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⁵⁹ Averil Harriman

⁶⁰ Marie Harriman

⁶¹ Al Friendly

⁶² William Jefferson Clinton

swimming pool at the Ritz Hotel and she told me that she tried to make a point of getting over there because it was the only indoor swimming pool in downtown Paris. She was a horsewoman and very athletic and kept this beautiful figure. She had just had her face lifted before she went to Paris. She told me but I wasn't supposed to tell anybody. She gave me the name of the guy who did it in case I ever wanted to have my face lifted. He's in New York and I said to her that I knew some plastic surgeons in L.A. who went to Stanford and if I was going to have my face lifted I'd have a Stanford man! (Laughs) Anyway, it came as a great shock when she was swimming and had a heart attack and died.

She put on a beautiful funeral for Averil. He was almost 90, I think he was 89 when he died. The last time I talked to him, they gave a party at their house in Georgetown and as I was leaving he said, "I'm going to see you next week, right?" I said, "No, I'm going home, I'm going to California." He said, "But it's my birthday, aren't you going to come for my birthday?" I said, "It's my father's birthday, he's going to be 90" or "He's going to be 95" or something. Averil said, "That's alright, he's older than I am, you should go to his birthday." (laughs) Well, soon after that he died and the funeral was at Washington Cathedral and it was by invitation. I was really strung out at that funeral because it was 'This is Your Life.' All the people I had known in Paris as a bride. I had met him originally at the White House when my husband took me there for a White House Ball when Truman was President. I told you I went to the White House when Truman was President. My roommates always said that the reason I decided to date Bob, instead of all those other people, was because I was so impressed about going to the White House. He was Special Assistant to Truman and he arranged with one of the other Special Assistants whose wife was away. The invitations always came to Mr. and Mrs., no girlfriends allowed. So he arranged that I should pass as this Colonel's wife. So we checked in at the East Wing, what they call the diplomatic entrance. We checked in and I was the wife of Ronald whatever his name was and then we got into the receiving line and Truman called me Mrs. Oshins. I didn't correct him. I had long gloves up to here, a very sexy dress. All of my roommates went shopping with me so that I could get a ball gown. (I bought it at) Earl Bocher's which is the women's store in Washington, on F Street. **(This is the dress.)** The sexiest dress I've ever owned. Could you imagine I could fit into that? I had to put a piece of scotch tape over my nipples because I couldn't wear a bra.

Here's the dress I wore to Jack's inaugural, the blue one. It was made out of a sari for me. The two handsomest men in Washington were Averil Harriman and Clark Clifford and I got to dance with both of them because I was the only young girl there. Except for ⁶³Eunice Kennedy and Eunice was never very sexy. She was always gangly, you know and she never cared much about her appearance. I introduced her to my husband and he even mentioned that she wasn't very well attired, and her with all that money. He brought this sari back from India and I had it made for Jack's inaugural because I was the Chief Hostess at the Mayflower Hotel. That was 1961. I wore the black pearls. They're called black pearls but they're blue. I remember I had a special pair of glasses that were gold that my mother bought for me. She was always after me to wear fancy

⁶³ Eunice Kennedy

glasses. She always hated me in glasses but I couldn't see! Boy that brings back memories. See, this goes over the shoulder. I also have the dress I bought to be presented to [Queen Elizabeth](#)⁶⁴ in Vienna.

EM This is Davy Crockett. Those were Davy Crockett outfits they had on. Mark Salinger, Pierre's eldest son gave him that clarinet so he was learning the clarinet. Then Leland learned the clarinet. Oh, and this was at Arlington. We gave a party at Lee's mansion for the General Assembly of Virginia. [Dorothy McDermott](#)⁶⁵ was a member of the General Assembly and I worked on the committee to arrange the function.

KH Now this is interesting, I see your name written differently. Sometimes I see it written as Ms. Ellen Marcus, and sometimes as your husband's name.

