

HARRIMAN INSTITUTE
ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

The Reminiscences of
Grace Kennan Warnecke

Columbia Center for Oral History
Columbia University
2016

PREFACE

The following oral history is the result of a recorded interview with Grace Kennan Warnecke conducted by Caitlin Bertin-Mahieux on September 23, 2016 and on October 24, 2016. This interview is part of phase two of the Harriman Institute Oral History Project.

The reader is asked to bear in mind that s/he is reading a verbatim transcript of the spoken word, rather than written prose.

ATC

Session: 1

Interviewee: Grace Kennan Warnecke

Location: New York, NY

Interviewer: Caitlin Bertin-Mahieux

Date: September 23, 2016

Q: Today is September 23, [2016]. This is Caitlin Bertin-Mahieux, and I am here for the Harriman Oral History Project with Grace [K.] Warnecke. Grace, I hope I pronounced your name correctly.

Warnecke: Yes. I think I'd say Grace Kennan Warnecke. I use that.

Q: Grace Kennan Warnecke. Okay, wonderful. Because your father is the legendary diplomat, George F. Kennan.

Warnecke: Well, was. He's unfortunately dead.

Q: Yes. As I just mentioned, we'd love to start with some background about you. You really have a lifelong association with Russia and the Soviet Union. Let's start at the beginning and if you could just tell me where and when you were born and a little bit about what you remember from your early childhood.

Warnecke: Yes, I was born in Riga, Latvia. My mother was Norwegian. My father was in the legation there. Latvia at that time was an independent country. After a few months we went to

Norway and I lived with my grandparents in Norway. My early childhood is confusing because we moved all the time. We were at some mélange of moves.

Q: As a family unit you moved all together or?

Warnecke: No, not always all together. The year I was two, I lived alone with my grandparents. My parents were in Russia. I spoke Norwegian before I spoke English. Then I joined them in Russia. I went to some sort of nursery school, the Kremlin Nursery School there. But it was outside the Kremlin, in the garden and in a park. My father became ill, and we lived in Vienna for a while. After we left Russia we were in Prague, Czechoslovakia. I actually saw Hitler. I was lifted up to see him. I was five years old. But I wrote my grandparents in Norwegian about seeing Hitler. So obviously it make a big impression on me.

My father was stationed in Berlin. We went for a spring vacation skiing, to Norway my mother, and by this time I had a younger sister named Joan, who's four years younger than I am. My mother and Joan and I went to Norway skiing and my father called and said, "I want you to get out." We had just come down from the mountains where my grandfather had a hundred birds. It was a bird hunting lodge. My father said, "You must come back to Germany immediately." My mother said, "No, no, we're having too nice a time here in Norway." Then he sent her a telegram saying, "I order you to come to Germany." We left two days before the Germans invaded. He knew about the German invasion of Norway. Of course, he couldn't tell us. It was secret. Then of course, we would have been there for the whole war because my mother was Norwegian.

Q: So then you left your grandparents behind.

Warnecke: Yes. They were Norwegian. Besides, he couldn't tell anybody. He didn't tell why we had to come back. He just said we had to come.

Q: I guess it's a blessing and a curse to have that type of knowledge.

Warnecke: It is difficult. We went to Berlin, and then my sister and I went with my mother—my mother brought us back and we lived with my father's sister in Highland Park, Illinois for a year.

Q: This was the first time you lived in the U.S.?

Warnecke: No, we'd lived in the U.S. for a year when I was in kindergarten. When my father was back here with the State Department. It was very confusing. I have charts trying to figure out—

Q: Where you were when and, yes.

Warnecke: Yes. The year we were in Highland Park, we moved for three months to Milwaukee. Don't ask me why. I mean, it was that confusing. I was in two schools that year. I never went to the same school twice in a row until I got to the eleventh grade.

Q: The very end.

Warnecke: So the one question I can never answer is, “Where are you from?” I go completely blank.

Q: Is there one place that you were longest, or that has the most memory or meaning for you, in all that time?

Warnecke: Well, I suppose the two places, Norway and Russia. Because we were a long time in Russia. Then we went back to Europe when the war started my parents were stationed in Portugal. I was left behind to go to boarding school. I was ten.

Q: Left behind in the U.S.?

Warnecke: U.S. I went for a year to a boarding school in Washington, the National Cathedral School for Girls. Then my father was able to get back to the US because he had a meeting in the State Department. It was very difficult to get across the Atlantic. But my father and I were able to get on a Portuguese freighter. It was 1943, the middle of the war, we went back to Portugal. After that he was stationed in Moscow. At that time I’d forgotten my Russian—he enrolled me in a Soviet school. School number 131 in Moscow. I went to school there for a year.

Q: I saw that school mentioned in some of your biographies. Is that a well known school? Or what is that—? It’s just how the numbers—?

Warnecke: No. It is just, all the schools have numbers. I could have been in number thirty-right, but I happened to be at number 131. No, it was an ordinary, regular Soviet school. Because there were no foreign children there.

Q: There weren't international schools like the other countries?

Warnecke: No. There were no international schools.

Q: Wow. So all this moving—what were some of the positive and negative aspects of all these changes?

Warnecke: Well, I suppose the positive is you certainly get to see a lot of the world. I learned languages; I was good at languages.

Q: Yes, you must be. We have Norwegian, Russian, English.

Warnecke: Well, I've forgotten things. I used to speak—I speak some Norwegian and some French now. But I also used to speak German, which I don't anymore, and Portuguese [laughs], which I don't anymore. Those languages have left me.

Q: In your family, what language did you speak, with your parents and siblings?

Warnecke: Oh, we spoke English.

Q: You spoke English.

Warnecke: My mother tried to speak Norwegian, but it didn't take. I knew that she and my father spoke English, so I thought that was the right language. I didn't want to get sidetracked into Norwegian. Although I had spoken it fluently.

Q: Wow. What were some of the challenges of all these moves?

Warnecke: I think the main challenge is a certain—it's hard to say—a certain nervousness about going into new situations, because you never knew. You had to try and assess the situation, which was always different. Things that were considered good in one place would not be considered good in the next place.

Q: Like shaking hands across the doorway [laughter].

Warnecke: Yes, or—well, when I first came to—I went one year to Alice Deal Junior High School in Washington, D.C. Of course, I'd come from a Russian school. When the teacher walked in the room you stood up. So I stood up.

Q: But you were the only one?

Warnecke: Yes. I was the only one. It made me very unpopular for a while. People thought of me as distinctly odd.

Q: That must have been difficult, especially for such a sensitive age.

Warnecke: I think that was the hardest part. I think that year was the worst year of my life, in the sense of just not feeling a part of anything. I was too different. Americans are very—they don't always just accept strangers.

Q: Not as open, yes.

Warnecke: I had my hair in braids. Nobody did braids.

Q: Right. Even the fashion trends in each country were probably very different.

Warnecke: Yes.

Q: Were your siblings usually with you, where you were?

Warnecke: Well, my family ended up having—the same parents, but they ended up having children in two sets. I have a younger brother who's seventeen years younger than I am, and a younger sister who's twenty years younger than I am.

Q: Okay. So your sister Joan was the—

Warnecke: She was the one that grew up with me.

Q: And you two were together mostly through all these—

Warnecke: Well, no. Because when I was in boarding school she was not in boarding school.

Q: Too young?

Warnecke: Too young. Then I was sent to, back to that boarding school for eighth—I was there in fifth grade and eighth grade. Of course, she wasn't there. Then when I was high school she was in grade school. We weren't so much—

Q: It's a bigger gap when you're younger.

Warnecke: When I'm at school in Russia they decided she was frail and she didn't go to school.

She was home-schooled.

Q: What were your parents like? Tell me about your mom and dad.

Warnecke: Oh, well, my father—you know a lot about my father.

Q: I do know, but I mean personally, at home. I know about his career.

Warnecke: Well, they were both outwardly very charming people. In different ways. My father was a great intellect and he had an enormous sense of curiosity about the world; loved literature, loved books. I could always go in to see him with an idea or thought or wanting to talk to him about something like that, or something I was learning in school. He was very excited by all that. But he wasn't around a lot. There were years when I was young, towards the beginning of the war, I didn't see him for two years.

He just wasn't there. He was there and we were here, or something. When we stayed here—when we lived in Highland Park, Illinois, our mother wasn't with us, either. We were sort of dumped at an aunt's and lived with her. I thought my father was wonderful when he was around, but he wasn't always around. My mother was very beautiful and a lovely hostess. She looked kind of like Greta Garbo. She was terrific looking. She had not even graduated from high school, so she had a very different kind of background. She was a homemaker and a hostess. It was much harder for me after a certain age to get along with my mother. I found her difficult. And I think I was difficult for her.

I was a dreamy child who liked to read books. I wasn't good at cleaning my room or doing any of that stuff. I didn't like it. When we lived in Europe we usually had maids. So somebody else cleaned my room. Then I'd come back here and she would ask, "Why isn't your room clean?" I didn't really know how.

Q: Yes. Do you remember—?

Warnecke: She wasn't as interested in my—I was born nine months after they were married and she was very young. She was only twenty-one when I was born. I think that she was really just getting used to this new marriage, new everything. I think maybe I came along a little soon.

Q: Lots of adjustments.

Warnecke: Lots of adjustments. When she was older we got along fine, and I appreciated her. But I didn't appreciate her when I was young.

Q: Yes. That's how it goes, it seems [laughs].

Warnecke: What?

Q: That's how it goes, I think.

Warnecke: Well, sometimes.

Q: Sometimes.

Warnecke: But they led me into a very interesting and exciting world and exciting background that I never would have had without my parents.

Q: Right. When did you become aware that your dad kind of was who he was, and how different that was from—other people's families maybe?

Warnecke: Well, I must have been a little aware at some point. I think he gave—he kept giving all my graduation speeches. It didn't seem to matter much in high school at all. I became aware of it in college.

Q: Okay, yes. You talked about how your dad would obviously be away sometimes, or for like extended periods. Besides just having you live in different places, how did he share the world with you and how did you learn to—maybe later—share him with the world a bit?

Warnecke: Well, he always talked a lot. When he was there we'd discuss things, or how the world was going, or what the events of the day were. For example, when I was in high school, he was head of the Policy Planning Staff. That was a very demanding job. I just don't remember him being home a lot.

Q: You went to college at Radcliffe [College], right? What made you decide to go there, to go to Cambridge?

