

**A Relative Advantage:  
Sociology of the San Francisco Bohemian Club**

BY

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M.A. (California State University, Sacramento) 1974

M.A. (University of California, Davis) 1992

**DISSERTATION**

Submitted in partial satisfaction of the requirements for the degree of

**DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY**

IN

SOCIOLOGY

IN THE

OFFICE OF GRADUATE STUDIES

OF THE

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

DAVIS

Approved:

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Committee in Charge  
1994

## Acknowledgements

This work received support and assistance from numerous sources. The staffs at the University of California Bancroft Library, California Historical Society and California State Library - California Room each deserve a note of thanks for their assistance in locating primary source documents used in this study. Thank you also to the U.C. Bancroft manuscript division for permission to cite from documents in its collection.

I want to thank Val Burris from the University of Oregon for allowing me the use of his database on national policy council members, Jeannette Glynn for access to her 1991 data in the directory Who Knows Who, and Kerry Richardson for his 905 Bohemian biographies.

Recognition needs to be given to student assistants Mary Anne Ranasinghe and Abraham Lee for their long hours of library research and data input. Judy Bloch was the primary word processor, and my family members Tim Johnson, Nate Johnson and Erin Kimball spent long hours matching Bohemian names to various resource directories.

Numerous Bohemian Club members generously gave of their personal time in support of my research. In particular Alfred Baxter and his campmates at Silverado Squatters deserve a thank you for hosting me at the Grove. Without their support the insights obtained in this study would not have been possible.

I want to give special recognition to computer specialist Chula Ranasinghe for his expert management of the database systems needed for this study.

Finally a sincere statement of appreciation to my wife and life partner, Gail Johnson, for her months of supportive advice and editorial reviews. Without her help the entire process would have been much more difficult and personally less rewarding.

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This work is dedicated to  
Clement A. Phillips, M.S.  
Associate Professor of Dairy Industry  
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1921 - 1962

## CHAPTER 1

### **Sociology of Elite Men's Clubs**

For over 150 years private men's clubs have existed as a place of personal retreat for socio-economic elite men in American society. U.S. elite men's clubs are seen by some social scientists as the American equivalent to European male aristocracy. For example, Max Weber writes about U.S. clubs;

In American mere money in itself... purchases power, but not social honor... In America; the old tradition respected the self made man more than the heir, and the avenue to social honor consisted in affiliation with a genteel fraternity in a distinguished college... At present time affiliation with a distinguished club is essential above all else. ...Here the equality of gentlemen prevailed absolutely... He who did not succeed in joining was no gentleman... (Gerth and Mill 1978 p.310)

Defining a gentleman, in Weber's perspective, was one of the essential characteristics of U.S. men's clubs and a mark of success in American Society.

Private men's clubs have been described as a fundamental element of maintaining the "old boy networks" of power in modern society (Rogers 1988 p.179). Progressive attacks on the exclusivity of all-white-male clubs, while not new historically<sup>1</sup>, have increased in the last three decades (Baxter 1992). This has led clubs to initiate token

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<sup>1</sup>A 1919 report in the San Francisco Chronicle describes how a group of women invaded the swimming pool at the all-male Olympic Club in San Francisco. The group of fifteen women, hiding their "abbreviated" swim suits under their street clothes, disrobed and jumped into the pool between events at a swim meet causing quite a disruption (San Francisco Chronicle 5-19-19).



changes that have gradually broken the barriers of race, ethnicity and gender in many of the private men's clubs in the United States.

But just how important to networks of power are these clubs in the United States? Information related to this question appeared in 1974 in two books published about the all-male San Francisco Bohemian Club. Sociologist, G. William Domhoff's work, entitled The Bohemian Grove and Other Retreats, described the Bohemian Club as a place for white male upper-class bonding and consensus building. The Greatest Men's Party on Earth, a title borrowed from a description of the Bohemian Grove attributed to Herbert Hoover, was a popular book by writer John Van der Zee, published after his working one summer as a waitperson at the Bohemian Grove.

Not only did these two books provide details on an elite men's club, but their near-simultaneous release contributed to progressive political groups in the San Francisco Bay Area seeing the Bohemian Club as symbolic of the socio-economic and political ills in American society. Within a few years these groups began protest demonstrations outside of the Bohemian Club's redwood grove on the Russian River in Sonoma County, California.

The Bohemian Grove is unique in American clubdom because it puts 2,000 to 3,000 mostly elite men together in the forest for up to sixteen days every summer.

While Domhoff's work on the Bohemian Grove (1974) and other upper class get-togethers, gives descriptive details of Grove life, his primary focus is on the Grove as a place for upper class bonding and cohesiveness building. Domhoff presents his case by examining the structural relationship between Grove participants and the top 797

corporations in the U.S., finding that , "29% of these... corporations were represented by at least one officer or director (p.32)".

Domhoff goes on to show how the Bohemian Club is structurally interconnected with other upper class clubs and national policy councils including: Pacific Union Club in San Francisco, California Club in Los Angeles, Rancheros Vistadores in Santa Barbara, Links and Century Clubs in New York, and Council in Foreign Relations, Business Council and the Committee for Economic Development. Domhoff demonstrated that an overlapping network of shared membership existed between the Bohemian Club and all of these other upper class organizations. He claimed that this small network is but a sample of the institutional interlocking of the upper class in America.

In a follow-up study in 1975, Domhoff built a network of thirty-one upper class social and policy organizations and by using centrality scores was able to rank these groups in terms of those with proportionately the most interconnections to all other groups. In this study the Bohemian Club ranked fourth out of twelve clubs for centrality behind the Links, Pacific Union, and Chicago Clubs.

Domhoff conducted a follow-up analysis in 1983 of Bohemian connections with the top 800 corporations in the U.S. which resulted in similar findings to his earlier work. Of the top 800 corporations in the U.S. in 1980 30% had at least one officer or director at the Grove.

In testimony before the State of California Franchise Tax Board in 1987, Domhoff stated:

"...men's clubs are an important part of the business community in the United States. Not to be included, as women and minorities usually are not, hurts the chances for them to advance to the top of major corporations (Capital Reporter 1987 p.14)."

Domhoff went on to say that the Bohemian Club, in particular, intermixes male politicians and business elites, giving the former ready access to some of the most economically powerful men in the United States.

Much of Domhoff's work regarding elite men's clubs has been a structural analysis showing strong network relationships between individuals in various positions of power in the United States. However, the intimacies of exactly how these interconnections are used and sustained through private mens clubs has not been fully developed.

One of Domhoff's limitations twenty years ago was the fact that his work was done from outside the Club using informants and second-hand reports of Bohemian life. Also, his work was primarily a snapshot of a brief period in Bohemian history around 1970, with little in-depth comparative historical analysis. This lack of in depth qualitative and historical evidence has been a weak link in the claim that men's clubs serve as consensus building organizations and provide advantages to business and economic elites.

Dye (1983) concluded that membership in elite men's clubs is a recognition of a man having achieved an important position in society, and that a man "seldom acquires position and power because of club membership (p.216)". In dye's view clubs serve primarily prestige function and that it is speculative to say that clubs are important for consensus building and elite cohesion. He holds that "social interaction, friendship

networks, and consensus building all develop in the club milieu, but clubs merely facilitate processes that occur anyway (p.216)".

Club historian and member Al Baxter, has repeatedly claimed that external accounts of the Club are often in error and that Domhoff's work is not really about the Bohemian Club, but rather a small percentage (10%) of the members who are high level corporate and political elites. He asks, "What about the other 90% of the Club, the men who really make up the essence of Bohemia? These men are there primarily for the enjoyment of each other's talents." Baxter vigorously denies that Club membership promotes an "old boy network" or in any way gives its members economic or political advantages (Baxter 1-13-94).

I have chosen to re-examine the Bohemian Club twenty years after Domhoff's work by extending his structural analysis over time and including an in depth qualitative interpretation of the Club. By using an expanded methodological approach I will address the issues of elite cohesion building and economic/political advantages as outlined in the following theoretical summary.

### Bohemian Club Theoretical Positions

	Domhoff	Dye	Baxter
Upper Class Cohesiveness Building	The Bohemian Club builds cohesiveness among elites in America.	Bohemian Club serves primarily a status function recognizing socio-economic achievement of already elite men in society.	The Bohemian Club is a place of social enjoyment and companionship for men interested in the arts.
Economic/ Political Advantages	Club membership gives advantages to men in business and politics.	The Club may facilitate advantages but these would happen anyway.	There is no economic or political advantage to membership.

Within the framework of the above theoretical perspectives I will answer the following specific questions about the San Francisco Bohemian Club.

#### Research Questions:

1. Do men join the Bohemian Club for personal friendships and bonding opportunities with other men? If so, is this process similar over long periods of time.
2. Has the Bohemian Club historically offered an "old boy": advantage to its members in the areas of business, and politics, or has it been primarily a place of social enjoyment in a relaxed, orderly atmosphere?
3. Has the San Francisco Bohemian Club been a place of elite consensus building where men of power and prestige come together to conduct behind-the-scenes policy planning?

## Definitions

A contemporary elite private men's club has a membership that is made up of men from the higher socio-economic strata in society and others with intellectual or artistic qualities deemed important by men of wealth. Elite men's clubs are an urban phenomenon that need an adequate population base from which to draw men with similar interests. Elite men's clubs tend to be introspectively oriented. Major activities, events and interactions tend to occur within club boundaries primarily for the members' and guests' own self-gratification. Elite men's clubs tend to establish traditions and maintain an internal club culture to which new members receive some form of indoctrination before or after joining. Finally, elite men's clubs offer their members a safe sanctum that meets personal needs away from less ordered environments.

A man is an aristocrat within the confines of his club. He has supportive staff to wait on him and other aristocrats with similar interests for stimulating interaction. An elite men's club is a system of ordered civility in what is perceived as an otherwise chaotic and disorderly world.

Elite men's clubs are actually a relatively rare phenomenon with perhaps fewer than two hundred in the United States for a total membership of about 200,000 (Baxter 1993). Given the ubiquitous Rotary, Elks and Lions clubs in every small town in American, two hundred elite men's clubs is a rare phenomenon indeed.

Jeffrey Charles' recent work "Service Clubs in American Society (1993) is a historical study of Rotary, Kiwanis and Lions Clubs in the United States. He portrays service clubs as a localized response to a society increasingly dominated by an urban

corporate environment. Service clubs' manifest function is to do community building and finance public benefit activities. Service clubs are made up of predominantly middle class businessmen who "combined sociable pleasure with career interests" (p.19) around a theme of good works for the community.

These middle class organizations are distinctly different in status from elite men's clubs. A service club's community-building activities contrasts sharply with an elite club's introspective orientation. Elite men's clubs are social establishments with permanent staff and facilities available to members to use full time, whereas service clubs usually operate on a weekly meeting basis, often catered by a local restaurant. There are numerous other social clubs that do offer facilities and staff such as VFW and Elk Lodges and various country clubs, but these groups either have an extremely broad membership (i.e. any veteran), or are open to the general public, or admit women as well as men. Even exclusive country clubs tend to be family-based, which creates an entirely different atmosphere from an elite men's club.

Baltzell distinguished (1958, 1991) between elite vis-a-vis upper class clubs, suggesting that some clubs tend to be more an economic elite rather than upper-class gentlemen's clubs. He uses Who's Who as the primary indicator of American elites and the Social Register as the principal basis for recognizing upper-class members. While I concur with Baltzell that these sources tend to distinguish elites from upper class old money families, neither is an all encompassing sources. The current Social Register contains approximately 43,000 families while Who's Who lists about 80,000 individuals. Selection methods for each are conducted by non-public committees, whose priorities are

not necessarily consistent historically nor compatible with Baltzell's intended uses.

Therefore, in this study the use of the term upper class will be restricted to general theoretical discussions and the term elite will be used to describe a particular category of private men's clubs in the United States.<sup>2</sup>

### Socio-Political Context of the Bohemian Club

My choice of studying the Bohemian Club was fairly easy. The Club has been the subject of over a decade of protests as well as lawsuits challenging its all male exclusiveness and advantages its members have accessing political and corporate power brokers. This has made the Bohemian Club simultaneously famous and infamous, depending on the social or political leanings of the perceiver. Current perspectives are ripe with misunderstandings from both challengers and supporters of the Club.

Just the title of Domhoff's book Who Rules America, implied, especially for those who have not read it, that the private secretive Bohemians are a wicked upper class cabal dedicated to ruling the world. This is how many Bohemians perceive the views of those on the outside, who protest the Grove. The protestors are seen as plotting radicals who will use the Grove for the publicity of their own political agendas, or as men-hating divorcees/lesbians out to attack male togetherness and traditional family values.

On the other hand, many of the stories and reports on Grove activities I was told by employees and activists are equally as untrue and as prejudiced as the Bohemians'

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<sup>2</sup>. For purposes of this study I will use the general definition of elite used by Thornten (1989 p.15), "to denote those individuals and families who by virtue of wealth, power, and/or some major cultural accomplishment or scholarship are recognized by the wealthy and powerful as carrying status, constitute the upper stratum of society..."



perceptions of the protestors. Some of the outsider myths about the Grove include:

- President Truman met with all his key advisors at the Grove in July of 1945 to decide when to drop the atom bomb on Japan.
- The Grove has U.S. military special forces for security around the perimeter.
- There are hidden microphones in the forests that serve as listening posts for intruders.
- There are snipers in the trees with laser scopes to protect important men at the Grove.
- President Nixon was kicked out of the Club for 20 years.
- Most of the waiters at the Grove are gay and they service the Bohemians after hours.

Most of the protest literature from the Bohemian Grove Action Network (BGAN) that I reviewed tended to focus on the important men at the Grove and their particular connections with numerous socio-political issues. Included in these were:

- environmental degradation
- rain forest destruction
- U.S. interests in South Africa
- nuclear power and weapons
- Central America/Contra Aid
- women's rights
- Navajo relocation at Big Mountain

Some newspaper accounts of BGAN protestors' views were as follows:

What we are trying to show is how connected these guys are... that there are relatively few white men in the country pulling the strings. And they're all coming here to have their fun and make decisions about our futures (S.F. Chronicle 7-16-82 p.3).

We don't protest these people's rights to meet with one another. But, important business is discussed that affects all of us and we object that it is conducted in secret (S.F. Chronicle 7-17-83).

For many of the demonstrators the issues they were concerned about were perceived as being planned and discussed in the Grove during the actual summer encampment they were protesting. Domhoff attempted to clarify this point on several

occasions, but the untrue public policy decision myths were well established.

San Francisco Chronicle reported July 17, 1982 (p.4):

Why do hundreds of the country's richest and most powerful men camp out in strict secrecy... They must be up to something people think, making business deals or cutting political decks on the sly. Professor G. William Domhoff... after interviewing members and employees... concluded that the encampment is pretty much what it claims to be, a combined fraternity party and Boy Scout Camp for the rich... But, Domhoff said the Grove forges strong personal ties among its members, much like a primitive secret society.

In another article that very same day the San Francisco Chronicle quoted demonstrators as protesting "because the encampment is a way public decisions are made beyond earshot of the public."

In 1986, Domhoff was again quoted as saying "Bohemian Grove is not a place of power,... It is merely a place where powerful people relax and enjoy... most people are too drunk to remember any policy things let alone make them (West Sonoma County Paper, July 10-16, 1986 p.16)."

Protestor mythology of elites planning policy in the Grove has been persistent and unproven. It is these charges of policy meetings that Bohemian Club members find particularly irksome. These policy planning myths contribute to the Bohemian's total rejection of the issues protestors wanted them to individually and collectively face.

Another difficulty in Bohemian-outsider relationships has been the overlapping use of terms referring to the Club itself as involved in these issues.

The club's involvement with nuclear power dates back to the Manhattan Project era, when Edward Teller, Ernest Lawrence and Luis Alvarez used their Bohemian connections to obtain funding (Moore and Hall undated).

It is this type of overlapping categorization of the Club as an entity being representative of its individual members' activities that Bohemians are quick to point out as a stereotypical error on the part of the outsiders.

It is within this context of outsider misunderstandings and members' responses that I choose to study the Bohemian Club. Elites do belong to the Club. This fact is not in dispute. But how many of them there are, for what purpose they belong, and what impacts the Club has on their lives and the lives of others is an important aspect of my research.

### Methods Statement

I conducted triangulation research using historical, qualitative, and network analysis methods to examine the San Francisco Bohemian Club since its formation in 1872. The years 1941, 1971, and 1991 served as benchmarks for a fifty-year comparative historical network analysis of Club members' corporate connections and political positions in various institutions through out the United States.

1941 was chosen as a pre-World War II year. 1971 was selected because of Domhoff's work being based on that time period, and 1991 was used because that is the most recent year for which full databases were available on individuals in corporate, policy and governmental institutions in the U.S. The databases established for this research project are as follows:

- Active Bohemian Club membership list for 1941, 1971, and 1991<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup>. Active Club membership means that I included only those members who were listed on the annual summer encampment lists. This includes 90% of all Club members (Baxter 1987) but excludes any new members and inactives.

- Lists of guests to summer encampments at the Bohemian Grove for 1971 and 1993.
- All State of California elected and appointed government positions for the years 1941, 1971, and 1991.
- All Federal Government appointees listed in U.S. government manual for 1991 (Club membership match for 1971).
- All directors and chief management employees of the largest (by assets) 100 non-California U.S. corporations for the years 1941, 1971, and 1991.
- All directors and chief management employees of the 50 largest (by assets) California corporations in the years 1941, 1971, and 1991.
- All directors of the Fortune 1,000 and the Forbes 500 U.S. corporations (1,144 corporations) for the year 1991.
- All directors of U.S. foundations with over one million dollars in assets for the years 1971 and 1991.
- Directors of the top twelve policy councils in the U.S. for 1973 and 1990 (partial for 1941).
- Corporate stock holdings of all 1991 Bohemians required to report to the Security Exchange Commission.

I used overall corporate assets as the primary criteria for database selection instead of selecting by corporate sector, such as financial or industrial. It is my belief that in a capitalist society assets are the single most consistent indicators of resource control. Just the top 100 U.S. firms in 1991 held assets in excess of two trillion dollars.

Assets also seemed to be a more historically valid comparative basis given sector changes such as the increased assets of financial institutions in the 1990s compared to industrial firms in the 1940s.

I made numerous visits to the historical archives at U.C. Berkeley, California Historical Society, and California State Library to look at the personal papers and records of several Bohemian Club members since the early 1920s. These records, many of them newly accessible, gave me an in-depth historical view of the personal feelings and daily lives of Bohemians in and out of the Club environment. Each of these archive sources also maintain a separate file on the San Francisco Bohemian Club, so I was able to look at hundreds of old documents, photos, books, and artistic works covering a 100 year period of the Club.

I conducted formal interviews with five Bohemian Club members, and had informal discussions with dozens of others. My interviews also included formal questioning of four Bohemian employees and informal interviews with four others. During the course of the research I talked to over 200 people regarding the San Francisco Bohemian Club.

I was able to access G. William Domhoff's files on the Bohemian Club, thereby developing a strong awareness of the sources and databases for his earlier works. During the two-year period of my research I was able to visit the Bohemian Club as a guest on two occasions. Fraternizing with Club members over dinner was most useful in gaining a sense of the interactive style of men at the Bohemian Club.

Perhaps most important of all for evaluating the interactive social process of the

Bohemian Club, was that I was able to attend the Spring Jinks Weekend, June 2, 3, 4, and 5, 1994 as a guest. This gave me an opportunity to do unparalleled participatory observation and to experience the ethos that is distinctively present among Club members. The Spring Jinks is an annual four-day event that serves as a warm-up for the midsummer encampment. The difference is that Club members can invite California guests for the Spring Jinks, but must have special Grove Committee approval for a California guest at the summer encampment. The Spring Jinks serves as a weekend when members can invite their California business associates, sons or personal friends and let them have an opportunity to experience the Grove.

I was a guest of Mr. Al Baxter at Silverado Squatters Camp and was able to come and go throughout the Grove for four days. I was diligent in maintaining a qualitative evaluation of my experience and took over forty pages of notes on the daily happenings. These notes were a significant resource in the development of this work, and are represented throughout the following chapters.

Because of the use of historical archives, participatory observation and network analysis, I believe this study provides a broad comprehensive historical view of elite interaction in the San Francisco Bohemian Club, and substantially expands Domhoff's earlier work on the Club. Given that the Bohemian Club is one of the top exclusive all-male private clubs in the United States, my findings will serve as a comparative basis for additional research in socio-economic elite institutions.

It is only through a clear understanding of elite privilege, or the potential thereof, that participatory democracy can exist. To forego an analysis of relative advantage for

the elites in a society is to relegate all others to a secondary status and diminished opportunities.

I feel strongly about democracy and equal opportunity within social institutions.

It is these closely-held values that have motivated this work.

## Chapter 2

### **Historical Development of the Men's Clubs in the United States and the San Francisco Bohemian Club**

Private men's clubs have existed in America for over 250 years. The first recorded club was the "State in Schuylkili", a Philadelphia based eating and drinking organization which was founded in 1732. Harvard University students prompted the formation of the Hasty Pudding Institute in 1770 and the Porcellian Club in 1791 and Yale's well known Skull and Bones originated in 1832. However, it was with the formation of the Philadelphia Club in 1830 and the Union Club of New York in 1836 that London-style men's clubs first came to America (Amory 1960).

London's West End men's clubs, the prototype for American clubs, originated as regular gatherings of men with similar interests in taverns or coffee shops. Sir Walter Raleigh is reported to have founded the Friday Street Club which met at the Mermaid Tavern. Club life in London represented the collective alliance of men with similar tastes and perspectives. Scientific and literary clubs were some of the more honorable associations while gambling and drinking organizations abounded in the 17th and 18th centuries (Gritin 1964). Some of the more famous early English gentlemen's clubs that are still active to this day are Whites (founded in 1696), Brooks (1774), Carlton (1831) and the Reform Club (1834).

Elite club life in London has been historically tied to upper levels of society. To be selected for membership in a private men's club was a "landmark acknowledgement" of a young man's career (Gritin, p 52, 1960). Gentlemanly behavior was the foremost rule in early private men's clubs in England and America. Members were expected to



treat each other civilly and with formal correctness. Violations of this standard could result in suspension or expulsion from the club. Secondly, gentlemen's clubs were a male sanctuary. Women were seldom, if ever, allowed to enter.

Griten (1960) writes the following story:

... an unimaginable scene did... take place in 1880 at the New York Union Club, where a wife... gone berserk, burst into the club and raced up the stairs into the whist room to drag her husband away. The man reacted with great dignity, he introduced his wife to the alarmed and outraged members, invited her to take a seat, finished his game, gave his wife his arm, and bowing to his friends, left the club never to return (p. 97).

This image of the emotional woman and the controlled dignified male represents classic gender stereotyping and a core value in the formation of elite private men's clubs separate from the feminine environment of the home.

British men's clubs and their American counterparts served as a male refuge from domestic reproach and a place of social interaction where boundaries of propriety were strictly observed. Clubs gave men a private space wherein behaviors restricted elsewhere, drinking, smoking, gambling, storytelling and other incongruities were tolerated or collectively supported. A special interest in business, science, politics or the arts could be promoted, shared and collaborated, while self-indulgences, eating, and entertaining were restricted only by internal club conventions. A gentleman's club was a sanctum of racial, sexual and class homogeneity, and a place where ease of interaction, contentment and shared prejudices reigned supreme.

Club life followed Englishmen around the world. In the United States the 19th century saw the formation of dozens of English-style men's clubs throughout the country. For example, clubs in New York City have a long and colorful history. The Century Club was formed in 1847 because the older Union Club was not considered intellectual

enough. The Union League Club came with the Civil War as a predominately Republican organization, and the Manhattan Club started in 1864 as a Democratic group. Knickerbockers originated in 1871, the Metropolitan in 1891 and the Brooks Club in 1903. Although the Union and Manhattan Clubs were originally politically motivated, by the turn of the century they were primarily social organizations (McGlodrick, 1930).

In reference to the New York clubs Amory (1960) says:

Here a man found... his four freedoms of speech against democracy, freedom of worship of aristocracy, freedom from want of tipping, and above all, freedom from fear of women (p.205).

American men's clubs served a similar function as did their British models. They were extremely homogeneous, representing the upper elite of white male society. Similarities of interest, values and social status were strict criteria for club admittance and a shared feeling of collectively-justified superiority based on variations of "Social Darwinism" were commonplace (Van der Zee 1974 p.60).

Baltzell (1958), states that,

In most major American cities there are one or two distinguished metropolitan men's clubs whose members dominate the social and economic life of the community (p.336). An example of this is Amory's 1947 description of the Bostonian upper crust using clubs as the "core of the social system" (p. 354).

Baltzell goes on to say that these clubs are... largely male dominated, and patriarchal, and make up the center of the upper regions of a social system in any large city (p. 336).

The Century Club was one of the first in the U.S. to actively seek members who were authors, artists and men of letters as club partners with business executives, bankers and industrialists. This blending of the arts and business served as a model for other clubs throughout the U.S. including the Tavern Clubs of Boston and Chicago, Cosmos in

Washington, D.C., Cactus Club in Denver, the Lotos, Players and Lambs in New York and the Bohemian Club in San Francisco (Amory 1960).

The Astor Hotel on Sacramento Street in San Francisco served as the clubhouse for the first Bohemians. Organized in 1872 the Bohemian Club was established as a gathering place for newspaper reporters and men who like arts and literature.

The origin of the term bohemian comes from the French artistic movement of the 1830's and represented the mutual supportive companionship of artists and intellectuals. Popularized in London among elite men's clubs in the mid-19th century, the term bohemian became familiar throughout the English-speaking world (Kent 1973). The purpose of the Bohemian Club was expressed as follows:

Article I - This organization shall be known as the Bohemian Club. It is instituted for the association of gentlemen connected professionally with literature, art, music, the drama, and also those who, by reason of their love or appreciation of these objects, may be deemed eligible.

