

# Reunion Essays from Classmates—9/22

## Contributions from:

Judy Bedelaar  
Nelson W. Black  
Anna Mohn Gade  
George Goldberg  
Barbara Harvey  
Diana Dessery Hensley  
Violet Hover  
Les Laky  
Wendy Martin  
Don Mitchell  
Joyce Putnam  
William Gee Wong

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## Judy Bedelaar

Judy Bedelaar taught in San Francisco public schools for 37 years. Her students won many writing awards; she won awards for her teaching as well, including two national on the national level. Her prize-winning poetry has been published widely in magazines and anthologies including *The Widows' Handbook* (foreword by Ruth Bader Ginsberg, Kent State University Press); *River of Earth and Sky: Poems for the 21st Century* (Blue Light Press); *The Squaw Valley Review*; and *California Fire & Water: A Climate Crisis Anthology*. Her chapbook, *Walking Across the Pacific*, was published by Finishing Line Press, 2014. *And Then They Were Gone: Teenagers of Peoples Temple from High School to Jonestown* (2018) written with fellow teacher Ron Cabral, is non-fiction, and has won ten awards and honors, including four first prizes. Ron and Judy were also named San Francisco Library Laureates in 2019.

## Memories of my time at Cal

Martinez is perched on the shore of the Carquinez Strait, 1950's population 8,000: Italian fishermen; those, like my father, who worked at Tidewater Petroleum (remember the winged Flying A?) or Shell Oil; those who came to work at the county seat; and descendants of long-time residents.

Coming to Cal, I was scared. Martinez was 30 miles from but three decades behind Berkeley, a big city to me. Still, I loved it, especially, my English classes. But I wanted to take something more exciting, and enrolled in the only upper division class open to me, in dramatic literature. I listened to the professor and the sophisticated students, whom I came to realize were UC actors. When I finally opened my mouth to express my naïve opinion, sitting there in my out-of-place madras shirt dress and sorority circle pin, I said something really stupid. About Lysistrata, and sex. You can probably guess.

The sorority: I had planned to join one, as my big sister had, signed up for Rush. But when I discovered no Jewish or black women were invited to join the Christian ones, I asked my mother if I could live in a dorm; there was no room left. So I joined one. I'd try to change things, politely. I

spoke to the visiting officials from the first chapter in the South, asked them if this discriminatory practice could be changed. Didn't work.

Deciding to be more furtive, I convinced my friend Susan— whose father ran the popular Orange Julius shop—to pledge with us. No one realized her mother was Jewish, I think. I can still see her, peeking out from under the “grass” rug underneath which each Persephone must lie before rising on the summons of the “hierophant” (me), saying timidly, “Judy, are you sure this is okay?” It was.

That was my first protest. Participation in other peaceful, but more effective protests followed. Those were the days.

### **Dear fellow '62 graduates,**

I enjoyed meeting in person all of you that I did at the dinner and am honored to be among the winners of the essay contest. I wanted to share a little more about my life after graduation and my continuing connection with Cal Berkeley.

I earned my teaching credential, as my husband John had before me, at Cal's Graduate Internship Program, then part of Cal's School of Education, which provided great training and mentorship by gifted teachers, who followed us through our first year of teaching. Four of us from the program made a proposal for a new public alternative school, Opportunity I and then for another, Opportunity II. The schools were designed to help what are now called “at risk” students, and both still exist in San Francisco as Downtown High and Ida B. Wells High. I have also been a Teacher Consultant for the Bay Area Writing Project, which began in 1974 at Cal's School of Graduate Education and now has expanded to more than 200 Writing Projects across the nation, now under the umbrella of the National Writing Project. The program's founder, James Gray, believed that writing teachers must write and that teachers should share their best lessons. I continue to be part of the project to this day.

I taught in San Francisco public high schools for 37 years and loved it. I had taken creative writing classes at Cal, from poet Louis Simpson and Earth Abides author George R. Stewart. I found helping students write and publish their poems made them view “literature” in an entirely new way and helped create a community in the classroom. Together, and with the help of many visiting poets, we created anthologies and a multicultural literary/art calendar which won national prizes, including the State Farm Good Neighbor Award which was then given to 8 teachers, chosen nation-wide and a Business Week/ McGraw-Hill award for innovative teaching as well as others.