EM Working in politics I used my maiden name because he was hatched. Do you know what [hatched](#) means? I'll tell you later. I used to sign my name Ellen, when I used Oshina, Ellen M. Oshins, (Mrs. Robert L.) but politically I used Marcus because I didn't want to embarrass him, although, I managed to quite regularly. [Pierre \(Salinger\)](#)⁶⁶ had this advertisement put in the International Edition of the Herald Tribune announcing that I was going to be in charge of the Americans Abroad for Humphrey-Muskie.

KLO Without so much as a by-your-leave. That's how we found out, we opened up the newspaper.

2:07:00

EM So he asked me, and boy my husband got in so much trouble over that. You know, in the Foreign Service you can't participate in politics.

KLO Pierre, the yuck, should have known that.

KH Oh, that's the original of the picture from the newspaper.

EM I came across that. That was when I graduated from Stanford.

KH What a handsome man.

EM I was attracted to handsome men.

KH You have excellent taste.

EM This my father wrote, when I was 17.

KH What a precious thing to have.

EM I left a book out over here. I came across this letter and I suddenly realized that this book had been given to me by the author, and I'm in it! This is [Theda](#)⁶⁷ who wrote the book, and she and Lois, and this is Lois, came into Washington to help me in the Johnson-Humphrey inaugural. Here I am giving a speech at the Washington Women's Democratic Club. That's Lindy's (Boggs) head. That's [Joe Freehill](#)⁶⁸ who was running

⁶⁴ Queen Elizabeth II

⁶⁵ Dorothy McDermott

⁶⁶ Pierre Salinger

⁶⁷ Theda

⁶⁸ Joe Freehill

for Congress. I took Keith over to his headquarters. Keith was 3 years old. He picked up the phone and instead of saying, "Freehill for Congress," he said, "Freehill forever!" Brought down the house.

KH What was the speech about that you were giving?

EM I was introducing him. I ran his campaign for Congress.

KH Did he win?

EM He came awfully close. It was one of those where the Republican had been in office forever, was a Dixiecrat and he was for integration of the schools when that was a big thing. He came so close that everyone was sure if he ran again that he could make it. We were just starting to set up his campaign and he died of a heart attack. Darling man, Joe Freehill. Those are the men who worked for me. I always had a bunch of men as assistants so I'm not used to men telling me what to do. Men are always telling women what to do.

EM

LONDON AS A CHILD

KH Was it your first time in New York?

EM Oh no, I had been to New York several times with my parents and also I had been to Europe in 1936. I was there when the abdication took place. You've heard about the abdication? It was very sexy and everybody was talking about it. I was 11 years old and I learned about sex, hearing about the abdication. She had raped him in so many words. David was not much of a man's man. She was the manly one. Anyway, enough of sex. It keeps coming up, always. (La

I had been in and out of airplanes since I was 11 years old when I flew across the channel on the Imperial Airline which was what the British called what later became BEA, but it was called Imperial at that point, from London to Paris. I felt like Lindberg arriving in Paris at Le Bourget, at the airport outside of Paris. We were of an era that if you had the money you did all kinds of things and my father was very wealthy.

My Uncle Aubrey was an old friend of some fascinating people in London who took us to the most beautiful nightclubs and I had never been to a nightclub before. You know my

parents had always had babysitters or my grandmother around, so I got to go to a nightclub. I remember there was woman walking around bare, with a tray selling cigarettes and my father took the napkin off the table and put it up in front of my face and I wasn't supposed to see it. Nude woman! I was too young, I was 11 years old and I wasn't supposed to see a nude woman. (laughing) Anyway, then we went to Victoria Station and as far as I knew we were going to take the train to the Channel and then take a boat to France, which is how you got across the channel in those days. We got to Victoria Station and I was told I had to be *weighed*, and I said, "Why would I have to be weighed to get on a boat?" The attendant said, "Imperial Airlines insists that we weigh all of the passengers." I said "Airlines! We're going on a plane!" I was so excited, I'd never been on a plane before. So, we got on this plane and it was called Imperial Airlines before it was called BEA (British European Airlines was the one that went back and forth over the channel. The plane flew about 20 feet over the water and there was a storm and I kept looking down at these waves coming up. The stewardess passed out bags for everybody to be seasick in. I kept saying, "I'm not going to be seasick, this is the first time I've ever been on a plane." I think I was the only one on the plane who wasn't. My mother was seasick but I guess my father wasn't. She was absolutely looking at me and shaking her head. She was absolutely white and looking at me, and all I wanted to do was look down at these waves. I was so excited. And then we arrived at Le Bourget, which is where Lindberg had landed and of course it was very famous. I was so excited about that plane ride. Then we stayed at the Georges VI and I had a wonderful time, I just loved Paris. I really liked it more than London because London was so foggy and the Brits were so uptight and the French were so much freer and I thought more like Americans. I had had a French governess at one point, so I knew enough French that I could get along, even at 11. I still know enough French so that I can get along. He doesn't. He has the worst pronunciation. (Says something in French.)