Warnecke: I took a bet with somebody about it.

Q: Really? Tell me about that.

Warnecke: It was not my first choice of colleges. I wanted to go to Middlebury, because that was languages and skiing, which I liked. I was turned down by Middlebury [laughs], and accepted at Radcliffe, so you never know.

Q: Oh, you never know.

Warnecke: Which was devastating for me at the time. I was a good student, National Honor Society, all those things. I just couldn't believe that I was going to be turned down. I think, in our lives, we always have to have a few turn downs. I really believe in that. If everything goes your way it's not a good sign.

Q: Right, yes. Is that the longest you'd been one place? College four years and—

Warnecke: Well, I had three years in high school.

Q: Three years in high school. Okay.

Warnecke: I was tenth, eleventh and twelfth grades.

Q: In college, you majored in Russian?

Warnecke: History. No, I really majored in the History and Literature of Russia, France and England in the nineteenth century; that was my major. I sometimes shorten it to Russian, I guess.

Q: Was an exciting time to be studying that topic?

Warnecke: Well, it was what I was interested in. It was pretty much of an exciting time.

Q: How did your Radcliffe experience turn out? I know you said it wasn't your first choice but—

Warnecke: Oh, I loved it. I'm so glad I went to Radcliffe. It was exciting, it was stimulating, it was the first time—in high school you had to hide. Being smart was not good in my high school. It was not admired. You were considered a nerd and—[laughs] so I'd been used to hiding, trying to be good at other things. Because when I came to junior high school, when nobody spoke to me for a year—I mean, I'm exaggerating slightly, but it was almost like that. Of course, all I wanted was to be accepted. I wanted to be like other children. I didn't want to be isolated.

Q: Yes, you want to belong.

Warnecke: I worked very hard at trying to develop social skills. I started out with archery. I thought archery would really do the trick. Well, let me tell you, you don't get popular by being good at archery. It didn't work. It was a complete flop. Then in high school I did field hockey. That was much better.

Q: There we go.

Warnecke: I became captain of the field hockey team, and I got letters and all those things that mattered to me. It mattered a lot. I wanted to be an American. My mother, not having ever lived here, had no idea what American jokes, and standards and—the fact that she made me dress differently—at that point there was something about socks. I think you either all wore white socks or you all wore colored socks. I can't imagine, but of course, my mother wanted me to wear the other [laughter]. So I wore the wrong socks [laughs]. Silly things. I had to have lace-up shoes. Everybody else wore loafers—were very big at that time. She'd say, "Well, they're silly. Lace-up shoes are more—it's much better for your feet." Well of course, they are better for your feet. But I wanted to look like everybody else, you know. I don't know if that explains it very much, but—

Q: It does.

Warnecke: But anyway, I learned that to be popular in high school, being smart was not what they did it. You really had to hide it. Therefore when I got to college it was such a relief, because everybody liked—people liked being smart. They were excited about their courses. It was different.

Q: You said you wanted to be American. When did you actually feel like you were?

Warnecke: Oh, I suppose, by the time I graduated from high school, I was completely American.

Q: After those three years.

Warnecke: I'm very happy, actually, that I went to public high school. Because I think it made me more American. If I'd gone to one of the well known private schools—but I would have been not as regular ordinary American [laughs] as—

Q: Yes, that's true. How did you start your career after college? What was your first?

Warnecke: I worked at MIT [Massachusetts Institute of Technology]. It was the Center for International Studies. I was a project analyst, it was called. But I was basically a project assistant. I just had a nicer title. I worked on evaluation of Soviet Scientific Education, and helped a man write a book about it. That's what assistants do.

Q: Exactly, exactly. Were there many other women working at MIT at time?

Warnecke: Yes, but they were secretaries, by and large. No, I was very lucky. I got a good job. I was even a member of the MIT Faculty Club. That was the big thing.

Q: Oh, wow. When was this? When did you graduate from Radcliffe?

Warnecke: I graduated in '54.

Q: Fifty-four. Okay. How long did you stay at MIT then?

Warnecke: I was there two years. Well, I was actually engaged to be married. I was supposed to be married at the end of it and then the marriage—that didn't happen. So then I went down to Washington and worked for Army Intelligence. Did that for a couple of years, but then I did get married. I moved to Sacramento, California. Where I kind of thought my career was over [laughter]. Well, in those days you were supposed to [laughs] work until you got married and that was that. But I kept always doing something. I did Russian translations for the Library of Congress and stuff like that. I mean, little things. They were not fulltime jobs.

Q: But just to keep active in that.

Warnecke: Well, I wanted to do—yes. I wanted to do something in addition to having children. That wasn't quite enough for me.

Q: I read that you were a professional photographer, starting in the—

Warnecke: That was quite a bit later.

Q: —in the mid '70s. Yes. But I don't know what's before that. What comes before that? Your family in Sacramento.

Warnecke: Well, I had three children.

Q: Three kids, okay.

Warnecke: They were born—I had three children under the age of four, so I was busy having children [laughter]. I did these sideline kind of jobs, like the Library of Congress one. Then I moved to San Francisco. I became the book critic for *San Francisco Magazine*, which I was very proud of. It wasn't a fulltime job either, but it was exciting and fun.

Q: It sounds like fun, to be able to—

Warnecke: Oh, I interviewed authors and did books. Before that I was an art critic. I wrote for an art magazine. So I guess I was always writing. That's probably the best thing to say. Before I left Sacramento, what really led me back into the Russian world was there was a Russian woman's delegation. They were from the Soviet Women's Committee, which of course, was a huge propaganda arm of the Communist Party. But they had very—some interesting women were members of the Soviet Women's Committee. The first astronaut—what was her name?

Q: The Cosmonaut?

Warnecke: Yes.

Q: We'll come back—we'll think of it.

Warnecke: Valentina [V. Tereshkova]. She was a member. I met her and things like that. Anyway, they sent a delegation to Sacramento, and they asked me if I would be their guide. I said, "No, I couldn't possibly," that I'd forgotten my Russian. Because I felt my Russian was very rusty. Well, I hadn't used it. I said, "I can't do it. Get somebody else," but I said, "If you need a driver, I'll be the chauffeur. I'll drive them around." They got a proper interpreter and I was the driver. But they were there a long time. I think they were there a week, maybe even ten days. It was a long visit. Of course, I went everywhere with them and each repeated their story, the same story over and over and over again. A lot of it must have just sunk in without my even being aware of it.

Their big last night, they were giving a big speech in the City Hall auditorium of Sacramento. In those days they had things like—this is really old fashioned—armchair cruises. People came to listen to people talk about foreign countries. It was really before—well, there was television but people still wanted to learn about other countries in smaller cities, like Sacramento, that way. They got up there, and there were four Americans and the translator, and the translator froze. She absolutely froze. She got a panic attack and couldn't talk. So they started screaming, "Grace! Grace!" It was very dramatic [laughs]. I got up on stage and there were two thousand people or something. I translated for them. Of course, a lot of it was in my head. I'd heard it for a week.

Q: Right. Thankfully, yes [laughs].

Warnecke: Yes. So I did it and I did it fine. As a result, when they invited an American delegation to go to Russia, the Russians specifically asked if I could come along as their interpreter. I was requested or something. Anyway, that's how I went along with them and that was the first time I went back to Russia.

Q: This was in the '60s or the—?

Warnecke: Yes, '62.

Q: Sixty-two. How was the Soviet Union different from what you had remembered from before?

Warnecke: Well, I don't remember—when I was there before it wartime. We were allies. It was very different and by the time—'62 it was Cold War, and KGB, and all the things that we think. It was very different. But it was exciting for me. We also went to Armenia, and we went to Latvia, where I was born [laughs]. We traveled around. We went to Moscow and Leningrad then.

Q: Yes. What did you find, both in California and then in a Soviet Union, your interactions with people and kind of the exchange that was going on during the Cold War?

Warnecke: Well, with the women—with the Soviet Women's Committee, of course, they were allowed to talk to foreigners. These were outstanding women. We never went to their apartments. We never met their husbands. It was strictly official. But on the other hand, they were not scared of talking to us. They were supposed to talk to us. That was their job [laughs], so

to speak. People were by and large friendly until the odd moment. I remember in Riga, when they were taking us to see an outdoor market—and I don't know, I lagged behind a little bit or something. Some man came running up to me and he said, "Don't believe a word they say. They're telling you lies." I'd have moments like that, when you really got the other side of it.

There was a moment in a restaurant when a man came up and made a signal, and somehow I met him behind a pillar or something. He said, "I used to work for the American Embassy." He was now a waiter. "I was sent to the gulag and was away for ten years." He said, "Don't tell anybody, but I wanted you to know." Things like that would happen. For me, it was extremely exciting. I was at that age and I was like part of a Cold War and things were going on.

Q: Being presented with one side of the propaganda and then having to look deeper a little bit.

Warnecke: Things were difficult there. Things were bad and people—the Gulag was still alive and well.

Q: Yes. So that was evident, regardless of the officialness.

Warnecke: Oh, yes. Well, I mean, I'd read things, too [laughs]. I do remember on that same trip we took a delegation over with us. A very nice woman, she was a Quaker and she was a very big part of the Peace Movement. But we were taken to the Bolshoi Ballet, and they had a militaristic ballets—they've long since gone—with tanks going across the stage, and the ballerinas done up in army uniforms [laughs]. They had some very propagandistic ballets. Later they got much more

sophisticated, but those early ones were not sophisticated. I looked down and the Quaker lady was crying. I said, “Oh dear, what’s wrong?” She said, “But they’re so militaristic.” I was so stunned. I looked at her and I said, “What did you think they were going to be?”

Q: Right.

Warnecke: Her vision was that this was a place where every child got to go to kindergarten, where there was universal education. It was a kind of Communism, in America, that came before my time, but in the '30s. People really were idealistically Communist. This was going to be a better world and all that. Well, she was of that ilk because of her work in the Peace Movement. So she was terribly upset to see this ballet. It was not a good [laughs] advertisement for her.

Q: Reality check. Yes.

Warnecke: Yes. It was interesting to me to do that. From then on I started getting pulled more and more back into going to Russia with groups. I went with ABC Television three times to translate and help them set up the programs. I kept sort of doing it. After I was divorced from C.K. McClatchy, my first husband, I married, three years later, an architect named Jack [John Carl] Warnecke. I was married to him. That’s why I have the Warnecke name. When I went over with ABC is when.

