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A CAREER IN  
PROFESSIONAL AND UNIVERSITY THEATER

Ralph Freud

Completed under the auspices  
of the  
Oral History Program  
University of California  
Los Angeles

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## INTRODUCTION

Ralph Freud, director, actor and teacher, was born in London, England, on August 14, 1901, the son of William J. Hilliar and Ann Bramley. His first recollection of the theater was watching his mother perform on the stage of Drury Lane. After his mother's marriage to an American, I.C. Freud, the family came to Detroit, Michigan to live.

While in high school he embarked on his theatrical career by writing the high school opera and playing the lead. After graduation he was affiliated for a short time with the Arts and Crafts Theater in Detroit, a part of the whole insurgence of little theaters throughout the country at that time. Next he joined the Jesse Bonstelle Company as bit-part performer and an assistant stage manager, along with Jo Mielziner. During his three years with the company, he received his fundamental training in the theater. It was during a visit of Gilmore Brown to Detroit that Freud became acquainted with the activities of the Pasadena Playhouse. The following fall, in 1921, he headed West to become part of the Playhouse, remaining there during the twenties. He played more than two hundred roles, besides directing over fifty productions.

In 1924, having seen the work of Jacques Copeau in France, Gilmore Brown, in participation with Freud, opened the Playbox, the first central-stage theater in America. Freud continued actively in the operation of this new experiment in theater through 1933.

It was in the summer of 1932 that Professor Freud had his first association with UCLA. Gordon Watkins, the Dean of Summer Session, asked him to teach the courses in theater then being offered by the English Department. It seems that a secretary in the Summer Session office had seen him perform at the Playhouse and had offered his name as a possible substitute for the scheduled professor. The following summer he returned to teach the summer session, and along with other members of the English Department, he thought of establishing a community theater in Westwood. Before plans for the theater could be initiated, he received an offer from the Jewish Community Center, San Francisco, to be the Director of Mass Activities--"if more than three people got together, I was in charge of it."

Through his contact with young people at the Center and its affiliated summer camp on Lake Tahoe, Freud became more aware of his ability to stimulate creativity and enthusiasm for theater. These years at the Center were important in "pulling together" and giving direction to his theatrical vocation. While in San Francisco, he was asked in 1934 to direct the Ramona Pageant and continued his connection with the pageant over the years.

In 1937 the opportunity came to join the Federal Theatre, and he left the Community Center to become director of the WPA Theatre in San Francisco. He later took over the Los Angeles project as co-director with Jerome Corey. Under their leadership the Los Angeles Federal Theatre attained

its height of artistic success.

When Professor Evalyn Thomas retired in the fall of 1938, Professor Longueil asked Freud to join the English Department on a temporary basis, teaching the two theater courses in acting and play production. Accepting the position, he remained with Federal Theatre to supervise its participation in the San Francisco World's Fair that fall. In December of 1938, foreseeing the Congressional termination of the project, he retired from Federal Theatre, and what had begun as a temporary assignment with UCIA became a continuous association.

Through his exerted influence, additional theater-related courses were added and eventually a drama curriculum developed that served as the structure for the final establishment of a department of theater arts. With the support of Provost Clarence Dykstra and Dean Vern Knudsen and the approval of the Education Policies Committees of Berkeley and Los Angeles, the Department of Theater Arts came into existence in 1947. Professor Freud has been instrumental in its subsequent growth and development.

In the following narrative, which is a transcript of tape-recorded interviews made by Professor Freud with the Oral History Program, he describes his varied theatrical associations, from his early experience as a stock company performer to that of a professor in university theater. Records relating to the interviews are located in the office of the UCLA Oral History Program.

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## INTERVIEW HISTORY

INTERVIEWER: Mrs. Bonnie Duttera, Oral History Program, UCLA.  
B.A., History, UCLA.

### TIME AND SETTING OF INTERVIEW:

Place: At Professor Freud's office, UCLA, 405 Hilgard Avenue, Los Angeles, California.

Dates: Records concerning this interview are incomplete. Only the second tape is dated, May 17, 1961; it is assumed that the other interviews occurred close to this date.

Length of sessions and total number of recording hours:  
The length of the sessions is unknown. Both sides of Tape I were apparently recorded in one session. The two other sessions produced one hour of recorded tape each. The manuscript represents a total of four hours of recording time.

Persons present during the interview: Duttera and Freud.

### CONDUCT OF INTERVIEW:

The interviewer encouraged Professor Freud to talk freely about the various activities relating to his theatrical career. The interviewer chose a topical approach, asking frequent questions to expand and further the interview.

EDITING: Editor, Bernard Galm, Oral History Program, UCLA.  
M.A., Theater Arts, UCLA.

Transcription of Tape I was completed in 1962, but because of the poor audio quality of Tape II and III, the transcription was not undertaken and completed until 1967. The questions by the interviewer are almost entirely inaudible on these two tapes. The editor did an audit-edit of this manuscript, introducing punctuation and verifying name spellings. The material is presented in the order in which it was recorded and transcribed; there are no deletions.

Freud reviewed and approved the edited manuscript, from which this final version was typed. He graciously helped to reconstruct the probable content of the questions that were inaudible, Mrs. Duttera being unavailable. No other major changes were made.

The index and supporting documents were prepared by the editor.

TAPE NUMBER: ONE, SIDE ONE

Freud: An example of the conflict between the Washington office and the local California WPA administration, in terms of choice of subject matter, is the case of Judgment Day by Elmer Rice. Judgment Day is an anti-Nazi play, based upon the burning of the Reichstag, and the local WPA objected to the presentation of this play by Federal Theatre on the basis that it was unfriendly to a friendly power--Germany. This was in 1938. The Washington office, however, overruled the objections of the local WPA and Judgment Day was presented quite successfully, as a matter of fact, at two of the local Federal Theatres--the Hollywood Playhouse and the Mason Opera House, downtown.

Another example, and a rather amusing one, concerned a puppet performance, a production of Ferdinand the Bull. The local WPA administration again objected to this on the ground that this was a veiled presentation of Communist propoganda, since Ferdinand, the bull, went around smelling flowers rather than working as a good bull ought to work. This was, of course, one of the amusing ones. But, here again, finally the Washington office approved it, and Ferdinand the Bull did go on.

Interference not only was attempted in terms of play selection--and there were other examples besides the two I've mentioned, although they were not tremendously numerous--but interference, also, was attempted in terms of

personnel. Now it must be remembered that in terms of personnel enlistment for Federal Theatre, an applicant first had to be on the relief roles. That is, he had to establish his general need for relief and the fact that he was entitled to it. He then was placed on the relief roles, usually on a labor project of some sort, and then he set about to seek transfer to the Federal Theatre Project on the basis that he had, during his lifetime, been professionally connected with the theater.

Now the interference from the WPA office came about particularly during the latter days of the project, when the quota was very near to being full, and we had to select who got on the project and who didn't. Naturally, we tended to select those people who could still function, because by 1938, we were trying to operate a theater with some standards of production and presentation. Many of the people who came to us were people who were long past the age when they could function well in the theater. Some of them were even physically incapable. Some of them were blind. Some were deaf. Many of them, for example, had no teeth. A lot of them were acrobats who were acrobats thirty-five, forty years ago and who no longer could acrobat. So some method of protecting us in these decisions, as to who should get on the project, had to be set up. We got together with the Screen Actors' Guild and established an auditioning board of professionals. This board met once a week all day and interviewed people who were applying to

get from a labor project onto the Federal Theatre Project. The board was composed of Boris Karloff, Edward Arnold, Mrs. James Gleason and occasionally others from the Screen Actors' Guild.

The interference came about when this committee, this citizens' committee, decided against some of the people whom they considered no longer practical for work in the theater. In one case, a Ziegfeld chorus girl, of about 1910 vintage, applied for transfer to the Federal Theatre Project. The board recognized the fact that she had had at one time been a professional person in the theater, but realized that what made her a Ziegfeld Follies girl was no longer present, and they determined against her. Within a week, the administrator of the Federal Theatre Project was visited by a congressman--incidentally, a very liberal congressman, Congressman [H. Jerry] Voorhis--who had to bring to his attention the fact that a great deal of pressure was brought to bear on behalf of this particular applicant. Now, this is again, one case; there were many such cases.

Duttera: What was the basis of the pressure brought on her behalf?

Freud: She appealed to friends from her old days, and these friends organized pressure of one sort and another. There were various types of pressure. Some of the pressure was from organized racial groups, for example. Others were from church groups, and these group pressures were

constantly in action, which, of course, is not unique to Federal Theatre, but it is a part of the American scene.

Going back to the organization of the project--the decision to have the arts project, once being made, the action then moved with a rapidity that was characteristic of the whole Roosevelt regime, particularly in those early years--a rapidity that's almost hard to understand these days. Mrs. Hallie Flanagan was the director of the experimental theater at Vassar, and it was finally decided to appoint her as the head of the national Federal Theatre setup. The reasons for appointing her were rather strange ones. First, it was decided that a professional person, a person directly from the professional theater, would not be as apt to understand the relief part of this, the sociological factors involved, as somebody from a university. Second, it was anticipated that the Federal Theatre would not have much money to spend except for the relief salaries being paid to the workers, and Hallie Flanagan had done quite significant work at Vassar on an extremely limited budget. The third factor, and it may have been rather important, was the fact that Hallie Flanagan was known to Mrs. Roosevelt, and it was Mrs. Roosevelt who brought her to the administration's attention.

Within two weeks after her appointment, she was told to set up projects throughout the country, particularly in New York, Los Angeles, Chicago and a few other centers--

Detroit, New Orleans (I think that the New Orleans setup was largely a political sop to the South). She was told to gather all the names she could in those communities of people who were on relief and who had at one time been connected with the theater, and that whatever she came up with would be the setup, numerically, for the personnel of that particular unit. She was told to do this, if I remember, in two or three weeks. This, of course, was a gigantic job, and she did the best she could. She appealed to the people she knew in each area to take action in this regard. Out here she approached Gilmore Brown of the Pasadena Playhouse. He, together with a young man who had been working with the Pasadena Playhouse and a theater in Padua Hills (not the Mexican setup as it is now, but that same theater before it was devoted to Mexican drama), named J. Howard Miller. Brown and Miller set about to find all the people they could who were on relief who had some connection with the theater in this area. Finally, a number, and this is very general round number that is approximately accurate, of about 1,700 people on relief in this area was established, and this became the figure for the personnel in the Federal Theatre Project here; the New York figure was around 3,000; the Chicago figure around 700. These became the quota for the Federal Theatre Project

Now in the process of this choice of people, being done as hastily as it was, there was a strange assortment of personnel. In the first place, a large number of what I

would call "indigestible" actors, actors way past the age of proper function, flocked into this project, but at the other extreme was a large group of very young people whose only actual activity in the theater had been in amateur theater. A large number of these, for example, came from the Pasadena Playhouse where they were merely amateur, unpaid actors, but they were on relief and their names were put down for transfer to the project. So you had a very motley group here.

A word as to this group of nonfunctioning people--as I said, the idea of the whole project was that one worked for one's salary. This was not an English dole, the method that was employed in the depression in England of just handing money to people. The attempt was, with all the relief projects of WPA, to pay salaries and to maintain some sense of human dignity. Now, therefore, the people assigned to the project had to work four hours a day. In a theater operation, this is a very difficult thing because theater does not work like an office. It has periods of peak work and periods of slack work, but, nevertheless, the Federal Theatre had to operate four hours a day. The "indigestibles," the people whose function was not really very good any more were assigned to what we call the greenroom. All people on the project went to the greenroom until they were given an assignment, but many of these nonfunctioning people reported, to my knowledge, for four years to the greenroom for four hours a day, and never did anything because there wasn't any possible use for them. We called this room the "chamber of horrors," because it became a

horrible evasive kind of thing. It was something we all pretended wasn't there. We hid it.

In terms of the production velocities of the Federal Theatre, these, of course, varied in each Federal Theatre Project, but there were some national policies established by Mrs. Flanagan, who later, incidentally, became Mrs. Davis (she married a man named Davis). She realized at a very early date that the one resource that the Federal Theatre had, which no theater had ever had in quite that abundance, was people. She said, "We can throw across our stages huge crowds of people. We must devise dramatic vehicles which will allow us to do this."

Now in a sense this is what gave birth to the "living newspaper." That, coupled with Elmer Rice's leadership and vision in determining the form of the living newspaper, The living newspaper has been hailed as perhaps the Federal Theatre's great and perhaps only contribution in terms of dramatic form. Rice decided to try to produce some dramatic statements, using a newspaper type of organization. It is not that the plays were just thematic plays. That had been done before; Sidney Howard had done it several years earlier with the play on the conquering of yellow fever in the Canal Zone, a play called Yellowjack. Rice's contribution was to set up a writing staff very similar to that of a newspaper, with an editor-in-chief, sub-editors, feature editors and research workers. This, of course, resulted in

the production of such living newspapers as One-Third of a Nation, which was a study of housing and which took its title, of course, from Roosevelt's inaugural address; The Spirochete, which was a living newspaper on venereal disease, Triple-A Plowed Under, and four or five others. Now these were written by groups of anywhere from twenty-five to fifty people, and no one name can be attached to the writing of these plays

The plays were largely successful because of their adherence to Hallie Flanagan's philosophy of using a tremendous number of people. This was particularly true of One-Third of a Nation, which was the most successful, and which had as its tremendous scene--the burning of a tenement district, with these crowds of people rushing from the fire and being caught in the fire.

Most of the living newspaper work was done in New York under Elmer Rice's leadership. Rice, incidentally, finally became concerned at all the political pressures put upon the living newspaper, particularly, both on the score of ultra support for the Roosevelt administration in the case of Triple-A Plowed Under and also on the score of unfriendly statements about friendly countries in some of the other living newspapers; Rice finally quit.

There were some living newspapers done on the West Coast, particularly two. One was a dramatized history of vaudeville, called Two-A-Day, which was done in a living

newspaper form under the leadership of two men, but with a larger number of writers working on it. This came about because of the tremendous number of vaudeville performers we had on the Federal Theatre Project in Los Angeles, and the fact that vaudeville being dead, one could only send them around to hospitals, and that became worn out in time, and there was a desire to do something with these vaudevillians. So the idea of writing a history of vaudeville in living newspaper form came about. There was another use of these vaudevillians, which I'll talk about later.

A second living newspaper was written, based upon the story of Los Angeles real estate. It was a rather interesting idea. There was a news item at the time, concerning a house, a rather cheap kind of shack house on a lot in Hollywood, and the news story was about the eviction, if I remember correctly, of a Negro from this house for nonpayment of rent or mortgage--something of that sort. This living newspaper set about to track down the whole history of that particular lot, and the result was a living newspaper called Spanish Grant. This particular living newspaper never saw production because of the fear that since many contemporary people were listed of these families, there would be so much social pressure against it that it would create an upheaval in Federal Theatre. This was particularly true in the case of the Chandler family. I agreed with the idea of not producing it--not for that reason; but I was afraid that the documentation that had been provided was not really solid enough to offer a basis for a defense against the avalanche of criticism that I

was sure would come upon it. These, then, were the two living newspapers done on the coast.

There was a third kind of group writing project done, and this particular play became the object of attention of the Un-American Activities Committee at a later date. This was a play called The Sun Rises in the West, which was written by a group of the younger people on the project, working in a unit we called the experimental theater unit, under the leadership of Virginia Farmer. This ended up by being a kind of imitation of Steinbeck, who, of course, at that time was the literary hero to most of the young people in the theater, and was almost a retelling of the Grapes of Wrath, about the migratory workers from Oklahoma, with some little stronger and more overt social statements involved in it. Now this was not a living newspaper, in the sense that it wasn't organized in the same way that Rice had organized the living newspapers, but it was, nevertheless, an anonymous kind of group writing.

In the first days of Federal Theatre, as I've more or less implied, there was no money to be spent on production, or at least, very little. Therefore, the productions were done in a very sparse kind of way. At first, no admission was charged. Tickets to the productions were passed out among WPA workers on other projects; very few of them were used on the West Coast. They were used in the East because it gave people a place to come in out of the cold, but hardly anybody came to the theater on the West Coast in those very first days. Finally, the government allowed a

charge of admission to be made. This was done first on the theory that people might care more about something they made some slight personal sacrifice for, and so an admission charge of fifty cents was allowed. This finally grew; I think the top was around a dollar and a half in the later years.

Now, surprisingly enough, it was coincident with this charging of admission that we began to get audiences, and this resulted in a fund of money which could be diverted to production costs. Beginning with that development, we began to spend more and more and more money on production techniques and production implements--sets, costumes, et cetera--with the result that by late 1937 and '38, we became perhaps the most wealthy theater, in terms of resources, that the world has ever known.

Now there was another reason for this besides the use of this money that was taken in as admissions; that was the fact that the WPA in those later years not only wanted to support people who were on relief, but by spending money could also prime the pump of business and industry. The results of this in the theater were rather spectacular. We rented practically every theater building in Los Angeles. We had the Hollywood Playhouse (which is now, I believe, the El Capitan Theater), the Mason Opera House, the Belasco Theater and the Mayan Theater on Hill Street, the Greek Theater. Practically every theater in town of any size--except the Biltmore, and the Philharmonic Auditorium--

were under lease to the federal government for use as theaters. This, of course, helped support the people who owned that real estate.

Every time we moved a production into a theater, we tore out the old sound system and put in a new one, with each production. This, in turn, helped people who were in the business of selling electronic supplies. These are examples of the affluence of this theater, particularly during the '37-'38 years. Our costume department, which had a personnel of about a hundred, composed of seamstresses and cutters (we even had two shoemakers, three men's hat-ters), over the years developed a tremendous wardrobe which filled two or three large temporary buildings. It must have amounted to thousands and thousands of excellent costumes. Our property department built furniture, exact replicas of period pieces, beautifully made, as only an artist working with plenty of time at his command could make them. This, then, resulted in an affluence of physical resources which has seldom been mentioned about Federal Theatre. There was no play that could not be staged with the greatest attention to detail, and to use of the very best materials for the very best lighting effects and so forth.