CHILDHOOD - PARIS TRIP

When we were in Paris is when we really found out all the juicy gossip about **Wally Simpson**⁶⁹ because the British papers were censored. **Stanley Baldwin**⁷⁰ was the Prime Minister and **Lord Beaverbrook**⁷¹ was the lord of all the newspapers on Fleet Street. Baldwin called him in and made him promise that none of the British papers would cover anything about Wally Simpson. It was such a scandal, *such* a scandal. So of course the French knew all about it. When we went back to London, I remember talking to these lovely Brits, including the man who was my father's representative their, who wanted me to go to the London School of Economics after the war, and I would stay with them. They had a beautiful estate in Hertfordshire, a 400 year old estate. I just thought that would be lovely, but that's another story. Anyway, I told them all about Wally Simpson because I'd learned it all in Paris. (Laughs)

⁶⁹ Wallace Simpson

⁷⁰ Stanley Baldwin

⁷¹ Lord Beaverbrook

We took the Queen Mary back and William Randolph Hearst⁷² and Marion Davies⁷³ who was his mistress were on the boat. She thought I was so cute, she invited me into her suite and she showed me all of her wigs, and I'd never seen a woman wearing a wig before. So, every night, when they would come into the dining room, I'd tell my mother, "That's the wig she tried on me!" I wasn't supposed to know about mistresses like Marion Davies. She and I used to take the Promenade together and she would always get me to run with her, which was good exercise, because its very boring, there weren't any kids, even on the Normandie or the Queen Mary. I was the only kid in First Class, there were some in Second Class and Steerage, so I met a lot of adults that way because I didn't have anybody else to talk to, and I liked to talk.

KH Did Marion Davies seem very glamorous to you?

EM Oh, yes! And she was so outgoing to me, and she made me feel as if I was a young lady instead of a little girl. She treated me as a companion instead of talk down to me like my parents did.

KH Did you see she and Hearst interact very often? Did you get a sense of what their relationship was like?

EM Oh yes. I talked to him at length, too. Then he invited us to San Simeon. Where we lived in Hillsborough, by the way, we were surrounded by his children. Do you remember when Patty Hearst⁷⁴ was...Well, Randolph Hearst⁷⁵ lived just to the north of us and George Hearst⁷⁶ lived to the South of us. We couldn't get out of Hillsborough without going by either George Hearst or Randolph Hearst's house. Of course, in San Francisco, Hearst was a big thing because of the newspapers. There were four newspapers in San Francisco at that point, and two of them were owned by Hearst, the Examiner and the Call Bulletin. The Call Bulletin was the night paper. The Examiner and the Chronicle were the morning papers and the Scripps Howard paper, which was the San Francisco News and the Call Bulletin were the night papers. Most cities at that point had morning papers and night papers. So, anyway, then I came back to Hillsborough Grammar School and Mr. Romer had me address the assembled throng of the 220 students and tell them all about my trip to Europe, and mostly what I told them about was that all the statues in the Louvre and in the parks didn't have leaves. I was so surprised when I first saw a statue of a man without a leaf, because in America, 'Merika (with a drawl) we were such puritans that all the statues had to have leaves on them, but not in France. I was telling them about the Louvre and about the Mona Lisa, but then I got diverted. Mr. Romer at the back of the auditorium shaking his head. Here he'd given me permission to go to Europe and here the main thing I reported is that the statues didn't have leaves. (laughing.) Everybody in the school was, you know, particularly the upper classmates were, "Agggh." So, I was well known by the upper