But I went over before then as well. When I went over with a woman’s group I was pregnant with my third child, but they didn’t know it.

Q: So you're going back with these groups with the Women's Committee, with ABC News, I mean—

Warnecke: Then I went with Ted [Edward Moore] Kennedy in '74.

Q: Oh, really? Tell me about that trip.

Warnecke: That trip was very exciting. Because we were the guests of Brezhnev, we were given a special private plane of our own to fly around in. We could leave our clothes on it. I never heard of leaving your jacket on a plane. We stayed in mansions that the Soviets had for official guest. I'd never been at anything that fancy before. We were in Russia and then we went to Georgia. I think we went to Latvia, one of the Baltic states again. Then we went to Georgia and then we ended up in Leningrad.

Q: How did you get connected to Ted Kennedy and pulled into that trip?

Warnecke: Oh, because Jack Warnecke was kind of the Kennedy family architect. He designed Ted Kennedy's house. He had designed Bobby [Robert F.] Kennedy's pool house. He designed President [John F.] Kennedy's grave.

Q: Oh yes, I did read that.

Warnecke: Yes. He was very close to the Kennedys, and so I got to know them, too. When Ted was going to the USSR, Jack was going to be in China at that same time on an architect's trip. Also I went over before that. The American Institute of Architects was invited to take a group of architects to go touring Russia and I was invited to go as the translator. Jack was on that trip, and I was the only woman.

Q: That's how you met?

Warnecke: No, no, no. We were married already. We didn't meet like that. I was very used to going and being a translator. I was a translator for a long time.

Q: You liked all this travel? I mean you were—

Warnecke: Oh, yes, but I'm not sure my children liked it so much.

Q: It must have been such an interesting time because it was a difficult place to have access to, to get to.

Warnecke: It was very difficult. There were always adventures, and you were always scared.

Q: Yes? But you kept going back for more?

Warnecke: Yes, I mean it became—you'd get addicted to Russia. You could also get disgusted with it, too, at times.

Q: What are some of the things that stick out over all those visits in the '60s and the '70s? Besides the gorgeous private plane [laughter].

Warnecke: It's hard to say. There are so many thousand things; I made so many trips. It's really hard to pick out what sticks out, if you haven't thought about it in advance.

Q: Did you feel like things had changed over that time? Like you would be surprised to see certain things change over time?

Warnecke: Well, particularly when things got more and more relaxed, and you could start seeing people socially, that was not approved. Yes, when I went over—I was an editor of the book—did you ever see the book *A Day in the Life of the Soviet Union*?

Q: Yes.

Warnecke: Well, I was the senior editor of that. We lived in Moscow for two months. I used to go over—I'd met a woman who collected—I think she's quite well known. Tanya Kolodzei. Well, I'll think of her last name in a second. I've for some reason blanked on it. She collected art, and she used to have these night soirees that were—I'm sure they weren't approved by anybody. When we came we were not allowed to talk when we went in to the building. We had

to go quietly, so nobody would hear us talking English. She had a variety of guests. We weren't all Americans. Probably seven or eight of us would cram into this small apartment and sit there and drink wine and eat sausages late at night and talk about everything.

I began to feel part of this other world that was semi-dangerous. I mean, not terribly dangerous, but it felt dangerous. I was also careful—I mean to some extent careful—because of my father. I didn't want to do something stupid that would reflect badly on him.

Q: Right. Because he's still a public figure at this time, and he's still—did you feel like you were being followed and watched? What were some of the things—?

Warnecke: I certainly was followed during my father's time, yes. I knew I was followed. Then when I went with Ted Kennedy, we had KGB people kind of as part of the entourage. One of them pulled me aside and said, "We know everything about you." It was unpleasant [laughter]. I didn't feel very comfortable then. But it was an interesting time and I'm glad that I was a part of it.

Q: How did you get into photography?

Warnecke: Well, it was when I was married to Jack Warnecke. He was somewhat of an explorer. He liked trying new things and doing different things. He also liked name recognition, and he kind of liked promoting his business. He was a well known architect. He read that there was going to be a coronation of the new king in Nepal, and he thought it would be great fun for us to

go to Nepal. I've written several articles about this. He and I were going to celebrate his birthday in Nepal. But he didn't have any hotel reservations, he didn't have anything. We also invited a young neighbor, a very attractive, slightly younger woman and, who I always thought—I didn't really see why we had to bring her along for this trip, but Jack thought it would be so good to have her. She was studying photography. He said, "You can practice." He was quite charming. So she decided she wanted to come, too.

I thought about it and I decided that maybe I'll just take advantage [laughs] of this situation. I suggested that she and I go over early, to get used to things. She loved that idea. Basically I didn't want us going in the three of us. I thought it was a little strange, and also I didn't completely trust my husband, whom I later divorced. I thought it was better if she and I just went. I knew she was very ambitious and she wanted to do something with her photographs. So I said, "I can write an article and you can take the pictures." She said, "Well, we'll do it for *British Vogue*." She went to *British Vogue*. They were not terribly impressed because we, neither one of us had great credentials. They said, "Go ahead and if we like the article we'll print it," but we were there on total speculation.

We got there, and of course we had no place to stay. We had nothing. She was blonde and could cry on demand. So tears would come down. Well, suddenly we had a place to stay and suddenly we got credentials, which we had no rights to at all. It was absolutely ridiculous, but we got into everything. We managed with pure chutzpah. Mostly on her part, because I wasn't so good at the chutzpah, but I went along. In the end, incidentally, just so you know, we did get our article printed in *British Vogue*. My article was printed with her photographs and it all went well.

She was always going off on the back of somebody's motorcycle to look at something wonderful, to take pictures. I was stuck in a room writing away, studying the history of Nepal and I thought, I think she's having more fun. That's when I decided to be a photographer.

I'd always taken pictures. I'd had a Brownie and I loved taking pictures. I have pictures from way back when. So I was jealous of her. I thought, She's having more fun than I am writing. When I mentioned this to a friend she said, "Well, if you want to be a photographer, do it. Go take some courses, do it. Don't just whine about it." I thought she was right. We were living in Washington [D.C.], so I studied photography at the Corcoran School of Art [Corcoran School of the Arts and Design]. Then I got this idea that I could be a writer/photographer; I would do stories where I would write the text and take the pictures. It was going to be perfect.

Q: Best of both worlds.

Warnecke: Best of both worlds. We moved back to San Francisco and I took photography there, with a wonderful teacher. That really changed my life because—and then I had one of those amazing unanticipated events that sometimes happens to you in life. I was studying photography class and I read that President [Gerald Rudolph Ford, Jr.] Ford was coming to town. So I thought, well, it would be interesting. I'll go downtown and take pictures of the crowd. Somebody in my class had criticized my photographs saying, "All you take pictures of are society people and children." I was by far the oldest person in the class. So I thought, this will get me out of that niche. Because there was show and tell all of the time.

I went down there, and it was already kind of crowded and a TV photographer said, “You know, there’s room for somebody up in that tree. If you want to, I’ll lift you up.” Well, I didn’t know what he wanted [laughs]. I was a little leery of the whole thing, but I finally said yes. He lifted me up into this tree and there was another photographer up there who was kind of annoyed. He said, “Are you a professional photographer?” I said yes. We were up there so long, even though he was annoyed with me, we compared f-stops and things, because we had nothing else to talk about. Finally Ford came out and that’s when Sara Jane Moore shot at him. I have the picture. You can see it, it’s in my study—

Q: I’d love to, yes.

Warnecke: It shows the Secret Service pushing him into the limousine. Anyway, so my photo ended up being the whole top half of the page in the *San Francisco Chronicle*. But more important, I called Ken Regan the photographer from that Kennedy trip—because I’d become good friends with him when I’d gone to Russia with Ted Kennedy. He said, “Oh, for God’s sake, *Time Magazine* doesn’t have a picture. I’ll have somebody meet the plane,” because he was feeding those big magazines. So he did. I drove and went to the airport and got this film—in those days we had film [laughs]. You had to put it on the airplane and fly it to New York. It was the lead picture in *Time Magazine*, too. So it started my career with a bang.

Q: Yes. Go from just taking a class to being on *Time Magazine*. Wow.

Warnecke: The next class I showed my picture in the *Chronicle* and one of the guys got up and said, “Well, any of us could have taken that picture.” The teacher said, “Yes, any of you could have, but who was down there?” [Laughs]

Q: In the tree. Wow.

Warnecke: Before that nobody had spoken to me in that class. I mean, what was this middle-aged lady doing? Then suddenly people wanted to have coffee with me. It was funny; it was cute.

Q: It sounds like things with your photography continued to take off. Weren't you the photographer for *Newsweek* for the Moscow Olympics?

Warnecke: Olympics, I was. I did it in conjunction with Ken Regan, who had been the photographer on the Kennedy trip. I mean, he really boosted my—helped me. Yes, I loved photography. I did a cookbook; I did all sorts of things. I would have loved to—I wanted to be a photographer. It had nothing to do with my father, which I liked. I felt I'd done it all myself and it was my talent and I wasn't riding on somebody's coattails.

But when I got a divorce from Jack Warnecke, I really wanted to move back east. I was no longer happy in California. I'm so Europe-oriented. California was just too far away. Also, all my family, my sisters and brother and parents were in the East, and my parents were getting old. I felt I really wanted to spend time with them and I couldn't do it from California. So I moved

back here. My youngest son, Kevin, was in boarding school, in upstate New York, so my move really helped in every way.

I could not make it, however, as a photographer in New York. All the little glow I'd gotten in California didn't really translate. I could have, if I would have been willing to live really poor and moved down to Alphabet City and all that, but I realized I was used to living a certain way. I wasn't ready to do Alphabet City. It's hard to make a living as a photographer. New York has real competition.

Q: So many artists are trying to make it, including photographers. Yes.

Warnecke: I started out—I did it for a while. I did the pictures; took the photographs for a whole photo book on toys. A horrible experience. I was going to Mattel and all these awful toy companies. It was not fun. It wasn't my kind of photography either.

Q: This cookbook you mentioned, that you did the photos for, did you also do the recipes? Were you into cooking and—?

Warnecke: No, no. Just photographs.

Q: Just the photographs. Okay. I was just curious [laughs].

Warnecke: No, I can show it to you. I have it right here. The cookbook was fun. Now, it was very creative. It was a different kind of thing with the toys. There was no creativity whatsoever. You could have been creative about toys, but neither the toy companies nor the author really saw that. She wanted to make the toy companies happy and that meant staged shots.

