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INSIDE: SPIRITUAL DIVERSITY | MAPPING RELIGIOUS DIVERSITY
SCIENTOLOGY IN SAN DIEGO | JOURNEY OF A THEOSOPHIST TO HINDUISM

SAN DIEGO
HISTORY
CENTER

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EDITORS' INTRODUCTION

San Diego has long been a city of transplants. Each successive wave of newcomers from "the Sacred Expedition" of 1769 to contemporary immigrants from East Africa and the Middle East has brought with them a host of languages, foods, values—and religious beliefs. The result is a spiritual landscape that defies simple labeling, instead brimming with rich diversity, complexity, and intriguing narratives. This issue of *The Journal* is dedicated to telling these stories in the hope of amplifying lost and marginal voices in our region's history, challenging many long-held assumptions of San Diego's heterogeneity, and piquing the curiosity of future researchers to continue the work of exploring San Diego's religious diversity.

The first four articles began as papers delivered at an October 2022 conference on the diversity of religion in San Diego hosted by the San Diego State University (SDSU) Religion Department, the Special Collections Department at the SDSU Library, and the Institute for Studies of Religion at Baylor University. The issue opens with an article that serves as an introduction to the region's religious diversity and in which J. Gordon Melton focuses on those groups that since the mid-nineteenth century have made San Diego the pluralistic religious community it has become in the present day. Donald A. Westbrook explores not just the history of Scientology in San Diego, but the development of San Diego as a hub of academic research on the religion. W. Michael Ashcraft

analyzes the life of Judith Tyberg and her transition from Theosophy in Lomaland to Hinduism as a way to better understand both Lomaland and the San Diego religious landscape. And Rebecca Moore traces the impact of migration on the spatial layout and development of San Diego religions.

In the final article, University of San Diego (USD) Professor Sarah Federman and her former graduate student Clare Bath (who is now pursuing a doctorate in sociology) tell the story of USD's first seventy-five years. Rather than a comprehensive history, they frame the story through the lens of historical memory, interrogating conventional "official" histories and inviting readers and researchers alike to reexamine the institution's history with fresh questions, perspectives, and sources.

We believe the articles in this issue of *The Journal* tell important stories, encourage future research, and remind us that be it Special Collections at USD's Copley Library, the SDSU Special Collections Department, or the San Diego History Center's Theosophy collection—made even more rare with the recent destruction of the Theosophy library near Pasadena—San Diego is rich with historical materials waiting to be mined for the secrets they hold.

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SPIRITUAL DIVERSITY UNDER THE SAN DIEGO SUN: A BRIEF INTRODUCTION

J. GORDON MELTON

For millennia the inhabitants of the San Diego region have pursued a variety of religious (often described as spiritual, inspirational, or metaphysical) beliefs and practices. Native peoples developed a spectrum of holistic cultures in which social, economic, governmental, medical, and spiritual aspects of life were so thoroughly integrated into daily existence that any separation can be done only in the abstract for purposes of analysis.[1] Those holistic cultural units of Native Californians were initially disrupted in the eighteenth century by the arrival of Spanish missionaries who introduced Roman Catholicism. Friar Junípero Serra (1713-1784) and his Franciscan colleagues established Mission San Diego de Alcalá in 1769 (the first European settlement in what is now California) and initiated a still controversial phase of California religious life, as Catholic religious functionaries, with the backing of government authorities, claimed spiritual hegemony throughout the region.[2] That claim remained in place after the shift in sovereignty brought about by Mexican independence.

The initial struggle of Native Americans to retain their cultures and traditional spiritual lives did not end but

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(Opposite page) First Unitarian Church on 6th Avenue between Beech and Cedar Street, San Diego, c. 1913. © SDHC #91_18564-810.

was significantly changed by the Mexican American War (1846-1848) and California statehood in 1850. California's admission to the Union would lead to an influx of Protestant Christians, and over the next half-century, one by one, the major denominations (along with the several branches of the Jewish community) would establish their presence throughout San Diego County. Their rise to become collectively the largest visible element in the region's religious life continues to dominate the historiography of religion in San Diego.

Though religious diversity was a characteristic of the United States from its founding, in the decades since the Second World War the nation has become a host to all the major world religious traditions. This accelerating diversity initially centered around new forms of Christianity and of Western Esotericism but was subsequently enhanced by the settlement of followers of Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, Sikhism, Taoism, and a host of Asian new religious movements. In fact, San Diego played a crucial role in the development of this religious diversity nationally. The story of the development of the new diversity remains largely untold; hence the focus of this essay is on those groups that since the mid-nineteenth century have made San Diego the pluralistic religious community it has become in the present day.

THE SAN DIEGO STORY IN OUTLINE

While true religious diversity in San Diego only became visible in the decades since the end of the Second World War, it has been present at least since the 1840s. In 1846, the US government organized what became known as the Mormon Battalion, the only religiously-based unit in

United States military history, a company of some 550 male members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, who marched from Council Bluffs, Iowa, to San Diego as part of the American attempt to claim possession of California. The Latter-day Saints (or Mormons) were members of a new and very different form of Christianity that had been largely rejected by mainstream Christian leaders for the new revelations contained in its main supplemental biblical text, the Book of Mormon. Because of the church's espousal of a range of beliefs absent from more traditional forms of Christianity, Protestant leaders denounced the church as not just another new denomination, but a new religion.

The Mormon Battalion arrived in San Diego on January 29, 1847, concluding a march of some 1,900 miles. While the unit saw very little service in the war itself, its presence in San Diego served to introduce Mormonism to California, and individual members would emerge at significant points in California history, including, for example, Henry Bigler, who would be present at and record in his diary the actual date when gold was discovered at Sutter's Mill—January 24, 1848—one of the watershed moments in American history.[3] The Church of Latter-day Saints would experience significant growth and are now the second-largest religious body in the state of California. The community assumed a significantly higher profile in San Diego in 1993 when it completed its new temple prominently visible to drivers along Interstate Highway 5.

Following the Latter-day Saints in enlarging the diversity within the Christian tradition were the Unitarians and Universalists. The former was known in the nineteenth century for their affirmation of the unity or oneness of

God, and that affirmation's implied denial of the Christian doctrine of the Triune God and of the divinity of Jesus of Nazareth. Mainstream Christians denounced the Unitarians as heretics and pushed them to the fringe, but as they included among their leadership some of the country's leading intellectuals, they fought to keep their place in the wider Christian community. Simultaneously, the Universalists were condemned for their affirmation of universal salvation, with its implied abandonment of the Christian doctrine of hell.

Unitarianism's ongoing critique of Christian orthodoxy led it further afield, and it continually lost its more adventuresome leadership to a new movement that left Christianity behind, most notably those who departed in the 1930s to found the non-theistic American Humanist Society. In the twentieth century, the Unitarians' continued evolution led to the national merger of the Unitarians with the Universalist Church to form the American Unitarian Universalist Association (1961), followed by the formal distancing of the association from its Christian roots (1964).

Through the first half of the twentieth century, both Unitarianism and Universalism were concentrated in New England with only a small minority of their congregations located in other parts of the country. One of the few, however, was the San Diego congregation, founded in 1873 by businessman Alonzo Erasmus Horton (1813-1909) and lawyer Moses Luce (1842-1933). Since the 1961 merger, the association has enjoyed a rapid expansion across the nation and now has more than half a dozen congregations in San Diego County.[4]

Also entering southern California in the nineteenth century, the Jehovah's Witnesses (JW) emerged, much like the Latter-day Saints, as a new form of Christianity that both denied traditional Christian essentials and introduced new ideas that mainstream Christian leadership found unacceptable. While based in New York, the Witnesses found a second base of dissemination in southern California, and J. F. Rutherford (1869-1942), who took over leadership of the organization after the death of founder Charles Taze Russell (1862-1916), particularly favored San Diego, which he visited periodically as time allowed during his quarter century as the JW president.

In the 1920s, as he developed his understanding of the imminent changes God had in store for the world, Rutherford suggested that the Old Testament patriarchs would soon return to assume managerial control of the earth and that the patriarchs would need proper facilities to receive them. He chose San Diego as the place for their residence and purchased a large mansion, named Beth Sarim, or "House of the Princes." In acquiring that property, he affirmed the belief of the organization that "the faithful men of old will soon be resurrected by the Lord, be back on earth, and take charge of the visible affairs of earth." As events unfolded, of course, the patriarchs did not return, and during the remaining years of his life, Rutherford resided periodically at Beth Sarim. After his passing, as the organization continued to evolve its eschatological perspectives, especially about the timetable of imminent events in the human future, it deemed keeping the property a luxury that it could not afford and divested itself of the mansion.[5]

Through the second half of the twentieth century, the Witnesses experienced spectacular growth and joined the Latter-day Saints on the very short list of American

denominations that could count more than a million adherents. The Witnesses in San Diego County fully participated in that growth and now have more than a dozen Kingdom Halls (church buildings), each providing space for multiple congregations.

WESTERN ESOTERICISM

On the other end of the religious spectrum from the Witnesses, Spiritualism emerged in the 1840s in western New York. Its spread was slowed by the Civil War but picked up through the last decades of the century, and its adherents formed the National Spiritual Association in 1893. San Diego assumed a major leadership role in the movement three years later when a spiritualist group in Escondido, responding to advice offered through Spiritualist medium Mary Jane Evans, took the lead in founding the Harmony Grove Spiritualist Camp. Evans's father, Syvanus Nulton, donated the land, originally part of his large ranch. It would become the leading Spiritualist center west of the Mississippi and attracted Spiritualists nationally to its year-round programs. Spiritualism would in turn become the first popular expression of Western Esotericism.

Western Esotericism continues the ancient Gnostic current in Western religion that has found a number of organizational expressions and has in recent centuries provided the most substantial alternative to the more dominant forms of Western religious life expressed in Christianity and Judaism.[6] Western Esotericism tended to affirm a remote impersonal deity, the activity of a variety of beings in the spiritual domain with whom believers could have contact, and the practice of various exercises

that could provide contact with the spiritual realms. Esotericists also tended to privilege education rather than worship as the activity best suited to facilitate progress in the spiritual life. In the modern West, Esotericism has blossomed through such movements as Spiritualism, Rosicrucianism, Theosophy, ritual/ceremonial magick, and more recently Wicca and Neo-Paganism. The first American Rosicrucian organization was founded in San Francisco in 1851, the second in San Diego in 1910.

Shortly after the founding of Harmony Grove, San Diego would make its second major contribution to the development of the Western Esoteric tradition in America, the founding of the Universal Brotherhood and Theosophical Society. This organization was the culmination of the 1895 split between the society's founders, William Q. Judge (1851-1896) and Henry Steel Olcott (1832-1907). In the wake of the death of the third co-founder, Helena P. Blavatsky (1831-1891), her appointed successor, Annie Besant (1847-1933), emerged as the powerful leader of the international theosophical movement. Judge opposed Besant and recruited a young social worker, Katherine Tingley (1847-1929), who shared Besant's charisma, as his successor to lead the American Theosophists. She assumed formal leadership upon Judge's death in 1896 and in 1900 moved the headquarters of the Universal Brotherhood to Point Loma, where she established one of America's unique communal experiments. Tingley spent the rest of her career building the community even as she worked to turn the American Theosophical organization into an international society rivaling that led by Besant.

For a generation, San Diego would be home to one of the most unusual, interesting, and culturally vibrant

social experiments in American history. Artists, novelists, and would-be intellectuals found their way to the community, which became central to the cultural life and entertainment of the emerging city of San Diego. After flourishing for three decades, the community would face a slow decline that began with Tingley's sudden death in a car accident in 1929 and come to an end when their land was needed by the US government during World War II. The Theosophists left their Lomaland home in 1942, eventually settling in Altadena, but during the next decades San Diego would become an American lighthouse of Esoteric religion.[7] Part of the vacuum left by the closing of the Lomaland community would be filled by the local branches of the United Lodge of Theosophists, founded by former Lomaland resident George Crosbie, and of the Anthroposophical Society of America, with its associated Christian community growing out of the work of former Theosophist Rudolf Steiner (1861-1924).[8]

Even prior to Theosophy organizing in San Diego, the Swedenborgian movement, which had evolved from the writings of eighteenth-century Swedish seer Emanuel Swedenborg (1688-1772), arrived in San Diego. Followers founded the Swedenborgian Church of San Diego in 1883 and later constructed a church in the University Heights neighborhood.[9] Never a large movement nationally, the local Swedenborgian congregation, which had existed for more than a century, in 2016 voted to sell its building and dissolve, though a small worshipping community continues to the present.

Simultaneously with the Swedenborgian movement, Christian Science spread along the West Coast, and the first Church of Christ, Scientist of San Diego opened

Christian Science Church designed by Irving Gill, c. 1920.
© SDHC #4302.

in 1897. Through the first half of the twentieth century, Christian Science would enjoy much greater success nationally than did the Swedenborgians, and in spite of a marked decline in recent decades, Christian Science churches are now found throughout the country, including five in San Diego County.

The First Church of Christ, Scientist in San Diego would also come to have a special place in the city's life. In 1913 it moved into a new building designed by famed architect Irving Gill, at the corner of 2nd and Laurel. That building subsequently emerged as one of the most important architectural sites on the West Coast. Among other attributes, it houses an original Murray Harris Pipe Organ, "one of the last unspoiled pipe organs built by the Murray M. Harris Co." of Los Angeles, consisting of 1,732 pipes made of zinc, tin, lead alloy, and redwood. It has 29 ranks, 3 manuals, 12 general pistons and 32 levels of memory.[10]

Even as the Christian Science church was taking is first steps in San Diego, Max Heindel (1865-1919), the former vice-president of the American branch of the other Theosophical Society (headed by Annie Besant), was engaged in touring America as a lecturer when in 1907 he interrupted his schedule to visit Germany. There he had an encounter with a spirit being whom he came to know as an elder brother in the Rosicrucian order, who began to impart the teachings that formed the substance of Heindel's first book, *The Rosicrucian Cosmo-Conception*. He left his Theosophical duties, formed the first Rosicrucian center in 1908, and published his book in 1909.

By the end of the decade, he had opened several centers across the country and settled in Los Angeles. In 1910, the Elder Brother reappeared to him and outlined the work of a larger organization, a Rosicrucian Fellowship which would be focused in a temple to be erected in Oceanside, California, at a spot that came to be known as Mt. Ecclesia. That temple was finally dedicated and opened to Fellowship members in 1920. Mt. Ecclesia would become the site of a community built around the teachings passed to Heindel, and that community would anchor the international membership of the Rosicrucian Fellowship, one of the major Rosicrucian organizations in North America through the twentieth century.[11]

Harmony Grove, Lomaland, and Mt. Ecclesia put San Diego County on the map for the larger Esoteric community and through the mid-twentieth century would attract additional spiritual teachers wishing to found centers to facilitate their life's work. In 1940, for example, Flower Newhouse (1909-1994), a Christian theosophist who had begun to articulate her vision of spirituality as the

Christward Way, established Questhaven, a retreat center and ministry headquarters, on some 600 acres of land in rural San Diego County near San Marcos. It became the place where Newhouse would write her many books and to this day continues to attract spiritual seekers.

About the same time, Dr. Robert D. Stelle (d. 1952), an Esoteric teacher and physician in Chicago, with his associate, Howard J. Zitko, founded the Lemurian Fellowship in 1936. He soon moved to Chula Vista and shortly thereafter established a base of operations on a hillside plot in Ramona. Stelle's ideas had been revealed to him by several theosophical Masters, and he and his teachings soon attracted a community not unlike that at Lomaland, which became (and continues as) the center of a national and international organization.[13]

The Esoteric Essene Movement, established in San Diego in the mid-twentieth century, traces its roots to the visits of its founder Edmond Szekely (1905-1979) to the Vatican Library in 1923. While there, Szekely claimed to have found and translated several ancient Hebrew and Aramaic texts which revealed the esoteric teachings of the ancient Essenes and disclosed, among other secrets, that they were vegetarians. Szekely became convinced that Jesus was an Essene and a vegetarian. What he learned from his Vatican visit led to his producing a series of books beginning with *The Essene Gospel of Peace* and *The Essene Book of Revelation*.[14]

In 1939, Szekely married fellow vegetarian Deborah Shainman (b. 1922), and the two settled in Tecate, in Baja California, where they founded Rancho la Puerta as a site where they could nurture their Essene ideals.[15] Visitors could experience lectures by Szekely on organic farming,

Entrance of Rancho La Puerta, Tecate, Mexico, 1956.
© SDHC #S-2892-A.

vegetarianism, and the Essene faith, while his wife directed the ranch's cutting-edge spa. One result was the opening of Golden Door, a luxury spa in Escondido that soon attracted the Hollywood elite. The couple spent their last years together in Escondido, where they moved in 1970. Szekely's many books attracted a following, and in 1980 he would leave what was known as the First Christians' Essene Church to Bishop Garry White, who resided in San Diego during his leadership tenure.[16]

ASIAN RELIGION

Chinese migrants began to arrive in California in large numbers during the gold rush. They would establish the first Asian religious centers (termed joss or "god" houses) in which the traditional Chinese polytheist religion would be celebrated. The first Chinese arrived in San Diego around 1860, and through the 1870s, a thriving Chinese community began to emerge, built in part around a large group of fishermen. By the end of the 1870s, San Diego's joss house was constructed on Third Avenue adjacent to the large Chinese import business opened by the San Francisco-based Wo Sung and Company. The joss house would remain open and active for half a century.[17]

The early Chinese in San Diego were followed by an emerging Japanese community. Jodo Shinshu Buddhism was introduced to California in 1899 by missionaries who settled in San Francisco and from which worship centers spread southward along the coast. Buddhists in San Diego began to meet in small groups in their homes before World War I and came together to construct their first church/temple in 1926.[18]

A broader Asian religious movement in San Diego came

Deborah Szekely at the Golden Door, Escondido, 1965. Photo by Charles Schneider. © SDHC # 93_18923-572-26 (Charles Schneider Collection, SDHC, Booth Historical Photograph Archives).

from the efforts of a single Indian teacher who settled in Southern California. In 1920 Swami Paramahansa Yogananda (1893-1962), a teacher of what was termed kriya yoga, arrived in America to speak at an interreligious conference in Boston. He remained in America, and the next year he founded what became the Self-Realization Fellowship (SRF) to facilitate the spread of his teachings in the West. In 1924 he moved to California and opened the first center in Los Angeles. He traveled widely building a national movement, though his primary response came from California.

In 1935, he returned to India for a last visit with his own guru, Sri Yukteswar (1855-1936), who would die the following year. While Yogananda was in India, his American following located a site in Encinitas, and Rajarsi Janakananda (1892-1955), the leader of SRF, saw to the construction of a hermitage which would become Yogananda's home for the rest of his life (and is now a pilgrimage site for SRF members). The large center that grew up adjacent to the hermitage remains the center of the Fellowship. From there, Yogananda would found the Hollywood, San Diego, and Encinitas temples and eventually publish his ground-breaking *Autobiography of a Yogi* (1946). The SRF establishment at Encinitas would pioneer the development of San Diego as a major center of Asian religious life in America.[19]

NEW THOUGHT

Soon after its founding, the Church of Christ, Scientist (Christian Science) gave birth to New Thought, a movement that can be traced back to Emma Curtis Hopkins (1849-1925), a former editor of the *Christian*

Science Journal, who would train all and ordain most of the founders of the major New Thought denominations—the Unity School of Christianity, Religious Science, and Divine Science. Hopkins's last student would be Ernest Holmes (1887-1960), a former Christian Scientist, who established the Religious Science movement. Settling in California after his time with Hopkins, Holmes built a movement that enjoyed its greatest success in the southern half of the state.

New Thought came to San Diego early in the twentieth century but truly blossomed after the Second World War. Robert Stevens, a minister of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), who had become attracted to New Thought in the 1950s, visited San Diego in 1960. Encouraged by the response to his presentations, he moved to the city the following year and founded an independent New Thought congregation. As that work grew, Stevens discovered his greatest resonance with the Unity School of Christianity, based in Lee's Summit, Missouri. In 1968, the congregation broke ground for a new sanctuary (now considered possibly the most beautiful Unity church in the country), Stevens was subsequently ordained as a Unity minister, and the church formally affiliated with the Unity School. Originally taking the name Christ Church Unity, it is now known as Unity San Diego. The church grew quickly, and when it was but two years old, G. Arthur Hammons, its assistant pastor, assumed the pastorate of a satellite church, Christ Church Unity of El Cajon. Stevens retired in 1980, leaving the congregation as one of the strongest in the Unity fellowship and one of the largest New Thought churches in Southern California.

Even as Stevens's work was growing, in 1977, a young minister and former beauty queen, Terry Cole-Whittaker, took charge of the small Religious Science congregation in La Jolla. Two years later she began a broadcast ministry on a local TV station. Under her charismatic leadership, the congregation grew significantly. By 1982, she was speaking to several thousand weekly, with up to 5,000 for the Easter Sunday service. The work expanded to include a grammar school, a ministry school, and five teaching centers. Her first book, *What You Think of Me is None of My Business* (1979), became a bestseller and turned her into a superstar in Religious Science circles, and indeed in the whole New Thought community. It was followed by *How to Have More in a Have Not World* (1983), which featured her teachings on money and prosperity.

Although her popularity was growing, in 1982 Cole-Whittaker withdrew from her denomination, the United Church of Religious Science (which continues today as the Centers for Spiritual Living), and she reorganized her work as an independent New Thought congregation under the aegis of Terry Cole-Whittaker Ministries (which a few years later became Adventures in Enlightenment). Through the 1980s she remained one of the most charismatic speakers and famous personalities in the New Thought world. In 1985, at the height of her popularity, she resigned from her pastorate and moved to Washington state to continue her work in a quieter atmosphere. By this time, partially with Cole-Whittaker's nurturing care, additional prominent San Diego New Thought congregations had emerged, including the Church of Today (now known as the Unity Center) and the Pacific Church of Religious Science.[20]

New Thought in San Diego County survived the moving on of its charismatic leaders of the 1970s and under equally competent leaders has continued as a strong segment of the county's alternative religious community, even as the national organizations with which they are affiliated have undergone significant reorganizations (and some name changes). For example, emerging as a leading voice nationally of the new century's New Thought leaders, Christian Sorenson, the pastor of the Seaside Church for Spiritual Living in Encinitas, is a past president of the United Church of Religious Science, and the author of a number of popular books.[21]

THE LATE TWENTIETH CENTURY

The end of the Second World War brought a variety of changes to American religion, most notably a new appreciation of Asian religion, which had been encountered by soldiers stationed abroad, especially in Japan, in the years immediately following the war. The climactic event of the war, the dropping of the atomic bombs, also served to produce a period of general anxiety, as the public became aware of the destructive potential of nuclear warfare.

Interestingly, the first new religious movement to emerge after World War II would not be Asian, but a homegrown movement related to Cold War-era interest in UFOs. In 1947, the sighting of a UFO near Mt. Rainier in the state of Washington would inspire a quest to discover whether extraterrestrial beings were actually attempting to explore the earth and make contact with human society. Based in both popular and academic science (and with the added interest of the armed forces), that effort

was essentially a scientific endeavor (though with obvious philosophical consequences should hard evidence tying UFOs to extraterrestrial life emerge). As the search for understanding UFOs (ufology) developed, especially on the popular level, a second movement, often not clearly distinguished from ufology, made its appearance. It began with people who made extraordinary claims to having had direct experience with extraterrestrial entities, sometimes in the form of in-person physical contact, though most frequently via paranormal means (telepathy, clairvoyance, or mediumship).

This second movement, generally termed the flying saucer or contactee movement, integrated obvious esoteric religious aspects, and as it expanded, many primary spokespersons were revealed to have served as leaders in esoteric religions (mostly Spiritualist or theosophical organizations). Other leaders had recently had intense visionary experiences within the context of the general cultural anxiety over the atomic bomb and the Cold War. The first flying saucer contactee was George Adamski (1891-1965), a resident of San Diego County.[22]

In 1952, Adamski, who resided on land at the base of Mt. Palomar, became the focus of a new movement built around claims of contact with extraterrestrials when he published a book (with co-author Desmond Leslie) in which he claimed to have met with extraterrestrial visitors who shared information important to the survival of the human race. Even as scientists sought to determine if unidentified aerial phenomena had anything important to teach us, Adamski became the first of more than a dozen people who came forward to share stories of their meetings with various extraterrestrials, whom they claimed

were contacting random individuals with messages from outer space. The content of the messages generally evolved into teachings that sounded strikingly similar to those circulating in Spiritualist and Theosophical circles, but space travelers now tended to replace the spiritual beings who had communicated with Theosophical and Spiritualist leaders in earlier generations.

Adamski, who had been a teacher of esoteric ideas since the 1930s through the organization he had founded, the Royal Order of Tibet, paved the way for a global phenomenon of people claiming to have made contact with space brothers.[24] Among the earliest were Ernest (1904-1971) and Ruth Norman (1900-1993). The Normans met at a Spiritualist convention in 1954. From their home in Escondido, they began issuing books describing their contacts with visitors from various planets, quickly gained a following, and before the end of 1954 created the Unarius Educational Foundation to carry their teachings to the public at large.[25]

While most of the new contactees developed a personal following who kept up with the messages they received from extraterrestrials, and who founded new organizations primarily designed to facilitate their dissemination of the teachings of space brothers, the Normans were among the first to organize a fledgling new religious group, in this case based upon "interdimensional physics." They published a steady stream of books and booklets and began to organize their following, to whom they offered a course of "scientific" spiritual development. Ruth Norman would later build a picture of the galaxy modeled on the well-known spiritual hierarchy described in Theosophy. Unarius members held picturesque annual

conventions (during which they dressed in clothing worn by the inhabitants of different planets) that celebrated Norman's role as the exclusive earthly contact with the Space Confederation. Unarius would become one of the most successful of the flying saucer groups and among the few that survive to the present, though no successor(s) to their founders have appeared in the two decades since Ruth Norman's passing.

Even as the flying saucer movement declined, one group that did survive into the new century would relocate to San Diego County and become the subject of one of the area's most tragic incidents. In the 1970s, a couple, Marshall Applewhite (1931–1997) and Bonnie Nettles (1927–1985), decided that they were the two endtime witnesses of the biblical Book of Revelation. The two gathered followers, designating them as beings from the Next Level of Existence and telling them that they would eventually initiate others into a higher life, known as TELAH (The Evolutionary Level Above Human). The public came to know them as Heaven's Gate. A relatively small group of never more than 200 members, it operated quietly though making sporadic public appearances and moments of contact with outside investigators.

The group struggled with the death of Nettles and their failure to attract a large following, but members continued to explore a variety of ways to reach the next level. They speculated that they might be picked up by a space craft and hence exit this planet, they considered moving out of the country, and some of the males castrated themselves. In the end, they settled in Rancho Santa Fe (a San Diego suburb), and occasioned by the appearance of the Hale-Bopp Comet, thirty-nine members of the group decided

to make what they saw as a willful exit from their bodies in a dignified manner. On March 22 and 23, 1997, they committed suicide by taking poison. Given this dramatic denouement and contemporaneous violent deaths in other new religions, Heaven's Gate will remain a topic of research and speculation for many years.[26]

SCIENTOLOGY

Like the flying saucer community, the Church of Scientology, the single most successful (in terms of the number of adherents) representative of Western Esotericism to date, also traces some of its roots to San Diego. Founded by L. Ron Hubbard (1911-1986) in 1954, Scientology built upon the very popular Dianetics movement that Hubbard had started in 1950. Two years later, Hubbard announced his discovery of the philosophy of Scientology and established the Hubbard Association of Scientologists International (HASI), originally based in Phoenix, Arizona, but later moved to Washington, DC. Among the first graduates of HASI was Julia Lewis (Salmen), who attained a doctorate in Scientology.

After graduating, Lewis began assisting Hubbard in shaping the church, then still in its infancy. Two years later, Hubbard asked Julia and her new husband Ken Salmen to move from Washington to Los Angeles and begin HASI there. Meanwhile, by the spring of 1955, a Church of Scientology headed by John McCormick was functioning in La Jolla. Toward the end of the year, he and his wife Margee, along with another couple, Carl and Laverne Jardine, attended the national training congress at the Founding Church in Washington, DC. While there, they would meet Julia Salmen. San Diego would for the rest

of the decade be the most active Scientology center in California and soon moved out of the McCormick's La Jolla home to an office on Washington Street in San Diego.

In 1962, the Church of Scientology of California (The Los Angeles Org) was granted the status as the Central Org (HCO) for the western United States. Shortly thereafter, the Church of Scientology San Diego was officially designated as a City Office, under the direct supervision of HCO Los Angeles. Thus, California became the first state to get both a Central Org and a City Office. From that modest beginning, Southern California would become the world center of the Scientology movement, and from the 1970s to the present, San Diego would remain a powerful influence on the developing church.[27]

ASIAN IMMIGRATION AND RELIGION IN SAN DIEGO

Immigration reform in the postwar era had a significant impact on religious diversity. In part because the United States hoped to improve its international reputation during the Cold War, Congress in 1965 passed the Hart-Celler Act, an immigration law that eliminated the decades-old quota system that had effectively barred migrants from Asia. The act paved the way for a significant increase in migration from Asia, with the largest number settling in Los Angeles, Orange, and San Diego counties. More than half a million Asian Americans now reside in San Diego County, constituting over 15 percent of the county's population.

The movement of so many Asian people to San Diego has meant the rapid expansion of Asian religions, especially Buddhism and Hinduism. While Christians are the largest

religious group among Asian Americans, a substantial percentage follow the dominant religions of their homeland, and by the beginning of the new century, local centers of all the major forms of Buddhism and Hinduism had been opened in the county. Asian religion has also become attractive to increasing numbers of non-Asian Americans, and the growth of Buddhism and Hinduism has not been limited to centers predominantly led and populated by Asians. This phenomenon is possibly most noticeable in the Tibetan Buddhist centers. There are only a minuscule number of Tibetans residing in the United States, but there are more than a dozen Tibetan Buddhist groups operating in San Diego County, all consisting primarily of non-Asian leaders and followers. In like measure, there are a variety of Hindu groups in which only the national leadership is of Asian background and the followers come from other ethnic and linguistic backgrounds.