The choice of dramatic material for plays for presentation varied, of course, tremendously throughout the country. There was an urging by Hallie Flanagan that each region develop its regional characteristics. Very few

attempts in line with this program bore much fruit, however. There were some down in the Portland project. Incidentally, there were projects on the West Coast--in Portland, Seattle, San Francisco and San Diego--in addition to Los Angeles but in general, the regional drama didn't materialize as Hallie Flanagan had hoped it would.

In the early days of the project, several playwrights of international repute became so interested in the idea that they offered their plays at a considerably reduced royalty for use by the Federal Theatre. Among these were Shaw and Elmer Rice and others. And some other playwrights became conscious of the fact that if their plays were presented for three, four, five, six weeks in a number of Federal Theatre Projects throughout the country, their income would be appreciable, and so they made concessions. Therefore, the whole area of dramatic literature, except for current Broadway success, became available to production on Federal Theatre very shortly after the early years. Certainly by 1936, almost any play that we wanted to do was available for us.

The most noteworthy use of the multiple presentation factor (that is, the presentation of the same play by a number of projects simultaneously or during a given period) was, of course, the production of the dramatization of Upton Sinclair's It Can't Happen Here, in which the same play opened in every project throughout the country on the same night. It played for several weeks, and this enabled

the payment of a rather sizable amount of money by the government for the rights for this presentation. The play received mixed reviews. It was, of course, done in accordance with one of the basic tenets of the project--which was that the theater could take a look at the social and political situation and that the plays which dealt with the social and political situation were the type of thing that the project should be doing. I personally would say that the play was not a particularly effective play. It was exaggerated, extreme, and overmelodramatic. This, I believe, was the general critical point of view and the general audience reaction to It Can't Happen Here.

Certainly, for most of us working in the Federal Theatre, two things were in our minds about it and this is true of Hallie Flanagan and down through most of the directors. First, that a national theater could have a type of program which would, with courage and determination, say a great deal about the political and social structure, could criticize, and could applaud where applause was proper, and could be an articulate statement in the theater about the world around us at that time. This was certainly one of the objectives uppermost in everybody's mind (I say "everybody," I mean by that a large percentage, the majority of the workers in the Federal Theatre). The second thing that was in their mind was that undoubtedly this would eventuate in a national theater and would become a permanent

feature of American life, as a national government theater was part of the life in most European countries.

There had been a move some years previously to establish in America a national theater. Incidentally, looking at this from a historical point of view, the cry for a nationally subsidized theater occurs very early in American theater history. The last chapter of the first history of the American theater written by William Dunlap, published about 1835, is a fervent plea for the establishment of a government subsidized national theater--in his case, based upon the Comédie Française. These cries for a national theater keep repeating. It's interesting that in about 1890, Richard Mansfield, one of the top stars of the period, gave a lecture on the Berkeley Campus, University of California, with a plea for a national theater. This keeps repeating, this plea for a nationally subsidized theater.

Duttera: Does this plea usually emanate from people who are dissatisfied with the professional theater?

Freud: Yes. In most cases, dissatisfied with the professional theater and who are conscious of how the theater has been enriched in other countries by federal subsidy and how it has been, in many cases, freed from the restrictions that are inherent in box-office control.

Now in the late twenties, a woman, Amory Hutchinson, set about to implement this long crying call for a national theater, and together with some people on the East Coast,

she finally prevailed upon Congress to grant it a charter. Now, as you probably know, congressional charters are rather rare. They've given to the Red Cross, the Smithsonian Institute--ten or twelve other things--and finally Congress did give this charter to the American National Theater and Academy. This is known today rather generally among theater people as ANTA, and still exists. Unfortunately, remembering that the government charter does not provide funds, it merely states that it has government blessing, certain tax exemptions and so forth. Unfortunately, Mrs. Hutchinson's plan was that a large number of private philanthropists would then contribute money to implement this American National Theater and Academy, and she did, in fact, secure a large number of pledges for such support. But the year was 1929, and none of these pledges, when the stock market crash came, materialized. The whole implementation of this congressionally chartered national theater fell to pieces. It practically went out of existence and did, in fact, completely evaporate when the Federal Theatre Project was established.

I tell this because immediately as the Federal Theatre developed during that first year, all of us began to see that this would become, we hoped, the government subsidized theater. These two factors, then, I think were operating in everyone's mind: that the theater would be, not exclusively but to a large part, devoted to a kind of drama that said something about the life all about us, with courage

and with a sense of political and sociological points of view; and second, that in time this would become a national theater.

As I've stated, it was in everyone's mind that this might eventuate into a national theater; the question is inevitable--why didn't it? The answer is a complex one, but there are points of interest that may be in the answer. It's a subjective answer; it's my answer. The greatest failure on the part of the leadership of Federal Theatre was the fact that they failed to realize that since this was a relief project, any hope for its changing over into a national theater would have to be anticipated in the light of the fact that the depression could not last forever, and that national relief to unemployed could not go on forever, certainly not in amounts similar to those characteristic of the mid-thirties. If the Federal Theatre Project people had, in about the year 1936, begun to lay a concise plan of changeover, perhaps this might have become the national theater. Now, there were other political mistakes that contributed to this.

In the early days of the Federal Theatre, there was a considerable amount of touring. There is in Hallie Flanagan's book a kind of a free verse poem she's written about the work in Florida of Federal Theatre, how they went from turpentine camp to turpentine camp. They played in the most remote areas of Florida, down in the Everglades. They played to people who dimly remembered seeing a play thirty

years before and wanted their children to see a play. They were struck by the fact that the audience never applauded in many cases. The reason they didn't applaud was that they felt it was impolite to interrupt the actors, and besides they never applauded when they went to the movies. This was a kind of a grassroots operation, but very soon after those early days, by 1936, the playing of Federal Theatre productions in remote areas, or indeed in areas outside of the major metropolitan centers, practically ceased. The only communities which gained any benefit at all from Federal Theatre were communities which already had a large amount of professional theater, the centers: Los Angeles, Chicago, New York, San Francisco, et cetera. In the meantime, therefore, the congressmen from smaller areas wrote Federal Theatre off as far as its making any contribution to their communities. There were no pressure groups, therefore, believing in this in their communities who could exert pressure upon congressmen. Had the leadership of Federal Theatre recognized this early enough, and had they provided communities with theater--many of which wanted theater--I feel very sure that pressure groups would have been exerted on a large cross section of Congress, which didn't materialize when the wipe out of Federal Theatre occurred. Of course, that wipe out is particularly signaled by the story that Hallie Flanagan tells in her book, Arena--of several days after the Federal Theatre was

wiped out by Congress, a congressman calling and saying he wanted to have Federal Theatre do something in his district, and Hallie said, "Well, Senator, you wiped out Federal Theatre last week. Don't you remember?"

One of the hopes, too, of the leadership of Federal Theatre was that a new audience could be developed. It must be remembered that the road show, which was part and parcel of American life, even in small towns in the first and second decades of the twentieth century, had gone out of existence by the mid-twenties. I suppose every young person in America in the 1910-20 period saw most of the great stars. Every person saw the annual visit of Joseph Jefferson, and so forth. The theater was a living part of a large section of the American populace in those early years. This theater, this popular theater, had gone out of existence to any appreciable degree, certainly of high popularity, during the mid-twenties. Even the stock companies, which existed in every city across America (in 1924, there were close to 300 such stock companies), all went out of existence by the thirties--or practically all.

Now it was the hope, therefore, of Federal Theatre that a new audience could be developed, and it was hoped that this could be done by providing something for children. This was slow in coming, however, because nobody could find a way of doing anything particularly new or interesting for children. The solution of this was coupled with the pre-

sence on the Los Angeles project of so many vaudevillians and circus performers--entertainers of that sort. A man named Yasha Frank, who was a photographer-director, evolved the idea of rewriting some children's classics and weaving through them these hordes of dancers, singers, magicians, acrobats, clowns and so forth. The first one of the children's theater things he presented was Pinocchio. This was followed by productions of Hansel and Gretel, Aladdin, and a number of others. They were tremendously successful and popular in the Los Angeles area. Thousands and thousands of children came to these plays which were presented in the regular theaters for usually two performances on Saturday morning.

Yasha Frank, then, was taken by Federal Theatre, Washington administration, to Chicago and to New York to do the same thing for children's theater there. By 1938, the children's theater across the country was an important and extremely valuable part of the Federal Theatre operation. It had a strange kind of place at the time of the death of Federal Theatre. The final performance in New York of Federal Theatre was a performance of Pinocchio, and in the story, as you know, Pinocchio, a little wooden puppet, by doing good deeds turns into a real little boy and lives happily ever after. In the last performance, they changed the ending so that Pinocchio died, was put on a stretcher in a coffin with a banner draped over it, FTP,

meaning Federal Theatre Project, and he was carried out through the aisles. This was the children's theater contribution to the final demise of the Federal Theatre Project.

Within each Federal Theatre Project there were separate units. I have already mentioned the experimental theater unit on the Los Angeles project. Many of these units, however, were of racial or national types. On the Los Angeles project, we had two Yiddish units, or at least, the Yiddish unit served two separate audiences. It served the Yiddish theater audience in Boyle Heights and Ocean Park by the preparation of the kind of standard maudlin Yiddish melodrama that was a staple of that type of audience for many years in New York. It served the Beverly Hills area's Yiddish theater audience by productions of a more recent and sophisticated nature, such as the story of the suffering of the Jews under Nazi tyranny, Professor Mamlock and translations of other more or less contemporary Yiddish plays.

Strangely enough, the Federal Theatre Project in Los Angeles had a French unit. This came about by a strange accident. When talkies came into Hollywood, the first thought of a lot of the leaders of motion pictures was that the American pictures would be dubbed into French, which was considered the universal language, and so huge groups of French actors were brought over, presumably to dub all the pictures into French. This was never done, and suddenly

there was a whole colony of French actors here with nothing much to do. These eventually went on relief, and a French unit was started on the Federal Theatre Project.

By far the outstanding unit on the Federal Theater Project was the Negro unit and this unit provided the major success of Federal Theatre, certainly in Los Angeles, and one of the major successes nationally. This was a production of a play called Run, Little Chillun. This was directed by Clarence Muse in a modification of an original script of Hall Johnson; this modification was written by Langston Hughes. This was a very exciting and moving kind of theater and became so popular when it played at the Mayan Theater on Hill Street, that not only were tickets practically unavailable, but ticket scalpers appeared out front of the Federal Theatre for the first time. Later, Run, Little Chillun was repeated at other projects throughout the country and became the main feature of the presentation of Federal Theatre at the World's Fair on Treasure Island in San Francisco and in New York.

The story of the Communist influence in Federal Theatre (which, of course, was the charge leveled against it, and which to a large extent determined its final oblivion) is a story that has yet to be woven together. It cannot be denied that there were a number of active Communists on Federal Theatre, as there were in practically every strata of American life at the time. When I say Communists, I don't mean card-carrying Communists, nor do I even mean people high sympathetic to the Russian regime. What I mean is that

there were a large number of people who felt that there was something wrong with the American political system and that there was a need for change. Naturally in such a highly intimate atmosphere as the theater always provides, these people banded together; they grouped together.

In the Los Angeles project, they grouped together in the experimental theater. Most of them were quite young, and the experimental theater unit became more or less the center for the leftist movement. The contrary ingredient to this was composed of what I referred to earlier as the "indigestibles," the older, conservative people who represented the theater of some twenty or thirty years before. Now, personal jealousies played a great part in this. An actress named Maude Feely, who was at one time a motion picture star in the very early silent days and a quite well-known national actress, became the leader of the anti-Communist group on the Federal Theatre Project and organized several of the older members of the project into a quite militant force against what they considered to be the Communist-dominated youthful group.

I didn't mention the final activity of Federal Theatre which took place at the two World's Fairs in 1938-39, the turn of the year. This, of course, was hardly a time to hold a world's fair because the world at that time was just beginning to fall apart. But with the World's Fair in New York and the World's Fair on Treasure Island in

San Francisco occurring simultaneously, the Federal Theatre had a chance to erect a building on each fair site. I was not familiar with the New York one, but I was in charge of the one in San Francisco on Treasure Island, and it was my last activity with Federal Theatre. Incidentally, there was in the setting up of that theater a significant technical achievement, which has taken a firm place now in theater equipment throughout the country. This was the development of the first electronic control board for stage lighting. Previously control boards had operated through what we called resistance dimmers, lowering the intensity of light by converting the energy to heat. A man named George Izneour was on the Federal Theatre Project in Los Angeles as a kind of technical supervisor, and he devised a method of controlling the intensity of light, electronically, through the use of a radio vacuum tube. This was installed at the fair in San Francisco in the Federal Theatre Building. This was the first electronic control board. Since then it's been highly developed and installations of it have been made on a very large scale at CBS and NBC for use in television. It's also used in most modern theaters.

The Federal Theatre at the fair in San Francisco started with high hopes of being able to give to those going to the fair a great deal of good theater. Little of it materialized because by the time the fair opened, it became apparent that the general congressional attitude

about Federal Theatre was such that it probably would not last very long. There was an attempt at the Federal Theatre at the fair in San Francisco to produce some regional drama, and for this purpose several plays were written dealing with California history, particularly northern California history--the dramatization of the old San Francisco days, of Emperor Norton and so forth. Some of these were done. The production of the Negro unit of Run, Little Chillun was taken to San Francisco and became the main staple of the Federal Theatre at the fair. In addition to Run, Little Chillun, there was a considerable amount of puppet theater production and some children's theater. This was the last gasp of Federal Theatre. It's plainly on the record what happened in Congress, and that's well described in Hallie Flanagan's book.

In substance, Congress finally told Mr. Roosevelt that if the Federal Theatre budget was included in the general relief budget, they would not pass the total relief budget, which amounted to several million dollars, and so the Federal Theatre was dropped out of existence. This, as you know, was surrounded by investigations by the Un-American Activities Committee, with a sometimes amusing, but largely terrifying atmosphere connected with them.

Duttera: In the congressional position, were there men involved in the scepticism who were actually artistically sophisticated enough to evaluate it, or were these just men who were completely unable to evaluate it?

Freud: I would say completely unable. I don't think any of the few congressmen that were interested in the arts, such as [Norris] Cotton at the time and others, had any opportunity or connection with the investigation of Federal Theatre, or indeed, with the final wiping out of it. This again, in a sense, was a result of the lack of political savvy of the leadership of Federal Theatre. I feel sure they should have seen this coming in advance, and I'm sure there were congressmen and senators whom they could have rallied to the defense; but the defense came, what there was of it, much too late. There was some defense at the very end offered by people from the professional theater; Tallulah Bankhead and others went on the radio and wept and cried about the demise of Federal Theatre, but this was all in the last few days and was completely ineffective. Had there been some political savvy, I think something might have been salvaged from this, but perhaps the tenor of the times, even so, wouldn't have allowed it.

Duttera: When you say "political savvy," do you mean in the themes of the dramas themselves?

Freud: No. No. I'm referring completely to the fact that had the leadership of Federal Theatre found friends in Congress, realizing that the theater could not go on forever as a relief project, if they had laid plans to attempt some kind of a conversion, with even perhaps limited federal funds, then they might have achieved the real beginnings of

a national theater. Not that Congress at that time would have given them much money, if any, but a better job could have been done in fighting for the maintenance of a relief project, which is really what happened. The question as it was posed was: should a relief project continue or should it not continue?

I don't think that should have been the question. Obviously, its days as a relief measure were numbered, anyway. Then they should have made a plan to convert to some kind of operation. In saying this, I'm referring to the fact that nobody in Congress or in government realized what tremendous resources had been built up by these projects. I've mentioned that on the coast, there were these buildings full of wonderful costumes, properties, scenery and so forth; a strange thing about this is that when the day came that the project was finally declared out of existence, immediately all guards were taken off the project buildings. A number of my friends who were actors went in and helped themselves to costumes and photographs and scripts and so forth. All the costumes and scenery, somebody, somewhere in Washington, decided these would be nice to give to the Navy so that the sailors could do plays at sea. So they were all shipped to San Diego and then kind of disappeared. But there were enough resources, physical properties, to start a national theater, and these just evaporated. A conversion could have been made at that time--at least a

plan of some sort to store these things, and then set about to start a federal theater with local subsidies throughout the country. It was a golden opportunity, and it was muffed.

Duttera: Since the primary attack, as I understand it, came on the basis of the subversive elements, would this have been answered by a smooth administrative conversion?

Freud: No, but I don't think the attack of the House Un-American Activities Committee would have come into existence as strongly. We must remember that this period was the very beginning of the Dies Committee. They were looking for something to make themselves noteworthy about, and they fastened on Federal Theatre, which really wasn't too big an issue anyway. Very shortly, they went on to much more important and more publicity-value issues, which was really what the Dies Committee was looking for. Had a plan existed or even come into existence at the first threat of this attack, I don't think the House committee would have been particularly concerned about it. As it was, they fastened on it and began to build it, and you couldn't fight the charges made because they were ridiculous charges anyway, and how can you fight an investigation committee? The time element doesn't work in your favor.

It's always been my feeling that some kind of organized approach--for example, the appearance on radio of a large number of professionals, as I've said, pleading that the Federal Theatre Project be continued, might have been done

in a much better way by having an organized plan setup, which would involve Actors' Equity Association and the other unions in terms of a conversion from a relief project to a subsidized project of some sort, but this was not done. It was all done on an emotional, haphazard, and rather hurried manner, and this was a great failure of the leadership. I, myself, talked with Hallie about it in December of 1938, at the time that I retired from the Federal Theatre Project. She had become very despondent, but she was trying to fight for the maintenance of the Federal Theatre relief project. I said to her, "Hallie, the days of this as a relief project are doomed by the very nature of things. We cannot continue to have relief projects." But she didn't see that. She didn't see that she might fight for a conversion, and I don't think any of the others did.

Duttera: Why do you think she failed to see this?