My students won many writing awards on the local level, seven in the Scholastic Writing Awards contest on the national level, and Scholastic gave me one as well. I kept writing along with my creative writing students, more after retirement. My poetry has been published widely in over 50 magazines and several anthologies including *The Widows' Handbook* (foreword by Ruth Bader Ginsberg, Kent State University Press); and in a chapbook, *Walking Across the Pacific*, published by Finishing Line Press. I also wrote, with fellow teacher Ron Cabral, a non-fiction book about the students we came to know when Jim Jones sent all the teens from his church in San Francisco to our little alternative school in 1976. *And Then They Were Gone: Teenagers of Peoples Temple* from

High School to Jonestown (2018) is non-fiction, and has won ten honors and awards, including four first prizes. Ron and I were named San Francisco Library Laureates in 2019.

If you would like a copy of *And Then They Were Gone*, it is available on Amazon and Kindle, and I am once again doing book talks locally. There is no fee, as mostly, Ron and I want people to know about these wonderful kids. Most don't realize the one third of those who died in Jonestown were under 18, and one half of the 918 were in their 20's or younger.

Thanks, and Go Bears! Judy

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Nelson W. Black

Early 60s Berkeley was a most stimulating time. My North Side fraternity required that I enter campus through North Gate. There, K.O. Hallanan and others would hand out SLATE missives. I was not aware of Senator McCarthy during the 50s Army hearings on T.V. but I did catch the repeats from Edward R. Murrow's See It Now show in one of my History classes. McCarthy's performance made me realize something important was going on in our country as did my soon to retire Geology professor; he spoke out several times in class of his contempt for the loyalty oaths. The Cuban Bay of Pigs invasion and the campus reaction was another wake up call.

Sergeant Shriver came to campus and spoke of a new government organization called the Peace Corps. After graduation I joined the Peace Corps which then was one year old. I was trained at what I first naively thought was an Ivy League College, Purdue University, and eventually made it to Chile.

While serving in the Peace Corps I was exempt from the draft but when my service was over, the draft board was ready to pounce. While I had no feelings about the war one way or another, my contemporaries were either in graduate school or married. I was single and wanted to get on with my life. I luckily was able to enlist in the Coast Guard Reserve and eventually became an officer. I do not recall any campus antiwar demonstrations when I was a student. But, in the mid 60s, I came to campus on business many times. I vividly remember much student anti-war anger extending to the war's end.

My life lesson take away from Berkeley? That I must take a more active role in politics and the affairs of my country.

I worked my whole career for one textbook publishing company, 38 years. I was in sales half the time, an editor for two years and as a marketing manager the other half. I was a good marketing manager and a mediocre editor. However, I did sign one book that became a market leader, which is still being used in Social Psychology at Berkeley. As my ex-boss once sagely said, "even the blind squirrel finds the occasional nut." I have had two wives and four children. Two of the four are graduates of the U.C. system, one is off to Cal Poly S.L.O. this week. All four have avoided drugs and stayed out of jail. I have been blessed.

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## **Anna Gade**

### **My Troisième Age**

How I would approach life after teaching English in high school for most of four decades came to me in Provence in 2001. At a show of retired folks' projects in Lourmarin, my French friend acquainted me with the concept of the Third Age of life, the last stage, the open window for the rest of one's years. That day was pivotal for me.

I would be retiring from my job soon, my parents were older and needed my attention and lived a few hours away in San Francisco, and I wanted to return to the Bay Area after years of living in the San Joaquin Valley. My first grandchild would be born in the east bay where my married son lived. I was on the cusp of change.

The epiphany was this: I decided to make my Troisième age an adventure. I would move to Bolinas, the coastal village in Marin just 12 miles north of my hometown. My father had offered my grandfather's neglected little home and property; I decided that it would be the place where I would build a new home and settle. I'd been advising young people to follow their dreams for years; now I gave the same counsel to myself. Two decades later, I am there and have been for 17 years with a beautiful home with a view of Mt. Tamalpais and close to my precious family in Berkeley.