Among the first of the new Asian groups to form in the wake of the 1965 immigration law was the International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON), whose founder Swami Prabhupada (1896-1977) happened to be in the United States in the fall of 1965 when the law was passed. Thus, as his tourist visa was expiring, he was able to secure a residency visa and remain in America to build ISKCON, now a global organization. Begun in Manhattan, ISKCON quickly developed a national following, with temples along the West Coast. The original temple in San Diego emerged toward the end of the 1960s during the era of the "hippie" street people on Thorne Street next to Balboa Park. A second temple established in Pacific Beach grew under the lengthy temple presidency of Badrinarayan Dasa (1978 to 1995).

ISKCON in San Diego had at one time envisioned a large temple on land near Escondido and worked with the Laguna Beach temple on its construction. When funding failed to materialize as hoped, devotees decided to turn the twenty-three-acre property into a working organic farm. Members from Southern California now gather there annually to celebrate the "Maha Govardhana Puja" recalling the story of the day when Lord Krishna displayed His divine powers by lifting the sacred Govardhana Hill.

ISKCON holds a unique place in the Hindu community, continuing the traditional temple worship as is done in India, but largely consisting of non-Indian converts in whom ISKCON's founder placed his trust for the perpetuation of the ancient Vedic beliefs and practices in the West. Over the years since its founding, however, a large number of Krishna devotees from India have moved to America, and the San Diego temple (like most American ISKCON temples) has been transformed into an Asian-majority temple. The recent Asian immigrants discovered the ISKCON temples to be faithful replicas of what they had grown up with in their homeland.[28]

Immigrants from other parts of India and/or followers of other forms of Hinduism have more recently founded a set of traditional Hindu temples, several clustered in the "Little India" community off Clairemont Mesa Boulevard. These temples serve the major sampradayas (akin to denominations) of Hindus – the Vaisnavas, Saivites and mother goddess worshipers. The largest number of Indians worship the god Vishnu, known for his multiple incarnations, including as Krishna or as Rama. Saivites focus their worship on the god Siva (or Shiva) and members of his family such as Ganesh or Muragan. Worshippers of

Sai Baba Statue at Sai Baba Temple, San Diego. Photo by author.

the mother goddess center their devotion on the female deity Durga. The largest Hindu group in the United States has arrived from the state of Gujarat and venerate Swaminarayan, a real historical personage who lived in the early nineteenth century. They believe him to be an additional incarnation of Krishna (or Vishnu). There is one Swaminarayan temple in San Diego.

Another historical figure who has received contemporary veneration from Hindus is Sai Baba of Shirdi (d. 1918), a Hindu saint who lived at the beginning of the twentieth century. In the century since his death, many have come to see him as a recent incarnation of Lord Shiva. His situation has been complicated by the appearance in the last generation of a spiritual teacher in India who called himself Sathya Sai Baba (1926-2011) and whose disciples would come to view as the return of Sai Baba of Shirdi. There are disciples of both Sai Babas in San Diego, including a temple to Sai Baba of Shirdi (the San Diego Shirdi Saibaba Spiritual Center) and a center focused on Sathya Sai Baba affiliated with the Sathya Sai International Organization.

During the last half century, a variety of groups have emerged around individual spiritual teachers (or gurus) who have come to the West from India and built followings among non-Asian residents in their new country. The first such group was the Vedanta Society that grew out of the original activity of Swami Vivekananda (1863-1902). The Vedanta Society of Southern California, headquartered in Hollywood, supports a monastery in San Diego. The new wave of post-1965 gurus, however, have stood out for their tendency to jettison ancient practices, especially temple worship, in favor of focusing upon a single spiritual practice. Most famous of the new generation of teachers was Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, who brought the practice of Transcendental Meditation (TM).

Maharishi Mahesh Yogi was able to get a head start on the other Indian spiritual teachers by making several short visits beginning in 1959. Though he arrived in the country on a tourist visa that allowed him to stay only a short time, during his 1959 visit, Maharishi held a short class on Transcendental Meditation in Hawaii. Among the attendees was San Diegan Beulah Smith. She went on to attend a teacher training class in 1960 in Rishikesh, India, and was the only American among the eleven to graduate. It would be another five years before Maharishi held another teacher training course, and during the period between 1960 and 1965, Smith was the only person in the United States who could hold TM initiations.

Simultaneously, several disciples of Swami Sivananda Saraswati (1887-1963) brought Sivananda's practice of integral yoga to Canada.[29] Within a decade, Western disciples of the Indian gurus emerged as gurus themselves. Among the guru groups active in San Diego are the

Oneness Movement, the disciples of Sri Chinmoy (who also manage a vegetarian restaurant on Adams Avenue), Sahaja Yoga (Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi), and the American Meditation Society (Gururaj Ananda Yogi), to name a few.

The first Hindu teacher to establish himself in San Diego County was the previously mentioned Swami Yogananda. Since his death, several movements have emerged from the Self-Realization Fellowship, including what is now known as the Ananda Sangha (founded by the late Swami Kriyananda (1926-2013), a.k.a. Donald Walters, a former member of the SRF board), while several groups that share Yogananda's lineage have also appeared, such as Kriya Yoga International (founded by Paramahamsa Hariharananda (1907-2002)) and the International Babaji Yoga Sangum (founded by Yogi S.A.A. Ramaiah (d. 2006)).

Buddhism has shown itself a much more organized religious community than Hinduism, having formed a number of "sects" that are analogous to Christian denominations. There are now more than 200 such sects operating in the United States, most tied together either by shared language and national identity, or in the case of English-speaking groups, by the teachings and charisma of notable teachers. Most Buddhist groups in America are identified initially by ties or past ties to a particular national Buddhist tradition. The Chinese and Japanese are the oldest such traditions in North America, but Korean, Vietnamese, Burmese, Thai, and Sri Lankan Buddhist traditions are now well-established, too.

The oldest Buddhist tradition comes out of South and Southeast Asia. It is called Theravada Buddhism, the form of Buddhism practiced in Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Thailand, Cambodia, and Laos. Since 1965, immigrants from each of these countries have moved into San Diego and opened temples in the city.[30]

Along with these temples, which have primarily attracted Southeast Asian Americans, are the several groups that practice Vippasana Meditation. Early in the twentieth century, monks in northern Thailand expressed a desire to practice their Theravada Buddhism apart from the elements of folk religion that had invaded the larger Buddhist community and separate from the laxity of normative Buddhist practitioners. They retreated to forests and founded isolated Buddhist monasteries where they not only emphasized the strict traditional Buddhist monastic standards but cultivated a particular form of meditation known as Vippasana (or mindfulness). Parallel trends developed in adjacent countries.

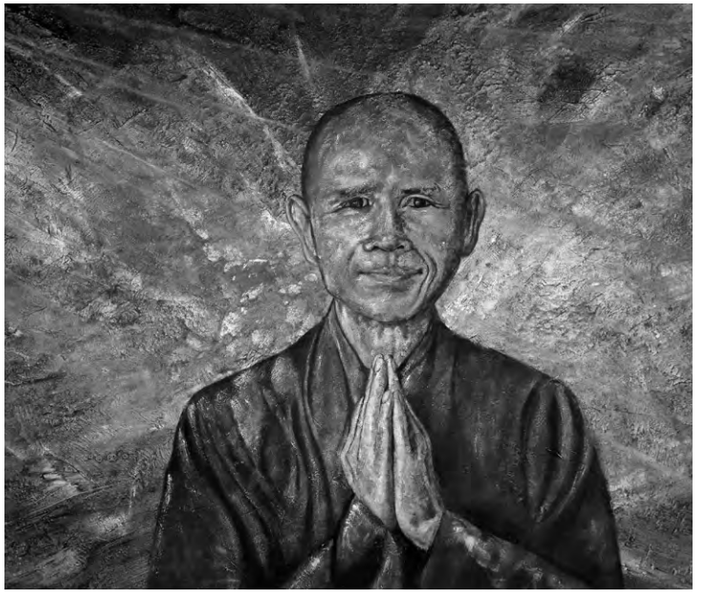
During the twentieth century, Westerners learned of the tradition and brought it back with them to the West, where several Theravada monasteries were opened. One such monastery, the Metta Forest Monastery, is located in an isolated rural area near Valley Center. Drawing a much larger audience is the singular practice of Vippasana meditation which can easily be separated from the monastic practice. It was brought to the West as Insight Mediation. San Diego is home to more than a half-dozen Vippasana sitting groups, usually drawing on the teachings of one of several meditation masters from Southeast Asia, most notably Mahasi Sayadaw (1904-1982), S.N. Goenka (1924-2013), and Sayagyi U Ba Kim (1899-1971). Insight San Diego, founded in 2014, builds on a tradition of local practice dating to the 1990s.

Possibly the most important Buddhist center in San Diego was founded by Thich Nhat Hanh, the Vietnamese

refugee, peace advocate, and founder of the Plum Village Buddhist Tradition, an eclectic form of Buddhism that draws on both Theravada and Mahayana Buddhism with an added emphasis on engaged (socially active) Buddhist practice. It is notable for applying mindfulness to everyday activities and consciously adding an ethical/spiritual dimension to personal decision-making. Modelled on his Plum Village Monastery in France, Thich Nhat Hanh led in the founding of Deer Park Monastery in Escondido in 2000, and it quickly emerged as the North American headquarters for his movement in America. There are more than 100 Plum Village Buddhist centers across the United States.

What is termed Mahayana Buddhism developed in China and was exported from China to Vietnam, Korea, and Japan. While Theravada Buddhism tends to focus primarily on the single figure of Shakyamuni Buddha, the Enlightened One, Mahayana is known for its veneration of multiple enlightened ones such as the Buddha Maitreya or Buddha Amitabha, and the many bodhisattvas, saintly angel-like beings who stand just below the buddhas as being devoted to assisting humans in different ways. The most notable bodhisattva is Guan Yin (called Kannon in Japan), a female deity also known as the goddess of mercy. Mahayana Buddhism had three main sub-schools, one based on the study of the holy books, one on mediation, and one on esoteric and/or magical teachings. Each of the different schools of Mahayana Buddhism produced multiple sects.

The most noteworthy of the text-oriented schools are the Pureland sects of Buddhism. Pureland Buddhism is focused on Amitabha Buddha, the Buddha of a heavenly



Thich Nhat Hanh founded the Deer Park Monastery in Escondido in 2000. *Thich Nhat Hanh in Prayer.* Painting by Spar Street, 2006. © SDHC #DP_1800_2020.35.

land just short of Nirvana. The first Buddhists to come to America were Pureland Buddhists, representatives of a Jodo Shinshu sect from Japan. Their work led to the formation of the Buddhist Churches of America. Their basic teaching is that those who call upon the name of Amida (Amitabha) Buddha in this life will be taken to the Pureland after death. The Buddhist Temple of San Diego was founded by Japanese Americans in 1926 and was the only Buddhist temple in the county established before the new immigration law of 1965.[31]

This original San Diego temple had its origin among the early Japanese settlers. As small Buddhist groups began to meet in private homes, a minister from Los Angeles

would occasionally visit to lead special ceremonies. Then on January 27, 1916, tragedy struck the community when a dam broke and water flooded the Otay Valley, home to a colony of Japanese farmers, killing eleven people. Serious discussion on organizing a more formal Buddhist association began at the farmers' funeral and continued periodically and informally for some years. The discussions finally bore fruit, and a sanctuary for worship was organized in 1926. A building was constructed two years later.

Among the important figures in Japanese history is Nichiren (1222-1282) who focused particular devotion on a single Buddhist sutra (holy book), the Lotus Sutra. His movement divided shortly after his death, and one branch of that movement has enjoyed noteworthy success in the post-World War II era. Its former lay organization, known as Soka Gakkai, which separated from the main body of the Nichiren Shoshu in Japan, has subsequently become the largest Buddhist group in many countries of the world, including the United States. Soka Gakkai has a large center in the Kearny Mesa area of San Diego from which its work in the county is coordinated.[32]

The meditative tradition developed in China as Chan Buddhism and is known in Japan as Zen Buddhism and in Korea as Son Buddhism. Zen was introduced to the West at the 1893 World's Parliament of Religions, and several teachers emerged on the West Coast prior to World War II. However, interest in Zen Buddhism spread rapidly in the postwar years. It was identified with the beatnik counterculture movement of the 1950s but gained serious traction with the 1962 founding of the San Francisco Zen Center led by Shunryu Suzuki (1904-1971)

World Mission Church of God headquarters, Santee.
Photo by author.

and the founding of the Zen Center of Los Angeles five years later by Taizan Maezumi (1931-1995).

Zen was brought to San Diego by Charlotte Joko Beck (1917-2011), a student of Taizan Maezumi who broke with him when his problems with alcoholism became known.[33] In 1983 she moved to San Diego and founded the Zen Center of San Diego. As she trained teachers who in turn went out to establish new centers, she founded the Ordinary Mind Zen School. She retired in 2006 and two senior students, Ezra Bayda and Elizabeth Hamilton, succeeded her at the San Diego Zen Center. Another student of Maezumi, Nicolee Jikyo Miller, also came to San Diego to found the Three Treasure Zen Center, and students of still another Maezumi student, Bernard Glassman (1939-2018), founded the Sweetwater Zen Center in suburban National City.[34] There is additional Zen practice in the city, but the work of the students of Taizan Maezumi is by far the most expansive.

Botanica Mama Roots, San Diego. Photo by author.

Esoteric Buddhism is usually identified with Tibet, though it has Mongolian, Chinese, and Japanese (Shingon) sectarian forms. Thousands of Americans have found their way to various Tibetan teachers who left their homeland after the Chinese takeover. Meanwhile, dozens of scholars have emerged to translate the Tibetan religious texts into English. The result a half century later is the existence of the four major and several lesser schools of Tibetan Buddhism in America's urban centers and the development of a number of new sectarian forms. San Diego is home to centers of three of the four major schools of Tibetan Buddhism—the Gelugpa, Ningmapa, and Kagyu—plus several of the smaller traditions, the Drikung and Dzogchen.[35]

CONCLUSION

This outline of alternative religious traditions in San Diego has just scratched the surface of the innovative religious life now found in the southwestern corner of the United States. No mention has been made, for example, of the magical community, especially Wicca (or witchcraft), to which San Diego has supplied a string of nationally prominent priests and priestesses. Growing out of the New Age movement of the 1970s have been a spectrum of psychic channelers, esoteric readers and practitioners, meditation centers, and a number of hatha yoga studios. While most Hispanic residents are affiliated with the Roman Catholic Church, a sizable minority follow different paranormal artists known variously as curanderos, brujas, and santeros, or attend one of the several Brazilian Spiritist churches in San Diego. In addition, future historical research should explore how immigration from

the Middle East and East Africa has contributed to the region's religious diversity with the arrival of Muslims, Chaldeans, and Coptic Christians.

Even atheism has played a prominent role in the city since the establishment of the American Association for the Advancement of Atheism made its headquarters in the city in the 1960s and brought with it the *Truth Seeker*, the oldest Freethought periodical in America. Today a number of non-theistic groups active in the area (from American Atheists to the American Humanist Association) have been brought together by the United Coalition of Reason.[36]

San Diego's important and unique contribution to the development of the pluralistic structure of American religion deserves further attention, both to give the county's residents a greater understanding of the significant changes that have occurred in the city's spiritual constituency, and to make the larger community aware of the county's important role in the American religious story.

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[28] Joshua H. Greene, *Swami in a Strange Land: How Krishna Came to the West* (San Rafael, CA: Mandala Publishing, 2016); Satsvarupa das Goswami, *Srila Prabhupada Lilamrta: Biography of Srila Prabhupada* (Los Angeles: Bhaktivedanta Book Trust, 2014).

[29] J. Gordon Melton, "Pioneering Hinduism in Canada: The Life and Work of Swam Sivananda Radha," *Études Canadiennes/Canadian Studies* 88 (2000): 115-27.

[30] Wendy Cadge, *Heartwood: The First Generation of Theravada Buddhism in America* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004); Penny Van Esterik, T*aking Refuge: Lao Buddhists in North America* (Tempe, AZ: Arizona State University Program for Southeast Asian Studies, 1992); Phra Rajavaramuni, *Thai Buddhism in the Buddhist World: A Survey of the Buddhist Situation against a Historical Background* (North Hollywood, CA: Wat Thai of Los Angeles, 1984).

[31] *Buddhist Churches of America, 75 Year History, 1899–1974*. 2 vols. (Chicago: Norbet, 1974); Kenneth Kenichi Tanaka, *Ocean: An Introduction to Jodo-Shinshu Buddhism in America* (Berkeley, CA: WisdomOcean Publications, 1997).

[32] Jeffrey Ourvan, *The Star-Spangled Buddhist: Zen, Tibetan, and Soka Gakkai Buddhism and the Quest for Enlightenment in America* (New York: Skyhorse Publishing, 2016); Philip Hammond and David Machacek, Soka Gakkai in America: Accommodation and Conversion (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 1999).

[33] Beck is featured in Lenore Friedman's *Meetings with Remarkable Women: Buddhist Teachers in America* (Boston: Shambhala Publications, 2000): 125–150.

[34] Among Ezra Bayda's many books are *At Home in the Muddy Water* (Boston, MA: Shambhala Publications, 2003) and *The Authentic Life: Zen Wisdom for Living Free from Complacency and Fear* (Boston, MA: Shambhala Publications, 2014). Glassman, one of Maezumi's most outstanding students, co-founded and served as the first president of the White Plum Asanga, the association of all the dharma heirs of Maezumi. Operating from his base in New York, he is also credited with instilling a social consciousness within the American Zen community.

[35] Donald S. Lopez, Jr., *Prisoners of Shangri-La: Tibetan Buddhism and the West* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999); Jeffrey Paine, *Re-Enchantment: Tibetan Buddhism Comes to the West* (New York: Norton, 2004).

[36] Malcolm Dalgliesh, *The Sage of San Diego Said Choose Quality and Reason* (New York: New Enlightenment, 1996); James Hervey Johnson, *Superior Men* (San Diego: privately printed, 1949).

SCIENTOLOGY IN SAN DIEGO: A SURVEY FROM 1954 TO THE PRESENT[1]

DONALD A. WESTBROOK

This article explores the history of Scientology in San Diego as well as the ways in which Scientology—and new religious movements (NRMs) more generally—have become the subject of sophisticated academic study in the region, in particular through the efforts of religious studies scholars, archivists, and donors at San Diego State University (SDSU). Scientology founder L. Ron Hubbard (1911-1986) spent time in San Diego off and on throughout his life, first due to his father's career in the navy, as a naval serviceman himself, and then after the Second World War in the period before the introduction of Dianetics (1950) and Scientology (1953-1954). Scientology's formal institutional history in San Diego dates to late 1954, not long after the incorporation of the earliest Scientology churches in California and on the East Coast. Today the Church of Scientology operates a large center, known as an "Ideal Organization," at 1330 Fourth Avenue. Hubbard and Scientology's history in San Diego offer a case study of the ways in which the founder and his followers created a space for themselves in the mid-twentieth century

(Opposite page) Grand opening of the Church of Scientology of San Diego at 1330 Fourth Avenue. November 19, 2016. Courtesy of Church of Scientology International.

that fostered its growth and development. Hubbard's fondness for San Diego and his concern for the success of Scientology there is perhaps most obvious from his delivery of a special audio message to the local church, entitled *Ron's Journal* 28 (1976).

FINDING SCIENTOLOGY IN BALBOA PARK

Over a decade ago, I interviewed dozens of American Scientologists in preparation for my first book, *Among the Scientologists*.[2] One of them was the pseudonymous Jane, who worked for Scientology's ecclesiastical headquarters, the "Flag Land Base," in Clearwater, Florida. She shared details about her life before becoming a Scientologist, what she has gained from the church and its principles, how it improved her communication and family life, and the ways she has volunteered and contributed as well, in particular her full-time work inside Scientology's clergy, known as the Sea Organization.

But decades before this, Jane's introduction to the Church of Scientology came by chance one day during a visit to San Diego when she was twenty-four years old. "It was in 1977, January, and I was in Balboa Park. It was a Sunday afternoon," she recalled of the trip with her husband and infant daughter. "We were in the park and my husband came to me and says... 'I want you to come and take a free personality test.'" Delivery of a free personality test was, and still is, a common path of introduction to the Church of Scientology, and today the test is also available online.[3] Jane was initially uninterested. "A personality test? I'm really not interested. I don't really need anyone to tell me I'm cute and have dimples." But her husband persisted, and the two of them, with their baby daughter in tow, headed over to a "little table set up" in the park. "They had *Dianetics* [by L. Ron Hubbard], and they had these "Oxford Capacity Analysis" tests which is another name for personality tests."[4]

"So they gave us the personality test to take," Jane told me. "And we're sitting there and my daughter is getting crankier by the minute. And I'm really getting kind of frustrated because I'm trying to hold her, she won't stay in her stroller, and I'm trying to fill out this personality test. There's this guy that's running the little booth there. He could see I'm frustrated. He says, 'Well, how can I help you?'" Much to Jane's pleasant surprise, the young man at the table was understanding, "so cool," and came up with an immediate solution. "He says, 'Okay. So I'm going to go get the milk for the baby and you hold the baby. Your husband can read the questions and mark both tests'...I could tell you I was so impressed with the simplicity of him handling what [was a difficult task] for me as a little overwhelmed 24-year-old mother with a baby out. It just was the first positive impression from this organization."

The Scientologist that day, it turned out, was from the Adams Avenue Mission in El Cajon, where Jane would soon go to complete Scientology courses, even joining the staff there herself, and begin a journey that would eventually lead her to Scientology's clergy. "When I [first] read *Dianetics*, I didn't want to be Clear. I wanted to *make* Clears," she told me, and it was abundantly clear that Jane, who had a background in nursing, was proud of the ways in which she has been able to help others, both psychologically and spiritually, using the "technologies," as Hubbard called them, of Dianetics and Scientology. "I wanted to be an auditor," she added, referring to

Hubbard's term for a counselor. She realized that goal and has since worked with hundreds of others.

Jane's story offers a glimpse into the everyday experience of how someone is introduced to a new religion in San Diego and the appeal that it can hold for a person in both the short and long term. Even nowadays, visitors to Balboa Park can find tables and displays set up by adherents of new and alternative spiritual systems, such as the Jehovah's Witnesses, International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON), Falun Gong, and others as they seek to introduce their messages and hopefully recruit new members from among the visitors and tourists.

SCIENTOLOGY STUDIES 2.0 AND SAN DIEGO STATE UNIVERSITY

If we fast forward to the present day, many of the new religious movements of the last century continue to exist and, depending on the example, have become fixtures of the American religious landscape. Scientology, for one, continues to operate a large center in San Diego. The academic study of Scientology by historians, sociologists, and religious studies researchers has expanded to such an extent that numerous monographs, anthologies, and journal issues can be found on the subject in addition to critical works from journalists and former members.[5] Sociologist of religion Massimo Introvigne has even coined the phrase "Scientology studies 2.0" to refer to the more sophisticated ways in which academics have begun to take this new religion seriously on its own terms and not simply on the basis of anti-cult simplifications and stereotypes.[6]

In fact, even on an academic level, Scientology and San Diego history intersect in remarkable ways. SDSU holds one of the world's largest collections of archival materials related to new and alternative religions, including Scientology, the Peoples Temple, Theosophy, Spiritualism, New Thought, Rosicrucianism, and Christian Science, among others.[7] Of particular note is the Edward E. Marsh Golden Age of Science Fiction Reading Room at SDSU Special Collections in the Malcolm A. Love Library. Marsh is an SDSU alum, a long-term Scientologist with roots in San Diego, and a private collector, who has donated millions of dollars' worth of materials to the university, including a 2013 gift valued at $2.25 million.[8] Among the highlights of his donations are rare works from the "Golden Age of Science Fiction" (1930s and 1940s), of which L. Ron Hubbard was a part alongside others such as Robert A. Heinlein, Isaac Asimov, and E. E. "Doc" Smith, to name a few. The Marsh Reading Room (and the larger Marsh Special Collections) house a great many rare and first-edition Scientology books, periodicals, and ephemera, including items signed by Hubbard.[9] As of early 2025, Marsh also maintains a private library in Rosarito, Mexico (previously based in Escondido, California) that contains what I believe to be the world's largest independent collection of Dianetics, Scientology, and Hubbard materials outside the Church of Scientology.[10]

Marsh's donations to San Diego State and the building of a first-rate collection for archival use builds on the success of others at the university. These include the pioneering efforts of Robert C. Ray, the retired head of special collections; Rebecca Moore, professor emerita

of religious studies and a senior scholar of new religions; and Rev. David A. Meyer at the Church of Scientology of San Diego. In fact, it was Meyer's own interest in Hubbard's personal connections to San Diego, including the Scientology founder's presumed education at the San Diego Normal School (a precursor to SDSU), that led him to connect with Ray and Moore and ultimately helped paved the way for Marsh's philanthropy and the university's abundance of archival gems.

L. RON HUBBARD IN SAN DIEGO: EARLY YEARS

In 2014, a few years before the inauguration of the Marsh Reading Room in 2017, SDSU Special Collections hosted an exhibit entitled "L. Ron Hubbard: The San Diego Years," complete with photographs of a young Hubbard at Balboa Park, San Diego Bay, the family's University Heights home, and aboard the USS *Henderson*.[11] The full extent of Hubbard's personal history in and around San Diego is difficult to cover adequately in the course of this article, especially since he spent time in the area both during childhood and as an adult. We do know that he first came to San Diego, like many others before him and since, as part of a military family. Hubbard's father, Harry Ross Hubbard, was an officer in the navy. In 1919 the family lived in University Heights for about a year, when the young Hubbard would have been just seven or eight years old. Reflecting on the adventure and travel of his childhood in a journal entry from October 14, 1943, Hubbard wrote: "When I was nine there were other trips with my Father and Mother, trips as far as San Diego, California—and going across the great deserts in a car of those days on the roads of those days *was* an adventure."[12] Nearly

USS *Henderson* at Broadway Pier, 1928. L. Rob Hubbard departed aboard the *Henderson* in 1928, bound for Asia. © SDHC # 11602.

a decade later, in 1928, a seventeen-year-old Hubbard returned to San Diego to depart on the USS *Henderson* for what became a fourteen-month journey across Asia.[13] "From all reports," Hubbard wrote of the hectic boarding experience, "the '*Henderson*' was supposed to be in San Francisco...But when I arrived and went to the Transport Dock, she was gone. I had a bare twenty dollars in my pocket."[14] Hubbard suspected (correctly) that the vessel was in fact in San Diego, and acting quickly, he boarded a bus and made his way to southern California. When he arrived at the USS *Henderson*, the captain was willing to board the minor but first needed "my father's permission... The radio from my Dad arrived the morning of the first, about an hour before the 'Henderson' sailed...No wardrobe, no money, but that trip was the best I ever took and the best I ever hope to take."[15]

Hubbard made his way back to San Diego as he grew older. In fact, the Church of Scientology traces the origins of his professional writing career to the area. According to the SDSU Special Collections exhibit from 2014, "...he moved to San Diego in October 1933 to write for the magazine fiction market. His first nine published stories appeared while living here in San Diego, adjacent to Switzer Canyon and then Encinitas, just north of downtown."[16] This was echoed by the church's ecclesiastical leader, David Miscavige, when he spoke in 2016 at the grand opening of the current Scientology church on Fourth Avenue. "Even after forty years LRH [L. Ron Hubbard] would fondly recall this 'never-never land,'" Miscavige told the audience, "where he spun his first tales for the pulps, in a cottage on the bluff," which was of course years before he found commercial and popular success as a writer and then as the founder of Dianetics and Scientology.[17] As he struggled to find success as a writer, Hubbard found himself in 1934 at Lindbergh Field, taking photographs and reporting on aviation at the Ryan Aeronautical Company.[18] In addition to the non-fiction works that later made up the canon of Dianetics and Scientology scripture, Hubbard published fictional works across many genres, and not just the science fiction for which he is perhaps best known. (For instance, *Battlefield Earth* and the ten-volume *Mission Earth* were published only in his later years, decades after the establishment of the first Scientology churches.)[19]

Following in his father's footsteps, Hubbard's own career in the navy came during the Second World War. Hubbard's military career is fascinating, complex, and at times controversial, even tied up with the origins of

Dianetics, but the connections to San Diego are relatively clear enough.[20] This includes Lieutenant Hubbard's command of USS *PC-815*, a subchaser, which saw service in San Diego in 1943. The chaser even made its way as far south as Mexico in an unauthorized live fire incident near the Coronado Islands that led to his loss of command. Not all that surprising, the Church of Scientology tends to emphasize other aspects of Hubbard's nautical adventures, and his larger military career, in one of the volumes of his official biography, *Master Mariner*.[21] From my perspective, far more interesting than the particulars of his naval career in the San Diego area are the cultural and bureaucratic ways in which his military experience influenced the management of the Church of Scientology in the years to come. This is perhaps most obvious in the history of Scientology's clergy, the aforementioned Sea Organization, which was formed in 1967, with Hubbard in command as the "Commodore" of a number of vessels that traveled the Mediterranean and beyond in the late 1960s and 1970s. Eventually, the Sea Org took up land bases from 1975 to 1976 and set up operations in Clearwater, Florida, where the church continues to maintain a large ecclesiastical presence and where thousands of Scientologists (both in and outside of the Sea Org) reside.[22]

DIANETICS AND SCIENTOLOGY IN SAN DIEGO

In order to contextualize the origins of the Church of Scientology in San Diego, it is necessary to understand that the Scientology religion was preceded by the mental health movement of Dianetics. Hubbard published *Dianetics: The Modern Science of Mental Health* in 1950,

and it became a bestseller that led to the rise of local Dianetics groups and organizations, one prominent example being the California Association of Dianetic Auditors (CADA).[23] It was not until 1953 and 1954, on an organizational level, that Hubbard transitioned his project into the realm of religion, occasioned by the recollections of past lives among Dianetics practitioners and the development of techniques to address the spirit (known as the *thetan* in Scientology terminology) rather than simply the mind (as had been the case with Dianetics). Today, the Church of Scientology International (CSI) in Los Angeles traces its origins to February 1954.