Freud: I don't know. I suppose a whole group of people in Washington had become, like the American public, almost so well-adjusted to depression and relief by large government spending of this sort, that it had become a way of thinking, and they just couldn't think of living and operating any other way. They were perhaps hopeful that it would convert without help. I don't know, but there was some kind of anesthesia about it that stopped them from thinking that the world was going to come back to some kind of status quo that it had had before. Another factor is that we were

heading, as we knew, toward war, and this added to the unsettlement. I suppose Hallie and others felt they'd better try to fight for what they had. Why they didn't see that its days were numbered, I cannot understand.

Duttera: Were there very many people, such as yourself, who did realize that?

Freud: Oh, I think there were a good many. Yes. The last administrative director of the Federal Theatre Project here, who was brought on about eight or nine months before the end of the project, was a man named James Ullman. He was the first man of some intellectual capacity to head up the Federal Theatre Project--in fact, to head up a Federal Theatre Project, anywhere. He later wrote one of the best-selling novels. James Ullman was a mountain climber and wrote a best-seller novel in which mountain climbing was the principal ingredient in the novel--White Towers. Ullman, after the death of the project and his experience for some nine months in it, wrote in the New York Times a very interesting appraisal of his experience, and he of course realized, as I did, that some other plan than just fighting the extinction of a relief project could have been evolved.

It was Ullman's opinion, and one in which I tend to agree, that based upon his experience, a federally subsidized national theater probably would work because of the form of government we have, which is, as we all know, largely a government by pressure group, and that federal pressure groups would be too strong to ever allow a theater

to lead an untroubled existence. He felt that local subsidy might be less subject to such social pressures. I tend to agree with this, but I do think that with proper and canny maneuvering at the time, perhaps we might have had the opportunity to find out whether federal subsidy would work.

It must be remembered, too, that Federal Theatre was making some money. In the last year, its receipts were well over a million dollars, and its own receipts might have been a basis for the continuance of some converted type of national theater operation.

Duttera: Hallie Flanagan actually did not want to emphasize the receipts as a factor--other words, she wanted to play down the receipts somewhat?

Freud: When you're talking to hardheaded businessmen, the receipts didn't look too good because the project was costing-- I don't know, let's say twenty million a year--and the receipts were a million a year. Well, you don't advance a balance sheet like this to hardheaded businessmen. Nevertheless, the point is that the activity did have an earning capacity, and that earning capacity might have in the future, even without government subsidy, might possibly [have] allowed the continuance of some projects. We must remember that there were really only three projects that mattered-- New York, Los Angeles, and to a very slight extent, Chicago. The rest of them were pretty much playtime operations.

During the fall of 1938, I was still with the Federal

Theatre Project in Los Angeles, but as I've indicated, I was rather aware in my mind that this would not go on much longer, and I was apparently quite alone in this. I don't remember many of my colleagues feeling that way about it. I had taught summer session at UCLA in 1932 and '33, and then had gone to San Francisco and had not continued any association with UCLA. In the fall of 1938, I got a call from Professor [Alfred] Longueil, who was then Chairman of the English Department at UCLA, and he informed me that Evalyn Thomas, the woman who taught the two courses in dramatics that were offered (there was an acting course and a play production course), was not available to teach them. She had been at UCLA since the very earliest days of the State Normal School on the Vermont Campus, and it had suddenly been revealed that she was way past the retirement age. They had never known her age, but they finally established that she was well over seventy, and so they had to drop her--and would I come on a temporary basis and cover for her for the year? I did this while I worked on Federal Theatre, both in Los Angeles and at the World's Fair in San Francisco, up until December of 1938, and then I retired from Federal Theatre.

Duttera: What brought your final decision to retire?

Freud: The decision was that I knew the Federal Theatre was going to go out of existence anyway. But, mainly, in those two summer sessions that I had spent at UCLA, and subsequent activities that I had in San Francisco as a director of theater activities at the Jewish Community Center

there and also activities in running a camp, all of this had kind of moved my point of view away from that of a performer--which I was previously, a performer-director--to an interest in a very broad sense in teaching. This seemed to offer me an opportunity then to get into this area of teaching which I had become interested in since 1932.

In the spring of 1939, I began to realize that this might emerge into something more than a temporary assignment to the University, and that there was an inevitable development at the University in the whole field of theater arts. Of all the universities in the country, UCLA being in close proximity to Hollywood and the then radio center, it was inevitable that the University would develop in the teaching of these techniques and these areas of experiment. So I was asked to stay, and I stayed; and this temporary job that I took in the fall of 1938, I've been working at now for whatever it is--twenty-three years or something.

The University of California at that time had just passed from under the leadership of Dr. Moore, who was a very estimable man, a philosopher, who had been really the provost of the Los Angeles campus and who was largely responsible for the establishment of the present campus. But this was a man of very classic idea, as one can sense from the inscriptions on the older buildings, particularly Royce Hall; his view of a university was pretty much dictated by the visions of Oxford, Cambridge, and possibly Harvard. He further believed, as he stated somewhere, that theater was not proper and appropriate to a university

campus and that, existing as it did in close proximity to Hollywood, the University of California should be an island of cold blue intellectuality in a sea of tinsel.

Now, he had just ceased being the provost when I came in, and a mathematician named Hedrick had taken his place. Hedrick was not as opposed to theater as Moore had been. Before I came, the only play done on the campus by the University, proper, was an annual production of a Greek drama, directed by Miss Thomas and using a large number of her girl students, amplified by the football team playing the male roles. She had a Greek adoration of the human body, and the football players suited her ideal.

After I came, we began to develop a program of productions and it grew very rapidly, and the English Department, of which I was a member, began to add a few more courses. The war came, which rather slowed up progress, but even during the war, I believe it was in 1941, we finally succeeded in getting a drama curriculum established. It was not a department, but it was an association of courses from many departments, allowing a student to complete a major in the field of drama. It involved courses from art, physical education, theater, the English speech, and music. This was the basis for the development eventually of a department. Speech was a kind of a subdivision of the English Department--as, indeed, it still is--and I was really in the Speech Department. It's interesting that the speech people never set about to urge a split-off from the English

Department, and they have remained in the English Department ever since. I urged a split-off, and it was achieved when we got the drama curriculum.

The program became a very active one with a large number of students, most of them working on a completely voluntary extracurricular basis, although we called it a "co-curricular" basis, because wherever possible, we tried to integrate what we did with curricular offerings in the University.

But the final possibility of realizing a department came with the appointment of Provost Dykstra. Dykstra was an unusually wonderful person. He was, as you may know, a liberal; a man who had indulged in many battles with forces of a very conservative nature; who had been a city manager; head of the University of Wisconsin; selected by Roosevelt to be the director of Selected Service because of his completely unprejudiced point of view about people--his desire to see that Selected Service was carried out fairly. In fact, Dykstra was a man who had been considered by Roosevelt, and Roosevelt had urged him to be the Vice-President, but Dykstra refused that. Dykstra was a remarkable man, and a man possessed of a great and deep sincere love of the arts and of the theater. So it was through Dykstra that finally a committee was appointed, headed by Dean Knudsen, to study the possibility of establishing a department of theater arts, a department which would encompass the fields of theater, motion pictures, radio and eventually, as it de-

veloped, television.

This department came into existence in 1947. The local committee, headed by Dean Knudsen, offered such a plan to the provost. He then submitted it to the Educational Policy Committee on this campus, and they approved it. But in those days, the Educational Policy Committee could only act finally through a joint meeting with the Berkeley committee, and so it was essential that the Los Angeles campus committee go up to Berkeley and argue the problem of establishing a theater arts department. They took me with them as the so-called technical expert. We met with the Berkeley committee, most of whom were men of very advanced years. There was one man whom I first took to be an undergraduate, a much younger looking man. He was very vital in his objections to the establishment of a theater department in a university and fought bitterly against it. I didn't know who he was, but later it turned out to be Ralph Oppenheimer, the nuclear physicist. We won by one vote, and the man from Berkeley who tipped it in our favor was a man from the Department of Forestry in Berkeley. After the meeting we asked how come he defended the theater-- did he love the theater, or did he have some great interest in it? He said no, he voted for it because there were so many damned fool things in the University already, and he didn't see where one more would hurt.

Well, we got the department established and brought Kenneth Macgowan, a world-renowned authority on the theater,

to be the first chairman of the department.

Duttera: What was the basis for the Berkeley faculty's objection to a theater arts department?

Freud: Largely, they were men devoted to the Oxonian and Harvard point of view, that theater practice was not an appropriate area for university study. As you probably know, the European and English universities have never taught theater practice. If they've gone into theater at all, they've gone into theaterwissenschaft, the science and history of theater--never, practice. They were devoted to this point of view and believed that the theater was putting into the university a frivolous area, which was not appropriate to the university. This was their basic objection

Duttera: Did they feel that this is true primarily because of our proximity to Hollywood?

Freud: No; when they finally did agree, they agreed that if it should be anywhere in the University of California, it should be at UCLA because of its proximity to Hollywood; but that Educational Policy Committee on the Berkeley campus was opposed to it on ideological grounds. As a matter of fact, my feeling is that all the arts, with the possible exception of music which has some greater strength because of its early identity in America with ecclesiastical operations, are still the second-class citizens of the university. They are considered to be attractive, and therefore easy, and therefore sinful. The steps are not hard to take.

It's not difficult to understand this point of view when one realizes that the Puritan influence is still with us. It's our heritage; one of the first acts of the Continental Congress was a proscription against the theater. In fact, the edict was that no theater, cockfighting or gambling should go on--that it would tend to weaken the citizenry. Later, the Continental Congress, in the early part of the Revolutionary War, issued an order that any government employee attending the theater, or taking part in it, would be dismissed from office. This is rather interesting in view of the fact that I was just looking today at a page from Washington's diary in 1773, in which he attended the theater three nights running in Virginia. As you may know, he was a great theatergoer. It's interesting to know that even during the seige at Valley Forge, the American soldiers put on plays at Valley Forge.

So there was a strange dichotomy here. There was a Puritanical attitude against the theater, which we have carried on today to a kind of attitude about the theater and about people in the theater, and this is reflected to an extent in the university. At the same time, we have a strange estimation of the theater as a lovely thing to go to, but not for ourselves or our children to be connected with. It's a strange kind of split attitude, and it comes from an old heritage.

Duttera: Did you find a similar attitude toward the theater in England?

Freud: Yes. Much more in the United States than England. It is not prevalent in England at all, really, except in England where it runs in the caste system, which operates more strongly in England. That is to say, there is some discomfiture of a person of upper economic levels going into the theater. Even that, however, is disappearing in England. It's very strange because England was, of course, much more subject to the Puritanical attitudes about the theater, through the attacks of Jeremy Collier, but they soon got over them. We never really have gotten over our feeling that somehow the theater is sinful.

It may even explain a great deal of the fascination that motion picture columnists have for the public. It isn't that they really want to know anything about the art of the motion picture, but they love to read these columns and get a peek behind the curtain, particularly where a kind of attractive, glamorous sin is suggested--if not actually true, it's at least suggested. It's not a healthy attitude that we have about the theater. It's a mixed attitude. I think it's changing a little bit, but it's a long battle.

It is reflected in the university by the committees that determine educational policy. In many, many cases there's a feeling that theater courses must perforce be rather light, not very demanding on the student, which is very interestint in view of the fact that the theater students spend about three times as much time on the campus as

do students in other departments.

TAPE NUMBER: ONE, SIDE TWO

Freud: In terms of the human element of the Theater Arts Department, first, in regard to faculty members: At the beginning, as I've said earlier on the tape, we brought in Professor Kenneth Macgowan to head the department. Macgowan had had a widely varied kind of experience, starting as a newspaper critic in Boston, then moving to be a critic in New York. He was a graduate of Harvard, and the George Pierce Baker theater activity at Harvard. Then he drifted into the theater by way of his being a friend of Robert Edmond Jones and [Eugene] O'Neill, and with Jones and O'Neill took over what is called the second phase of the Provincetown Playhouse, that second phase being a period of the Provincetown Playhouse when the originator of it, George Cram Cook, had given up in some despair, given up because he felt that a theater dedicated to the production of new plays was a hopeless task because success would inevitably ruin it. Cook had a kind of a love of failure. So Macgowan, O'Neill and Jones took that over and had a kind of a new approach to it, but had a very successful couple of years in New York, where they were known as a triumverate.

Following that experience, Macgowan went into other areas of theater production and stopped being a critic and became a theater producer. Then in the early transition of the movies from silent film to the talkies, Macgowan came out here and became a motion picture producer, particularly

with Darryl Zanuck. In fact, he was frequently referred to as Darryl Zanuck's brain trust. He produced one of the first classics in color for talking pictures, Vanity Fair, and then went through a succession of pictures which he produced. Perhaps the most interesting one from a social comment point of view was the one starring Tallulah Bankhead, called Lifeboat.

After these years of being a producer of motion pictures, he had amassed sufficient money to guarantee his security for the rest of his life, and he turned to the area which was quite obviously his prime interest--the world of the intellectual and the university--and he welcomed the opportunity to come here.

Just as Macgowan had had a varied connection with the professional theater, so did most of the earlier members of the department, among whom were Professor Melnitz, who is currently the acting Dean of the new College of Fine Arts. Professor Melnitz had been extremely active in the theater in Germany, being director of the Völks Buhne, and at the time of Hitler had to come to America. Not being able to handle the English language too well, he finally became a student at UCLA, and gained his doctorate here. The award of his doctorate happened to coincide with the establishment of the department, and he became a member of the departmental faculty. So here again was a man of wide theatrical background.

Walden Boyle was a man who happened to have a doctoral degree, but in addition to that, had had several years of professional experience as a stage manager and actor in New York. In the second year, we added Henry Schnitzler, the son of Arthur Schnitzler, the famed Austrian playwright, and Schnitzler, too, of course, was a man who 'was raised in the theater.' The majority of the faculty, then, in those early years of the department, were men who either had gained their entire education in the theater, or who had at least combined a normal academic education ending in the degree of doctorate, with a career in the theater, and so we had that kind of double-barrel quality to our faculty.

In more recent years, this has of necessity, I believe, diminished, so that today the majority of our faculty are men whose whole experience in the theater arts has been gained within the confines of a university. There is a trap here of simplifying it one way or the other. It is my opinion, however, that the ingredient of professional experience is a needed ingredient in the faculty, just as it is, I believe, in any professional school. Certainly a school of medicine in which the faculty was largely composed of men who had never faced the problem of the operating room or the actual practice of medicine would not amount to a very effective medical school. The problem in the theater arts, however, is that opportunities for gaining experience in the professional theater are rare, and when

they are gained, are much more remunerative than the university salaries are; therefore, if people get into the theater or motion pictures or television, et cetera, they tend to stay in it. Our hope, therefore, lies largely in getting men of the quality of Macgowan who have amassed enough economic security and are still young enough to spend ten or so years in the field of teaching, and I hope that is developed more than we have developed it in recent years.

In terms of the students, this is a very hard matter to report on. That is, it is hard to point out individual students who have entered one or another of the theater arts professions, and to have a ready list. We probably should, as a department, have such a list. I can only say, in essence, that about seventy-five percent of our motion picture majors and our television majors do find themselves within one phase or another of the theater arts within a year after graduation. The theater majors tend not to be so high, largely because there are more theater majors of a feminine persuasion than there are motion picture or television majors. I suppose many of these go into a career of marriage and homemaking rather than a career of the theater. On the whole, though, our record of contributing to the professional world of the theater arts is a pretty good one.

As I was talking here, I was looking at a program of a show done in the very first year of the department (1947),

a play called Footprints on the Ceiling, which was an original play. Just looking at random down the list, I see that the words and music are by William Barnes, who is now known as Billy Barnes, and has a show called Billy Barnes' People currently playing in Hollywood, a show, which incidentally has toured in England. I next see the name of Nordstrom Whitehead, who was a teaching assistant in the department at that time and who is now a program director at a local television station. I see the name of John H. Widney, who is an actor in New York at the present time; George Eckstein who is a producer of the Billy Barnes show, both in England, here in Hollywood and in New York. Other names pop up, such as Lynn Stallmaster, a student at that time, playing in the cast. Lynn Stallmaster is now the head of perhaps the biggest casting office in television. If one looks at television shows now, you usually see at the end of it, casting by--and then the name of the Stallmaster firm. I would say he casts at least a third of the television shows currently being produced in Hollywood. Another name, Burton Nodella is now a leading casting man and director of subjects with MCA, the Music Corporation of America.

Well, these names I've picked out quite at random from one program. I noticed, too, of course, that a number of these are now teachers. I see the name of Virginia Barnell, who is a teacher in a local high school; Stewart Hyde, who is a teacher at USC currently. I would say, probably

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within the compass of this program, there are five or six men and women just from this list who have gone into the field of teaching theater. So this may be a representative way of telling you what happens to students.

Duttera: There is a long-standing argument or discussion about the merits of an actor or a professional theater performer going right into his profession from high school rather than going into the university. Now, can you discuss that?

Freud: Yes. Well, the answer is fundamentally very simple. There are two kinds of performers, and I think this question is almost perforce limited to performers. There are two kinds of performers in the world of the theater arts. One of those who contribute to the theater, youth--and quite obviously, sex--and these are best and usually selected from the lower age levels. Therefore, if a student in high school shows extremely great virtuosity as a performer, not just in the estimation of his or her mother, or maiden aunt, but by someone who offers him a job, and he or she is the type of glamour girl or Adonis that fits the present state of the entertainment business, he or she would be very stupid not to take advantage of that particular door which only youth can open. On the other hand, this is relatively a very small percentage of performers in the theater arts.

Most of the performers in theater arts are effective in relation to their maturity, not only their chronological maturity but their maturity of mind and experience and understanding, and for this larger majority, it is better for them to go through a college training for two reasons: first, and perhaps the least important, that they get at least a general cultural background within the limits of the present-day university to give it; and second, the university offers them one of the few areas now left for them to learn the theater by making mistakes in performance. Now that the stock companies no longer exist and community theaters are rather rare, the university does represent the best practical training ground for these students who will take some years of maturation before they're actually ready to perform. It should be remembered that the average leading lady's age in motion pictures today is around thirty-five, and the average leading man's age is around forty. The same thing is true in New York. There are the exceptions, as I've pointed out, of those who are very young. It is therefore better, if you're in that group which will probably succeed later in life, to gain the advantages that the university can offer.