I have played many roles in this community of about 1500-2000 folks. For years, I have volunteered to be a docent at the Bolinas Museum, run for and served on the Volunteer Fire Board for 4 years; been a member of the Friends of the Libraries of Bolinas and Stinson Beach for a long time and am current president; have been the social chair for the local Rod and Boat Club for six years. In this town of many artists, I have been fortunate to practice drawing, now botanical watercolor, after a life in academia. Having found many here to be of a literary mind, I have joyfully read or reread many tomes including Proust and currently Middlemarch. There is an ongoing Shakespeare group of which I've been a part since its inception. I am very happy in this place.

I have kept very close to Cal by my yearly trip to third week, Gold, at the Lair of the Bear—taking my grandchildren since each was two! My 18 year old grandson wants me to go for my fiftieth season next year. For my first 5 winters of retirement, I worked for the Admissions Department at Cal evaluating applications. I welcomed the weekly visits to campus to which I had become sweetly accustomed from my years on the Alumni Board and that of the Lair. Until 3 years ago I had been chair of the Alumni Leadership Scholarship Committee in Marin County. In 2018 and 19, I traveled with small groups of Cal Alums to Japan and China. For about ten years, after school on Wednesdays I took my grandchildren on regular walks on campus to visit the dinosaur in LSB and find the bear sculptures. Here I am at our sixtieth reunion!

As I've pursued my adventures, there have been physical obstacles. Last year on the way home from the Lair, my car was broadsided and my neck broken; old orthopedic injuries have raised their heads, but I've soldiered on inspired by my family, my community and my continued connection with Cal.

I relish the dream I realized.

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## **George Goldberg**

Hi classmates,

After I master a piano piece that I've been working on since 1962, completing my freshwater project in Africa, reading to a 3rd grader, finishing my exotic travels and my campaigns for world peace I plan to continue painting.

I am a self taught American pointillistic artist. I work in acrylic on canvas and have, in the last few years, realized that there are many people, in addition to myself, who like my art and think that I'm pretty good. A common comment that I've received is "Your art makes me happy." To me there's no great complement.

I have been selected three times to exhibit my work in the prestigious Beverly Hills Art Show and in 2019 one of my works won first place among the many paintings displayed. My recent works are comprised of thousands, if not tens of thousands, acrylic dots. These pieces take a very long time to complete but they are great therapy and it's far less expensive than therapy.

I have a few Cal inspired paintings and lithographs. All of my work can be seen on my website, [www.georgegoldbergartist.com](http://www.georgegoldbergartist.com).

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## **Barbara Harvey**

I have lots of nice memories of my time at Cal. My most significant memory was that of the JFK speaking at Charter Day.

I am most grateful for achieving a degree from UC Berkeley. It has impressed my employers over the years.

I have spent the last 55 years in the Raleigh area of North Carolina. I'm married, have 3 children and 6 grandchildren.

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## **Cal, The Gift That Keeps on Giving**

## By Diana Dessery Hensley, Cal Graduate 1962

Major of Anthrpology, Psychology and English Minors.

It took me a few years after graduation from Cal to realize the enormity of the gift I had received. The gift wasn't packaged neatly and tied up with a big bright bow, rather, it emerged as a way to think and see.

I started as an elementary teacher, then moved on to School Psychologist, Homeless Liaison, private practice psychotherapist, and school administrator. I also taught graduate school. In all these careers, I was a problem solver and that is the real gift. I can see how I brought that ability from my time at Cal, from my professors, and the Fiat Luxe we all know. It certainly hadn't shown up before my time at Cal.

I'm 84 now and still practice psychotherapy part time as an LMFT and licensed educational psychologist. Anthropology classes at Cal put me ahead of the curve in terms of systems analysis; knowing where and how to intervene; and understanding family and other cultures. That paradigm is useful in most situations that call for problem solving.

Looking forward, I'm working on a humorous journal of my life with two sisters, as well as helping to publish my Welsh coal miner and leader grandfather's journal. I'm traveling next summer with Pacific Chorale to Austria and England.

I could not have done any of these without the world class education and gift of perception I received from Cal. I'm grateful.

Diana Dessery Hensley

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Personal: I've taken four years of piano in my 80's, learned to sing choral music, (sing in three choirs), still drive by myself to Berkeley from Orange County, have photography and water color as paid hobbies, and lead guided meditations at my church. My recent years have included presidency of a Homeless Shelter Board of Directors, as well as presidency of several other non profit organizations. I also spent five recent years as psychotherapist for homeless families.