Q: Static and boring and yes.

Warnecke: It wasn't fun. So I started kind of—this is a long story. A friend from San Francisco came to New York and asked, "How are you managing?" I answered, "Well, so-so." He said, "Well, I need somebody." He'd started something called Business Executives for National Security [BENS], which was for business people concerned about the threat of nuclear war and how that would affect the economy. BENS was not totally anti all nuclear weapons. They were anti-nuclear weapons that were bad for the economy. The founder was a businessman. We could have some nuclear weapons, but not a million of them [laughter].

I think his goal was to have—to have peace, certainly, and a stable economy. BENS was not totally anti-nuclear—it was part of the Peace Movement, and I'd say way to the right. The Peace Movement encompassed many different organizations. I remember an NGO called Pillow Cases For Peace, where Soviet and American children were going to switch pillow cases and that would bring peace. I mean, please. That was one extreme and BENS was another extreme.

Q: Quite a spectrum in there. Yes.

Warnecke: Yes. I went to all these meetings. It brought my father and me together because he was very concerned about the threat of nuclear war. He had seen the damage done in Europe after World War II and he was anti-war. We were able to suddenly talk about something. I was seeing it down from here and he was seeing it up there, but we could still discuss it.

Q: Also it seems maybe around this time you were the associate producer on a PBS documentary, right? *The First 50 Years*, that one? That could be a connection to your father and artistic, too. Continuing your—

Warnecke: It seems to me all these things have stories. They always come from something.

Q: Yes. Where did that come from?

Warnecke: Well, because I had been asked to go to the Esalen Institute out in California. It was one of the first touchy-feely sort of institutes. Started by a man named Mike Murphy and it's in Big Sur—it's on the water. People would come to learn how to get in touch with their feelings, and get rid of inhibitions. It wasn't a cult; I wouldn't say that. But it was a very California, very sort of leading edge. They had hot tubs, and people swam nude at night. But Michael and Dulce Murphy—she was his wife—who started it, they decided they were going to bring an end to the Cold War; getting in touch with people like them in Russia who were also interested in the same issues.

So they started some sort of Russia focused group—I've forgotten the name of it. We would be invited to California, and I think they paid our airfare to come. We came as Russian experts. There was a famous poetess called Vera [Sandomirsky] Dunham came, and some man in the State Department—whose name has also [laughs] escaped me, but I could find it easy enough. He gave it some sort of respectability. We did not have to go nude. Although I think in the end most of us went at night and soaked in the hot tubs. So we were going to bring peace to the world. The Esalen group made friends with people from Russia—and this was just when everything was changing in Russia.

Q: Right, okay. So like early '80s, or mid '80s kind of—

Warnecke: Yes. Mid '80s, exactly. I did that two or three times. But now where was that leading us?

Q: To the documentary somehow?

Warnecke: Yes. When I was out at Esalen I would meet people from other Esalen programs. There was a man named David Hoffman. He was at our program. I didn't remember him very well. I got this call from him one night in New York—it was about nine o'clock or eight o'clock—saying, "I met you at Esalen." I knew he was real. The Esalen people didn't just pick anybody out of the phone book. David said he was staying in somebody's apartment but something happened and he couldn't stay there, could he move over and stay in my apartment? He didn't have any money.

My brother had recently scolded me, “You take in everybody. You shouldn’t be doing this.” But I said, “Yes, okay, you can come, but for just one night, though.” I was trying to be very firm. “Just one night,” I remember saying. Well, he stayed three nights and finally left, going back to San Francisco. But he did say, “Next time you come to San Francisco I owe you a dinner. Call me. I want to pay you back for your generosity to me.” I went to San Francisco to see my children. I did call him to see what was going on. He invited me for dinner and at dinner he asked, “If you could do anything in the world you wanted and money was no object, what would you do?” Which is a very challenging question. I said, “Something that would combine my love of photography, my love of movies, and my ability to organize.” He said, “That’s really interesting.” The next day and he phoned and announced, “I’ve got just the job for you. They’re looking for a writer on this television program, *The First 50 Years*. Why don’t you go over and meet the director?”

The director was Bill Jersey—he has become a friend—was in Oakland. I went over and was interviewed by him and he hired me as a writer. But then I began finding all the people that were in the documentary and also began scouting locations. Bill Wilson, an old friend of mine said, “Grace, what you’re doing is producing. You ask him for a producer credit.” He said, “I’ll never speak to you again if you don’t do that,” so I did ask Bill Jersey, and I did get it. I asked him on a train, and my hands were shaking [laughter]; everything was shaking. I loved working on the documentary. Bill Jersey’s an outstanding producer, and very creative. I love things that are creative. I love art.

In that film, to bring us closer to Harriman Institute, we interviewed Marshall Shulman, who was also a good friend of my parents. I met Marshall, previous to the interview, at my parents' house. He and I took a train back to New York together and that's when he really talked about the Harriman Institute and what it was doing. We had that whole hour train ride to talk about things. Then I got to know his wife Colette [Schwarzenbach], and then I went up and spent the weekend with the Shulmans up at their house up in Connecticut. That pulled me in. There we talked about various Harriman Institute things.

Q: So this was your introduction into Columbia and Harriman at the time. I think your dad actually worked with [W.] Averell Harriman at the State Department back in—

Warnecke: No. Averell Harriman was ambassador to Russia, and my father was the DCM [deputy chief of mission], from 1944 to 1946.

Q: But just another connection that comes back through.

Warnecke: We were in Moscow during the war. I was there only from '44 to '45, because then I went back to the US to go to boarding school. But Harriman was the ambassador. Of course, I knew him. I mean as a child knows somebody: I saw him. I don't think we ever had a conversation.

Q: What do you remember about going up to Harriman at Columbia after Marshall Shulman introduced you to the institute?

Warnecke: Oh, I always loved going up there because focused on Russia, and we were interested in the same things. There were so many nice people there. Later I became very close to Cathy [Catharine Theimer] Nepomnyashchy. I saw a lot of her. She and her husband Slava and daughter Olga visited me in Norway. They came three times to Norway. She lived very close to me on the Upper West Side. So I saw them a lot—and then after Slava died I saw her and Olga. That pulled me a lot into the things. Cathy invited me to everything at Harriman; I went up there a lot.

Q: That was probably later, much later, like that late '90s or early 2000s when you met Cathy.

Warnecke: Yes, it was the late 90s, and then I knew her over the eight years she was director, from 2001 to 2009. I knew her before. Then after that Tim [Timothy M.] Frye became director. That was three or four years.

Q: Right. There was a time when Kim [Kimberly] Marten was acting director during that time and then, and then Tim Frye. But even before—back in the '80s was Marshall Shulman. Do you remember the people who were at the Harriman at that time?

Warnecke: Yes.

Q: People like Mark von Hagen and Mike—

Warnecke: Oh, Mark I know very well.

Q: You know Mark well?

Warnecke: Well, also both Mark and Cathy at different times—I'm on the Advisory Council of the Kennan Institute in Washington. They were both members of that. I got to know them because we would be going down from New York together. We would be at these meetings and sometimes travel together.

Q: Oh, wow. Grace, I don't know—

Warnecke: Well and then also I knew Elizabeth [K.] Valkenier, that wonderful woman who teaches—I think it's Harriman.

Q: Yes. You knew her well, too?

Warnecke: She was part of all the people who were active at the Harriman Institute.

Q: A part of that group. Yes, we're interviewing her next week, actually.

Warnecke: Oh, she'll be wonderful to interview. She will be just fabulous.

Q: Yes. I look forward to that.

Warnecke: She has a very rich history.

Q: It sounds like Cathy really pulled you into the things at Harriman, but even before that you were involved throughout the years, and you continue—

Warnecke: Oh, I was and I spoke at various conferences. I was always in an odd situation because I knew a lot about Russia, but I didn't have an advanced academic degree, but spent much time in the Soviet Union, and then I also lived and worked four and a half years in Ukraine.

Q: Yes, tell me about your time in Kiev.

I was doing some work at AFS [American Field Services] and a woman I worked with was a good friend of Fred [Stephen Frederick] Starr, who I knew very well because he'd been the first secretary of the Kennan Institute. In those days the director—or whatever, the head of it—was called “secretary” for some unknown reason. I always thought it was confusing. But anyway, he was the secretary of the Kennan Institute, the very first one. He's a very creative man. I don't know if you've read any of his books.

Q: I haven't, no.

Warnecke: Well, he's very interesting, and very creative, as a matter of fact. So we were all going to have lunch with Fred Starr. Fred Starr said, "Why don't we start an American Soviet youth orchestra? That will help." All these projects were directed to bringing an end to the Cold War. I was involved in many the non-governmental projects that were working in this field. If we can bring musicians from East and West together—

Before that I had been the U.S. director of something called Alerdinck Center for East-West Communications, which was an NGO bringing journalists from East and West together. We were going to end the Cold War by having journalists better understand each other. We had serious conferences and we got very high-level journalists from both sides to come. We would translate the Russian articles into English, the English articles into Russian. They would reach each other's articles, which were mostly very hostile. Meanwhile they were drinking together and having a nice time. We had these conferences in—well, we did have one in Moscow, but we usually had them in place like Paris or places that were neutral, sort of. People would be handed—the journalists actually got to be friends and then they'd read these ridiculous articles they'd all written. It was very dramatic.

Frans Luruim was founder and director of Alerdinck Center lost all of his money and The Center ended just like that [snaps]. I had to look for a new job. I'd worked for about a year as the U.S. director of The Center. We were based in Holland. It was crazy and it was kind of fun. I had a good time. I was doing well and then all of the sudden, "What am I going to do now?" It seemed a pattern—one job would end and then, "Where am I going next?" It's all detailed in my book—*Daughter of the Cold War*—written in a much more linear fashion than I'm giving it to you.

I was asked if I would head up and do a feasibility study of establishing a Soviet-American youth orchestra. So I started doing that, but at the same time was offered a job going over as senior editor for *A Day in the Life of the Soviet Union*. I felt that I had to take that job, because I knew my Russian was getting rusty and I thought two months living in Moscow would bring back my language skill. I couldn't afford to go over by myself and live two months in Moscow. Here everything paid for. I couldn't turn this down; getting to know Russians again, getting to know them on an entirely different basis.