⁷² William Randolph Hearst

⁷³ Marion Davies

⁷⁴ Patricia Hearst

⁷⁵ Randolph Hearst

⁷⁶ George Hearst

classmen, which was lucky because we had tennis courts and only the upper classmen could play tennis at lunchtime. I loved to play tennis so I would make deals with some of the upper classmen to play doubles with them before I was legally allowed to play tennis. We had a cafeteria but nobody brought their lunch, it was like a private school. There was a kitchen and cooks made us lunch and we would eat in 20 minutes so we could play tennis for the rest of the hour. I could remember racing across with my tennis racket following the upper classmen so I would get to play tennis. Everybody had courts when I was growing up, so many of our neighbors and my classmates that I didn't even bother to play very much at the country club. That was really for the adults. The country club wasn't really receptive to children. Mostly I played at friends' courts. I could remember over the years people asking me who was my pro?" I just walked on the tennis court and somebody gave me a racket and I started to play. We didn't take tennis lessons and we didn't take riding lessons, we just rode and we just played tennis and we just swam. We didn't have pros, instructors. That always struck me as a big difference between Californians and Easterners, they all had pros, because we could play all year round. It's the same thing with skiing, you know, we would just go up to Yosemite and start skiing. Then, I graduated finally from Hillsborough Grammar School, and I had skipped a couple of grades, so I was very much younger than anybody else in my freshman class at Burlingame High School. I really was not happy there, I felt out of it. Everybody was so much older and more sophisticated. It was really a play school, people went there to have fun. I can remember talking to the counselor and saying I wanted to take college preparatory courses. I wanted to go east to college. I had gotten this idea when we were in New York, all of the children of my parents' friends, of the female variety either went to Smith, Wellesley or Vassar and the boys all went to Princeton, Yale and Harvard. So my idea was that when I graduated from High School I would get away. I'd go back East. **Elsie Northrup** her name was, she was the Dean of Women at the High School. She said the best thing would be if you transferred to San Mateo High School which is the same district because they have a better college preparatory program that new have here. So she talked my mother into letting me transfer after a year and a half. So I went to two high schools on the peninsula. I can sing both of their songs. (sings) "Burlingame with hearts and voices!" and "San Mateo, HMI, we honor and obey!" Anyway, I finally graduated from high school after the war started, as I told you, in June of 42. I was 16, and again the youngest. I was always trying to make up for the fact that I was younger, trying to be very sophisticated. That's why I started to smoke, because I wanted to be sophisticated.

SANTA BARBARA AND STANFORD

Santa Barbara was our summer home during the war. We couldn't travel, so we would take the train to Santa Barbara and rent a car and rent a house and stay there during

the summer. Because of the war and gas rationing, we couldn't go to Tahoe, which we usually did during the summer. Every summer up to that point, I had always gone to Tahoe. Yosemite and Tahoe, you know and during the winter, Palm Springs. So my father came up with this idea that we should take the train to Santa Barbara and rent a car. My father was head of the rationing board so he knew all about getting gasoline. So we got to Santa Barbara and rented a car and I remember I got my drivers license in Santa Barbara when I was 16. My mother said, "Do you know how to drive?" and I said, "Yes, I've been driving since I was 14!" (laughs) My mother always liked to have me drive her because she didn't like to drive and she always thought I was very much a better driver than she. Be that as it may, that's how Santa Barbara became very much a part of my life. All during the war we went to Santa Barbara every summer and I got to know a lot of my contemporaries, many of whom were headed to Stanford. So when I got to Stanford, I knew as many Santa Barbrians in my freshman class as I did San Franciscans. Of course, I knew everybody from Hillsborough. It's so funny, to this day, I'm going to have a 60th class reunion, so many of the people that have been calling me about it I went to grammar school with. Hillsborough Grammar School was highly rated, because it was very small and as I say, treated like a private school. As the teachers used to point out to us, most of us came from families that were very well educated so not to be surprised if we could get into the very best colleges. We were told that in grammar school that we should be thinking of the best colleges. Because of the war, I couldn't go east to college and my father bribed me with a Packard convertible so I went to Stanford. End of story. But you saw about that little card that they talked about my big car and Anthony Eden? To this day people will come up to me at different University functions and say, "I remember that car!" (laughs)

KH You talked about growing up around a diverse population in Hillsborough, there were people from Japan...