A trip to Wales, U.K., helped find and reconnect my family.  
Retired from Newport Mesa Unified School District, Orange County.  
My daughter and husband both have graduate degrees and live in Berkeley.  
My son and his wife live in Sherman Oaks. He has a Master's Degree in Counseling from Antioch University.

I have four grandchildren of different ages.  
My husband attended Cal and was an award winning mathematician before his death in 2007. I met him at Cowell Hospital, on campus, where I worked part time to pay my way through school.

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## **Violet Hover**

### **2022 Elections in Yountville**

My sociology studies at Berkeley 60 years ago and my living in Berkeley a few years later (while my then husband studied at Berkeley) whet my interest in understanding people's political beliefs and activities.

In June, Sandy and I decided to work with our friend Hillery in her run for one of our two vacant Yountville Council seats. In early August, Sandy and I agreed to help our neighbor Robin run for the second Council seat.

In mid-August, Debbie, one of my wildlife volunteering colleagues, asked if I would help on the Mayoral campaign of Pam, a woman whom I recognized by name. I immediately answered "Yes" since I want some competition to the current crop of mayoral candidates.

So what", I said to myself at the time, "I will be 82 this year but I might as well wear out doing something useful and exciting rather than rust out complaining about my aches and pains."

My volunteering on Pam's mayoral campaign is actually keeping me busier than I expected. The strategy meetings, the lengthy text threads, the countless phone calls, the Meets and Greets at our home, the Meets and Greets in other places, the Letters to the Editor and the yard sign placements are assuring that I will not rust out between now and the election.

A fascinating aspect of this election is that Pam's Mayoral campaign and Hillery's and Robins's Council campaigns are intersecting. For example, at my Meet and Greet for Pam, I included Hillery and Robin who also greeted the attendees. Almost a "slate", but not actually a "slate".

So, we might ask, did my Cal education and my living in Berkeley all those years ago help prepare me for my current Yountville election activities? The answer is "Absolutely". Go Bears.

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## **Laszlo "Les" Laky**

### **Experiences in leadership.**

Learned a great deal at Bowles Hall, founded in 1929 as the first residential college in North America and restored as a residential college in 2016 by the alumni from the 1950's and 1960's.

Upon arriving at Cal, I opted to join Bowles Hall. What happened? Got elected President of Bowles Hall. The next term my roommate Pete Cassinelli followed as the President. I was very active in

extracurricular activities at Cal. As a result, I was awarded a high profile in the 1961 yearbook and honored with membership in the Order of the Golden Bear. All the activities pushed me into a fifth undergraduate year so I graduated in 1962.

Arrived at Cal from Carmel High School, Carmel-by the Sea. In my senior year, the school held it's first students in government day. You guessed it! I was mayor of Carmel for one day, a few years before Clint Eastwood got his turn as mayor of Carmel. My classmates at Carmel rewarded me further by electing me class president of the outgoing senior class. Little did I know that it was a lifetime appointment. This year, I am organizing the class reunion for the 65th year after graduation, just like the reunion at Cal.

My goal on graduation was to have a large executive office. Exceeded my goal with two offices, one in Dallas and one in Silicon Valley working for a multinational telecom company. Then I realized that leadership has two forms, leading people and leading technology. I became an entrepreneur in Silicon Valley, incubating start-up companies and pioneering leading edge technologies. In the early years of the Internet, I had the opportunity to be a co-founder of the first internet service provider in Palo Alto and to assist in the development of multi-service cable modems. Today I am still active in operating domain name registration businesses in the US and Africa.

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## **Wendy Martin**

I was an undergraduate at UC Berkeley from 1959-1962; I had grown up for the North Shore of Long Island and was expected to go to a prestigious East coast University, but I was determined to "Go West" — so much so that I gave up a New York State Merit Scholarship to come to UC Berkeley, and I have never regretted this decision.

My professors were extraordinary: I took courses in English which was my major from Tom Parkinson; History courses from Carl Schorske; Sociology from Irvin Goffman and Anthropology from Irwin DeVore — all of whom were outstanding teachers and scholars. During these undergraduate years, I realized I wanted to become a professor, and I received my PhD in American Literature and American Studies in 1968 and went on to teach at CUNY/ Queens College and Claremont Graduate University, and I was a Visiting Professor at Stanford University, the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and UCLA.