Dianetics enthusiasts from the early 1950s could be found across the country and most certainly in the San Diego area. The Church of Scientology of San Diego officially dates to 1971.[24] This may very well be the case legally or in terms of the church's current corporate set up. However, Scientology's origins in San Diego go back as early as 1954, according to other sources published by the church. In the Church of Scientology periodical *Freedom*, for example, one can find a 2017 article in which one of the San Diego church's founding members, Margee McCormick, then 90, reflected on early Dianetics and Scientology history.[25] "Margee…remembers when LRH—as Mr. Hubbard is widely known—spoke to a packed Los Angeles auditorium in August 1950," the article notes. "Four years later, the McCormicks were among the founding members of the city's first Scientology Church and the movement's expansion in the greater San Diego area."[26]

I had the opportunity to interview Margee McCormick three years after this Freedom article came out during her visit to SDSU Special Collections for a tour of the Marsh Reading Room. During our conversation, she filled in some more details, noting that she and her husband, John, "started the church in San Diego…1954, August…We had two store buildings that were together on Washington that had 'Church of Scientology' on it [sic]."[27] The August 1954 founding is corroborated by a copy of a brief handwritten letter, from L. Ron Hubbard himself, dated August 16, 1954: "Founded on the same general site as the first mission in the west, I hope the Church of Scientology of San Diego has an even better civilizing influence. Good luck—Ron."[28] This letter, in fact, supports the view that Scientology's presence, in the form of a mission (i.e. a smaller center), came even earlier than late 1954, which makes sense on the basis of Scientologists such as the McCormicks, and presumably others, who lived in the area and had followed Hubbard's developments since the publication of *Dianetics* back in May 1950. Based on church magazines from the 1950s, the earliest address for a Scientology organization appears to be 235 Playa del Sur in La Jolla, a residential address associated with the McCormicks.[29] The Washington location that Margee McCormick mentioned—the "two store buildings that were together"—appears to be a reference to the church when it was set up at 116 West Washington Street.[30]

In the years to come, Scientology continued to grow under the leadership of others.[31] This included the work of Julia M. Salmen, who got her own start in the Los Angeles Dianetics foundation as well as the Hubbard Association of Scientologists International (HASI) in Phoenix, which was an important early organizational player in the institutional maturation of the Scientology religion. Salmen even devised an "American Personality Analysis"

(APA) test (1955) that was a precursor to the "Oxford Capacity Analysis" (OCA) delivered today.[32] In 1962, the Church of Scientology of California (headquartered in Los Angeles) received administrative oversight over the western United States, with the church in San Diego designated a "City Office."[33] Some other leaders and influential players throughout the 1960s were Ray Kemp, Bob and Connie Harvey, Helen Kitchin, Marguerite Wirick, and Gerry Knight.[34]

One notable figure from the 1970s was Carl Barney, an Englishman who was a "mission holder" in San Diego and ran Scientology centers in the greater Los Angeles area. By 1973, a new Church of Scientology in San Diego was formed with the merging of a mission in San Diego and a center in La Jolla.[35] Edward E. Marsh, the long-time Scientologist and donor to San Diego State, joined the church in 1969 and soon after became a staff member at a mission located on College Avenue. Marsh witnessed the 1973 merging of this mission with another center and the creation of the San Diego "Class IV" organization, a more senior designation that allowed for specialized courses and auditing (counseling).[36] Marsh then took a position at another mission, this time in Santa Barbara as its founder and executive director. This Santa Barbara center was also part of Carl Barney's network, and was ultimately absorbed by the international church in 1979 as operations became more centralized under the Church of Scientology International (CSI) and Scientology Missions International (SMI), both in Los Angeles. Marsh worked with Barney in other senior executive capacities and, while Barney is no longer a Scientologist, Marsh has continued to support Scientology in San Diego as a parishioner and

Scientologist, collector, and donor Edward E. Marsh (left), San Diego State University's Director of Special Collections Rob Ray (center), and SDSU President Eliott Hirschman (right), looking over portions of a $2.25 million donation of science fiction and other rare materials to SDSU from Marsh. January 9, 2013. Photo courtesy of Rob Ray.

philanthropist.[37] The Santa Barbara mission that Marsh spearheaded in the early 1970s eventually became an "Ideal Org" of its own, in Ventura, opening to the public in early 2020.[38] Another particularly successful San Diego center dating to the 1970s was the Adams Avenue Mission (located at 3200 Adams Avenue and then 6911 El Cajon Blvd)—the same location where the aforementioned Jane joined after taking a personality test in Balboa Park.

RON'S JOURNAL 28 (1976): HUBBARD'S MESSAGE TO SAN DIEGO SCIENTOLOGISTS

Hubbard produced a great many books, lectures, articles, and other resources that comprise the scriptures of the Scientology religion. In fact, according to the Church

of Scientology International, Hubbard "set forth the Scientology theology and technologies in tens of millions of words, including hundreds of books, scores of films and more than 3,000 recorded lectures."[39] The overwhelming majority of these are public and intended for general Scientologist audiences, although it is certainly true that a minority of the materials are confidential, such as the Operating Thetan or OT levels that a Scientologist is invited to complete after reaching the state of Clear. The confidentiality of the OT levels might be compared to the sacred-secret temple rituals of (for example) the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Other Scientology scriptures, while not confidential, may only be relevant to select Scientologists who are on particular training courses or auditing levels. This might, for example, include Hubbard's writings and training films about the E-Meter or training materials for Scientology executives that would hold little relevance for everyday parishioners. In other words, Scientology scriptures are generally considered either public (again, the vast majority fall into this category) or confidential.[40] In the church, it is theologically, as well as pedagogically, important to advance through materials, courses, and training in the exact sequence that Hubbard intended so that the individual receives the most benefits, psychologically and spiritually, from the founder's "technologies." Even when studying Hubbard's books and lectures, it is preferable to do so in chronological order, if possible, in order to allow a "full conceptual understanding."[41]

However, a study of San Diego Scientology history arguably reveals yet another category of Scientology scripture that is not to my knowledge directly considered

in the scholarship about this new religion. This is the category of Scientology scripture in which Hubbard specifically addresses a particular church or group of Scientologists residing in a given geographical area. From the 1960s through 1980s, Hubbard occasionally authored what are known internally as *Ron's Journals (RJs)*. The usual format was an audio message from Hubbard to the worldwide church. Perhaps the most well-known of these among Scientologists is a recording entitled *Ron's Journal* 67, in which Hubbard announces the creation of the Sea Org as well as the confidential auditing level OT III.[42] The recording is not confidential and can be purchased for a nominal fee at Scientology church bookstores. This particular recording is likely more relevant to an advanced Scientologist, or perhaps to someone interested in completing the OT levels, but nonetheless it is publicly available and theoretically intended for a broad church audience.

However, there is an exceptional example within the body of *RJ* recordings: an audio message that Hubbard crafted *specifically* for San Diego Scientology staff, as part of *Ron's Journal* 28, which was released in 1976.[43] The recording begins with an announcement that the message was "personally recorded and mixed by L. Ron Hubbard and the staff of LRH audio-visual especially for your org." Before Hubbard speaks, there is a musical introduction that features Strauss's *Also sprach Zarathustra*. Played by a musician on Hubbard's own organ, "it is the first public performance, especially for you," says the announcer. After the performance, Hubbard begins to speak and offers his "greetings to the San Diego Org executives and staff." Much of the message is meant to encourage

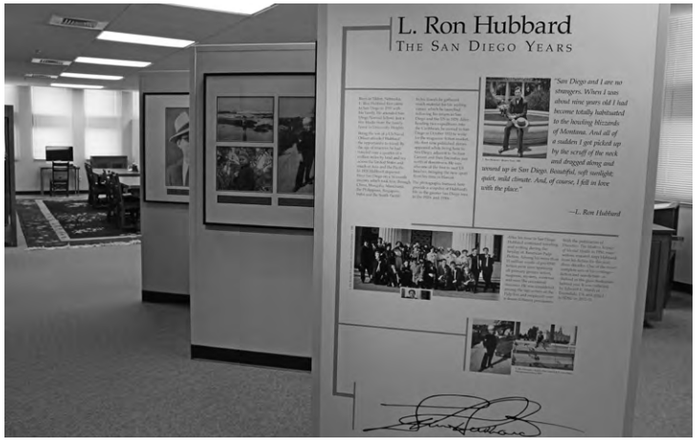

Exhibit on "L. Ron Hubbard: The San Diego Years," displayed at San Diego State University's Special Collections and University Archives in 2014. Photo courtesy of Rob Ray.

staff members in their work to deliver and disseminate Dianetics and Scientology in the area. Hubbard offers a number of personal anecdotes, some of which connect to his youth as explored above and express his fondness for San Diego over the years. This portion of the recording is well worth excerpting in full here:

> You know, San Diego and I are no strangers. When I was about nine-years-old, I had become totally habituated to the howling blizzards of Montana. And all of a sudden, I got picked up by the scruff of the neck and dragged along and wound up in San Diego. Beautiful, soft sunlight. Quiet, mild climate. And of course I fell in love with the place. And off and on, for most of my life, I've been in and out of San Diego, sometimes living there for very long periods of time. As a boy, I don't think you have a street, I don't think you have a sidewalk, that I haven't roller-skated on or bicycled on. In that bay out there, I've departed and arrived with all manner of ships and merchant, navy [vessels]. And as far as San Diego's concerned, we're friends. When I was a writer, I used to have a cottage up on the cliff there, above Mission Valley. Looked out across and down to the San Diego [Catholic] mission. I remember a monk down there—they still had one or two around [a] few years ago—showing the mission off. And he showed me the shadow where some hoodlums had hung a priest, and every evening at a certain time of the day, in a certain time of the year, the hanging shadow of the priest would appear on that wall. I don't know if they tell you that story anymore. But anyway, the quiet, the utter, absolute quiet of Mission Valley in those days, and the soothing, soothing sunlight was just about what I needed to look off into the never-never land of story writing and I thoroughly enjoyed it. I have many memories of San Diego. And there you are picking it up, a San Diego that's gone into the higher velocity of modern times—and don't think I'm not unfamiliar with those too. There you are with a whole area spreading out, population increasing. All kinds of people out there that aren't HASs [Hubbard Apprentice Scientologists], all kinds of people out there who aren't Grade IV [an auditing level, before Clear], there's all kinds of people out there who aren't auditors. I think you have an almost unlimited vista. I remember I used to come down from Encinitas. I also lived up in Encinitas for a while. I would always thoroughly enjoy myself, riding around town, walking around. Maybe even to

> this day some of those retired Iowa farmers are still playing checkers down there on the beach. And that beach, by the way, that's a great beach. That's a great beach. Did you know that I brought surfboarding from Hawaii down to that San Diego beach? I did. Anyway, that's not just your San Diego. That's my San Diego too. And I want you to take good care of it. I want you to give it some good tech[nology]. I want you to give it some good policy. You have some Flag programs [from Sea Org members based in Clearwater, Florida]. You have a brilliant and bright future ahead of you. There's everything going now for Scientology. As far as technology is concerned, well you've got it. There it is. As far as policy is concerned, well, it works, when it's used. You've got a great future ahead of you. And my one hope is that San Diego is going to take off now like a rocket.

The ending of this message to San Diego is followed, appropriately enough, by the sound of a rocket, or perhaps an airplane, taking off into the sky for dramatic effect. The remainder of the recording, however, is not apparently personalized for San Diego Scientologists and includes what appears to be more of a general audio message from Hubbard to Scientology staff around the world about the state of the church and upcoming projects. "I'm doing all I can to help the take-off continue and that's what it is: help. In your turn, you can help me by making the org help itself," Hubbard says.[44] This more generic message also reiterates Hubbard's views about the singular role that Scientology plays in the salvation of humanity, a point that is echoed elsewhere in church scripture.[45] "Others talk about a better world. We are making one," he emphasizes near the end of the recording. "And what I have just told you is the winning way to do it. So don't regard it lightly. We're the only chance man has. Don't forget it."

The earlier, San Diego-specific message, however, is revealing on a number of levels. For one, it provides further details, on an autobiographical level, about Hubbard's life and connections to Mission Valley as well as Encinitas—in the decades before the metropolitan area began to expand in the second half of the 20th century—"a San Diego that's gone into the higher velocity of modern times," as Hubbard puts it in this 1976 recording.

Some of the details he offers may strike the listener as surprising, exaggerated, or possibly hagiographical, such as the claim that Hubbard "brought surfboarding from Hawaii" to San Diego.[46] When David Miscavige, Scientology's ecclesiastical leader, spoke at the 2016 opening of the San Diego church, he told the audience that "While in the wake of Waikiki, he [Hubbard] tells of importing a board from Honolulu, and so became the first to catch a wave at Encinitas." While it's entirely plausible that Hubbard surfed, or showed others how to surf, one day at the beach, it is perhaps even more instructive how this anecdote is presented by Hubbard to San Diegans and then repeated by others such as Miscavige and the church as time has gone on.[47] Ultimately, then, perhaps Hubbard's message in *Ron's Journal* 28 is most remarkable for showcasing the ways in which he evidently maintained a strong bond with his former home and wishes for Scientology's success there. "Anyway, that's not just your San Diego," he tells local Scientologists. "That's my San Diego too. And I want you to take good care of it."

SAN DIEGO'S "IDEAL" PRESENT—AND OPEN RESEARCH AREAS FOR THE FUTURE

The Church of Scientology of San Diego that opened in 2016 is a remodeled building located at the Fourth Avenue location. I visited this church before and after the renovation (first with a friend in 2012 and again in 2022 with a group of NRM scholars) and can speak to its impressive transformation. Scientologists refer to it as an "Ideal Org," based on a Hubbard policy with the same name, which means that the building has been designed to meet particular size standards for auditing (counseling), auditor training, courses, and community outreach.[48] There is also a new sauna on site for use in the "Purification Rundown," the first major step on the Scientology "Bridge to Total Freedom." The church is open to the public seven days a week for tours. Photographs from the grand opening are available online and provide an excellent visual introduction to the four-story building and its rooms that span some 49,000 square feet.[49]

This article has offered a survey of Scientology from 1954 to the present, but a number of open areas remain for researchers in the future. For instance, more research should be carried out to piece together the full history of the individual mission and church sites, especially in the late 1950s and 1960s. Details related to Hubbard's presence in San Diego could be further investigated as well, such as the possibility of attendance records or enrollment forms from the San Diego Normal School (which would be housed at SDSU Special Collections). In addition to directly considering the fuller history of Scientology in the city and region, it may also be useful to consider the ways in which the American anti-cult/

David Miscavige, ecclesiastical leader of the Scientology religion and chairman of the board, Religious Technology Center, at the grand opening of the Church of Scientology of San Diego. November 19, 2016. Courtesy of Church of Scientology International.

counter-cult movement intersects with this San Diego history. For instance, San Diego is home to Ted Patrick (b. 1930), former leader of the defunct Cult Awareness Network (CAN) and the "father of cult deprogramming," the highly controversial practice that is tantamount to kidnapping and was carried out against "brainwashed" new religious movement members in the US, especially in the 1970s and 1980s.[50] Elsewhere, I have written about the attempted deprogramming of Paula Dain, a San Diego-area Scientologist, in the summer of 1979 that led to lawsuits against Patrick and eventually contributed to his bankruptcy.[51] Last but not least, I encourage historians, sociologists, and religious studies scholars to consider, as I have attempted to do in this introductory article, the perspective of Scientologists themselves in this history.[52] It is vital to include as many perspectives as possible, and from as many disciplines as possible, but also to remember that Scientology is a newer and living religion with active members—people like Jane, Edward Marsh, and so many others—in San Diego and around the world.

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NOTES

1 This article is based on a presentation at SDSU (October 6, 2022) for a conference on the theme of spiritual and religious diversity in San Diego. My presentation slides are available here: https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1SmPoroRItR2soh-BpjcUJGOMiOB1folCEhtR8FL3u2k/edit?usp=sharing.

1 Donald A. Westbrook, *Among the Scientologists: History, Theology, and Praxis* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2019).

3 "Oxford Capacity Analysis Personality Test," Church of Scientology International, https://www.oxfordcapacityanalysis.org/.

4 For a 1970s journalistic perspective on Scientology and San Diego, including its personality test, see Mike Schaeffer, "Scientology's Beachhead in San Diego," *San Diego Reader*, June 13, 1974, https://www.sandiegoreader.com/news/1974/jun/13/cover-if-you-want-to-be-happy/.

5 For a survey of this scholarly scene, from the 1950s to the present, see Donald A. Westbrook, *L. Ron Hubbard and Scientology Studies* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2022).

6 Massimo Introvigne, "Scientology Studies 2.0, Utopia or Opportunity?" *Implicit Religion, 23*(2), 156–166 (2021), https://doi.org/10.1558/imre.42092.

7 See, for example, SDSU Library's guide for researching its religious studies special collections: https://libguides.sdsu.edu/c.php?g=441477&p=3010403.

8 Jeff Ristine, "New Gift Enhances 'Golden Age' Science Fiction Collection," SDSU News Center, January 25, 2021, https://newscenter.sdsu.edu/sdsu_newscenter/news_story.aspx?sid=78272; Karen Kucker, "SDSU Library Receives $2.25M Collection," *The San Diego Union-Tribune*, January 25, 2013, https://www.sandiegouniontribune.com/news/education/sdut-donation-library-science-fiction-sdsu-hubbard-2013jan25-story.html; and Beth Chee, "Library Receives $2.25 Million Sci Fi Collection," SDSU News Center, January 29, 2013, https://newscenter.sdsu.edu/sdsu_newscenter/news_story.aspx?sid=74043.

9 "Edward E. Marsh Golden Age of Science Fiction Library," SDSU Special Collections, https://library.sdsu.edu/scua/new-notable/Edward-Marsh; and "Edward E. Marsh Ephemera Collection," SDSU Special Collections, finding aid (MS-0524), https://archives.sdsu.edu/repositories/2/resources/330/collection_organization.

10 Westbrook, *L. Ron Hubbard and Scientology Studies*, 38; Angela Carone, "Scientology Founder Central Figure In Local Sci-Fi Collection," KPBS, February 13, 2013, https://www.kpbs.org/news/evening-edition/2013/02/13/scientology-founder-central-figure-local-sci-fi-co.

11 These and other photographs are available in the Church of Scientology's official biographical volumes, *The L. Ron Hubbard Series: The Complete Biographical Encyclopedia* (Los Angeles: Bridge Publications, 2012) and *Images of a Lifetime: A Photographic Biography* (Los Angeles: Bridge Publications, 2012).

12 L. Ron Hubbard, journal entry on October 14, 1943, republished in one of the church's official biographical volumes, *Early Years of Adventure: Letters and Journals* (Los Angeles: Bridge Publications, 2012), 13.

13 "L. Ron Hubbard: A Profile," Church of Scientology International, slide 5, https://www.lronhubbard.org/ron-series/profile/chronology.html#event-slide5.

14 *Early Years of Adventure*, 56.

15 Ibid., 60.

16 Exhibit pamphlet, "L. Ron Hubbard: The San Diego Years," provided to me by Rev. David Meyer of the Church of Scientology of San Diego.

17 "California Dreaming Becomes Reality as San Diego Opens New Church of Scientology," Church of Scientology International, November 19, 2016, https://www.scientologynews.org/press-releases/church-openings/grand-opening-san-diego.html.

[18] Fittingly, Edward E. Marsh, the collector and donor affiliated with SDSU, sponsored a 2017-2018 exhibit in terminal 2 at San Diego International Airport that included a display on Hubbard. One of his photographs from Lindbergh Field, 1934, is republished in another biographical volume from the Church of Scientology, *Adventurer/Explorer: Daring Deeds & Unknown Realms* (Los Angeles: Bridge Publications, 2012), 71. See also, e.g., Hubbard, "Mr. Spectator," "San Diego Fair Meet," *The Sportsman Pilot*, Vol. 12, No. 3, September 15, 1934.

[19] See, for instance, William J. Widder, *The Fiction of L. Ron Hubbard: A Comprehensive Bibliography & Reference Guide to Published and Selected Unpublished Works* (Los Angeles: Bridge Publications, 1994).

[20] For a critical perspective, see Chris Owens, *Ron the War Hero: The True Story of L. Ron Hubbard's Calamitous Military Career* (London: Silvertail, 2019). Hubbard spent time at Oak Knoll Naval Hospital in Oakland near the end of the war and claimed to experiment with techniques that later served as the basis of Dianetics counseling. See J. Gordon Melton, "Birth of a Religion," in James R. Lewis, ed., *Scientology* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 20. One source of relevance to the postwar development of Dianetics and San Diego history is a letter Hubbard wrote to his friend Russell Hays, dated July 15, 1948, from El Cajon: "Been amusing myself making a monkey out of Freud. I always knew he was nutty but didn't have a firm case." See *Dianetics: Letters and Journals* (Los Angeles: Bridge Publications, 2012), 17. The original copy of this letter, and others, sold at Christie's in 2018: https://www.christies.com/en/lot/lot-6145981.

[21] L. Ron Hubbard, *Master Mariner: At the Helm Across Seven Seas* (Los Angeles: Bridge Publications, 2012).

[22] For more on the early history of the Sea Org, see chapter 4 in Westbrook, *Among the Scientologists*.

[23] "History of the C.A.D.A.," California Association of Dianetic Auditors, http://ca-da.org/history/cada-history.html.

[24] "Since 1971, our Church has served a growing congregation" per the official website for the Church of Scientology of San Diego as of February 2025, https://www.scientology-sandiego.org/inside-our-church/.

[25] "Unlimited Vistas," *Freedom*, Vol. 49, Issue 1, 2017, https://www.freedommag.org/magazine/201702-the-data-demon/scientology-news/unlimited-vistas.html.

[26] Ibid.

[27] Margee McCormick, interviewed by author, February 27, 2020, San Diego State University.

[28] A photograph of this letter, discovered at Edward E. Marsh's private library in Rosarito, Mexico, is available in my October 2022 SDSU presentation, slide 18: https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1SmPoroRItR2soh-BpjcUJGOMiOB1folCEhtR8FL3u2k/edit?usp=sharing.

[29] *Ability* 3 (April 1955).

[30] This is corroborated by Howard Dickman, "The Early Days of Scientology in San Diego," *Scientolopedia*, a helpful, even if quite fragmentary, source: https://scientolipedia.org/info/The_early_days_of_Scientology_in_San_Diego,_California.

[31] See "The Early Days of Scientology in San Diego," https://scientolipedia.org/info/The_early_days_of_Scientology_in_San_Diego,_California.

[32] Salmen's personality test is also posted at https://scientolipedia.org/info/The_early_days_of_Scientology_in_San_Diego,_California.

[33] California was "the first state to get both a Central Org and a City Office—San Diego," according to *Scientolopedia*, https://scientolipedia.org/info/The_early_days_of_Scientology_in_San_Diego,_California.

[34] I am thankful to John H. Wolfe, a researcher and long-time Scientologist in the San Diego area, for his help filling in some historical gaps and identifying these individuals. Scientology's early San Diego history, particularly the 1950s and 1960s, remains an open area for historians, and one that would benefit, I suspect, from a fuller analysis of information from church periodicals such as *Ability* and *The Auditor*.

[35] "New Church Opens in San Diego," *The Auditor* 86 (February 1973).

[36] Today, most Scientology churches, including the "Ideal Org" on Fourth Street, are designated as "Class V" organizations, and can take parishioners up to the state of Clear, an important milestone on the Scientology spiritual path called the "Bridge to Total Freedom."

37 Barney later became a strong supporter of Ayn Rand's Objectivism: https://carlbarney.com/. See also Craig Biddle, "Regarding Carl Barney and Scientology," *The Objective Standard*, July 15, 2019, https://theobjectivestandard.com/2019/07/regarding-carl-barney-and-scientology/.

38 "Scientology Ideal Org Rises like a Legendary King Wave in Ventura's Surf City," Church of Scientology International, February 22, 2020, https://www.scientology.org/scientology-today/church-openings/grand-opening-ventura.html.

39 "Does Scientology Have a Scripture?" Church of Scientology International, https://www.scientology.org/faq/background-and-basic-principles/does-scientology-have-a-scripture.html.

40 For instance, Hubbard and the church sometimes use the phrase BPI ("broad public issue") to indicate a publication intended for a more general Scientology audience.

41 This phrase has often been used by Scientology's ecclesiastical leader, David Miscavige. See, e.g., "Golden Age of Knowledge for Eternity: The Basics," https://www.scientology.org/david-miscavige/renaissance-for-scientology/basic-books-and-lectures.html.

42 Hubbard, *Ron's Journal 67* (1967, republished by Los Angeles: Golden Era Productions, 1983).

43 The recording is available at the Church of Scientology of San Diego, and a copy has been posted to YouTube via Scientolopedia (a Scientology history wiki site that is not affiliated with the church), https://youtu.be/jhHjAKfRhNI. See also Ken Stone, "Inside Scientology's New Church at Old San Diego Home," *Times of San Diego*, November 24, 2016, https://timesofsandiego.com/life/2016/11/24/inside-scientologys-new-church-at-old-san-diego-home/

44 The juxtaposition of an org-specific message for San Diego before a separate, more general message from Hubbard, especially with the use of this rocket language ("I'm doing all I can to help the take-off continue...) suggests that Hubbard delivered unique messages to other Scientology churches and then re-used a more general recording within the same message. In the private Scientology and science fiction library of Edward E. Marsh in Rosarito, Mexico, for instance, I discovered a *RJ 28* recording along these lines specifically for Seattle. The more generic message of RJ 28, elsewhere subtitled "Forming Orgs," is familiar to church members outside of the San Diego area, according to several Scientologists I asked who live across the US.

45 For example, Hubbard, "Keeping Scientology Working, Series 1," Hubbard Communications Office Policy Letter, February 7, 1965.

46 In 2024, the Church of Scientology's television station, Scientology Network, aired an episode on San Diego that did not mention Hubbard and surfing, but did include the roles of surfing pioneers such as George Freeth and Woody Brown. *Destination: Scientology*, San Diego, season 6, episode 2, Scientology Network, originally aired April 22, 2024, https://www.scientology.tv/series/destination-scientology/san-diego.html. See also Tony Ortega, "That Time When Scientology Founder L. Ron Hubbard Didn't Invent Surfing in California," *The Underground Bunker* (an anti-Scientology blog), November 25, 2016, https://tonyortega.org/2016/11/25/that-time-when-founder-l-ron-hubbard-didnt-invent-surfing-in-california/.

47 Hubbard does not provide exact dates in *Ron's Journal 28*. However, Russell Miller, who published a biography highly critical of Hubbard, notes that his first wife, Margaret "Polly" Grubb, gave birth to their son L. Ron Hubbard, Jr., on May 7, 1934 after a day of swimming in Encinitas. See Miller, *Bare-Faced Messiah* (republished by London: Silvertail Books, 2014), 68.

48 Hubbard, "The Ideal Org," Executive Directive 102 International, May 20, 1970. Dave Schwab, "Ideal Org: 'A Perfect Expression,'" SDNews.com, January 6, 2017, https://sdnews.com/ideal-org-a-perfect-expression/.

49 "California Dreaming."

50 As of February 2022, Ted Patrick maintains a Twitter account: https://twitter.com/thetedpatrick?lang=en. In a tweet from August 20, 2019, Patrick claimed the following: "Just to clarify—I never kidnapped or imprisoned anyone [sic] of those who I rescued from a cult. Never held them against their will. Never tied them to beds or chairs. Never denied them food. And most importantly, I taped EVERY SINGLE deprogramming session. I have 1000s of tapes."

51 Westbrook, *Among the Scientologists*, 179.

52 KPBS in San Diego has done a largely admirable job on this front, such as a 2011 interview with Rev. David Meyer of the Church of Scientology of San Diego (although he is incorrectly interviewed as "Meyers") and J. Gordon Melton, a well-known scholar of American religion: https://www.kpbs.org/news/2011/jun/07/what-scientolog/.

JUDITH TYBERG, RAJA YOGA, AND THE JOURNEY OF A THEOSOPHIST TO HINDUISM

W. MICHAEL ASHCRAFT

Judith Tyberg (1902-1980) was born and raised at the Theosophical community of Point Loma in San Diego. Teachers at Lomaland practiced a philosophy of education called Raja Yoga, which educated the child holistically in terms of spirituality, intellect, and mental and emotional health. This philosophy drew from educational theorists of the day, but educators at Lomaland claimed it was a Theosophical approach to education, incorporating ideas from their religion in the upbringing and education of Lomaland children. Judith was, according to Katherine Tingley, a model Raja Yoga.

In this essay I explore the complexity of personal experience within the universe of religious traditions in San Diego through the life of Judith Tyberg. First I provide background on Lomaland, Theosophy, and the values of Raja Yoga (the term can refer both to an educational system and individual students in that system). Then I will show, based on diaries and letters written by Tyberg, how she lived out these values, although not always in the most ideal way. Judith's story offers an insight into Raja Yoga through the diaries she kept during her teenage

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(Opposite page) Katherine Tingley in her office. No date.
© SDHC #15606.

and young adult years. In this period, she became a teacher of young children while pursuing collegiate-level studies at a university that Lomaland created for young people who had grown up in the community as well as other interested students.

In her early thirties, Tyberg visited fellow Theosophists in several northern European countries. She kept a diary of this tour, and many letters she wrote to her parents also provide insight into her time in Europe. She lectured, taught, and got to know many people during her tour, making a positive impression on just about everyone. This tour marked the high point of her Raja Yoga years. A decade after her return to Lomaland, she would be involved in a leadership crisis at the community. Tyberg was on the losing side in this struggle and ultimately resigned and moved away rather than continue under the Leader who came to power. That freedom in turn opened an opportunity to study in India, which changed the course of her life.