Duttera: In terms of college theater arts departments, how does UCLA's stack up? Does it suffer by the proximity to Hollywood or does it actually gain an advantage?

Freud: No. I think it gains an advantage from its pro-

ximity to Hollywood. At least, it offers us a touch with the realities of the business of the theater arts that a university situated in a small college town or even a large city that is not a center of theater arts activity would not have. We do have a chance to have many people from the profession come in, at our invitation, and talk to classes. It also gives our students a chance to actually observe professional activities. For instance, our television people go down and see television programs made. All these advantages of being near Hollywood, I think, far outweigh any tendency to lead our students to think it's a glamour business.

In fact, that may even be an added advantage, that being so close to it, they're not so struck by the glamour. I know that in such universities as the University of Utah, even a second-or third-rate Hollywood star who by some device or some trick of fate, happens to come to the Salt Lake City campus, the whole department almost does genuflections before this mighty hero. Well, of course, we're too used to people from motion pictures to be that lost.

Duttera: How did the McCarthy era affect the University as you saw it as an issue?

Freud: Well, actually, I think perhaps the direct business of the McCarthy Committee did not affect us as much as perhaps the California Committee on Un-American Activities. I think both effects, as far as the arts were concerned,

were rather negligible. The most dramatic impact of the fervent anti-American investigations occurred with the holding on this campus of the Writers' Conference. This was a conference (I think it was in late '42 or early 1943), fundamentally brought about by the activities of many members of the Screen Writers' Guild, who were anxious to have a conference to see how well writers could integrate their efforts with the general war effort of the period. To this end, they, together with the University, invited a great many writers, many of them from other parts of the world--England, France, Germany, and I believe, one or two from Russia--and held on this campus a conference. It was, if I remember correctly, a three-day conference with a great many panel discussions, some general meetings, a great many subjects under investigation and study.

There were two co-chairmen of this conference: on the professional side, Marc Connelly the playwright represented the profession; and on the University side, I was the co-chairman representing the University. About a month after this conference was held, many of us, including Mr. Connelly and myself, received subpoenas from the Tenney Committee, which was the California Committee on Un-American Activities. Together with us, were those members of the Writers' Conference who later were the people who became famous, or infamous, depending upon your point of view, as the Hollywood Ten, such people as John Howard Lawson and

Albert Maltz, et cetera, et cetera.

This, however, had very little effect on the University. It gave some of us a considerable sense of strength; by and large, the officials of the University acted with dignity and strength. There was no hint of chastising any University person who was connected with the venture. President Sproul made several public statements of considerable strength in defense of the holding of such a conference. If there was any effect, I think it may have been a fairly good one.

In the arts, this is the only time McCarthyism, in the sense of fervent committee investigation, ever touched the campus. It is not the only time it touched the campus, but in the arts I believe it was. It's noteworthy that since then, never have we in the department been pressured into doing or not doing any particular play or picture, on any subject, because of its political implications, and this is interesting in view of the fact that, of course, our plays are done for the general public, and the general public indeed makes up a good eighty percent of our audience. Our pictures, in many cases, are distributed by University Extension, and so there is an area there of susceptibility to pressure groups from the outside.

There have been some group pressures; for instance, there were group pressures expressed, if not brought to bear heavily upon us, for doing Arthur Miller's The Crucible.

But again, we were defended by the administration of the University for doing a play which was an acknowledged contemporary expression of ideas about the world. I am not the person to comment on the other ways in which McCarthyism affected the University, such as in the matter of the famous battle about the oath, or indeed in certain other areas, such as the investigation that was held in Kerckhoff Hall by the State Un-American Activities Committee on the whole operation of the University, a meeting in which, incidentally, Chancellor Dykstra covered himself with great honor.

But certainly in terms of the arts, I don't think we were affected except as the arts may currently be generally affected. I'm borrowing here an idea in a sense from John Howard Lawson; the theater arts tend, it seems to me-- not because they're forced to, necessarily--to veer away from discussions now of a political sense, to veer more and more toward the field of Freudian psychology. Whether that is true here or not, I'm not prepared to say. It is certainly true generally, of the theater arts.

In terms of the plays our students write here (many one-act plays are done in our one-act play series), they are affected certainly by a dedication to deep Freudian investigation of character as they see it, but also many of the plays have quite a bit of social and political comment in them, and certainly nobody has tried to modify this or stop it.

Duttera: Do you think drama suffers or actually flourishes with a political or socially significant theater?

Freud: Well, social content and political content is part of the content that belongs in theater, and when it diminishes to a vanishing point, the theater has lost something.

The theater has to be a very catholic thing, involving many, many phases of the life flow around us, and certainly the political scene and the social scene is part of that life flow around us. When, for one reason or another, the theater ceases to interest itself in these phases, obviously it is not as rich a theater.

Duttera: So you think that preoccupation with the autobiographical and psychoanalytical somewhat diminishes the richness.

Freud: Oh, I think there's no question about it. No question about it.

Duttera: Is it generally true of American drama, or just of college drama?

Freud: No. I think it's more true of the professional theater than it is in the nonprofessional. I could qualify that, though. It is most true of a movement in America for which we once had great hope, and that's the community theater movement. It is the community theaters that seem to be the most intimidated by pressure groups and who have most exclusively, of all types of theater, left completely the realm of any social or political comment. There's hardly a community theater in the country which has the courage to do even such a play as The Crucible, which by its very

virtue of its being laid in a period of a couple of hundred years ago is hardly of immediate social impact, and yet you will find that this is seldom done in community theaters, for fear that somebody may take issue with it. The professional theater is influenced, not quite so much, but certainly political and social comment there has diminished greatly in the last twenty years. I think the university theater is perhaps affected least, and is least subject to controls either being placed upon it, or being suspicious or afraid that controls might be placed upon it. From that point of view, the university theater may be the freest theater in the country at the present time.

Duttera: How would you explain its freedom from pressures?

Freud: Let me hasten to add: I'm talking out of an experience at one university. I'm sure that this amount of freedom is not characteristic of all universities. I happen to know, however, that most of the larger state universities have this freedom now, although at periods during the McCarthy hysteria, they did not have it. On the other hand, the smaller colleges that have dramatic departments or that offer dramatic courses, in many cases are under a sectarian subsidy or guidance, and these tend to be rather subject to controls. But I think the larger universities throughout the country, like us, have a high degree of freedom.

Duttera: And why do you suppose that is? Why are we freer in a university than in the professional theater?

Freud: I don't know why, unless there is a fundamental

recognition on the part of the leading administrators of the universities that it is our job, as [Clark] Kerr said, "Not to make ideas safe for people but to make students safe for ideas." It does reflect something that I think the universities had to get back to, which was a recognition of just what their job was, and I think the McCarthy hysteria jeopardized their conviction in this for a while. But I think they've gotten back to it.

Duttera: You mention some effect was felt by group pressures and this was particularly notable in the showing of The Crucible. Can you tell me a little about the group pressures?

Freud: In The Crucible, I remember that we had a letter from a prominent alumnus who said that he enjoyed the performance thoroughly, but he took issue with a statement in the program, which we had asked a professor of history on the campus to write. However, when you read the gentleman's letter, you saw that it was not just that, that bothered him, but also the content of the play. He obviously didn't want to say so, because to do so would have implied that he felt that we were treating of a historical subject in the contemporary time. He was stopped from doing that; so he took issue with the letter by the professor in question. His letter was turned over to the professor who gave a brilliant reply to it, but here again, the administration of the University took no action on this whatever--either

way. We have had quite a number of experiences of this sort; in a certain play we did, I believe it was a dance-drama version of John Brown's Body by Stephen Vincent Benet, a Negro boy danced with a white girl. I had a telephone conversation the next day with a woman who said that she and her daughter, who was a student here, had attended the play the night before, and that she, the mother, was a daughter of a baron and that if this was the kind of thing that was going on at the University, she would withdraw her daughter. I was happy to be able to tell her that the Negro with whom the girl was dancing happened to be the student-body president, elected by the rest of the student body, but she made another reference to being the daughter of a baron and hung up.

We have had that kind of thing, but seldom revolving around the content of the plays themselves. It's interesting that we are free from this. Either we have an audience that has come to expect a certain amount of controversial content, and we've lost those who don't want it. Whatever it is, our audience seems to accept practically anything we do, as long as it's done in good taste and in effective performance.

Duttera: None of the pressures, then, were actually from Regents or from any group that had power?

Freud: We've never had any pressure from the Regents, nor from any top administrator of the campus.

Duttera: What about the general attitude within the department on the oath or the requirement of the oath before the Supreme Court decision?

Freud: Well, I suppose our department was rather typical of most. I'd say that seventy-five percent of the department wasn't too vitally interested. One or two were extremely vocal in opposition to the oath up until it came time to sign it, and then they signed it. A few of us went on record one way and another, particularly by donations to the fund to support those who had not taken the oath. I would say probably our department was pretty much like most other departments. I think the younger members were intimidated more into keeping their mouths shut about it because they were new and didn't want to get into any trouble. So they took that point of view. None of our people left because of the oath, as they did in one or two other departments on the Los Angeles campus.

I don't think it affected our department too much, and this may be typical of the theater. It must be remembered that during the days of the Russian revolution, Stanislavski's Moscow Art Theater just went on rehearsing and only stopped momentarily when the shooting in the street got so loud, and then went right back to rehearsing. While people in the theater have, in many cases, strong political convictions, they tend to not get involved in the immediate conflict regarding those points of view they have. What they

hope to do, if they hope to do anything, is to do it through the medium of their means of expression--the theater. I don't know whether I'm being very clear here, but it's a point of view about it at least.

Duttera: You mentioned the subpoenas by the Tenney Committee. What was the justification for these subpoenas? What was the nature of them?

Freud: That we had personnel in the conference and content in the conference which espoused a Socialist point of view, a Marxian point of view, and that this was against American well-being.

Duttera: There actually was no legislation foreseen by this committee?

Freud: No, of course not, although Mr. [R.E.] Combs, who was the attorney for the Tenney Committee, always gave a very nicely-worded preface to their meetings or their investigations, reminding us that the purpose was to prepare legislation; but I don't know of any legislation that ever came out of it.

Duttera: Do you think that this sort of harassment, however, which was carried on at a very high level and was definitely harassment of a sort, does have effect on the people who write, who do create, and tends to inhibit to an extent?

Freud: Oh, I think it very definitely does, but in a day when all the theater arts--even the theater, which is the least dominated--are big business, it is not so much the

writer who is directly intimidated, as the producers and the people who foot the bills for the entertainment or the work of the theater, whatever it may be. The writer will write, after all, what he's told to write, in most phases of the present-day theater arts. The writer today is not a man who sits down to write an idea or to write something that's burning within him to say, in most cases. He is writing, for example, for television, according to a pattern that he's been handed to write by--for a particular star, a particular series, a particular set of circumstances. In motion pictures, this is a little less true, but also to a great extent true. He is brought in as one of several writers on a film that is to be written. The general pattern of this film--its content, its plot, everything--has been pretty well been decided in advance. It's only in the theater, and perhaps only there in the far reaches of the theater--off Broadway--that the writer, writing something just purely from inner conviction, does so, because to do it anywhere else wouldn't make any sense. The writer today in ninety-nine percent of the theater arts is reduced by economic structure of the theater to being a kind of "schneiderman" of writing. He's a tailor of writing; he writes to fit the star or to fit the established plot or series or whatever it may be. There are, of course, some writers who make their money doing this and then on the side write an occasional thing out of their guts, which

is done in some obscure off-Broadway or off-Hollywood theater. But certainly the opportunity for the playwright today to really say what he is convinced about is pretty limited.

Duttera: Why do you suppose, then, that it is more financially feasible to write in a psychoanalytical mood than it is in any other?

Freud: In this, as I said before, I agree with John Howard Lawson. The preoccupation of not only writers, who really only reflect a national preoccupation, but the preoccupation of the general public, with what they think is analytical psychology, creates a market for plays which take that point of view. It also constitutes an escape from reality, which is the main point Lawson makes, which I think is very valid. By interesting yourselves in the problems of a girl whose lover was killed in an airplane crash before she gave herself to him, who then spends the rest of her life in confusion looking for replacements for that particular man, all this has nothing really much to do with anything, but with that particular girl--and she never really existed. So it is an escape from reality. This is hardly a common problem. When you examine most of the psychoanalytic plays, you find them to be very atypical problems. They are not general problems. I think [Sigmund] Freud would be the first one to say so. They are aberrant problems. They're far from being typical problems. So it's, therefore, a kind of escape.

Duttera: Do you see this sort of drama or these themes actually making any kind of significant drama which will live through the centuries?

Freud: It won't make any significant drama because of that. Where there might be some continuing life to the drama, it will be because of the excellence of the writing in some cases. In some of Tennessee Williams, there are strains of really pure beauty, poetic beauty almost, in writing. If it lives at all, it will be because of that, not because of the psychoanalytical content.

Duttera: So that you can universalize, you can expand your consciousness because of its beauty?

Freud: That's right. I think we will see a change, if, hopefully, we see a change in the body politic. The main point, as I see it in all this, is that the theater, more even than the other arts, is a reflective mirror for society, usually reflecting it a little in retrospect; the mirror is seldom in the theater or in drama turned ahead, always turned back, looking back a little. This is why, for instance, we didn't have any plays about the Civil War until about seventeen or eighteen years after the Civil War. We always come after the fact. We reflect backwards. When we begin to see a few plays appear that represent a study of American fiber in the character of our country, a kind of determination toward some kind of a true democracy in our country, when we see that happen in the theater, we'll know that it has already happened to the body politic be-

cause the theater works a little bit backwards, much more so than painting.

Duttera: Is this true of all theater, or is this unique to American theater?

Freud: No. I think it's true, by and large, of all theater. One can say, for instance, that Ibsen broke upon the world with a new concept of the emancipation of woman. Well, he didn't. The emancipation of woman had started well before then, but he came at a very apt time to dramatize that emancipation, but he certainly didn't create it. The theater seldom creates a national or world point of view. It may reinforce one.

Duttera: This is theme, not technique, you're talking about?

Freud: I'm talking now of theme content; technique is different, of course. Within a given style of theme, it will perhaps innovate many different techniques, but it doesn't tend to innovate themes until those themes are somehow related to the pattern of some potential audience group of the community.

Duttera: Speaking of technique, did you find that there was a willingness to experiment with new techniques at the University, theatrically?

Freud: Oh, yes. That's what we can do that can hardly be done anywhere else. The universities have made great contributions to the whole business of the technical side of the theater, both in terms of trying new techniques of writing

techniques of expression. The university is the only place where that can be done now, because it is the only place where it isn't too exorbitant from a financial point of view.

Duttera: Do you think it's as true now as it was in the beginning?

Freud: Oh, I think so, yes This is part and parcel of the university theater.

Duttera: Is it not possibly one of its main contributions?

Freud: I think so. I started to say "obviously,"--hopefully, the generations of students now passing through the university theater arts departments are those who will create a new theater. Therefore, they must have the opportunity to be a part of experimentation here in order to be prepared to face the problems of new types of theater, new areas of content that the theater, hopefully, will take unto itself--the theater arts, motion pictures and everything else. It's appropriate and proper and almost undeniable that we must have this experimental drive, or we are not doing a job of teaching. We also must respect the student's desire to experiment, even though we, from the heights of our experience and maturity, may think he will fail, because perhaps he won't. The student's right to a certain amount of experiment is a very important right and must be protected.

Duttera: Could you tell me what production problems are unique to the university which are not true in the professional theater?

Freud: There are really very few. The only one is the matter of casting. The university in production can do scenically the equivalent of a \$50,000 production in New York with the greatest of ease. It can select any play from any area of literature; therefore, it can do practically any play it wants to. The one thing that it cannot do-- it cannot have a very high variety of casting. In other words, most of the roles will be played by people roughly the same age and in the same condition of experience and background. It's in the acting of the productions that we will never be able to go beyond a certain point--perhaps never should go beyond a certain point of perfection. In those other areas, we can have a high degree of perfection.

Duttera: When you say that we can freely, without temerity, make a very expensive production, are you speaking of the costuming, lighting and so on?

Freud: The physical production.

Duttera: We have these available to us.

Freud: We have them available to us because we make them. Because of the fact that we have large numbers of students, we therefore have what amounts to a large labor force. Perhaps we depend upon it a little too much; we pile upon the student almost too much of that side of the chore of the theater. However, that's a personal opinion; the department doesn't think so. But the result of this large labor force--slave labor force, if you will--is that we

can have a magnificence of production that, as I say, would be of a major production standard, even on Broadway.

Duttera: Would you say, then that the desirability of experimenting, plus the availability of a splendid production, pretty much encompasses the differences between the professional and the nonprofessional theater, or are there other theoretical differences?

Freud: Well, there is, of course, a fundamental difference. Perhaps the best word that describes, or the best way to talk about the two types of theater in America, is to talk about the investment theater and the noninvestment theater. The Broadway theater is now an investment theater. Indeed, it's a strange kind of investment theater. In the first place, the New York theater is really a subsidized theater, because it's subsidized by tax deductions, not only in terms of admission tickets which are bought by people who then charge them against expense accounts, but a tremendous amount of the investment of backing in the Broadway theater is also done by people who have exhausted their charity deductions in income tax and are looking for a business that is interesting, which may fail, which will most likely lose their money, but is interesting enough to give a little fillip to it. For example, people will invest, let us say, five hundred dollars in a New York show. For that they will get the privilege of going to the preliminary auditions of the casting. They'll be allowed to go to a

dress rehearsal or will have tickets reserved for them at the out-of-town opening--in New Haven or somewhere. They will be given two sets of tickets on the opening night, and if the show doesn't earn them back their five hundred dollars, they write it off as a tax deduction. This is all an investment business in New York, the Broadway theater.