(Bohemian Club Constitution and By-Laws 1887 CA State Library)

By the 1880's, at the latest, businessmen had joined the Club in large numbers. Original Bohemians found that admitting men of wealth helped pay the expenses (Van der Zee 1974 p.21). Club membership rose rapidly from 182 members in 1874 to 561 in 1887. Early Club rosters do not show any difference between artist members and those who join as appreciants of the arts. The 1887 roster has an interesting combination of literary figures and San Francisco businessmen including: social radical Henry George, four members of the Crocker banking family, three Spreckles, William Randolph Hearst, Bay Area shipbuilder Arthur W. Moore, and fourteen Army/Navy officers. Honorary members included Oliver Wendell Holmes, Samuel L. Clemens, and Joaquin

Miller. Oscar Wilde was entertained at the Bohemian Club in 1882 and is said to have drunk his guests under the table (Starr 1977). The Club rapidly outgrew the Astor Hotel and by 1877 had moved to a building at 430 Pine Street in San Francisco.

The early Bohemian tradition even allowed for restricted visits from women. The hours of 10:00 A.M. to 11:30 A.M. and 2:00 P.M. to 5:00 P.M. every Wednesday were the times members could invite women into the clubhouse. These hours were restricted even further in later years to only allow women during special occasions such as art shows and musical recitals. Women were completely banned from the clubhouse from 1910 to 1933 (San Francisco Chronicle, May 30, 1938).

Club activities included poetry recitations, performances by musicians, lectures and frequent plays. Regular entertainment became known as a "Jinks" after a Scottish drinking game (Van der Zee 1974 p.19), as alcohol consumption was a major part of Club events. A Club Jinks had a master of ceremonies known as a Sire who was in charge of orchestrating the program.<sup>4</sup> These positions were filled on a rotational basis, so numerous men could become involved in Club events.

In 1878 several dozen Bohemians held a Jinks in the forest in Sonoma County near what is now known as Camp Taylor (California Historical Society, Bohemian Club 1947). This was the start of a long Bohemian tradition of trekking to the Sonoma County redwoods during July and August of each year for camping and self entertainment.

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<sup>4</sup>. The term "sire" is used by Club members to mean master of ceremonies for Club events.

By 1882 Bohemians were doing regular midsummer weekend campouts under the stars at various locations in Sonoma County. They rented what is now known as the Bohemian Grove from the Sonoma Lumber Company between the years of 1893 - 1899.

Sonoma County was heavily logged during the latter part of the 19th century. Railroad spurs were built into vast areas along the Russian River where clear cutting was a common practice. Bohemians would ride the trains from Marin County to the remaining forested sites for overnight camping. A particularly beautiful grove of old growth redwoods was preserved by Sonoma Lumber Company in the hopes of greater profits at a later date. It was this 160 acre property surrounded by clear cut lands that the Bohemian Club arranged to purchase in 1899. The Club made twenty-eight purchases of land over a 67 year period and now owns 2,712 acres that surround the original old growth redwood grove (Hood, Baxter 1987).

Initially the Bohemian Grove was kept in a mostly natural state, with members erecting tents along the valley floor for long weekends. By 1914 members were extending weekend campouts to three weekends over two weeks. Ceremonial traditions and Jinks in the Grove became a regular part of Bohemian life.

1889 was also the year Bohemians had moved into a permanent clubhouse at Post and Grant in San Francisco in order to accommodate their larger membership. By the turn of the century the Bohemian Club had accomplished something unique among elite men's clubs by combining a city-based club with a rural retreat. This particular rural-

urban combination has given the Bohemian Club a worldwide reputation as a gathering place of the high and the mighty and attracted kings, ambassadors, and world leaders for visits and membership.

One is really overcome with all those notables up there (Grove)... They come from Europe, Australia, from every state in the Union. Paris even sent several... for the majestic beauty of the redwood camp on the Russian River (San Francisco Chronicle 7-20-22).

The 1906 San Francisco fire destroyed the Bohemian clubhouse, including its library and most of its art. After the fire members rented various locations for four years, religiously maintaining regular Club activities until the completion of a new clubhouse at the corner of Post and Taylor<sup>5</sup>

The Club spent \$300,000 on the land and the new building. Bohemians purchased long-term bonds as part of the funds and the Pacific Mutual Life Insurance Company loaned the Club \$200,000 at 6% interest (San Francisco Chronicle 8-17-08).

The San Francisco Chronicle gave first page coverage to the opening of the new clubhouse on November 13, 1910.

The new building is four stories in height. On the first floor is the main hall or court in Corinthian style,... the lounging room on the south side is in different shades of lake green and antique gold [as well as] ... the billiard room, dining room and wine room. The second floor is the library in Elizabethan style and the theater. The third and fourth floors are given over to members' and guest rooms.<sup>6</sup>

This article on the front page of the Chronicle was symbolic of the Club's

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<sup>5</sup>. The Lambs Club of New York donated \$5,000 to the Club towards the purchase of a new clubhouse. (Annals 1972)

<sup>6</sup>. It was common for Club members to rent rooms and use the Club as a permanent residence.

importance and high reputation in San Francisco. The Club activities were reportable events and the early 1900 Bay Area newspapers were filled with accounts of Bohemian Club activities. The following are a brief sample of such newspaper stories:

### **San Francisco Chronicle**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Article Title</b>
3/4/1909	Bohemian Club Artists Exhibit Good Pictures
8/18/1910	Bohemian Club's Jinks Music To Be Given
8/11/1913	Bohemia Stages Wonder Production
8/7/1920	Hadley Star of Bohemian Club Concert
7/20/1922	Bohemian Club's Midsummer Jinks Now in Progress
11/3/1927	Bohemians Present S. F. Midsummer Grove Music
8/5/1930	King Arthur Rules In The Redwoods

It was even common for the Bay Area newspapers to report on Bohemian elections and present the platforms of the various candidates for office. In the eleven-year period between 1904 and 1915 the San Francisco Chronicle ran 331 stories on the Bohemian Club. This represented a yearly average of thirty articles, making Bohemia one of the most highly publicized club in the San Francisco Bay Area.

Some people resented the exclusiveness of the Bohemian Club. Guerneville residents in Sonoma County protested the Club's private use of one of the last old growth redwood groves in the area and petitioned for a public road through the property (Annals 1972). Private property rights prevailed, however, and the Grove has been maintained exclusively for Club use up to the present time.

By World War I the Bohemian Club had emerged as a premier elite men's club, with a flourishing arts and literary program and a one-of-a-kind private redwood grove.

Early Bohemians liked to publicize their prominence by releasing news reports of important guests attending the Grove or Club functions. In fact the Club was so famous that in 1921 the United States Shipping Board allowed a tanker built by Moore Shipping in Oakland to be named The Bohemian Club.<sup>7</sup> A full Club ceremony was held at the launching, with the Club chorus singing as the ship slid down the ramp (Annals 1972). The following is a list of notables in Bohemia covered by the San Francisco Chronicle between 1919 and 1931:

**Guests Attending Bohemian Club Functions 1918 to 1931  
as Listed in San Francisco Chronicle Articles**

8/10/18	Magnus W. Alexander	Consultant to General Electric and Manager of National Industrial Conference Board
7/20/22	Dr. Henry Pritchett	President of Carnegie Foundation
	Ray Long	Editor of Redbook
	Douglas Fairbanks	Actor
	Charlie Chaplin	Actor
7/25/22	Fred Olmsted	Sage Foundation, U.S. Housing Corporation
8/3/24	Dr. Nicholas Butler	President of Columbia University
8/1/26	Crown Prince Gustaf Adolf	Sweden
	Viscount Astor	England
	Thomas Beer	Novelist
8/7/27	Nicholas Longworth	Politician, Speaker of the House
	Rupert Blue	Surgeon General
	Ossip Gasrilowitsch	Famous Pianist, Detroit Symphony Orchestra
	William Donovan	Assistant Attorney General
	Roy Howard	Chairman of Board, Script Howard Newspapers
8/2/28	Dwight Davis	Secretary of War
	Will Rogers	Public figure
	H.F. Stone	U.S. Supreme Court Justice

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<sup>7</sup>. Joseph A. Moore, shipbuilder, had been a member of the Club since 1904.



8/4/29	Ernest I. Jahneke Edward Golding Arthur Capper	Assistant Secretary of the Navy Motion Picture Director U.S. Senator from Kansas
7/18/30	W.B. Storey Commodore James H. Bull	President, Santa Fe Railroad U.S.N. Retired
7/27/30	Roy Chapin	Chairman of Board, Hudson Motor Co.
7/17/31	Dr. Ray Lyman Sir Hamilton Hart  Arthur Wood  Gen. Adrian Fleming Cornelius Kelly Gerry Heath August Pabst	Secretary of the Interior Conductor, London Symphony Orchestra Former Director of Chicago Stock Exchange U.S. Army, Retired President, Anaconda Copper Co. Assistant Secretary of the Treasury Brewer

As evidenced by the above names the Bohemians frequently hosted art, business and government notables whose attendance gave the club prestige and social import, as well as an international reputation as an elite gathering place.

In 1932 the Chronicle published a long list of important people attending the Grove, but 1933,34,35 had only brief articles on Grove programs without names of guests. Important guests were not reported on again until 1936-37. I have been unable to determine if this was a deliberate policy on the part of Club officers, however there was a definite drop in notable publicity during that period, and this was to become a conscious policy enforced in the 1950's.

The Club grew rapidly before World War I and had a membership of 1,259 by 1914. The 1914 Club roster shows the various categories of membership as follows:

Resident members	787
Non-resident	241
Navy	19
Army	49
Faculty	29
Associate members	114
Honorary	20 (Bohemian Club, 1914)

Associate members were primarily artists, writers, actors, and musicians who were the workhorses for the various productions and events. Associate members were often employed in other full-time jobs, yet had musical talents that found fulfillment at the Club.

In 1887 the entrance fee for joining the Club was \$100 and the dues were \$3.00 a month. By 1930 it had risen to \$500 initiation fee and \$15 a month dues. Today the initiation fee for a regular member is \$10,000 with \$120 a month dues. Associate Members are admitted without a fee and only pay half of the monthly dues (Baxter 1-13-94).

In the late 1920's the Bohemian Club had close to 2,000 members and pressures began to mount to build a larger clubhouse. The members voted in 1930 to increase their dues by \$5 a month to create a new building fund (Annals 1972). By December 1931 financing for \$800,000 had been arranged to initiate building a new clubhouse. In May of 1932 plans for the new building were submitted to the members for approval (San Francisco Chronicle May 13, 1932). In the summer of 1933 the Club took up residence at the Sir Francis Drake Hotel when the dismantling of the old clubhouse

began. In May of 1933 women were invited into the clubhouse for the first time since 1910 to a reception honoring the old building's demise.

The San Francisco Chronicle reported on the progress of the new building (1-19-34) describing the six story, \$1,000,000 construction project as one of "the finest physical plants of its kind in the world." A Chronicle story on March 31, 1934 described how the new modern soft diffused lighting, the Club would install, was similar to that used in the Municipal Opera House.

The formal dedication of the new clubhouse occurred October 13, 1934 with the oldest living Bohemian unlocking the doors. The Chronicle story on Sunday, October 14th was significantly shorter and more subdued than the Chronicle article covering the 1910 opening. Instead of describing the grandeur of the new clubhouse the Chronicle simply stated in a seven paragraph article:

The new structure adds two floors of bedrooms, and also houses an improved Jinks room or theater seating more than 750, a permanent art gallery, a smaller art gallery, an improved library and a roof solarium.

(Chronicle 10-14-34)

The 1934 story was written without a picture and run on the inside pages of the paper, whereas in 1910 the new clubhouse story was on the front page with a full photo of the new building. I don't think that the Club was any less prestigious in 1934 than 1910; if anything, the opposite was probably true. However, like the dropping of notables' names for a few years during the depression, the opening of an new million dollar clubhouse may have been a sensitive issue given the high levels of unemployment and poverty across the nation at that time.

Secondly, by the end of the summer of 1934 San Francisco had just been through a massive General Strike where over 100,000 union workers had walked off their jobs. Businessmen in San Francisco, many of them Bohemian Club members, had been extremely active in anti-strike activities during that summer (Phillips 1994). The midsummer encampment at the Grove started exactly as the General Strike was initiated. A Howeller camp history gives an account of the mood at the camp in the summer of 1934.

We will never forget the summer of 1934... General David Barrows, Commander of the California National Guard was thronged, coming out of the dining area by eager Bohemians who wanted to know about the General Strike in San Francisco. So many of them wished to hear the General that in a short time at least seventy-five Bohemians came up to the camp... It was a notable gathering, including the head of the Marine Corp, A.P. Giannini, The Hale brothers,... Ray Lyman Wilbut, and... Charles W. Field (Howell 1947 p.315-316).

The symbolism of opening an opulent new clubhouse for the rich had to be a sharp contrast to the turmoil that had occurred only a few months before, and a sensitive issue for Bohemians concerned about labor unrest.<sup>8</sup>

The following summer (1935), during and after the Grove gathering, someone set several fires near and on Bohemian Grove property. The fires were quite severe and had the wind shifted could have threatened the entire Grove. This incident is unrecorded in the annals of the Club or any Club histories I have read. I only discovered the story by accident while perusing John F. Neylan's personal papers at the University of California

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<sup>8</sup>1934 marked the first time the Club required official employee identification cards to be issued to all camp employees (Oliver 6-23-34).

Berkeley's Bancroft Library.

A letter from Marshall Dill, president of the Bohemian Club to John Neylan dated September 17, 1935 reads as follows:

The matter of protection from fire to the Bohemian Grove has never been as important or more forcibly brought to our attention than during the last two months. During the encampment we had a very bad fire within our property which necessitated the use of all our equipment, all our organization of manpower and forty or fifty Bohemians in addition, together with twenty-five or thirty of the State Forestry Service, to finally bring the fire under control. As a matter of fact, the fire was not completely put out for several days. It burned a very large area and with a change of wind might have threaten the heart of the Grove.

The opinion of those who studied the particular fire was unanimous in the belief that it was of incendiary origin. The week before Labor Day four fires developed within our property and the result is that at the present time not only is the Grove carefully patrolled and watched but both the Government and the State have their representatives there investigating the possibility of all the fires during the week having been of incendiary origin (Neylan 9-17-35).

It would be speculative to assume that the Bohemian Club was being targeted by disapproving citizens in the summer of 1935, however someone or some group did set fires at the Grove in 1935 and the Club seems to have chosen to ignore the incident in its historical records and stories.<sup>9</sup>

As the Club expanded and the popularity of the Grove increased, there was a desire by Club members to build permanent camp structures at the Grove. From 1929 forward, various camps constructed tent platforms, camp clubhouses and in many cases rustic cabins for members' use.

The valley floor of the Grove along river road is 75 to 100 yards wide and

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<sup>9</sup>. I asked Bohemian Club historical researcher Al Baxter about this incident and he was completely unaware that it had happened.

historically campers had set up tents among the redwoods in the flat areas. The addition of permanent camp structures encouraged the use of the steep hillsides, and made room for elaborate campgrounds to be built by the wealthier Club members. In the mid-1920s the Lost Angels Camp members hired San Francisco architect Willis Polk, designer of the Pan Pacific Exposition Buildings, to "go the limit" on the creation of a splendid camp at the Grove. The results were one of the more elaborate camp clubhouses and decks complete with mahogany dressers and chairs for each tent; sterling silver tableware, and Japanese stewards in white uniforms with gold braid (The Lost Angels 1958). The Lost Angels Camp today sits on what is commonly referred to as "Snob Hill". I could really not tell any significant difference from other similar camps when I observed it from its entrance in 1994.

The development of permanent camp buildings lead to the consolidation of camps. In 1929 there were 169 camps in the Grove and by 1994 there were 124. Camps can be born and die with their members, or merge into other camps. Between the years 1972 and 1986 eleven smaller camps terminated, eight new camps were formed and two merged (Baxter, Oliver 1987).

A typical camp at the Bohemian Grove has some sort of entryway that depicts the camp name. Pig'n Whistle has a ceramic group of suckling pigs at its' entrance. Toyland has a soft light behind a toy soldier figure in a glass case. Many camps have rustic redwood bark-covered buildings and fences that set apart camp boundaries. One entryway was set through a redwood stump wide enough for two adults to pass.

The typical camp has a clubhouse building that holds a bar and a kitchen including

a sheltered area adequate to seat the camp members during inclement weather. There is an outside deck area large enough for hosting parties of 50-100 men. A campfire pit or fireplace is a featured part in the clubhouse area and fires are set every evening. Many camps have a piano for spontaneous sing-alongs and campfire cheer. Camps tend to display various former Bohemian posters and event announcements, especially those sired or written by camp members. Some camps have pin-up pictures of women in various states of undress, but of the dozen or so camps I visited I did not observe any overtly sexual or pornographic pictures.

As camp memberships in the 124 camps (1994) ranges from less than half a dozen members to up to 125 individuals, camp sizes vary significantly. The average camp has approximately 16 members with usually 1-2 live-in valets, paid for by the camp members, who serve drinks, snacks and meals to members and guests.<sup>10</sup>

Member sleeping quarters in the Grove can be as simple as four-man tent cabins to spartan motel-size private rooms. Almost all construction is of redwood, so that a rustic forest theme is present throughout the Grove. Sixty-three years of Grove additions and improvements have resulted in elaborate redwood staircases, winding forest trails, several miles of paved roads, a central dining area that seats over 1,500, a large campfire

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<sup>10</sup>. Baxter estimated that 2/3's of the camps have valets (1-28-94). Camps have hot water showers in their central restrooms, and interconnecting trails between central clubhouses and various other buildings or tents.

It is a little over a mile between the front gate to the last camps on River Road. There is a 24-hour transportation system where open air trucks with rear seating for about twenty adults cruise back and forth in the paved roads allowing for men to get on or off at their convenience, making movement from one end of the Grove to another relatively quick and efficient.

circle, art studio, museum, civic center, bar and cafe, and two magnificent outdoor theaters.<sup>11</sup>

The Lake, as it is called on the Grove map, is about 100 feet wide and 400 feet long. The Lake was originally built in the mid-1920s, and relined with earth and concrete in 1981 (Hood and Baxter 1987). The Lake could be a Disney creation as it has an artificial waterfall tumbling into it, and water lilies kept in natural-looking patterns by water jets embedded in the lake bottom. An early morning mist rises off the Lake giving it a mythic Arthurian quality. A bandstand in front of the a giant concrete owl sets on the south shore of the Lake, and is used for concerts and ceremonies during Grove sessions.

When the camp is in session a fully-staffed fire department is on the scene, as well as two doctors and two emergency medical technicians who man the Grove's medical center.

Walking through the grove at night is a audio-visual delight. Music, songs, and laughter fill the forest and lights twinkling through trees and bushes scattered up the hillsides give the Grove an enchanted forest quality. A California legislator and candidate for statewide office, after visiting as a guest in 1993, described the Grove as "Fairytale Land" (Interview A 1994). Grove employees in a group interview depicted the night appearance of the Grove as similar to the Ewok Village in Stephen Spielberg's

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<sup>11</sup>. Bohemian Grove was investigated by the Sonoma County Assessor in 1987 and was found to have done \$300,000 worth of improvement since 1975 without the benefit of construction permits. The Club admitted its error and blamed a transition in personnel for its mistake (San Francisco Chronicle 9-11-87).



Starwars (Interview B 1994). The redwood trees themselves are majestic with the tallest tree towering over 300 feet above the dining circle. Certain areas in the Grove have a shrine-like quality, that some Japanese visitors have compared to sacred forested sites in Japan (Baxter June 3, 1994).

All of this, of course, is for the exclusive use of members and guests. The Grove has an ample staff of security guards to discourage uninvited intruders into their private retreat. The Bohemian Club has had a summer encampment at the Grove every year since 1899, even during World War II when formal encampments were cancelled, hundreds of men would still make the pilgrimage to the Grove for a two-week summer visit.

Camp members may reserve use of their camp for weekends and special events any time of the year. But other than the two week midsummer encampment during July and August, and a few special weekend events (Spring Jinks, and Spring Picnic) the Grove sits mostly empty, maintained by several permanent staff who live on the grounds.

As many as 2,500 members and guests may attend some portion of the Grove encampment each summer. Of the three weekends during the encampment usually the middle weekend has the highest attendance. Midweek during the summer only 400-500 men actually remain in the Grove and the pace is considerably less hectic than on the weekends.

A Grove staff of up to 500 employees is present when the Grove is in full session. Traditionally, union waiters and cooks from San Francisco were hired at the Grove but in recent years an increasing number of local young people, including many college

students, have been employed in addition to union help. Current pay ranges from \$8.00 to \$13.00 an hour depending on the duties involved (Interview B and C 1994).

The city clubhouse is still very much as it was originally built in 1934. Visiting the City Club, as Bohemians like to call it, is a much more formal experience than the Grove. When you enter as a guest you are signed-in by your host. If your host is not present you are asked to wait in the lounge area while he is paged and can escort you into the Club. Upon entry a large general sitting room is the first area you enter. It comprises dozens of dark leather over-stuffed chairs and couches, and heavy dark wood tables. Numerous paintings are on the walls and about 50 contemporary magazines for browsing are available including: Newsweek, New York Review of Books, Christian Science Monitor, Barrons, and Time.

The adjacent Cartoon Room is the Club's main bar area. Its name is appropriate because it is filled with historical cartoons, lithographs, and pictures of Club events, plays, and memorials. A dozen ten-person round tables encourage singles and groups to join others for conversation. A Bohemian Club flyer (1956) encouraged members to sit down, "and introduce yourself and state your calling..." when at the Club.

The same floor also includes the Bohemian Club library, which would be adequate for a small college. The books fill a large two-story room from floor to ceiling with a balcony circling the second floor. Original rare books authored by Bohemians, such as Jack London (member 1904-1915) are kept under lock and key. Other than that all books are on the honor system, with a member signing out and returning them at his leisure.

The entire Bohemian Club is filled with art work done by members: bronze statues, memorabilia (Herbert Hoover's fly rod), and numerous pictures of events and personalities. Upstairs, on the third floor is a seven-hundred person dining room with a stage for Jinks dinners and special celebrations. On the same floor is the famous Grove Room, with its four-wall mural of the Grove exactly as if you were standing at the Civic Center in 1934.<sup>12</sup>

The City Club also has a 750-person theater set up for full stage productions, with sound rooms, and all the normal backstage necessities such as make-up rooms, carpenters' shop, set design areas, and rooms holding thousands of costumes collected over the years. Bohemians even own a 2,500 year old mummy donated to the Club by an Egyptologist, Jeremiah Lynch in 1914. The mummy, known as Lady Isis, rests in a glass case near the entrance to the Bohemian theater.

The street level floor has two additional separate entrances, one onto Post Street and one onto Taylor. These are used as entrances for the theater and the art gallery. They served as public entrances in the days before World War II when the Club allowed the San Franciscans to view its annual art displays. Today, entrance to the City Club is by invitation only. The annual art show, while still held, is seen only by Club members and specially invited guests. There are numerous rooms upstairs available for small gatherings and meetings. Few members are long-term residents today, but out-of-town members can reserve a room for overnight stay. City Club hotel rooms are named after

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<sup>12</sup>. The term "Civic Center" refers to the central administrative area at the Grove which includes the Bar and Grill, Post Office and Grove Store.

various camps at the Grove and decorated accordingly. I have visited the Club on two occasions, once in 1992 and again in 1994. I could detect no changes in the Club during that period. Tradition is an important aspect of Bohemia and the Clubhouse clearly reflects a long-held concern with that principal.

Current membership in the Bohemian Club is about 2,400 men. Membership levels since the 1930s have gone up only a little. There was a Depression-inspired drop in membership through World War II (1941 membership 1,643), and then a gradual rise of about 1% per every three years since 1950 (Atcheson 1987). Membership categories reflect the Club's philosophy of inter-mixing artists, scholars, and businessmen with the latter paying most of the bills. 1987 categories of membership are as follows:

Regular members	1,000
Non-Resident members	500
Regular professionals	100
actors	
musicians	
artists	
authors	
Associate members	300
chorus	
orchestra	
band	
Faculty	127
Military officers	15
Foreign consultants	18

Several other categories make up the balance of membership which includes Old Guard (40 year membership), honorary members and inactives (Atcheson 1987). The current waiting list for Club membership in the regular and non-resident categories is approximately fifteen years. Special preference does go to younger men. The Club has

divided the waiting list into ten age groups, from under 30 to over 70. In order to keep young members involved, Club admittance is an affirmative action age category system that gives preference to under-represented age groupings (Thompson archive 2-12-70). Between 1980 and 1987 404 Bohemians passed away, for an average of fifty-eight deaths per year. This, along with a slowly expanding overall membership, allows an incoming class of new members on an annual basis (Annals 1987).

Membership in the Bohemian Club is by invitation only and requires an applicant to be sponsored by two current non-related members. Applicants for membership complete a detailed questionnaire similar to a job application, which also asks them about their artistic or literary talents. Applicants may submit letters of references from other members in support of their candidacy. In order to be elected to the Club an applicant must receive nine yes votes from the eleven-person membership committee. The membership committee will write the members listed as known by the applicant, and seek responses to personal questions about the applicants', personality, character, talents, and sociability (Lawrence archive 3-9-50).

The Club has always maintained a balance between regular members, most of whom are business executives (See Chapter 4) and the artistic/musical members who provide much of the entertainment. This balance is a long held tradition, that is firmly adhered too. Associate members tend to recruit other associate members into the Club, and the waiting list for a talented tuba player can be quite short if the band is in need of that particular skill.

A comparison of the ratios of categories of membership from 1914 to the present

reveals that 13% of the Club's membership slots were allocated to faculty and artistic members in 1914, whereas 25.3% of the slots were set aside for these groups in 1987. This reveals that today the Club takes an even stronger position in support of artistic members than it did in earlier years.

I conducted a geographical analysis of active Bohemian Club members in 1991.<sup>13</sup> The results show that currently Bohemians come from thirty-five states and twelve foreign countries. Besides California, the top sixteen states and the District of Columbia are as follows:

#### **Out-of-State Members**

<b>State</b>	<b>Number of Club Members</b>
New York	29
Washington	22
Illinois	19
Washington D.C.	18
Texas	17
Connecticut	13
Arizona	10
Hawaii	10
Ohio	10
Nevada	10
Michigan	9
Maryland	9
Colorado	8
Florida	8
Pennsylvania	8
Virginia	8
TOTAL:	208

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<sup>13</sup>. As mentioned in Chapter One, for the purposes of this research work, I have used the annual Bohemian Grove list as my comparative database. This is meant to focus on active participatory Club members for sociological analysis and leaves out inactive and very new members.