The Theosophical community that provides the setting for my analysis of Judith Tyberg is usually referred to as either Point Loma or Lomaland. The first of these references is the name of the geographical area where the Theosophists established their community. The moniker "Lomaland" became the legal name of the site of the community after 1911. That term often appears in documentary sources in association with the educational programs at the community.

The worldview of Lomalanders was Theosophy, a New Religious Movement in the United States founded in 1875 by a small group of spiritual seekers led by Helena P. Blavatsky (1831-1891) and Henry Steel Olcott (1832-1907).

The group's original mission was to explore the secrets of the higher powers of the universe, which linked many of them to the extant Spiritualism movement. Eventually Theosophists developed a sophisticated, complex cosmology, mostly through Blavatsky's books and articles. In brief, that cosmology posits an infinite universe in which groups of souls reincarnate many times on ever-changing planets. Some souls remain behind after their own group has advanced in order to guide the next group of souls along the same spiritual path. These souls were called Mahatmas or Masters, and they supposedly communicated with humanity through Blavatsky and Olcott, then subsequent Leaders like Tingley.[1]

The group was not always united. Indeed fractures emerged among Theosophical groups both during Blavatsky's life and after her death. Those influenced by Annie Besant (1847-1933) and Charles Leadbeater (1854-1934) became the Theosophical Society Adyar (in Chennai, India). Its American branch is the Theosophical Society in America, headquartered in Wheaton, Illinois. Other Theosophists were influenced by William Q. Judge (1851-1896), a student of Blavatsky's. His branch, headquartered initially in New York City, moved their headquarters to Point Loma in 1897. This group was called the Universal Brotherhood and Theosophical Society, today called simply the Theosophical Society and located in Altadena, California.[2]

Theosophy is an eclectic blend of Asian religions and philosophies as well as western esoteric ideas. Reincarnation, for instance, has some association with early Christianity, but is primarily a South Asian idea, found mainly in Hinduism and Buddhism. The Masters

Theosophical Institute Arch and Building, 1906. © SDHC #1530.

have many parallels in earlier religious beliefs about divine beings. Some are entities in South Asian traditions, while others are spirit guides and occult sages from European and Middle Eastern countries. Not all Theosophists who settled at Point Loma were experts in Theosophical doctrine. In fact, many seemed to adhere to Theosophy in a general way, satisfied that the teachings were true and that they could live happily by following those teachings. After Judge died in 1896, Katherine Tingley relocated the headquarters of the movement from New York City to Point Loma and led Lomaland for about thirty years. Theosophical members of the Judge-related movement, including Tingley, were middle class, were generally well educated, and supported art and refined culture to uplift society. Under Tingley, many members relocated to Point Loma from all over the United States and from northern European countries such as England and Sweden.

The community of Lomaland was a beehive of activity during the years that Tyberg lived there. Lomalanders raised much of their own food and provided meals every day for members. The property on which the buildings of Lomaland were built, as well as the buildings themselves, all needed constant maintenance, repair, and improvement. Further, Lomaland was the headquarters for a network of lodges across the United States and abroad. The Lomaland departments tasked with publications labored incessantly to provide these lodges, and many other interested readers, with a constant stream of publications espousing Theosophical doctrine and a wide variety of other topics (related to scientific advances, religious organizations, social policy, and much else). There was also a replica of a Greek Theater at Lomaland where residents performed ancient Greek and Shakespearean plays for the public. Members of the community also performed plays and presented lectures at a downtown San Diego theater purchased by Tingley.

The Raja Yoga School was the educational arm of Lomaland. This term, Raja Yoga, is from Hinduism and means 'royal union,' uniting mind, soul, and body. Most likely Tingley adapted the term to the holistic educational philosophy practiced at Point Loma.[3]

Judith grew up attending the Raja Yoga School, but she rarely referred to it in her diaries. Nevertheless, we can safely assume that Tyberg's experiences mirrored those of Lomaland writers who had much to say about Raja Yoga, especially in the early years of the community.[4] Children who attended the Raja Yoga School would be trained in practical terms to be of service to the world, taking their cues from their teachers, who would model

for them the type of traits that Lomalanders wanted to instill in their young charges. Students were to discipline themselves, striving for moral purity and cleanliness. They were to be "kind, gentle and loving to everyone in the world." They were to enter adulthood with a commitment to spread Theosophy, which meant not just verbally telling others about the movement, but showing that they had embraced its ideas and reflected those ideas in daily behavior.[5]

The diaries Tyberg kept between 1919 and 1928 (from the age of seventeen to twenty-six) reveal a young woman completely caught up in the community life of Lomaland and genuine in her embrace of Theosophical teachings.[6] For Tyberg, Tingley was the model woman and human being. In 1920 she attempted for the first time to write one of Tingley's speeches from memory. She did this because she was inspired by Tingley's words, and once the words were on paper she could return to them again and again whenever she started "to loose [sic] interest."[7] Rather than taking a closer look at her own tendency to lose interest in Theosophical concepts or teachings, something a self-reflective person in such circumstances might do, she sought to remedy this problem by returning as many times as needed to Tingley's words of inspiration.

As a young woman Tyberg delighted in waiting at table on Tingley and the latter's guests for luncheons and dinners. Tingley hosted those curious about Lomaland, such as visiting artists and academics, as well as people in the Theosophical movement traveling through. She knew the importance of cultivating relationships with notable people who either were, or could be, contributors to the community either by donating money or by moving to

Lomaland to share whatever talents they were famous for. One day Judith was informed she should not return to this job because Tingley found out that Judith was relaying to her parents amusing details from the meals she served. Tyberg was devastated. Her world, perhaps for the first time, had a dent in it. As long as her world was coherent, unified, upbeat, and infused with a profound sense of mission and purpose, she could stroll along through life, enjoying the education and activities at her Lomaland home, and maturing into an adult with the expectation that she would pass along to the following generations her convictions and worldview.

Raja Yoga as a means of helping children and young adults navigate life's difficulties failed at Lomaland on many occasions. Although most Lomaland youth's parents lived in the community, childrearing was not the exclusive domain of the biological parents, and children did not spend much time with their natural parents. Those who lived for many years at Lomaland recalled the prominence of disciplinary actions when their behavior failed to measure up to Raja Yoga standards. They might be isolated for a time, and silence was expected of children at mealtimes. Sexuality among children and teens posed problems that adults at Lomaland seemed ill-equipped to handle. Boys were made to wear tight, restraining fabrics at night so that they would not masturbate. As one of the adults reflected on this decades later, the restraints failed, and boys would masturbate as soon as they were freed from adult supervision.

Both of Judith Tyberg's parents were prominent members of the Theosophical Society at Point Loma. Her mother taught all ages in the classroom, and her father

Raja Yoga Children at Theosophical Institute, 1903.
© SDHC #OP 12423-1689.

was one of the male members of the community who held various responsibilities around the site and could be counted upon to support the leadership. Although these obligations to the community (as well as Lomaland's approach to childrearing) kept Judith and her parents separated from each other, they nevertheless maintained sturdy relationships until the senior Tybergs died.[8]

Thus, Raja Yoga as a sort of educational and child-development philosophy worked best when everyone lived out the principles expected of them. When Tyberg was dismissed as a server for Tingley's special lunches and dinners, it most likely felt to Tyberg that she had failed to live up to Tingley's and the community's expectations, that she was being punished for misbehavior as unwelcome as the wrongs committed by many of the children and teens at Lomaland.

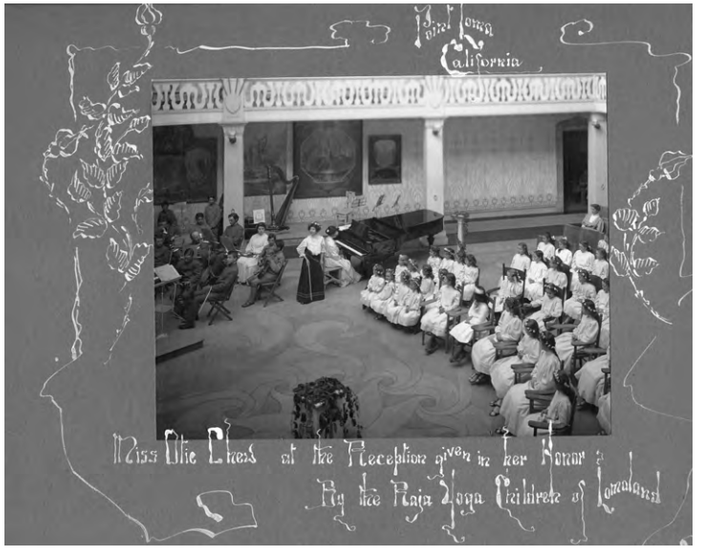
The psychologist and philosopher William James (1842-1910) provides us with a way to categorize Tyberg that sheds light on her Raja Yoga status. In James's terms, she was a healthy minded person. James described such individuals as perpetually positive, rarely disgruntled, perceiving the world as a happy and harmonious place, and naturally attuned to the divine. James's other type, the sick soul, was the opposite of the healthy minded. The sick soul sees suffering everywhere and doubts the existence of an all-good, all-powerful God interested in our lives. Tyberg's approach to life, then, may have been rooted in a perpetual kindness and regard for the needs of others. When conflict arose, avoidance was one tactic that someone like Tyberg might use. Another might be self-reflection, in which the individual refers back to the ethical ideals on which they relied, but not the deeper sort of reflection that might interrogate the legitimacy of one's motives.[9]

Judith entered adulthood, then, with her sense of self intact, her belief in Theosophy unshaken. Her experiences while touring European countries from April 1935 to August 1936 did little to cause Judith to question her beliefs and convictions, but the experience stretched her

Lomaland values in ways that perhaps she was not aware of at the time.

Tyberg went to Holland, England, Wales, Sweden, Germany, and Denmark, although in this last country she did not do much as a Theosophical leader. Instead, she visited Danish relatives on her father's side of the family, none of whom were interested in Theosophy.[10] The diary that she kept during the tour is a travelogue throughout. So were the letters she wrote to her parents. Judith gave vivid descriptions of people and places encountered while on the first leg of the journey that involved driving across the continental United States and then in Washington, DC and New York City. She continued her travelogue by recounting her tours of various historic sites and attendance at musical performances in Europe, usually in the company of one or more Theosophical members native to that place.

Why did Judith take this trip? After Tingley died in 1929, the community at Lomaland experienced many changes. Long-time residents moved away, gardens and orchards went untended, debts mounted. In addition, the leader who succeeded Tingley, Gottfried de Purucker (1874-1942), felt the mission of the community should change. Under Tingley, Lomaland had been like a beacon for others to follow, showing how a community could operate along Theosophical lines. With the onset of the Depression, however, de Purucker felt that the community should downsize and withdraw inwardly, showing the world the wonders of Theosophical belief mostly through publications.[11] Starting in 1932, de Purucker and nine of his staff moved to England for two years, perhaps to somehow improve Lomaland's financial situation.[12] Also,



Miss Ollie Chew at reception by Raja Yoga children of Lomaland, c. 1910. © SDHC #OP 157.

with the headquarters of Lomaland now experiencing some decline, perhaps the European sections of the Society could be of more assistance in furthering the spread of Theosophy, and toward that end, de Purucker opted to live in Europe so that he could oversee efforts by Theosophists there.

Tyberg had just the right blend of character traits to encourage European Theosophists, to bring them some happiness and light amidst their own struggles. The European national sections, composed of local lodges, strived during the Depression to maintain Theosophical work, such as producing publications, conducting regular lodge meetings, and offering courses in Theosophy and related esoteric subjects. The national section in England, in particular, was practically at a standstill. Judith found

when she visited England that the leader of that section, A. Trevor Barker (1893-1941), and his wife were broke. Barker's business, upon which he and his family relied, was faring badly.[13] Although not all Theosophists were as close to financial insolvency as Barker, many were hardly any better off. However, there were wealthy Theosophists whose donations undoubtedly helped to keep struggling lodges afloat.[14]

Tyberg arrived into these gloomy situations like a breath of fresh air. She was a positive, happy, helpful person—a true Raja Yoga. She rarely said a cross word to anyone and was very patient with all. Her integrity was evident to virtually anyone who met her, if her diaries and letters to her parents are to be believed. Various individuals whom she met, stayed with, and traveled with wrote to her parents praising Judith as a wonderful human being.

This is the person presented in the diary of the tour and Judith's letters to her parents. However, despite her cheery demeanor and seeming popularity, there are hints that the Lomaland mission itself was not so well received. When Tyberg lectured about Theosophy at lodge meetings, members of the public attended and questioned her, often attacking her from a Christian perspective. In addition, she met some former residents of Lomaland who had returned to their countries of origin at the beginning of de Purucker's tenure and had predominantly negative memories of Lomaland. Tyberg did not attempt to change their minds about their experiences at Lomaland. In fact, she did not respond very much at all to them, other than by listening to their complaints. Her standard tactic when confronted with negative people or ideas was avoidance. For example, on

the ship crossing the Atlantic to Europe, she met a man who was a member of the rival Theosophical Society headquartered in Adyar, India. This man tried to draw her out about a leader of this rival group, Charles W. Leadbeater, but Tyberg avoided a confrontation by responding that she "never knew him [Leadbeater] so I do not like to express any opinion about him."[15]

Tyberg also struggled with health issues, which possibly felt more intense to her because they affected the quantity and quality of her work. In particular, she suffered from leg pain. In one letter she noted that sometimes the pain would arrive suddenly and she had to turn—"screw myself about"—to ease the pain, which to her felt like a cramp.[16] She eventually received various treatments from Theosophists who had professional medical training, and by May 1936, with only a few short months left in her tour, she could say that there was no pain in her leg at all.[17]

The Raja Yoga philosophy could result in a distinctive elitism in some Theosophists, including Judith. For example, only on a few occasions did she seem to feel any sympathy for impoverished people. Traveling through the American South, she became aware of the poverty afflicting much of the Black population. While in Georgia, she noted in her diary that "We certainly see enough negroes and negro-quarters. They seem to be very poor and their quarters are unpainted old wooden homes with little protection from the weather." In a letter to her mother she noted that Black people had "awful looking homes."[18] She may have felt sorry for those living in sub-standard housing, but she offered no remedy for the situation and did not dwell on these images of poverty.

She was also elitist in a religious sense. In Holland she

Buildings at Lomaland, c. 1914. © SDHC #AB_85.5.

observed a Roman Catholic street procession celebrating the death of John the Baptist:

> Well, you never saw such a melancholy sight. As this procession passed all holding crosses or rosary with crosses on the end they were muttering in the most monotonous and meaningless tone prayers of all kinds. Those in the middle carrying the banners shouted a little louder than the others...It seemed as if all the ugly in Holland were Catholics. There was one pretty part of the procession. The children all dressed in white and carrying beautiful baskets of flowers. No one marched in step at all. It was quite a disorderly progress. Many were in very devout attitude with hands clasped and eyes half closed. But some had the daring to look to the sides, especially younger men & boys. It is rather disappointing to think that those hundreds of young people are attached to the Catholics.[19]

From Judith's Theosophist perspective, Catholic superstition stood in the way of potential enlightenment.

In the cases of both the impoverished African Americans and the Dutch Catholics, Tyberg revealed something of her cultural biases as much as her Theosophical perspective. Black people's low social status as reflected in their homes was understood by millions of Whites living in the United States at the time to be fitting for African Americans. Tyberg shared this disregard for the needs of people of color. As for the Dutch Catholics, Tyberg's labeling of one part of the procession as "ugly" (people were shouting) and one part as "pretty" (the children carried baskets of flowers) is telling. Tyberg seemed to apply a standard of purity in judging these Catholics. In particular, she noted that "No one marched in step at all." It did not occur to her that they might not have found marching in step to be of any importance. But it was important at Point Loma, where marching was the way the children got from one place to another.

Tyberg's elitism was not based on personal wealth. She, and the European Theosophists who hosted her, came from middle-class backgrounds but lived materially humble lives. Tyberg constantly watched her expenses, especially those related to travel. On rare occasions she rode in someone's private automobile. She did not dine in fine restaurants. She ate most of her meals with her hosts and hostesses, those Theosophical members who were financially able to support a house guest for weeks at a time. Indeed, the tour itself was largely possible only because several wealthy Theosophists contributed to Tyberg's expenses all along her route, from California to the East Coast to the British Isles to northern Europe and back.

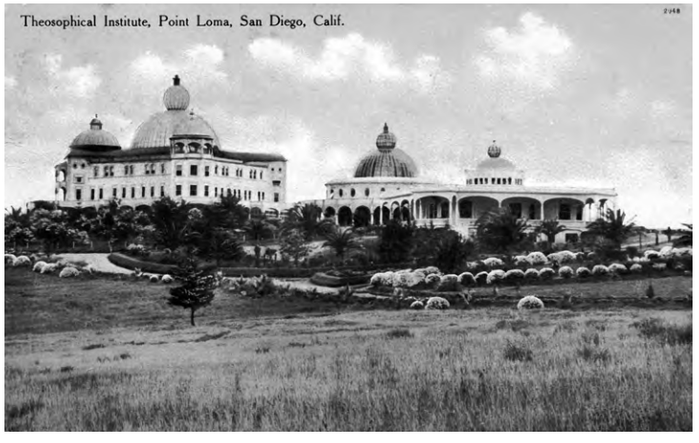
By examining Judith's efforts at living the Raja Yoga ideal, as conveyed in her diaries and letters, we see a well-meaning person struggling to navigate relationships. For the most part, she succeeded in being liked by everyone. Children she taught referred to her as "Judy Sunbeam," a reference to a children's song—"Happy Little Sunbeams"—sung by generations of Lomaland children. Various friends would also address her as Judy Sunbeam in their correspondences with her.

And then the succession crisis came, and Judy Sunbeam was not so sunny. When a dispute arose over who would take over after the death of de Purucker, Tyberg sided with the faction that eventually lost. The victorious faction banished those (including Judith) who had opposed them. Tyberg thus had to leave her entire world behind. She fashioned a meaningful life during the year after she left Theosophical headquarters. The key to that meaningful life was Sanskrit.

Judith was a bright young Lomaland woman with intellectual curiosity to spare. Unpublished records of Judith's education at Lomaland reveal someone who was totally engaged in educational activities. She taught the lower grades from 1922 through 1934, covering a wide variety of subjects from mathematics to literature to music and much more. From 1932 to 1940 she taught high school-level students, again focusing on a wide variety of subjects. She herself was enrolled as a bachelor's student at the Theosophical University from 1920 through 1929 and took many courses in languages, history, chemistry, mathematics, and calisthenics.[20] Eventually she would earn master's and doctoral degrees as well.

What is most interesting about her educational record, however, is not the enormous amount of time and effort she must have invested in both her own education and that of her pupils, but the fact that she studied Sanskrit under de Purucker from 1929 through 1942. In the dedication of one of her books, she wrote that de Purucker "opened for me this Gateway to the Wisdom of the East," that gateway being Sanskrit.[21] De Purucker and the Lomaland community assumed that Sanskrit was, as Judith called it in the title of another of her books, "the language of the gods."[22] Ancient Hindu texts were written in Sanskrit, and these texts, so Theosophists believed, preserved the Ancient Wisdom—read Theosophy—that has guided humanity in its spiritual quest for enlightenment.[23] For de Purucker and Judith, and others who studied Sanskrit with de Purucker, this language was the code that modern people must decipher to find the golden nuggets of ancient teachings. Many people at Lomaland began studying Sanskrit in the 1930s. One critic of Lomaland, in fact, claimed that everyone at the community was going overboard wanting to learn Sanskrit.[24] Most Sanskrit students did not last, but Judith did. Languages came easily for her. She learned Dutch and Swedish well enough on her tour to converse with native speakers. Not only was Sanskrit the means for Tyberg to access the timeless wisdom found in Hindu texts, but the language itself was holy, as many Hindus believed. No doubt Judith deemed at some level that her study of Sanskrit was in itself a devotional practice.

Judith taught Sanskrit during her European tour. She was probably most successful with Dutch members, many of whom were young adults eager for deeper teaching of Theosophy. She spent many weeks in the small town



Postcard of Theosophical Institute at Lomaland, c. 1910.
© SDHC #AB-85.36 (Andreas Brown Postcard Collection).

of Bussum, southeast of Amsterdam. The pace of life was more relaxed there than in urban areas, and she had the leisure to tutor students in Sanskrit grammar. Mixed in with the language lessons, of course, was exposition on Theosophical doctrines. She worked with some Dutch members to produce a mimeographed copy of Sanskrit terms and their meanings in Dutch. She also made and sold phonograph records of Sanskrit pronunciation.

In 1940, Theosophical University Press at Point Loma published Judith's *Sanskrit Keys to the Wisdom Religion*. Four of the eight chapters contain grammar lessons in Sanskrit based on Theosophical texts in which Sanskrit terms appear. For example, in the chapter on de Purucker's book *Fundamentals of the Esoteric Philosophy*, Judith repeatedly linked Sanskrit terms to Theosophy. She called the Mahatmas of Theosophical teaching Jivanmuktas, a word referring to one who is liberated. Although Jivanmukta is a Sanskrit term associated with

Hinduism, in classic Hindu texts the Theosophical idea of Mahatma is not articulated as Jivanmukta. Rather, the Theosophical Mahatma is embedded in a complex Theosophical cosmology that resembles but is not the same as the Hindu cosmology of classic Indian texts.[26]

In that same chapter Tyberg extended the original meaning of two Sanskrit terms considerably in the direction of Theosophical interpretation. The Sanskrit word loka refers to the world as we know it, of names and forms. The term tala refers to nether regions. Judith claimed that the two are opposite sides of the same coin. The world we know interpenetrates the nether regions and vice versa. And the form and nether are replayed in seven layers that run the gamut from the material to the spiritual. Going further, Judith then tied loka and tala to the Theosophical teachings about Rounds and Races, surely one of the most difficult concepts in Theosophy to grasp.[27] In brief, Rounds and Races refer to the evolution of beings who reincarnate into ever higher spiritual realms as untold ages pass. We—you and I—are those beings. We have experienced many lifetimes in the past, when we were at primitive levels of development. But we will reincarnate over many lifetimes to come, advancing higher up the evolutionary spiral. This particular cosmic scheme is not, to my knowledge, found in just this fashion in classic Hindu texts. But Judith could and did make convincing cases, over and over, that Sanskrit terms point the modern reader back to the original Ancient Wisdom tradition, or Theosophy, out of which all religions evolved. She wove Sanskrit terms seamlessly into her exposition of Theosophy. And her listeners among European Theosophists were eager to hear what she had to say.

Judith became a professional Sanskritist. Once separated for good from her Theosophical community, she moved to Los Angeles, where, through informal networks of people interested in all things Asian, she gave lectures and lessons on various aspects of South Asian languages, cultures, religions, and philosophies. She also ran a bookstore from the rental property where she lived. Americans of the postwar years hungered for knowledge about Asian cultures and religions. The future was there to be grasped by people like Judith, whose learning and initiative would doubtless have resulted in a full-time academic appointment in some college or university in Southern California had she remained in Los Angeles.

Instead, an opportunity arose for her to study for a master's degree at Benares Hindu University in India. Her experiences there over a two-year period would change her forever, as she met Sri Aurobindo and the Mother, spiritual guides for a type of yoga that Judith would spend the rest of her life promoting.

Judith's story is one of a Raja Yoga who imbibed the principles of that educational approach, and those principles served her well throughout the period of her life when she was a committed Theosophist. As a Raja Yoga, Judith could explain why misfortune and tragedy occurred. And she knew how to conduct relationships of all kinds. Her understanding of Hinduism, through her Sanskrit studies, would eventually lead her to detach herself from Theosophy and become attached to an Indian philosophy taught by Sri Aurobindo. Tyberg's story, then, is emblematic of the spiritual searching that has been a prominent feature of the San Diego religious landscape.

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NOTES

1 This information is readily obtained in numerous sources, from encyclopedia articles and Wikipedia to monographs and academic anthologies. What I offer here is merely a brief review.

2 These historical developments are discussed in chapters of *Handbook of the Theosophical Current*, ed. Olav Hammer and Mikael Rothstein (Boston: Brill, 2013).

3 Two histories of Point Loma provide many details about life at Lomaland: W. Michael Ashcraft, *The Dawn of the New Cycle: Point Loma Theosophists and American Culture* (Knoxville, TN: University of Tennessee Press, 2002) and *Emmett A. Greenwalt, California Utopia: Point Loma: 1897-1942* rev. ed. (San Diego: Point Loma Publications,1978; originally published 1955); on Raja Yoga, see Ashcraft 86-87.

4 Ashcraft, Chapter Five, "Raja Yoga: Training a New Humanity" provides information that more thoroughly rounds out the picture of Raja Yoga than the details provided here.

5 Kadmon, "The Raja Yoga School and Its Work for the Future," *New Century* 5 (27 April 1902), 9; "The Raja Yoga School Point Loma, California," *New Century* 5 (26 October 1902), 13; Student, "The Point Loma Type of Character," *Century Path* 13 (19 June 1910), 15. Quotation from "What Raja Yoga Means," *New Century Path* 6 (26 July 1903), 15.

6 These diaries are kept at the Sri Aurobindo Center of Los Angeles, East West Cultural Center in Culver City, California (EWCC). The earliest diary is dated from 23 April 1919 to 7 July 1922. The next diary, in chronological order, is dated from 7 July 1922 to 13 July 1923, followed by a diary dated from 16 July 1923 to 31 December 1924; January 1, 1925, to November 1925; and 22 November 1925 to 25 December 1928. In addition, Tyberg at some later date summarized her diaries and titled these summaries "Jyoti Tyberg – Diary Starting April, 1919" and "Jyoti Tyberg – Diary July 1923 to December 1925." Although these latter two documents were not written in the midst of her busy life at Lomaland as a teenager and young adult, and lack the spontaneity of these earlier diaries, she does reinforce some basic details that she wanted to be remembered.

7 *Diary*, 4 April 1923-6 July 1922 (EWCC).

8 Ashcraft, 96-97.

9 William James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience* (New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1928; first edition, 1902), 76, 80, 136 ff.

10 Tyberg to parents, 30 March 1939 (EWCC).

11 Ashcraft, 175-177.

12 "Point Loma Moves to England," *O.E. Library Critic* 22.2 (September 1932), n.p. and "Point Loma T.S. Headquarters," *O.E. Library Critic* 22.3 (October 1932), n.p.

13 Tyberg to parents, 18 November 1935 (EWCC).

14 Tyberg to parents, 15 September 1935 (EWCC).

15 Tyberg to parents, 10 June 1935 (EWCC).

16 Tyberg to parents, 27 January 1936 (EWCC).

17 Tyberg to parents, 31 May 1936 (EWCC).

18 European tour diary, 18 May 1935 (EWCC); Tyberg to Marjorie Tyberg, 19 May 1935 (EWCC).

19 Tyberg to parents, 24 June 1935 (EWCC).

20 Unofficial School Records, Judith Tyberg (EWCC).

21 Judith Tyberg, *Sanskrit Keys to the Wisdom-Religion: An Exposition of the Philosophical and Religious Teachings Imbodied in the Sanskrit Terms used in Theosophical and Occult Literature* (Point Loma: Theosophical University Press, 1940), v.

22 Judith Tyberg, *The Language of the Gods: Sanskrit Keys to India's Wisdom* (Los Angeles, Calif.: East-West Cultural Centre, 1970).

23 Olav Hammer, *Claiming Knowledge: Strategies of Epistemology from Theosophy to the New Age* (Boston and Leiden: Brill, 2001), 74.

24 "The Sanskrit Jabberwock," *OE Library Critic* 23.7 (May-June 1935), n.p.

25 Tyberg to parents, 6 March 1936 (EWCC).

26 Tyberg, *Sanskrit Keys to the Wisdom Religion*, 81, 85-90.

27 See Ashcraft, 21.

MAPPING RELIGIOUS DIVERSITY: THE IMPACT OF MIGRATION ON THE RELIGIOUS HISTORY OF SAN DIEGO[1]

REBECCA MOORE

San Diego's Imperial Avenue offers a variety of religious expression rarely seen in a single place in the United States. We find the Masjidul Taqwa, which houses adherents of the American Society of Muslims. At one time it served the Nation of Islam until W. Deen Mohammed (1933–2008) turned the group toward the practice of orthodox Sunni Islam.[2] Further up Imperial Avenue is Muhammad Mosque No. 8, which continued to adhere to the teachings of Elijah Muhammad and now follows those of Louis Farrakhan. There are multiple Christian churches, such as the Saint Gabriel Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church, the Iglesia Cristiana Camino al Cielo, St. Rita Catholic Church, and St. Stephen's Cathedral Church of God in Christ.[3] Just a few blocks from Imperial Avenue are the Eritrean Kidane Mihret, the Twenty-Eighth Street Church of Christ, the One Way Apostolic Church, the Iglesia de los Milagros, the Believe in God Church, Chabad of Downtown San Diego, and numerous others. Further north are Buddhist Temples—for Laotians, Cambodians, Thai, Chinese, and Japanese, as well as for Anglo Americans practicing Zen, Vipassana, Vajrayana, and other forms of

(Opposite page) Paramahansa Yogananda and others on lawn at Self-Realization Fellowship in Encinitas, c. 1938. © SDHC #2009_10-249.

Buddhism. And this does not even begin to include the centers for New Thought, the Hindu mandirs, the Jewish synagogues and temples, and the structures devoted to the new and alternative religions that populate San Diego County.

How do we account for this amazing religious pluralism? Kevin Starr, the late historian and California state librarian, asserted that diversity was in California's DNA. "Is there any people on the planet, any language, any religion not represented in California this very day," he asked in 1999.[4] Indeed, many have noted California's exceptional religious diversity, attributing it to a variety of factors—from the lack of an established religion, to an attitude of curiosity and experimentation, to an outlook of tolerance and even indifference.[5] While there is a marked contrast between religions north and south, an attitude of religious laissez-faire seems to characterize the entire state.