So I got somebody to replace me, heading up the feasibility study. It's not half as exciting as going over and working on the ground. Fred Starr was furious with me and it did a lot of damage to our relationship [laughs], that I did go. We now speak to each other again, you're happy to hear, but it took about twenty years. I ended up running the youth orchestra, but I wasn't very friendly with Fred, although he stayed one of my two bosses. The other was head of the American Field Service.

I did the two months in Russia doing *A Day in the Life*, which was really, really exciting. I worked—I've never worked so hard. As usual, I was older than anybody else by far. It was a very young crowd, who liked having drinking competitions after work [laughs], which I managed to skip. Instead I would go over to Tanya Kolodzei's and look at art, and talk with her friends when they were having their wild parties. But it was fun to work on.

Meanwhile I found the—I had this incredible piece of luck. Through a friend, I was invited to a dinner party Tania Kudniavtseva's apartment. She was one of the top Russian translators from English to Russian. She did all of the John le Carré's [David John Moore Cornwell] books, as well as Norman Mailer, John Updike. I was at her house, and sitting next to me on one side was David Cornwell, who of course, is really John le Carré. On the other side was the Deputy Minister of Culture of the Soviet Union, whose name was Vladimir Kokonim. I told him all about our great idea for the youth orchestra. He was interested and invited me to come to the Ministry and discuss the proposal, which I did. And as a recruit I was able to go back to Fred Starr, and say, I found for you this contact and we now have a chance to bring the orchestra to fruition. So Fred Starr had to use me.

Q: He had to forgive you.

Warnecke: He didn't really forgive me [laughter], but he used me. The orchestra happened and it was a big success. After the season ended I never wanted to work on it again. I didn't enjoy it. I had never worked with a boss who didn't like me. That's not fun. Also most of the job was raising money. I was able to do it that once, but I mean, I never wanted to spend all my time raising money. It's very difficult, very hard. I spent night after night not sleeping, worrying about where the money was coming from. So after the tour I happily left the youth orchestra.

I had a lot of intense jobs, but they were always involved with Russia.

Q: Yes, it seems like a lot of them were creative, and a lot of them enabled you to return to Russia, to keep up your language.

Warnecke: Yes, but I had to work. I had to have something that would pay for me. I had so many different jobs. I mean literally. For example, after the youth orchestra, I was telling stories to a friend Renee. She was about the same age as me. We had both arrived a little late in the game to live in New York. We liked movies, we liked food, we liked to talk about mutual interests. She had a business and she had a business degree. I was telling her these stories about on all the airplane trips I took to Russia—when I was flying to Russia with the youth orchestra. In those days you always went on Pan Am [Pan American World Airways]. There were a lot of American businessmen going over there who wanted to do business in Russia, the years just before the Soviet Union fell apart.

It was the time of new opportunities, and everybody was trying something new; it was exciting. They would all talk to me, and so I was telling funny stories about—I even remember the story I was telling. A businessman would tell me, “Well, I met this man, and we were going to do this business, and it was really interesting. He had a mine of something in Siberia or whatever it was. But I faxed him and he didn’t fax me back.” I would explain, “Oh, there’s a shortage of fax paper right in now in Russia,” which there was. No Russians could fax and I knew that because I’d been over there. Everybody was complaining about it. So I said, “Doesn’t mean he doesn’t want to do business with you; he just doesn’t have fax paper.”

I told that story and Renee said, “We’ve got to start a business.” I answered, “But I’m no good at businesses. I don’t know how to start a business.” “Oh yes,” she said, “I know everything about businesses and what we want.” I countered, “But you need money to start a business. I don’t have any money.” Renee answered, “I’ve got a friend who will give us her office, and it’s not going to cost that much. I’ll invest a little.” So we opened SOVUS Business Consultants. We got fancy stationery, and cards, and goodness knows what. Then we went to Russia. Renee had never been to Russia. She just liked the business side. We were going to advise American businessmen, who were going to start businesses in Russia. Because I knew all about Russia, and she knew about business, and we were going to be the perfect combination.

So we got space in someone’s office. We went to Russia together and it turned out Renee didn’t like Russia. She thought Russia smelled terribly.

Also, there were those little cheap Russian-made cars called Ladas. They don’t exist anymore. They kind of spewed out a gas smell. In those days, too, there was a lot of B.O. [body odor]. I mean, deodorant had not yet reached Russia. You could get in an elevator and it smelled of people. Well, all those things bothered her. She’d never been there. Russia at that point was not the way it is now, when things look more or less westernized and nice. So it turned out she didn’t really want to do this. So I was left with a company, but no partner. She went on to teach at the New School. It just was clear it wasn’t going to work. We both realized it and we parted very amicably. I got the stationery and the cards.

Q: Was this SOVUS?

Warnecke: SOVUS Business Consultants. I sat in my apartment and nothing happened. The telephone didn't ring. It was the worst period. I thought, What am I going to do? I was just about ready to give up when the phone rang one day. It was the International Human Rights Law Group, from Washington DC. They wanted to observe the first elections in Moscow. It was right after the fall of the Soviet Union. But they wanted to do it in ten days, and they wanted visas, they wanted hotel rooms, they wanted permission to get into a polling station. They wanted all these things in ten days.

I remembered a guy that I'd met—whose phone number I had—who I'd met at one of those late night sausage and wine parties [laughs] at Tanya Kolodzei's apartment. He was from Siberia and he was all excited about the new Russia and what was going to happen, and he was kind of riding this wave. I called him up at three in the morning—my time, which is of course, early morning his time—and I said, "I need help. I want to do this, but can you help me make it possible?" He said yes, he could.

The two of us—I'm sure any money I earned we used up in the telephone, because in those days you paid for the telephone. But somehow we put it together and we did it. So I had a client. I had done something successfully. Slowly but surely the phone started ringing. I ran that business for ten years out of my apartment. I figured, it's terrible to think that I thought I needed a man's voice. I was trying to hide the fact that this was being run out of my apartment. I first hired a young guy who spoke Russian, so that he'd be answering the phone. I thought that made it sound more official.

Q: Right. Such a small operation, yes.

Warnecke: Yes. Later I hired other people. At one time we had three people working here. For ten years this apartment was an office. Of course, I went back and forth and in the course of it— then I wrote an op-ed piece which appeared in the *New York Times*. It was a big op-ed piece with a big picture. It was written after I had been at one of the big demonstrations in Moscow, and the photo is the demonstration in Moscow. So as result of that I started getting a lot of calls.

A woman named Sasha [Alexandra] Chalif called and said she was running something called The Alliance of Russian and American Women. She was the president of it, she'd founded it, and would I be a part of it. I said, "Absolutely not. I've just started my own company, and I really have to focus on it. I can't do anything else because I have to make this thing succeed." Then she said, would I just have lunch with her. We had lunch. We had a glass of wine. I still remember it. I remember at the end of it I said, "Oh well, yes, I'll join." She was taking American businesswomen over to Russia and we were putting on conferences, telling them how to—Russian women could start small businesses.

Well, we kept doing this, and I would go over with these groups with her. Sasha was charming. Her grandfather had been a Russian ballet instructor, and had a ballet school here. But she'd never been to Russia and she didn't speak Russian. But she used charm and she knew about ten Russian words, all of which she sprinkled into her conversations. She was one of those people who could take huge advantage of what she had. I said, "But I won't do anything that interferes

with SOVUS business, because SOVUS has to come first.” Sometimes when I was going to Russia on SOUVS business, I could join her. It kind of worked out.

Q: Overlapped a little bit, yes.

Warnecke: Overlapped quite a bit. Although all the SOVUS clients were men. I never had a woman client. That was another thing that made me feel I should be part of the Alliance, because I felt a little guilty that I was only working with men and in a men’s world. It took me a long time, but I began to realize that women were not getting a completely square deal.

Q: Yes. You mean Russian women.

Warnecke: American women.

Q: American women. Okay. Yes. This opportunity that the men had access to that they didn’t, is what you mean.

Warnecke: Yes. A lot of places I’d be the only woman in the room. A lot. I mean, more than you would think. That was shocking to me.

Q: It’s disappointing still.

Warnecke: In the beginning I was sort of pleased. I was proud that I was the only woman. But then I began to feel very differently. I felt like it was my job to also help other women. Part of the reason I stayed with the alliance was ideological. I wanted to help women, and help Russian women. I realized that everybody thought Soviet women were so liberated because they had more women doctors than men doctors. That was very shocking to Americans. What I learned later was, of course they had more women because doctors in the Soviet Union they were very badly paid. The men didn't want to be doctors.

Q: The truth comes out.

Warnecke: But then if you went into a hospital, the head of the hospital, of course, was a man. The head of the big divisions of the hospital were men. The women were the doctors, but they didn't realize there was a big glass ceiling there. But in America the impression was, "Oh, look at Russia." The women were engineers much more than here. They went to engineering school, they studied engineering, they worked in the factories.

Then I learned a lot when I lived in Ukraine. Anyway, but back to the alliance. The Alliance took us to a town called Volkhov Stroi, which was in the Leningrad Oblast. It's basically on the road between Moscow and Murmansk. It's a three-hour drive north from Leningrad-St. Petersburg. The Mayor, a woman, wanted to have a business incubator. She'd been to Scandinavia and seen some incubators in Finland, and in Sweden, and she wanted one in Volkhov. She was one of the very few women mayors in Russia. She was one of four at that time. Sasha said, "Well you and Ida could research incubators." Ida Schmertz had just resigned from American Express, and so

had time on her hands and had joined the Alliance of Russian and American Women. The two of us were asked to study business incubators and ultimately to write a proposal for USAID [United States Agency for International Development]. USAID had a RFP [request for proposal].

They had an RFP out on opening business incubators in Russia. They were going to fund four. A hundred and thirty-two organizations competed, and we got one of the four, for Volkhov, which was big thing. Then during those four years, I kept SOVUS going, but we were paid as project supervisors. Meanwhile we had to hire a person to actually live in Volkhov and run the incubator on a day-to-day basis. Before that we had to set it up from scratch. We had to make usable an empty warehouse. We had to do everything in a provincial, small Russian town. Volkhov was a town built after the revolution. It was the site of the first hydroelectric station in the Soviet Union.

Anyway, that was an incredible feat, and we did it. It became very successful, and people came to look at it, and they got quite a bit of publicity because it was the first time that USAID had funded something in a small town, and not in one of the major cities. We were pioneers in the sense that we were working in Russia in a town with no amenities. Let me tell you, none. There were two restaurants; they were both Mafia hangouts. The smoke was so thick you could barely see. We went in one one night and we never went back. We never ate in a restaurant again. We went in the hotel, and it was so awful [laughs] that we realized that wasn't going to work either. Had one cold water shower. It was a mess.