The other nineteen states have a total of only sixty members, so 78% of all out-of-California active Bohemian members come from only sixteen states. Washington, Arizona, Nevada, and Hawaii reflect the long historical commercial patterns on the West Coast, and the balance of the states are major commercial and political centers in the U.S. Of the 500 non-resident members, close to half actually live in California, but more than 100 miles from the Club, which gives them non-resident status. The largest number of these California non-residents live in the Los Angeles area. Of the twelve countries represented in Bohemia, England and Canada top the list with four members each. Germany, Philippines and Bermuda have two members and Panama, Switzerland, India, Hong Kong, Bahamas, Japan, and Ireland each have one Club member. As one of the Canadian residents is Edgar Kaiser from the California Kaiser family, it may well be that a number of the foreign residents are actually U.S. citizens working abroad.

Active faculty members in 1991 came from twenty-four universities, seventeen of which were California institutions. Of the fifty-eight active faculty, twenty-one were professors or administrators from University of California, Berkeley. Stanford University had six members and University of California Davis had four. All other universities had only one or two members. It is clear that the San Francisco Bohemian Club is predominately a California-based institution with approximately 85% of all members residents of this state.

The quotas for categories of membership in 1969 were very close to those in 1987 except for non-resident members which went up by 20%. There is probably a very practical reason for this. Non-resident members pay the same dues and initiation fees

but are not as likely to use the clubhouse on a regular basis in San Francisco, thus while not over-burdening the City Club, they can still participate in encampments.

The development of the San Francisco Bohemian Club has occurred over a 122-year history. In that time the Club has achieved global acknowledgement.

Loyal McLaren (1972) writes about how Prince Philip sought to visit the Grove:

Before leaving London for a visit to California in November, 1962, Prince Philip wrote to Jack Merrill, an old friend and expressed a desire to visit the Bohemian Grove... Since the weather was unpredictable at this time of the year; we decided it would be safer to hold the party inside the grill and bar building... we restricted the invitation to former presidents of the club, committee chairmen, and groups of our highly talented entertainers... At luncheon... Charlie Kendrick delivered the speech of welcome. However, the show was stolen by Prince Philip, who made a most amusing but salty speech in keeping with the traditions of Bohemia. (p. 451)

The Bohemian Grove has been a major contributing factor to the Club's international reputation. The ownership and exclusive use of a private 1,500 year old redwood grove has placed the Bohemian Club in a unique position among elite mens' clubs in the world. The maintenance of a stylistically traditional city clubhouse rooted in the anachronism of a 1900 century English gentlemen's club, has also contributed to its distinction. To Club members the Bohemian Club and Grove stand as time-honored sentinels against the crassness of a modern age. As men pass and the next generation matures the sacredness of these private spaces multiplies. Members share in the belief that a man's honor recorded in Club history is as immortal as the sacred redwoods themselves.

Every year Bohemians find each other somewhat older, or very much older; a little changed, or very much changed; and sometimes



transformed from dear friends to cherished memories. But the trees stand, soaring in venerability and strength, redolent of the affection we have had for them, and for the men who have been our companions among these vast trunks (Herman Wouk 1987).

## CHAPTER 3

### **Owls In The Redwoods The Culture of the Bohemian Club and Grove**

In order to appreciate the social interaction at the Bohemian Club, it is important to have an understanding of Bohemian culture. This includes not only the ceremonies and traditions of Bohemia, but their socio-emotional content as well.

Something has sustained this Club for 122 years. Something has emerged within the Club that draws world class applicants willing to wait fifteen years to get in. Perhaps some members join for business purposes, or the seeking of political connections, or even just the social status of being a Bohemian. Yet, there must be more here than connective networking and status that sustains the intense loyalty and a fierce sense of weness so often expressed by Bohemian Club members (Baxter 94, Starr 77, Wouk 87).

The Bohemian Club's motto, "Weaving spiders, come not here", first appeared on a Club announcement in 1875. This was taken from Shakespeare's "A midsummer Night's Dream", and was intended to speak to the inappropriateness of conducting or soliciting business at Club functions. This whole issue will be covered extensively in Chapter 4, but at this point I would like to say that in group situations Bohemians seems to follow a strict observance of this motto. In the numerous group settings I observed at the Grove and at the City Club, only one time did a conversation drift to a specific members' business matters, and in that case it was a camp captain taking some warm-hearted kidding from other camp members regarding a restaurant investment in New York on which he had lost a good deal of money. One time when I was speaking with

a San Francisco attorney at the Grove, I asked him if I could have his card and perhaps call him later. His response was that we were not supposed to trade cards, but he went ahead and handed me one when he thought others were not looking. While at the Grove I heard a story about a guest who violated the no business tradition by soliciting other camp members for an investment. Late in the night several Club members allegedly roused him from his bunk and unceremoniously escorted him to the front gate. The tradition of weaving spiders is definitely honored in the day-to-day conversations of gathered men at the Grove.

Bohemia's symbol is an owl, which has been in use since the first year the Club started. The owl has come to symbolize the wisdom of life and companionship, that allows humans to struggle with and survive the cares and frustration of the world. The owl is found on all Bohemian materials from matchbook covers and doormats to the most elaborate Club publications. For \$34.00 you can even own an owl-embled sports shirt. A forty foot concrete owl stands at the head of the lake in the Grove. This owl shrine was built in 1929 to serve as a ceremonial site for traditional Bohemian rituals and is used yearly for the Cremation of Care Ceremony.

1910 marked the first ceremonial burial of the cares of the world during the midsummer encampment and by 1913 Care was being cremated during the first weekend of the Grove (Annals, 1972) The Cremation of Care Ceremony was produced as a play in 1920, wherein a High Priest standing before a huge pre-historic alter, is confronted by Dull Care wrapped in the chains but not dead because Bacchus, the only warrior Care fears, is truly dead (18th Amendment was passed in 1919). Good Fellowship arrives,

but lacks the sword necessary to kill Dull Care, and can only imprison him and Care still sings out through the prison window. At last Bohemia's Spirit emerges and proclaims:

Down with all fears! And up with your cheers,  
for his (Cares) mocking is turning to sobbing and tears.

But Care responds:

'Call Bacchus from the grave... long as he is dead. I sneer at Great Bohemia! Aha! Aha!' Good Fellowship then takes the torch from the priest at the alter and burns Care in his prison, thereby purging the 'demon Care from the sacred Grove.' (Thompson Archives, 1920)

This ceremony has been rewritten on several occasions but the theme is still the same. The addition of the owl statue in 1920 allowed for the voice of the owl to be incorporated into the ceremony. Care is still dispatched yearly in a fiery death that symbolizes the initiation of Bohemian fellowship. In recent years Care's cremation has become one of Bohemias more infamous ceremonies due to published descriptions by G. W. Domhoff (1974) and John Van der Zee (1974) and numerous newspaper articles and protestor literature.

The highlight is the "Cremation of Care", an elaborate ritual... in which an effigy of Dull Care is engulfed in flames... (L.A. Times 5-26-87 p.1).

During the protests some activists held symbolic anti-cremation of care ceremonies that challenged the Bohemians for not "caring about something" (West Sonoma 7-17-86 p.6).

Club member, Al Baxter, cites this issue in his unpublished paper, "Witness in the Woods" (1986). Baxter claims the cremation ceremony is not symbolic of the

destruction of human sympathy but it is meant "to set aside the nagging and often unworthy preoccupations which inhibit openness and warm sympathy for human affairs generally and for works of artistic and moral creativity in particular (p. 14)." The cremation ceremony may mean different things to different Bohemians, but the consistent theme for eighty-four years is the release of everyday mundane concerns for the brotherhood of Bohemian friendship. The ritual continues to be an important event in the annual Bohemian trek to the redwoods.

Bohemians maintain an active schedule of activities. Bohemian, Al Baxter (1-13-94) has visited elite men's clubs throughout the world and he believes that there simply is not another club with as many regularly scheduled events as the Bohemian Club. Currently the Club has an event almost every Thursday night of the year. These consist of various types of musical, theater, comedy, or variety shows sired by different individuals each week. Generally, Thursday nights have 300-400 Club members attending. Weekly mailers announcing Club events, often art pieces in themselves, are designed to encourage attendance. The Club held 181 scheduled events in 1993. This includes Thursday night events, many similar activities on Tuesday and all the Grove functions (Baxter 1-13-94). Frequently at weekday lunches members will join together to play music of all sorts. One week may be a jazz quartet, the next light classical. The Bohemian Club is a very social place, and the music, skits, plays, concerts, and art shows serve both an expressive function for the individual artist as well as entertainment for other Club members.

It is like being a Sunday painter... It's great for the amateur artist. Maybe he is not good enough to go pro or takes over Dad's business, but

still has a yen as a tenor... So the Bohemia is made for this population...  
 A guy writes funny skits, plays the cello and wants to do chamber music...  
 They can have a little show and invite their friends... it's for their own  
 private amusement... (Baxter 1-13-94).

The frequency of these artistic endeavors helps maintain a high participation level of the members. Norms within the Club are that to be a good Bohemian you are expected not only to participate but to take your turn at writing or organizing activities. The following is an annual cycle of events and activities for the years 1941 and 1971. The style of event announcements has changed somewhat, in that the 1971 events tended to have specific theme names and the 1941 events were more group associational. 1971 also had more activities scheduled than 1941, which may be due to the fact the Club had several hundred more members.

#### **Bohemian Club Annual Cycle**

Month	1941	1971
January	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Aviary Night</li> <li>•New Member Night</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Les Brown and His Band Renowned</li> <li>•Devils Revels</li> </ul>
February	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Night on Old China Town</li> <li>•Wine Dinner</li> <li>•Domino Tournament</li> <li>•Turnerville Night</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Mad, Mad, Scientists of Bohemia</li> <li>•Consulitis</li> <li>•Laurinda Almeida in Concert</li> </ul>
March	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Band Night</li> <li>•St. Patricks Night</li> <li>•Annual Art Show</li> <li>•Doctor's Night</li> <li>•AWOL Night</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Band Gambols</li> <li>•Aviary Drop In</li> <li>•Sherlock Holmes Night</li> <li>•International Trumpet</li> <li>•Naval Air Training Command Choir</li> </ul>

April	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Ladies Night/Band &amp; Choir</li> <li>•Golfers Night</li> <li>•Del Monte Golf Tournament</li> <li>•Los Angeles Night</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Fools, Fools, Fools</li> <li>•Turnerville Tours Europe</li> <li>•Can't Anyone Here Play</li> <li>•Triple Play</li> </ul>
May	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Brokers Night</li> <li>•Spring Jinks</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Grove Fever Night</li> <li>•Annual Art Show</li> </ul>
June		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Spring Jinks</li> <li>•Picnic Day</li> </ul>
July / August	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Camp Opening</li> <li>•Daily Lakeside Chats</li> <li>•Dinner for Old Guard</li> <li>•Cremation of Care</li> <li>•Concert at the Lake</li> <li>•Trap Shoot Tournament</li> <li>•Low Jinks</li> <li>•Field Circles</li> <li>•Water Carnival</li> <li>•Grove Play</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Camp Opening</li> <li>•Cremation of Care</li> <li>•Old Guard Cocktail Party</li> <li>•Daily Lakeside Chats</li> <li>•Fields Circles •Entertainments</li> <li>•Trap and Skeet Shooting</li> <li>•Concert</li> <li>•Low Jinks</li> <li>•Water Carnival</li> <li>•Grove Play</li> </ul>
September		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Afterglow</li> <li>•Presidents Dinner</li> </ul>
October	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Afterglow</li> <li>•Presidents Dinner</li> <li>•Opera Night</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Jinks Revisited</li> <li>•Night Owls of Bohemia</li> <li>•The Lovely Sea and the Sky</li> <li>•Ivory, Strings and Brass</li> <li>•Magic Flute</li> </ul>
November	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Election Night</li> <li>•Thanksgiving Dinner</li> <li>•Jam Session</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Bohemian Club Comedy Hour</li> <li>•Big Game Night</li> <li>•Opera Luncheon</li> <li>•Thanksgiving Play</li> </ul>
December	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Ladies Concert</li> <li>•Photographic Exhibit</li> <li>•Christmas Feast</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Christmas Art Exhibition</li> <li>•Evolution of Swing</li> <li>•Christmas Jinks</li> <li>•Christmas Dinner</li> <li>•Christmas Lunch</li> </ul>

The Club has a long history of various special events that date back to early Club years. These annual traditions become meaningful in members' lives. They build a sense of continuity and belongingness that is perhaps rare in American culture today. This allows an emergence of a personal sentimentality that has been described as the Spirit of Bohemia. Over the years, numerous Bohemians have written and talked about this spirit.

...the Bohemian Club fights the mechanization or the routinization of modern life. In a charming, naive way it asks the worldly wise... successful American men to feel vulnerable again... Pleasure, true pleasure... has a way of doing that, of bringing to life old , lost dreams about art, beauty, and friendship (Starr 1977 p.4).

Great home of the human spirit... It is no exaggeration to say that not since Ancient Greece has there ever been such whole-souled and truly human devotion... to all that is best in that life... human relationships, letters, and fine arts... (Butler 1935 p.1).

Bohemians tend to hold their Club traditions with great reverence. It is this deeply-held sentiment that motivates their contemporary rationalization for secrecy.

I have previously discussed the rise of Club secrecy as emerging from class conflicts in the 1930s. Among Bohemians this remains an unacknowledged source of Club privacy, whereas the alternative rationalization is one of rights of individuals to have private associations. It was this right of association on which the Club has based its legal defense against external lawsuits that challenged the Club's policy of excluding women employees and members.

This right of privacy issue, however, is deeply tied to the emotional sentiment of the members. They fear that the addition of women and other changes would



qualitatively transform the Club into something entirely different that lacks the unique Bohemian Spirit. Protests and legal challenges tend to reinforce these collaborative sentiments among members and result in an intensified unity of purpose. This is perhaps why there is a singular suspicion of external inspection by outsiders.

On several occasions during the course of my research at the Grove I was questioned quite sharply on my intent and purpose. I was able to assure them that I was doing a scholarly objective study of the Club. The fact that I was a college professor and an approved guest of a member seemed to give me an entirely different status, than if I had just been an outside reporter or investigator.

The first recorded rejection of outside publicity by the Club was in 1949, when the Saturday Evening Post asked to do an article on the Grove. The board of directors voted not to approve it after "some 200 members expressed distaste (S.F. Chronicle 11-7-49)." This has been fairly standard policy up to the present. Hampton Sides (1992) reports attempting to interview Kevin Starr, California historian and Club archivist. He was told, "the Club has nothing to gain by talking to the press (p. 49)." For the past forty years press articles on the Bohemian Club have predominantly been news items (often negative) about protests or controversial issues. This has contributed to Bohemian shyness and even hostility to the press, to a point that Club members have an informal no-talk rule when it comes to outside press relations. During the course of my research at the Grove I told all informants that I would not use their names in my research. This seemed to go a long way in allowing members to say things "off the record".

The Club's patron saint is John of Nepomuk, who was originally adopted in 1882.

The legend is that St. John suffered death by a Bohemian monarch in the late 14th century rather than disclose the confessional secrets of the queen. A large wood carving of St. John in cleric robes with his index finger over his lips stands at the shore of the lake in the Grove. St. John as the Club patron was started as a reminder of respect for others' privacy in 1882, but today has emerged as the collective symbol of the privacy of Bohemia.

The midsummer encampment at the Grove is the most intense experience of the Club's annual cycle of events. Compacted into two weeks and three weekends, the Grove becomes an annual regeneration of the Bohemian Spirit. Civility, respect for fellow members, and a glad hand are important aspects of the Grove experience.

Respect starts with the honoring of the senior Bohemians known as the Old Guard. Recognition of Old Guard status comes after forty years of Club membership. Every year there is an Old Guard cocktail party and dinner at the Grove, now held on the first Saturday. As various events are held at the theaters, fire circles, or lakeside, a special seating section is reserved for senior Old Guard members. A number of events have limited seating, so many men must sit on the grass or fresh cut evergreen boughs. When this is the case Old Guard and handicapped men are given preference for available seats.

The Old Guard are the living representatives of the continuity of traditions and life at the Grove. Remarks by Charles Kendrick at the Old Guard dinner in 1954 express this point.

We of the Old Guard sense the presence of many dear and valued friends who walked and played with us beneath these trees, but who now have

retreated into the shadows. ....their names and deeds remain affectionately enshrined in our memories. To all true Bohemians this Grove is a shrine,

an enchanted forest. Around and about it, trees, for generations, have spun a web of sentiment and tradition so rich and deep as to be almost tangible. On its leafy carpet have trod the feet of men who have drunk more deeply of friendships than were possible on any other place on earth (Lawrence 1954).

A typical day at the Grove starts with juice, fruit and pastry snacks, prepared and laid out by the camp stewards, and a copy of the San Francisco Chronicle available for each camp member. In some camps gin fizzes start the day, although generally alcohol consumption seems fairly limited before noon. A morning campfire allows men to collect themselves in preparation for the journey to the central dining circle. A small number of men are out jogging or taking brisk walks, but of the over 2,000 men who were present during my visit at the Grove, there seemed to have been no more than a few dozen early morning exercisers.

Breakfast at the dining circle runs from 7:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. with seating available at long picnic tables linking 26 men together to encourage interaction and conversation. Men are free to sit wherever they like, so generally you are within conversation range of several new faces each morning. Breakfast is ample, quickly served and comparable to better quality San Francisco restaurants. Members may order specialty items such as eggs Benedict, or pick an entre from the main listings such as baked trout or a mushroom omelet. Red-coated waitpersons, both men and women, bring out platters of ham, bacon, sausage, pastries, fresh fruits (raspberries, etc). Coffee and juices are in abundance.

Conversations at breakfast are stimulating and participatory, ranging from a U.C.

Berkeley professor's lecture on the 100,000-year cycle of the ice ages, to who will win the California governor's race in 1994.

After breakfast men can wander back to camp, go off for trap and skeet shooting, take a perimeter ride around the Grove in an open-air truck, or attend a scheduled museum talk at 10:30 a.m. Museum talks are a post-World War II tradition, originating with U.C. Berkeley Professor Emmanuel Fritz's talks on the redwoods in the Grove in 1948 (Fritz 1972). The original talks emerged into daily programs and Grove nature tours known as "walkie-talkies". The 1994 Spring Jinks museum talks covered redwood trees in the Grove on the first day and advances in earthquake predictions the second. The 1993 summer encampment museum topics included the following:

### **Summer Encampment Museum Topics 1993**

- Mining In The Jungle
- Endangered Species in Somalia
- Marble Carving
- Hawaii
- Nuclear Disaster
- Population Growth
- Redwoods
- Eye On/In Iraq
- Nineteenth Century Logging
- Desert Storm's Aftermath In The Gulf
- Art and Trail of Tears
- Development and Conservation of Non-Traditional Oil Sources
- Adaptive Complexity

As evident from the above, museum talks are not always about the natural environment. In 1992 John Lehman, former Deputy Director of the U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, spoke on "Smart Weapons". For the years 1989, 1991, 1992, and 1993 there were fifty-seven listed museum talks at the Grove. They covered a large

variety of topics from Japanese writing to Stanley Steamers. A museum talk summary for these years is as follows:

**Museum Talk Summary**

Natural History/Biology	28%
Environmental Issues	14%
Business/Technology & Environment	12%
Military and Space Science	9%
All Others	27%

As indicated above, Natural History/Biology is the largest single category. However, the two environmental categories combined are a close second at 26%. Given that the military and space science category is predominately a government topic, it appears that museum talks tend to have a broad generalized topic area involving government, business and the environment as principal contemporary themes.

Daily at noon there is an organ or band concert as a prelude to the Lakeside Chat speakers who usually give a thirty-minute talk at 12:30. Discussion of the content of Lakeside Chats will be covered extensively in Chapter Five, because of their often political content. However, at this point it is appropriate to say that Lakeside Chats often feature prominent Bohemians or well-known guests. I had an opportunity to observe two Lakeside Chats at the 1994 Spring Jinks. The Friday chat was given by a former Green Beret who runs an international security agency that consults to businesses and governments on corporate fraud, security issues and terrorism. The speaker discussed several case studies regarding fraud, corporate spying, executive stalking, and employee violence. Each case focused on an individual who had some personal disturbance or mental illness and on how his company was able to solve the problem. About 1,000 men attended and they gave him a polite applause at the end. On the way back to camp one

Bohemian stated that this was the most blatant case of "advertising" he had ever heard at the Grove. The Saturday chat was given by a U.C. Berkeley political science professor. As this talk was extremely political, I will cover it in Chapter Five.

After the Chat, Bohemians are off to their camps for lunch. This is a time when personal invitations are frequently given to friends and associates at the Grove to join a camp for lunch. Lunches are usually cooked and served by the camp stewards. Early afternoon is the time of day that many Bohemians begin to drink alcohol. Wine was served at both lunches I attended and mixed drinks and beer were readily available. As no money exchanges hands at the Grove, if you are a guest in a camp for lunch or a party, all the food and alcohol is paid for by camp members. This is not an inexpensive process. The wines for one lunch I attended were a premium Napa Valley chardonnay and a ten year old cabernet savignon. I estimate that just the wine for that lunch of twenty men ran \$300-\$400. Wine is a regular topic of conversation among Bohemians, and amply available at all lunches and dinners.

Mid to late afternoon at the Grove is time for camp to camp visiting or a walk to the Russian River for a swim. On occasion there is a late afternoon museum program or organized walkie-talkie, but these are fairly intermittent. Camp visits are one of the principal activities at the Grove, and the hospitality mat is always out. I visited seven camps for extended periods during my days at the Grove. On each occasion I had the name of a camp member to ask for and a superficial reason for the visit. In each camp I was warmly greeted, usually by the camp captain, and introduced to each member of the camp. I was immediately offered a drink and often a cigar and invited to join the

campfire circle or on-going discussion.<sup>14</sup> On two occasions, when I requested my normal Seven-Up, I was pressured to have liquor in my drink. One camp where I did accept brandy in my soda, my host said, "I like you better already".

Alcohol is definitely a major part of Bohemia and is available 24 hours a day at your camp bar. The brands of alcohol consumed are all premium or exotic liquors and San Francisco's Anchor Steam Beer is often on tap.

Despite the vast amount of alcohol consumed I did not see any men falling-down drunk, or exhibiting drunken obnoxious behavior. If such incidents do occur at the Grove, they are certainly not the norm and would be considered ungentlemanly.

Perhaps the most seductive aspect of the Bohemian Grove is the open civility and hospitality of members. Meeting new acquaintances is extremely easy, and gives one a feeling of importance and enhanced self-esteem. For example, the weekend I was at the Grove covered a period from Thursday at 5:00 p.m. to Sunday, noon. During this time period, I was personally introduced to ninety-four men and had informal conversations with dozens of others. Of the new introductions there were seventeen individuals with whom I had long and significant enough conversations on a first name basis that I would be able to contact outside of the Grove at some future time.

Stage and movie actor, Charles Coburn, wrote a thank you letter to member John Howell, after being a first-time guest at the Grove in 1948.

Way beyond that appreciation of the wonderful organization... is that something that is indescribable - that wonderful ephemeral quality releasing within the breast of each individual pent up inhibitions and bringing out the best that is in him. Then there is that fellowship, the

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<sup>14</sup>. Cigars are frequently smoked at both the Grove and the City Club. The men take pride in their cigars. The carrying of a cigar clip is a common practice.

evaluation of men on their merits, the elimination of one's ego, and a desire to give your fellow man the best that is in you.<sup>15</sup>(J. Howell, 8-6-1948)

Dinner is often preceded by a concert on the great organ at the Grove stage. As of 1973 this was the second largest outdoor organ in the world. Dedicated in 1920, the organ contains 1,300 pipes up to sixteen feet in length, covering a range of eight octaves. Designed for outdoor use, it is protected by a heated de-humidified building that is sealed up in the winter (Bethards 1972).

Evenings at the Grove entail a return to the dining circle for a full course meal.

<b>Bohemian Grove Dinner Menus</b>		
June 2, 1994 - Camp Dinner	June 3, 1994	June 4, 1994
Roast Lamb Boiled Red Potatoes Artichokes/Curry Sauce Apple or Berry Pie Wines: Chinon-Cabernet Savignon '81 Chardonnay	Caesar Salad Baked Salmon Boiled Red Potatoes Buttered Squash Strawberry           Shortcake Wines: R.H. Phillips Cabernet Savignon Mondovi-Chardonnay	Green Salad Roast Beef Boiled Red Potatoes Buttered Carrots   and Broccoli Apple Pie with Whipped Cream Wines: Kendel Jackson Chardonnay and Cabernet Savignon

Dinners are more lively with the Jinks Band playing music. An afternoon of alcohol and companionship contribute to a dropping of personal defenses, so copious conversations and flamboyant joking are evident.

<sup>15</sup>. Charles Coburn was voted in as a Club member on October 25, 1948 (Bohemian



Jokes at the Grove range from clever poems and twists on words to gross misogynist or homophobic tales. Of the camps I visited, one in particular told a number of racist, sexist, and locker room style jokes. Language in this camp included a lot of four-letter words and some fairly heavy drinking. I observed this behavior in only one of seven camps, so I think that it probably occurs with some regularity in certain camps, but is not a normative standard for most members in general. Clinton jokes were probably the most common humor among members in 1994. Judging from the frequency and on occasion strong angry tone of jokes about the President, I think that it is safe to say that there are few people at the Grove who like Bill Clinton, or if they do they are extremely quiet about it.

During the Spring Jinks 1994 over two thousand men attended. Of these I observed three African-Americans and one Asian. Every large gathering was a sea of white faces. I have asked employees and members on several occasions how many people of color are members of the Club. My best estimate is that somewhat less than 1% of current Club members and guests are racial minorities. Prior to the mid-1960s the Bohemian Club was exclusively white. Since then there has been a trickle of non-white members.

The Olympic Club in San Francisco was targeted in 1967 for its all white membership policy, after a prominent Catholic priest resigned from the Club for its restricted membership (S.F. Chronicle 2-25-67). The State Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control threatened the Olympic Clubs' liquor license, prompting a policy

change by the Club (S.F. Chronicle 8-18-67). It was during this period that the Bohemian Club also started accepting non-white male members.