This article focuses on religion in San Diego and argues that the region's religious diversity in the era after European contact was propelled by migration in four different ways. First, the Spanish Catholic encounter with Indigenous peoples and their religions in the late eighteenth century differed markedly from that of pilgrims and adventurers landing on the East Coast of what became the United States. Subsequent migrants from the South (Mexico and Central and South America), the West (Asia, including Russia), and the East (American settlers—both White and formerly enslaved) sought economic advancement rather than the religious freedom that motivated some of those who colonized along the Atlantic Coast. Not only did their religions differ from those on the East Coast, but their religiosity differed as well. Second, while California's

geographical variability attracted a range of migrants, Southern California's benign climate proved exceptionally appealing to ranchers and agriculturalists as well as to those seeking health and healing. Adherents of new and alternative religious groups looked to California as both a literal and spiritual oasis. Third, immigrants from Asia came throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, bringing Confucianism, Daoism, Buddhism, and Hinduism to receptive audiences. Finally, San Diego lies on the US–Mexico border, a unique space where "fathoming borderlands religions requires grasping the significations of various kinds of transitions," according to religion historian Luis D. León. These include "social, cultural, economic, and symbolic or religious . . . responses to spiritual and material anxieties."[6] I refer to the various factors impacting religion today in the greater San Diego–Tijuana region as "border churn." As millions of people come and go through the San Ysidro–Tijuana port of entry—the fourth busiest land-border crossing in the world—they bring their spiritual traditions and practices with them. Nothing is staid or settled, but all is in flux, ever changing, ever vital.

The impact of migration—in the founding of California, in the rise of religious alternatives to Protestant Christianity, through the introduction of Asian religions, and in the border churn occurring daily—is a major factor contributing to the state's exceptionalism. But more particularly, these factors coalesce to make San Diego (and Tijuana as well, although that city is not the focus of this article) a wonderful laboratory for studying religion. The opportunities are vast for examining specific religious or spiritual institutions, the nature of religion in general in a

border community, and the influence that religious groups have upon social, cultural, economic, and political life.

COLONIZATION, CONVERSION, AND EARLY SETTLEMENT

Understanding San Diego's religious history requires a reorientation from traditional analysis. "The flow of U.S. history does not follow an east-west axis exclusively but also adheres to a south-north axis—a fact that is repeatedly overlooked in historical reconstructions of American religion," according to León.[7] Accounts of U.S. history usually begin on the East Coast rather than the West Coast, whether those accounts focus on Indigenous peoples, settlers and colonization, economic practices, or religion. Although the nineteenth-century historian George Bancroft extended the nation's history by almost three centuries—starting with Columbus in 1492 rather than 1776 with the Declaration of Independence— accounts of California in broader histories of the United States tend to be perfunctory until the era of the Gold Rush.[8]

Throughout Spain's American colonies, Catholic missionaries accompanied the conquistadores and subdued Indigenous people through forced labor and (attempted) Christianization. In the case of Alta California, religious conversion would be central to Spain's plans for populating and securing the colony. Jesuits and Dominicans established seventeen missions in Baja California between 1697 and 1767; when Spain expelled the Jesuits, the Franciscans took over in Baja and expanded the field to Alta California. Father Junipero Serra (1713–1784) founded Mission San Diego de Alcalá in 1769, but the harsh conditions for Natives prompted hundreds of Kumeyaay

to attack the mission and burn it down in 1775. The Franciscans went on to found a total of twenty-one missions along the Alta California coast between 1769 and 1823.

In the process of compulsory conversion, Native Americans lost their individual tribal or band identity, and Spaniards referred to them as neophytes. The Franciscan project was intended to convert Natives not only from "paganism" to Christianity, but from a hunter–gatherer lifestyle to a sedentary, agricultural economy. Nevertheless, Native people retained a religious culture in which shamans served as both religious leaders and healers and continued to supplement their diet with traditional foods.[9] Living at the missions turned out to be deadly for Indigenous peoples, but the situation grew more desperate after secularization of the missions in 1834, when Native Americans lost the small measure of protection they had from the padres.[10] Finally, a genocidal period that one scholar calls "the organized destruction of California Indians" began in 1848 under United States rule.[11] It was only in the twentieth century that the so-called Mission Indians recovered their individual identities as bands of Kumeyaay and other tribes, and regained small portions of their ancestral lands. The eighteen federally-recognized tribal nation reservations in San Diego County today encompass slightly more than 124,000 acres and make it the US county with the greatest number of reservations.[12]

This troubled history remained largely unknown in White popular culture until the late 1940s. Instead, a mythology arose in which Californios—those residents of Alta California of Mexican or Spanish descent—dwelled peacefully on large rancheros that employed Native

peoples. The novel *Ramona*, published in 1884 by activist writer Helen Hunt Jackson (1830–1885), attempted to shatter this myth in order to restore lands and traditions to California's original inhabitants. The book is heavily indebted to Jackson's work as a special commissioner to investigate the conditions of Mission Indians in Southern California in 1882, particularly those living in San Diego County.[13] Jackson hoped that *Ramona* would be the Indian *cri de coeur* that *Uncle Tom's Cabin* had been for enslaved African Americans, and critics then and now generally view Jackson's as the better book.[14] At the same time, Jackson's representation of the rancho era as a golden pastoral age in the state's history has met with criticism and ridicule, even as this romantic outlook popularized Ramona-centered tours, festivals, exhibits, and cultural events that celebrated ranchero life. In San Diego's Old Town, for instance, one can visit "Ramona's Real Marriage Place," refurbished and promoted by sugar magnate John D. Spreckels in 1910.[15]

For all its romanticization, however, there is a grain of truth in this lore about California culture, namely the strong Catholic character of life and thought among Southern California residents. "Mexicans and other Latinos in time would become the dominant constituency of the Catholic population," according to sociologist Wade Clark Roof, giving "a distinctly ethnic, yet Americanized flavor to the Catholic presence."[16] Ongoing immigration from the Global South contributes to this religious profile, making Roman Catholicism the largest Christian denomination in the state, with more than ten million adherents.[17]

The second single largest denomination is the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, with three-quarters of a million members.[18] Mormon arrival in California followed the flight from mob violence in Nauvoo, Illinois, after the murder of Joseph Smith in 1844. It also overlapped with the war between the United States and Mexico (1846–1848). Seeking help from the US government for their planned migration westward, Mormon leaders were instead asked to join its military operations. Five hundred men enlisted in the US Army in what was called the Mormon Battalion. Only 330 men completed the 2000-mile trek from the middle Missouri River Valley to San Diego between 1846 and 1847. After fulfilling a year's military service, which saw no combat but rather service projects conducted throughout the state, most recruits migrated to Utah or returned to Missouri. Despite this unpromising start, Mormonism established strong roots in California thanks to the battalion's construction projects, the proselytization efforts of subsequent migrants, and the promotion of large families. And so, California is second only to Utah in the number of Mormons who live there.

Jewish pioneers were also present in San Diego early on, arriving in the 1850s and establishing Temple Beth Israel in 1861, the oldest congregation in the city. In 1889 the congregation moved into a newly-constructed building at Second and Beech Streets, an edifice saved through historic preservation efforts and moved to Heritage Park in 1978. Its second temple was located at Third and Laurel Streets and designed by San Diego architect William H. Wheeler, who also designed the Balboa Theater. The building now houses Congregation Ohr Shalom, a Conservative synagogue that merged two other congregations. One of the congregations comprised a core group of Mexican families, who blended

Beth Israel Synagogue at northeast corner of 3rd Avenue and Laurel in Bankers Hill, 1927. © SDHC #8750.

Sephardic influences into Conservative Jewish practice. In the meantime, Congregation Beth Israel moved to a larger facility in La Jolla, having outgrown its second home. Today there are more than thirty-five Jewish congregations in the county, with an estimated 100,000 Jews living in the area.[19]

HEALTH, WEALTH, AND DISPOSSESSION

As immigrants from around the world scrambled into the gold fields of the north, Southern California retained its largely Catholic and Mexican culture. It was not until the coming of the transcontinental railroad in 1869 that the demographic and religious profile of the region changed radically. According to historian Glen Gendzel, three additional "rushes" surpassed the original gold rush in size and scale, shifting power and wealth south and

transforming Southern California into a largely White, urban population. These were the health rush, the land rush, and the orange rush that occurred between 1880 and 1920.[20] The discovery of oil in Los Angeles in 1892 created yet another attraction that contributed to the region's growth. The impact of the railroads upon the economic, social, and political development of California is well known, if often mythologized as a clash between David (the hapless citizenry) and Goliath (the greedy "octopus" of Frank Norris's novel).[21] What is undisputed is the fact that the railroads opened California, especially Southern California, to an enormous influx of people, boosting its population from 64,000 to more than 1.3 million between 1880 and 1920.

The migration of wealthy White Protestants from the American Midwest in search of health and well-being comprised part of the health rush. With railroad tourism bureaus extolling the scenic wonders and journalists touting the health benefits of the state's mild climate, thousands came seeking respite from tuberculosis, rheumatism, and old age. Gendzel notes, "In 1894, *Land of Sunshine*, a Los Angeles booster magazine, estimated that between 30,000 and 40,000 people had already moved to southern California in search of health cures."[22] Among those who came were members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church (SDA), a Christian denomination in which health and wellness became synonymous with piety and virtue. Reflecting nineteenth-century health reform movements, Ellen Gould White (1827–1915), the group's prophet, advocated "abstinence from alcohol, meat, and tobacco, and [emphasized] exercise, fruits, nuts, grains, and vegetables."[23] In 1902 White visited San Diego, and

she later acquired property in Paradise Valley, in what is today's National City. Paradise Valley Hospital opened in 1906, and though it began as a sanitarium for the wealthy, it quickly established a nurse's training program in 1909. It was accredited shortly after the state instituted the requirement in 1914 and remained open as a training hospital for men as well as women until 1966.[24]

The land rush and the orange rush—that is, the lure of getting rich on land speculation and citrus farming—drew millions more to the state. Lands originally held by Native peoples that had been claimed by Californios but subsequently lost to Anglos though a combination of legal fees, debt, an unfamiliar legal system, and environmental crises now sold at inflated prices to the highest bidder. In 1869, railroad crossing signs in Los Angeles appeared in both English and Spanish; by 1900, Spanish language had been virtually effaced. (California's first constitution was printed in both English and Spanish in 1849.) "The land rush marked the turning point in the gradual overthrow and displacement of Mexican culture and society in southern California," writes Gendzel, with Mexican Californios dislodged from the top of the social hierarchy and pushed to its margins as cheap labor.[25] Nevertheless, or perhaps because of their new inferior status, Mexican Americans held on to their Catholic Christianity.

California's promises of health and wealth, therefore, were generally limited to Whites coming from the Midwest and the East Coast, rather than to the Indigenous inhabitants or the ethnic minorities coming from abroad to work in the citrus orchards. Yet they too brought a diverse array of religious and spiritual thought unimaginable to the settlers from the Mayflower era.

METAPHYSICAL SAN DIEGO

Historian Nathan Hatch identifies a type of populist Christianity that arose in the period of the Early Republic, 1780 to 1830, marked by three characteristics: a refusal to defer to theologians and educated clergy; a belief that ordinary people can express their own spiritual impulses; and a lack of limitations on religious outsiders.[26] These democratic and egalitarian impulses fostered the expansion of Methodists, Baptists, Mormons, the Black Church, and the Restorationist Movement, out of which the Disciples of Christ and other denominations emerged. Another historian, Stephen Prothero, argues further that Hatch's thesis can be applied to all types of American religion, not just Christianity.[27] Certainly the rise of Spiritualism and New Thought—especially with their female founders, leaders, and clergy—supports Prothero's claim. Adherents of these metaphysical traditions, along with those attracted to the teachings about esotericism found in Theosophy and Rosicrucianism, arrived in California seeking a type of religious freedom far removed from their pilgrim forebears.

Spurred by print media in the form of "pamphlets, books, tracts, hymnbooks, journals and newspapers that inundated popular culture," dozens, if not hundreds, of new religious groups emerged in the nineteenth century.[28] The most popular for a time was Spiritualism, in which mediums contacted the dead and provided access to the supernatural for their clients. Although plagued with instances of fraud, Spiritualism also served as a vehicle for women's leadership and individual initiative.[29] A few miles west of Escondido, for example, Harmony Grove Spiritualist Association (HGSA) began as a camp meeting

in 1896 with the purpose of furthering the teachings of Spiritualism "as a religion, philosophy and science."[30] It has survived three devastating fires, the most recent in 2014, and continues to offer certificates in healing, mediumship, and spiritual studies. At least four Spiritualist churches and fellowships founded in the county continue to this day. For the most part, their emphasis has shifted from communicating with the dead to physical and spiritual healing conducted through angelic intermediaries.[31]

Spiritualism acted as the springboard for Theosophy, a movement and a philosophy that claimed an ancient wisdom tradition handed down from time immemorial. Originating in the teachings of Helena P. Blavatsky (1831–1891), the Theosophical Society underwent several schisms, one of which led to the founding of the Universal Brotherhood and Theosophical Society by Katherine Tingley (1847–1929).[32] Located on 132 acres on Point Loma, Tingley's group was one of the most significant, if not *th*e most significant, alternative religious groups to settle in San Diego. Lomaland, as it was called, became a center for art, culture, and education in San Diego between 1900 and 1930, though it continued its programs after Tingley's death until 1942.[33] The land was acquired in 1897, and three years later the Raja Yoga School opened, operating under the inspiration of New England Transcendentalism, Greek philosophy, and classical European education.[34] When Madame Tingley purchased the Fisher Opera House in downtown San Diego, she renamed it the Isis Theater, where Theosophists staged numerous dramatic and musical productions. Residents of San Diego would also frequent the grounds of Lomaland to view elaborate productions of Greek tragedies and Shakespeare's

plays in the classical-style amphitheater designed by Tingley—one of the first of its kind in the United States. In daily devotions, the group drew upon the wisdom of Asian religions as well as the writings of Blavatsky and Tingley. Music played an important part of everyday life, and all residents, young and old alike, sang in the chorus and played a musical instrument. The artistic milieu of Lomaland also attracted fine artists like Leonard Lester (1870–1952), Grace Betts (1883–1978), and Reginald Machell (1854–1927), to name just a few who were given space and financial support to make their art. Upon the invitation of Tingley, well-known *plein air* artist Maurice Braun (1877–1941) lived across the street from Lomaland and maintained a studio in the Isis Theater.

Vestiges of the grandeur of Lomaland remain today on the campus of Point Loma Nazarene University. The university's administration building, topped by a large amethyst-colored crystal, is housed in what was once the home of the Albert Spalding family, of tennis racquet fame. Other buildings reveal hints of East Indian-inspired motifs, along with intricate woodwork designs crafted by Reginald Machell. Paintings, carvings, photographs, and other artistic works by Theosophists have been preserved by Special Collections at San Diego State University and the San Diego History Center. These collections are especially precious given the complete destruction of the Theosophical Archives in Pasadena in the 2025 Los Angeles fires.[35]

Although not as influential as Lomaland, the Rosicrucian Fellowship in Oceanside provides another example of the popularity of ancient wisdom traditions in the region. Founded in 1911 by Max Heindel (1865–1919) and led after

his death by his wife Augusta Foss Heindel (1865–1949), the group adopted a path of Christian mysticism, unlike other branches of Rosicrucianism. Adherents completed a healing temple in 1920, thereby giving the name Mount Ecclesia to the forty-acre spread that overlooks Mission San Luis Rey. A large sanitarium opened in 1938 to treat individuals with non-contagious diseases. Today a small group of Rosicrucians gives tours of Mount Ecclesia and welcomes visitors to vegetarian meals.

The Lemurian Fellowship also practices a type of esoteric Christianity mixed with elements of Asian religions and perennial philosophy, that is, the view that all religions share fundamental teachings. Founded in Chicago in 1936, the group moved several times, finally settling on sixty acres near Ramona, a town located thirty-five miles north of San Diego and named after the main character of Helen Hunt Jackson's novel. The Lemurian Order now comprises a small community of people who work and worship together in order to live according to the Universal Laws of God, as revealed to their founder Dr. Robert Stelle (1881–1952) by Elder Brothers, or Masters. The order offers courses in Lemurian philosophy online with the objective of helping individuals lead meaningful and useful lives. Lemurians believe in the lost continents of Atlantis and Mu, for which they find confirmation in monolithic statuary and buildings around the globe. They claim that archaeological evidence points to an advanced civilization in either the Pacific or Indian Ocean region, called Lemuria, to which Christ first brought his teachings to humanity more than 70,000 years ago.

Additional movements in San Diego that share a belief in spiritual teachers—whether Elder Brothers or

Rosicrucian chapel at Mount Ecclesia in Oceanside. Photo by author.

intelligent extraterrestrials—include the Unarius Academy of Science in El Cajon, and the group known as Heaven's Gate that committed mass suicide in 1997 in Rancho Santa Fe. Indeed, the conviction that spiritually-evolved humans and/or spiritual beings bring us wisdom from transcendent sources marks all these diverse groups. Whether the beings are those who are deceased or angels (Spiritualism), those who are Masters of the Wisdom (Theosophy and the Lemurians), or those who are Space Brothers or Extraterrestrials (Unarians and Heaven's Gate), they all serve a vital purpose in the present.

Yet perhaps the longest lived and most popular alternative to mainstream Christianity came out of what is called New Thought, a self-help movement that emphasized mind over matter in order to achieve health, wealth, happiness, and spiritual satisfaction. Christian

Science, and its offshoot New Thought, also arose in the nineteenth century, offering both healing and well-being through the power of "mind." According to religion historian J. Gordon Melton, "they shared historical roots both in the idealistic philosophy of the nineteenth century and in the search for alternative means for healing at a time when the healing arts were still in a primitive state."[36]

The immediate antecedent to New Thought was the Church of Christ, Scientist, founded by Mary Baker Eddy (1821–1910) in 1879. Following a miraculous healing, Eddy wrote the bestseller *Science and Health* (1875) in which she combined traditional Protestant Christian doctrines with rather heterodox ideas, such as a dual-gendered Father-Mother God. She wrote that human beings were immortal, and that illness was the result of wrong thinking, or "mortal mind." Remaining mired in materiality, rather than realizing our true spiritual nature, leads humans to believe in the body, sin, illness, and even death, all of which are denied by Christian Scientists. In an era in which medical care was at best rudimentary, the possibility of mental or spiritual healing offered hope to those who suffered from illnesses that were not readily diagnosable, unlike cancers and broken bones.

Christian Science found its way to California before the end of the nineteenth century. The First Church of Christ, Scientist was incorporated in San Diego in 1897. The congregation met in parlors and meeting halls until it commissioned well-known local architect Irving Gill to design a small brick building at the corner of Third and Ash; it opened in 1903. But due to growth of the Christian healing denomination—Christian because it retained certain traditional beliefs—Gill was commissioned to

Christian Science Church at Third and Ash Streets, 1905.
© SDHC # 415.

design a larger building, which opened in 1910 at Second and Laurel, its current location. Its unique Mission style design was modernized into oblivion in the 1950s but was restored to Gill's original plans in the 1990s.

Mary Baker Eddy's controlling leadership style pushed one particular Christian Scientist into a new direction. Emma Curtis Hopkins (1849–1925) left Eddy's church in 1885 and the next year founded the Christian Science Theological Seminary in Chicago. Like the original Christian Science, it emphasized spiritual healing by trained practitioners who participated in classes. Melton observes, "During the decade from 1886 to 1895, Hopkins trained a number of students who went on to found those 'denominations' which today constitute the core of the New Thought tradition."[37] In the late nineteenth century, Hopkins's students dropped the name Christian Science and adopted the identification of New Thought, since

they believed that we create our own reality through the power of our thoughts. "Thinking makes it so," is one slogan that characterizes the philosophy of New Thought. Protestant minister Norman Vincent Peale's famous bestseller *The Power of Positive Thinking* (1952) is a good example of twentieth-century New Thought philosophy clothed in Christian garb, as is the contemporary Word of Faith Movement and other Christian prosperity gospel denominations. Most New Thought churches, however, deleted all references to Christianity in the 1950s; even Unity School of Christianity is now simply the Unity Church.

The spiritual descendants of Emma Curtis Hopkins appear throughout San Diego County today. Almost a dozen groups affiliated with Ernest Holmes's Science of Mind (or Religious Science) meet in Centers for Spiritual Living that can be found on University Avenue in San Diego and range north to Encinitas, Carlsbad, Poway, Fallbrook, and even Temecula, in southern Riverside County. At least a half dozen Unity centers exist in the county that follow the principles of Charles and Myrtle Fillmore's Unity School of Christianity. The Unity Center on Activity Road in San Diego, led by the charismatic Wendy Craig-Purcell for more than forty years, markets itself as "spiritual, not religious," and does not have a church or congregation but rather a sangha—the Buddhist word for community, which once designated monasteries of monks or nuns, but now indicates, more broadly, devotees.

New Thought metaphysics have found their way into broader American society, as have the teachings of Theosophy and Rosicrucianism: the oneness of God, the divine within all humans, positive thinking, and self-help. Moreover, more exotic doctrines, such as karma, reincarnation, clairvoyance and divination, and the perennial and universal nature of all religious beliefs, have also become commonplace.[38] According to the Pew Research Center, for example, almost 30 percent of Christians say that they believe in reincarnation.[39] By opening American culture to more diverse religious ideas, nineteenth-century metaphysical movements helped set the stage for the acceptance of religions from Asia.

ASIAN AMERICA

"Where is California in the world?" asked historian Eldon Ernst. "That it is a gateway to and from Asia, halfway between England and China, has affected the religious consciousness of a variety of settlers from both Europe and Asia from the mid-nineteenth century on."[40] Although the 1965 Immigration Act opened the United States to Asian religions and their gurus, roshis, and swamis, California's exposure to religions of the East had begun more than one hundred years earlier. Immigrants from China brought their traditions, customs, and beliefs as they sought their fortunes in the gold fields of Northern California. Most of the early Chinese migrants were men who intended to stay in the United States only long enough to strike it rich before returning home. The Confucian emphasis on ancestor veneration, filial piety, and duty to the family made leave-taking difficult; it was only the dire circumstances existing in the southeast coastal province Kwangtung (now Romanized as Guangdong) at that time that encouraged the radical step of leaving home, even if for a supposedly short time.

The Daoist tradition that teaches the secrets of longevity and health was brought to Los Angeles by

Share K. Lew (1918–2012) and Kenneth Dickerson (1910–1991) in 1970. There they formed the Taoist Sanctuary, the first Daoist religious group to receive federal tax-exempt status.[42] Born in New Jersey, Dickerson is better known as Khigh Dhiegh, an actor who made frequent appearances as Wo Fat on *Hawaii 5-O*. Master Lew, however, was born in Guangdong province and immigrated to the United States in 1948. He was initiated into the Daoist tradition of TaoAhnPai, which he taught after he moved to San Diego in 1979. Lew turned over the Taoist Sanctuary—now the Taoist Sanctuary of San Diego—to his students. He continued to teach TaoAhnPai Daoism—which he called a form of healing—until he died in 2012, at which point his widow Juanita took over. She still offers private classes in San Diego and workshops around the country.[43] The Taoist Sanctuary's website shows that the nonprofit organization is operated largely by a White leadership that teaches courses in Chen-family style taijiquan, qi gong, meditation, and traditional Chinese medicine.[44]

With gold panned out in the north, the cultivation of citrus drew Chinese laborers south to tend orange and lemon groves in the late nineteenth century. Japanese immigrants also came to work in agriculture and to acquire their own farms. As a result of Japanese immigration, a unique form of Shin Buddhism emerged as the Buddhist Church of America. While these churches resemble Protestant churches—with pastors, pews, and hymns—their theology belongs to the Jodo Shinshu tradition. When the reservoir at Otay Mesa overflowed the dam and killed ten Japanese farmworkers in 1916, Japanese residents sought a Buddhist minister to preside over the funerals.[45] A decade later, the San Diego Buddhist Church—now

Otay Valley store damaged by 1916 flood. © SDHC #6027-1.

called the Buddhist Temple of San Diego (BTSD)—was established, making it the oldest Buddhist congregation in the county. Indeed, Shin Buddhist communities like BTSD built the "infrastructure [necessary] for the spread and popularization of Buddhism" in mid-twentieth century America.[46] Nevertheless, with more than forty Buddhist temples and monasteries of ethnic origin—Taiwanese, Chinese, Thai, Laotian, Cambodian, Vietnamese, and Japanese (such as Soka-Gakkai)—not to mention informal house temples and American centers, it is certain that a variety of Buddhisms play a large role in the county. Perhaps the most famous is the Deer Park Monastery

located on 400 acres near Escondido, one of eleven Plum Village practice centers in the world established by the famous Vietnamese master Thich Nhat Hanh (1926–2022). The ordained monk introduced the concept of "engaged Buddhism," that is, a religious practice directed inward through meditation, and outward through peace activism.

Although ethnically-originated Buddhisms predominate in the region, two Anglo-originated programs deserve mention. One of the oldest is the Zen Center of San Diego in Pacific Beach, founded in 1983 by Charlotte Joko Beck (1917–2011). The center claims no connection to Buddhism beyond briefly acknowledging its White Plum Soto Zen lineage, but rather focuses on meditation practice and daily living, since, according to Beck, religion is "nothing special."[47] In contrast, the Dharma Bum Temple, located in the University Heights neighborhood of San Diego, is explicitly Buddhist. Taking its cues from Jack Kerouac's novel, *The Dharma Bums*, the group accepts the principles of engaged Buddhism, seeing meditation as the way to change one's own life and to be of benefit to others. Initially meeting in a loft beginning in 2006, the Dharma Bums moved to an old Swedenborgian Church building in 2017. The presence of a Buddhist group in a former Swedenborgian church marks the confluence of many mystical trajectories, beginning with Emanuel Swedenborg (1688–1772), a prolific writer, inventor, philosopher, and mystic in the European Enlightenment. His work was highly influential in nineteenth-century American occultism and continues to shape New Age interest in other planes of existence and spiritual beings in the twenty-first. The fact that engaged Buddhists like the Dharma Bums practice in a building once devoted to an entirely different religion is just one of the many paradoxes of religious diversity in San Diego.

Another example of the encounter between East and West comes from the arrival of Hinduism and its adherents at the end of the nineteenth century. The World's Parliament of Religions "exposed American citizens to the religions of China, Japan, and India" at the Chicago World Columbian Exposition in 1893, but Californians had already experienced these faiths firsthand.[48] Perhaps the true star of the parliament was Swami Vivekananda (1863–1902), a major disciple of Ramakrishna (1836–1886), an Indian mystic who claimed that all religions were essentially one, leading ultimately to the same goal. Vivekananda reiterated his master's philosophy when he declared at the parliament that "I am proud to belong to a religion which has taught the world both tolerance and universal acceptance. We believe not only in universal toleration, but we accept all religions as true."[49] While the swami had already established a Ramakrishna training center for both householders and monastics in India, along with a Ramakrishna mission to address charity, social work, and education, his travels in the United States and Europe prompted him to evangelize the West. In 1894 he founded the Vedanta Society of New York, and on his second trip to the United States in 1900, he founded the Vedanta Society of San Francisco (now Vedanta Society of Northern California). The Vedanta Society of Southern California was established by Swami Prabhavananda (1893–1976) in 1930, and the San Diego Vedanta Monastery, located on Upas Street across from Balboa Park, is a branch of this organization that offers lectures, classes, and retreats.

Twenty-five miles up the coast is the Self-Realization Fellowship (SRF), located on a bluff overlooking the Pacific in Encinitas. Yet another swami, Paramahansa Yogananda (1893–1952), introduced Westerners to the practice of Kriya Yoga. Like Vivekananda, Yogananda saw an underlying unity between Asian and Western religious traditions. After living in Boston, where he created the SRF in 1920, he eventually settled in Encinitas. There is both a temple in the beach town community—arranged with pews facing portraits of Jesus Christ, Lord Krishna, Yogananda, and his teacher Sri Yukteswar—as well as a jewel-like ashram with beautiful grounds. The large golden onion domes attract visitors, who can tour the hermitage on days when it is open to the public and see the desk at which Yogananda penned his bestselling book *Autobiography of a Yogi* (1946). The swami's home can be seen nearby, though it is closed to sightseers. The SRF Temple in San Diego on First Avenue was designed by architect Irving Gill in 1909 as the Bishop's Day School; Yogananda acquired it in 1943. He called it a "church of all religions" at its dedication.[50]

While Vivekananda and Yogananda reinterpreted the teachings of Hinduism for a Western audience, more traditional forms of Hinduism arrived in San Diego in the wake of immigration reform in the 1960s. In 1966, A. C. Swami Bhaktivedanta Prabhupada (1896–1977) founded the International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON) in New York City. Better known as the Hare Krishnas, western devotees of ISKCON adopted Hindu dress, customs, diet, and rituals. For many years, the Hare Krishnas were a familiar presence on college campuses, including San Diego State University, where they

Paramahansa Yogananda, c. 1938. © SDHC #2009_10-225.

would serve low-cost Indian meals to students. At first, leadership of the group was dominated by young, White men, but after the death of Swami Prabhupada, and the revelation and resolution of several criminal scandals in the late twentieth century, group members and leaders were increasingly of South Asian descent, which is the case for the temple in Pacific Beach. Almost a dozen other ethnic Hindu temples dot the landscape in colorful variety and worship.