While I was an undergraduate, I was Editor of Occident, the campus literary magazine (see attached story). The administrative and editorial experience I gained has served me exceptionally well throughout my academic career. For example, I am Founding Editor of the pioneering journal of feminist scholarship Women's Studies: An Interdisciplinary Journal; we are celebrating our 50th anniversary this year, and I am pleased to say that I continue to edit the journal.



The outstanding education I received at UCB has informed every aspect of my professional life. I have loved my life as a Professor and continue to teach and write books 54 years after becoming an Assistant Professor I have been a Professor at the Claremont Graduate University since 1987 where I served as Chair of the English Department for twenty five years as well as Director of the Tufts Poetry Awards and Founding Director of the Transdisciplinary Studies Program. In addition to editing Women's Studies, I have published 20 books as well as numerous articles and book reviews. *An American Triptych: The Lives and Work of Anne Bradstreet, Emily Dickinson and Adrienne Rich* was described as a "path breaking" book in a full page review in the New York Times. And, I've also lectured throughout the United States and internationally in Europe, China, India and elsewhere.

I'm grateful to for everyone at UC Berkeley for helping me become who I am today.

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Far from bringing student publications into line, though, the administration's punishment of Wegars stimulated a competitive drive for notoriety, according to Wendy Martin ('62), who was then editing *Occident* and is now a professor of English at the Claremont Graduate University. She recalls, "wanting to publish something in the literary magazine that would be even more provocative than the Pelican's cartoon" (Martin). For the fall of 1961, she deliberately sought some transgressive, attention-getting content, which she received and published in the form of a short fictional piece featuring inter-racial fellatio. Martin remembers being bitterly disappointed when the story failed to cause a scandal or draw university censorship. One can imagine, though, that the administration was not eager to attract more attention to its rebellious student publications, especially if the question of "redeeming literary value" might be at stake.

From <<https://150w.berkeley.edu/150w-history-project.>>

Wendy Martin

Professor of American Literature and American Studies

Founder and Editor, *Women's Studies: An Interdisciplinary Journal*

Chair, Department of English (1987-2010) (2018-20)

Chair, Faculty Executive Committee (1998-2001)

Founding Director, Transdisciplinary Studies Program (2005-2013)

Director, Tufts Poetry Awards (2010-2015)

Claremont Graduate University <http://www.cgu.edu/pages/1367.asp>

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## **DON Mitchell**

### **CAL MEMORIES**

- Freshman Year- Meeting Nobel Prize Recipients.
- Spring Bacchanalias.
- Studies in logic and reasoning.
- Professor, "subliminal perception not suitable for academia".
- Great part-time job, UC Library Documents Department.
- Lecture by British philosopher, Bertrand Russell, "Survival", i.e., Life After Death.

- Met Eric Fromm, author of “Escape From Freedom”.
- Met Russian Cosmonaut, Yuri Gagarin, first to circumnavigate earth.
- Lively nighttime music at Northgate.
- Football tickets, Cal Games.
- Cal Drinking Song (oh well).
- Telegraph Avenue Art Exhibits.
- Game with friends, similar to Jeopardy, we called Botticelli.
- Labs in LSB.
- Getting an A in French.
- Being introduced to Opera “Madame Butterfly”.
- Cal an awakening, new ideas, experiences and insights.
- Weekend escapade driving down steps at Palace of the Legion of Honor in San Francisco, bump, bump, bump, as in a Jean Belmondo Spy Thriller.
- Apartment living on Northside on Euclid Avenue a half block down from Grizzly Peak Boulevard with scenic views of the entire bay and all three major bridges; and also, on Derby Street in a studio with a murphy bed and only six blocks from Campus.
- Two lifelong friends, *book to follow*.
- Meeting bright, interesting people, but never kept in touch.
- Sensing that I was close to the center of a very important part of the Universe – such an extraordinary privilege.
- Airforce ROTC flight in the open bay of an Air Freighter Transport, imagining walking out into space.
- Remembering friends that I have been unable to locate.
- Feeling at the time I didn’t have resources, or infrastructure, to easily establish and sustain long-term friendships.
- Remembering a refined Tea Ceremony with each gesture and movement conveying significant meaning and grace, and in a bone-headed moment asking “So, where’s the sugar”.
- Conversations at Stiles Hall.
- The Beat Generation announcing its Bohemian presence in San Francisco to a button-down Madison Avenue kind of society.
- Voices examining fairness, foreign policy, and boundaries to traditional intimacy.
- John F. Kennedy, Speaker at our Class Graduation.
- Overall, the Cal years could be described as time and experiences surfing an intellectually exciting, changing world.