So we ended up renting an apartment. We had an apartment in this little town. We spent a lot of time in St. Petersburg. I found an apartment we could rent there. Because we didn't want to pay for hotels on this budget. Then we'd go to Moscow, where we did—as I remember it, we stayed in hotels there. You do understand, I went there so frequently that there are many times I can't tell you what hotel I stayed in. So that was a big success. As far as I know, until very recently anyway, the incubator is still there. We wanted residents to feel like it was their incubator. It wasn't just an American thing.

Q: They had ownership of it, too, yes. Wow.

Warnecke: It was a three-year grant, although in the end USAID extended the funding another year, so it was four years. The last two years we had a Russian running it. We got a Russian banker from St. Petersburg to come out and run the incubation. Everyone said, "He'll never take this job," but he did. A lot of my life has been spent doing things that I've been told could not be done. They said, "No Leningradite would ever live in Volkhov," but he did.

Q: Proved them wrong again.

Warnecke: Proved them wrong again. Turned out one reason, he didn't like his mother-in-law. We only learned that much later.

Q: There's motivation for moving [laughs]. That's great.

Warnecke: With all of that success one thing led to another. I was hired to run a Women's Economic Empowerment Project in Ukraine. That's how I got to Ukraine. Then I became Country Director for Wimrock International in Ukraine. Of course, the four and a half years I was in Ukraine made me much more of an expert, not just on Russia, but also on Ukraine. Of course, Mark von Hagen and I sort of cemented our friendship in a way.

Now that I know how this is working, I would do a little bit more background checking.

Q: Sounds good. That sounds good. Well, thank you for today.

[END OF SESSION]

ATC

Session: 2

Interviewee: Grace Kennan Warnecke

Location: New York, NY

Interviewer: Caitlin Bertin-Mahieux

Date: October 24, 2016

Q: This is Caitlin Bertin-Mahieux. Today is Monday, October 24, 2016. I'm with Grace Kennan-Warnecke for her second session with the Harriman Institute Oral History Project. So Grace, it's delightful to see you again. Thank you for continuing our conversation today.

Warnecke: Well, good to see you again.

Q: Thank you. We did cover a lot last time. We ended when we were talking about the Women's Economic Empowerment project in the Ukraine. So maybe can just pick back up there and you can tell me a little bit about that.

Warnecke: Well, it was a very exciting project. It was one that had already begun before I took it over, but it had only been going a very short time, so it wasn't completely formed. Basically it was a project designed to help women in Ukraine start small businesses, and to give them the rudimentary education that it takes to start a small business. The training started with simple tasks such as to how to open a bank account—because most people didn't have bank accounts and were rather suspicious of the banks. It was the kind of place where you kept your money under your mattress. We also taught legal literacy, teaching the women what the laws were about small business. There was a lot of our training that you might consider primitive.

Our goal was and we ultimately set up six women's business centers in six different oblasts. An oblast being pretty much like a state. In each of those centers we had a three-month course where the women came five days a week—might even have been six—but anyway, it was five days a week, all day to study. Our students didn't pay anything. This was paid for by the project. But it was competitive to be chosen and every class was limited to twenty-five. This project was designed to be all over Ukraine, not to be project-based in Kiev. In fact, we did not have a center in Kiev. We had a center in six other cities, which I can tell you which they are, if you're interested, but it probably doesn't matter. They were all around Ukraine. Including one in Crimea, and one in Donetsk, so we hit a lot of hot spots.

And then we also worked on—we had a small loan program for these businesses, which we ran through the existing credit unions. We had an advocacy program, which was helping women to form business associations and advocate for their rights. It was a very broad-based program. We had a program of small grants, where we gave grants to women's NGOs. It was something to involve women at all levels. We had short-term, three-day trainings in how to start your own business. Which sounds like you couldn't learn anything in three days, but they were amazing. They were much more psychological. It was really to train women to the fact that they, too, could do something. It was an empowerment project, and I saw it make big differences in people. It was amazing to watch that.

Our trainers were superb. They were all Ukrainian. A few years after I started I also became Country Director for Winrock [International], and our other big program was an anti-trafficking program. Which was sort of the other side, because women were often trafficked for financial

reasons. They let themselves be trafficked because they needed money to support their families. A lot of them didn't know what they were getting into and others kind of knew they were getting it, but they didn't realize how rough it was. I think they thought of it in a different way than it actually was. It went on. It was a three-year project.

Q: Three years, yes.

Warnecke: We were still sort of riding high, so we got a two-year extension, so it became a five-year project.

Q: Where did the funding come from?

Warnecke: USAID [United States Agency for International Development].

Q: It was USAID again.

Warnecke: Yes. So basically I had two bosses. One was Winrock and one was USAID.

Q: Okay. What was your primary role? What were you doing in all of this?

Warnecke: Oh, I was the director. I picked the cities in which we set up the centers. I picked the directors of the centers.

Q: Hired the trainers, that type of thing.

Warnecke: No, the director would hire the trainers. No, we were trying to empower people on all levels. We just didn't want to go in there as the big boss from America. That was exactly what we didn't want to do and that's why we insisted on having local people. We did bring in American experts with varying degrees of success. Most of them were very successful and very helpful. Some had less understanding of what the problems were in Ukraine, which is—that's always going to be true. You're not going to have every single person you hire to come in and give a lecture, be perfect. But by and large they were. But mostly we really relied on our Ukrainian staff—and those women that were on my staff practically all have risen and have really good jobs now. I see them; they come into the UN [United Nations] and things like that. Yes.

Q: Wow. This was in the late '90s or early 2000s that this program was?

Warnecke: It was 1999 through 2003.

Q: Okay. So you've kept in touch with some of them.

Warnecke: Oh, yes.

Q: Over a decade later. That's such a tribute, yes.

Warnecke: Yes, well, we were very close and we worked very hard together.

Q: Did you spend a lot of time in Ukraine during that period?

Warnecke: I lived there.

Q: You lived there. Oh.

Warnecke: No, I moved to Ukraine. I couldn't have done it—

Q: From afar.

Warnecke: No, you really couldn't have done it from afar. It would have been impossible. I spoke in Russian. Luckily at that time most of the people in Ukraine were speaking Russian. I think it's changed a lot now. Today many more people speak Ukrainian. I studied Ukrainian when I first got there, and then I was really afraid I'd speak what they called Surzhyk, which is a mixture of Ukrainian and Russian. I thought, That's worse than anything. Stick to one language. And so I hired a Russian literature teacher and studied once a week with her, reading [Anton P.] Chekhov and [Ivan S.] Turgenev, authors like that.

Q: Because you already had the language but this just brought it back—

Warnecke: Oh, I had the language, but not half as well as I had it four and a half years later. No, no, no. You can have a language at very many different levels.

Q: True, very true.

Warnecke: My Russian improved immensely.

Q: What was life like in Ukraine during that time? Did you like it there? Did you—?

Warnecke: I loved it.

Q: Were you in Kiev? Or where were you based?

Warnecke: I was based in Kiev. Although I did spend a lot of time traveling. I was on that train more than I can tell you. The night trains. Because there were no day trains. You always went on the night train to everywhere. You don't sleep very well on those night trains. You end up arriving, and then the hosts all standing on the platform with flowers and all excited because you've arrived and you feel like you've just been rung out. That part never ceased to be challenging, you might say. And then you try and dress yourself up in those—with the bathroom at the end of the hall that everybody else wants to use, besides you. There were no showers or anything. You've been on those trains, haven't you?

Q: Yes, I have, yes.

Warnecke: So you know what I mean?

Q: Yes.

Warnecke: You usually sleep about three hours and then you arrive just dead.

Q: Exhausted and depleted [laughs].

Warnecke: I think I have a hair fetish. I would usually make them get me a hair appointment as the first thing.

Q: That's a good way to feel refreshed after such a journey. Right?

Warnecke: It really was. Yes.

Q: This painting is of Kiev you said, right?

Warnecke: That's Kiev before the revolution.

Q: Did you come to feel at home and comfortable there? Did you like the city?

Warnecke: Oh, very. I loved the city. The city's a wonderful old city. They built the high-rises and everything on, ironically, what they call the "Left Bank." It's hardly like the Left Bank [laughter] in Paris. Instead, it's all the ugly Soviet high-rises that were built. But they're not built in the center of town, so they left the center of town alone.

Q: Old and historical, yes.

Warnecke: Old and historical. It was nice to walk around in. The Ukrainians are extremely hospitable people. It was a very exciting project. I mean, we really felt like we were breaking ground and we were.

Q: You were. Yes.

Warnecke: When I arrived, it was a time—unlike today unfortunately—it was a time when everything was developing and growing and happening. It was a very positive time in Ukraine. Now it's so different. There were such hopes that it was going to be sort of a new world.

Q: Have you been back since then?

Warnecke: Yes. I've been back as an election observer, in 2004 and 2010, I believe.

Q: I think it was during this time, in the early 2000s, that you met Cathy [Catharine Theimer Nepomnyashchy] at a conference, I believe.

Warnecke: I met Cathy—I'm going to have to look up the date, she was on the National Advisory Committee of the Kennan Institute and so was I. I've been on that as sort of the representative of the Kennan family for twelve years, I think. The first time we were there, her first time down, we agreed to fly down together or we met at—we met and I never forgot her because she had all these, we all had all her hair blowing around and a big book bag overflowing with books and papers.

[INTERRUPTION]

Warnecke: A big job of people on the advisory council is to read the grant applications that come in. We always have a great pile, and they're fat grant applications, which in those days were in paper. They now come in over the Internet. But they didn't then, so you always had papers. I remember Cathy—her hair had a way of alluding her, and so her hair in all directions. She always carried half her belongings with her in these great sacks. So she was over-laden down with Kennan Institute applications, with her makeup, with I don't know what. So struggling cheerfully along. I had taken this very seriously and read and graded them all before I went. I said, "What did you think of them?" She said, "Oh, I haven't read them yet," [laughter] and we went out for a nice dinner. I thought, oh poor thing, she'll never read them. Then the next day when we were discussing these applications at the Kennan Institute, of course, her comments

were the smartest. She was so intelligent. Somehow in the middle of the night she had read them all and come to these conclusions.