A final Indian mystic with connections to San Diego is Jiddu Krishnamurti (1895–1986), who was groomed

from childhood by British Theosophists in India to be the expected forerunner to a World Teacher who would advance spiritual evolution. In 1929, Krishnamurti renounced claims to leadership of the Order of the Star, which had been established in anticipation of the World Teacher's arrival. As he announced his disassociation from the organization, he declared, "I maintain that truth is a pathless land and you cannot approach it by any path whatsoever, by any religion, by any sect."[51] Although Krishnamurti settled in Ojai, he had many occasions to visit San Diego. In 1974, Dr. Allan Anderson (1922–2013), a cofounder of the SDSU Department of Religious Studies and later chair of the department, conducted a series of eighteen dialogues with K. (as he was called). The Special Collections department of the SDSU Library is fortunate to have these tapes, along with audio reminiscences, tape transcripts, and many original papers, lectures, and letters written by Krishnamurti and collected by Dr. Anderson.[52]

The number of Asian religious traditions significantly increased in the twenty-first century and will continue to grow. Along with traditional practices, immigrants from the Pacific Rim are bringing new religions, such as the True Jesus Church from Beijing, Tzu Chi from Taiwan, Tenrikyo from Japan, and Iglesia ni Cristo from the Philippines. By 2030, the plurality of foreign-born people living in San Diego will be from Asia, with most coming from the Philippines, Vietnam, China (including Hong Kong), and India.[53] This may seem surprising, given the fact that San Diego has a vibrant Latino community that plays a large and visible role in the cultural life of the city and county. But according to 2018 statistics, only 43.7 percent of those foreign born came from Latin America, with

39.1 percent born in Mexico, as opposed to 42.9 percent coming from Asia.[54] Despite this demographic shift, Mexican and Latino influence will remain significant due to a major factor—the proximity of the US–Mexico border.

BORDER CHURN

Glass-encased candles depicting the Virgin of Guadalupe, San Judas Tadeo, and other Mexican saints are on the shelves of most large grocery chains in San Diego. Botánicas located throughout the county sell healing herbs and lotions. Altars, shrines, and decorations appear at educational, commercial, and religious institutions the week before the Day of the Dead. Equally visible are new Christian sects—new to the United States, that is—such as La Luz del Mundo, La Iglesia Universal del Reino de Dios, Apostolic Assembly of the Faith in Jesus Christ, and many more. This is especially true of groups representing Renewalist Christianity, the umbrella term that covers various types of Pentecostal, Charismatic, and ecstatic Christian churches—leaders in the growth of Christianity in the twenty-first century.[55]

In the days of sailing vessels and steamships, immigrating to a new land often entailed saying a final farewell to friends and family and leaving the Old Country forever. Current communication and travel technologies, however, allow migrants to remain in close contact with their families back home. Thus, immigrants today have a foot, or heart, in both worlds and cultures. This is especially true of those who bring strong religious connections. As a result, "the immigrant congregation is unrivaled as the place where homeland values are maintained, celebrated, and passed on to the next generation."[56]

Religious life in San Diego clearly demonstrates that evangelization moves in both directions, or rather all directions. We tend to think of missionary endeavors traveling north to south, from Europe to Africa or from the United States to South America. This was certainly true in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, when missionaries from Protestant denominations (Methodist, Baptist, Lutheran, and so on) established churches in Mexico. Although they developed an Indigenous ministry and leadership, the institutional centers remained in the United States. Mormons, Jehovah's Witnesses, Seventh-day Adventists, and Pentecostals also made significant inroads into the historically Roman Catholic country. After the Second World War, evangelicals and fundamentalists arrived. Meanwhile, Mexican Protestant church leadership and management increased, as did the number and diversity of Protestant denominations, primarily in southern Mexico and along the US–Mexico border. Immigrants brought these fresh forms of religiosity—primarily in the Renewalist style—to the United States, where they nurtured other newcomers in a cycle of departure and return—border churn, in other words. The Pew Research Center identifies this phenomenon as "religious switching," while Melton describes it as "religious fragmentation."[57] Roof calls this a process of "interfusing the local and the global while at the same time creating an environment in which social identities are fluid."[58]

By whatever name we call it, border churn functions like a rock tumbler, constantly polishing and changing whatever is placed in it, as the rocks bump and roll against each other. On the one hand, the churn between San Ysidro and Tijuana creates new Latino churches in San Diego; on the other, it establishes yoga studios and meditation centers in Tijuana. Anglos travel to Tijuana and further south to attend workshops in shamanism and New Age healing, including Santo Daime ceremonies involving ayahuasca. Mexicans launch storefront churches and construct large megachurch campuses in San Diego. According to sociologist David Machacek, new immigrant communities are transforming existing religious groups, "de-Europeanizing" them, and further diversifying American denominations.[59] But the process of diversification clearly goes both ways, with, for example, Chabad Without Borders, a group based in San Diego that has planted a half dozen Lubavitch synagogues in Baja California and elsewhere in Mexico.

Creating community across the border has become more difficult, however. The border between San Ysidro and Tijuana was fairly porous until the 1990s, when the Clinton Administration introduced greater travel restrictions. Seasonal workers could come and go. Families living in San Diego could easily visit their relatives across the border. The situation is vastly different in the wake of the 9/11 attacks and anti-immigrant sentiment in the United States. The most recent obstacle is the destruction of Friendship Park, located directly on the US–Mexico Border near Imperial Beach. The existing fence, through which relatives north and south can communicate—and in the past, celebrate the Eucharist—has been partially replaced by massive walls, and the US side of the park has been closed to the public since 2020. With or without walls, however, border churn cannot be stopped. It is a natural outgrowth of current globalizing pressures as well as simple proximity.

CONCLUSIONS

The East Coast and Midwest cultural consensus of European Protestant Christianity, by which political, economic, and social institutions were governed, never existed in California. Southern California in particular—with its legacy of Indigenous traditions, Catholic Christianity, Mexican folkways, Asian religious expressions, New Thought, New Age, and New Religious Movements—was religiously plural even before California statehood. This diversity exists today, not only in immigrant religions but also in homegrown new religions. For example, the Twelve Tribes, a Christian communal group that operates a farm in Gopher Canyon north of Escondido, runs Yellow Deli restaurants in Valley Center and in Vista. The Church of Scientology, with a large facility in downtown San Diego on Fourth Avenue, provides instruction in techniques of self-realization and empowerment. The Questhaven Retreat Center, founded by the clairvoyant channeler Flower A. Newhouse (1909–1994) and her husband Lawrence (1910–1963), offers weekend courses in the mystery teachings of Christ and the angelic kingdom at its 600-acre center in San Marcos. The list of diverse religious opportunities available in San Diego is seemingly endless—from the Gurudwara (temple) Sahib of the Sikh Society of San Diego in Escondido, to Rock Church, a megachurch with six campuses founded by retired football player Miles McPherson, to countless others.

Although the pace of immigration into San Diego has slowed over the last ten years, with a precipitous drop between 2020 and 2021, foreign-born residents are likely to continue to shape the religious profile of the city and county.[60] In addition, with the number of immigrants from African nations to the county accelerating, Islam may have an increasing presence.[61] The new forms of spirituality that immigrants bring is a strength because religious diversity tends to ensure religious liberty for all rather than privileging a single religious group. It generates a social and cultural dynamism missing from more homogeneous regions. It encourages tolerance, acceptance, and mutual support and appreciation. Is there a negative aspect to religious pluralism? As Roof asks, what ties us together if we lack a spiritual or religious core? The answer, he says, is reliance upon civility and democratic institutions. "Religious pluralism in the sense of a habit of encouraging and reinforcing people's choices in religious faith, including that of no faith, is obviously an expression of American democracy," independent of the truth claims of any particular faith community.[62] If Roof is correct, San Diego has the potential to be one of the most religiously plural and culturally democratic places in the nation.

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NOTES

1 I would like to express appreciation to the following readers for their helpful insights and comments: Fielding McGehee, J. Gordon Melton, Robert Ray, Kenneth Small, and Catherine Wessinger.

2 The group claims it is the oldest masjid founded by "indigenous people" (that is, non-immigrant Muslims) on the West Coast. Masjidul Taqwa San Diego. https://www.masjidultaqwasandiego.org/.

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14 Ibid., 123–124.

15 "Ramona's Real Marriage Place," *Save Our Heritage Organisation*, https://thearda.com/us-religion/census/congregational-membership?t=1&c=06.

16 Roof, "Pluralism," 85.

17 "California State Membership Report – 2020," *The Association of Religion Data Archives*, https://thearda.com/us-religion/census/congregational-membership?t=1&c=06.

[18] "California State Membership Report – 2020." The single category "Non-Denominational Christian Churches" is greater, however, with 1.6 million members.

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[20] Glen Gendzel, "Not Just a Golden State: Three Anglo 'Rushes' in the Making of Southern California, 1880–1920," *Southern California Quarterly* 90, no. 4 (Winter 2009), 349–378.

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[24] Donna Fosbinder, "Hospital Based Nursing Schools in San Diego, 1900–1970," *Journal of San Diego History* 35, no. 2 (Spring 1989) at https://sandiegohistory.org/journal/1989/april/hospital/.

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[27] Stephen Prothero, "From Spiritualism to Theosophy: 'Uplifting' a Democratic Tradition," *Journal of Religion and American Culture* 3, no. 2 (Summer 1993), 210–212.

[28] Hatch, *Democratization*, 11.

[29] Anne Braude, *Radical Spirits: Spiritualism and Women's Rights in Nineteenth-Century America* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1989).

[30] "Beginnings," Harmony Grove Spiritualist Association, https://harmonygrovespiritual.org/beginnings.

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[33] For a thorough discussion of Lomaland and Katherine Tingley, see Kenneth R. Small, *Revisiting Visionary Utopia: Katherine Tingley's Lomaland, 1897–1942*, Theosophical History Occasional Papers, Vol. XV (Fullerton, CA: Theosophical History, 2022); and W. Michael Ashcraft, *The Dawn of the New Cycle: Point Loma Theosophists and American Culture* (Knoxville, TN: University of Tennessee Press, 2002).

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[36] J. Gordon Melton, "Christian Science–Metaphysical Family," *Encyclopedia of American Religions*, 7th ed., ed. J. Gordon Melton (Gale ebooks, 2003), 145–151.

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53 Tom K. Wong and Mikayla Sanchez, *Immigrant Integration in the City of San Diego*, U.S. Immigration Policy Center (San Diego: University of California–San Diego, 2020), 2. https://usipc.ucsd.edu/publications/usipc-immigrant-integration-san-diego-final.pdf.

54 Ibid., 5.

55 The Pew Research Center uses "Pentecostal" to describe members of traditional Pentecostal denominations, such as Assemblies of God; it uses "Charismatic" to describe Protestants and Catholics who subscribe to Pentecostal practices but do not belong to a Pentecostal denomination; the term "Renewalist" refers to both Pentecostal and Charismatic Christians. The Pew Research Center, *The Shifting Religious Identity of Latinos in the United States*, May 7, 2014, p. 96, https://www.pewresearch.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/20/2014/05/Latinos-Religion-07-22-full-report.pdf. The situation is more complicated in Mexico, where many Christians hold Pentecostals beliefs and rituals but do not identify as Pentecostal. See, e.g., Ramiro Jaimes Martínez, "El neopentecostalismo como objeto de investigación y categoría analítica," *Revista Mexicana de Sociología* 74, núm. 4 (octubre–diciembre 2012), 649–678. Jaimes Martínez uses the term "Charismatic Evangelicals" for this large group.

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57 The Pew Research Center, *The Shifting Religious Identity of Latinos in the United States*, 36–43; J. Gordon Melton, email communication with author, June 12, 2023.

58 Roof, "Pluralism," 88.

59 David W. Machacek, "The Problem of Pluralism," *Sociology of Religion* 64, no. 2 (Summer 2003), 147.

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61 Between 2015 and 2020, the number of foreign born immigrants from Africa grew by 53.8 percent. Wong and Sanchez, *Immigrant Integration*, 2.

62 Roof, "Pluralism," 95.

THE UNIVERSITY OF SAN DIEGO: CURATED HISTORIES AND FORGOTTEN STORIES[1]

SARAH FEDERMAN AND CLARE BATH

Institutions increasingly reckon with histories that do not hold up to the moral light of our times. Reckoning work falls to those currently working within these institutions whether or not they participated in these wrongdoings or how long ago they occurred. Some resent this obligation; others embrace the opportunity to right the wrongs of the past.

In May 2023, the Trinity College of Dublin announced its decision to remove the name "Berkeley" from its main library because the respected philosopher George Berkeley owned enslave /Users/Jen/Work/Freelance/HistoryCenter/HC225244_FallWinter_JournalofSD/David Miller, SDHC/USD/S-4756 University of San Diego - Immaculate Church - 1958_HR.jpg
d people and favored the forced conversion to Christianity of Indigenous people and the enslaved, especially children. Now the University of California, Berkeley faces a difficult situation. Will it too change its name?[2]

Regardless of whether people believe current institutions must change their names, pay restitution, or commemorate these pasts, we have a responsibility to at least know our

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(Opposite page) University of San Diego Immaculata Church, 1958. © SDHC #S-4756.

institutional histories. That is why we, a faculty member and a former graduate student at the University of San Diego (USD), wanted to better understand the history of our university, not with an intention of finding evidence of moral wrongdoing, but to better comprehend the legacies to which we belonged. The timing could not have been better: the institution celebrated its 75th anniversary in 2024.

We know too that studying history can increase our collective sense of belonging.[3] Studying the history of USD's buildings (including their names), foundational narratives, and memories helps us connect with a longer timeline and realize that our time here will similarly be archived into the institution's history. As importantly, by studying choices made (and not made) by our predecessors, we become more aware of the moral choices before us.[4] We hope these findings help others feel more connected to the university and to San Diego.

This article first offers a summary of published histories about the University of San Diego's founding both in books and in university-produced sources. In the second half we supplement the official narratives with findings from transcripts of interviews and our own interviews. This expanded historical rendition, while in no way comprehensive, offers a richer view of the school's origins and its founding members. Due to limited space, we focus primarily on the school's origin story through the 1972 merger of the colleges. The themes highlighted during these years reflect their importance as stated by our sources as well as our own interests. For this reason, we occasionally use personal pronouns. We wanted to make ourselves visible as authors, whose selections

are informed by our upbringing, era, personal ages, professions, gender, and connection to the school. The official narratives more often bury their positionality, making their biases less visible. We hope these findings and the provocative questions raised at the end inspire others to continue this work. There is always more to uncover.

METHODOLOGY

This study draws on two types of sources: those employed for the official narrative along with oral histories and archival documents provided by the Copley Library. The first section of this article summarizes the university's official history based on its website and three primary books published by and for the University of San Diego: *Founder's Tale, Fortress on the Hill: Founding the University of San Diego and the San Diego College for Women, 1942-1963,* and *The First Forty Years: A History of the University of San Diego 1949-1989.*[5]

The second half of the article draws on a wider range of sources, including the school's yearbooks, accreditation reports, print media coverage, student newspapers, a current campus tour, and oral histories. The oral histories provided some of the richest material: we reviewed roughly twenty transcripts of interviews conducted in the 1980s with faculty, administrators, and seminarians who worked at the school in the decades immediately following its founding. We then conducted interviews of our own. We met twice with Dr. Diane Maher, Associate Professor and the Head of the Archives and Special Collections at USD, and with Dr. Juliet Mousseau, President of Academic Affairs at the Franciscan School

Aerial view of University of San Diego, 1952. © SDHC #S-1589.

of Theology located on campus. Dr. Mousseau connected us with Sister Virginia Rodee, a graduate of the College for Women and later Assistant Vice President for Mission and Ministry. Next, we interviewed Madeleine Koehn, a student mentor at USD's College Corps, which "creates debt-free pathways for students who commit to serving in their communities for an academic year."[6] Koehn helped us understand some of the challenges current students face. Collectively, their stories enriched and enlivened the official narratives circulated in the carefully crafted books and brochures.

Historians continue to prove the advantages of collecting oral histories, relying on them to varying

degrees in conjunction with other types of sources. Critiques of oral histories tend to follow two lines of thought. The first argues that oral histories are antithetical to traditional academic research paradigms that value objectivity and strict methodological coherence. The second questions the propriety of amplifying discriminatory or harmful perspectives and researchers' ability to accurately represent the stories of respondents who may seek to influence findings or be impacted by the researchers' questions or responses.[7] Oral histories, however, serve an important purpose: to give space to the stories of everyday individuals and study socio-cultural phenomena.[8] The oral histories we use in this essay complement the archival documentation, which we found was often thin when it comes to community voices and critical perspectives.

OFFICIAL HISTORIES

Buddy, Hill, and the Founding

The official narratives of the University of San Diego all begin with the school's founder, Bishop Charles Francis Buddy. Buddy attended Catholic school in St. Joseph, Missouri, and went to college at St. Benedict's in Kansas, studied for the priesthood, and completed his PhD in philosophy in Rome. Pope Pius XI appointed Buddy the first bishop of San Diego in October 1936, and he received his consecration on December 21 of that year.[9] Bishop Buddy immediately set about fulfilling his dream of establishing for San Diegans a Catholic university with colleges for men and women. In 1938, he reached out to Mother Rosalie Clifton Hill to help him fulfill this vision.

Mother Rosalie Hill was born in 1878 near Washington,

DC, to a family who boasted close ties to early British colonists and the Founding Fathers. She attended private schools before deciding to join the Covenant of the Sacred Heart in Montreal at age eighteen. Mother Hill spent the following years teaching and serving in administrative positions at various Catholic schools where she lobbied to ensure that her fellow nuns received graduate degrees to prepare them to teach at the college level.[10] She had a love of books and was committed to growing the libraries at the institutions where she worked.[11] Mother Rosalie Hill said that "books are always a first need for a college."[12] Between 1937 and1942, Mother Hill corresponded with Bishop Buddy about his project without yet committing to helping him fulfill his dream.

In 1942 Bishop Buddy invited Mother Hill to visit San Diego. At that time, she worked at the San Francisco College for Women—a Catholic institution which she helped found and develop. During this visit Buddy asked her to move to San Diego and establish the San Diego College for Women.[13] She would create this school, he said, "for the glory of God and the salvation of souls."[14] Eventually she acquiesced and agreed to join Bishop Buddy on this venture, which they agreed would include separate colleges for men and women.

In 1945, after visiting various potential sites for the university, they selected a plot of land in Linda Vista Heights. The area was then known only as a part of the pueblo lands, but Hill and Buddy changed the name to "Alcalá Park" to recognize San Diego de Alcalá.[15] Alcalá loosely derives from the Arabic word *Al Kala* meaning "the castle." They both fundraised for the school. Bishop Buddy's commitment to Catholic ideologies as well as

his patriotic, anti-communist, and community-oriented sentiments won him monetary support from Catholics and non-Catholics alike.[16] Mother Hill sought funding from the Society of the Sacred Heart, her religious order, while Bishop Buddy focused on local parishes and businessmen in California.[17]

They broke ground on May 1, 1948. Throughout the school's construction Bishop Buddy was "strong, unyielding and pious," ensuring that contractors remained on schedule and met the highest standards.[18] Mother Hill ensured that utility and efficiency of buildings did not come at the expense of beauty, choosing the Spanish Renaissance style.[19]

In 1952, the College of Women hosted its first classes. While construction continued, the first thirty-three female students studied in unheated classrooms and lived in half-built residence halls.[20] However, their education did not suffer during construction. The nuns Mother Hill selected, including four who had received their doctorates, were well prepared, having attended Stanford University, the University of California, and other top schools.[21]

Two years later, the College for Men and the law school opened.[22] Despite Bishop Buddy's fundraising, the College for Men began with fewer resources than the College for Women. Rather than learning from professors, the men received their education from diocesan priests who agreed to teach if the diocese gifted them a portion of land. Bishop Buddy agreed but hoped that the Jesuits would eventually take over. The Jesuits declined.[23] The men's college had no building when it began serving almost 100 students. By 1959 the men's college moved into Serra Hall (today known as Saints Tekakwitha and

USD men's dormitory under construction, 1958. © SDHC #S-4751.

Serra Hall). Both the men's and women's colleges had dress codes, with women required to wear dresses to dinner with heels and nylon stockings.

From the start Bishop Buddy wanted a strong athletics program, hoping to make USD a "Notre Dame of the West."[24] Men and women participated in sports both recreationally and as a requirement, though the early focus remained on supporting men's athletic programs.

Bishop Buddy, a Republican who enjoyed politics, invited Vice President Richard Nixon to visit the school to receive the school's first honorary degree.[25] Following the 1959 visit, Bishop Buddy publicly voiced his support for Nixon in the upcoming presidential election even though this sentiment did not align with that of many San Diego Catholics. During this era the school's grounds and programs expanded: The Immaculata Church opened in 1959, the College of Arts and Sciences in 1960, and the sports center in 1963. Academic offerings and student

enrollment increased as well.[26] Along with traditional subjects, the College of Women added Mexican Studies.[27]

In the early 1960s the Catholic Church relieved Buddy from his post as Bishop of the Diocese of San Diego. In 1964, the Catholic Church named Buddy the "Assistant to the Pontifical Throne," a largely symbolic role with no control over the diocese.[28] Bishop Buddy died two years later on March 6, 1966. Mother Rosalie Hill had died two years prior on December 12, 1964. On November 12th of each year, the University celebrates Founders Day to recognize the "beloved founders, Mother Rosalie Clifton Hill and Bishop Charles Frances Buddy."[29]

Merger and Growth

The university's founders both believed in separate schools for men and women. Mother Hill wanted to keep them separate both because the College for Women handled its money better and because separate instruction aligned with her philosophy of education.[30] The founders succeeded in keeping the colleges separate for twenty years until 1967. Their deaths and the financial needs of the university allowed administrators to consider a merger. Though the Second Vatican Council's 1965 *Declaration on Christian Education* did not explicitly mention or advocate for co-ed education, this declaration was also certainly a contributing factor to the decision to merge the men's and women's colleges.[31] The colleges began merging first by allowing co-ed enrollment in courses at either school, and then administratively in 1969, when the university published its first joint college yearbook.[32] Sister Sally Furay, who received her doctorate from Stanford University, played a major role in what became a

complicated and, at times, contested merger.[33]

In 1971, out of over 230 applications the university administration selected Author "Art" E. Hughes to become president of the College for Women.[34] He oversaw the merger in 1972, and with the help of Sister Furay as provost, put the school on solid financial ground.[35] One of the primary challenges was the financial differences between the schools, with the College for Men and law schools carrying a deficit while the College for Women had maintained a balanced budget. That same year Mrs. Helen Copley donated the funds for the Copley library to support the growing needs of the students. Mrs. Copley was the owner of the *San Diego Tribune* and *Evening Tribune*. In the 1970s, the School of Nursing and Education opened.

Enrollment grew and building construction and renovations continued throughout the 1980s.[38] Mother Teresa visited on May 31, 1988 to receive an honorary doctorate and speak to a crowd of over 6,000 in the USD stadium, advocating against abortion and for charity and care for children in need.[39] In 1995, Dr. Alice B. Hayes became president. Hayes is remembered for fundraising, facilitating the construction of many new buildings on USD's campus, hiring more professors, and outfitting the university with technology.[40] During her tenure, the school hosted the final Clinton-Dole presidential debate and the men's basketball conference championships, both in 1996. USD won this tournament![41]

Dr. Mary E. Lyons served as USD president from 2003 to 2015, during which time the university grew—earning designation as an Ashoka Changemaker campus, committed to advocating for social change throughout the university. During this time, Joan B. Kroc donated

funds to start an Institute for Peace and Justice as well as a School of Peace Studies. During Lyon's tenure USD hosted the Dalai Lama and established the Shiley-Marcos School of Engineering.[42] USD's current president, James T. Harris III, DEd, succeeded Dr. Lyons in 2015.[43] He oversaw construction of the Beyster Institute for Nursing Research, a new Student Learning Commons building, a tennis facility, a student recreation center and basketball practice arena, a new Business School building, and renovations to Olin Hall, Founders Hall, the library, and many residential structures and classrooms.[44]

Over the years, the University of San Diego has hosted four student papers: *The Paper* (1958), *The Pioneer* (1959-1960), *The News* (1962), and *The USD Vista* (1965-present). These papers tend to focus on sports, student achievement, and opinion pieces relevant to their respective time. More recently they have come to discuss trending pop-culture events and occasionally publish articles focusing on contentious topics on campus.

LIMITATIONS AND UNANSWERED QUESTIONS

This official overview offers a fairly accurate, if incomplete, rendition of the university's history. Any institution or brand that uses its heritage to attract customers will provide a version of its past streamlined and fit for consumption. The curated version offers a pristine rendition, even though it largely lacks context, texture, emotion, and human interest. Only the merger and allusions to some financial challenges point to any difficulties.

These historical accounts are limited in part by the available sources, mostly hagiographies about the school's founders. Perhaps unsurprising for a Catholic school

founded by a bishop and well-respected nun, these sources focus on the founders as saint-like figures, even if somewhat flawed, rather than on the students, for whom the founders created the institutions. The school website, like the university-published books, focuses predominantly on the founders' activities, institutional changes (the merger and presidential turnovers), the construction of new buildings and programs, and sports victories. We found almost nothing about student accomplishments (other than athletics) or faculty research contributions.

Student life over the years also felt mysterious. The school newspapers offer some insight into student cultures but seem similarly curated. Like the school's Instagram feed today, the papers shared a snapshot of what students felt was relevant to discuss at a given time, but still reflected the culture the school wished to promote. Similarly, the yearbooks, financed by the school, fit the image the school wished to portray. These sources serve a specific purpose and have an intended audience so they cannot be expected to give a holistic view of the school or campus culture. These official histories left unanswered such questions as:

- From whom did USD acquire the land upon which the university now resides?
- How and why did the nuns teaching in the College for Women obtain PhDs from such prestigious universities whereas the male students received education from priests?
- What did Bishop Buddy do (or fail to do) that led to his removal as bishop?
- Did the two Colleges attract the same kinds of students?

- How often, and in what contexts, did the men and women students interact (if at all)?

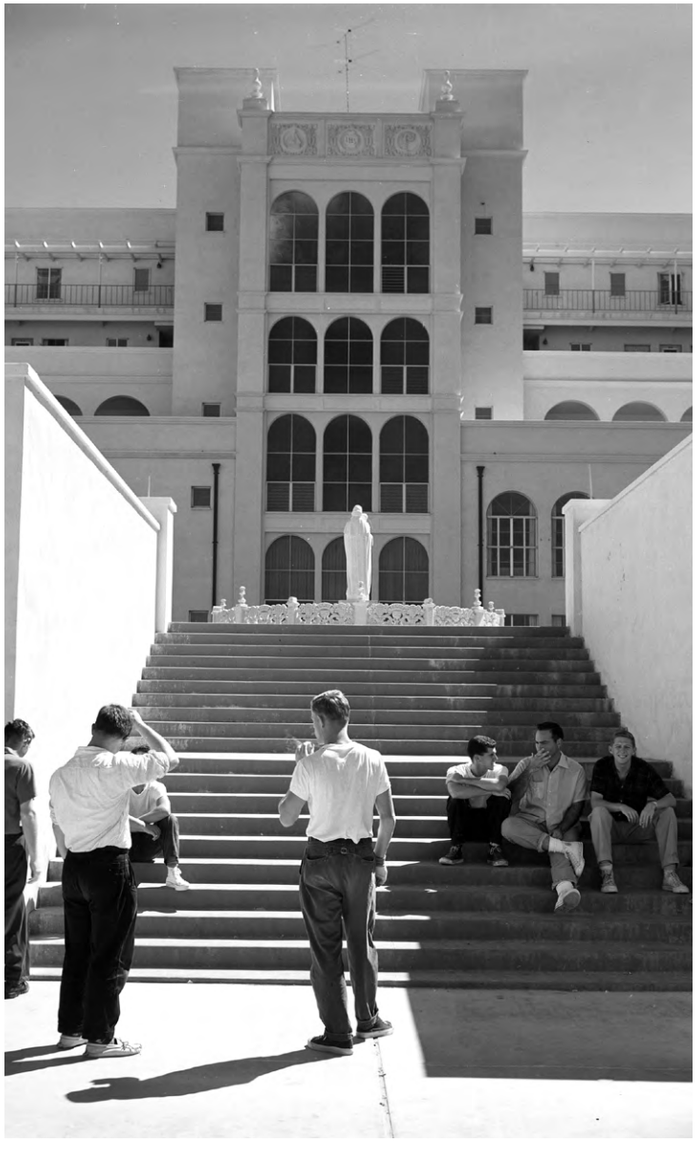
The oral history research below humanizes the individuals who made up the institution and expands other stories, experiences, and relationships that matter.

FORGOTTEN STORIES: ORAL HISTORIES & ARCHIVAL DOCUMENTS

This section uses oral histories and other archival sources to elaborate on the school's origin story. The importance of Mother Rosalie Hill's leadership, for example, became more apparent as our research advanced. First, Mother Hill chose the land. She visited the land Bishop Buddy selected for the school and determined it would be too small and uninspiring. Hill told Bishop Buddy that she wanted beauty and views of the ocean and asked about the land where the university now stands. Bishop Buddy said that unfortunately the government owned this land. Undeterred, Mother Hill encouraged him to look into it anyway, so he did and they secured the property.[45]

In addition to determining the location (and architectural design of the campus), Mother Hill secured $4 million in loans to start the College for Women (about $65 million in today's dollars). Roughly $2.5 million came from her religious order and another $1.5 million from Bank of America.[46] She immediately began collecting books for future students.

In addition to their religious education, Mother Rosalie Hill made sure that the nuns teaching in the College for Women received PhDs from the most prestigious universities on the West Coast.[48] The Catholic Church discouraged nuns from pursuing further education at non-



University of San Diego Immaculate Heart Seminary building, 1958.
© SDHC #S-4763.

Catholic schools, but Mother Rosalie Hill bucked at this constraint. She refused to send her nuns to the University of San Francisco, because while Catholic, it lacked the rigor of other California schools like Stanford University, the University of California (Berkeley and others), Catholic University of America, St. Louis University, and other institutions of a similarly high caliber.[49] Throughout the 1930s and '40s, Mother Hill sent her nuns to receive their doctorates at these top schools so they could teach at the College for Women along with the other three institutions for higher learning she built over the years.[50] The female students benefited from the robust education of their professors, who were then among the most highly educated women in the country.