The other type of theater, which includes university theater as one of its subdivisions, is the noninvestment theater, and perhaps this is the best way of separating the two, because there is then a fundamental difference. The noninvestment theater is done for some reason other than a return on investment. It may be an art theater. It may be a community theater. It may pay money to its actors; it may be a professional theater in that sense, but no one is hoping to make a big return on it. Therefore, it is not an investment theater. It is driven by some desire other than just a return on an investment. The university theater is part of that noninvestment theater, and the university theater, admittedly, is perhaps our only fairly well subsidized theater, in that almost all university theaters, while they pay their production costs out of their income from the sale of tickets, rely upon the university to supply them in terms of the faculty with not only the directorial and technical force for the presentation of the play, but also the theaters in which to play. In a sense, the university is the furthest along the line of the non-investment differentiation of the two types of theater.

Duttera: Now, I would like to eventually talk with you about the Ramona Theater as a community project. I think we probably could go from the university theater as a non-investment theater to the community theater.

TAPE NUMBER: TWO, SIDE ONE\*

Freud: I have to talk about the Ramona Pageant which since 1923 has been produced annually by the two towns of Hemet and San Jacinto, California. This is a dramatization of a very popular novel published in 1885 by Helen Hunt Jackson, a novel which has been compared in its effect to the effect of Uncle Tom's Cabin. And indeed Mrs. Jackson did claim that she was trying to do for the American Indian, in her novel, what Harriet Beecher Stowe had presumably done for the American Negro in Uncle Tom's Cabin.

Helen Hunt Jackson came to California in the late seventies to do a series of articles for Harper's magazine on the California missions, and at that time she had no interest in the California Indian, no interest in the reservations, in fact nothing but an interest in doing a kind of travel series for Harper's magazine. There was no kind of interest in social comment of any kind. She didn't return to California for nine years, but during those nine years in Boston--I believe it was Boston--she heard a lecture by a Midwestern Indian--a Cherokee or some other tribe, I forget which--in which he recounted the terrible conditions under which the reservation Indian was living, and how he was exploited and so forth. This inspired her to return to California and to devise some kind of dramatic

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\*Side One was the only side utilized.

treatment of the California Indian. So in the early 1880's, she came back to California and set about to look into this whole business of how the California Indian was treated by the government and by the citizens of California.

There had been an early settler in Los Angeles, a Scotchman by the name of Hugo Reid, who had married an Indian woman and who published a series of articles in the Los Angeles Star on the plight of the American Indian as detailed to him by his wife, who was a very quite well-educated and quite a superior Mission Indian woman. These letters to the Los Angeles Star formed part of the basis of Helen Hunt Jackson's information for the story of Ramona. In fact the story of Ramona concerns a girl who was the daughter of a Scotchman, and it is quite evident that this particular part of the story was based upon the actual story of Hugo Reid's marriage to the Indian squaw.

Helen Hunt Jackson also met a rather fascinating person here, an Easterner who had come out here as quite a young man with a considerable fortune which he had inherited from his cigaret-concern family, a man named Abbot Kinney. Abbot Kinney was for the nineties a kind of rebel and a man of pronounced eccentric social ideas, such as eugenics. He also published the first agricultural journal in California; he had a lot to do with the planting of eucalyptus trees throughout California. He was a very colorful and many-sided personality. Later, of course,

after the Helen Hunt Jackson period, he founded what he believed would be the ideal home for people of taste and who love to live; he founded Venice, California, with its canals. It is kind of a commentary of what finally happened in Venice.

It is quite evident in reading what remains of the correspondence between Kinney and Helen Hunt Jackson that there was a great mutual attraction between the two of them, and that she was not the rather dumpy, a very Victorian-looking woman as you see in the pictures, but rather a quite dynamic person. She finally got herself appointed with Kinney to travel throughout the California reservations, and they took about a four-week tour by buckboard, and they stayed at the various reservations.

It was on this trip that she gathered together the bits of material: an incident in Santa Barbara about a torn altar cloth; and an incident, of course, from the story of Hugo Reid, the Scotchman who married an Indian woman; an incident down in San Jacinto of an Indian who had been shot for stealing a horse and whose murderer was immediately excused from any penalty. All these bits and pieces of information which she gathered on this trip and during her sojourn in California, she put together in a typical Victorian romantic novel called Ramona. This was published in 1885--which is also the year she died. She died in San Francisco.

The novel became an immediate success and became almost a required "must" reading for certainly well into this century. It was obvious that someone would attempt to dramatize it, and the first dramatization was done by the California Landmark Society, which was an early version of the California Historical Society. It was done first in Los Angeles and then one performance was given in Riverside, but this version (this was around 1905) was awkward and ungainly and nothing ever happened about it.

Now the publication of Ramona was coincident with an attempt by a number of people in southern California to glorify our Spanish heritage and to kind of recapture the color, the supposed color, of the Mexican and Spanish background, an enterprise which was very actively engaged in by such people as Frank Miller in Riverside who built the Mission Inn, with its catacombs and so forth. Of course, the recreation or recapturing of this supposed Mexican-Spanish heritage had a great deal to do with luring more and more tourists and more and more settlers to California. So this became a kind of lodestar for people from the East.

Along with this, the story of Ramona began to assume a kind of a reality. Ramona, the story that all these people had read in the East, became very real to them, and the southern Californians were not loath to disabuse this idea that it was really true history. So people were seized

upon; for instance, one tribe of Indians, as a matter of fact, produced the woman whose husband had been shot for stealing a horse and they said that she was the original Ramona. She was even interviewed, and about 1910, a phonograph recording was made of this woman who claimed to be the real Ramona. So bit by bit, the character of Ramona became a real person, and it is one of those instances where a completely fictional character becomes more real than many a real character. The same thing of course is what happened to William Tell. Throughout Switzerland one sees statues of William Tell, but of course he never really existed. And so today one can still go down to San Diego and pay a quarter and go into Ramona's wedding chapel, where she is presented as being entirely a historical character-- a woman who never really existed.

The town of San Jacinto is a very old southern California town as a town, as such towns go. It was first an asistencia of the San Luis Rey Mission, beginning about 1820, and in 1840 one of the Picos built his home in San Jacinto. And this town of San Jacinto, around 1915, began to agitate for the production of an outdoor presentation of the story of Ramona, but the First World War intervened, and the thing did not become a reality until the two towns, San Jacinto and Hemet, about 1921, began to talk seriously of doing this. They finally secured the services of a man named Garnet Holme, who had done pageants the

length and breadth of California. We have a master's thesis in the department [Theater Arts] called, Garnet Holme: California Pageant-Maker. He originated the Mount Tamalpais Play in San Francisco. He did direct the Mission Play, although he did not originate it. He did do a Palm Spring play, an outdoor pageant called the Taquiz. He did plays in the Forest Theater in Carmel. He was in the forefront in California of what was a national movement during the teens and the twenties, a movement toward a popular outdoor theater, a theater of the masses, a theater which, incidentally, has practically gone out of existence except for a few instances.

Garnet Holme was hired then by the two towns to do a dramatization of the Helen Hunt Jackson story and to find a place to do it. They found a site outside the city of Hemet which was formed by three rather large hills and which formed a kind of natural bowl, with the audience seated on the side of one hill and the play being performed at the base of the three hills and up the sides of the other two. The play was produced, as I said at the very first, in 1923, with a minimal amount of money, and with the people climbing up, way up from the valley below--actually hiking up, a very steep hike--to sit and see the play. But there was a kind of an effect with this performance, an effect of utter reality by virtue of the fact that it was not played at night with artificial lighting but rather played in

direct sunlight, in this completely natural surrounding. And it had a kind of credibility that perhaps no play could ever have in an enclosed theater.

In the years since 1923, the pageant has grown and grown in terms of an audience appeal. All money made by the pageant has been turned back into improving the site, improving the comforts of the patrons and so forth. They have played, during these years, to approximately 400,000 people. It now has a bowl, seating 6,000 (that is an audience-seating capacity), in the same site which was originally selected by Garnet Holme. It plays three weekends, with a performance on Saturday and Sunday, and so it plays to about 36,000 people a year.

It is unique in terms of a community enterprise; it is extremely well run. It still retains the complete integration of community in the production in that all the parts in the production, except for the few leading ones, are played by townspeople. There are large paved parking areas now and all the parking attendants are local businessmen. In fact, the whole operation is done by the people of the two towns, a uniquely successful community operation still running on an almost completely volunteer basis.

Playing now, in a way it seems dated. Certainly if one reads it, it is almost laughably dated--it is a Victorian melodrama of almost the worst kind. And yet for some reason, when it is played in the site that it is played in--which is a kind of thoroughly proper place to play it--it still

nevertheless seems to have a kind of credibility and kind of effect about it.

Each year auditions are held for all the roles, although quite obviously many times the same person plays the role for a good many years. There are still some people playing in it, not in major roles but in crowds at least, who were in that very first production in 1923. But there are others playing major roles who have played from anywhere from six, eight, nine to ten years. However, there is no assurance that the person will be given the part year after year. He will only be given it if he still seems to be very good and still better than anyone else who tries out for it. Every year auditions are held for all the parts in the show, and of course it is an honor to be selected for one of the roles. There are about twenty major roles in the show, that is speaking roles, that are sought after by the townspeople.

\* Duttera: Does this include the roles of Ramona and Alesandro?

Freud: No. The two main roles are played by professional people who are hired, although there have really been very few changes in them. By that I mean, when a man is found to play this Indian, Alesandro, he usually plays it for a number of years. The present player of Alesandro has just finished his ninth year of playing it. He happens to be of Spanish descent, a man named Jara, who also works in pictures and television. There have been a succession of

\* asterisk indicates that the question and subsequent questions so marked have been reconstructed by the interviewee. See Interview History page for further explanation.

more Ramonas actually than Alesandros, although there was one recent Ramona who played Ramona for nine years. The more recent one would naturally be rehired for the past three years. But these are purely professional actors and actresses that would be hired for these two leading parts; the rest of the parts, however, are strictly local amateurs.

We attempt to choose professional people--we have made some mistakes--who will fit into a community that still may be, in southern California, the most--I was going to say "backward," it may not be backward--the most conventional kind of community in southern California, in the best sense of what a conventional community means. I'm not saying this very well. What I mean to say is this: that the towns of Hemet and San Jacinto are not on any main highway (they are off the main inland highway to San Diego, Highway 395). There is not a great deal of travel through the two towns. The two towns, particularly San Jacinto, are, as southern California towns go, quite old. They are dominated by the people who settled there, anywhere from fifty, sixty or seventy years ago. Therefore, the two towns have a kind of tradition and a kind of solidity that is not characteristic today of southern California towns, many of which were, only six or seven years ago, orange groves. In such a town, therefore, with this pageant which for so many years has been a big event in the town, which has had a great deal to do with bringing these two towns into a kind of cooperation, it is necessary that we hire people who will

fit into that kind of environment--it is not the environment of even such towns as Claremont and Pomona and some of these more recent towns that have sprung up out of orange groves and so forth.

\* Duttera: Are these farming communities?

Freud: They are completely so. The agricultural crops have changed; the main crop now is potatoes. It used to be more predominantly apricots and olives, although those are still big products, but the main crop now of the two towns is potatoes. The two towns also are developing very fast as retirement towns; the large part of the population are retired people. But they are a different type of retired people than one finds in some other southern California communities. They are almost "semi-retired" people; they are people who are partially retired but are still gainfully employed in one way or another, and usually in service operations of some sort.

One interesting thing about the two towns is that there is an intense rivalry between them. The towns now have practically grown together. Their centers are four miles apart, but it is hard to distinguish when you leave one town and arrive in the other. But the rivalry goes way back to a dispute over water rights, and from San Jacinto, which was the old town, a lot of its people left and formed the town of Hemet, four miles away. This created a bitterness about sixty years ago which continues today, particularly

upon the part of San Jacinto, which has not grown as much as Hemet. So the two towns have separate school systems, separate local governments and every attempt to date to have them engage in a cooperative school system, with the obvious benefits that would come from a unified school system, has failed. Attempts are still being made. The two towns only get together on two things: one, of course, is the pageant of which both towns are equally proud; and the other is the cemetery which is equidistance between the two towns. -

\* Duttera: What caused the split?

Freud: Water problems were involved in it. The other factor in it was the one thing one might expect--a promoter, who was a very able promoter, got the vision of a town in that particular area of the valley. A man named Whittier, who seized upon this water thing as one of the elements, one of the reasons for justifying the establishment of a new town.

\* Duttera: Is the popularity of the pageant due to press-agentry?

Freud: No. Actually there now is fairly good press-agentry, and we use the same promotion personnel that is used by the Civil Light Opera. But it is not press-agentry that has done it. It's a fact that there is a fundamental appeal about outdoor theater, and that with the fadeout of what had been hoped would be a great national movement and a type of theater, which it was expected would be extremely suc-

cessful in California because of its more beneficent climate condition, it has practically gone out of existence. So this remains the only southern California outdoor theater there is, and one of the few examples throughout the country.

Now there is a certain kind of recreational experience that one gets from outdoor theater which doesn't come from anything else. One gets theater, but one also gets air, which is increasingly becoming more and more rare in southern California. One sits there under clear skies instead of half-obscuring smog. It is a nice automobile ride; it is the kind of thing that one can take the whole family to, so there is no babysitter problem and it occurs at the right time of day for that. All of these factors create a word-of-mouth activity going which is much more important than any press-agentry could be.

It is true too that the Ramona legend has not diminished, that most people today, I imagine, who know of Ramona at all, believe that there actually was a Ramona. In fact, people who come to the pageant point up to the hut that we built up on the side of the hill, which was purely a piece of scenery so to speak, and tell one another that there is where Ramona actually lived. They invest this purely fictional person with all the attributes of having been a living reality. This I think has something to do with its success and also the scarcity of anything worth bothering about that does dramatize a scene from Mexican and Spanish background, which more and more people in southern

California are hearing about and wondering about, particularly people who come from the East. Where can they see much of it, except in Olvera Street, which in the final analysis is really nothing much to brag about, or the Ramona Pageant? This appeal I think has had something to do with the crowds that come.

\*Duttera: You say that the script is old-fashioned?

Freud: Yes, except there are some rather prophetic statements in it that still have a pertinancy, not the pertinancy that either the author or the man who dramatized it thought of. For example, one of the priests berates the incoming Americans in the play and says: "Beware the day that your great nation rules the world by wealth." It is very strange how certain things that were written then, with no idea of that connotation, have a kind of current connotation. There are many allusions in the play, of the kind that I just mentioned, that somehow many people in the audience take to have a current meaning. As a matter of fact, we have been challenged in some cases by saying, "Change that line. It sounds as though it were worded for today." Actually we hadn't changed any of those speeches, although we have changed some cadences, but we haven't changed the content.

\*Duttera: The play is glamorous rather than historical?

Freud: Oh, yes. There are only a few little vestigial things in it that have any kind of real socio-historical validity at all, although the American is very badly painted

in this in terms of the treatment that was accorded the Indian. And I must say too that the Spaniard --that is the Mexican--is not particularly well treated in terms of how the Spanish treated the Indian, at least in part, because the Senora, who is kind of the female heavy of Ramona, lacks any understanding of the Indian as a human being. There are certain vestigial elements of fact in it, but they are well-glamoured over with the dance and song and color and so forth--these things that are usually associated with the romanticism of the Spanish-Mexican period. But I must say it isn't a very penetrating analysis of what really went on, because it is very questionable in fact whether the Spaniards were not tougher on the Indians than the Americans ever thought of being. The book was largely glamourized.

One thing that I didn't say was that Helen Hunt Jackson, after she heard the Indian lecture in Boston of the account of the trials of the Indian, published at her own expense a brochure which she had printed and put on the desk of very member of the House and of the Senate, in which she claimed that the shame of America was that the Indians should be treated this way. Well, in its day, it was an attempt by her in part to do something socially for the Indian, and it too had an effect. This book and her pamphlet to Congress did result in a complete investigation of the commissioner of Indian Affairs and did

result in a great many improvements in the reservation situation.

\* Duttera: There was already a general movement, was there not?

Freud: Well, it was part of a general movement, but certainly her book, I'm sure, accelerated that.

\* Duttera: You think the book really helped?

Freud: Oh, yes. There is no question about it. There is some validity to the claim that this did do something for the American Indian. I think that it was ripe, that it happened because America at the turn of the century was beginning to get a kind of conscience about this matter anyway. But the book accelerated it; it helped to give public support to it.

\* Duttera: Have there been objections to the theme?

Freud: No, there has never been any protest about any phase of it. If it were not an adaptation of a novel, there might have been, but because it was from a novel it was accepted that that was where it came from and that was the way the novel was, so it was all right to have it. If there was any objection, it would be not for the treatment of the Indian, whom after all they show as a victim of persecution, but rather for the treatment of the Spaniards and Americans. But even there, there has been little criticism.

There was criticism of the play at the beginning. I pointed out that these two communities, even today, are

relatively conventional communities; therefore, in 1923, one might imagine they were much more conventional, and they were. When it was proposed that this play be produced on Saturdays and Sundays, many of the churchmen of the two towns rose in their pulpits and denounced this presentation of the theater on a Sunday and in fact threatened to have their parishioners boycott the performance and not be allowed to participate in it. But the pageant board, and those interested in it, showed a considerable degree of courage for a small community and refused to accept this dictate and went ahead with it anyway. Now, today, the clergy, almost to a man, is very much back of it and sees it as a valuable thing.

I might point out that there is one thing about this pageant that has not been true of most other pageants. There are other pageants throughout the country, particularly the pageants of Paul Green, his pageant of The Lost Colony in Roanoke, and two or three others that run very successfully. But these pageants--both throughout the country and such others as remain in northern California, such as the Mount Tamalpais play--are no longer community ventured. The Lost Colony runs for the whole summer, and it is therefore completely professionalized.

But this pageant, it seems to me, continues for a rather simple reason: no other pageant ever written had so many young people in it, so many crowds of young people. It starts with little Indian children, some thirty or forty

of them; you begin with the first scene in the play that concerns these little children playing, and on up through teenagers and so forth. Now what this has done is that it takes the young people of these two communities and gets them at a very early age involved in this pageant, and they grow up with it. There is always a continuing kind of identification throughout the life of the average resident of these two towns where the pageant takes place, an identification through participation from almost the age of five, six or seven, on up through the rest of their life. This is one of the reasons I think it has grown and continued.