Predominately white members are a sharp contrast to the waitperson staff at both the Grove and the City Club. By visual observation I estimate the male staff to be approximately a third to half minority. I observed no female employees at my visits to the City Club, although I was told that women do work there. Women employees at the Grove, however, are predominately white.

During the Grove session there is evening entertainment every night. During week days the programs range from an organ concert to campfire variety shows. It is the weekend evenings when the full stage productions and Broadway style shows are performed. The second Saturday is the Low Jinks which has become by tradition a rollicking farce designed to create a good laugh. The 1993 Low Jinks was entitled "Sherwood Estates", and was described in the program of events as a recently discovered episode of Robin Hood and His Merry Men. The actors are all generally Bohemians, although on occasion a special guest may be featured as a star attraction. The Low Jinks is performed in the Field Circle, which is a steep outdoor amphitheater, with a full professional quality stage and giant redwoods as a backdrop. They play warm-up music, which at the spring 1994 Jinks variety show included the University of California and Stanford University alma mater fight songs. As the appropriate university song was played, all the alumni from Stanford or Cal rose up from their seats and sang their song in unison. About one-quarter of the 1,500 men rose up as Cal alumni, and about one-quarter rose up as Stanford alumni. It is apparent that a large number of Bohemians are

graduates of either U.C. Berkeley or Stanford University.

The last Friday night of the encampment is the annual Grove play. These plays, known as the Midsummer High Jinks before 1912, are written each year exclusively for this one-time presentation. Grove plays are theatrical extravaganzas that cost tens of thousand of dollars to produce and can involve up to two hundred actors. The following are brief summaries of the 1991-92-93 Grove plays:

Grove Play, 1993 - Oin Shihuang-Di, The First Emperor

Taoist priests prophesies the imminent attack of the six warring states... Victory will depend on one lowly foot soldier... Prince Feng attempts to murder his brother... Emperor builds his mausoleum to include 7000 warriors and Empress Liang and ten concubines (Bohemian Grove program 1993 p.43).

Grove Play, 1992 - Cristoforo Colombo

Our authors trace the storm tossed path, and the towering achievement of one of the world's great shapers, the man we memorialize exactly three days before the 500th anniversary of the morning he set sail from Spain on his incredible journey of discovery (Bohemian Grove program 1992 p.43).

Grove Play, 1991 - Tyburn Fair

Set in London in the early 18th century, our play... celebrates the lives and spirits of the 'poorest of the poor', whose attempts to play out the very meager hand life has dealt them demand ingenuity, resourcefulness and a fatalistic but lively sense of humor (Bohemian Grove program 1991 p.42).

As evident from the above, Grove plays tend to present moralistic macro-perspectives on major socio-historical transformations. Bohemian, Kevin Starr write in 1987,

The Grove play might last for only an hour, but that hour is an important one, (to)... the deepest identity of the club. Its memory of its own past and its references to the menial aspects of human experience are symbolically presented with breath taking intensity. Ironically, the Grove

play, our best defense against accusations of triviality, our best expression of identity... the Grove play (is) an essential moment in the yearly Bohemian cycle... because these plays so affirm the club's deepest identity, they are worth the expense of production... (p.338 and p.340).

I think that mostly Grove plays are elaborate spectacles that entertain and delight members. One could well make an issue of the expense, the exclusivity, and the irony of a play about poor people presented to economic and social elites. However, my impression of Grove events is that the personal witnessing of the Grove play or Low Jinks goes beyond ephemeral content of the event itself. I think that the shared experience of amusement extends the boundaries of friendship from a conversational to an experiential level that allows for a deeper emotional bonding between the men at the Grove. When Starr describes the Grove play as the Club's most important hour, he is speaking more of a meaningful experiential process rather than a dramaturgical event. This, I think, is an important understanding for outsiders to realize. The Grove process and the building of the Bohemian Spirit is more than just a good time in the woods.

A San Francisco attorney and elected official described to me his feelings about why men join the Bohemian Club. He felt that the Grove is one of the few places where men can go for ritual and bonding experiences. In the Grove something mythical occurs that allows "white males (who now feel under siege) to gather and celebrate themselves" (6-3-94). He used to feel that letting women join the Club would be alright, but recently he had changed his view because of the importance of being able to allow men to join together in private all male associations.

On June 3, 1994 the museum talk host described the Grove as "magical", and a

place where "comradeliness" prevails. These sentiments are one of the most important aspects of understanding the Grove. Feelings arise in the men present that may well be suppressed in other arenas of their lives. These feelings are reflected by the common sentimentality Bohemians often express about the Grove experience. Being a true Bohemian means that you understand the spirit of Bohemia, not just intellectually, but with real felt emotions that bond you to your companions in the redwoods. For however we view the Bohemian Club from our various socio-political perspectives, the experience for the men there is perhaps as soul touching as any that white males embedded in our materialistic culture can collectively hope to achieve.

The fundamental social unit at the Grove is the individual camp. The camps are the base of operations for a members' interaction throughout the Grove. Camp members tend to see each other more frequently than other Club members, and camps develop their own histories, traditions, and favorite activities. Camps transcend the Grove and take a life of their own on the outside. Gatherings of camp members for seasonal holidays, special occasions, weddings, funerals, and other events is common among geographically centered camps (Baxter 1-13-94). The only place cameras are allowed in the Grove is for group pictures at single campsites. Many camps keep annual photo albums of members eating, making music or cocktailing together. These photo albums can become the basis of privately published camp histories that are written for the camp members and Bohemian Club archives.

I was able to acquire copies or originals of four privately published camp histories. They are listed as follows:

The Lost Angels Camp Bohemia  
 The First Fifty Years  
 1908 - 1958  
 Preston Hotchkiss (250 copies, 1958)

History of Mandalay Camp  
 Bohemian Grove - 1972  
 by Herman Phleger (350 copies)

Dies Dulcae et Largo  
 The History of Silverado Squatters Camp  
 1940 - 1990  
 Al Baxter, 1992 (100 copies)

The Pleasant Isle of Aves  
 1904 - 1964  
 John L. Simpson

Each camp's history gives a listing of all its members, and a brief overview of how and by whom the camp was formed. Special features of the camp are examined such as Mandalay's Bechtel designed electric pulley cart for hauling supplies up the hill. Other areas covered are antidotes or personal histories of members. Bragging about important celebrities who have visited is also a regular feature. "We have entertained some of the most celebrated men in the world at our Lost Angels Camp (Hotchkiss 1958 p.16)." Personalized poetry may adorn the camp history:

When Chaffee, Bob and Garten,  
 Lift their chorus to the skies,  
 The walls begin to tremble  
 and the roof begins to rise.  
 They rock the Isle of Aves  
 Till the very airs unfixed,  
 Our sole relief is barley corn  
 and gin and onion mixed (Simpson 1964 p.10).

The fact that this poem is in direct reference to toddy parties that kept Earl Warren awake at night makes it a historically interesting poem.

Camps used to have memberships that tended to emphasize certain professional or business associations. For example, of Pleasant Isle of Aves' twenty-nine members between 1904 and 1964, all but two were in some way affiliated with U.C. Berkeley. Nine were U.C. regents (Simpson 1964) Midway Camp, in the 1930s, was made up of executives from the Pacific Insurance Company, and Tie Binders were all railroad men (Annals 1987 p.302). Silverado Squatters Camp history had a occupational description of its forty-five members since the camps founding in 1940. A summary of their career interests is as follows:

#### **Bohemian Club Members Career Interests**

Corporate Executives	11	Artists	1
Attorneys	10	Publishers	2
Academics	11	Physicians	2
Other Professionals	7	Military	1

Included in this group were two university presidents, a university chancellor, Deputy Director of U.S. Treasury, a diplomat, law school dean, U.S. Supreme Court Justice, Security Exchange commissioner, and a Deputy Secretary of Defense.

Silverado Squatters was started by three Bohemians and has a current limit of 21 members. Men in camps get to know each other on a personal basis over long periods of time. Each man brings friends or associates as guests to the Grove as well, thereby expanding the social network of each of the men in turn. In Silverado Squatters Camp members are 50% resident and 50% non-resident, so personal contacts are nationwide. This does not necessarily mean that a physician in California will maintain year round

contact with a Supreme Court Justice in Washington, D.C., but it does mean that the potential for regular personal contact outside of the Club is always present, and could be acted on by either man.

Well over half of the Silverado Squatters have post-baccalaureate training. During my time at the camp, conversations ranged from the intellectually sophisticated to the mundane, with the former being dominant throughout the three days.

A 1979 publication entitled The Camps, gives particular characteristics about each camp at the Grove (Gelwick 1979). The following are some of the more interesting peculiarities of various camps.

#### **Camp Specialties**

Aviary	Chorus members with one of the finest fireplaces in the Grove
Cool Nazder	Has a gin fizz hour at 8:30 a.m.
Cave Man	Distinguished members in a world class estate
Dog House	Beer and beans party after every Cremation of Care
El Toro II	Magnificent Mai Tai
Fore Peak	Makers of the famous Nembutal drink - 3,721 served in 1978 <sup>16</sup>
Halcyon	Grove's finest library of classics
Hideaway	Classic oil painting of a nude woman, where artists add one gray hair per year
Interlude	Wine and cheese party to commemorate Bastille Day

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<sup>16</sup>. Nembutal is a mixture of warm rum and cocoa. According to an anonymous source, this drink is rumored to contain powerful white powder barbiturate provided by an executive from a drug company (Interview D 6-15-94).



Jungle	Third Saturday mint julep party
Last Chance	Swinging doors to the camp are the originals for S.F.'s Last Chance Saloon
Madrone	Abalone lunch on the last Thursday
Moonshiners	Pours imported German beer exclusively
Parsonage	Buffalo burger luncheon
Pow Wow	All-time Abbott auxiliary martini machine
Roaring	Original bar from Jack London's home
Puma	Second Saturday wild game feed includes elk, moose, and boar
Sahara	One of the few camps during prohibition that was dry
Sons of Toil	Hosts a French sidewalk cafe 2nd Friday, French wines,cheese, and red checker table cloths
Thalia	Has the original stop and go signal from the corner of Powell and Post in S.F.
Turnerville	Home of Bohemia's orchestra
Ye Merrie Yowls	The bar is the former altar from the Catholic Church in Forrestville

Camps like to have distinctive images. As indicated above, these often include a specialty food or alcoholic drink, while other claims-to-fame are historical artifacts, or specialty art pieces. Camps are the centerpiece of a members identity at the Grove. One of the first exchanges of information in conversation is what camp a person is from. Camp identities not only have a personalized image, but serve as communication facilitators by allowing strangers to immediately find common friends from various camp associations.

Camp captains are responsible for financial control and general management of

the camp. This can include issuing work order requests to the Grove committee for camp maintenance, purchasing supplies and food and supervising valets. Some camps keep the same captain for decades, while others alternate on a more regular basis. Camp captains maintain year-round contact with members and will report to others on health problems or difficulties a member is having. Captains coordinate the invitation of new Club members to join a camp, a process not unlike a fraternity rush on a university campus. It may take Club members several seasons before they actually connect with a camp that invites them to join. New members stay in Bromley Camp near the main gate.

At times, wealthy or famous new Club members may actually be solicited by camps for membership. Sons of Toil Camp wrote the new Bohemian and U.C. President, Clark Kerr, inviting him to join their camp in 1953. Kerr declined and joined Wayside Logg instead.

E.L. Oliver, member of L.O.G. Camp, writes to his brother R.L. Oliver in 1928:

I took it upon myself to invite Admiral E.H. Campbell (Commander of Mare Island), to make himself at home at the encampment this year... I suggest that if the members have no objection he be invited as a permanent member of the camp, because he is well able to pay expenses... so instead of being a burden he would lighten the load of the rest of us (Oliver 6-22-28).

The 1930 and 1938 Grove lists do not show Admiral E.H. Campbell as ever belonging to a camp, so apparently this effort was unsuccessful as well.

Camp expenses are covered by each individual member of the camp. Captains are responsible for general assessments and collections which can run from five hundred to four thousand dollars per year (Baxter 1992). Camp buildings and facilities are collectively owned by the camp members and the land is owned by the Club. New members of a camp can be asked to pay an assessment for part ownership. This means

that some camps sell beds to new members for an initiation fee. L.O.G. Camp Captain,

Roland Oliver, writes to new perspective member Fred Boyken in 1936:

"There are still a couple of beds unsold in the new camp, and yours will cost you \$375.00... the original plan of financing was that the first ten members would pay their prorate of the total... \$4,127.00, with the understanding that as new members came in, the investment would be prorated over the additional membership (Oliver 3-19-36)."

Camp stewards or valets are an important part of Bohemian culture. These men may serve a particular camp for decades. Camp valet, Henry Brown, worked for Silverado Squatters from 1968 to his retirement in 1989. Upon his death a few years later the Silverado Squatters collectively contributed to his funeral expenses (Baxter 2-18-94). Two valets I interviewed stated they were paid comparable to union scale waiters at the Grove which is \$13.00/hr. They both said they liked the work and were able to get in a lot of overtime (Interview D 6-4-94). Valets address all camp members and guests formally using Mr. and their surname. Camp members address valets by their first names, thus maintaining the formal employer/employee status. Valets are responsible for the comfort and welfare of camp members. They mix and serve drinks, prepare lunches, and snacks, and are generally available to assist members with special needs. I am a decaffeinated coffee drinker. On the first evening after dinner, coffee was offered to the members and guests. I asked if they had decaf coffee and was told none was available in camp. The next morning a fresh pot of decaf was ready when I got up, and available for the rest of the weekend.

Having valets to serve members allows for a stratified feeling of well-being and shared rank among members. During the course of the 1994 Spring Jinks weekend large gatherings of Bohemians were entertained by several non-member comedians, and other

professional performers. On several occasions the collective Club members were referred to by non-club performers as distinguished, honorable, and elite. The crowd always seemed to revel in these laudations. During the Friday field circle variety show, a comedian talked about a lot of rich people being in the theater and "liking it". This got a spontaneous applause. Later that evening a ventriloquist having a conversation with his dummy also referred to the "rich" audience. My impression from these incidences is that there is a shared knowledge among Bohemians that they are part of the socio-economic elite of America. This results in a collective weness present at the Grove, which carries over to the City Club as well. This is not to say that conflict and disagreements do not arise at the Grove, but in an atmosphere where civility is the norm, overt expressions of conflict are discouraged and formal grievance processes are available.

Charles Hyde, of Sons of Toil Camp, writes to the Grove committee August 4, 1950.

"The members of the Sons of Toil Camp desire to express their objection to conditions imposed by the Dragons Camp... #1... Soapy, filthy, wastes carrying food particles were allowed to flow down the trail... leading to our... cabin. #2. The gaunt supporting timbers of their structures are extremely unsightly and introduce a disagreeable element."

(Bohemian Archive 8-4-50)

The archives do not tell us how this conflict was resolved, but it is clear that a grievance process is available and in use in the Club. In order to maintain civility and minimize conflict the Bohemian Club has set procedures and rules for most all important activities.

Before arriving at the Grove guests are mailed a written statement that describes the main rules of Grove life; no tipping, no cameras (except in camp), no cutting or trimming of trees or branches, no radios, phonographs, video cameras, tape recorders, cellular telephones, televisions, pets, or firearms, and no playing of music from 1:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. (Bohemian Club 1994). The Bohemian Club by-laws and rules take sixty-one pages of the Club's 1969 by-laws/officers directory and can be added to at any time. In 1952 the Club passed rules for the Grove and Club that forbid any solicitation of autographs from any member (Lawrence 5-23-52).

The Club strives to achieve a well-ordered gentlemanly atmosphere both at the Grove and the City Club. This atmosphere allows for the sentimentality of the Bohemian Spirit to be sustained and continue as an important factor in the depth of bonded friendships developed between members. Bohemian men share strong feelings about their Club. In short, there is an inter-club male culture that includes socially constructed traditions and ceremonies as well as deeply-held emotionally-based values and beliefs. The Clubs' 122-year history has established a pattern wherein these cultural understandings are religiously passed from generation to generation. More than one young Bohemian camps in the same location as his father and grandfather before him. In this respect the Grove takes on a sacred patrilineal quality that members seek to protect for future generations.

To what extent this sense of bonded friendship extends into the world of business, politics and policy will be explored in the next three chapters.

## CHAPTER 4

### Weaving Spiders

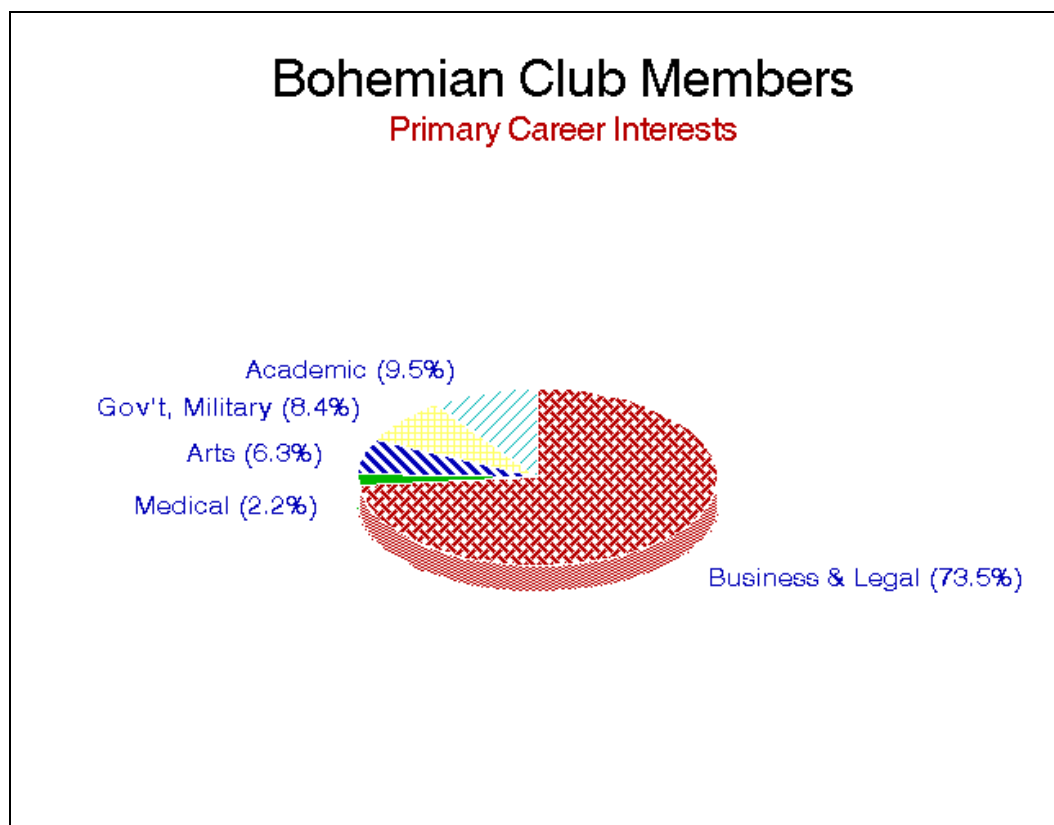
#### Business and the Bohemian

"The Bohemian Club has changed a lot. It used to be that when you sat down for dinner, out of fifteen men, ten would be owners of their own local businesses, employing 200-300 people. Today, out of fifteen men, maybe one would be a sole proprietor, while most now work for a corporation (Walter Dold Bohemian Club member since 1933 Interview 2-1-92)."

The most comprehensive effort to identify Bohemian Club members collectively has been done by BGAN activist and photographer, Kerry Richardson. He has compiled a biographical information on 905 Bohemian Club members from various Who's Who's, Bay Area newspaper indexes, and other sources. Richardson used Club lists from the late 1980s as his Club membership source (Richardson 1990). I reviewed each of his records and was able to classify 853 biographies into five primary career categories:

Business/Legal	627
Theater Arts - Writing	54
Non-Profit, Government and Military	72
Academic	81
Medical	19

The following pie chart displays the results:



Although not completely accurate, because associate members tend not to be listed in biographical sources, the above percentages are probably fairly close to the actual breakout of Club membership, given that a number of associate members, according to Baxter (6-3-94), are businessmen as well as talented artists.

Each of these areas can have considerable overlap. A business executive may serve as a political appointee or a career politician may have various business investments. The above graph reflects the primary lifelong activities of the various men, and shows that private business is the dominant career interest of Bohemian Club members. With such strong business interests and elite corporate connections the question arises, are Bohemians primarily spiders or art aficionados?

The answer to this question is highly contentious. As the business executives of



the Club provide the bulk of the financial resources, one could argue that economic elites with a weaving spider mentality would have eventually taken over and phased out the artistic and musical segments. The reason this has not happened is that even business executives have self-actualizing needs for friendship and mutual support, and the artistic/musical elements of the Club provides a common experiential process that serves both the socio-emotional needs as well as enhancing web spinning activities. Club members adamantly defend private male association rights for social purposes and promote strong mores against business dealings in the Club or at the Grove. However, there is mounting evidence that suggests these efforts are not always successful and are only intended to be superficially observed.

A recently published directory, Who Owns Corporate America (1993), lists the Security Exchange Commission's (S.E.C.) stock ownership data for 4,100 publicly held corporations in the U.S.. Corporations are required to report all stock held by their corporate directors and by any principals with 10% or more of the shares. This data source leaves most stock ownership in the U.S. undisclosed. However, the Who Owns Corporate America list is substantial, with over 75,000 names. I was able to cross match it with active Bohemian's for 1991. In total 232 Bohemian's, 11.89% of all active members, held 30.476 billion dollars worth of U.S. corporate stock. This ownership is concentrated primarily in the Club's top five billionaires, who collectively own 25.449 billion dollars worth of stock.

This S.E.C. data is extremely limited in its scope. For example; David Rockefeller Jr.'s holdings are shown at \$1,633,142.00, yet according to Rockefeller

family biographer, Peter Collier, David Jr.'s current net worth is somewhere around 10-12 million dollars (Collier 7-3-94). From this it is clear that the S.E.C. data is but a small percentage of actual Bohemian Club members' net worth. Nevertheless, the S.E.C. data is an indicator of incredible corporate wealth held by a significant number of Bohemian Club members.

I sorted the S.E.C. data by camp in order to determine which Grove camps held the highest amount of publicly listed stocks.

**Bohemian Grove Camps by S.E.C.  
Listed Holdings Over \$100,000,000 in 1991**

Camp Name	Corporate Stock Value
Uplifters	\$21,948,748,561
Silverado Squatters	2,477,834,527
Highlanders	1,430,095,648
Friends of the Forest	948,582,898
Jinks Band	720,094,448
Hill Billies	590,590,700
Mandalay	549,827,200
Caveman	391,878,758
Midway	178,538,965
Lost Angels	175,248,030
Zaca	162,119,680
Parsonage	160,380,527
Druids	145,521,728
Thalia	121,777,764

In addition to the above, nine camps held over \$10,000,000 worth of S.E.C. reported stock and twenty-six camps held over \$1,000,000. The cumulative results of camp S.E.C. data indicates that forty-six camps have members whose stock holdings exceed one million dollars. This means that 37% of all the camps in the Grove have

internal camp networks that represent substantial business assets. This financial data seems to be an important aspect of understanding Bohemia, where wealth is evident but definitely not flaunted.

I was also interested in patterns of business networks among corporate directorships in the United States. A new directory entitled Who Knows Who, has been discretely published annually since 1987 for the non-profit fund raising community by a Berkeley Librarian, Jeannette Glynn. This directory is a listing of all directors of the Fortune 1000 and Forbes 500, for a total of 1,144 top U.S. corporations. The total number of director's listed is 10,714 (Glynn 1991).

Matching the active 1991 Bohemian list with the 1991 U.S. directors resulted in showing that 141 Bohemians hold 286 directorships in the top 1,144 U.S. corporations. The data indicates that 13.2% of all Bohemians are directors of Fortune 1000 or Forbes 500 corporations, or that of the top 1,144 corporations in the U.S. 17.6% have a one or more Bohemian directors. These 286 directorships were held in 201 corporations, so that eighty-five Bohemians had directorships with at least one other Bohemian in a top U.S. corporation. The thirteen corporations with three or more Bohemian directors are as follows:

**List of Top U.S. Corporations With  
Three or More Bohemian Directors**

U.S. Corporation	Number of Bohemian Directors
Bank of America	7
Pacific Gas and Electric	5
American Telephone & Telegraph	4
Pacific Enterprises	4
First Interstate	4
McKesson Corporation	4
Carter-Hawley Hale Stores	3
Ford	3
F.M.C.	3
Safeco Insurance	3
Potlatch	3
Pope and Talbot	3
General Motors	3
Pacific Telesis	3

As would be expected of a high-California-membership Club most of these corporations are headquartered on the West Coast.

As such, 201 corporations are essentially the Bohemian corporate family, because they are made up of permanent Club members who have an opportunity to network and interact with each other on a regular basis. This does not necessarily mean that all 141 of the men know each other intimately, or make business deals with each other because they are Bohemians.

In fact, it is very clear that groups of Bohemian's do not now have business meetings at the Grove. However, should two men need to meet each other for business purposes at another time, the opportunity to get acquainted at the Grove is readily available.

An evaluation of camp membership by U.S. corporate directorships makes this point exactly. The following is a list of the ten camps with the most members who are directors of one or more top 1,144 U.S. corporations.

**Camp Affiliation of Bohemian Corporate Directors**

Camp	Number of Men in Directorships	Number of Directorships
Mandalay *	14	36
Lost Angels *	10	23
Hillbillies *	7	13
Caveman *	7	13
Owls Nest *	6	15
Uplifter *	6	13
Stowaway	5	9
Midway *	5	10
River Lair	4	6
Silverado Squatters *	4	11
Totals:	69	149

\* Indicates S.E.C. \$100 million plus camp

If a person were actually trying to meet U.S. corporate directors, visits to these ten camps would easily acquaint him with a director on the board of over 100 of the top corporations in the United States. In theory, it would take only three to four days of camp time to meet most of these 69 men during the midsummer encampment. This estimate is based on my random meeting of 94 men at the Grove in two days in 1994. If a person were so inclined it would be quite possible to build a personal network of corporate America in a matter of a few days at the Grove.