EM Oh, the help.

KH But, what was Stanford like? Was there any diversity on campus at Stanford at all?

EM No, not until the ASTP came, which was the Army Service Training Program. During the war, the Army and the Navy had different colleges where they trained the enlisted men for officers' training school and in specialties. At Stanford they had a very famous, to this day, I mean its famous, a foreign language school. They were teaching Japanese and Chinese and Russian and Polish and all of the languages for the troops training for the invasions. They were a much more diverse group than the regular Stanford students, they were all white. I don't remember any Orientals. Of course, the war, you know. Well, I guess there was a Chinese boy. Chang, that's right, he was in our class but there were many more Japanese on the Peninsula. Also, the Chinese stayed in San Francisco and in Chinatown and the Valley. Of course there weren't any Japanese because of the war and in our class there was only this one Chinese boy, because as I can remember they all stayed in the city or went east, there weren't any on the Peninsula. We had many more Japanese on the Peninsula.

When I go back to Santa Barbara now I always stay at the Biltmore which is in Montecito, because right across from the Biltmore were the Biltmore stables where I used to keep a horse and every morning, a bunch of us teenagers would meet at the stables and we'd ride our horses down to the beach and ride up and down on the sand

waiting for the fog to lift, which it always did by 10:00. Then we would ride up to the East West Highway. Do you know where that is? Do you know where San Ysidro Ranch is? We'd ride up to San Ysidro Ranch on horseback, because there weren't any cars. It was during the war and there weren't any cars.

SANTA BARBARA WITH HUSBAND

I went there on my honeymoon and my husband fell in love with Santa Barbara. When he retired because of illness, he had several heart attacks. Do you know who [Robert Hutchins⁷⁷](#) is? He was head of the University of Chicago and a very well known academic. He set up the Ford Foundation. He asked my husband to come and work with him at the Ford Foundation in Santa Barbara so he moved out to Santa Barbara and all my children moved out to Santa Barbara at one time or another and they all went to UCSB at one time or another. They still consider Santa Barbara a second home, which I had always as a child. So that's Santa Barbara.

EARLY SINGLE DAYS IN WASHINGTON

You know, I didn't know any colored children at all, except we did have a wonderful cook. Daisy Bell was the name. She'd come from Washington originally. She left to go back to Washington when she inherited some property so she had to leave to go take care of her property and she went to work for Nelson Rockefeller. So when I arrived from Washington, Daisy Bell found out I was there and she came over to our apartment and said, "Any time you girls would like me to do your cooking for you, just let me know." My Stanford roommates and I said, "Main thing is, none of us know how to cook." We learned the hard way. I knew how to make salads, I was great at making salads. [Scotty Lanahan⁷⁸](#), in the article she wrote about me, I don't remember it, I think she made it up, that we had a house rule that you couldn't eat at home more than 4 nights a week to save money. So that made us very aggressive finding men to take us out to eat. We didn't have to be aggressive, we had so many men wandering in and out of that apartment. You know, four attractive college graduates. Because, you know, most of the young women in Washington at that point were secretaries, clerks. There were very few professional women. I told you, when I went to work at the Senate, I was one of two professional women on the Staff. One was sixty-something, they could tell the difference. She worked for a Colorado Senator and she had been his secretary. He was about to retire so he promoted her to professional grade but I was hired as a professional so I got to eat in the Senator's dining room and have my fanny pinched by [Joe McCarthy](#). I used to call him a Greek, Roman hands and Russian fingers. (Laughter) Repulsive man and the hairiest man I'd ever seen! He and LBJ were the two most repulsive men that made passes at me. They turned my stomach. LBJ had the largest derriere of any man I've ever been up close to. It was like Herr Prenzel's. What?

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⁷⁸ Daughter of F. Scott and Zelda Fitzgerald and a journalist for the Washington Post.