It's also regional pride. I don't think it is carried to the extreme of chauvinism. It is an intense regional pride. After all, I suppose any small community that does something out of its people rather than out of its gentlemen's Chamber of Commerce, or out of its promoting nucleus, but does it rather out of all the people in the community, or a very large section of the people in the community, it does develop a pride in that accomplishment. I think that is the essential difference between this as a community project and so many other community projects which are the operation of a kind of minor hierarchy in the community, a kind of businessmen's association which stages a festival of this sort or the other, and does it for the quite ostensible reason that it will bring people to the town, or it will cause people to help the merchants sell stuff

in their shops. This is not a factor in it at all, but rather it is the pride in it, and the pride of the people who are in it and who help make it.

For example, we have the cast party coming up in another week or so. For the cast party, we let the people in the cast and the other workers on the show bring their families; we hold that cast party in the fairgrounds because we will serve probably about 1,400 dinners there, which, after all, is a pretty big section of the community, and there won't be any speeches by any Chamber of Commerce man or any promoting group or anything like that. This is closer to being what was envisioned as being the simple outdoor theater, the pageant of America, closer than anything that I know of. It really has roots in this community.

\* Duttera: It is, then, a true community project?

Freud: That's right. The board of the pageant is separate from any municipal connection, but the members are elected by the Chamber of Commerce of the two towns; six are elected to the board from the Hemet Chamber of Commerce, four are elected from the San Jacinto Chamber of Commerce. But these boards operate separate from the municipal governments or actually the Chambers of Commerce, although they are members of the Chambers of Commerce. As a matter of fact, there have been considerable disputes between that board and the Chambers of Commerce. I suppose these people, being in a community with a long tradition

of history back of it, feel that it is a good thing, that it is pretty well worth preserving it in its mass form, rather than to tamper with it or to try to promote revisions and so forth. It is free pretty much from the ever-present kind of realty board promotional thing that is so characteristic of most of these other pageants.

\*Duttera: Is it not, however, a help to local merchants?

Freud: No, as a matter of fact, most of the shopkeepers now look upon it as an interruption; they are not dependent upon the few tourists that it brings in or anything like that. An interesting characteristic of the audiences is becoming evident in the last three or four years, however; more and more of the audience comes in busloads. Groups in various communities, from Santa Barbara down to San Diego, get together and hire buses, groups of 50, 100 to 150; and more and more of our sales we notice are to very large groups who come by bus. Historical societies will charter a bus; last year the Southern California Historical Society, Pacific Palisades Chapter, hired a bus and came in a whole load. I think more and more the chief sales will be by bus. Incidentally, the thing is now so popular that the major good seats in the bowl are sold out by at least three or sometimes four weeks ahead of the actual production.

\*Duttera: How have they managed to succeed financially?

Freud: Well, they actually started from the beginning

because they never spent more than they had. Each year business was a little better; of course, there were some years when they couldn't afford...the war years were quite a severe strain on them because they had to maintain this place, and the maintenance and the care had to be paid for. So the war years were quite a strain on them. There was also one year in the twenties when they couldn't perform because of the hoof and mouth epidemic in southern California. It would practically stop southern Californians now, but the hoof and mouth epidemic was so severe that all automobile travel in California was curtailed. I think that this was in 1926, or 1925.

\*Duttera: Did they play during the Depression?

Freud: In the Depression they kept going and did amazingly well in view of the fact that it was a depression. No year have they lost money, because they never spend more than they, with a good deal of sense, anticipate that they will take in. They have never really lost money, but in those early years, they had to borrow money to do the first couple of productions. But they have never failed to pay back every penny they borrowed. They have never been given any money; they have never had support from any foundation or agency.

\*Duttera: The salary list is not high, then?

Freud: Oh, no. Nobody gets paid except the professionals. I'll qualify that: everybody in the show gets a salary of four refreshment tickets which he can cash in at the re-

freshment stand. For instance, we have eighty high school boys who portray the Indians way up on the side of the mountain, and they are given these tickets and they cash these in for bottles of coca-cola, and some boys wrap them up in their Indian blankets and carry them up to the area of these rocks. But that is their pay, if you want to look at it that way.

\* Duttera: It is not subject to Actors' Union?

Freud: No, actually we are not under the jurisdiction of Equity, although the salaries we pay to the professionals are well above Equity scale.

\* Duttera: Is the show a "showcase" for actors?

Freud: I don't think so particularly, because an agent or a director is seldom looking for an Indian or a Spanish girl. In addition, the vision of the average casting director is pretty limited--he only sees what he sees. I don't think that any actor has been particularly helped by playing these parts in terms of getting a job, although some of them have been helped in gaining experience.

Actually nobody ever played in it has achieved any kind of prominent place in the theater. There is one exception: the man who played Alesandro for a good many years was Victor Jory. But I don't think anybody other than Victor Jory ever achieved any particular prominence in the theater as a result of it.

\* Duttera: Jory was the original Alesandro?

Freud: Pretty much so. He played it the second year, in 1924.

My first consciousness of Ramona was when in its second year, in 1924, Victor Jory got the part. Jory and I were then quite close friends. So I went down to Hemet to see the play and climbed up the hill and sat on the rocks to see the play.

In 1934, I had severed my connection with the Pasadena Playhouse and the Playbox and I was freelancing; I played in New York and in California. Jory and his wife were still playing the two major parts, and they needed somebody to direct it. So I directed the Ramona Pageant in 1934, and even though in 1935 I moved to San Francisco, I came down in the spring to direct the pageant again in 1935. I continued throughout the years--from then to now--to have more or less connections with the pageant. I have served as a member of a casting committee, because we always cast the play, using a committee of people from outside the valley so that there can be no charge of political maneuvering or anything of that sort. I served on such casting committees in the late thirties and early forties. I had met certain people in Hemet and San Jacinto, particularly youngsters who later came to the University [UCLA], and some of my earlier students were from that area. One girl, who married a boy at the campus here, is the mother of a Godchild of mine. Well, these I met way back in the thirties. So I have always had a kind of tenuous connection with the pageant.

I am also extremely fond of the area; I live there-- that is where my home is now. I moved there in anticipation of retirement, so when I retire, the "jerk" will not be too great. And the reason I live there is because I like the community. I like it for a kind of strange reason. I have referred to its conventional quality, and I like it because it is therefore a place in which I can be part of a movement to change it a little bit.

One of the additions to the pageant in this year has been the erection of a small theater, a regular theater for the use of the local Community Players. It is a theater seating about seventy-five people. But it is very attractive, a nice little place to work in, and I'm working with the Community Players there, helping them all I can while I am working here--and will help much more so after I retire. So my connection with the whole thing has grown over a large number of years. I have directed it more often than anyone else, and I have had a very close connection with it during what have been its most lucrative years and its most pronounced development--physically, at least--during the last eight years.

\* Duttera: Are the Community Players the pageant actors?

Freud: They are roughly the same people. Yes. The Community Players were started and aided by the Pageant Association, with the idea of giving people more experience and development.

\* Duttera: As a director, do you enjoy the pageant?

Freud: It is very satisfying because of its tremendous scale, and it is fun for most directors to work on that

stage. The stage is about a quarter of a mile wide and more than that deep, and in dealing with 250 to 400 people on horses, and stuff like that, there is a kind of excitement about anything of that size that doesn't come from small things. Small things have their excitement too, but it is a completely different kind of excitement. It is also a challenging exercise in organization, because to keep a thing like that moving makes very interesting problems.

\* Duttera: Is the script exactly as it was in 1923?

Freud: No, however, there are limits to how much you can change this. There have been attempts made in the past years by some directors to modernize it. You cannot modernize a Victorian novel--that's fundamentally what it is, it's a Victorian melodrama so to speak--and if you modernize it, it doesn't have anything. It is not modern, and it becomes neither fish nor fowl nor good red herring. Beyond that extent, one is not limited. You have to retain that quality or you lose everything. But we have changed a great deal of dialog; we have changed a great deal of business. We added phrases to it, some of them purely mechanical.

We've added elements, but it is a very strange thing. Years ago they used to try to have ranch animals around, and they were always a source of confusion if you had chickens and sheep wandering through the ranch, or they always ran away or would pop up at inopportune moments. This year

however (we hadn't used any of these animals for fifteen or twenty years) we introduced sheep into it, and the play starts with sheep coming up the trail. It is an interesting thing that people said, even many of the local citizens said, "You brought the sheep up a different way than you did last year." Well, actually we hadn't used them last year, but apparently they were so apt that people thought that they had been in it. You make changes and they're not particularly noticeable, or are accepted as being so indigenous to the thing that they would accept them anyway. But other than that large limitation, we are not limited at all. We change dialog to keep it from being quite so stilted. Some of it is not only stilted but it involves grammar that would be unheard of--it wouldn't be translatable to the modern ear. But we make changes.

\* Duttera: Do you change the scenery?

Freud: Well, there is no scenery. There is a ranch house which was built out of concrete. There are false rocks which two years ago we also built out of concrete--reinforced concrete, very large. One rock is about 35-40 feet long and 15 feet high. We hide about 150 people back of that, standing with horses. These rocks are made to blend in with the landscape, but other than that, there is no scenery. It just occurs in its natural place.

As for the costumes, we do pay a woman a very small

amount to head up the costume department, and each year she makes certain new costumes. All the old costumes are kept. But we keep changing, and in the last five or six years we cleaned up the wardrobe a great deal and made it much more attractive looking, because basically it is a better color selection, a better blend of colors for a large crowd.

\*Duttera: There has been a Ramona movie, hasn't there?

Freud: Well, there have been several movie versions. This lacked what the pageant had because it over-glamourized it--as I think any motion picture must. The story of Ramona, it seems to me, for any presentday audience is only palatable when it is presented in this completely natural setting and with this aesthetic distance that it attains when it is so large and so far away from the audience. A motion picture is so intimate that you get into a kind of a style and a kind of an area of composition--literary, dramatic-wise--that we can't believe it, we can't go along with it too much.

Incidentally, the first motion picture version was a very early version; I think it was made in 1915 (a silent film) or 1914 even. It was well played. It was directed by a man who is still living, a very prominent Hollywood figure, Donald Crisp. And at that time, when it was decided to make a major epic (I think it was three reels

or something) they were able to secure from old Spanish families here and in Santa Barbara actual implements and carts and things. They made quite a southern California historical fervor about getting this picture made. They actually erected an Indian village down somewhere on Bryant Street, which was one of the first kind of large-scale sets, other than D. W. Griffith's Intolerance. So Ramona has been a motion picture thought, way, way back then.

In any motion picture today, you cannot avoid-- if the picture is going to be any good--going into the psychological motivation. Even back in the beginning of talking pictures, it was evident they were going into character in that way--what psychological mood would he be in and what was their motivation. Well you can't do that with a Victorian novel of the type of Ramona; it has been so completely romanticized that it doesn't lend itself to this psychological close-up that the camera lens can do.

In silent films it was a different matter because you didn't have words in the way, and so in a silent film you could make a sweep of history as D. W. Griffith did with Birth of a Nation. Birth of a Nation as a talking motion picture would not work; it would be another picture than that picture was, you know. The audiences read into the silent picture what it wanted to read into it, but in a talking picture language stands in the way of the audience's imagination. I don't think Ramona can ever be anything

except an over-glamourized thing, with castanets and such.

\* Duttera: Can't you modernize it?

Freud: I don't think so. You can the plot, but you can't the motivation. The plot after all doesn't amount to very much: a girl, who says she is Spanish, turns out to be a half-Indian, falls in love with an Indian, and the Spanish family that she is living with throws her out and she goes up in the hills and lives with the Indian, and is married and has a baby and is shot--that is the plot. And you can photograph that, but as to what is going on within her, and in the Indian, who cares about that couple. As far as from the scope of the thing, there is a kind of geographical spread of it that would work in a silent film, and does work in the pageant but doesn't work in the modern motion picture. There isn't a big enough rise as there is as with some of the epic motion pictures, where a great hunger of somebody, or some group of people can motivate these things.

TAPE NUMBER: THREE, SIDE ONE\*

Freud: Now you tell me if I go too deep in the story, or too far back. In a sense I am one of those people who's born in the theater. In fact, I was in the theater before I was born; my mother carried me when she was an actress at Drury Lane in England where I was born. My father, whom I never knew (he left my mother before I was born), was a magician and writer of many of the early books on magic, so that this matter of the theater I was always conscious of. I remember as a child being backstage and watching my mother perform on the stage. She then married an American and he brought us back to America.

Now this is an interesting kind of a story, so I will tell it to you, but I am telling it much more to you than to the recorder. She married, when I was about five, a young American Jew whose family was quite wealthy--and also quite orthodox. He, being an enterprising and ambitious young businessman, wanted in his future the accord of his father and, in view of his orthodoxy, decided--he convinced my mother--that they should not make their marriage known since she was a Gentile. We, therefore, came to America. On the ship across I was taught to call him "Uncle," and when we arrived in America and finally at the

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\*Side One was the only side utilized.

city where he lived (it was Detroit, Michigan), my mother and I were settled in an apartment which my stepfather visited, but there was no revelation of the marriage.

Obviously, since my stepfather was Jewish and was approaching the age of twenty-five, -six, -seven, the rest of his family sought suitable matches for him; so he was in the rather unique position of being married but also having girls thrown at him by the dozens. My mother and stepfather decided to keep this a secret until a reasonable time. Finally my stepfather's mother died, and they talked about revealing their marriage but decided that the father could not last too much longer, and so they did continue to keep it a secret, except that they did tell my stepfather's younger brother. Well, in short, this went on for sixteen years, so that I was raised in a completely false kind of environment.

I was also an unwelcome encumbrance to this operation; I was sent away to boarding school and so forth. However, as the years went on, my stepfather began to develop a certain kind of affection for me. I even worked in his office where his father was also ensconced--he was a wonderful old patriarch--and my mother's brother became the office manager, but all without any knowledge of the relationship that my stepfather had to either me or to his brother-in-law.

Finally after these sixteen years of secrecy, the

older brother was told and he said, "I think you ought to tell, Father."

So my stepfather with my mother went to this old patriarch, who was Sigmund Freud's first cousin, and they told him and his only response was, "Well, why didn't you tell me before."

So the sixteen years were a denial; it meant nothing. My mother became his favorite daughter-in-law; as a matter of fact he died in her arms. Well, this is an excursion--the point being, that this coupling of my early acquaintance with the theater, with this need for makebelieve during these years of secrecy, undoubtedly steered me for good to the theater.

In high school and around Detroit, Michigan, I dabbled around with as much amateur theater as I could. I might tell you another incident, because it is also kind of amusing. In the first place, because of this strange environment in which I lived, by the age of ten or eleven I led completely my own life. I had no parental controls at all; my mother wasn't supposed to, and my stepfather wasn't around most of the time--and he didn't care anyway. So I wandered around town what hours I wished and with whom I wished. I was very fortunate because somehow, perhaps it was because I was escaping reality anyway, I didn't get too involved with many of the groups with whom I went around. For instance, in my teens I went around a great deal with kids who later

became the famous Purple Gang in Detroit. But I suppose it was the fact that I never immersed myself in too much of a reality.

When I was about twelve, I went one day to Barnum & Bailey's Circus. I went and saw the sideshow barker. I looked up on the spread of attractions inside the sideshow and among them was a magician, and he had the same name as I had. So I recognized that this must be my father. (My name at that time was Hilliar.) And finally this barker, when I went inside, took us around to see the various freaks and finally ended up at his own stand. He was the magician and this was my father. He then asked for a volunteer, a boy, to come on the stage and hold an egg bag for the tricks, and I went up and did it without of course doing anything about the fact that it was my father.

I went home and told my mother and that night my uncle, my mother's brother, went to the circus and told him that his own son had been there that day. He wanted to see me, but of course under the existing circumstances, it was out of the question. So in these different ways, theater was part of me, and in a sense, that way I behaved was kind of theatrical in that it was not an ordered kind of normal existence.

My beginnings in high school lay in the field of writing the high school opera and playing the lead in it,

really not knowing too much what I was doing, but after I graduated from high school and I went to Detroit Junior College (which was the first junior college in America), I became more serious about it. There was a rather good teacher there, named Frank Tompkins, who wrote some of the early one-act plays that were in the American one-act play period in the late teens and twenties, and through him developed more interest and more contacts and became affiliated loosely with a thing called the Arts and Crafts Theater in Detroit, Michigan. This was in 1915--I was only fourteen.

The Arts and Crafts Theater was part of the whole kind of rise of insurgent small theaters throughout the country, and for some reason, it all occurred within the period of 1914, '15, and '16. For example, the Provincetown Players, the Theater Guild in New York, were in 1915; the Little Theater in Chicago under Maurice Browne; and even in Los Angeles a little theater organized under the philanthropy of Arlene Barnsdall, called the Los Angeles Civic Repertory Theater, brought a boy out from the East whose name was Norman Bel Geddes to do the sets here in Los Angeles.

And in Detroit of all places, because of its motorized rise, this Arts and Crafts Theater came into being. This was a little theater, in a rather attractive small building, devoted to putting on largely one-act plays under the direction of Sam Hume, who had been a student at Berkeley with an

interest in the theater. This theater happens to be the place in which the Theater Arts magazine was born; the first issue was gathered together (it was then a quarterly) in I think 1916 at the Arts and Crafts Theater in Detroit. So I was, therefore, mixed up with this insurgent theater, although I was practically a child in '14, '15, '16.

When I finished a year in junior college, I went to the University of Michigan. Incidentally, money had never been a problem because by this time my stepfather himself had become quite enormously rich. So I went to the University of Michigan because other boys my same age were going there. I went to a few classes and found out that there was nothing that interested me because there was nothing about the theater at all. So I got a job in a professional stock company and again I was very lucky, because this was one of the fine stock companies of America.