While today we associate educational acumen with mobility, Mother Hill's nuns remained cloistered on campus. Sister Furay recalls, "We all lived on campus and didn't leave the campus. You know we didn't go down to the post office to mail a letter. You waited until the postman came and got it."[51] The nuns expected this, but to many lay faculty (whose numbers increased over time) the customs associated with cloistered life felt extreme. The nuns expected all women faculty, for example, to work incredibly long hours and did not recognize the need to offer medical or maternity leave, days off, or other benefits.[52]

College for Men vs. College for Women

Though today's university cites the school's founding as 1949, the College for Women did not officially open until October 1952 and the College for Men two years later. The Korean War prevented access to the building materials needed for both colleges. Mother Hill's fundraising

savvy, understanding of architectural design, and high educational standards resulted in the College for Women opening more quickly, offering better education, and proving more financially solvent than the College for Men.

The colleges attracted different kinds of students. The College for Women attracted students from wealthy, often local families, whereas the men came from more working-class families.[54] The College for Men Western College Association Accreditation Report in 1959 noted that 60% of male students admitted in 1958 came in with red flags. The College for Men received 331 applications in 1958 and, of the 121 admitted, 40 students received *provisional* admissions (meaning students had several deficiencies), 21 received *probationary* admissions (meaning students had a C average or less in their prior institution), and another 13 were *provisional on probation*.[55] The College of Women's Accreditation report for that same year made no mention of provisional or probationary admissions.[56]

Monsignor Charles Dollan, a former librarian at the College for Men, described the differences. "The quality of students we attracted at the College for Men," he wrote, "was at the opposite stratum from that at the College for Women. For the first couple of years, almost all of [the male] students were veterans from the Marine Corps or the Navy, using the G.I. Bill of Rights for tuition. Many of them were on academic probation for their first two or three years."[57]

Monsignor Dollan added that Bishop Buddy struggled to find students as well as priests to teach them. As a result, Buddy often resorted to hiring priests who needed a "second chance," meaning they had failed in some way in their prior positions. Some turned out to be terrific and others "lemons."[58] The 1959 accreditation report also expressed some concern about the faculty's ability to teach such a wide range of courses. The course catalog seemed to promise far more subjects than the faculty could cover.[59]

Though Mother Hill and Bishop Buddy believed in separate education, they supported social interaction between the students.[60] Within two weeks from the start of term, the men and women enjoyed a dance organized by the university.[61] Yet because students came from different social and economic backgrounds, many at the school wanted to keep these men and women separated. Some believed that the women would be marrying down if they married students at the College for Men.[62] To provide the women more class-appropriate suitors, the school maintained contact with chaplains in the navy, who helped officers stationed in the city to come socialize with the female students. Sister Furay recalls, "They'd call and say could you put so and so on your list for the next mixer. We had a lot of marriages. Many, many of the young naval officers married the young women."[63] At times, efforts to separate the male and female students became extreme. Bishop Buddy refused to allow the men's theater group to cast anyone from the College for Women in their plays. When they instead cast women from other colleges, Bishop Buddy shut the play down.[64] They even tried other, more subtle structural barriers. Sister Virginia Rodee, '57 BA, '74 MA, recalled the school placing the seminarians in the building next to them (rather than the men from college). She recalled that "we were kinda bummed."[65]

The male and female students found ways to mingle despite the founders' wishes. Sister Rodee recalled

the men coming by every afternoon to hang out in the "Smoker," a room near Camino Hall and Shiley Theatre where they smoked, played bridge, and chatted with the women. The women also organized "tea dances" that welcomed men on campus as well as others in the community. When they wanted more time together, some snuck out.[66] Many couples met this way, and some women married men from campus and off campus.[67] Again, the school did not mind the women dating and coupling up, they just wanted it to be with higher-class men than those that tended to populate the College for Men.[68]

Finding husbands for the female students was highly valued by the school. Despite the impressive pedigree of the women professors and the strong performance of the female students, neither the female students nor their families expected the women to have professional careers. In the 1950s, the College for Women served more like a finishing school where women received an education along with lessons on how to dress and act. Each term began with a fashion show, designed to inform women about proper clothing. The fashion show ended with a bridal dress, further perpetuating the often unspoken understanding that the women's priority after college was marriage and, eventually, motherhood.[69] USD archivist Dr. Maher recalled an administrator at the school collecting clippings about alumni marriages and birth announcements of female students.

Complicated Buddy

Oral histories and other sources enriched our understanding of the College for Women as well as the founder, Bishop Buddy. From the published sources,

Bishop Buddy appeared as a charismatic, albeit eccentric founder. Unpublished sources revealed his reputation for being simultaneously philanthropic and grasping, charming, and unyielding. Archbishop John R. Quinn, a seminarian at the school and later provost, explained that:

> Bishop Buddy became an adult before World War I, so essentially he retained those qualities of a Victorian gentleman. And he was, he was a very thoughtful man and he hated to see anyone humiliated…but he had a very strong will and he would not stand being opposed so there were many sides to him…[H]e would find it difficult to work with boards and things like that.[70]

Richard Phillips, hired by Bishop Buddy, confirmed this assessment, saying that the school's founder was notoriously difficult to work with, which led to high faculty turnover.[71] Years later Phillips could laugh about his frustrations with the bishop. Hired in 1958 as the chairman of the Division of Mathematics and Natural Sciences, Phillips (who did not yet have a PhD), was given one mathematician, a priest, and "half a chemist" with whom to create a department. Bishop Buddy first assigned him the task of designing a science building. With help from consultants, Phillips spent a couple of years working on plans for the building. One day, Bishop Buddy came into his office and opened up a totally different plan stating, "There's your science building." It looked nothing like what Philips and his consultants had designed.

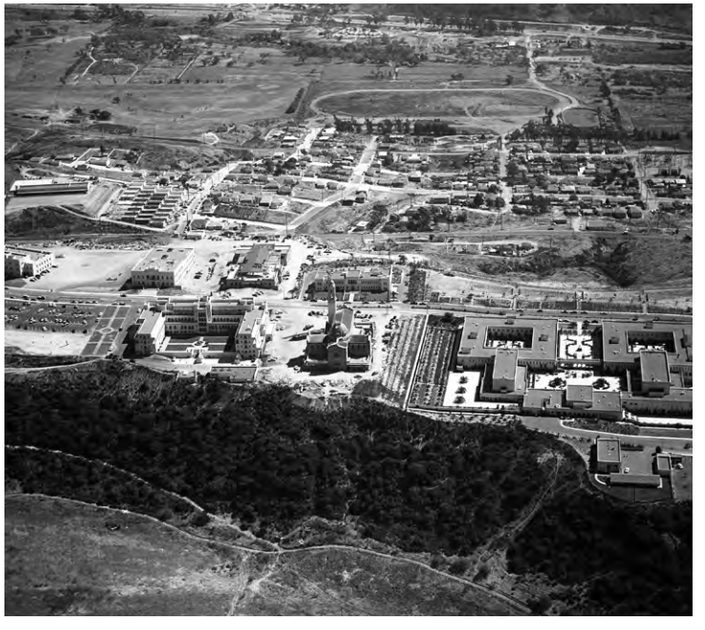
During the construction of this science building (now known as Saints Tekakwitha and Serra Hall), Bishop Buddy allegedly fired the workmen doing the wiring and turned the job over to a group of seminarians. They

would work at night trying to get the electricity sorted out. Being seminarians rather than electricians, they wired the building "backwards" and for years those working in the building struggled to get the electricity to work as it should.[72]

Buddy knew he could not run the school himself but failed to attract the help he needed. He had reached out first to the Jesuits, but once they discovered the level of his continued involvement over their activities and the school's dire financial situation, they walked away from the offer.[73] He then approached the Augustinians, who turned down the request because they said that in the aftermath of the Second World War, they had their hands full with other projects such as the running of Villanova.[74] Bishop Buddy struggled without the support of those who understood universities and who valued higher education.

Bishop Buddy made other mistakes that shocked his administrators and contributed to the lower quality of the College for Men. While Mother Hill ensured that those who taught the women had prestigious doctorates, Bishop Buddy often hired parish priests who had been trained at the Vatican or elsewhere for a few years, but not prepared to teach college-level courses in different subjects. In 1959, the median salary for female professors ($6,400) exceeded that of male professors ($5,400), though the maximum salary for men was 16 percent higher.[75] The College for Women offered sabbaticals in 1959 but no financial support for research. The College for Men offered faculty the opposite: no sabbaticals but some research funding.

His personal and religious values, rather than academic commitments, seemed to drive his decision to have a law



Aerial view of University of San Diego, 1958. © SDHC #S-4745.

school. He added it to ensure more Catholic lawyers in the country.[76] Virginia Rodee, a former student and later assistant vice president for Mission and Ministry at USD, shared that Bishop Buddy also wanted the law school to produce lawyers who could "get things for him."[77] A political man, he could benefit from a legal team.

Bishop Buddy also invested heavily in athletics. His desire to make his university a "Notre Dame of the West" was more about achieving similar athletic prowess rather than academic competence. This affected the College for Men's educational environment. The 1959 Accreditation Report from the Western College Association expressed concern that the development of the athletics department outpaced scholastic growth. The school instituted

a requirement that each student participating in extracurricular activities needed to maintain a C average. Faculty reported on student performance weekly. The report said that this requirement improved academic performance in the College for Men.[78] According to faculty member Phillips, Bishop Buddy made "a wreck of the rules as far as bringing in unqualified students that would be good in the athletic program."[79] Again, we see someone with a commitment to creating a Catholic community without a strong commitment to quality higher education.

In *A Fortress Upon the Hill*, Burt Boudoin describes Buddy as coming to San Diego like a "sheriff" who was "intent to establish law and order," and his likable demeanor helped him achieve this. What about San Diego needing law and order? The parishes, students, residents? How did this approach affect his reputation?

Bishop Buddy's biggest reputational challenges, however, all relate to money, both his approach to fundraising and his use of funds. As soon as he became bishop of San Diego, he became obsessed with funding his dream school. To meet his financial goals, Bishop Buddy asked all of the parishes in San Diego, San Bernardino, Riverside, and Imperial Counties to contribute the entirety of their collections on the fourth Sunday of each month.[81] This deprived each parish of 25 percent of their monthly collections income, which many needed to follow through on projects stalled during the war.[82] Most of the pastors acquiesced, paying Bishop Buddy for many years.[83] This contributed to ill feelings towards the bishop among these Catholic parishes.[84] Perhaps in an effort to mitigate these negative feelings, Bishop Buddy later allowed children from these parishes to attend USD at a reduced cost.[85]

At the time, only a group of Franciscans in Old Town San Diego pushed back. The Franciscans told Bishop Buddy that their mostly poor, Mexican parishioners could not bear the burden of funding this school. In response Bishop Buddy pushed them out of San Diego. They retreated to Oceanside where they had a strong base and where they resided until recently. He wanted the Franciscans out of the diocese altogether, but they had been in San Diego long before the diocese, so he only succeeded in sending them north.[86]

Administrators, faculty, and staff questioned Buddy's use of the money he acquired. He "bribed" male students by hosting fancy, catered dinners on the rooftop of his home for those that attended mass. Additionally, the campus had an excess of gardeners because Buddy granted a job to anyone who asked him for one.[87] Dr. Sister Agnes Murphy, who taught philosophy and history, both admired and questioned his use of funds: "He was a great man. Suddenly, I found out he was giving a female student $20.00 a month, which back then wasn't a small sum. Just to take care of herself and her kids [because] she was divorced; she had two at that time."[88] The Bishop regularly handed out money to students who could not afford their education or living expenses. This contributed to a campus with diverse socioeconomic backgrounds, but slowly contributed to the school's financial struggles.[89] Monsignor Charles Dollan recalled, "Bishop Buddy was very Republican in his politics, but he spent money like a New Deal Democrat, mostly borrowed. He expected all the works he established to become self-supporting, and

when the realization came to him the University couldn't be simply run on tuition and contributed services, it was a great blow.[90] He could not adapt to the realities of running a university.

One of his most serious blunders involved spending the entire College for Men endowment to cover debts. Those who work with endowments know the dangers of dipping into these funds directly. Endowments are meant to serve the institution for decades to come. Spending the endowment hurts not only the school but chances for future gifts. Eventually, administrators quietly pushed Bishop Buddy out.[91] People debated whether his financial management of the school contributed to his dismissal as bishop as well, though Buddy believed that Irish clergy members' gossip led to his removal.[92]

Bishop Buddy died soon after he lost his bishopric and university position. Mother Hill died shortly after Buddy's ouster in a room in Founders Chapel where the nuns used to live. The nuns opened her doors so that she could see the altar one more time.[93]

We asked USD archivist Dr. Maher whether she thinks that the founders would be happy with today's USD. She said "No." "It would break her heart," she said, if Mother Rosalie Hill knew that the men and women now studied together.[94] Bishop Buddy similarly would be distraught by the co-ed campus. Bishop Buddy even wanted men separated from men. In most athletic facilities of that time, men and women used large group showers. Bishop Buddy required that his school construct individual stalls.[95] Their deaths marked the end of the school's first chapter and soon the gender separation.

Both colleges admitted students regardless of ethnicity,

University of San Diego School of Theology, 1958. © SDHC #S-4758.

class, or religion from their inception. To ensure equality, the College for Men application lacked any identifying background questions.[96] Early yearbooks show proud, educated Black women excelling while segregation still existed in much of the country. In the late 1960s, Black students joined together to become a source of support for one another. In 1969, students formed a Black Student Union (BSU). William Miller, BSU Chairman, explained the need: "Black people have problems that rise from our very being black, problems that we live with 24 hours of every day."[97] In 1970, the BSU organized a "Black is Beautiful" week with speakers, a soul food dinner, and a fashion show.[98]

1972 Merger: Behind the Scenes

The death of the founders gave administrators space to merge the colleges, which they felt needed to happen for financial reasons. Official USD historical narratives refer to the merger as a challenging, albeit critical time for the school. Oral histories and other archival documents offered more details about these merger-related conflicts and the reason for the merger at all.

In 1976, Mary Bridget Flaherty of the Religieuses du Sacré-Coeur de Jésus published a piece about the school's merger called, *University of San Diego: Its Evolution*. Flaherty worked as the chief financial officer of the College for Women and later the treasurer and associate business manager of USD. In 1985 she became chancellor of the San Francisco Archdiocese. (This established her as the first woman chancellor of a Roman Catholic Archdiocese).[99]

Flaherty attributes the merger in part to the larger social shift away from single-sex education in the 1960s, reflecting a national desegregation of race and sex across the United States. She writes, "Co-education became the socially acceptable order-of-the-day."[100] She noted some pragmatic reasons as well, such as the increasing cost of the technologies needed to educate students (in labs, etc.). Sharing resources made more sense than having two sets of everything. To compete with the increasing number of college students, the university needed to expand its offerings, which it could not do as effectively as separate colleges.

The merger began softly in September 1967 when roughly 200 upper division men and women in good academic standing could take classes together. This

meant not only an opportunity to study together but also to explore new subjects. Now, women could study accounting and business and men could study library science, the fine arts, and Italian.[101] The program thrived: the next academic year, the number of participating students more than doubled to 500. In 1969, the schools began combining services such as dining, admissions, financial aid, and maintenance. University-wide positions became available, though each college retained its own board of trustees. The administrative merging occurred more smoothly than the academic unification. Mary Bridget Flaherty wrote, "While non-academic unification was taking place on an administrative plane, the faculties, on the grass-roots level, were hammering out the academic matters—and often as not—hammering at each other."[102]

Why were they hammering at each other? Flaherty pointed to conceptual differences and a tendency to cling to the *status quo*. There were other reasons. First, the College for Men wanted the merger; the College for Women did not. Secondly, Sister Furay said the women were concerned about losing support from the Vatican: "We might have agreed to [the merger] but we were approved by Rome to teach women. Our approval within the Church was to teach women."[103] Unifying the colleges would make this a free-standing Catholic university, no longer under direct religious control.[104] Beyond this, the College for Women had higher academic standards, better students and faculty, and more financial stability. Managing their own finances spared them from Bishop Buddy's mistakes. The women hesitated to take on the debts held by the College for Men.

Political science professor Gilbert Oddo, who worked at the university at the time of the merger, saw other sources of resistance, explaining that "the College for Women of course was always elitist, and believed in the education of women, and enrolled the women and believed that women could be and would be submerged if they were educated alongside the men."[105] The College for Women administrators, he said, "in a sense looked down their noses at the College for Men for being inferior academically and for having priests who were not really educated."[106] That may be true, though the concern that male students would come to dominate women's classes turned out to be legitimate. According to Sister Margaret Guest, "I noticed a big difference in the women's behavior when the men moved into classes...people who had real material for leadership were just taking a backseat because the men were there."[107]

As the College for Women continued to refuse the merger, the men prepared to go co-ed on their own.[108] Eventually, however, the financial survival of the entire institution convinced both schools to join together.[109] The clerical faculty decreased significantly after the merger. Priests who wanted to teach now needed a doctorate. Oddo credited students with doing a fair bit of the heavy lifting, finding a way to merge the student governments. The administrations did need to work together to address some pragmatic challenges. Former administrator Sister Annette Bourret recalls arguments over the admissions standards.[110] Administrators needed to decide whether the co-ed university standards would be more akin to those previously held in the College for Women or the College for Men. In 1970, the Joint-Committee on Academic Standards worked out the details.[111] Within a year they figured out graduation requirements, add/drop regulations, attendance policies, and other details. Flaherty believed that the creation of a single faculty senate proved the most important feat in creating a unified institution. One faculty member summarized it this way: "First we learned to talk together, then we learned to fight together, and finally we learned to pull together."[112] A shared faculty dining room and happy hours helped deepen these relationships.

After the Merger

Author "Art" E. Hughes succeeded Bishop Buddy as president of the now merged University of San Diego. Hughes, alongside Provost Sister Sally Furay, continued expanding the school and cleaning up its finances. As the school grew and USD administrators sought financial stability, the institution developed more of a corporate culture. The nuns no longer lived on campus, lessening the connection between teachers and students.

After the merger, the school tended to reflect the temper of the times.[113] During the Reagan Administration Professor Sister Agnes Murphy noticed male and even female students focusing more on their grades; in earlier decades, many female students focused on marriage and anticipated a life of leisure. By the 1980s more of the female students needed to get jobs soon after graduation. Of course, some students continued to party instead of study. Some justified this decision, she said, by declaring this "as a hopeless world." She offered as an example her great nephews who required an extra year of school because they partied more than studied.[114] Students

were not often politically active, as psychology professor Dr. Mary Jane Watson noted in 1989: "Sometimes you'd kind of like them to have a cause. But they just kind of go with the flow as long as there is a beach there."[115] A student who attended the law school just after the Second World War even noted that law students "didn't pay any attention to Civil Rights Movements."[116] The two exceptions to this observation were student protests after the bombing of Cambodia and in 1996 when USD hosted the final Clinton-Dole presidential debate and some students inscribed the name of business magnate and popular third-party candidate Ross Perot into the shrubbery on a hill on campus.[117]

Academic programming similarly followed trends in US culture and academia. For example, the ethnic studies program was closed in the 1980s and only reestablish in the early 1990s, perhaps reflecting the culture wars of the Reagan era. Though students of color have attended the school since its founding, over the past several decades campus diversity of USD student and faculty populations increased while the curriculum and culture became less Catholic.

That said, the diocese continued to exert power within the university during these years. Most Rev. Leo Thomas Maher, Diocese of San Diego in California (1969–1990), maintained significant influence over the university as USD's chairman of the board of trustees for 18 years (1972-1990). In 1986, we saw an expression of that influence in what became known as "the Copley affair."

The Copley Affair

On March 7, 1986, Helen Copley, longtime USD trustee,

stepped down as vice chairman of the USD board.[118] Why did Copley, the Catholic, multi-millionaire, and then-publisher of Copley Press (owner of the *San Diego Union Tribune* and many other newspapers in California and Illinois) back away from a university she had built over fifteen years? Because Most Rev. Leo T. Maher and other priests pressured Copley to step down after the *Tribune* ran a series of articles about financial mismanagement, nepotism, cocaine use, and sexuality within the San Diego diocese.[119] Some interpreted these articles as indications of her disloyalty to the Church. Copley faced retribution even though as publisher she did not produce articles herself, and other local papers had reported these issues before the *Tribune*.[120] Today every student enters the Copley library – we hope more than once – named in honor of the Copley family. Today students also make use of Maher Hall, named after her co-board member who took formal steps to ensure her removal. The university continues to benefit from Copley's contribution far beyond the library; she led a $15 million campaign drive, contributing $1.5 million from her family fund (the first ever seven figure gift to the university), which funded building expansions in 1982.[121] Helen Copley died in 2004. Maher passed away in 1991 at age 75. His obituary in *The New York Times* makes no mention of his role at USD.[122]

NEW QUESTIONS

The additional findings recounted above enrich the school's origin story. We still, however, have unanswered questions relevant to conversations happening on today's campus around the themes of land, trauma, and campus culture.

Land: What is the history of the land that the school

currently resides on? *Before* Bishop Buddy and Mother Rosalie Hill purchased the land, how and when was it taken from the Indigenous population, the Kumeyaay? How might that history frame how faculty, students, and staff engage with the land, and the descendants of people displaced, together? Additionally, some of our interviews hinted at the possibility of prior Japanese American ownership of the land before it was owned by the US government. This raises additional research possibilities. How did this land become federal property? What became of the prior owners?

Trauma: Today, like many universities, USD strives to offer students a safe, inclusive space to pursue their higher education. To this end, the school offers sexual assault training and services to those who experience harm. Though sexual assault is known to be prevalent on college campuses, we never discovered what, if any, violence existed on campus, especially in terms of sexual assault. [123] Did the merger of the men's and women's colleges impact gender-based violence on campus and how the newly merged administrations may have managed such cases?

Additionally, people understood comparatively less about post-war trauma during the 1950s and 60s than we do today. We wonder how Korean War veterans in the College for Men grappled with their war experience. Did they struggle in their studies or in their relationships? The College for Men offered an extensive counseling program, through which each student selected a personal-social counselor. The low faculty-student ratio (11:1) in the early days likely offered increased opportunities for mentorship and support.[124] We do not know what students struggled with or the advice given to handle those struggles, but

we do know that the development of the total person was a focus for men's education. This message came from the top and permeated all of the programs. Students came to learn to be good men, not just learned men. For example, the business faculty taught students that "honesty, responsibility and self-expression are a businessman's greatest assets."[125] Behavior mattered. How this guidance helped war vets we cannot be sure. Recent studies have found that veterans who have returned from duty, including those attending college or university, perpetuate intimate partner violence and aggression at higher rates than civilian populations.[126] We cannot know if this was an issue on campus and can only hope that this moral education provided needed guidance.

Instructors: We wanted to know more about the priests teaching in the College for Men. Bishop Buddy struggled to find teachers for these male students, so he hired priests who needed a "second chance." Whether they become compromised in their prior posts because of financial mismanagement, alcohol usage, sexual abuse, or any other infractions remains a mystery.

As of the writing of this article, the Roman Catholic Diocese of San Diego worries about surviving lawsuits from over 400 litigants claiming sexual abuses by clergy in the past decades.[127] Did Bishop Buddy hire clergy who needed a "second chance" because of sexual abuse allegations? He was the bishop of the Roman Catholic Diocese in San Diego when some of these incidents occurred. How did he respond at the time? These questions remain.

USD Culture: Outside observers may get the impression that today's undergraduates enjoy a campus

experience much like the curated version found in past yearbooks. The University of San Diego, rated the Most Beautiful Campus by the Princeton Review in 2023, remains a pristine environment in which students, unlike at many campuses, rarely read on the grass or sit together outside in groups, despite the relatively warm California weather. We wondered about this, but since neither of us attended the school as an undergraduate, we reached out to some current students and those working with them to better understand today's campus culture. The university funds periodic play, with jumping castles, popcorn, and bubble machines. These initiatives can give the campus a cruise-ship feel, reassuring parents and attractive to prospective students. We wonder, however, whether this environment, focusing on safety and fun, infantilizes young adults while they develop their intellectual traits and capacities that will guide their adult lives. How much may this, and other aspects of campus life, be connected to either the school's history, proximity to the beach, student and faculty demographics, the Catholic Church, or changing American culture?

Even faculty life looks idyllic from the outside, and in many ways one could argue it still is. Yet some aspects of the past we may mourn. In its early years, the College for Men faculty enjoyed lunch together, which members said fostered a "family atmosphere" in which faculty could discuss problems, find solutions, and generate new ideas. A "healthy spirit of cooperation" emerged.[128] Today a much larger campus makes this more challenging, as does the advent of remote work. Since those early days, the desirability of San Diego as a region has only increased, driving up the cost of living. Faculty, staff, and students

struggle to find housing, making it difficult for many to commit to the region long-term.

CONCLUSION

The maintenance team keeps the University of San Diego's campus so clean and well landscaped we can forget how many people have called this institution home since the 1950s. Alumni, the sisters of the Sacred Heart, and other community members have advocated most for the preservation of the school's history. Community members, rather than the administration, raised the funds for a statue of Bishop Buddy in front of the Immaculata, a building named for Mother Hill, and scholarship funds in the founders' names. We could not find who advocated for the "Mother Hill Reading Room" in Copley library. Some historical facts remain nestled into memories of various USD community members. We learned, for example, about a few stained glass windows in the Immaculata that came from Bishop Buddy's home. In sum, outsiders with connections to Mother Hill and Bishop Buddy initiated most tributes to the founders. That is why we found this subject so important and compelling.

We want this article to encourage current USD faculty, staff, and students to poke into our history. The USD archives provided the foundation for this study, without which we would not have been able to frame and guide our interviews and desk research. Archivist Diane Maher pointed us to far more documents than we could review. University archives can be the basis for further studies that help us better understand academic, cultural, and extra-institutional change over time. Findings could support current university initiatives, goals, and programs,

while offering opportunities to rethink strategic direction. Additionally, we hope that future researchers will conduct and record interviews. Without the transcribed oral histories, we would not have known that the buildings themselves have charming stories, like Sister Rodee throwing books out the library window onto a patio to sneak them out to study before the school allowed students to check them out.[129] With more research the history might be more integrated into the present. Today's campus tours, for example, might mention the founders or say something about the school's history. While the USD website recognizes November 12 as "Founders Day," we remain unclear how, if at all, any school history emerges on this day.

The temptation may be to convert findings into marketable histories. We understand the importance of crafting histories that will be attractive to prospective students and donors. That said, a history too sanitized does not ring true and can seem like an attempt to dissuade people from asking questions. Isn't that what students come to learn to do? Asking whether campus life was idyllic for students over all these decades creates opportunities to reflect on what is working and not working on campus today. Furthermore, the University's new vision statement calls upon today's USD community to "confront humanity's challenges."[130] Understanding the past helps us gain perspective on, and better respond to, these challenges. Furthermore, if we cannot look honestly at past decisions—ones in which we had no say—how can we expect to do so in the present?

At the very least more research about the university's history will add to the rather staid timelines and

hagiographies that currently recount the past. We hope that more student experiences will become part of any future telling. Conducting oral histories allowed us to contribute to a richer, more humanized, authentic, and relatable history to understand the people that gave the university its life. Yet we know that we only scratched the surface. More interviews are needed to better understand the University of San Diego and how it connects to the history of San Diego more broadly.

This work need not be done alone. In the 1980s, students in a history class on campus conducted oral histories with faculty and staff, which proved invaluable for our research. We recommend a recurring history of USD class to enliven the school's culture, foster greater community, and better remember the legacy and contributions of those individuals who came before us. Students could dig through school newspapers all available online to help us better understand ourselves today as well as how the university transformed from a campus with co-ed dances organized by cloistered nuns and priests to one with student-organized drag shows. That is quite a transformation in just seventy-five years.

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NOTES

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BOOK REVIEWS

OCTOPUS'S GARDEN: HOW RAILROADS AND CITRUS TRANSFORMED SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA. BY BENJAMIN T. JENKINS. LAWRENCE, KS: UNIVERSITY PRESS OF KANSAS, 2023. ILLUSTRATIONS, MAPS, BIBLIOGRAPHY, AND INDEX. XII +358 PP. $54.99 CLOTH. $54.99 E-BOOK.
Reviewed by Kimberly Ussery, MFA Creative Writing, University of California, Riverside.

Octopus's Garden: How Railroads and Citrus Transformed Southern California, by Benjamin T. Jenkins, documents how the railroads and citrus agribusiness shaped Southern California's economy and culture. He discusses how these industries created Southern California mythology through fruit crate labels, advertisements, and citrus expositions, showing that oranges became the true gold of the Golden State. Organized chronologically, the chapters weave together the histories of railroads and citrus agriculture. Jenkins contributes to the historical literature by showing how the collaboration between the railroads and growers differs from the typical "Southern Pacific Octopus" tales of railroad greed. He also reveals how selling the Southern California lifestyle—while hiding the ugly parts—has been practiced since the nineteenth century.

The humble origin story of Southern California's Orange Empire began with two navel orange trees brought to Riverside by Eliza and Luther Tibbets. In 1870,

a missionary in Brazil sent twelve grafted trees of the Bahia navel orange to the US Department of Agriculture (USDA). William Saunders, head of the USDA, was friends with Eliza Tibbets and in 1873 gave her two Bahia navel orange trees to try in the warm, arid conditions of Riverside. The seedless orange trees thrived and were renamed "Washington navels" to sound American. These two trees provided the cuttings from which all the Washington navels in California descended, and one of these original trees still grows in Riverside. In 1870, the California orange crop revolved around the summer-ripening Valencia orange, which came from Spain and was grown at the California missions. The introduction of the winter-ripening Washington navel orange, and the support of the Santa Fe and Southern Pacific railroads, allowed California to dominate the global citrus industry. In 1870, there were 30,000 orange trees in California. By 1920, there were 10 million.