Q: Wow. That is impressive. At that time she was the director of the Harriman.

Warnecke: Yes.

Q: Yes, yes. This connection to Cathy, did it bring you back into the Harriman world a little bit?

Warnecke: Oh, it very much did. Because we realized by the end of that first trip to Washington, that we were friends, we were so interested in the same things. We both were interested in Russia, we both loved the ballet, we both loved art. I very quickly met her husband. We liked food and we liked wine and we had a lot of things together. Her husband, Slava was around and they immediately had me over and I met Olga, their daughter, who was quite small at that time.

Q: How old?

Warnecke: I think she was about—we really should look up these dates and keep them straight, but I think she was around four or five. She was in that neighborhood, I think. Although that would make it—she is sixteen now, or about to be, so that would be twelve years ago, which would be what?

Q: About age four. Yes.

Warnecke: What would twelve years ago be, 2004?

Q: Yes.

Warnecke: Yes, it's about right.

Q: That's about right. They lived around here, too, didn't they?

Warnecke: Yes, they lived up on West 80—in the low West 80s.

Q: Yes. That's fun.

Warnecke: We started going back and forth. We spent New Year's Eves together, we did all sorts of things. And then they visited me in Norway, where Cathy and Slava and Olga all came over one summer. Cathy was also lecturing at a university in Sweden and so she was able to put this together.

Q: How nice. So tell me about Cathy. What was she like?

Warnecke: Cathy was wonderful. She was so creative, so intense. She had passionate interests, very strong opinions, was never afraid to express them. An enormous knowledge of Russian literature, and Russia history, and slang, and events and what was going on in Russia. I mean,

she was just font of knowledge. She spoke Russian very often. She and Slava spoke Russian together, which I think probably did a lot for her Russian. Not that her Russia wasn't always good, but if you have somebody you can talk to every day, your Russian stays much sharper than if you only speak it once in a while.

I loved the family. I'm single, and it's very nice when you're single to have families that you become a part of. I was very much a part of their family. She loved talking about her students, and what was going on in the politics at the Harriman Institute. You know, I became a part of that. Every time she had an event up there she always invited me, so I always came. Whenever I could, which was most of the time, I came. I felt like I became part of the Harriman family, through Cathy.

Mark von Hagen was—because he was also on the Kennan Institute at one time. I think he replaced Cathy possibly; I'm not quite sure. They were not both on at the same time.

Q: Okay. What was the Harriman like, when you'd go up there to these events? What were the activities that were going on, the people that were there? What was the Harriman like under Cathy's leadership?

Warnecke: Well, we did a lot of art projects, which I don't believe they'd done before. I remember she was very keen on Georgia. We had a big evening with a Georgian theater, and a Georgian theater group, and a play. She had lecturers from all over, who would give lectures or talks. I would often go up there. They'd have those lunch lectures, where you bring your brown

bag [laughter]. I really, as often as I could, I went up to Harriman. It was a way for me to keep up with my Russian. Because I felt like I was losing it. After being so intensely involved, and then you come back here and nobody's talking about Russia.

Q: Right. Besides Cathy and Mark, were there other faculty members or people you remember being around a lot or?

Warnecke: Well, Elisabeth [Kridl] Valkenier I always knew, yes. But that was not through Cathy. I knew her somehow—

Q: Some other way?

Warnecke: Yes, I just got to know her because I was up and around and we talked, I think. Also—oh my goodness. This is embarrassing; his name has momentarily escaped me. Oh, [Richard] Wortman, Dick Wortman.

Q: Oh yes, Richard Wortman, yes.

Warnecke: Well, he was also on the Kennan Institute Advisory Council. Through the Kennan Institute I got to know these people. Before then I think I was somewhat intimidated by all these professors. But at the Kennan Institute we were all on the same level. We were all judging and discussing these things. So I got to know them more on an equal—instead of being so impressed

that oh my goodness, this is a full professor and—like a lot of people who have no advanced degrees, you have this sense of inferiority.

Q: Speaking of advanced degrees, you mentioned that you had been tempted, I think at one point, to pursue a master's degree at the Harriman Institute.

Warnecke: When I came back from Ukraine, that's what I wanted to do. And Cathy said, "Don't be ridiculous. You know more than any of the other students getting their master's and it's a waste of your time, and you should be doing other things." She encouraged me to write my book. Which is what I did.

Q: Right. So an honest opinion from Cathy [laughter].

Warnecke: Yes. She had no interest in having me get an MA. And so instead I started taking a course called Memoirs from the Middle. Did I mention this?

Q: No.

Warnecke: It was given by the 92nd Street Y [Young Men's and Young Women's Hebrew Association], which at that point had a sort of adjunct across the street on 67th Street. I took this course, Memoirs From the Middle, it was called. Through that I began to get to know some other people working on memoirs that I felt some affinity with. We then started a writing group using the same teacher we had the 92nd Street Y. Her name is Veronica Golos. She came and taught

here for a while and then she moved to New Mexico. She was a poet. She was wonderful. We still meet once a week and have met for ten years.

Q: The group?

Warnecke: Yes. Five of us. We've never increased or diminished. It's the exact same five [laughs].

Q: You persevered. That's impressive.

Warnecke: Well, we've become a family of our own.

Q: You've always been a writer, it seems, throughout your life.

Warnecke: I've really tried to write or something, but I've never done anything as ambitious as doing a book. My writing has been much shorter things. It was hard to learn to do a book.

Q: I can only imagine.

Warnecke: I think that's where being a graduate student would help you, because you are writing these long papers. But anyway, I did it a different way.

Q: Tell me more about the Kennan Institute. Just in general.

Warnecke: Well, it was started by my father. So I've always been interested in it. I've known it with varying degrees of closeness—but I've known all the directors since it started. I heard my father talk about it. I've gone to events there. And then I went on the National Advisory Council and I've been reelected—all the terms are three years, but I've been on like twelve because there isn't anybody else in my family that has a special interest in Russia.

Q: None of your siblings?

Warnecke: No. If there were, of course, we'd change.

Q: Change, yes.

Warnecke: Oh, yes. But there just hasn't been. Usually everybody on that Advisory Council speaks Russian and has some Russian knowledge.

Q: Sure. So you reviewed the grant applications through the Advisory Council.

Warnecke: Yes, and we discussed where the Kennan Institute is going and what its goals are, a lot of things like that.

Q: Yes. That's one of the things we're trying to explore with this project is the history and evolution of Area Studies and institutes, obviously, like Harriman and the Davis Center and the

Kennan Institute, and how their future has seemed somewhat uncertain at certain points in time. Especially after the collapse of the Soviet Union, they kind of had to redefine themselves and get through—

Warnecke: Well, I think this is an incredibly important time for redefinition again. I think our relations with Russia at this point are very dangerous. There are a lot of people making decisions who know very little about it. This is a time when it's extremely important that there are organizations like Harriman, Davis, Kennan, that are training—I hate to say the George Kennans of tomorrow, but—

Q: Yes, the future experts.

Warnecke: The future experts. Unfortunately you'd think that would all happen through the State Department, but it doesn't always. I think also the State Department—they send people to countries for a relatively short time. Three years is not—they usually send them there for three years. That's the norm, and then you get sent somewhere else and then God knows.

Q: That's quick, three years. I mean, it's not that long, three years.

Warnecke: Well, it's funny. When I went to the Ukraine and I signed up for three years I thought, “Oh my God, it's three years in the Ukraine.” I was very, very scared about going. And then when this project really wasn't completed, and we needed more time to bring it to the conclusion that we wanted, and everybody else wanted us to keep it going—we applied for an

extension. It takes a while to start all new organizations. It took us a year or so to get these going. I'd pick the cities. I would go and interview all the people in the city government and the oblast government because if they were not supportive of it I knew our centers wouldn't have worked. When there were places I went and people were kind of indifferent, "Oh, that's nice, she wants to start something," we didn't pick that city. We kept interviewing until we found somebody that had some feeling that this would really be important.

All that took time. We had to set up the meetings with all the mayors and find a mayor. You don't just automatically know who the mayor of Ivano-Frankivsk is. You know, things like that. We weren't through at the end of three years, but we were on a roll. We were doing well, we had a good reputation and so we applied and got a two-year extension. Then I discovered, much to my surprise, that I really learned more about Ukraine in those last two years. I thought I knew a lot, but you get in a much deeper level. That was really very interesting and I was very glad that I had the experience. In the end, because my parents were getting so old, I trained somebody to replace me and I came back after four and a half years.

I think that the State Department very much needs these experts. I mean, they're the people representing us on the ground, and they need the experts from the academic or think tank community. The academics really go the deepest. I mean, think tanks are more policy; policy oriented, but sometimes miss a little history [laughter].

Q: Yes, context. Yes, we've heard from some others on this project that there is this kind of resurgence of interest, and realizing how important it is to have a relationship with Russia again.

But some have lamented that there's been kind of a gap in that, and so we don't have all the experts we need right now and—

Warnecke: I think that's true.

Q: It takes time to train people as well.

Warnecke: No, I think that's extremely true. There was a gap. I just hope some new—well, I think some new people are coming in.

Q: Yes. I think so, too. But it's interesting to look back and see how the scholarly community and the government have kind of had a relationship over time. I think about your father and the long—even Harriman in the past, how it was much more involved in the State Department through people like Marshall Shulman and others who were advisors.

Warnecke: Well, I knew Marshall very well.

Q: Right, right. Today, perhaps the relationship between scholarship and government isn't quite as direct, I would say. What do you think? How those two co-exist.

Warnecke: I think it depends a lot on the person who runs each of these institutions. Whether they are considered important, whether they go down to Washington, whether they bring people from Washington up here or up to wherever they are. Yes, I think it is—I'm trying to think of

some of them. Tim [Timothy J.] Colton, when he was up at the Davis Institute, I think played a role. I think it's up to both sides. It's one of the things we've tried to do at NCAFP—that's one of the reasons I'm so excited and interested about being part of the National Committee on American Foreign Policy. We spent three years doing serious work on Central Asia.

One year, we gave three conferences in Washington that we'd put together, one at Brookings [Institute] and two at the Kennan Institute. We did them down there, although we are based here in New York. Because if you want to get the government people, they won't come up to New York for a whole day. Or if they do, they come up, they give their talk and they go right back down again. We wanted them around all day long, from beginning to end, so that it really was a meeting of government and academic people. To do that we felt we had to do it in Washington.

