Transcript of an Interview
Conducted by
Colin B. Burke
at
Los Angeles, California
on
26 February 2001
(With Subsequent Corrections and Additions)
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Robert Mayo Hayes, interview by Colin B. Burke at Los Angeles, California, 26 February 2001 (Philadelphia: Chemical Heritage Foundation, Oral History Transcript # 0217).
ROBERT M. HAYES

1926 Born in New York, New York on 3 December

Education

1947 B.A., mathematics, University of California at Los Angeles
1949 M.A., mathematics, University of California at Los Angeles
1952 Ph.D., mathematics, University of California at Los Angeles

Professional Experience

National Bureau of Standards
1949-1952 Mathematician

Hughes Aircraft Corporation
1952-1954 Technical Staff Member

National Cash Register Company
1954-1955 Applications Division

Magnavox Corporation
1955-1960 Head of the Business Systems Group

American University
1959-1960 Visiting Lecturer

Advanced Information Systems, Incorporated
1960-1962 President

University of Washington
1960-1962 Visiting Lecturer

Electrada, Incorporated
1960-1963 Vice-President and Research Director

University of California at Los Angeles
1954-1964 Adjunct Lecturer
1964 Professor, School of Library Services
1965-1970 Director, Institute for Library Research
1974-1989  Dean, Graduate School of Library Service, School of Library and Information Science

Becker and Hayes, Incorporated
1969-1973  Vice-President
1993-1996  Vice President

University of Illinois
1970  Windsor Lecturer

White House Conference on Libraries and Information Sciences
1979  Advisory Council Member

University of New South Wales
1979, 1993  Visiting Professor

Japanese Universities
1987, 1994  Visiting Professor

Loughborough University
1989  Visiting Professor

Online Computer Library Center, Incorporated
1990  Consultant

Khazar University
1994  Visiting Professor

Honors
1971  Best Information Science Book Award, ASIS
1985  Beta Phi Mu Award, American Library Association
1986  Professional Achievement Award, UCLA Alumni Association
1990  First Tezak Award, University of Zagreb, Croatia
1993  Award of Merit, American Library Association
ABSTRACT

Robert M. Hayes begins the interview with a discussion of his father’s and his stepfather’s affect on his life. He describes how he traveled frequently because of his stepfather’s acting career, attending over sixteen different high schools before receiving his diploma. Hayes graduated from UCLA in 1947 with a B.A. in mathematics, and afterwards was drafted into the Navy. He recounts his acceptance into the Navy’s V-12 program, and the courses he took for that program at the University of Colorado at Boulder. After the War, Hayes returned to UCLA, where he earned his M.A. in mathematics in 1949, and his Ph.D. in mathematics in 1952. While earning his Ph.D., Hayes worked on information science at the National Bureau of Standards. In 1952, he decided to move into industry, and was hired at Hughes Aircraft. He describes his work at Hughes, where he programmed a computer to fly an airplane. Further, he recounts his teaching responsibilities in UCLA’s University-extension program, which he continued in parallel with his experiences at Hughes. In 1954, Hayes began working at the National Cash Register Company, and a year later he moved to Magnavox Research Labs. He discusses the important developments in information storage and retrieval at Magnavox, such as the Minicard and the Magnacard systems, and his realization that his efforts at Magnavox could be taught to students. Eventually, Hayes was teaching at locations all over the United States, including American University, the University of Washington, and Wright Patterson Air Force Base. In 1960, Hayes was invited to join the Electrada Corporation, which he did, as vice-president. Hayes relates how, soon after joining Electrada, he and John Postley created Advanced Information Systems as a subsidiary of Electrada. Hayes also explains why he became a fulltime professor at UCLA at that time, and discusses his roles in the formation of the School of Library Service and the Institute for Library Research. In 1969, Joseph Becker and Robert Hayes started Becker and Hayes Incorporated, with the purpose of creating an interlibrary network for the State of Washington. Hayes discusses the obstacles he and Becker overcame to accomplish that task, and goes on to recount his work with NCLIS and the SILC system. Hayes concludes the interview with his interpretation of the relationship between information science and library science, and the importance of libraries and librarians.

INTERVIEWER

Colin B. Burke had recently retired from the history department at the University of Maryland at Baltimore County and held a research fellowship at Yale University when he came to CHF. He spent his residency working on his book on the history of computer-based scientific information systems and related government policies, from the 1950s through the early 1990s. He received his Ph.D. from Washington University in St. Louis and currently serves as Associate Professor Emeritus at the University of Maryland. He also served as a Fulbright Scholar in Poland and as a Scholar-in-Residence at the National Security Agency.
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