It was a company called the [Jesse] Bonstelle Company. This was a typical one-a-week stock company, doing a new play every week, but it was not typical in view of the fact that it had a tremendously talented number of people in its personnel. At various times, the leading lady was Katharine Cornell, Ann Harding; people like Frank Morgan; Guthrie McClintic was a director at one time; Mrs. Shelly Hall was a director another time. Jo Mielziner and I were assistant stage managers, in addition to playing small parts. Each week we would submit designs for next week's show. They never used them, but we had the fun of designing

them. They didn't lose anything by not using mine, but obviously they could have used Mielziner's.

This of course was a wonderful experience for anybody in the theater, an opportunity that doesn't exist anymore because these stock companies no longer exist. But [there was] the pressure of doing a new play every week. Incidentally, we gave performances every day, plus three matinees a week; we had matinees on Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday. We were handed the new parts for the new play on Sunday night; we rehearsed all day Monday, played Monday night, rehearsed Tuesday morning, had a matinee and an evening performance, rehearsed all day Wednesday and had an evening performance of the current show; Thursday morning we had off for wardrobe and studying, matinee Thursday afternoon and a performance in the evening; Friday we had a rehearsal all day with lines learned; Saturday morning we had off for wardrobe, matinee and evening performance, dress rehearsal all day Sunday and then open a new play Sunday night. So this going on, week after week (one stretch of it was fifty weeks straight) was a kind of experience that has been called player's nursery. In fact, there has been a mimeographed pamphlet or brochure history of it published by Stanford University which uses that very title; it refers entirely to this company and is called Player's Nursery. So this was my fundamental training, and I did this for three years.

I had no courses in drama or in acting; such things didn't exist. I did have--and took at my own volition--singing lessons, not for singing but for the improvement of my speech. The teacher was wise enough to be able to teach me singing from this speech point of view. So that the only kind of training I ever had as a performer were the singing lessons designed to aid my speech control.

In the last year that I was with the stock company, a man named Gilmor Brown came, together with Sam Hume and another man named Irving Pichel, to Detroit for a six-week's repertory of plays done in connection with the Detroit Symphony Orchestra, which was then under the direction of Ossip Gabrilowitsch, and they asked me to work in a couple of the shows. I, however took a dislike to Mr. Hume and finally didn't appear in the shows. But I did meet Gilmor Brown, and he told me what he was doing in Pasadena. I decided that when my family went West (as they did every winter), the next fall I would go with my mother and stepfather. So I came out with them in 1921 and finally found the Pasadena Playhouse by asking the mailman--no one else in town seemed to know where it was

I became a part then of the Playhouse. I stayed at the Playhouse during the twenties, up until 1929, and while I was at the Playhouse, I played something like two hundred roles and directed about seventy or eighty shows and was

part of the growth of the Playhouse from its very simple beginnings as a kind of an abandoned burlesque theater until its present kind of architectural stage.

In 1924, however, Gilmor Brown came back from a trip to Europe and had become interested over there in the work of Jacques Copeau, in terms of a kind of theater operation where the relationship between the audience and the actor was not limited to the picture-frame stage--really the precursor of modern-day central staging. So in 1924, Brown opened what he called the Playbox; this was the first central-stage or flexible-stage theater in America, and I had a great deal to do with it, because Brown and I and a man named Maurice Wells were the ones to set it up and keep it in operation. Then in 1929, we built a special building for it, which became the first central-stage theater in America. I continued with that up through 1933, again producing a large number of plays because we had a new play there about every two weeks, and of course experimenting with different kinds of staging because it was possible to do that in a rather experimental atmosphere.

1932, of course, saw the depths of the Depression coming upon us and the loss of most of my stepfather's resources, which meant that I no longer had his inexhaustible supply of money. I had never particularly been conscious of money, fortunately, and I had always, as I indicated, worked, although I wasn't always paid magnificently for it.

But in 1932, this money having disappeared, my wife and I found ourselves rather short of cash. In fact, we hadn't paid our rent for some time, and I got a call from Gordon Watkins of the University [UCLA], who at that time was dean of the summer session, and he asked if I would be interested in teaching summer session. I came over to talk with him, and I was terribly scared of the whole idea of teaching, getting up in front of a class and lecturing. I went home without giving him an answer. But my wife provided the answer; she said, "You have to do it since it pays \$600!" So I decided to try and go ahead with it.

I was always intrigued as to why they had called me, and it turned out--I found later--that a girl in the summer session office had mentioned my name. It appeared that the year before they had Frederick Koch from North Carolina in summer session and were about to invite him back when a flood of letters from summer session students, complaining about him, forced them to make other plans. And it was late; so this secretary in the office, who had seen me act in Pasadena, mentioned my name--that's how I happened to be asked to come over.

I came to the class in Royce Hall, and as is usual with the University, nobody spoke to me, nobody on the faculty told me what to do. In fact, once I signed the contract, nobody seemed to have any interest any more. So

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I wandered into a classroom almost rigid with fright, and a girl came up and said, "I'm your reader"--which she had no business to do because nobody had spoken to me about it. But fortunately she was able to pass the cards out to the class. I wasn't able to say a word; she recognized this and dismissed the class. And I went home that night and I realized that I must really work on this, so I stayed up all night, and I drew out the teacher's plans for the whole six weeks and put it all down on paper and turned up the next morning, prepared. And, of course, in fifteen minutes I had used all that up.

Then something dawned upon me, that I didn't have to be academic, that I could just go on doing what I had been doing all my life--which was directing and acting, getting people in motion about an idea. Slowly, within that first week, I began to find the trick of stimulating people to the expression of some kind of an idea in theatrical form. The result was that the summer went pretty well; I directed other plays here for the student body, which at that time in the thirties, all plays were put on by the student body and financed by them. I put on Elizabeth the Queen with students who since have made quite a name for themselves; Lloyd Bridges, the underwater actor now, played in Elizabeth the Queen; a number of other people, a very fine young actor in New York now named Wesley Eddy, and others. I also directed some of the

student plays during the winter, and next summer I was invited back to the summer session.

The second year I was here in summer session I got intrigued with the idea of establishing a little theater in Westwood Village, which was then really quite small, a little community. A lot of the members of the English Department got enthused with me about the idea; Professor [Alfred] Longueil, Lily Bess Campbell and others. But my exchequer had sunk even lower (in the meantime by the way, I had played in New York with a considerable amount of critical success, but I realized that the New York theater was not really for me), so I more or less had to give up formal theater. I got an offer of a job in San Francisco at a thing called the San Francisco Jewish Community Center as-- the title is an impressive one--Director of Mass Activities, which meant, that if more than three people got together, I was in charge of it. So I went to San Francisco and dropped this whole idea of a theater in Westwood and so forth.

At that Jewish Center, I learned a tremendous amount that was useful to me later on. The experiences at the Jewish Center really pulled what is obvious from what I've been talking about--what had been a very static life, kind of together. In the first place, there was a remarkable man there named Louis Blumenthal, who recently passed away, who was one of the early users of group work, which as you know had a great deal of popularity in popular talk in the thirties, and he gave me a sense of what I had been doing and

why I had been doing it. I had been doing it, God knows, and I could do it, but I had no idea exactly what effect it had had. I had been doing it with casts in plays; I had been doing it with students and so forth. Blumenthal gave meaning to what I was doing in terms of the influence that a man could have on young people in terms of stimulating their imagination, their creativity. And this happened to me at the Jewish Community Center in San Francisco.

It was further amplified by the fact that I also ran the summer camp that was operated in part by the Jewish Center, and there I worked with youngsters ranging from ten years of age to the counsellors who were college students, with whom I had a very, very close relationship, a relationship that continues even to this day, since that camp, although it went out of existence a good many years ago, has a reunion every five years. They had one this February, and I went back and sat with these old men who once were campers and counsellors. So it was in this new kind of atmosphere that I began to pull together some ideas about working with people.

At a certain point, I recognized that I could do this best, however, in my own field, which was the field of the theater, and that I might be able to get back to theater or some form of theater with a kind of renewed sense of reality and a renewed confidence in my own ability to deal with people. And so the opportunity came for me to join the

Federal Theatre, which I have already spoken about, and I left the Jewish Community Center and became a director of the Federal Theatre in San Francisco.

I've mentioned before that the years (1914, 1915, 1916) were a period in which a kind of insurgent theater came influent in America. This was an insurgence against Broadway, against a Broadway which was dominated by two theatrical trusts: the Shuberts and Klaw and Erlanger, who regulated every theater in America, and every theater building, and through that control, also controlled the content of most of American drama. Now I say this was an insurgence, this is oversimplifying it in a way. In the case of some individuals, it was such an insurgence, an intellectual revolt if you will. In the case of the Provincetown Playhouse, this was a revolt by a dedicated intellectual named George Cram Cook and his lady-friend Susan Glaspell. In the case of the Theater Guild, it was a similar intellectual revolt; however, it is oversimplifying it to limit it to being such a revolt because it was coincident with another fact and particularly in its manifestations outside New York.

The establishment of these theaters also gave an opportunity to citizens of the communities in which the theaters existed to use the new leisure time that they had and to indulge themselves in a kind of delight of play-acting. Actually the community theaters that were born across the

country were born not so much out of a desire to say something, subject matter-wise--although there were traces of this, depending upon their leadership--but rather it grew largely out of a desire of the citizens of the town to put on a play or to be in a play, and to be in a play under fairly expert direction. And so these little theaters sprang up all around the country.

Most notable of them in the couple decades and in the twenties was the Cleveland Playhouse, which had a considerable financial support from an individual, a very talented and wise individual named Charles S. Brooks, who was an essayist. He happened to be a millionaire, but he was also a very fine essayist. He wrote several volumes of essays, Roundabout to Canterbury; they were largely about travel. He supported the Cleveland Playhouse, beginning about 1915, and the Cleveland Playhouse still exists.

On the West Coast, Gilmore Brown had had a small travelling stock company which played in southern California, in Arizona, and in one case even went as far south and east as Texas. And this was a company which played a different show every night, staying in a small town. For example, in the case of San Jacinto where I live, which was then a town of about 2,000 inhabitants, Gilmore Brown's stock company played there in 1915, playing a different show every night in this tiny community. Well, Brown finally found himself in Pasadena, with this company no longer

touring, but with a kind of a resident stock company, a tiny little company with about nine or ten players, in a very cheap, tumbled-down theater on Fair Oaks Avenue, which had an unsavory reputation because it had been a burlesque house. He stayed there for one season, barely getting enough to eat with.

He became conscious of what was happening in other parts of the country in terms of theaters which brought the community into the activity and were supported by those people who came into the activity. So he conceived the idea of integrating his professional stock company with the citizens of Pasadena, who were interested in theater, which he tried the next year, in 1916. It then became obvious that if it was to be a community theater, it would have to be purely that, and so in 1917, he established with the interested citizens of the town a thing called the Pasadena Community Playhouse, and from that point on, for a good many years, it was strictly an amateur community theater operation.

By 1923, this Pasadena Community Playhouse had done a number of things that seemed to be of considerable significance and which had drawn to the organization a large portion of the influential people of Pasadena and also people with money, and so it was decided to have a building-fund drive. Money was raised by contributions of many different sizes, but particularly through the donation of some fifty people or so who each gave a thousand dollars, and finally

in 1925, the new Pasadena Playhouse building was erected.

Now, this had come about because of a certain kind of creative courage upon the part of Brown and the people who associated themselves with him. He did a tremendous amount of Shakespeare revival; he also did a considerable amount of investigation of new plays and the production of new plays. I must say that never did the Pasadena Playhouse lean very far toward the drama of social comment, because obviously the environment of Pasadena was not conducive to that. Although as one looks back on the programs, there was a great deal more of it in the years up to 1928 than there has been since.

In 1929, the Pasadena Playhouse organized a school of the drama, and it was with the organization of this school that the business manager of the Pasadena Playhouse began to take on the tremendous prominence and was granted a much larger voice in the way in which the place should be run. So Gilmore Brown, also getting a bit older, began to relinquish a lot of his control, and the creative drive of Brown began to diminish and the Playhouse more and more became ultra-conservative and conventional. And perhaps the last gasp of any kind of creative drive occurred in, I would say about 1927, with the only production in America of Eugene O'Neill's Lazarus Laughed, which was a unique and quite remarkable production, but this almost marked the end of the Playhouse's greatness in terms of a creative, driving, artistic force.

The years since 1930, as far as the Playhouse is concerned, are in my estimation a gradual weakening of the creative fibre of the organization. Incidentally, this weakening of the creative fibre has been ironically also a weakening of its financial fibre; it has paid for itself less and less, year by year, as the years have rolled around. And this is interesting, because it was in the hope of building up its revenue that it changed to a rather cliché kind of program.

Today the Playhouse is in a very bad state, financially, and there is even talk of it filing bankruptcy. There have been wild appeals to the foundations for aid and support, but there seems to be little hope of getting the matching funds that most foundations today require for any support. And there is a certain kind of ironic justice in this, since the Playhouse tried to sell itself out and found that it didn't pay off. Now, of course, fundamentally it would be a tragic thing if the Playhouse did go out of existence, but on the other hand, unless some new force comes to play in it, it undoubtedly will, because it just cannot operate under its present heavy load of buildings and equipment and so forth unless it gets sufficient funds. And there is no point in its continuing unless it has a creative genius who can make out of it something Pasadena can pride.

Up to 1928, as I have indicated, it attempted such things as the almost impossible production of Eugene O'Neill's Lazarus Laughed. I say "impossible" because it has a cast of some 150 and needs some 1,200 masks; it has a full symphony orchestra score with a symphony orchestra playing it. This was a kind of production problem that could only be attempted by an organization with great resources and great imagination and so forth. I don't mean to say that all the productions up to that time had that kind of courage about them, but they had a kind of courage. Many new plays were tried out by little-known playwrights because it was felt that the play had something to say. And in many cases--for Pasadena--the content of the plays was rather advanced

After that period, the thing that happened to the Pasadena Playhouse--and what happened to I would say practically all of the community theater in America, and which unfortunately is happening to university theater to a greater or lesser degree, and an increasing degree--is that it became a theater dedicated to warmed-up revivals of the most recent Broadway plays available. This has become increasingly true of the Playhouse, where this is coupled with using rather déclassé professionals in most cases to play those plays at the Playhouse. It almost replaces the cheaper kind of stock companies of the twenties. There is no courage, nothing except an eye cocked hopefully--and rather

unhappily not very well-cooked--on the box office So the desire to be professional, to ape Broadway, has been the thing that has killed most of the community theater in America and which threatens to do the same to the university theater, as far as the university's theater development of an audience is concerned.

The philosophy of teaching at the school in the beginning was that the students would have a large amount of practical experience, coupled with a certain degree of theoretical education. Of recent years--and by recent, I mean the last ten or twelve years--the entrance of the professional onto the stage of the Playhouse has stopped the practical side of the work, since the student in the school of the theater seldom acts in the main productions of the Pasadena Playhouse or performs or designs or whatever his particular interest is. So that the very practicality of a professional school, which the Playhouse originally intended to create, has gone out of existence. The student now has completely impractical experience, unless he happens to be that one or two gifted students who are occasionally allowed to play smaller parts in the major productions. This is a fact, then, that the average student at the Playhouse learns less of a practical nature than even the student in a good university theater department. While the prestige of the Pasadena Playhouse School of the Theater grew to a very large point, partly due to

its advertising and promotion, this now is beginning to fade rather rapidly, and increasingly it is difficult to get students to come to the Playhouse.

I don't think the Playhouse developed a particular technique. For example, in the first central staging that I talked about, there was a man who had been here the other day who was doing a doctoral thesis on the history of the Playbox, and he asked me, "What was in your mind and Gilmore Brown's mind about the production techniques that would be involved as you envisioned the first Playbox, the first central-stage thing?" Well, I must frankly say that there weren't any. Since then, there are several books written on acting for central staging; designing, directing for central staging and a large number of books that have evolved some lovely theories, but, actually, the performance under those conditions was very little different than a performance in a theater where you use common horse sense, the kind of things you do which you don't do in a picture-frame theater.

So I don't think the Playhouse ever developed many theories which could be considered its own. It was devoted in the latter days of its school to a kind of slickness of performance. It is probably quite right that the Playhouse in the forties and fifties denied the very existence of the Method. I think most people today working in the theater take from the Method what is good about it

and throw out what is in distortion, for a good number of reasons. But the Playhouse has rigidly stuck to a kind of aim for slickness in performance rather than for a development of a great deal of honesty or a great deal of a kind of validity of characterization. So that their people do--certainly in the early years did--manage to develop a considerable amount of facility.

Of course, where the actor was very talented, what happened to him didn't matter too much, because no matter where a very talented actor gets his training, he will eventually go his own way anyway. Certainly, it must be said that part of the success of the performance of Robert Preston in The Music Man, which is one of those strange kinds of fitness of the actor for the role, is due to what he learned at the Playhouse about slickness, because that particular musical-comedy demands that. But mainly it is Preston's talent, and not what he learned at the Playhouse.

I began to realize that[I enjoyed being part of an organization], and it probably was my first association with UCLA that did it. I should have recognized it sooner. I should have recognized it from the fact that I was "at home" first in a stock company, with its inference that I was never "at home" at home, because I didn't have any home in the ordinary sense. But I found myself "at home" in that stock company which I mentioned--a part of an

organization. I then found myself "at home" in little theaters of the time; then I found myself "at home" in the Playhouse. And I could function best when I was part of a established organization of some sort.

Now this didn't ring a bell anywhere then. It was in the thirties when I went to New York and discovered that, although I appeared in a show and was lauded for it critically, I still had to go out and get a job, that I wasn't a part of an organization. When I began to think about it, I recognized that I must be the type of person who functions best when connected with an institution of some sort--and I think people in the theater are very lucky if they find this out early, because the professional theater is a very competitive field, and those who function best without that gift for competition are happier if they find that out and ally themselves with something of an institutional nature. This is what happened to me then; I found that, in spite of really quite remarkable reviews in New York, the next week I had to go out and get another job, and I was just not the type of person to be very successful in job-hunting competition. So I longed for an association with some kind of institution.