If you examine a map of the grove it is clear that by using Mandalay Camp as a base, a man would be physically within 1,600 feet of twenty-two of the twenty-eight multiple director camps, thereby making it a brief five to ten minute walk to visit each

camp. The only difficulty a person would have with this whole process is that you cannot just walk into Mandalay Camp (Baxter 6-3-94). Mandalay Camp has a waiting area so when you arrive a camp steward greets you and asks who you wish to see. So going into Mandalay Camp is not possible without a prior introduction to a member and an invitation. This probably would not be too difficult to arrange through other contacts if a person really wanted to get in.<sup>17</sup>

Domhoff's percents of 29% for 1970 and 30% in 1980 of top corporations being represented at the Grove, were based on both guests and all members for 797 corporations. I computed the 1991 figures base on active members (90% of all members) only and on a total 1,144 corporations. The closest Grove guest list I was able to obtain to 1991 was the 1993 list. I matched this list against the 1,144 U.S. corporations' directors and came up with 62 additional U.S. directors who served on 104 corporate boards.<sup>18</sup> So by adding in the guests as Domhoff had done in 1970 and 1980 to the membership directors the result is that 273 corporations had directors at the 1991-93 summer encampment. This represents about 24% of the top 1,144 corporations in the United States. So, Domhoff's data and the 1991-93 figures compiled show that for the

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<sup>17</sup>. At the last day of the Spring Jinks I walked into Mandalay after breakfast. Camp members were already all gone, and there was just staff there cleaning up. There were six valets at Mandalay serving eighteen members and guests for the week-end. Mandalay has a fairly small bar, but a beautiful deck and camp club house. The inside area flooring is polished hardwood, and there is adequate room for a formal dinner seating for 50-75 men. In book shelves along the river road wall are camp scrap books, showing pictures of Mandalay Camp members going back fifty years. George Bush's picture along with Henry Kissinger and George Schultz was in the 1991 album.

<sup>18</sup>. In the late 1980s the club stopped publishing a guest list at the Grove for all members and instead posted one list at the Civic Center. This was done to prevent their public circulation. (Baxter, 2-31-94) The source for my 1993 list wishes to remain anonymous.

past quarter-century Bohemia has had a consistent 24-30% of the top U.S. corporations represented at their summer encampments.

**% of Top Corporations Having Members or Guests**

**at the San Francisco Bohemian Club Summer Encampment**

<b>1970</b> N = 797	<b>1980</b> N = 797	<b>1991-93</b> N = 1,144
29%	30%	24%
(Domhoff,'74)	(Domhoff,'83)	

This twenty-year consistent pattern of corporate directors at the Grove lead to my questioning of how far back these patterns are evident, especially before the California growth boom during World War II. In order to address this question I compiled lists of the 100 non-California U.S. corporations with the largest assets and a separate list of the largest California corporations for 1941, 1971, and 1991. I used an assets-based criteria, because it seemed to be the most accurate way to identify the apex of U.S. corporations. Corporations merge, industrial groups decline, but assets remain uppermost. Once I had the corporate lists, I entered the names of the directors and top managers of each corporation into a data base for matching with the 1941-71-91 Bohemian Club active membership lists. The results were as follows:

**% of the Top 100 non-California U.S. Corporations**

**With Bohemian Directors**

<u>1941</u>	<b>1971</b>	<b>1991</b>
25%	41%	30%
N=19	N=49	N=31

Bohemians as directors of the top 100 largest U.S. non-California corporations started at 25% in 1941, rose to 41% in 1971, and dropped to 30% in 1991. The numbers of individuals are small, at 19 for 1941, 49 for 1971, and 31 for 1991. Nevertheless, what seems to be indicated from this data is that the largest corporations in 1991 had a slight decline in involvement at the Grove. This could just be an anomaly, or perhaps something has changed that had attracted Club membership among top economic elites outside of California. Domhoff had found from his 1970-1980 data that the largest corporations tended to be the most-heavily networked at the Grove. Again Domhoff's data included guests as well, so I matched the 1970 and 1993 guest lists to determine if there was also a decline in this area as well.

**% Of the Top 100 U.S. non-California Corporations**

**With Bohemian Grove Guests**

1971	1993
40%	21%

Just as with Club members and the 100 corporations, there was also a drop in guests from the top 100 non-California corporations. Again the numbers were small, thirty-nine individuals in 1971 and twenty-nine men in 1993. But considering that there were almost twice as many guests in 1991 as in 1971 (778-341) the decline seems even more dramatic. By combining guests and members for 1971 and 1991-93, the over all decline is even more evident.



**% Of the Top 100 Non-California U.S. Corporations  
Directors or Managers with  
Bohemian Club Members or Grove Guests**

1971	1991-93
64%	42%

One possible explanation for this decline could be that as of 1987 a ruling by State of California's Franchise Tax Board discontinued the practice of allowing individuals or corporations to deduct their dues and expenses for a private men only clubs on their State income tax returns (Los Angeles Daily Journal 6-17-87). This could have lead to a dropping off of the incentive to invite high level business associates if an individual had to pay all guest expenses from personal funds.<sup>19</sup>

If tax deductions were a factor in a decline of corporate elite at the Grove then this should show up as well, among the top California corporations. Matching the Bohemian Club members and guests for 1971 and 1991-93 to the directors and managers of the top fifty California corporations by assets level had the following results:

**% Of Top 50 California Corporations Having  
Bohemians as Directors or Managers**

1941	1971	1991
74%	52%	62%
N = 38	N = 26	N = 31

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<sup>19</sup>. The Bohemian Club is quite adamant about this issue, and has adopted a strict policy of not accepting any business checks for dues and expenses. In the early winter of 1994 a member was expelled from the Club for deducting club expenses on his income taxes (Baxter 3-31-94).

**% Of Top 50 California Corporations Having  
Grove Guests<sup>20</sup>**

<b>1971</b> 16% N = 8	<b>1991-93</b> 24% N = 12
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**% Of Top 50 California Corporations Having  
Bohemian Club Members or Guests**

<b>1971</b> 54% N = 27	<b>1991-93</b> 68% N = 34
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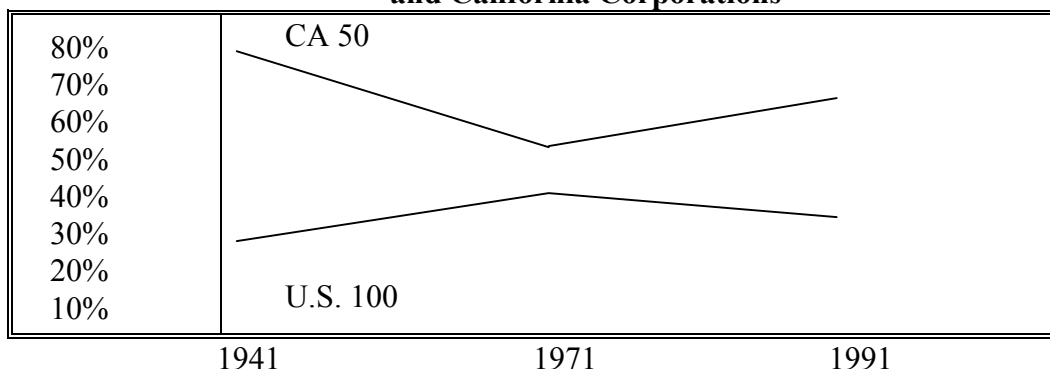
As evident from the above data California corporations have retained a strong presence at the Grove, especially in 1991, but still slightly less than in 1941. So, at least in California the loss of being able to write off membership has not discouraged top corporate elites from participating at the Club.

Overall the corporate data shows that the Bohemian Club has been and continues to be highly interconnected with both U.S. and California corporations. After World War II the Bohemian Clubs' connection with national corporate elites grew significantly, and has dropped off slightly since the 1970s.

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<sup>20</sup>. Generally Californians are not allowed as guests at the Bohemian summer encampment; Special permission is required from the Grove committee for California guests. The Spring Jinks has become the primary California Grove guest weekend. 1971-91 guests who were directors of California corporations were all primarily out of state residents.

**% of Bohemian Club Interconnectedness  
With Top Non-California U.S. Corporations  
and California Corporations**



It is tempting to say that the relationship between the California 50 and the U.S. 100 reflects a growth and decline correlation, however, I think the numbers are too small to make such a claim. They do seem to offset each other however, and there is a resulting balance of continuous high level corporate involvement at the Grove over the past fifty years. The Club still favors West Coast corporations, but a long term national level involvement is definitely present.

It has been fairly well-known that Bohemia is structurally inter-linked with the America business community, but less well-developed is a historical and qualitative interpretation of how the men in this network use it for business advantages.

In testimony before the State Franchise Tax Board in 1987, Domhoff cited an inter-office memo from a prominent Los Angeles Republican lawyer requesting reimbursement for private men's club dues and expenses.

December 30, 1975

To: Management Committee

Subject: Club Membership

There are a total of three clubs for which I propose to seek reimbursement for dues paid during the year 1976, which

I am a member; the Bohemian Club in San Francisco, the Links Club in New York, and California Club in Los Angeles.

One. Bohemian Club

This club, as you know, is one of the most prestigious in America and is particularly helpful for entertaining guests and visiting with members at the summer encampment. As examples, I have had, in the past, guests such as Thomas V. Evans, Esquire, of the firm of Mudge, Rose, Gunthie and Alexander in New York; Reese Meller, Senior Vice President and General Counsel of Richmond Corporation, an insurance company in Virginia; Robert H. Finch, Esquire, while he was Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare, William Rogers, former Secretary of State... I also use the downtown Club when I am in San Francisco, but only for business lunches or cocktails. I pay and will request reimbursement for non-resident dues and also my proportionate share of the Lost Angels Camp as I have in the past... (Capital Reporter 6-16-87 p.17-18)."

Lost Angels camp members, as noted above, held over 178 million dollars in corporate stocks, and had twenty-seven directorships in the largest U.S. corporations.

Club members would want outsiders to believe that here is a national level Republican attorney who invites cabinet officials and high level corporate officials to

share the same intimate camp site in the redwoods with the directors of twenty-seven U.S. corporations and all they are going to do is talk about music, nature and the arts!<sup>21</sup>

In group discussions and at dinners specific business issues are probably not talked about. If similar to my observations at the Grove the topics will tend to be broad economic issues, political concerns, societal changes and what's the best value on a Napa Valley Chardonnay. However, the gathering of business elites on a first name basis within the shared experiential process of Grove happenings creates fairly rapid personal intimacies that transcends the Grove and cements relationships for future business contacts and deals.

In addition to this, many men cannot resist the temptation to discuss specific business deals in the privacy of paired or small friendship groups. While the culture of the Grove forbids solicitation and economic dealing, the vastness of the Grove makes private discussions between individuals easily possible. This behavior is qualitatively observable to a listener sitting on Grove bench catching snippets of conversations of passing small groups of Bohemians. Walking at a leisurely pace men engrossed in a specific business discussion tend to ignore other Bohemians passing by or within hearing

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<sup>21</sup>. The corporations representing the Lost Angeles camp include:

Union Bank	Calfed	Mattel Inc
Union Electric Co	Comp Science Inc	Media General Inc
PHM Corporation	SCE Corporation	CBS
MCA Inc	Pacific Enterprises	Amax
Northrop Corp	Well's Fargo Bank	IBM
ARM Corporation	Great Western Fin	Cummings Engin
Colgate-Palmolive	Baker Hughes Inc	Philip Morris
Sears & Roebuck	Times Mirror Co	Security Pacific
Rockwell Int	Avery Dennison Corp	Atlantic Richfield

distance of their conversation. This phenomena gave me an opportunity to briefly overhear several paired business conversations at various locations in the Grove during the Spring Jinks.

Paired conversation pieces from three sets of Bohemian Grove men, June, 1994:

"Would G.E. come in on the deal? Only with new prototypes and a 500K investment, in a target area of the 7th largest area base."

"The bond market was flat, and the guy signed early. I guess that is why he is so fucking rich."

"The Asian mentality doesn't comprehend paying for financial advice. Do they expect to get it for free?"

Granted this is only a few brief conversations in crowds of Bohemians, but they have led me to believe that men tend to observe Grove conventions in large groups, but succumb to their primary career interests with friends or associates in paired settings.

The former C.E.O. of a major defense contractor participated in a conversation with Al Baxter and myself on this topic of business activities at the Grove. He frankly admitted, "Being at the Grove is a business advantage for me." He went on to say that, "I don't come to the Grove first off for business, but the guys you meet definitely give you an advantage (Baxter 6-4-94)."

A high level San Francisco attorney frankly disclosed that camp networking for business purposes is commonly done at the Grove. (Informal Interview Bohemian Grove 6-3-94). He said that "high level corporate officials will go from cocktail party to cocktail party", to meet others for future business contacts.

Another San Francisco attorney I talked to at the Grove kept 3" x 5" cards in his back pocket, so he could take notes on the names and backgrounds of various men he met at the Grove. It was clear that his purpose was to network for potential business clients as he made the rounds from camp to camp.

Personal connections have an opportunity to build over years in the Club. For forty-five years, before merging with Wells Fargo in 1986, Crocker Bank consistently had eleven to twelve of its twenty-five directors as Club members, three of whom were together in Hill Billies Camp in 1971. For these dozen men the Grove was a natural personal extension of regular banking contacts, where individuals could have an opportunity to sound out each other on important issues in an informal way. This is not to say that all men use the Grove for advantageous off-the-record business dealings. However, it is definite that some do and the opportunity is always present.

A historical look at advantages of being a Bohemian relative to business is useful for further discussion on this topic. Loyall (Blackie) McLaren, accountant, long-time financial consultant to James Irvine and later trustee for the Irvine Foundation, tells the story of how he met James Irvine in 1918, four years after graduating with his B.A. from U.C., Berkeley.

Ever since I was a boy I had heard a great deal about the Bohemian Club. My father had been a long time member, three of my uncles were Bohemians, as well as many family friends (p.152). Well, he (Irvine) knew my partner, who was really my fathers' contemporary, Percy Goode. Mr. Goode was a bachelor and lived at the Bohemian Club and Mr. Irvine used to go there for Thursday nights and they became acquainted (McLaren 1977 p.129).

This led to Irvine asking Goode for a tax advice referral, and he gave him McLaren's name. This produced a lifelong financial contact for McLaren with Irvine and the Irvine Company. For McLaren a Bohemian connection gave him the advantage of a lucrative business contract that changed his whole life.

McLaren's accounting firm went on to establish a national reputation. The following describes how he would develop usiness connections nationwide.

In reviewing my various activities,... a substantial portion of my life has been devoted to clubs.<sup>22</sup> The purpose of these... particularly in the case of clubs in big cities where I could find suitable accommodations when traveling by myself. There is also a commercial aspect connected with these clubs because the more I joined in , the wider my list of friends became, and the more clients came to our firm (McLaren 8-9-77 p.148-149).

McLaren (August 9, 1977) also tells how, in 1950, he was contacted by the Bohemian Club nominating committee about being president of the Club, just before going into a board of directors meeting of the Santa Fe Railroad, Inc. in Chicago. Unsure about how to respond he asked advice from other Bohemians at the meeting.

"I contacted Fred Grey who was an old time member of the club and asked him for advice,... He said... you'd better grab it right now... I questioned... three other members of the board who were Bohemians, they all advised me to accept. So I did (p.151)."

This is a good example of how intimately Club life is tied in with business for the American economic elite. Just the fact that four other Bohemians were in the room in Chicago at the time of McLaren's call is a specific example of the interconnectiveness of the Bohemian corporate family.

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<sup>22</sup>. He was president of both the Bohemian and Pacific Union Clubs, and a member of Links, N.Y., Rainer, in Seattle, Racquet in Washington, D.C., S.F. Golf, Cypress Point Golf, and the Metropolitan N.Y.)



In a ten-month period from June 1, 1940 to February 28, 1941 California received \$470,662,000 in defense contracts awarded by the Army and Navy, making it the number one defense contracting state (U.S. Office of Business Economics 1941 Appendix A). Defense money was an important stimulus to the San Francisco Bay Area economy and the promotion of this continued business was important to a number of people. E.O.

Lawrence, physicist at U.C., Berkeley, was actively involved in facilitating Bay Area military spending, understanding the symbiotic relations that this had for support and growth of his nuclear research projects.

In October of 1941 Lawrence hosted an overnight party at the Bohemian Grove, in honor of Admiral A.H. Van Keuren, Assistant Chief Bureau of Ships U.S. Navy, which included responsibility for all shipbuilding contracts with U.S.N. (U.S. Government Manual Sept, 1941 p.273-74). The guest list included:

**Guest List - 1941 E.O. Lawrence Party at the Grove**

Robert Sproul	U.C. President
H.E. Bolton	U.C. Professor
William Donald	U.C. Radiation Lab
Don Cooksy	U.C. Radiation Lab
Mauro P. O'Brian	U.C. Engineering
Charles Lipman	U.C. Dean
James Corky	Office of Controller, U.C.
Rear Admiral John Greenside	Commandant of 12 Naval
Rear Admiral Wilhelm L. Friedland	Mare Island Navy Yard
Ensign Alex H. VanKerven Jr.	Admiral's son
Joseph Moore Jr.	President, Moores Dry Docks
Captain H.M. Gleason	Manager of Naval

(Lawrence Archives 10-24-41)

This cozy private gathering held at the Grove's river clubhouse combined one of the leading shipbuilders in the Bay Area with the Navy's key person in charge of naval contracts and the top officials at U.C., Berkeley. After the party Lawrence got a thank you letter from shipbuilder H.M. Gleason.

October 28, 1941

Dear Dr. Lawrence,

I cannot tell you how much I enjoyed your party at the Bohemian Grove... In company with such a distinguished group, maybe I let my hair down with too much abandon, but seeing that all hands were doing likewise I felt that I would be in good company. "Van" (Admiral Van Keuren) told me that he thoroughly enjoyed himself... (Lawrence 10-28-41)

This party apparently got quite friendly, and the manager of shipbuilding for Moores became a first name acquaintance with the Chief of Naval Shipbuilding.

Lawrence was actively involved with other major defense contractors throughout his life, by serving as a consultant to and later on the board of directors of Monsanto, and working as a consultant to General Electric from 1928 to 1958. A letter from E.M. Queeny with Mosanto Chemical Company to Lawrence dated August 4, 1952, reads as follows:

"Sorry I missed your company coming down. We had a good flight. It was nice to see you at the Grove (Lawrence File 8-4-52)."

Lawrence was involved with a number of business-related functions at the Club.

A party for Mr. H.V. Erben, manager of General Electric's Control Division was held at the Bohemian Club 11-8-43. Lawrence sent his regrets (Lawrence File 11-8-43).

A Bohemian Club reception for Mr. Jen Hume, Vice-President of General Electric was held on 2-14-44 with Lawrence as a guest (Lawrence File 2-14-44).

Lawrence attended a Bohemian Club reception for E.O. Shreve, Vice-President of General Electric, on 5-1-46 (Lawrence File 5-1-46).

Lawrence even used his Bohemian connections to help his son get a summer job in a

Standard Oil service station, as the following letter indicates:

May 13, 1957

Dear Ted (T.S. Petersen, Bohemian President of Standard Oil),

This is to introduce Robert, who is looking for a summer job, preferably in a Standard Station in the vicinity of Laguna Beach or Newport Beach. I can tell you how much his mother and I appreciate your kindness in offering to see if there are any jobs along this line available.

Sincerely,

Ernest O. Lawrence

Lawrence's use of the Grove's river clubhouse for a Manhattan Project planning meeting in September of 1942 is well documented. Less well known is who exactly attended this meeting and the prideful publication of its history in Bohemian Club library notes. Participants at the Grove meetings of September 13 and 14, 1942:

E.O. Lawrence	U.C. Radiation Lab
Donald Cooksey	U.C. Radiation Lab
Robert L. Thornton	U.C. Radiation Lab
Robert Oppenheimer	U.C. Physics Department
James B. Conant	President of Harvard
Lyman Briggs	Dir, Natl Bureau of Standards
Eger V. Murphree	Chemist, Director of

Arthur H. Compton	Standard Oil Company Dean, Dept of Physical Chicago & Consultant to G.E.
Lt. Col. Kenneth Nichols	U.S. Army
Major Thomas Crenshaw	U.S. Army

(Bohemian Club Library notes #7 1960)

The atom bomb made this particular meeting at the Grove world famous, but it was not an isolated case of business and government planning through Bohemian club facilities. This was but one in a long series of historical business-related activities done in the context of a Bohemian corporate family network. The Club takes pride in this event, and members often tell new guests this story while at the Grove.

Least one think that Lawrence is an exception to the rule of business activity and associated connecting at the Club, this type of activity extends to Bohemian small business owners as well. Andrew Howell, rare book merchant in San Francisco, often used the Club to host clients. In the summer of 1939 he hosted the director of the Boston Museum and the president of the Metropolitan Museum in New York, at the Grove encampment (Howell Archives 1939).

During my dinner at the Bohemian Club on 3-31-94 I was seated with a probationary new associate member. This man was the co-owner of a computer software company in San Carlos. His guest was a school district representative from Coeur d'Alene, Idaho, who was in the Bay Area looking at new computer systems for his district. Both men had just met that day, and it was obvious that the school representative was being given an exclusive experience of Bohemia, meant to impress him and increase his respect for the computer software company owner.

Even loyal Bohemian, Al Baxter who adamantly claims the Club is for social purposes only, had to admit that the hand-carved marble inlay over his fireplace was done by the daughter of a fellow Bohemian (Baxter 3-31-94).

There are men within the Club who occasionally admonish members for their marketplace dealings.

"Weaving spiders come not here" is our motto. This club is vulnerable to criticism when its members outrageously violate that motto, when they use the club, not as an escape from the market place, but as a device of the market place. We are vulnerable to criticism when we grossly violate the heritage handed down to us by our nineteenth century founders (Starr 6-4-77 p.4).

Starr's criticism was a defacto acknowledgement of ongoing business activities at the Bohemian Club. That these activities do occur is not in doubt. That the Club is a highly interconnected socially-based reflection of American business society is also not in doubt.

Being in the Club gives a member access to business opportunities well beyond any normal business setting. Some men will and do take advantage of this, and some, like Al Baxter and Kevin Starr, would consider such actions an absolute violation of the Spirit of Bohemia.

Nevertheless, the structural analysis of the Bohemian Club and the historical/qualitative interpretation of that structure leaves little doubt that Bohemia has served for decades as a place for business entertainment and networking. Because they are in the Bohemian Club, each member has the potential for a relative advantage in

terms of socio-economic success in the business world. Acting in this advantage, however, is an individual choice.

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **Webs of Power**

#### **Bohemia and Politics**

The Bohemian Grove has long been a political networking point for Republicans. Dewey, Hoover, Wilkie, Eisenhower, Taft, Goldwater, Nixon, Bush, Ford, and Reagan have all been members or guests at the Grove along with significant numbers of cabinet members and White House officials (Van der Zee, Domhoff 1974). Eisenhower gave a premier political address at the Grove in 1950 setting himself on the path to the presidency (Van der Zee 1974 p.86), and presidential hopeful, Nelson Rockefeller, flew into the Grove for a Lakeside Chat in 1963. Nixon and Reagan sat down informally at the Grove in 1967 to work a political deal wherein Reagan was to run only if Nixon "faltered" (Domhoff 1974 p.42). These incidents are well-known, but to what extent is Bohemia an ongoing socio-political environment?

I want to examine this question starting with a political structural analysis of the Bohemian Club over time. To do this I built a database that included the names of all the

top political appointees in the United State government listed in U.S. government manuals for 1991 and I looked up the names of all active Bohemians in the 1971 index from the same source.<sup>23</sup> Government officials were matched against the active Club members for 1971 and 1991 to determine exactly how many Club members held high level government positions. The results by position were as follows:

**High Level Positions Held by  
Bohemians in U.S. Government**

1971	1991
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. President</li> <li>2. Deputy Secretary of Defense</li> <li>3. Deputy Under-Secretary, Dept of the Interior</li> <li>4. Associate Justice of the Supreme Court</li> <li>5. Rear Admiral, U.S.N.</li> <li>6. Director: Office of Science and Technology</li> <li>7. Member: National Science Board</li> <li>8. U.S. Circuit Judge: 9th District</li> <li>9. Trustee: JFK Center for Performing Arts</li> <li>10. Chairman: JFK Center for Performing Arts</li> <li>11. Member: National Science Board</li> <li>12. Deputy Asst Secretary of State Dept, Asian-Pacific Affairs</li> <li>13. Asst Deputy-Data Mngt, Veterans Administration</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. President</li> <li>2. Secretary of Treasury</li> <li>3. Postmaster General</li> <li>4. Chairman: U.S. Postal Service<sup>24</sup></li> <li>5. Director: National Railway Passenger Corp.</li> <li>6. Director: Federal Justice Center</li> <li>7. Board Member: U.S. Institute of Peace</li> <li>8. Director: Museum of National History</li> <li>9. Director: Pension Benefit Guaranty Corp.</li> <li>10. Secretary of Smithsonian Institution</li> <li>11. Director of Finance: Dept of Treasury</li> </ol>

<sup>23</sup>. Unfortunately the 1941 U.S. government manual is not indexed by individual name, making it a lengthy process to match and beyond the resources of this study.

<sup>24</sup>. Postmaster General and Chairman of the Postal Service were both members of Bald Eagle Camp.

As indicated above, about a dozen high level United States government officials were active members of the Bohemian Club for the two comparative time periods. Bohemians have traditionally invited a large number of guests from the East Coast to attend their summer encampment. Washington D.C. was second only to New York as the city most likely to have guests at the Grove.

**% of All Grove Guests from N.Y. or Washington D.C.**

<b>Year</b>	<b>1968</b>	<b>1970</b>	<b>1976</b>	<b>1981</b>	<b>4 Year Average</b>
New York	27.5%	21.4%	17.3%	10.9%	18.7%
WA, D.C.	5.6%	7.9%	5.7%	5.9%	6.2%

Totals N = 1462

NY = 274

D.C. = 92

Between 1968-1981 anywhere from 19 to 27 Washington, D.C. men were consistently invited to summer camp. Not all of these invitees were government officials; some were lobbyists, federal consultants, lawyers, and policy council officers. The only matching figures on a specific year available were for 1970, which showed that 66% of all Washington D.C. Grove attendees were government officials.