Octopus's Garden shows that the Orange Empire could not have prospered without the railroads. Citrus growers benefitted from competition between the Southern Pacific and the Santa Fe. These companies laid tracks to the orange groves, and citrus cooperatives like Sunkist built packing houses on the main lines. By 1887, refrigerated railway cars were dedicated to citrus, and California growers could export oranges to the Atlantic seaboard at cheaper rates than Florida growers could. Enjoying oranges from California affirmed Americans' social status in the Gilded Age. This occurred not only because of availability but also advertising campaigns.

Jenkins analyzes citrus crate labels and the roles they played in the public relations of both the railroads

and citrus companies. Growers hired graphic artists to make crate labels so that California oranges and lemons stood out from citrus products grown in Florida and Italy. The labels idealized California's landscapes and its romantic rancho-mission history. In addition, the railroads sponsored citrus displays at expositions across the nation. Towers and landmarks were constructed out of oranges. Southern Pacific staged a "California on Wheels" campaign, and railway cars displaying citrus, nuts, and wines traveled across the United States. Railroad-sponsored magazines such as Sunset carried advertisements for Southern California. Invisible in all this boosterism were racial problems that plagued the state and citriculture. Jenkins examines the contrast between the white landowners who reaped profits and the mostly Chinese, Japanese, and Mexican immigrant workers who received meager wages for fieldwork, picking, and packing.

The collaboration between citrus growers and the railroads shaped land development in Southern California. Railroad lines were built to serve the citrus groves, and communities such as Redlands developed. Railroad and citrus barons pressured both the federal and state governments to supply irrigation through water projects. Telegraph lines followed the railroad tracks, and hydroelectricity followed the dams. In 1895, Riverside, the heart of the Orange Empire, was the wealthiest city per capita in the nation. The orange belt spread to Pasadena, Los Angeles, the San Gabriel Valley, and Orange County. Citrus production extended south to San Diego and north to Santa Barbara, with lemons particularly important to those two locales.

However, growing citrus was different from traditional farming. Jenkins calls the groves "industrialized botanical factories." Landowners, typically wealthy easterners, embraced a scientific attitude towards farming. In 1907, they lobbied the California government for a Citrus Experiment Station (which became UC Riverside in 1959). The citrus pest called cottony cushion scale was controlled by scientifically managing the groves. Experiments established picking and handling protocols to reduce decay and demonstrated the need for refrigerated boxcars.

Octopus's Garden follows the Orange Empire from its beginning to its demise in the 1950s, a collapse that resulted from a combination of several factors. First, wartime and postwar production across the Southland had drawn workers away from agriculture and into higher paying jobs with aviation and steel companies. To meet the housing demands of the population boom, developers constructed suburban tracts and freeways on former agricultural land. In addition, the popularity of the automobile diminished the power and profitability of the railroads. The final blow was a disease called "quick decline" which swept through the groves and killed orange and lemon trees. Scientists were unable to develop resistant varieties until the 1960s.

The last chapter, "Remembering the Octopus's Garden," is a gift for the history lover. Jenkins lists and describes all the railroad museums, citrus museums, and murals throughout Southern California that include exhibits related to the Orange Empire so readers can take their new knowledge into the field—or grove.

WAIKIKI DREAMS: HOW CALIFORNIA APPROPRIATED HAWAIIAN BEACH CULTURE. BY PATRICK MOSER. URBANA, IL: UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS PRESS, 2024. ILLUSTRATIONS, NOTES, BIBLIOGRAPHY, AND INDEX. XI + 299 PP. $125.00 CLOTH. $27.95 PAPER.
Reviewed by Ben Cater, Assistant Professor, Department of History, Point Loma Nazarene University.

Patrick Moser throws serious shade on sunny California beach culture by arguing that its creation depended on aspects of settler colonialism, especially cultural appropriation. Tearing natives away from their ancestral homelands while co-opting indigenous knowledge has been a California tradition since the Spanish period, but by the 1930s Western imperialism manifested in the embrace of an idealized Hawaiian culture that ignored "substantive relationships with Native Hawaiians" (p. 3). Rather than societal borrowing and footnoting, Californians committed acts of racialized plagiarism intended to foster a mythic version of Waikiki in their state.

Which Californians? Five key individuals ("The Builders") leveraged developments in the 1920s (coastal engineering projects, Hollywood's production of South Seas movies, etc.) to transport Hawaiian culture to Southern California. Tom Blake ("The Dreamer") moved from Wisconsin to Los Angeles with dreams of emulating and ultimately replacing Duke Kahanamoku, a Hawaii-born Olympic swimmer and surfer. After Duke and his friends raced paddleboards in Waikiki, Blake mass-produced a "Beach Boy" model, replete with a decal resembling Duke

and endorsed (at least in word) by actual beachboys. In California, Blake became synonymous with surfing and turned a tidy profit while Waikiki beachboys struggled to get by. Here and in other cases, Moser writes, "we witness … a campaign that appropriates Hawaii not just in name and imagery, but the identity of Hawaiians themselves" (p. 58).

John Heath "Doc" Ball ("The Photographer") documented California's early beach culture in photographs he published in *California Surfriders* (1946), *Life* magazine, and *National Geographic*. Images revealed surfers riding waves at Palos Verdes' Bluff Cove, which they dubbed "Little Waikiki" on boards with their names carved onto them, copying a beachboy tradition. While Ball failed to reference Hawaii or Duke, he highlighted unique elements of Southern California's hybrid beach culture, including "homemade surfboards, self-stitched trunks, modified cars, [and] old tires to burn on the beach" (p. 62). Moser dubs Pete Peterson "The Waterman" for his beachboy-like omnicompetence as a lifeguard, surfing, paddling, canoeing, rescuing swimmers, and innovating lifesaving gear that made Santa Monica beaches safe for Depression-weary Americans.

While surfing remained a male-dominated sport through the 1930s, women like Mary Ann Hawkins ("The Waterwoman") surfed tandem with men like Gene "Tarzan" Smith, who observed Waikiki beachboys take female tourists out to surf. Hawkins and her friends formed surf and paddleboard clubs that hosted luaus at San Onofre beach, played Hawaiian music at club gatherings, and sprinkled their letters and daily language with Hawaiian words. At the Pasadena Rose Parade in 1938, they designed and participated in the "Little Waikiki Float"

since, in the words of Moser, they wanted to "play the part of people whom they romanticized and exoticized" (p. 121). In similar fashion, Lorrin "Whitey" Harrison ("The Traveler") served as an understudy to Waikiki beachboys through his incessant travel in California to find waves like those of Waikiki, as well as in building his own surfboards, canoes, boats, lobster traps, and bathing suits. "Much of what Harrison fabricated was inspired by his formative experiences at Waikiki, and the life of simplicity that he associated with the Hawaiian beachboys, much like his friend Tom Blake" (p. 141).

The second part of *Waikiki Dreams* examines beaches that hosted Californians' racialized fantasies. At Bluff Cove, the Palos Verdes Surfing Club moved "tons of dirt, rock, and sand . . . in a communal effort to realize their Hawaiian dreams" (p. 146). To white prospective homeowners from the Midwest, the Palos Verdes Homes Association touted its Waikiki vibes, as well as its exclusion of racial minorities. At San Onofre, "being white was essentially a base requirement for membership in the San Onofre Surfing Club," even though surfers engaged in the Waikiki pastime of playing volleyball when the surf was flat (p. 180). At Malibu, beachgoers yearned for perfect tans, which formed a more sinister attempt to "appropriate indigenous identity than merely adopting native dress or customs" (p. 189).

Moser concludes *Waikiki Dreams* by exploring the writing of surf history in the 1930s and why the decade gave way to a new era of surf culture. Tom Blake's *Hawaiian Surfboard* (1935) idealized Hawaiian society while portraying the author as the savior of surfing after its near disappearance in the nineteenth century. More broadly, it

provided a "blanket justification for appropriating cultural traditions and assuming political control of the land and its people" (p. 215). After the end of the Second World War and especially after Hawaiian statehood in 1959, Waikiki faded as California's aerospace industry supplied beachgoers with foam, fiberglass, and petrochemicals for surfboards, wetsuits, leashes, and surf wax—the makings of a distinctively modern mainland surf culture.

Moser admits that early California surfers "would not have interpreted their actions this way," but he rightly examines the overlooked invidious origins of California's surf industrial complex (p. 8). Well-argued, nicely written, and deeply insightful, Waikiki *Dreams* will appeal to popular and academic readers alike.

AT HOME IN THE WORLD: CALIFORNIA WOMEN AND THE POSTWAR ENVIRONMENTAL MOVEMENT.
BY KATHLEEN A. CAIRNS. LINCOLN, NE: UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA PRESS, 2021. ILLUSTRATIONS, NOTES, BIBLIOGRAPHY, AND INDEX. XIII + 199 PP. $21.95 PAPER.
Reviewed by Julie M. Walke, author of *Imperial Beach, California: A Pictorial History*.

Kathleen Cairns introduces the women who have made an enduring contribution to modern environmentalism. Like all trailblazers of grassroots movements, these women faced the strong headwinds of unwelcoming business leaders and opposing political operatives. They were relentless in their strategies to accomplish some of the most long-lasting environmental achievements in California's history.

Significant to California is the history of three East Bay housewives, Sylvia McLaughlin, Catherine Kerr, and Esther Gulick, who launched a movement called Saving the San Francisco Bay in 1960. At the time when California became a state in 1850, the San Francisco Bay spanned nearly seven hundred square miles and teemed with wildlife. By the 1950s, it had lost nearly a third of its area, much of the wildlife, and 90 percent of its wetlands. In 1959 the Army Corps of Engineers predicted that, by 2020, the bay could become little more than a narrow river or shipping channel and that there would be contiguous development throughout the Bay Area. The "Save the Bay" founders (dressed in twin sets and pearls) attended all Berkeley City Council and Berkeley

Planning Department meetings, leaned on journalists, expanded their membership to include prominent people, ramped up pressure on public officials, and organized car caravans from the Bay Area to Sacramento to show support at government hearings. Eight years into their unwavering efforts, California Governor Ronald Regan signed legislation that gave permanence to the Bay Conservation Development Commission. McLaughlin, Kerr, and Gulick never realized that it would take decades to accomplish their goals, but, to their credit, they never stopped fighting. Today, the bay is approximately 150 square miles larger than in 1961. It is ringed with shoreline parks, including three hundred miles of bike paths and hiking trails. Eastshore Park, with 8.5 miles of shoreline access from Berkeley to Richmond, has been renamed McLaughlin Eastshore State Park.

Cairns powerfully recounts the story of a mighty but diminutive woman named Kathleen Goddard Jones, a local Sierra Club hiking enthusiast who was devastated when Pacific Gas & Electric Company (PG&E) planned to build a nuclear energy plant along an eighteen-mile stretch of coastal dunes in San Luis Obispo County. Jones was in her mid-fifties in 1963 when she embarked on a crusade to stop the plant, taking on the Friends of the Central Coast (businessmen in favor of the proposed plant), PG&E Company executives, powerful Sierra Club leaders, and the public—less than one percent of whom favored dune preservation. What Jones accomplished, the Nipomo Dunes, is the world's largest intact coastal dune ecosystem.

Cairns credits three mountain residents—Jill Swift, Susan Nelson, and Margot Feuer— with forging a lengthy

and successful fight as Friends of the Santa Monica Mountains, Parks and Seashore. They aimed to guarantee public ownership of the mountain areas for all Angelenos while public officials favored housing, shopping centers, and industrial parks. The Los Angeles master plan of July 1964 was the catalyst for preservationists to mobilize against developers' plans, and public policy would be forever changed. The women's efforts helped ensure that funds from a $150 million state parks measure, passed by voters in 1964, went to the Santa Monica Mountains, with 30 percent earmarked for mountain parks. One result was the 14,000-acre Point Mugu State Park in Malibu.

Cairns also devotes a chapter to environmental justice, the new frontier for women staking claims on behalf of beneficial public policy. This emerging movement found its voice in the 1980s, but it took a while before it reached those who needed it most in industrial areas and working-class towns in the shadows of refineries, chemical plants, incinerators, and hazardous waste facilities. These residents were poor people, those of color, and immigrants who spoke little or no English. All had little or no access to the powerful decision-makers who affected their lives. Nonetheless, these women risked everything to improve the health and welfare of their families and their communities.

One of these women, Marie Harrison, was an African American mother and grandmother who lived in the low-income neighborhood of Bayview-Hunters Point in San Francisco, whose residents faced serious health problems resulting from industrial contamination from two power plants and a company that stored hazardous chemicals. Harrison launched a relentless campaign to shut down

the power plant and stop 200 leaking underground toxic sites. She wrote articles in a neighborhood newspaper and joined a multiethnic organization called Greenaction. In 2004 this organization blockaded the entrance to the PG&E facility, which was shuttered in 2008. Greenaction also succeeded in closing the Mirant Power Plant (built in the 1940s) in 2011.

Cairns also tells the story of a group of Huntington Park neighbors who gathered at the home of 71-year-old Linda Marquez to stop the dumping and crushing of cement after the January 1994 earthquake. Marquez jumped into action when the incessant crushing of concrete caused irreparable harm to residents. She formed La Causa and rallied others to join in action with Communities for a Better Environment. Together these groups forced the Los Angeles City Council to close the plant.

I recommend this book for those who want to know more about this generation of women and their positive impact on the environmental movement both through their actions and by marshaling the collective voice.

EVOLUTION OF A MOVEMENT: FOUR DECADES OF CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE ACTIVISM. BY TRACY E. PERKINS. OAKLAND: UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA PRESS, 2022. ILLUSTRATIONS, NOTES, BIBLIOGRAPHY, APPENDIX, AND INDEX. XIX + 281 PP. $95.00 CLOTH. $29.95 PAPER.

Reviewed by John Gove, PhD Candidate, Department of History, University of California, San Diego.

In *Evolution of a Movement: Four Decades of California Environmental Justice Activism*, Tracy E. Perkins provides an overview of the U.S. environmental justice movement, a history and analysis of the different types of activism within that movement, and two detailed case studies illustrating the ways that different strands of activism have played out in California. This structure, beginning with the broad strokes and narrowing to the fine details, is one of the book's strengths. For those unfamiliar with the concept of "environmental justice," Perkins guides readers through the movement's origins and explains how "EJ" fits into the larger environmental movement. The distinction between the two is crucial: while the mainstream environmental movement focuses on protecting the natural world, the environmental justice movement addresses environmental issues that disproportionately impact poor communities and communities of color. Environmental justice activists are often at odds with the mainstream environmental movement, which considers pollution and the environment without consideration of race or class. Perkins's concern is environmental justice: as she argues in the book's elegant preface, "environmental

degradation is inseparable from racism and classism" (p. xi).

Evolution of a Movement focuses on dynamics within the environmental justice movement itself. Perkins identifies two categories of activists: disruptive/outsider groups and institutional/insider groups. The line between the two is sometimes fuzzy, and the book shows that the former group often becomes the latter—as outsiders gain access to institutional practices, they naturally become insiders. Some activists champion this shift, while others decry it. Perkins simply accepts that it happens and seeks to explain how and why it occurs by placing "activists within the complexity of the society that shapes their tactics..." (p. 6). She is, for the most part, successful, and has produced a monograph that is both accessible and informative.

Chapter one explores the disruptive, "grassroots" origins of environmental justice organizations in the 1980s. These early groups were informally organized and comprised of volunteers; most addressed an immediate concern, such as preventing the construction of a solid waste incinerator or other source of pollution. Though small, disruptive/outsider organizations had a great deal of success. However, since these groups were predominantly local and each was focused on a single issue, most of their successes were limited in scope, and a victory often meant the end of an organization: groups would dissolve once the immediate threat was ended. Groups that endured beyond the 1980s were those that institutionalized and professionalized. Perkins documents this change in chapter two, tracing the shift away from outsider action, such as blocking roadways, and towards insider tactics like endorsing candidates in city council races and lobbying state legislatures. In the 1990s, both

strands operated in parallel, but over time institutionalized/insider groups became more dominant. By the 2000s, most EJ organizations employed paid staff and received the majority of their funding from private foundations. Public demonstrations, when they occurred, were usually police-sanctioned and intentionally organized not to be disruptive.

While the first two chapters document the growth and transformation of the environmental justice movement, chapter three attempts to explain those changes by analyzing both the "calculated decisions made by activists" and the "larger social currents" that shape activists' decisions (p.82). Some activists intentionally pursued institutionalization and viewed insider activism as more powerful and effective. Others felt that institutionalization was a process of assimilation that rendered outsider activism toothless. Perkins largely refrains from choosing a side in the debate. Instead, she provides two detailed case studies that illustrate the different approaches. The first, in chapter four, traces thirty years of EJ activism in Kettleman City, a predominantly Latinx community. The study shows "the unevenness of the environmental justice movement's transition from 'protest' to 'politics'" as well as the forces that contributed to this transition (p. 115). Perkins's use of oral history is very effective, illustrating many activists' deep distrust of and ambivalence towards institutional/insider tactics. The second case study, in chapter five, documents the battle over the California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006. This state-level struggle, pursued mainly by professionalized activists trained in policy advocacy, exemplifies the paradox at the heart of the book: while institutionalization and professionalization are clearly necessary to influence

state policy, such tactics just as clearly result in "victories" that are more procedural than substantive.

Evolution of a Movement is a well-researched and well-written piece of scholarship. Perkins's attention to local events will certainly engage anyone interested in California history. And her extensive use of interviews with the activists who shaped that history provides an intimate view of the California environmental justice movement—a perspective from which students, activists, and a general readership will learn much.

SAVING WILDLIFE: THE EXTRAORDINARY LIFE AND LEGACY OF DR. KURT BENIRSCHKE. BY ROLF BENIRSCHKE WITH JAMES LUND. SAN DIEGO: SAN DIEGO ZOO WILDLIFE ALLIANCE PRESS, 2022. ILLUSTRATIONS. 261 PP. $30.00 PAPER.
Reviewed by Donald H. Harrison, Editor Emeritus, *San Diego Jewish World*.

Kurt Benirschke was studying medicine in his native Germany when the Nazis started World War II. He was drafted as a medic for the Luftwaffe. After the defeat of Germany, he resumed his medical studies, then immigrated to the United States, where he worked in New Jersey, interned at Peter Brent Brigham Hospital in Boston, and completed a residency in pathology at Boston's Lying-In Hospital. He worked his way up to pathologist-in-chief and pioneered the science of studying placentas to determine causes of stillbirths and birth defects. That led to his initial interest in nine-banded armadillos, which always give birth to quadruplets attached to a single placenta. Soon he was studying other mammals: cows, marmosets, and tamarins among them.

His reputation led to an invitation to become chief of pathology at Dartmouth College, where he published *The Pathology of the Human Placenta*. His interest in animals led to his publication of *An Atlas of Mammalian Chromosomes*. When discoveries by other scientists enabled the counting of chromosomes, Benirschke solved an age-old riddle: Why can't mules mate with each other? The answer was that while horses and donkeys have even-numbered pairs of chromosomes supplied

by their parents, mules have an odd number, preventing them from being paired properly in mating.

Speaking at the 125th anniversary of the Antwerp Zoo, he met Charles Schroeder, the director of the San Diego Zoo. At about the same time, Benirschke received an invitation to join the medical faculty of UC San Diego. He had an office at the university's Hillcrest medical facility, just blocks from the zoo. Schroeder persuaded him in 1970 to become a member of the zoo's research committee.

With his son Rolf, Dr. Benirschke would frequently go on nature field trips to observe nocturnal species. They found a spot in the San Pasqual Valley where they observed owls that regurgitated pellets containing bones and skulls of small rodents. The pathologist and the fascinated son gathered the pellets, boiled the skulls to clean them, and added them to their collection of animal remains—a collection subsequently donated to the Museum of Natural History in Balboa Park.

Rolf, who authored this enjoyable, easy-to-read biography, became a place kicker for his high school football team and went on to play at UC Davis while majoring in zoology. He was subsequently drafted by the Oakland Raiders and then continued his NFL career with the San Diego Chargers. Later, Rolf instituted "Kicks for Critters," through which he donated money to the zoo with every successful field goal and persuaded thousands of fans to do likewise. Inspired elementary school students participated in "Cans for Critters," in which they donated proceeds from recycling aluminum cans.

Meanwhile, Kurt Benirschke became the director of research at the San Diego Zoo and Wild Animal Park (later Safari Park) and developed methodologies for thickening

the breakable eggshells of Darwin's rheas, identifying parrots' genders, and determining the genders of tortoises and turtles, which depends on the temperature of their eggs. Benirschke also was an advocate of veterinarians and human doctors learning from each other, as they both deal with mammalian anatomy.

Benirschke was instrumental in programs to promote reproduction among such endangered species as peccaries, California condors, giant pandas, and the Przewalski horse (one of which San Diegans later named "Kurt" in his honor), and he furthered the cause of conservation in a collaboration with the artist Andy Warhol in publishing *Vanishing Animals*.

Benirschke became a member of the board of directors of the San Diego Zoo and Wild Animal Park and was elevated to a term as the board's president in 1998. During his presidency, the family foundation of instrument maker Arnold Beckman donated $7.5 million to the zoo for a 50,000-square-foot conservation research center on the grounds of the Wild Animal Park, enabling its scientists to relocate from cramped quarters at the zoo in Balboa Park.

Benirschke also pioneered "the Frozen Zoo," in which cells from 10,000 animals representing 1,200 species and subspecies were stored at hundreds of degrees below Fahrenheit. When thawed, some of these cells could be used for reproductive purposes, especially for the benefit of highly endangered species.

The San Diego Zoo has a deserved reputation as one of the best—if not the best—zoos in the world. In describing how vital his father was to the development of the zoo's stellar reputation, author Rolf Benirschke has cleanly kicked this one through the goalposts.

SCHLEPPING AND SCHMOOZING ALONG THE INTERSTATE 5 (3 VOLUMES). BY DONALD H. HARRISON. SAN DIEGO: INDEPENDENTLY PUBLISHED, 2022. VOL. 1, PHOTOGRAPHS AND INDEX. X + 295 PP. $19.95 PAPER. $7.99 EBOOK. VOL. 2, PHOTOGRAPHS AND INDEX. XII + 279 PP. $19.95 PAPER. $9.95 EBOOK. VOL. 3, PHOTOGRAPHS AND INDEX. XII + 310 PP. $19.95 PAPER.

Reviewed by Emily Scalmanini, BA, Department of History, University of San Diego.

In the three-volume series *Schlepping and Schmoozing Along the Interstate* 5, Donald Harrison supports his hypothesis that "there is a Jewish story everywhere," taking the reader along as he identifies at least one Jewish story on each I-5 exit in San Diego County. The volumes consist of ninety individual stories spanning seventy-two miles, forming an extensive representation of San Diego's Jewish history. Donald Harrison is the (unofficial) journalistic scholar of Jewish San Diego, having covered Jewish news in the area since 1986. Given his experience at *The San Diego Union*, *San Diego Jewish Press Heritage*, *San Diego Jewish Times*, and his own publication, *San Diego Jewish World*, no one knows the San Diego Jewish story better than Harrison. Thus, through his discerning journalistic eye, *Schlepping and Schmoozing* provides a unique and riveting look into the history, tourism, and contemporary makeup of Jewish San Diego.

San Diego Jewish history has been widely overlooked in the historical profession. Historians of American Jews have predominantly focused on the experiences of New York above other regions, while scholarship on San Diego—even those more recent studies that have begun to explore the diversity of the region's inhabitants—has largely overlooked San Diego's Jews. In this series, however, Harrison proves that the San Diego Jewish community is both diverse and flourishing, shaping San Diego County as well as global Jewish communities. Harrison thus successfully creates a model of inclusion which can be replicated by academics focused on other racial or ethnic groups.

Harrison has a knack for taking familiar places or figures and finding a Jewish connection that may surprise even the most dedicated locals. A great example is found in Volume 1's seventh chapter, "Exit 5A (CA 75/Palm Avenue): Hotel del Coronado." The chapter highlights San Diego County's renowned Hotel del Coronado, owned at one point by Larry Lawrence with visits from Marilyn Monroe and King (then Prince) Edward VIII. Harrison expertly underscores the ties that bind all these people together not only by location but also by Jewish history. The chapter spotlights Monroe's conversion to Judaism alongside her contributions to feminism in Hollywood, King Edward VIII's abdication of the throne and his later unveiling as a Nazi sympathizer, and Larry Lawrence's Jewish identity and career as ambassador to Sweden. Harrison's succinct writing style will keep readers engaged as they discover familiar stories under a new (Jewish) light.

Further, Harrison not only celebrates the Jewish community and its unique value to San Diego but also spotlights why San Diego itself is unique and valuable to Jewish peoplehood. Volume 2's Chapter 26, "Exit 32 (I-5 Bypass): Ken Jewish Community," highlights the San

Diego Jewish Academy, a "nest for the Spanish-speaking Jewish community" (vol. 2, p. 209). The children at the Academy are mostly of Mexican heritage and are taught in Spanish about their Jewish culture. As Sundays are typically reserved for family in Mexican culture, the Ken meets on Saturday, or *Shabbat*, instead of Sunday like many other Jewish organizations. They also commit to keeping close relationships with Jewish people in Mexico City, acknowledging and learning from their cultural differences as Jewish people living in America. Jewish and Mexican people are not often linked in scholarship, yet in this story Harrison emphasizes their community and existence together.

Harrison's keen interviewing skills allow the reader to engage with deeply personal stories. In Volume 3's Chapter 5, "Exit 37 (Lomas Santa Fe Drive): San Dieguito County Park," the reader is immersed in the testimony of Dan Engel, a Jewish man who started San Diego County's Miracle League, a baseball league for children with disabilities, when he was diagnosed with stage-four melanoma. The chapter recounts Engel's creation of the league and the subsequent sense of community it brought to San Diego County. Specifically, Engel reflects on his spiritual connection to the league's field, his journey with cancer, the joy of watching the league's benefits to disabled children, and guest appearances of several Padres players. Through this story, Harrison promotes Jewish connections to San Diego and underscores Engel's positive social impact.

In reading *Schlepping and Schmoozing*, the reader embarks on an educational journey through Jewish San Diego, encountering many surprises along the way. As

a journalist, Harrison provides students of history with primary sources that can be further developed into more comprehensive historical works. While one does not find references to academic literature or scholarly debate in these texts, readers can still expect to be exposed to deep cuts of San Diego Jewish history. In these volumes, Harrison emphasizes not only how the Jewish people have contributed to San Diego County, but also how they have uniquely contributed to global Jewish communities, allowing the reader to understand just how vital this population is to San Diego.

BOOK NOTES

Backcountry Ghosts: California Homesteaders and the Making of a Dubious Dream. By Josh Sides. Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 2021. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, and index. xix + 248 pp. $29.95 cloth. $29.95 eBook. Between 1863 and 1930, more than a hundred thousand people filed homestead claims for land in California, and more than sixty-thousand succeeded, claiming about ten million acres. Sides tells the story of the successes and failures of those who toiled and overcame the challenges of natural disasters to acquire and maintain land for their families. Many of these people gained control over water and other valuable natural resources.

Bird Versus Bulldozer: A Quarter-Century Conservation Battle in a Biodiversity Hotspot. By Audrey L. Mayer. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2021. Illustrations, notes, and index. xv + 312 pp. $30.00 cloth. $30.00 eBook. Part environmental history and part environmental policy analysis, this book shows how urban development has threatened biodiversity in coastal Southern California. Highlighting the efforts of activists to protect the coastal California gnatcatcher, a bird that depends on the vanishing coastal sage, Mayer makes a case for sustainable urban development.

Rebel Imaginaries: Labor, Culture, and Politics in Depression-Era California. By Elizabeth Sine. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2021. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, and index. xx + 320 pp. $107.95 cloth. $28.95 paper. Sine, who holds a PhD in history from UC San Diego, shows how working people in California cooperated across ethnic and cultural divides in their struggles for dignity during the Great Depression. From Hollywood to the agricultural fields of the Imperial Valley, Black, Indigenous, Latino, and Asian workers joined forces in labor strikes, efforts toward immigration reform, and artistic acts of resistance in economically challenging times.

The Shadow of El Centro: A History of Migrant Incarceration and Solidarity. By Jessica Ordaz. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2021. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, and index. xxii + 196 pp. $95.00 cloth. $24.95 paper. $19.99 eBook. This is a story of how the El Centro Immigration Detention Camp, established in 1945 in the Imperial Valley, evolved into the Immigration and Customs Enforcement Service Processing Center in the 2000s, becoming a model for immigrant detention. Although this facility was built to control migration and extract labor, Ordaz shows that it also became an institution of migrant detainee solidarity and resistance.

Strong Hearts and Healing Hands: Southern California Indians and Field Nurses, 1920-1950. By Clifford E. Trafzer. Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2021. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, and index. xv + 429 pp. $37.00 paper. $37.00 eBook. In 1924, the US Indian Service hired a corps of white women nurses to improve the health of Indigenous people living on reservations. Four years later, field nurses in the Mission Indian Agency of Southern California

began visiting homes and schools, providing information about disease causation and prevention. Trafzer shows that Indigenous people formed a positive working relationship with these nurses, and their cooperative efforts resulted in significant decreases in deaths and illnesses among Southern California Indian tribes.

We Are the Land: A History of Native California. By Damon B. Akins and William J. Bauer, Jr. Oakland: University of California Press, 2021. Illustrations and index. xi + 384 pp. $29.95 cloth. $24.95 paper. $29.95 eBook. Akins and Williams have produced a comprehensive history of the Indigenous people of California from the time before European settlement through the period of statehood. This story includes early encounters with Europeans, Spanish colonization, the secularization of the missions under Mexican rule, the Gold Rush, and genocide. The authors also highlight the resilience and the activism of California's Indigenous people, especially in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries.

We Made San Diego. By Mária E. García. San Diego: Self-Published, 2021. Illustrations. 414 pp. $50.00 paper. In this self-published work of local history, García highlights the contributions of Latinas and Latinos to the social and economic life of San Diego County. She recounts stories of Latina/o San Diegans who owned businesses, fought in foreign wars, held political office, and excelled economically, despite the discrimination they faced.