Best,

Class of ‘62  
Just a Guy

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**Joyce Putnam**  
**My Cal Memories**

In my first semester, January 1959, the Cal Bears Football team, led by Joe Kapp went to the Rose Bowl in Pasadena. I took the overnight train full of fans, rooters and the Cal Band down to the

game. All night long, the Cal Band played loudly up and down the aisles as we sang and cheered. The next day, we went to the Rose Parade followed by the big game. Even though Cal Lost, we still celebrated and cheered the whole train ride home.

I studied mathematics at Cal, and had great interactions and support from my professors and peers. I went to my Calculus professor's office hours one time. He said I was the only one to see him, out of the 300 students in the class, and we chatted for a whole hour.

One story that could have ended badly started at the library! I usually went to the math library at Campbell Hall to study in the evenings. One night I was tired and went to the lady's room and accidentally fell asleep on the lounge! The next morning, I picked up my books from the library and attended classes. But I forgot that I was supposed to meet my boyfriend at Ludwig's Fountain, that night! I guess he probably thought I didn't like him...

And my sorority had a strict curfew with bed checks! But luckily, no one noticed I was missing and it never happened again. I'm sure that with today's 911, cellphones, GPS, campus security cameras and strict no-sleeping-in the lounges policy, this would not happen.

JOYCE

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## **William Gee Wong**

My years at Cal ('58-'62) gave me the best early lessons in politics, not from the classroom but from the Daily Cal, where I spent most of my non-academic time. I had just turned 17 when I started at Cal, having come from my Oakland Chinatown bubble, the son of an immigrant from China who used false papers to legally enter America during a time when the Chinese Exclusion Act was still in effect. Through high school, I knew virtually nothing about the politics behind that phenomenon nor those in American life. My principal interest was sports writing, which is what I first did at the Daily Cal. Politics, however, disrupted my apolitical Daily Cal life. The grownups at Sproul Hall fired the Daily Cal editorial board, of which I, the sports editor, was a member, because the editorial board endorsed a leftist group's candidates for student government. That was my first real-life political lesson. Subsequent lessons followed, as I was brought back on to become managing editor, then editor-in-chief of a now blended staff with more conservative Greek-letter society members as top editors too. I learned about the burgeoning civil-rights movement through a Cal friend who became a Freedom Rider in the south. I watched with disgust the House Un-American Activities Committee's hearings in San Francisco, fearing that HUAC had my name on a list of "un-American" dissenters because of the Daily Cal's perceived liberalism. For Cal faculty members, the big issue was loyalty oaths, pressure to declare their allegiance to America in the context of the U.S.-Soviet Union "cold war." This was a lot for a heretofore politically innocent Chinatown kid, but in retrospect, it was a great start in learning about what's real in American political and cultural life.

Known as William or Bill Wong in my Cal days, I am a retired newspaper journalist and author. After Cal, I worked for the San Francisco Chronicle and two other Bay Area newspapers before joining the Peace Corps in 1964, serving in the Philippines until early 1968. After graduating from

the Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism in 1970, I worked nine years for the Wall Street Journal, then joined the Oakland Tribune, where I was business editor, assistant managing editor, ombudsman, and columnist from 1979 to 1996, when I was fired by a conservative regime. Many Tribune readers protested my firing, but to no avail. For a year (straddling 1995-1996), I was an occasional regional commentator on The News Hour with Jim Lehrer on PBS. I freelanced and taught journalism until my retirement in 2008. In 2001, my Yellow Journalist: Dispatches from Asian America book was published by Temple University Press. Three years later, I authored Images of America: Oakland's Chinatown, Arcadia Publishing Co. In 2007, I co-authored Images of America: Angel Island, also by Arcadia Publishing. I am writing a book tentatively titled Son of a Native Son: A Memoir Rooted in China, Chinatown, and America. I live in the East Bay with my wife of more than 50 years, and we help care for our two young grandchildren who live with their parents a short drive from us.