A comparison of 1971 and 1993 Grove guests in the U.S. government follows:



**Government Officials Invited As Guests  
To The Bohemian Grove**

1970	1991 - 93
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Secretary of Interior</li> <li>2. Secretary of the Treasury</li> <li>3. Secretary of Defense</li> <li>4. Secretary of State</li> <li>5. Chairman: U.S. Export- Import Bank</li> <li>6. Chairman: Joint Chiefs of Staff</li> <li>7. Director: U.S. Information Agency</li> <li>8. Chief of Protocol: Dept of State</li> <li>9. Asst to the President: Domestic Affairs</li> <li>10. Asst to the President</li> <li>11. Asst to the President: National Security</li> <li>12. Deputy Director: Office Mngt and Budget</li> <li>13. Board Member: Smithsonian Institute</li> <li>14. Under Secretary: H.E.W.</li> <li>15. Commissioner: Federal Trade Commission</li> <li>16. Associate Administrator Operations: Dept of Transportation</li> <li>17. Deputy Associate Admin, Planning: National Aeronautics &amp; Space Administration</li> <li>18. Asst Admin, Industrial Affairs: National Aeronautics &amp; Space Administration</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Secretary of Defense</li> <li>2. Chief of Protocol, Dept of State</li> <li>3. Senator from Wyoming</li> <li>4. Representative from Tenn.</li> <li>5. Representative from WA</li> <li>6. Representative from CA</li> <li>7. Ambassador to Denmark</li> <li>8. Ambassador to Great Britain</li> <li>9. Ambassador to Bahrain / Canberra</li> <li>10. Asst Secretary, Dept of Defense</li> <li>11. Under Secretary for Mngt: Dept of State</li> <li>12. Administrator of E.P.A.</li> <li>13. Director of Foreign Service Institute, Dept of State</li> <li>14. Librarian of Congress</li> <li>15. Asst Secretary of Navy: Financial Mngt</li> <li>16. Officer of Federal Reserve Bank: S.F.</li> <li>17. Director: Federal Maritime Commission</li> <li>18. Board Member, National Railroad Passenger Corp</li> <li>19. Chairman: J.F.K. Center for Performing Arts</li> <li>20. Chief Economist: Office of Thrift Supervision</li> <li>21. Military Asst to Secretary of Defense</li> </ol>

The above data shows that Bohemians regularly invite government men and politicians to attend the Grove encampments. As the 1993 Grove list was compared to the 1991 federal list, it is a bit curious that the 1993 list still includes a number of men who were high level officials in Bush's administration, suggesting that a political network

of Republicans is consistently maintained at the Grove even when a Democrat is in office.

If we combine the U.S. government officials who are members and the government guests the results are that attendees at the Grove consistently include thirty-one to thirty-two of the top political figures in the United States, with a strong emphasis on Republicans.

Domhoff found that 223 Bohemians and guests were on record in 1968 as giving over \$500 to top politicians in the U.S. with 90% going to the Republicans (Domhoff 1974 p.32). Wehr (1993) found that 142 Bohemians gave an average of \$1,656 to the 1992 Bush campaign, eleven members gave an average of \$8,750 to Clinton, and Perot received a total of \$459 from three Bohemians. These comparative political finance periods give us fairly strong evidence that a sizeable portion (7-8%) of the Club regularly contributes to Republican political campaigns. Wehr (1993) points out it is not possible to determine how financially influential Bohemians are through their corporate political action committees, but it would be reasonable to assume that direct contributions from individuals are but a small portion of political funds directed from Bohemians to Republican coffers. Six Bohemians were participants in Bush's Club 100 in 1988, meaning they donated over \$100,000 to the Republican National Committee (Berke, N.Y. Times 1-24-89).<sup>25</sup>

Direct solicitation of campaign funds at the Grove would be in violation of the

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<sup>25</sup>. Al Baxter (1-13-94) seems to feel that 60-70% of the club is Republican with a sizable number of "New Deal" Democrats making up the balance.

weaving spider norms, however, given that Republican presidential hopefuls have regularly gone to the Grove, follow-up contacts by campaign finance personnel will likely include names of men met at the Grove during "informal" visits (Interview F 6-3-94).

While I was at the Grove, a former candidate for Congress frankly admitted to me that politicians frequently work the Grove, “ going from camp to camp to meet people. Female politicians cannot do this, so they often send their male campaign managers (Interview F 6-3-94).” He said both Republicans and Democrats will network the Grove camps during campaign years and that this gives the members a chance to meet the candidates.

Collectively, Bohemians offer political candidates a concentrated network of potential contributors and influential contacts in the U.S. corporate world. The same mechanism of camp visitations possible for business connections is equally possible for politicians as well.

Since there is evidence that Bohemians have a strong interactive network potential in regards to high level federal employees, I was interested in seeing if this existed at a state level as well.

In order to do a comparative historical analysis of Bohemia and California state government, it was necessary to create three databases that included all the political appointments and key state officials for 1941, 1971, and 1991. I used the California Blue Books for 1941 and 1971 and the California Roster for 1991. These sources produce listings of over 500 top state government officials for each of the benchmark years. These were then compared to active Club members and guests. A report of the

findings follows:

**Number of Positions Held by  
Bohemians in California State Government**

1941 N=530	1971 N=734	1991 N=789
17 positions 13 individuals	23 positions 22 individuals	9 positions 8 individuals

**Positions Held by Bohemians  
in California State Government**

1941	1971	1991
Member of Senate Member of Assembly Attorney General CA State Defense Council - 2 CA Board of Architecture U.C. Regents - 5 State Agriculture Society CA Dist Securities Comm Division of Pardons Water Project Authority State Personnel Board	Public Employee Retirement System Member of Senate C.S.U. Trustees-5 <sup>26</sup> U.C. Regents-6 U.C. Santa Cruz Chancellor U.C.S.F. Chancellor U.C. System Vice- President S.F. Bay Consr Dist CA Law Revision Comm Comm Uniform State Laws Reclamation Board Supreme Court Justice CA Heritage Preservation Comm Court of Appeals	C.S.U. Trustees - 2 U.C. Regents - 2 Member of Senate State Personnel Board Comm CA State Gov Organization Public Utilities Comm - 2 Fish and Game Comm

Guest lists for 1941 are unavailable. In 1971 the only guest from state

<sup>26</sup>. California State University Trustee started as a legal body in 1961.

government was Governor Ronald Reagan, but for 1991 seven individuals were guests.

**State Government Guests at Bohemian Grove  
For 1991 by Position**

U.C. Chancellors - 2 Member of Senate - 2 Judicial Council California Transportation Commission California State Lottery Commission Member of Assembly - 2 <sup>27</sup>
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If we add the guests into 1971 and 1991 member/government lists the results are:

**Bohemian Member and Guests Holding  
California State Government Positions**

1971	1991 - 93
23 individuals	15 individuals

It seems that 1971 was a peak period for Bohemians holding state government positions with a drop from 23 to 9 positions by 1991. However, Club members invited more state government guests in 1991, thereby maintaining a significant presence of state officials at the Grove.

It is quite clear that national and state level men in high level political positions maintain a regular presence at the Bohemian Grove encampments. Combining both federal and state employees and guests reveals that approximately 50 men who hold current high level government positions attend the Grove on a regular basis.

What this means is that through normal interaction and association at the Grove,

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<sup>27</sup>. One was a candidate for statewide office.

members will have an opportunity to meet high level government officials on a regular basis and can, by their own volition, follow up on these contacts at a later date if a political problem arises with which a fellow Bohemian could assist.

While deliberate politicking and fund raising conflict with Bohemian values, the discussion of political topics and current events is perhaps one of Bohemia's favorite pastimes. During my four days at the Grove the following political/current event topics were discussed in my presence:

- Willie Brown - Capabilities as House Speaker
- Clinton's anti-war career
- Minority admittances at U.C.
- Oppenheimer's political orientations
- A current bill in Congress
- China's most favored nation status
- Feminism and what do women really want
- Terrorism
- Environmental decline/lost species
- Bohemian Club protestors
- Pacific Rim export-import
- 1994 California governors race
- U.S. energy policy issues
- Multi-Culturalism/race relations
- Afro-Centrism

One paired political snippet I overheard during my visit at the Grove involved a leading political figure in San Francisco talking to a former corporate C.E.O. who had just returned from Washington, D.C. "What's happening on the bill? It looks like Gephardt is going to get it through (6-3-94)."

Next to personal stories and events about the Grove and Club, political topics of various sorts are one of the more common subjects at the Grove. These discussions are often stimulated by Lakeside Chats, which are themselves often very political.

On Saturday, June 4, 1994 the Lakeside Chat was given by a political science professor from U.C., Berkeley. The chat was entitled "Violent Weakness", which focussed on how increasing violence in society was weakening our social institutions. Contributing to this violence and decay of our institutions is bi-sexualism, entertainment politics, multi-culturalism, Afro-Centrism, and a loss of family boundaries. The speaker claimed that to avert further deterioration, we need to recognize that "elites based on merit and skill are important to society" (loud clapping). "Any elite that fails to define itself will fail to survive... We need boundaries and values set and clear! We need an American centered foreign policy... and a President who understands foreign policy." He went on to conclude that we cannot allow the "unqualified" masses to carry out policy, but that elites must set values that can be translated into "standards of authority". This speech was forcefully given and was received with an enthusiastic standing ovation by most members. I asked a dozen men after the speech how they felt about it. One said it was too simplistic, and another said it should be discussed more, but the others all gave it strong approval. In three camps I visited after the chat it was inevitably one of the topics of discussion.

From the reaction of Bohemians to the chat, it was apparent that the term elite is a self-identifier for many Club members, and that because of that identity they feel they have an obligation and right to set the political policies and direction for America.

Most of the men present at the Grove are not in immediate positions of power that would allow action on issues. However, more important sociologically is the idea of the shared sense of elitism that allows for the formation of reactionary attitudes towards

various progressive movements. This is very similar to the reactionary responses of Bohemians to insurgent labor challenges in the 1930s. The homogeneity of the Club and the close inter-relationships of the men, allows for the articulation of shared values and beliefs on numerous socio-political topics.

Historical phrases from the 1920 Cremation of Care ceremony reflects shared political sentiments from Bohemians of that era:

The Spirit of Tradition speaks:

With greatest scrupulosity; I seek the manner of the past; o'er all to hold. What doth not naturally unfold itself from the sure and written past I do abhor... The heretic, the fearless liberal, the over heated red, all advocates of novelty, I class as one... (Thompson 1920).

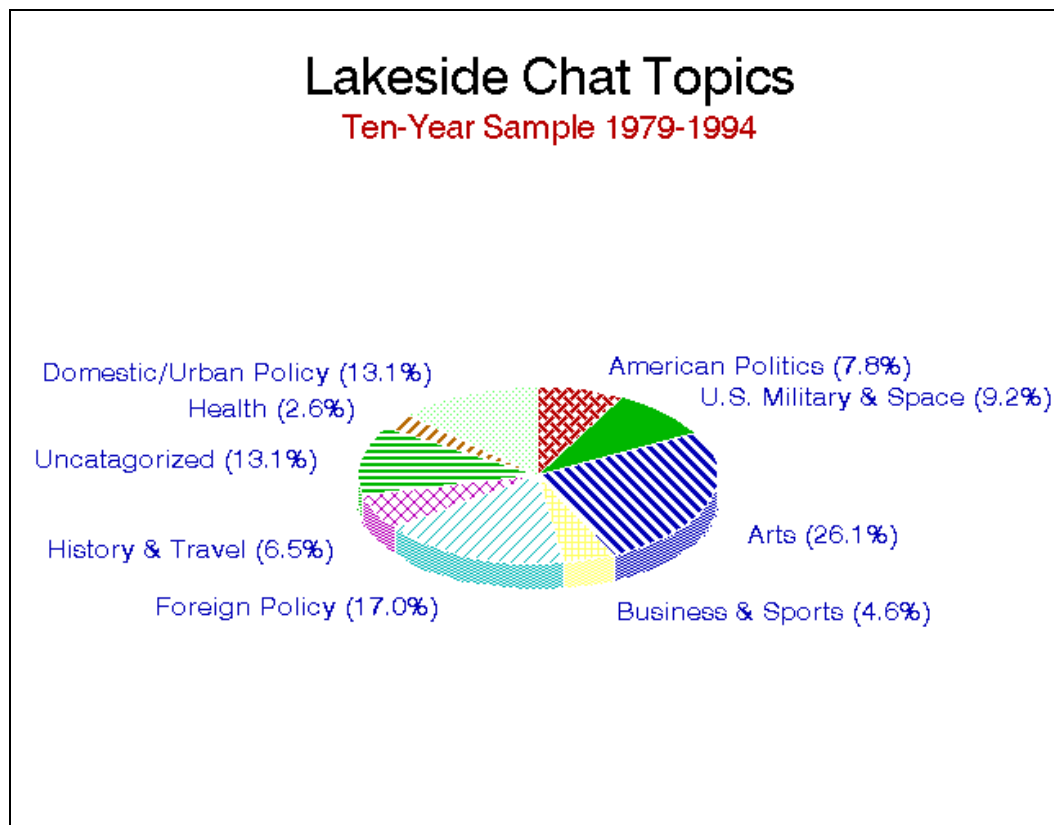
Socio-political topics are constantly presented to Bohemians at Lakeside Chats. A review of 10 years of Lakeside Chats at the Grove reveals that between 1979 and 1993 politics and policy issues are the most common topics.

**1979 - 1993**

<b>Politics/Policy Issues</b>	<b>Arts</b>	<b>General Interest</b>
American Party 8% Politics	Humanities 26% & Arts	Health 3%
Domestic/Urban 14%		Business 4.5% & Sports
Military/Space 12.5%		History 6.5% & Travel
Foreign 26%		
<b>TOTALS: 60.5%</b>	<b>26%</b>	<b>13%</b>

Not coded: 13.5%





#### Bohemian Grove Lakeside Chat Summary

Chats stimulate political and policy discussions among the men at the Grove, and serve the purpose of allowing consensual understandings to take shape. This is not to say that there is not disagreements among Club members. One particular case in point occurred in 1993. William Simon, former Secretary of the Treasury under Ford, gave a Lakeside Chat during which he delivered some scathing anti-Bush remarks, while the freshly defeated President was in the audience (Wehr 1993). The San Francisco Chronicle columnist, Robert Novak, reported August 9, 1993 that Bush walked out of the chat. However, this seems to have been overstated. Bush was probably upset, but he did not leave the lake area until the end of Simon's talk (Wehr 1993, Baxter 3-31-94). More than one Bohemian was unhappy with Bush in 1993. One Club waitperson

told how a group of men were exiting from the dining circle only a few tables away from Bush, one man went over to shake Bush's hand and came back to his friend and said, "Aren't you going to shake the Presidents hand?" His loud response was, "Yeah, I'll shake his hand and ask him why he fucked everything up" (Interview B 5-17-94).

High level socio-political policy topics have a long tradition at the Grove. President Hoover gave chats almost every year from 1932 to his death in 1964.

A 1951 program of Lakeside Chats shows the following speakers and topics.

"The International Oil Situation"  
T.S. Peterson  
President, Standard Oil Company, CA

"Wither America?"  
Senator Robert A. Taft

"Strategy"  
General A.C. Wedemeyer  
U.S. Army: General Staff, Washington, D.C.

"World Conditions"  
Herbert Hoover  
Former President of the United States

(Bohemian Club CA Historical Society 1951)

In recent years the more highly-attended weekend chats are most likely to cover policy issues and feature national or international level speakers, as compared to mid-week sessions which tend to cover the arts and common interest topics. A review of the weekend chats for 1991-92-93 shows both the noteworthiness of speakers and the socio-political content of their topics.

## 1991 Weekend Chats

## Friday, Saturday, Sunday

Speaker	Topic
William L. Armstrong U.S. Senator, Chairman of Republican Policy Committee	Congressional Reform Before It's Too Late
S. Frederick Starr President of Oberlin College	U.S.S.R., Smaller But Better
Helmut Schmidt Former German Chancellor, Publisher Die Zert	The Enormous Problems of the 21st Century
Vartan Gevorgian President, Brown University	Americans Individualism Revisited
George Shultz Former Secretary of State: Fellow at the Hoover Institute	Agenda for America
Michael Taratutu San Francisco Bureau Chief, Soviet T.V.	A Soviet in the U.S.
Vernon Jordan Attorney <sup>28</sup> , Former Urban League Official	The Coming Revolution
Richard Cheney Secretary of Defense	Major Defense Problems of the 21st Century

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<sup>28</sup>. In 1991 Vernon Jordan held eleven corporate directorships in the top 1,144 U.S. corporations, more than any other single individual (Who Knows Who 1991).

## 1992 Weekend Lakeside Chats

Speaker	Topic
Peter Ueberroth President, Rebuild L.A., U.S. Baseball Commissioner, President of L.A. Olympic Organizing Committee, 1979-84	Bringing Los Angeles Back Together
Albert V. Casey Former Postmaster General, 1980-86	Resolution Trust Corporation Update
Prince Bandar Bin Sultan Ambassador to U.S. from Saudi Arabia	Middle East Peace Process
Miguel de La Madrid President of Mexico	Free Trade Agreement, A Mexican View
Lamar Alexander Secretary of Education	Education in the 90's
Roald Saqdeeu <sup>29</sup>	Observations in the Soviet Union

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<sup>29</sup>. Roald Saqdeeu married Susan Eisenhower, granddaughter of the President, in 1990.

**1993 Weekend Lakeside Chats**

<b>Speaker</b>	<b>Topic</b>
Dr. Alain Ethoven	A Look At the Proposed Health Care Plan
Casper Weinberger Former Secretary of Defense	The World and Mr. Clinton
Hank Brown Republican Congressman, Colorado	Politics of Deficit Reduction
William Simon Former Secretary of Treasury	Freedom Isn't Everything, It's The Only Thing
James A. Baker III Former Secretary of Treasury	Meeting Global Challenges, the Necessity for American Leadership
James D. Wolfensohn Chairman: J.F.K. Center for the Performing Arts	Who Says the Arts Are A Luxury <sup>30</sup>
Dr. Boris Notkin	A View From Moscow
Willie Brown Speaker, California State Assembly	(California Government?) Exact title unprinted

Bohemians love to discuss and debate various political topics at the Grove. Harry Volk, Union Bank Chairman and Los Angeles camp member, made the following statement:

"People who go to Bohemian Grove, go with a commitment to make it an experience of relaxation... and avoid discussions of business as such. But, you can't avoid, with a lot of bright men, talking about politics, social problems, Mexican immigration. It is therapeutic experience for us all

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<sup>30</sup>. This was the only Friday-Saturday-Sunday art topic covered in the 1991-92-93 period.

(Nader and Taylor 1986 p.383).

Contact with the pinnacles of power, presidents, foreign dignitaries, cabinet officials, and intellectual giants in an informal off-the-record discussion format, gives Bohemians a heady sense of sharing ideas at the top-most level. Intellectually, Bohemians can agree or disagree with the specific issues of the chats, but like the Grove plays, Lakeside Chats are a shared experiential process that enhances a sense of elite weness in unison with shared challenges and in opposition to common threats.

Looking back historically at the Club, there is ample evidence of political inter-connections generated from Bohemian networks. One of the foremost political events in which the Bohemian political network played a significant role was the United Nations Conference of International Organization (UNCIO), April 25th to June 26, 1945 in San Francisco. This was the original formation meeting for the United Nations, with delegates from fifty nations. Receptions for UNCIO delegates and key dignitaries were held at the Bohemian Club on May 17, May 29, June 4, and June 5. Towards the end of the U.N. conference the Club invited all delegates to a program at the Grove.<sup>31</sup> Bohemian William Bacon describes the day;

Guests and members numbered 1,500... The U.S. Navy provided bus transportation to the Grove. The U.S. Army furnished enlisted personnel to assist with cooking, waiting tables, bar tending, etc... The events of the day included a welcome upon arrival at the gate by the band, cocktails in the bar and at a number of camps... After luncheon a program was presented on the Grove stage... one of the greatest thrills of the day was an air show staged over the Grove by the Army Air Forces (Bacon 1972).

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<sup>31</sup>. The Russian delegates declined to attend.

The Club was quite proud that Bohemians Earl Warren, Governor of California and Roger Lapham, Mayor of San Francisco, held decisive roles in greeting the U.N. delegates. The Club and its members were major players in hosting the U.N. delegates. This participation was closely interlocked with the U.S. military and a definite case wherein Bohemian social boundaries formally extended into the political arena.

Earl Warren was a Club member from 1941 to his death in 1974. As State Attorney General, Governor, and U.S. Supreme Court Justice, he used the Club formally and informally for many socio-political activities. On September 24, 1963 as Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, Warren and the entire U.S. Supreme Court were hosted for a double lamb chops lunch at the Bohemian Club, thereby giving numerous male San Franciscans an opportunity to see and meet the Justices firsthand (Bohemian Archive 1963).

Earl Warren (1977) references the Bohemian Club politically in his memoirs on two occasions. In 1951, while Governor, he was considering a run for the presidency when General Eisenhower came to the Grove encampment. Warren writes as follows:

...at Bohemian Club encampments where the general was a guest and very popular, the story was current that he had asked people if they thought he could obtain both party nominations (p.249).

It is clear from this statement that political tittle-tattle was an important aspect of Warren's involvement at the Grove, especially as Eisenhower was doing his political networking.

One of Warren's stories in particular, shows how politically elite Bohemians use the Grove to address key political problems. During the McCarthy era loyalty oath

disputes at the University of California, Warren found himself in opposition to U.C. Regents Edward A. Dickson, John Francis Neylan (Bohemian) and Mario Giannini (Bohemian) who were pushing anti-Communist oaths on the faculty. This dispute went on for a year and a half. The Los Angeles Times was considering coming out in favor of the oath. However, Norman Chandler, Editor, agreed to meet with Warren at the Grove to discuss the issue before the editorial came out.

I (Warren) was delighted when, at the encampment, Chandler and I could sit in a cluster of giant redwoods, which added a cathedral-like solemnity to the discussion and quietly debate his concern about radicalism in the University... (Warren 1977 p.221).

Warren won the argument and the L.A. Times came out against the "emotionalism" of the issue a few days later.

In each of these cases it is well-founded that the Club gave Warren political advantages that would not have been available to non-Bohemians. The fact that Warren's rivals used the same Club networks does not diminish their importance, but rather magnifies their significance as socio-political processes.

George Schultz, Secretary of Treasury under Nixon and Secretary of State under Reagan, describes hosting German Chancellor Helmut Schmitz at the Grove in 1982.

...a long relaxed weekend filled with candid and far reaching discussions. Also present were Henry Kissinger and Prime Minister Lee Kuan of Singapore (Schultz 1993 p.137).

Former Secretary of Defense and member of Mandalay Camp, Casper Weinberger, admitted to the San Francisco Chronicle that, "sometimes talk turns to



substantive matters" (S.F. Chronicle 7-17-83 p.B-5) These private off-the-record discussions were held at Mandalay Camp, an event not uncommon in that portion of the redwoods.

Bohemian political connections were also a prominent part of Republican party leader and U.C. Trustee John Francis Neylan's socio-political network. Neylan wrote to Richard Nixon July 24, 1950:

"I'm sorry I missed you during your visit to Mandalay Camp at the Grove. Some of my fellow members told me they had a very delightful visit with you. I shall be very glad to be helpful and shall look forward to seeing you on your return trip to San Francisco (Neylan 7-24-50)."

This letter was sent only a few months after giving a "generous donation" to Nixon's Senate campaign as the following correspondence indicates.

May 24, 1950

Dear Mr. Neylan,

... Your contribution for Nixon is in my opinion an excellent investment. ... he will become an outstanding leader in the United States Senate dedicated to free enterprise and to stopping the present rapid trend towards complete Socialism with it attendant confiscatory taxes...

Sincerely yours,  
David Parkhurst Smith  
(Neylan 5-24-50)

On November 1, 1938 Neylan was called upon by Bohemian friend William Chadbourne, who had stayed with him at Mandalay only three months earlier, to assist with coordinating the visit of Alexander Kerensky to the Bohemian Club. Kerensky, who was the Prime Minister of Russia after the fall of the Czar and before the rise of Lenin, was giving a lecture series around the U.S. Neylan responded immediately and assured Chadbourne that Kerensky would have all the "privileges" of the Bohemian Club while

visiting San Francisco (Neylan 11-1-38 and 11-4-38).

Neylan and Ernest Lawrence were close friends and Bohemian associates. Neylan was often involved in promoting various political agendas. In November of 1955 he wrote Lawrence and invited him to dinner at the Pacific Union Club.<sup>32</sup>

November 9, 1955

Dear Ernest,

Can you join me at the Pacific Union Club for dinner Thursday, November 17, 1955 at 7:00 p.m.?

I am having a group of scientists, experts in radio and television, editors and industrialists for a confidential consideration of the problem of teaching the sciences in the United States...

Neylan gave twenty-six formal socio-political luncheons between 1935 and 1958.

These get-togethers were mostly held at the Pacific Union Club.

#### **Locations of John F. Neylan's Dinners, 1935-1958**

<b>Pacific Union Club</b>	<b>Bohemian Club</b>	<b>St. Francis Hotel</b>	<b>Mark Hopkins Hotel</b>	<b>Press Club</b>	<b>Wood-side House</b>
21	1	1	1	1	1

These dinners and luncheons were held in honor of some very prominent men including:

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<sup>32</sup>. Neylan was a member in both the Bohemian and Pacific Union Clubs. For some reason he favored using the Pacific Union Club over the Bohemian Club for private dinners.

**Honorees at Neylan Dinners**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Year</b>
James H. Perkins Former President, National City Bank <sup>33</sup>	1935
James Bryant Conant President of Harvard	1937
Garrard Winston Chicago Attorney and Former Under-Secretary Treasury	1939
Thomas H. Kuchel California State Senator, later to become U.S. Senator	1940
Sir Girva Bajpai India	1942
Nelson Rockefeller (held at the Bohemian Club)	1943
Nicholas Roosevelt Deputy Director of Office of War Information	1943
Daniel Jacking Retired President Kennicott Copper Company	1946
David E. Lilienthal Chairman, Tennessee Valley Authority	1948
Jawaharlal Nehru India	1949
Dr. Loyal Davis Professor Emeritus, North Western University	1950
Herman Phleger (Bohemian) U.S. Representative to 13th U.N. General Assembly	1957

While understanding how the Bohemian Club serves to enhance socio-political

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<sup>33</sup>. Neylan had been one of the first West Coast Directors of National City Bank since 1933.

connections for its members, it is equally important to recognize that political elites maintain high level national and international connections throughout their lives and that the Bohemian Club network is but one aspect of these diverse inter-relationships. Depending on a person's status, the Bohemian Club may be their primary socio-political connection point or as in the case of Neylan, one of several interactive networks of power.

