Dan Berman grew up in New York City’s Lower East Side, between Little Italy and Chinatown, in the 1940s and 50s. He became a high school teacher interested in Asia and came to UH in 1964 for a summer institute for teachers. In 1965, as a EWC grantee he began his love affair with South Asian studies and with EWC. He tells stories about his Hale Manoa roommates, his “entertainment buddies” out “ewa-way,” and driving EWC folks around in his Volkswagen bus. With his new bride, EWC grantee Liz Speckels, he traveled to India on field study, where friends helped them bring their first child into the world with traditional Indian ceremonies, customs, and foods. After EWC, the Bermans returned to New York to teach comparative East-West history and culture to high school students. Dan went on to earn a Fulbright fellowship to China, a Woodrow Wilson fellowship to Princeton, and taught teachers in many U.S. states as part of the Woodrow Wilson outreach program in World History. He and Liz retired to Hawaii in 1998 where EWC put him to work as alumni association president from 2000-2005 and as a consultant to help invigorate alumni chapters in South Asia.

Read Berman's interview narrative (see separate pdf)

- **Personal Background**
- **Life Before EWC** - Beginning to Teach - University of Hawaii’i - South Asia Studies
- **Life at EWC** - The 1960s - Social Life - Martin Luther King Jr., 1968 - Inter-Island Trip - An EWC Marriage - Birthing /Ph.D. Research, India - Back to UH Campus, 1971
- **Life After EWC** - Teaching about Asia in New York - Retirement and Return to Hawaii’i
- **Ties That Last** - EWC Alumni activities - 2000 EWC Alumni Conference - EWC Alumni President 2000-05 - Outreach in South Asia - Role in Asia Pacific Leadership Program (APLP) - Growing the Alumni
- **EWC’s Impact** - The Mission
Interview Quotes

“Our daughter was born in Pune, Maharashtra in 1970. It was a wonderful experience.... We had wonderful neighbors who took us through the birthing process. In India, you have special foods, and you do special things at the seventh, eighth, ninth month. You know, special ladus [sweetmeats made of sesame], special kinds of ceremonies. We have pictures of it -- the thought being that she will never again be as beautiful as she is now.”

“In the spur of the moment, I said OK, and I guess spent five years as [East-West Center alumni association] president, from around 2000 to about 2005. I think what I feel is significant about the period is that we made an inordinate number of changes with Charles' help. And one was we got a permanent office here. I was the first president who was a full-time president in a way, because I was not working so I could put in the time, and I did put in the time. And it was really important to have an office here and to have a presence at the East-West Center. And I used it. I was kind of like a scout. I moved from department to department -- find out what was going on.”

“In the fall of 2004, in a discussion with Karen [Knudsen] and Charles [Morrison], we recognized that South Asia had disappeared from the map of the East-West Center essentially. Very few students came. There was very little Center activity there. I was president of the alumni association but also because it was my area of expertise...Karen and I went to Bangladesh first -- and we were able to establish a chapter there with the help of the American Center -- and now that chapter stands on its own as an extremely strong chapter. One I think both of us are really proud of. “

These narratives, which reflect interviewees’ personal perceptions, opinions and memories, may contain errors of fact. They do not reflect positions or versions of history officially approved by the East-West Center.

LINK (as of 06/04/2020)
https://www.eastwestcenter.org/research/research-information-services/oral-history-project/dan-berman