In my feeling about the socially-conscious theater, I don't see the theater ever as John Howard Lawson in his taped interview would almost seem to suggest, although I would rather doubt that he really believes this. I don't

see the theater as being primarily devoted to direct social comment. I think the theater should reflect the life flow around it and in doing that--whether it approaches it from the dramatic point of view, or from a tragic point of view, from a comedy or farce point of view--I don't think it can do it always directly. When people talk about the socially-conscious drama, they tend to talk about the play that does it directly, the play that makes social comment overtly, such as the early plays of Odets--John Howard Lawson wouldn't agree to that--or John Howard Lawson's own plays. I think that plays, like Watch on the Rhine, that do it a little less directly, and even plays that appear in themselves not to make social comment very strongly perhaps are as effective, if not more effective, in helping to create social change as those that do it so overtly.

Now, over and beyond this, it depends what kind of theater you are talking about; we tend to say the theater as though there were such a thing. There is no such thing as the theater. There is the popular theater which is, and will continue to be as long as people keep it such, the Broadway theater, either in its immediate original presentation on Broadway or its imitation, that is a revival of whatever was done two or three years ago. This is the popular theater; this is the theater which most people see who go to the theater at all. And the popular theater has certain characteristics about it, and indeed always has had

those characteristics. Sometimes the popular theater reaches points of great significance of accomplishment--Broadway does that too on occasion--but by and large the popular theater is a theater devoted primarily to an entertainment factor, although that may be rather stimulating, even mentally-stimulating entertainment.

Now the other theater that exists is a theater primarily devoted to entertainment, yes, but with a much higher factor of appeal to the intellect than just appeal to the emotions. This theater again could be divided into many types of theaters, and one of those types, for the health of the nation, for the health of the community, should be a theater devoted almost exclusively to social comment.

Now, you mentioned the off-Broadway theater, the off-Broadway theater in the last two years has become increasingly, merely an extension of the Broadway theater. As a matter of fact, economically, it costs about \$12,000 to get a play on off Broadway, to take the curtain up. It has also been seized upon by Broadway producers, who get ahold of a play, as a place to try that play out, or even to earn a reasonable amount of money on that play without ever taking it to Broadway. It has also become a place to do a rewrite of a play that flopped on Broadway and do it off Broadway and realize enough income from it to make it worthwhile. In other words, off Broadway has slowly lost that significance it had, even six years ago, as a

place where something rather courageous might be done, to being pretty much an extension of Broadway.

Off Broadway bears somewhat the same relation to the theater as the art motion picture house does to motion pictures. In other words, you see it is possible to take a [Ingmar] Bergman picture, which probably cost no more than \$200,000 to make, and play it in a very small number of houses and make a considerable amount of money. And so it is possible, if someone has \$12,000 to invest and an interest in a European play, to present it off Broadway and to perhaps break even, and even perhaps make a little money. But, after all, off-Broadway theaters are like Broadway theaters--they're getting hard to get--and so the thing now that will get this or that off-Broadway theater building to use will be the thing which looks like it would make the most money. Now, it may be a European play; it might even be an unusually controversial play in terms of social content. But the chances are it will be something that is a little more conventional, interesting, not quite as conventional or routine as Broadway, but something that has some possibility of the kind of minor success that off Broadway is now looking for.

I think, yes, there are more interesting European plays being done off Broadway than interesting American ones. I don't quite know why; I think that one of the reasons is that not every new American playwright will trust

a new play to the tender mercies of off-Broadway production. The playwright tends to hang on to his play, hoping that he will get a Broadway production; whereas, the European authors don't know what a play playing below 34th Street is off Broadway; they don't really know, or care particularly.

This whole inner-weaving of economics with the theater today is a very, very complex picture, and what has happened to the off-Broadway theater is beginning now to happen to the off-Hollywood theaters and the little theater in Hollywood. This is beginning also to boil down to a production of plays that might go to Broadway, and it is beginning to cost much more money to put on a play in a little theater here. It will never be quite so rigidly circumscribed as the off-Broadway theater, but the manifestations of the economic stranglehold are beginning to appear here. This whole economic state of the theater is a terribly discouraging thing to anyone who wants the theater--not necessarily in the popular theater but in this other manifestation--to say more acutely and more penetratingly about the world in which we live today. It doesn't seem to happen, and the stranglehold is partly an economic--very much an economic--stranglehold on the theater

I think it is more important that the playwright has a social sense than I think it is that he write a

socially-conscious play. As I look back on those few plays, let us say at the turn of the century, that had a social effect--and there were some such plays--I don't think it was so much due to the fact that the playwright was dedicated to a socially-conscious theater, because there wasn't at that time [such a theater], but more that he had a social sense about what he wrote. Now, certainly, one can say that a number of present-day playwrights have it--certainly Arthur Miller does, there is no argument about that--but very few other playwrights, and very few of the popular playwrights, do have this developed social sense. They really don't care too much.

I do think this--that among these intellectual theaters, or these theaters that appeal to the entertainment value arrived at through a certain amount of intellectualization, why I said that one of the theaters in every community should be a socially-conscious theater is that I think a theater organization devoted to a socially-conscious point of view does that kind of play more effectively than a theater that skips around rather catholicly among various kinds of plays and occasionally does a socially-conscious play. Certainly, the New Playwrights Theater--even while it is a flop--certainly, the Group Theater were best able to give vibrant performances of socially-conscious plays because of their dedication--which is part of the time true of the Group Theater--to a political point of view.

To expect a little theater that does a number of other things to tackle a socially-conscious play and do very much with it, with any excitement in it, is a vain hope. You need to have a kind of dedication to some kind of political ideology to make it work, and I think that this has been generally true.

The man you mentioned who wrote the book having the point of view that socially-conscious theater developed out of the little theater insurgence in 1911, I don't agree with at all, because the insurgence--I say 1911, that was when the Chicago Little Theater came into being--had nothing to do with a socially-conscious point of view. It largely was a desire to do things which were not being done in the American professional theater--and that's all.

The Chicago Little Theater, for example, which gave its name to the whole little theater movement, was dedicated very largely to new approaches to the classics. The Cleveland Playhouse was somewhat the same [orientation]. The Pasadena Playhouse was dedicated to doing any kind of a play in an attempt to give the citizens of Pasadena lots of varied experience in the theater. I, personally, am not conscious of any kind of social push in the theater of that period. There was a little bit in the Independent Theater in Boston, which was earlier, around the 1890's. There was a certain amount related to the beginnings of the political reformists' activity.

Duttera: Progressives?

Freud: Progressives, exactly. But even this was not particularly significant, in terms of what today we call socially-conscious theater.

I think, of course, as Lawson thinks, it started a little earlier, because I think large groups of intellectuals in America around 1920 began to feel that the basis of our way of life was not very solid. And, strangely enough, they were not always just intellectuals; there were a lot of businessmen who worried a great deal about it and who felt that the boom was a false boom. You remember that we did go through a minor depression in 1920, at least a shaking of our economic structure, and this caused a lot of people to know that something was wrong somewhere. So this desire to look into new ways of ordering our existence begins to be manifest in the twenties and, therefore, begins to be manifest among artists and among artists of the theater.

Although I will say this, and again it relates to what you spoke of and what the man that wrote the book said, it is true, not only in America but throughout the world, that theater never really leads anything. He states that the only important thing is happening in insurgent theaters--this is true. Any popular mass art--and the theater remains that in its larger sense, its Broadway sense--no such popular art can be expected to make innovations;

therefore, these innovations and new directions are established by groups that are not part of the mass theater. Whether this is the Moscow Art Theater, whether it is the Abbey Theater in Dublin, whatever it is, it is usually a group of amateurs, and successful usually in relation to how sharp those amateurs are and how solid their intellectual convictions about what they are doing are.

But surely it is true that Broadway feeds from this this insurgence. Take the case of Tennessee Williams. Tennessee Williams was working out in a field in California and had practically given up writing when finally his Glass Menagerie was done in Chicago, and even then, when it was done in Chicago, it was considered a flop in Chicago and yet this is what brought Tennessee Williams into the Broadway theater. And now Tennessee Williams has become a standard for the Broadway theater.

The case of Miller is a little different, because Miller was nurtured by the Broadway theater. He was kept going for several years by a group of people who were interested in his professional future. But usually Broadway brings from these insurgent groups, wheter it be the university or little theater, wherever there is a talent it grabs hold of it.

Everyone of us when we say "socially-conscious theater," probably gets a picture in his mind of what he

means by the socially-conscious theater, even extending to the form. Usually there is in the mind of the person a rather realistic connotation, or a naturalistic connotation of some sort, "that this is going to honestly show in reality a social conflict." But, actually, a social condition or evil or maladjustment may be shown in an entirely different style than realism and be more effective.

I'm thinking of a play written by two people--certainly they're not revolutionaries--George S. Kaufman and Marc Connelly who wrote the first--and one of the few--expressionistic plays in America, Beggar on Horseback. Now looking back and reading Beggar on Horseback, there is a tremendous amount of social comment in this play. It treats of the tremendous confusion of the artist on the American industrial scene; this is, after all, a social comment. Now this isn't done in terms of realism at all; it is much closer to fantasy. There is even a whole ballet; it was one of the first plays done on Broadway that included a ballet as an integral part of the play. But nobody ever mentions Beggar on Horseback when one is talking about socially-conscious plays because a little too rigidly we correlate the socially-conscious play with the school of present-day realistic theater. There are other ways of making social comment than through the realistic form.

It may be even what I'm talking about when I say that there are two different types of theater.

And, of course, the didactic theater was carried to some rather ridiculous extremes too. Before I took over Federal Theatre in San Francisco, there was a director there who-- it didn't matter what the play was--had six actors up in a box on each side of the theater and at intervals they would rise up with a kind of a chant, saying, "We hunger, we hunger, we hunger." And then go back down in the box again. [laughter] Everybody wanted to say something so much that it was a didactic kind of thing rather than truly a dramatic thing. I think that the didactic in the theater is not theater in the sense of what people of the theater feel is theater. I think that the didactic in the theater is very interesting. I think it's not exactly of the theater. It's a purely intellectual pursuit, which perhaps intellectuals might do better than theatricalians, and certainly a didactic theater should be controlled almost exclusively by intellectuals. I do think that the theater, run by people of the theater, should have a great deal more to say about the social conditions in which we live, and that any theater should be free to say what it has to say, and any playwright should be free to say what he has to say.

Actually this is what is not true! It is very difficult, on Broadway or off Broadway, or in a community theater and in fact almost anywhere except in a university

theater--and in a great many university theaters even it is impossible--for the playwright to say what he really feels about something. What I am interested in, more than whether the theater should go--as Lawson wants it to go--much more exclusively toward social comment, is the right of the theater to go in any direction it wants to go and that all phases of human thought, that are susceptible to dramatization or to theatricalization, be embodied in the theater. I'm not saying this very well, but this is what my personal feelings about the theater are.

But certain kinds of theater are not really best done by theater people. A certain part of the Abbey Theater was successful because the people doing it were not theater people; they were Irish revolutionaries and they were poets--they were not really theater people--and they created a theater that probably only they could have created. But most of the theater will be done by theater people. All I think is that all kinds of theater should be preserved.

Now, of course, I have another reason for feeling this way. My interest has been in the new generation, and I think it is a shame that students don't have enough contact, let us say, with a vigorous, dedicated, socially-conscious play. They don't have it very often--if at all. Likewise, I think it would be a shame if students had only contact with either a didactic theater or a simon-pure, socially-conscious

theater and not any other kind of theater. It would be a limited kind of experience that I think would not give them what they need as a fully-rounded theater experience. But all kinds of theater should be presented.

I think that this is bad, particularly, if you follow through Lawson's reasoning on it. What's bad about it is that Freud, or talking about Freud and Freudian theory, became a mass escape. It is a mass escape. One explains everything that happens in terms of a misunderstanding of Freudian psychology. This is what Lawson is getting at, and I agree with him, and this is just the theater using escapism at its very worst. It intrigues an audience by sounding as though it says something, when actually it doesn't say anything about anything. Who cares if the man was a homosexual. This isn't the evil; that Man X is a homosexual, or Woman Z is a nymphomaniac, and because of such-and-such Freudian background. This has nothing to do with the problems that beset us today whatever, and in those terms, Lawson decries using the popular kind of Freudian mumbo jumbo, because it appeals to people since they know a little about Freud.

This has happened in the theater as the theater became less a popular art and became only a semi-popular art and, therefore, attracted people of means and a kind of higher strata. The motion picture became the popular art. The

same thing incidentally, is of course happening to the motion picture. Now, the motion picture is not the popular art, television is. So the motion picture is making its excursion into a different kind of strata of audience, one with a little more money, more leisure and a little higher intellectual capacity, but unfortunately this kind of infatuation of the American public today with psychological motivations and in explaining all phenomenon in terms of Freud is what Lawson is getting at. It is merely another kind of escapism, like the melodrama was to the 1890's.

As a matter of fact, the playwright today is an awfully frustrated and confused individual. He has to write, he has to write, and so the playwright today takes one of two attacks: he gets another job--after all, there is nothing new about this, Goethe did it and a lot of people did it--and he writes; and he writes seriously and he writes what he wants to say. Now of the hundred that do it, perhaps one will ever get to see the light of day. Or, he fits himself to the economic picture and becomes a realist in terms of the world in which he lives. So he writes all the facile junk that television and the American motion picture demands, and he becomes an adjusted and respected member of the Screen Writers' Guild. A playwright goes one way or the other; there is seldom a middle ground.

In fairness to such people as Tennessee Williams, one has to say that he came out here to work for one of the studios, [but] he couldn't do it. He ducked it and went away. Somehow there was enough of a kind of integrity, and he was allowed to do this. But he was the kind of man who does get another job, writes and finally--allowing for fortune--hits it. But one goes one way or the other. I've known playwrights, as I've known actors, who have said, "Well, I'll go in and adapt to the economic picture, and then when I've earned enough, I'll go out and do something significant." And it never happens, because that then becomes a way of life.

I think there are a number of extremely gifted writers who could understand a great deal about the American scene who have given it up, and partly this is evidenced by the growing number of seminars and courses, of lectures and groups that are given by the University, with these people talking, not about their work but they talk about the theater really in terms of what they wish they had done with it, not about it as it is.

There was this series of panels held over the last two or three months in Schoenberg and Moore Hall. These are rather sickening in terms of these people talking out of the other side of the mouth, trying to compensate somehow for what they have done by their complete capitulation. And really what they talk about is what they would have liked to have done.

After all, the theater in the early 1930's had just stopped being a popular art, and being a popular art, there was a lot of it; and, therefore, one could do pretty much what he wanted to do. After all, it wasn't very difficult if you were a playwright to get your play done on Broadway in 1925. There were 80 theaters and 260 productions in those 80 theaters on Broadway. Now, there are 16 theaters and 16 productions, and so obviously your chances of getting a production became smaller and smaller. And so suddenly in 1930, this theater went out of existence, not suddenly, but it started to go out of existence in the late twenties--'27, '28, '29 and '30, it went out. The road shows stopped; even the professional stock companies went out of existence. Suddenly there was no theater in which to function, and the chances of saying something that you wanted to say became terribly, terribly limited

I think, as I said, that the theater tags along after the other means of expression. The theater it seems to me always comes a little after the fact. It was after the fact actually in the case of the socially-conscious drama of the thirties, because, as I have indicated, we knew about this before and we were told about it in the writings of dozens of novelists and dozens of painters who began to see things that were startling to us and engaging to us, not because of their beauty but because of their

ugliness. But the theater didn't hit it until we actually got in the midst of it fully. I think the theater tags along behind the other arts. So the last place I would expect to find any kind of dramatization of our current anxiety would be in the theater now. It may be in the theater ten years from now. Why this is, I don't know. It may be partly the nature of drama.

Let me say, too, that plays have been written on this. Now the theater after all is not just a place of writing plays; it is a place of doing them. There have been a number of plays written with this incident as its motivating factor, but the theater doesn't produce them. I suppose in a way that this is too big to be encompassed by the theater at this time; it is too immediate. After all, you take a point of view about this and you enter in to an indefinite area--your point of view might be right or it might be wrong. I can see why these plays have not been produced; certainly they have been written. I know of four or five, and there must be hundreds of plays. But the theater is not just a place of writing plays; it is a place of producing.

But, I don't see any hope for a revitalization of the theater except through some kind of economic change. Whether this occurs in some evolutionary way, like another depression, or whether it occurs in a modification of our

economic system as it is, it's certainly true that every theater in America, including the university theater, tends to be limited by this or that economic factor, a kind of reverence for the prestige thing, and that prestige thing usually made a prestige thing by reason of its economic exploitation. Unless this somehow changes, the theater will continue to be pretty much in the same groove it is. Now what will change it, I don't know. Hopefully something will break this.

When I say theater, I'm including motion pictures and I'm including certainly television. The economic phantasy of this whole thing, when you go into the detail of it, is unbelievable. Exhibitors--for instance, Balaban & Katz, and Skouras [Theatres Corp.]--don't want any pictures that have any adult quality because they are dedicated, as old-timers, to this idea of a mass motion picture market and that their pictures should be able to play in any community, in any state. Now, therefore, Balaban and Skouras maintain a constant barrage on moral grounds against the sophisticated film. It sounds as though this is really a moral indignation--it isn't at all--it is an exploited and developed control of the subject matter of pictures because that is what Balaban and Skouras think is their biggest market. It is purely a dollar-and-cents thing. This economic barrier is set up at every point that you turn in the whole business of the theater arts and craft.

Will it make more money or won't it make more money--it is purely on this basis. And until someone changes this economic picture it is going to be a gradually diminishing thing.

Now there are little hopeful signs, not many in the theater. In motion pictures, the foreign film has made a tremendous inroad, but who knows what will happen to it if it gets too successful. Obviously it will be taken over--in fact there are evidences that it is being taken over now--and as it gets taken over, it will tend again to be circumscribed or limited or directed in some way or another through these economic interests.

I would hope--having an English background I dislike too violent a change--that a complete breakdown of our economic system is not necessary, but sometimes I wonder if it isn't. Some kind of modification has got to happen. People of the theater, of course, wish that they were in other arts, where it is not quite so controlling, although it is controlled in painting, which is the most individual of the arts.

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