Bohemians Loyal McLaren and Harry Collier, were co-captains of the Stowaway Camp, where Eisenhower stayed in 1951. McLaren and Eisenhower became quite "congenial", as they both liked to play bridge (McLaren 1977 p.157). In 1953 McLaren invited Eisenhower back to the Grove but he was unable to attend. Eisenhower did reciprocate however, by inviting McLaren to a black tie "stag dinner", at the White House in January of 1954, that was meant to serve as a thank you to heavy Republican contributors (McLaren 1977 p.158). Later that year McLaren got a telephone call from the White House asking him to arrange for the Prime Minister of Pakistan to be received at the Grove that summer. McLaren took responsibility for hosting the Prime Minister at Stowaway Camp and even arranged for him to give a Lakeside Chat (McLaren 1978 p.159).

When Gerald Ford became the heir apparent, as Nixon was faltering, he was invited to his first Grove visit by Leonard Firestone. McLaren recalled being asked to assist Firestone with Ford's desire to meet prominent Republicans.

I had a call from Leonard Firestone, who was having Mr. Ford as a guest at his camp, and he wanted to know about rounding the thing out, to give him an interesting time and enable him to meet as many people, useful people as possible. So I thought the thing to do was to have some rather

mall parties at two or three of the different camps... The first night they had Ford at Mandalay. And the next day we had a luncheon at our camp (Stowaway) and then a sort of brunch at another camp, and finally on the last day they went to the Hoover camp (Caveman) where of course, there are a lot of Republican politicians (McLaren 1977 p.171-172).

This is an important disclosure on how political networking happens at the Grove. Ford was able to meet approximately 150 top level Republican corporate leaders in a matter of two days. Leonard Firestone, witnessing Nixon's decline and wanting to see a Republican continue in the White House, used the Grove and his Bohemian friend, Loyal McLaren, to promote Gerald Ford to key West Coast Republican Party heavyweights.

It is important to recognize that these political elite dealings probably do not directly involve more than one-third of the Bohemians at the Grove. But, given that all the men can witness the presence of famous socio-political figures and often hear them give presentations, the collective concept of being in a special elite fraternity of important people becomes easier to understand. A man belonging to the same club as the President of the United States, even if he has never met the President, shares a self-identifying status of being closely affiliated with power and prestige. San Francisco book store owner and Bohemian, John Howell, writes to President Eisenhower in 1952.

I am one of many Bohemians, Californians and Republicans who enjoyed working for you, knowing you are the right man for the right place. I had the pleasure at Bohemian Grove in 1950 of sitting near you at the performance at Field Circle. I am one of many who also enjoyed your talk at lakeside (Howell 11-24-52 p.136-137).

Howell goes on to say to Eisenhower, that he is sending a book for his review, wanting

to know what he thinks of it. Howell also writes that he had been a bookseller for fifty years, and that he had three sons in the 2nd World War and signs the letter a "brother Bohemian and lifetime Republican" (Howell p.137). Here is a man who by virtue of his Bohemian Club membership, writes to the President of the United States asking him to review and comment on a new book he has published. This sense of openness extends throughout the Club, and is the basis for a social network over and beyond ordinary human social contact.

Lakeside Chats become an individual episode, that can be perceived as a personal experience involving the person who is giving the chat. A third generation heir of a major California corporate family fortune expressed the belief to me that the Lakeside Chats gave speakers a chance to express themselves a little more freely than they would in more public settings (Interview G 6-4-94).

A shared belief in the open honesty of Grove chats may well tend to give "brother" Bohemians the idea that they are getting insider information on current national and international affairs. Bohemians returning from major world events, would often give talks at the Club or Grove regarding their experiences.

Al Roth, a member of the War Labor Board in 1943, returns to San Francisco to give an update on "What's Going On In Washington" (Letts 3-4-43).

Charlie Kendrick returns from South America, gives a talk on the "inside dope" of Juan Peron and ex-Nazis in Argentina (Letts 2-11-46).

Supreme Court Justice, Robert Jackson, gave a Lakeside Chat in 1948, covering his activities at the Nuremberg Trials in Europe, after the war (Howell Archive 1952).

A Bohemian's belief that he is hearing first hand interpretations of current issues could well lead to decisions or considerations on various other interests outside of the Club context. This could be especially true if the insider ideas have an emotionally-laden content that is reinforced by the closeness of the men at the Grove. These types of insider ideas and their emotional attachments could well be the basis for decisions in the world of politics and business. The Bohemian Grove and Club provides a concentration of socio-political ideas permeating from the highest institutional levels of society. These ideas could well provide advantages for decision-makers' timely use of material resources, political power, or financial capital.

This does not mean that when a banker hears the President of Mexico discuss the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), that special secrets unavailable to the public will be disclosed. However, it does mean that this banker, politician, or corporate director will have a heightened awareness of NAFTA's implications, that can be immediately shared and discussed with other elites, and that this process will give relative advantages to Bohemian family members over others in the pursuit of their business and career interests in the every day world.

## CHAPTER 6

### Who Decides

#### Policy Formation and Bohemia

According to Burriss (1991), Domhoff was one of the first researchers to systematically study policy groups from an "elite perspective". Domhoff (1967) identified several policy councils and foundations as key organizations in the shaping of U.S. domestic and foreign policy. Additional studies have been conducted on policy councils since 1967. Burch (1983) showed that policy councils tended to be dominated by large corporate interests, and that there is an interactive network of members among the top ten policies councils in the U.S.. Burriss (1991), examined twelve top policy councils in the U.S. for 1973, 1980, and 1990, finding high levels of director interlocks between the organizations. Burriss also disclosed (p.9) that the most central policy councils in the interlocked network were:

#### Top Most Interlocked U.S. Policy Councils

1973	1990
Business Round Table Business Council Conference Board	Business Council Business Roundtable Council on Foreign Relations

In addition, Burriss found that for persons holding two or more policy council directorships, over 90% were top corporate executives (p.10).

Using Burriss's policy council database I matched the directors of the top twelve councils with the active Bohemians and guests for the 1971-73 and 1991-93 periods.

#### % of Policy Council Board of Directors Positions



### Held by Active Bohemian Club Members and Guests

Policy Council	1971	1991
American Enterprise Institute	22.2	26.9
Brookings Institute	12	8.6
Business Council	26.3	26.3
Business Roundtable	13.1	12.3
U.S. Chamber of Commerce	3.2	1.8
Committee for Economic Development	15.3	5.2
Conference Board	26.7	21.2
Council on Foreign Relations	-0-	11.5
Heritage Foundation	-0-	-0-
Hoover Institution	46.2	37.6
National Assoc of Manufacturers	7.6	4
Trilateral Commission	11.1	18

As the above results indicate, Bohemians take an active part in national policy councils. In 1991, of 461 possible directorships among the twelve policy councils, Bohemians held sixty-two positions, representing 13.4% of the total. The largest concentration was in the West Coast Hoover Institution, but for each of Burris's most central organizations in 1973 and 1990, Bohemians held from 11.5% To 26.3% of the board of director positions. This is consistent with Domhoff's findings in 1975, showing the Bohemian Club as one of the top four most interconnected elite men's clubs in the country.

In order to evaluate the long-term changes of the Bohemian Club's membership in national policy councils, I secured membership lists for most of the policy councils that had been organized by the early 1940s. The Business Roundtable, Heritage Foundation, and Trilateral Commission were not yet formed in the 1940s, and the board of directors list for 1941 U.S. Chamber of Commerce was not available. The following chart is the results of this effort.

**% Of Board of Directors Positions on National Policy Councils  
Held by Active Bohemians**

National Policy Council	1941	1971	1991
Amer Enterprise Institute (1943)	9.1	11.1	19.2
Brookings Institute	-0-	8	5.7
Business Council	5.3	26.3	26.3
Business Roundtable	n/a	10.5	9.6
U.S. Chamber of Commerce	n/a	1.6	-0-
Committee for Economic Development (1942)	-0-	10.1	5.2
Conference Board	3.3	20	6.1
Council on Foreign Relations	-0-	-0-	7.7
Heritage Foundation	n/a	-0-	-0-
Hoover Institute	23.1	41.5	36.5
National Assoc of Manufacturers	2.4	7.6	4
Trilateral Commission	n/a	11.1	18

The above data demonstrates a significant increase in Bohemian policy council involvements from 1941 to 1971 and a maintenance of this involvement to 1991.

The Hoover Institution has the largest and probably the longest overlap with the San Francisco Bohemian Club. Herbert Hoover was a Bohemian before he founded the Hoover Library on War, Revolution, and Peace in 1919. Up through WWII the Hoover Library was primarily for research purposes and was administered directly as a part of Stanford University, with faculty and administrators exclusively making up the board of directors. Facing financial difficulties, the Hoover Institution formed a corporate-based advisory board in the 1960s. The new business oriented board set about developing a strategic plan to:

1. Recruit an outstanding staff of scholars.
2. Undertake ...a high quality research and publications program.
3. Increase expenditures for library acquisitions.
4. Assure availability of funds ...on a long term basis."

(Hoover, 1969-72, p.3)

These efforts proved successful, so that by 1991 the Hoover Institution was endowed at \$121,000,000 and had an annual operating budget of \$19,000,000.

The transformation from being a Stanford University-controlled library to a major semi-independent organization controlled by a corporate elite board of overseers occurred rapidly after the 1960s. By 1971 the Hoover board of overseers read like an elite Who's Who of corporate America, with over half of the directors holding positions in top U.S. corporations or important legal firms including: Chemical Bank, Lockheed, Hewlett-Packard, G.E., F.M.C., Mobil Oil, Standard Oil Co. Indiana, U.S. Steel, and the Chicago Tribune. The new direction, involving corporate elites agenda setting, resulted in a pro-active research program that addressed important national policy issues.

The 1969-72 Hoover Institution Report indicates that staff research studies were ongoing in the following topic areas:

Economics of Private Enterprise  
Fiscal Growth of the American Government  
Public School Finance  
Welfare Reform  
Alternatives to the Military Draft  
Economics of Health and Public Policy

The data match for 1971 showed that 41.5% of the Hoover Board of Overseers were active Bohemians. In order to evaluate how extensive the Club and Hoover connections were over a longer period of time, I matched 65 Hoover directors from 1969-72 with all

Bohemian Club members up to 1988 and found four additional directors, who became Bohemians after being on the Hoover board. In addition to these, the guests lists for 1968, 1971, and 1976 also included four Hoover directors. These additional eight Bohemian Club connections showed that a minimum of 55.3% of the Hoover directors in 1971 were also members or guests of the Bohemian Club.<sup>34</sup>

The Hoover Institution expanded its international policy activities during the Reagan and Bush administrations. The fragmentation of the USSR gave the Hoover Institution, one of the primary archives in the U.S. on Soviet Communism, an opportunity to actually engage with post-revolutionary Eastern Bloc' countries. In 1991 the Hoover conducted a twelve-week Diplomat Training Program on "free market economies" for government officials from Eastern Bloc countries and Mongolia. Other Hoover Institution ongoing research projects for 1991 included the following:

- U.S. foreign policy and security agreements
- Domestic environmental policy and international trade
- Economic competitiveness from abroad
- Opening of new commercial world markets
- U.S. campaign financing
- U.S. health care reform
- U.S. financial and banking systems

In 1991 the Hoover sponsored former Prime Minister of Britain Margaret Thatcher's first speech after stepping down as Prime Minister. The American Enterprise Institute, Heritage Foundation, the Manhattan Institute and the National Review were all co-sponsors of Thatcher's visit to Stanford.

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<sup>34</sup>Historically the Hoover Board would meet either before or after the summer Grove Encampment, making it easier for out-of-town members of both to attend.

The percentage of Bohemians on Hoover's board has declined primarily due to an increase in the total number of board members from sixty-five in 1971 to one-hundred in 1991. Given that the wait to join the Club is fifteen years, it might be easier for a man to serve on the Hoover Institution board than be admitted to the Bohemian Club. An example of this is Joseph Coors, who was a Hoover director in 1971, up through 1991. Although he was a frequent guest at the Grove, he wasn't admitted as a member until 1992.

The Hoover Institution and the Bohemian Club are natural historical extensions of each other. Currently popular weekend Lakeside Chat topics and Hoover Institution research areas are very similar, which would be expected from organizations with common economic interests. Joint sponsorships of Margaret Thatcher's talk, by the Hoover and other conservative American policy councils, reflects both an overlapping board of directors as well as shared Bohemian Club memberships as the following chart indicates.

**Bohemian Grove Camps With Three or More Directors  
on National Policy Councils**

<b>Camp</b>	<b># of Dir</b>	<b>Name of Council</b>
Caveman	<b>8</b>	Hoover Institution
Hillbillies	1	Brookings
	1	Business Roundtable
	1	Hoover Institution
Lost Angels	3	Hoover Institution
	1	Business Council
	1	Business Roundtable
	1	Conference Board
	1	Council of Foreign Relations
Mandalay	3	Business Council
	3	Business Roundtable
	2	Committee Economic Development

	4 1 1	Hoover Institution Conference Board Council on Foreign Relations
Silverado Squatters	2 2 1	American Enterprise Institute Hoover Institution Business Roundtable
Uplifters	1 1 1	American Enterprise Institute Business Roundtable Committee Economic Development

As indicated above, four of the six camps at the Grove with three or more policy council directors included a Hoover Institution director in their camp. The eight Hoover directors at Caveman (Hoover's camp) reflect a long-term historical concentration of Hoover associates in that section of the Grove.

Sharing a camp together at the Grove gives Bohemian directors of major U.S. policy councils ample opportunity to discuss current affairs and socio-economic policy issues. Watching and listening to reactions to Lakeside Chats by various other Bohemians also gives policy directors an opportunity to evaluate policy concerns from the broad sampling of the American corporate business community encamped at the Grove. In this sense, the Grove serves as an informal evaluatory feedback process to the top socio-economic domestic and foreign policy councils in the United States.

Policy councils are just one segment of the influence network in the U.S.. Foundations also serve a key role in funding studies related to policy development, or the implementation of activities that reflect policy interests of elites (Domhoff 1967 p.83)

(Dye 1983) (Salzman and Domhoff 1980).

In 1991 8,729 foundations in the U.S. gave \$8,046,602,000 to various charitable and educational projects (Foundation Directory 1992). Foundations tend to fund activities and projects that reflect the concerns of their boards of directors. Margo (1992) demonstrates that this funding primarily goes to benefit institutions and services that perpetuate socio-economic elite interests. In 1980 55% of all foundation funds went to private and public universities, research institutes, and professional societies. (Margo 1992 p.225).

Given Bohemia's elite status, I estimated that a high level of foundation involvement would exist among Club members. The Foundation Center in New York, publishes the Foundation Directory which lists all the major foundations in the U.S. and their boards of directors. I scanned into the database all the names of foundation directors for 1971 and 1991 and matched them with active Bohemian members and guests for those two periods. This resulted in a match of 26,774 names for 1971 and 42,767 in 1991. These were the most extensive databases used in this study, and the results reveal with near accuracy the number of Bohemians involved in U.S. foundations.

#### **Foundation Directorships Held By Active Bohemians**

<b>1971</b>	<b>1991</b>
194 Directorships N=156 individuals	198 Directorships N=166 individuals

#### **% Of Active Bohemians Who Hold Foundation Directorships**

<b>1971</b>	<b>1991</b>
9.2%	8.5%

The guest information for 1971 and 1991 also revealed a high number of foundation directors invited to the Grove.

### Grove Guests Holding Directorships in U.S. Foundations

1971	1991-93
42 Individuals 77 Directorships	53 Individuals 63 Directorships

This represented 12.3% of the guests for 1971 and 6.8% of the guests for 1991, showing that a fairly regular selection of national foundation directors were guests at the Grove.

Combining the guests and members for 1971 and 1991 shows that in 1971 approximately one out of ten and in 1991 one out of twelve Grove participants were directors of a U.S. foundation.

### Ratio of Bohemian Foundation Directorships to All Active Bohemians in 1971 & 1991

1971	1991
Total Grove Participants=2044 Total Foundation Dir=198 Ratio of above: 1/10.3	Total Grove Participants=2729 Total Foundation Dir=219 Ratio of above: 1/12.5

The data match also showed that 47.5% of all the camps at the Grove had at least one member who served on a foundation board, thus giving immediate foundation access to close to half of Bohemia. Twenty-three camps had three or more directorships on foundation boards. The following is a list of those camps:



## Bohemian Grove Camps With Members Holding Three or More

### Foundation Directorships in 1991

Camp	# of Directors
Aviary	4
Caveman	13
Haven	4
Hideaway	6
Hillbillies	7
Isle of Aves	4
Lost Angels	14
Mandalay	17
Midway	11
Monastery	3
Outpost	3
Owl's Nest	4
Pelicans	5
Pig'n Whistle	3
Santa Barbara	3
Sempervirens	3
Seven Trees	3
Silverado Squatters	4
Stowaway	14
Sun Dodgers	4
Uplifters	5
Whoo Cares	5
Zaca	4

I checked one other policy network for Bohemian connections. I was told by a State legislator that the two most influential long-term California lobby groups were the California Manufacturers Association and the State Chamber of Commerce (Interview A 1-25-94).

I examined the current boards of directors of these two organizations for Club membership. The 1991 California Manufacturers Association (C.M.A.) board of directors with 47 members did not have a single Bohemian. C.M.A.'s board is primarily

made up of vice-presidents and division managers of major corporations. Many of the corporations listed as having a seat in the C.M.A. board had corporate directors who were Bohemians, but it is apparent that the C.M.A. board does not attract directors and presidents of major corporations who are in turn more likely to be Bohemians.

The 1993 California Chamber of Commerce's board of directors was a little different. The State chamber has 101 board members, of whom six are active Bohemians. Three of these six were CEO's of major corporations, one was president of Pepperdine University, another the Western Regional Manager of Arthur Anderson and Company, and the final Chamber director was listed as an executive consultant to Santa Fe Railroad. The California State Chamber of Commerce attracts a significant number of corporate presidents, CEO's, and board chairpersons, with over half of the chamber directors holding these corporate ranks. Therefore, it is reasonable that a number of Bohemians will show up on the Chamber list.

In order to determine if the current lack of Bohemians on C.M.A., and the 6% on the California Chamber of Commerce was historically consistent, I compared the boards of directors of both to active Bohemians in 1941. The results are as follows:

**% C.M.A. and California Chamber Directorships Held by Bohemians in 1941**

C.M.A.	CA Chamber
16.6%	21.4%

Bohemians had a much higher presence on state-level lobby organizations in 1941 than

in 1991, whereas the national policy council board memberships came to prominence in the Club after WWII. This change probably reflects California's wartime growth boom and internationalization of the economy. This would mean that California's economic elite would tend to take a broader interest in national and foreign policy issues, and delegate more of their state-level concerns to mid-level corporate employees.

A qualitative and historical analysis of Club members' involvements with policy councils and foundations provides a more in-depth understanding of how Bohemia continues to serve as a network for these institutions.

During my Grove visit I witnessed one incident where policy council business was discussed. The president of a 7.5 million dollar energy and environmental policy center came into the camp I was visiting. He approached a specific Bohemian saying he wanted to get together with him to discuss energy policy issues. They seemed to notice that other Bohemians were within earshot, so they discontinued the policy-specific conversation and went into general Bohemian chatter. However, it was evident that a policy network connection had been made that would be discussed more discretely at a later time.

I investigated this energy and environmental policy group further and found out that its largest corporate contributors were Amoco, Dow Chemical, DuPont, IBM, Monsanto, Philip Morris, Shell Oil, and Waste Management. Of these corporate sponsors, Amoco and Philip Morris both had two Bohemian directors, and IBM had one. Dow Chemical had two directors as guests in 1991, meaning that four of the seven major funders for this policy council were part of the Bohemian network. A further

examination of this energy and environmental policy center turned up three directors of the center all in the same camp at the Grove. This was interesting, but even more interesting was the fact that two of these directors were Club members before the policy council was formed and the other joined the Club one year after. This means that all three directors of this policy center knew each other through the Club before the formation of the center. They could have, of course, known each other in other ways as well but the Grove provided them intimate personal togetherness before the policy center was initiated.

An earlier example of a national research/policy institute formed through connections within the Bohemian Club was the Stanford Research Institute (S.R.I.). S.R.I. is a non-profit organization founded in 1946 with the ambitious goal of using scientific methods to "help change the future" (S.R.I. 1991 p.1). S.R.I. subcontracts with governments and private corporations for various complex research projects. Their 1991 budget was in excess of \$300,000,000. Some of S.R.I. 1991 research areas included:

- Education Policy/Technology
- Biomedical Integration
- Employment and Training
- Economic Policy Simulators
- Business Competition
- Health Policy Research
- Survey Research
- NAFTA
- Business Intelligence
- Anti-Cancer Drugs
- Strategic Highway Research Program
- Treatment of Hazardous Waste
- Technology and Anti-Terrorist Strategies for Airlines
- Consumer Behavior

- California Business Growth

S.R.I. is a world level organization, that focuses on improving corporate competitiveness and governmental efficiency. This often includes the formation of policy recommendations at national, state and international levels.

S.R.I. was originally organized at the Bohemian Grove in 1945 at a meeting in the Semperviren Camp. The idea for S.R.I. had been discussed for several years, by three Bohemians: Robert Swain, Philip Leighton, and Dudley Swim; who had frequently used the Grove as a place for conversation on the idea (Gibson p.16). However, it was the 1945 camp meeting among several Stanford faculty that set the plan in motion. Early S.R.I. decision-making meetings often took place at the Pacific Union Club where, in a S.R.I. director's words,

One gentleman invites other gentlemen for a luncheon following which matters of common interest can be discussed.

I cross-matched S.R.I.'s board of directors for 1971 and 1991 with active Bohemians. The results were very interesting.

**% Active Bohemians Who Are S.R.I. Directors**

<b>1971</b> Total Board N=15	<b>1991</b> Total Board N = 19
73% N = 11	58% N = 11

S.R.I. is literally a sub-camp of the Bohemian Club with eleven Club members serving on S.R.I.'s Board for the past quarter century.

S.R.I. provides a definite example of how Bohemian networking takes place.

Since the years 1971 and 1991 each had eleven S.R.I. Bohemian directors, I wanted to see if camp membership played a role in recruiting S.R.I. directors from the earlier to the later period. Nine new Bohemians were on S.R.I.'s board in 1991 who were not on the board in 1971. Two Bohemians were on the board in both years. The following is an analysis of S.R.I. directors and camp membership:

**Number SRI Directors**

<b>Camps</b>	<b>1971</b>	<b>1991</b>
Mandalay	3	3
Midway	2	0
Uplifters	2	2
Owls Nest	1	2
Toyland	1	0
Sunshiners	1	0
Hillbillies	0	1
Hualapi	0	1
Stowaway	0	1

One member of Mandalay and one member of Owls Nest were S.R.I. directors in both 1971 and 1991. This means that two directors at both Mandalay and Uplifters were replaced on S.R.I.'s board by two other Mandalay and Uplifter camp members, and one member each in Owls Nest, and Sempervirens were replaced by other men in the same camp. Therefore six out of nine of the Bohemian S.R.I. directors in 1991 were recruited directly from camps of former S.R.I. board members, meaning that not only is S.R.I. dominated by Bohemians, but that personal camp networks also serve as a recruiting ground for new S.R.I. directors. The date of entry into the Club for the nine Bohemian S.R.I. directors in 1991 ranged from 1960 to 1986, suggesting that most, if not all, were Bohemians before being asked to serve on S.R.I.'s board of directors. This indicates even

further the active networking process of Bohemia. S.R.I. is probably the most concentrated network of Bohemians outside of the Club itself. Therefore it becomes a demonstrative model for how interactive networking in business, politics, and policy formation happens at the Grove.

Some personal aspects of this policy formation process will be examined through the following historical incidents.

In the 1950's four Bohemian Club members served on the Business Advisory Council for the Department of Commerce. This was when the Business Council was still directly affiliated with the U.S. Government.<sup>35</sup> In 1957 the Business Advisory Council invited Bohemian E.O. Lawrence to a Council meeting in Hot Springs, Virginia, where he was to give an address on radiation hazards. This meeting was described as "off-the-record and informal with no reporters present" (Lawrence 4-1-57). The Council's "private" meeting combined fifty-nine top corporate executives with key government officials to discuss atomic energy issues and policy. Government personnel attending this function included the Secretaries of Treasury, HEW, and Commerce, Chairman of the Council of Economic Advisors, Chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission, Chairman of the Board of the Federal Reserve System, and numerous under-secretaries and

departmental directors. Business Council Executive Director, Walter White sent Lawrence a follow-up letter on May 15, 1957 thanking him for his presentation and requesting he send in all his travel expenses for reimbursement (Lawrence 5-15-57). On

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<sup>35</sup>In 1961 the Council went independent in order to avoid opening its' meetings to the press (Burns 1991).

the return trip to California Lawrence's wife was accompanied by Bohemian and Business Council member Ted Peterson, thus showing further how a personal Bohemian friendship extends into social policy making arenas.

In 1958 E.O. Lawrence was invited to attend the National Industrial Conference Board's ninth annual Del Monte Lodge weekend at Pebble Beach, California. From the documents attached to Lawrence's letter I was able to identify forty-three of the fifty participants for the weekend. Eight or 18.6% of those attending were Bohemians. Lawrence's invitation letter spells out the purpose and procedures for the weekend.

Following our unusual procedure the group will be limited... to fifty leaders in business, industry, government, and education. Discussions of topics of interest will be 'off-the-record' and there will be no speeches or agenda. We do not attempt to arrive at a plan for action, but we do want to achieve a free interchange of thoughts and ideas on problems and development pertaining to business and industry...

As a result of the cooperation of the wives in attendance last year, we have decided the participants may... include their wives at the... conference. We are sure that by careful planning the character of these meetings, limited traditionally to men, will not be altered...