ALLIED ARTS

All my mother's furniture was made at **Allied Arts**. It's not far from here and it's a very well know institution. My mother was so funny, that's my mother over there. Allied Arts wove that (**tapestry**) as a housewarming gift. That's my mother and me and my sister and our garden in Hillsborough. It used to be very bright, it has faded, but that's pure silk, hand woven and then painted. That's the kind of thing they did at Allied Arts. (**The calla lilies are from Allied Arts**) There were several other hangings in our house that have disappeared but these were the two that I asked for when my parents sold it.

SHOES – KENNEDY FUNERAL

I used to like sling pumps. I started at 4 1/2 and I went to 5 and by the time I had my first child I was 5 1/2. I had 4 1/2 B all during. It was great because the shoe stores used to get the 4 1/2 B's for the window, for the displays, so whenever I would give my size they'd say, well we have some on sale. I got more shoes on sale because they'd been in the window! I couldn't ever get shoes in Vienna because they have such big feet! The Austrians are known for their big feet, so I used to go down to Venice to buy my shoes! (Laughs) I'll tell you another place they beautiful shoes is Greece. **Paka**, right next to the Acropolis is my favorite shoe store. I used to buy shoes there everytime I was _____. And Ferragamo's. I can't wear high heels any more because of my balance. That's why I asked you what size you wore, because I would give them to you. I have alligator shoes. I also have a pair of shoes I came across not too long ago while I was cleaning, that I wore to Jack's funeral. For some reason or another I put them in a plastic bag and I've never worn them since. I could show you the suit you wore to his funeral. It was raining. It had been raining. Arlington was just a sea of mud. Wait a minute. These are the shoes that I wore to Kennedy's funeral. They have the dirt from Arlington.

Ask about discrimination at the Country Club because her parents were jewish.

Ask more about Jack's inaugural

Clark Clifford

Joe Freehill

Pamela Churchill Hayward Harriman

Averil Harriman

Dorothy McDermott

Francis Lewine
Helen Thomas
Richard Nixon
Pat Nixon
Tricia Nixon
Bebe Rebozo
Text of the poem her father wrote when she was 17

Got spelling of Jeffrey and Stephen's names

JEFFREY OSHINS PRESS RELEASE

Before a small but intensely interested audience, Jeffrey Marcus Oshins made his first public appearance at George Washington University Hospital, here early this morning. Described as the youngest world traveler on record, Oshins looked fit after a tour that covered 16 countries and 4 continents. "I'm awfully glad to be hear. You really appreciate the good old USA after a trip like mine." The countries covered in his recent tour were France, Belgium, Germany, Holland, Sweden, Norway, Switzerland, Italy, Greece, Egypt, Lebanon, Syria, England, Ireland and Canada. The youthful traveler commented briefly but forcefully on world developments. "Everywhere I went on my tour," he said, "things looked very much the same to me. The outlook was dark and the situation fluid. Denying reports of bad food conditions abroad," he said laughingly, "Look at me, I gained 7 lbs. and 13 oz. while I was on the road!" Oshins was non-committal about plans to write a book about his adventures, he let it be known however, that he plans to spend the next few months resting quietly at the home of his aged parents, Ellen and Bob Oshins at 210 Midville Street, Falls Church, VA. During the upcoming summer, he is arranging for a coast-to-coast tour of the United States. He will do some lecturing but said, "This trip will be mostly for observation."

Timeline

Born in San Francisco

Moves to Burlingame

Moves into house in Hillsborough

Boat trip to England during Abdication of Edward VIII

Japanese Internment camps

1946 Graduates from Stanford with a BA and a Masters in Political Science and Economics

Summer in Mexico

Train trip to New York

1947 First job in Washington D.C. for Robert Taft

1948 Marries Robert Oshins

Arrives in Europe with husband

Returns to US to have 1st son at George Washington Hospital

Moves to Vienna

Returns from Vienna

1989 Retires and returns to California

Ms. Ellen Oshins

Ms. Ellen Marcus Oshins is that extraordinary blend of

An admitted class and intellectual snob who aided

Detroit, Atlanta, DC they cut you

New York, Chicago and Philly, they shoot you.

Judge Joe Brown