John S. Sinclair, President  
(National Industrial Conference Board)

This conference was a West Coast edition of similar conferences held around the country. The Del Monte Lodge conference was sponsored by some of the largest corporations on the West Coast including:



Security First National Bank  
Bank of America  
Pacific Gas and Electric  
F.M.C.  
Standard Oil Company of California  
Richfield Oil Corporation  
Southern Pacific  
Crocker Bank  
Litton Industries<sup>36</sup>

These two incidences demonstrate how elite corporate men, many of whom knew each other from the Grove, would meet at luxury resorts for off-the-record weekend chats about business and industry. These are examples of how elite consensus building around key policy issues occur. After the weekend each participant could then return to his own power base and proceed with individual action rooted in consensual understandings obtained on the weekend. I would not assume that everyone agreed at one of these sessions, but even when different perspectives were present a clarity of issues and deeper understanding of positions undoubtedly occurred.

In this context the interaction at the Bohemian Club and Grove becomes just another place, perhaps on a grander scale, where this process of consensus building could continue among socio-economic elites. The relaxed atmosphere of the Grove and the large number of policy council members present offers ample opportunity for discreet discussion on major issues facing America.

The Ford Foundation was one source of post-war funding for E.O. Lawrence's programs at U.C. Berkeley. H. Rowan Gaither Jr., President of the Ford Foundation,

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<sup>36</sup>All of the above had directors in the Bohemian Club in 1991.

was a Bohemian Club member in Wild Oats Camp. He wrote to E.O. Lawrence on Ford Foundation letterhead requesting that Lawrence host Alfred E. Loomis at the Grove for the summer of 1955.

April 26, 1955

Dear Ernest,

Today Alfred said he would like to attend the Bohemian Club encampment this summer... I think we should go ahead and ask the directors to extend an invitation to Alfred. Since I have already requested invitations for Harry and Benson Ford, will you please make the request?

Sincerely,  
H. Rowan Guither Jr.<sup>37</sup>

Lawrence complied with the request and submitted an application for Alfred L. Loomis to attend the Grove in 1955 as his guest in Sons of Toil Camp. The Club application requested the names of members who personally knew the guest, and Lawrence listed twelve Club members including James B. Black, John F. Neylan, and Robert Sproul.

Alfred Loomis was a physicist who served on the National Academy of Science, and was also an advisor to the U.C. Radiation Lab. This whole incident gives us an understanding of the close circle of friends a Bohemian connection can entail, as well as the possibility of connecting with a major foundation president as a potential funding source.<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>37</sup>A hand written note at the bottom of the page said: "John Rockefeller's third trip to Japan has been postponed until June."

<sup>38</sup>Guest attendance at the Grove can become an occasion where favors are asked for and returned by various Club members. During the course of this research I came across several incidences where Bohemians would ask other Club members to host a guest for them. How the financial arrangements worked in these matters was probably decided between the two individuals, but it is clear that guests are not always hosted at the Grove through their sponsoring Club member.

These examples of personal policy planning intimacies begins to give us an understanding of how these policy development sessions really work. It seems that they are primarily discussionary processes between men gathered for informal off-the-record talks, often based on prior social networks, and who-knows-who contacts. The Bohemian Club certainly serves as one of the centralized places for the formation of these policy-processing connections among socio-economic elites.

Although it is safe to say that all 2,000 to 3,000 men attending the Grove have easy access to a director of a major U.S. foundation or national policy council; it is possible that many of these men are unaware that the person to whom they are talking serves on a policy council or foundation board. However, if they have a business policy agenda they would like to see addressed, finding out who to talk to would not be very difficult. In the larger sense, however, the generalized discussions on social and political issues at the Grove undoubtedly influences men who have positions of power and influence. It can be expected that these men will often accede to the concerns of their peers when exercising their responsibilities in foundation giving or policy formation.

## CHAPTER 7

### Finding the Forest in the Trees

#### The Sociology of the Bohemian Club

In Chapter One I asked the question, do men join the Bohemian Club for personal friendships and bonding opportunities with other men? The answer to this is an unqualified yes. It is very clear that one of the principal attractions at the Bohemian Club is an opportunity to meet like-minded professional men on an intimate personal basis. The entire Club, especially the Grove experience, encourages friendship-building in a shared atmosphere of mutual artistic entertainment and fun. This personal interaction spans decades for many Club members, and deeply-held feelings of comradeship and sentimentality towards brother Bohemians are evident in the personal writings and histories of numerous Club members.

Kanter (1977) describes how businessmen working in modern bureaucracies are bounded by "Gesellschaft system of contractual... instrumental involvements", and that they have little chance to exercise their "sentimental and emotional sides", except perhaps with their personal secretaries (p. 102-103).

With a large majority of Bohemians coming from the corporate world, the Club offers one of the few places in their lives where sentimentality between men is accepted and encouraged. For many the Grove is a reminiscent extension of their college fraternity days, where unbounded alcohol consumption and fellowship reigned supreme.

The rituals and traditions at the City Club and Grove serve the function of

maintaining a symbolic eternal vigilance against the rationality of a corporate/bureaucratic experience. Club members' strong retention of traditional ceremonies is a sharp contrast to external post-modern cultural conditions. The Grove experience has a mythic component that triggers the expression of the deepest held values in the men present, and allows for these feelings to intermingle with others' in the physical beauty of the Grove. Described as the Bohemian Spirit, these feeling-filled experiences have been a vital component of the Grove from its earliest inception to the present time.

It is important to recognize how the Bohemian Spirit extends beyond Club boundaries. As explained earlier, the Grove camps create close friendship networks that are often maintained in outside business and social circumstances. Camps often have close bonds with other camps, and these too allow for long-term external interaction. For example, Silverado Squatters and Wayside Log have a long tradition of inviting each other to various functions at the Grove (Baxter 6-4-94).

Expanded networks of Bohemians are evident in various socio-economic political settings throughout the United States. One New York Bohemian, described to me how an East Coast network of fellow Club members has been renting the Union League Club in New York for annual gatherings of up to 300 members for the past few years. The New York area also has a planning sub-committee currently working on Bohemian Club rules and practices, which is part of an overall Club effort to develop a long-range plan for Club growth and survival.

These types of networks, rooted in the Bohemian experience, are historically

evident as well. Bohemian, Roger Lapham, served as Mayor of San Francisco from 1944 to 1948. I analyzed his guest lists for a political reception honoring the Ambassador from China in 1944 and his 40th wedding anniversary party in 1947. Since these were two distinctly different events, I was curious to see if there was an overlap between the guests for both events and to what extent fellow Bohemians were invited to either or both of the receptions.

The reception for Wei Toa-Ming , Ambassador from China, was held on July 7, 1944. There were a total of 341 invited guests including a number of businessmen from Chinatown in San Francisco, The San Francisco Board of Supervisors, and numerous high ranking military officers, city and state officials and the directors of the International Center. I was particularly interested in the 135 guests who were identified as "the Mayor and Mrs. Lapham's list". The Lapham list had 65 male names on it, which I matched for Bohemian Club membership. 38.4% (N=25) of the Lapham male guests were members of the Bohemian Club. This proved interesting in that Club members were invited to an elite political function based on their business and social prestige as judged by the Mayor's family. That such a high percent of these were Bohemians is an indication of the Club's status and significance as a network of local San Francisco socio-economic elites (Lapham 1944).

Lapham's 40th wedding anniversary party had a guest list that included 109 men. Of the sixty-five male guests 28.4% (N=31) were members of the Bohemian Club. This indicates that the Club served as both a political and a social network for Roger Lapham. The overlap between the two events included fifteen Bohemians, meaning that over half

of Laphams' personal Bohemian friendship network was accepted in his political network as well.

**% of Bohemians on Roger Lapham's Guest List**

Political Reception 1944	Anniversary Party 1947
38.4% N=25	28.4% N=31

**% of Bohemian Overlap Between 1944 & 1947 on Lapham's Lists**

1944	1947
60% N=15	48.3% N=15

John Francis Neylan was a long-term legal advisor to the Hearst Newspaper empire, a U.C. Regent, Director of National City Bank of New York, and a mover and shaker in Republican Party politics. Neylan joined the Bohemian Club in 1932 and used elite Club networks for many of his socio-political activities. He moved in several social circles and was a member of the Pacific Union Club, Press Club and three Bay Area country clubs including San Francisco Golf, Burlingame, and Menlo Country Clubs.

As mentioned in Chapter Five, Neylan hosted twenty-six formal luncheons or dinner parties over a twenty-three year time period. I was able to examine the guest lists from seven of these parties to determine how many Club members were guests.

### John F. Neylan's Dinner Parties and Bohemians

#	Total Guests	Total Bohemians	Honoree	Date
1	53	26	Gordon S. Rentschler	8-13-41
2	73	26	Nelson A. Rockefeller	6-21-43
3	57	28	David E. Lilienthal	4-28-48
4	42	21	Dr. Loyal Davis	6-29-50
5	50	24	Bernard M. Baruch	8-21-52
6	66	31	Hearst Brothers	8-27-54
7	44	30	Herman Phleger	10-29-57
	Total= 385	Total= 186		

### % of Bohemians Invited to John Neylan's Luncheons & Dinner Parties

1941	1943	1948	1950	1952	1954	1957
49%	35.6%	49.1%	50%	48%	47%	68.2%

Neylan's parties had an average 48.3% Bohemian attendance rate over a sixteen-year period. This is a remarkably high rate given his public positions and his numerous social contacts.

This leads to the understanding of how personal networks bonded in the Bohemian experience came to exist. Neylan had contacts throughout the Bay Area, yet repeatedly he invited a disproportionate number of Bohemians to attend his special all-male dinner parties. Eleven days after his dinner party in 1950 he wrote a letter to his honored guest, Loyal Davis, from Chicago. A specific line in the letter reads as follows:

"Your debut proved to be a big success with the local crowd."  
(Neylan 7-10-50)



Here is Neylan describing his personal network of friends and associates in San Francisco as the "local crowd". The fact that half of the "crowd" were Bohemians is a strong indication of the importance of the Club for sustaining a man's personal friendship networks. Inviting a person to dinner once or twice may be for business or political purposes. For example, Neylan invited Roger Lapham to his dinners twice, once in 1941 and again in 1957. However, Neylan invited Colbert Coldwell to all seven of his dinners. This had to be based on some level of personal friendship and not just on political or commercial motivations.

I identified dinner guests who were invited to four or more of Neylan's dinners. The following chart shows the men who attended:

**Guests Invited to Four or More of John F. Neylan's**

**Luncheon/Dinner Parties \* 1941 to 1957**

Name	Bohemian	1941	1943	1948	1950	1952	1954	1957	Total
1. Bechtel, Stephen D.	yes			*	*	*	*		4
2. Black, James B.	yes	*		*	*	*	*	*	6
3. Buck, Frank E.	no	*	*		*	*			4
4. Coblenz, Edmund D.	no		*		*	*	*		4
5. Coldwell, Colbert	yes	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	7
6. Collier, Harry D.	yes	*	*	*	*				4
7. Fay, Paul B.	no	*			*	*	*		4
8. Harris, L.W. Jr.	no	*	*		*	*	*	*	6
9. Joyce Keynon	yes			*	*	*	*		4
10. Lawrence E.O.	yes	*	*		*	*	*	*	6
11. Lee, Russel V.	yes			*	*	*	*	*	5
12. Lockheed, James K.	yes	*		*		*	*	*	5
13. McBean, Atholl	yes	*	*	*			*	*	5
14. McEnerney, G.W.	yes	*		*		*	*		4
15. Madison, Marshall	yes		*			*	*	*	4
16. Miller, Robert W.	yes			*	*	*	*	*	5
17. Phleger, Herman	yes	*	*	*	*			*	5
18. Roth, William P.	yes	*			*	*	*	*	5
19. Russell, Donald J.	no		*	*	*	*	*	*	6
20. Sterling, Wallace	yes				*	*	*	*	4
21. Sullivan, Walter **	no	*	*		*	*		*	5
22. Sullivan, Mark	no			*	*	*		*	4
23. Whitman, Fred C.	yes			*	*	*	*	*	5
24. Witter, Jean C.	yes		*	*	*	*	*	*	6

Total Bohemians: 17

Average # of dinners: 4.94

Total Non-Bohemians: 7

Average # of dinners: 4.71

\*\* Sullivan became a Bohemian in 1962.

These were the men who were invited repeatedly to his dinners over a sixteen- year period. The above chart demonstrates that Neylan's most significant personal connections were primarily Bohemians. Bohemians were more than twice as likely to be long-term invitees than non-Bohemians and Bohemians even had a slightly higher invitation rate.

The Bohemian Grove offers one of the few places in most socio-economic elite men's lives where personal friendships and positive feelings towards other men can be expressed. These bonding experiences carry over into men's social networks and become the basis for long-term friendships. Men identify their fellow Bohemian's as my "crowd". This special in-group perspective is reinforced annually at the Grove through the emotional experiential processes that the men share.

Other Bohemian social circles are evident from historical archives as well. Loyall McLaren described a group of the men who, over a twenty-year period, had regular lunches together at the Pacific Union Club. Included in this private social group were the following men:

Alan Sproul	Don McLaughlin
Bob Sproul	Ken Monteagle
John L. Simpson	Marshall Madison
Wallace Sterling	Ward Mailliard
Morris Doyle	Loyall McLaren

This group was self-identified as the "Disputers", and remained active until 1977, when several deaths resulted in its termination (McLaren 1977 p.177). All the Disputers

were members of the Bohemian Club except for Ken Monteagle, who was a life-long friend of McLaren.<sup>39</sup> These ten men had other social interactions in addition to the Bohemian Club. Wallace Sterling was the president of Stanford University while Morris Doyle was a trustee, and seven of the ten were members of the Pacific Union Club (Pacific Union, 1970) However, it is the Bohemian Club that was the most central institution in their lives.

Bohemian, George Shultz's recent book Turmoil and Triumph (1993), covers his years in the Reagan Administration. I matched all the names of men in his index and found twenty-six Bohemians. Given that Shultz is writing about his travels and interactions throughout the entire world, a listing of twenty-six Club members from San Francisco is a significant personal Bohemian network.

After a fellow Bohemian has been a long-term Club member a number of his closest friends may decide to give him a special recognition night or reception. These types of events are common in Club history. E.O. Lawrence was honored on February 8, 1951 with a special dinner at the City Club, sired by U.C. President Robert Sproul (Lawrence 2-8-51). This type of formal honoring of a fellow Bohemian serves to reinforce strong networks of mutual support through the celebration of particular individuals. One has to assume that Sproul was honoring not just Lawrence the Bohemian, but Lawrence the U.C. atomic energy scientist, military contract promoter, Ford Foundation funding recipient, and national policy council participant as well.

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<sup>39</sup>Three members of the Disputers; McLaren, Mailliard, and Monteagle, were roommates at The Taft School in Watertown, Connecticut.

Never forgotten among Bohemians is the belief and idea that they are important men in the world, and that sharing Bohemia creates a whole greater than the individual parts. The Bohemian Club represents not just deeply-felt emotional experiences, but also a unique self-identified label of being an elite. The self-references, Lakeside Chats, jokes on wealth, and the total environment of the Club and Grove are completely representative of a shared belief in the Club being made up of very important men in society.

Even if a member is only a high school band teacher from Palo Alto, or a hardware store owner from Chico, being admitted into the Club is a sign that you are accepted as a gentleman and a self-achieved individual. The fact that most of the activities in which Club members engage carry with them a certain artistic or "cultured" quality adds to the stature of membership.

Bohemians are sensitive about outsiders criticizing their elite identity, and have historically withdrawn into themselves whenever external challenges have emerged. The differences between the Club as a public entity in the first three decades of this century is a sharp contrast to the self-imposed privacy now evident. If anything, this contemporary shyness feeds into the negative myths and rumors generated by outside progressive groups.

Fairness and Accuracy In Reporting published a story in 1991 about how a People's Magazine reporter, Dirk Mathison, hiked into the Grove for a first-hand look at the Bohemians in action. During his visit he, by chance, ran into a Time-Warner executive who promptly threw him out of the Grove. As Time-Warner is the corporate

owner of People Magazine, the story was never published and Dirk Mathison was laid off in corporate cutbacks six months later (Cohen 12-2-91). This type of negative article certainly adds to the mythology of Bohemian corporate elites exercising discretionary power to protect their secret dealings in the redwoods.

The Club could quite easily diminish these external misunderstandings simply by re-opening media access to the various activities that occur at the Grove and at the City Club. It seems, however, that the more the exclusivity of the Club comes under challenge, the more the members seek to demand absolute privacy from outside inspection. This becomes an escalating cycle of challenge and retreat that can even further compound negative external perspectives of exclusivity and eliteness.

Perhaps the elite self-image of members is partially enhanced by external challenges. There has to be a certain ego satisfaction that occurs when members drive through a gauntlet of protestors into the privacy of their own primordial forest. The power of money and private property rights is personally expressed by each man who makes that journey up the Bohemian highway, and later celebrated in unison by those present who share this common reality.

The celebrity status of many members and guests adds to the feeling of eliteness represented at the Grove. A one hundred-year tradition of hosting famous people, from Will Rogers to Clint Eastwood, adds to the feeling of being a part of a special fraternity of American insiders. Peeing on the same tree as a former president or eating dinner at his table contributes to a shared belief in an elevated stature.

Being a gentleman is a major part of a Bohemian identity. After explaining to my hosts at Silverado Camp the goals of my research and a desire to write an objective honest study of Bohemia, I was told that they were sure I wouldn't write anything "ungentlemanly".

By definition a gentleman is a "civilized, educated, or well mannered man, ... of good social standing" (Random House Dictionary 1980). This definition seems deeply embedded in an eurocentric privileged class culture, which, to some degree, is how the term is used in Bohemia.

Max Weber recognized that a private men's club defined a gentleman in America, and that this was equivalent to European aristocrats. There is certainly some of this understanding still present in the Bohemian Club.

The all-maleness of the Club reaches back into a patriarchal past that saw women as inferior humans and encouraged the celebration of male superiority in private associational settings. Despite contemporary "new age" male bonding cultural ideas, the Bohemian Club's patriarchal tradition belies any modern attempt to justify male exclusiveness as a separate but equal process. This is an issue the Bohemians in the future are going to have to face.

I was asked on three occasions by Bohemians if I thought the Club could survive in its present form. There is fear and concern among Club members that they will lose a primary emotion-laden experiential component of their lives if the Club is forced to break its traditions. I think the fear of this loss is greater than the reality of admitting women to the Club or diminishing exclusivity in other ways. These feelings are

definitely present nonetheless and represent an important aspect of the sociology of Bohemia.

Research question number two asked if Bohemian membership provided advantages to men in business and politics. To this question I have to answer yes, but they may not all take advantage of these opportunities.

Bohemians do make business contacts at the Grove. There are economic deals being discussed between pairs or small groups of men as they intermingle, but unless you are a careful observer, none of these activities will be obvious. The real normative standard at the Grove is that weaving spiders cannot be too overt about what they are doing. Given that three-quarters of the men have business oriented careers, to expect them to not talk about business to some extent seems an incredulous idea.

More importantly than the actual in-house discussions of business matters, is the bonded friendship networks that are created at the Grove. It is quite clear that these friendship patterns extend into commercial and political circles outside of the Club. Numerous business advantages are gained by Bohemians who use these connections. The current and historical admittances by Bohemians that they use the Club for business purposes leaves little doubt that regular commercial dealings are as much a part of Bohemia as the Cremation of Care Ceremony.

A level of trust between gentlemen is obtained at the Grove, which often is not possible in the day to day commercial world. This trust, rooted in the Bohemian Spirit, allows for dealings and understandings to occur both in business and politics that would



be extremely difficult without these Bohemian family connections. In this sense there is a relative advantage in the outside world to being a Bohemian brother.

There are, of course, independently wealthy Bohemian art aficionados and struggling musicians who do not engage in or have commercial business interests. These men are as much a part of the Grove as the chairman of the board of a major U.S. corporation. It may be that these men carry the Bohemian Spirit in its purest form, as the early Club members are reputed to have prescribed, but they are clearly not a majority at the Grove.

I have described in earlier chapters the advantageous access to men of power that politicians and corporate business men have as they network from camp to camp. There is one other networking process described to me by a long-term Bohemian, that also takes place (Interview F 6-3-94). Young Bohemians and sons of members often use the camp-to-camp networking process to meet corporate executives who may be prospective employers. Names and friendly handshakes in camps can lead to a follow-up inquiry about possible openings in a firm at a later date.

At the Spring Jinks I overheard one Bohemian father tell his son to be sure and stop by his boss's camp. The clear message was that being present at the Grove was an opportunity to promote your career growth through informal gentlemanly contact

with your employer.

If you are a Republican candidate for office, attending the Grove is a definite advantage and has been an ongoing practice for up to one hundred years. Democratic candidates are also invited, but are less likely to reap campaign contributions from Club members than would a Republican.

Politicians and potential candidates have long used the Grove as a place for political networking and support building. The long-term friendships and contacts obtained at the Grove can serve well for men who decide to run for public office at a later date. It would seem very natural for a candidate to call his trusted Bohemian friends for advice when considering running for office or asking for their campaign committee support.

What all of this adds up to sociologically, is that being a guest or member of the Bohemian Club is definitely an advantage for those men inclined to use the contacts gleamed from Club and Grove involvement. The elite weness experienced by members contributes heavily to the possibilities that such advantages will be acted on. Being a Bohemian creates a trusted gentlemen identification easily transferable to commercial and political settings.

I completed one final data merger for this study which will help to evaluate research question number three. Has the San Francisco Bohemia Club been a place of elite consensus building where men of power and prestige come together to conduct behind-the-scenes policy planning?

The easy answer to this question is that for the most part high level behind-the-scenes policy planning is a rare event at the Grove and Club and probably less frequent now than in the past. However, by merging all the 1991 database matches used in this study it is revealed that 368 Bohemians have one or more of the following positions:

- Directorship in a Fortune 1000 or Forbes 500 company
- State or national political position
- Director of a national policy council
- Trustee on a major U.S. foundation
- 10% holding in one of the top 4,100 U.S. corporations
- Stockholder director of one of the top 4,100 U.S. corporation

This represents 18.9% of all active 1991 Club members. By adding the guests at the Grove, who usually have a slightly higher percent of the above indicators, it becomes evident that one out of every five Grove participants is a man involved in a decision-making position for one or more of the upper-most economic, political, policy or fund giving institutions in the United States. A person would have to look very hard to find such a dense concentration and variety of American socio-economic elites in one place anywhere else in the United States.

Involvement of these socio-economic and political institutional leaders in the activities at the Grove gives them extensive periods of off-the-record discussion time with campmates and other Bohemians about the prevailing social issues of the day. The Lakeside Chats and various in camp presentations provide a stimulus to these discussions. All of these chats and talks work toward the building of a consensual mind

set regarding current political and social issues. The fact is that one out of every five men at the

Grove is in a position of power to which this consensual mind set can become a frame of understanding. In other words the general parameters of major policy and socio-political decisions can and do evolve at the Bohemian Grove and Club. This is not a deliberate process, but rather occurs through normal social intercourse.

There are specific Lakeside speakers who seek to promote a particular political agenda or idea, but the men at the Grove are sophisticated enough that they will evaluate and assess these messages and reject or accept various parts of them. The homogeneity of the members of the Club and the shared togetherness of the Grove both serve to promote a commonality of general socio-political values and beliefs. This is the foundation for the process of consensual mind set building.

A full recognition of this consensus building process is a key to sociological understanding of the Bohemian Club. Discussion of individual advantages and social networking and friendship groups are important, but the main idea to understanding Bohemia is to recognize the deeply-held emotions that bond these men together. This Spirit of Bohemia is the element that makes the consensual building process a sociological reality. Deep-seated emotional experiences between men are a rarity in the lives of most business executive and high level bureaucrats. Having a place where their values and feelings can be expressed in a safe atmosphere, allows for bonded consensus and understanding about whatever issues these men face.

So, yes there is policy-setting that occurs at the Bohemian Grove, but it is not a sit down, negotiation type, behind-the-scenes, deal making process. Rather it is reflected in a mutually-shared conscious knowing of the way things ought to be. It is a knowing deeply-rooted in expressed values and feelings that go beyond the simply rational. These Bohemian values are imbedded in the gentlemanly traditions of elitism, ethnocentrism, and patriarchy. A recognition of this fact by contemporary Bohemians would go a long way towards remodeling men's clubs and addressing institution inequality in American society.

Conclusion:

The theoretical positions of Domhoff, Dye, and Baxter, as outlined in Chapter One, are interesting in that each has an element of truth revealed by the data presented in this study.

There are men at the Grove who, as Baxter describes, are there just for the enjoyment of the arts and Bohemian fellowship. In fact, it is quite clear that for almost all the men the Spirit of Bohemia is an important aspect of their socio-emotional lives. A qualitative/historical understanding of this perspective is probably one of the strongest aspects of this study. It was Baxter's open and honest belief in the purity of the Bohemian spirit that allowed him to invite me to visit and observe the social interaction at the Grove. A female sociologist, however, would not have been given this opportunity, nor do I believe would a non-white male social scientist have the same

access to the insider ethos present at the Grove. Dye's position is that elite men's clubs serve primarily a status recognition

function and that the men present have very adequate economic and political resources outside of the Club, is also partly correct. It is clear that being invited to join the Bohemian Club is often a validation of a man having made it in the world, but the long waiting list, the age quotas, the 20% associate membership suggests that more than just status recognition is happening at the Bohemian Club. Numerous young men are members as well as aging corporate executives, and the data shows that career advancement in business and politics happens after Club involvement as well as preceding it. This is especially evident in regards to a man's participation in policy development. It is very definite that the Bohemian social network serves as a recruitment base for some policy council memberships, as well as providing informal opportunities for policy elites to discuss issues off the record.

It is true that a number of men in the Bohemian Club have significant socio-economic and political networks outside of the Club, but even for those that do, the Club's intimacy building atmosphere creates strongly held friendship ties that can strengthen and expand pre-existing networks through mutual membership and guest invitations to the Grove.

The evidence shows that Domhoff's work is essentially correct when he says that Club membership builds cohesiveness among elites and gives economic and political advantages to the men present. The Bohemian family network does provide a relative

advantage to all Club members and their guests. Some, however, will not utilize these advantages nor even recognize their existence. This denial does not in any way, however, diminish the sociological realities present in this unique and powerful network of men in the Sonoma County redwoods.