Those were very—for various reasons we haven't really gone on with our Central Asian work, but at the time they were very important in bringing people together—so I was excited to be a part of that. The National Committee does a lot of things like that, the National Committee on American Foreign Policy. That's what I'm working on now and I'm chairman of the board, but I was acting president.

Q: Okay. When did you join the National Committee?

Warnecke: I joined it because, when I was in Ukraine, oddly enough, I became a trustee. So I've been a trustee ever since. The National Committee does not have term limits, so you just stay on the board as long as you want.

Q: That's good continuity.

Warnecke: There's a lot of continuity in the National Committee, although hopefully it's changing a little bit now. Half of what the National Committee does is what's called Track II and Track I and a half diplomacy. You know what that is?

Q: Yes.

Warnecke: So we've always been close to the government. Every year we take a—we're particularly well known for the work we've done—the Cross-Straits Policy, China and Taiwan. Also we've done work with all those countries, Taiwan, China, Korea and Japan. We send a group every year that goes over and has all these meetings. I led the group last fall, a year ago.

It was extremely exciting because I had no idea how highly respected the National Committee was. Or the power that a small niche organization like that can have. I mean, when we arrived in Taipei, not only was I met at the airport by the foreign office, who whisked me through everything, but then I had a meeting—I had a delegation of four experts; I mean high level people that was my delegation that I was leading, all of whom knew a hell of a lot more than I did. Two of them spoke Chinese. Two spoke Japanese. One spoke Korean. They were very, linguistically proficient. In Taipei we met for an hour with the president, then we met with the foreign minister, then we met with the woman who's now president, Tsai Ing-wen, then we met with her staff, then we met—I mean, it was unbelievable how we were treated.

The State Department uses us to give certain messages to the Chinese that they don't want to give themselves. So you play a very interesting role. I had no idea because I mean there are other people that do Track II diplomacy; we're not the only ones. But we are experienced, and we've been doing this for a long time. Obviously you can't talk about it too much. But it serves a very important function. Because there are certain things that the official representatives, the State Department, the Department of Defense, may not want to say to those countries, because if they say it officially it becomes an official plank of American foreign policy. But they may want to get some ideas across that are not totally official, and then they use organizations like the National Committee. The National Committees had very good people working on this. I've been very proud to be a part of it.

Q: Sounds like an exciting organization to be a part of, yes.

Warnecke: Yes, it is. I was thrilled to have been able to play a role in it. And so do. Yes, to some extent. We just recently had a meeting here where we brought Chinese and Taiwan people together. But we don't advertise it. It's not in the papers; it's completely—

Q: Right. Those types of examples that you just gave kind of remind me of the Track II diplomacy that Harriman used to be a part of, once upon a time, in its golden age. I don't know, but I assume that that has changed over the decades and that these institutes, like the Kennan Institute and Harriman—I'm just curious how you see their role about impacting policy today, how they do that.

Warnecke: I think that the crucial step may be—I went up at Harriman—[laughs] what is her name? I'm suddenly drawing a blank. Well, you know, the number two really at Harriman, what is it?

Q: Kim [Kimberly] Marten?

Warnecke: Yes, Kim Marten put together a really nice—an interesting program on the Arctic. I don't know if you knew about it.

Q: Yes, yes.

Warnecke: I went to that and it was really interesting. It was a good program. I think maybe where sometimes the academic institutions—and also the National Committee, too, with our Central Asian work—we really do get people from government, and academia, and the press together. But then what's the next step? I'm not sure there was a next step on the Arctic, to be honest. I mean, I don't know.

Q: Yes, I don't either.

Warnecke: Put it this way. If there was a next step, I didn't know about it. Put it that way. With our work with Central Asia, we got sort of distracted and started doing other things and Central Asia. We were still interested, but it was a time we also had some financial problems and we'd—

it's expensive to put on those kind of big conferences. So it becomes a little ad hoc and then the people change in the State Department, then there's a new administration. Like right now everybody's waiting to see what's next.

Q: What's going to happen.

Warnecke: What's going to happen. And nothing's happening.

Q: Yes, so the follow through and the implementation is kind of the more difficult task, I guess.

Warnecke: But I think they're in an unusual position that they can put on those kind of conferences. When the government does it, it's so official. It's very different. There's much more freedom when you can do it through Harriman or Kennan or Davis.

Q: It's true.

Warnecke: There must be—I think Stanford's [University] doing a certain amount. And Hoover Institute, although they're more conservative, but they're still working on these issues.

Q: Yes. Do you see much collaboration across the institutes?

Warnecke: Oh yes. I think so.

Q: Okay. That's good.

Warnecke: I think there could be more. Why not? I'm very big on collaboration [laughter]. I don't think they collaborate as much as they should. But there is certainly some cross-fertilization.

Q: Yes. How did you become a part of the National Advisory Committee for Harriman?

Warnecke: Cathy asked me.

Q: Okay [laughs].

Warnecke: It was very easy.

Q: What did the committee—?

Warnecke: There had been something like it before, and I think it had faded away or died, or anyway it had become inactive. I don't think it was ever closed or anything. I think it just kind of stopped functioning. I don't know anything about it. I don't know who was—I mean, I really know very little about it, except that it existed.

Q: Okay. But then she kind of reenergized it.

Warnecke: And she wanted a new, more active organization and she asked me if I would be chairman of it.

Q: Okay. What was the purpose of this new advisory council?

Warnecke: I think a little bit, the purpose of it is to bring the Harriman Institute back into being a leadership role, to bring the top business people who maybe work in Russia to bring—some people have had government backgrounds—to both stimulate and help the students, but more important, to get the Harriman Institute out and more connected with the big world, the non-academic world. So that the Harriman Institute and the world of people interested in Russia, both on an academic and business and cultural. She particularly was interested in cultural ties. I had been the founding director of the American Soviet Youth Orchestra. I collected Ukrainian art, which is all over the place in my house.

Q: It's beautiful.

Warnecke: I was very interested in cultural things. We both passionately loved ballet, although we disagreed [laughter]. I went last night to see the new [Alexei Osipovich] Ratmansky ballet.

Q: What did you think?

Warnecke: I thought it was wonderful. Have you seen it?

Q: No.

Warnecke: It's really good. Anyway, so I think she wanted the stimulus. She chose me because I am connected with many different worlds and she knew that. And we worked well together, I mean you know, that was also—you like to pick somebody you already know.

Q: For sure. So did it work? Did this council come together? How did it actually function and who—?

Warnecke: Well, she picked the council. I didn't pick the council. I think it worked. There were some disagreements.

Q: Healthy, right.

Warnecke: Healthy. And we worked to get a new professor of Russia history, which has happened, I believe. We had a few interesting lectures that I attended. I think there was—some of our members came, our business people and foundation people working in Russia. And now there's a new president, Gail Buyske.

Q: I think so, yes.

Warnecke: I think she's going to be very exciting. She's going to bring in a new level.

[Alexander A.] Cooley and I both thought—I mean I very much agreed with him that we should

have rotating chairmen of this. It shouldn't just get stuck with one person. So I'm looking forward to the next three years.

Q: It's nice to see that this committee continues to be active after Cathy, too, that it's still a big part—

Warnecke: Yes, I think Cathy would be very pleased. I think there's some thought that we would do fundraising for the Harriman Institute. I think that part is less clear, partly because the Harriman Institute, in some ways, is well funded already.

Q: With its endowment.

Warnecke: With its endowment. But that will straighten itself out as time goes on. I think there was a little, maybe, confusion about the role of the Advisory Council.

Q: Yes. How big is the committee, and how often does it meet, and things like that?

Warnecke: Well, it has one big meeting a year. And then it has events. We're invited to things up at the Harriman. We had a small meeting of the committee, a breakfast meeting a few months ago, but that wasn't the whole committee. It was, I think, partly to set up term-limits and get a new president in. It was more working [laughs] members of the committee.

Q: Over your time with this committee, what kind of improvements have you seen in Harriman?
How has the institute in general—?

Warnecke: I think we're working on having a little more—and that happened at that breakfast meeting—a little more association with the students, the graduate students at Harriman. So that they know that they have people around that they can also talk to. They're not just there.

Q: Yes, that's creating the network and the support. People have talked about that as well.

Warnecke: And I think it is important to have a network. I mean, the graduate students, once they finish, they're going to look for jobs.

Q: Never easy to be on the job market.

Warnecke: Never easy and it's helpful if there is a network you can occasionally dip into.

Q: Right. Does the committee have much involvement, speaking of networks, with Harriman alumni? Or does that—?

Warnecke: It has some. Yes. I wouldn't say that was the biggest part of it—but it definitely has some.

Q: That's great. So it brings all these pieces together.

Warnecke: Well, there was a very moving memorial for Cathy Nepomnyashchy, where all her former students came. I don't know if you knew about that.

Q: No, tell me about that.

Warnecke: Well, it was absolutely lovely because all the students that she had helped with their PhDs—and they're now teaching all over the place—and they all came together. It was an all-day thing and each one would give a little—take forty-five minutes to talk, not only about what they were doing, but connected to Cathy and how they felt about Cathy. She loved champagne and she loved wine, but champagne was her big thing. At the end of it they brought in, for everybody, champagne and there was a moment of silence. It was just very moving. It was very—I felt that was almost more moving than anything. But they kept that very small. There weren't a lot of guests outside of the Harriman. I was invited because I was a good friend and I'd been a eulogist at her memorial service. I think things like that are important.

Q: The personal connections and the [crosstalk] like that, yes.

Warnecke: Yes. It gave her students a chance to sort of closure, and say goodbye. She was very popular with her students.

Q: Everybody says that.

Warnecke: Very popular. She was disorganized, she was late, she was not Miss Perfection.

Q: Yes, but people have deep affection for her.

Warnecke: But I think it's more important to give what Cathy gave, than to be Miss Perfectly Organized, which she was not. She was always running late.

Her apartment was shambles. She collected so much art, so many books, so many things, you could barely move through the house. It was overstuffed. But I wouldn't say she didn't care. She did care. She would apologize and stuff, but basically she was always in the now. She lived in the moment. I think that made her not thinking about things like we should clean up the living room [laughter].

Q: Do you still see her husband and daughter?

Warnecke: No, her husband died.

Q: Oh, I didn't know that.

Warnecke: He died—was it three years? Three years before she died.

Q: Oh, [unclear] wow.

Warnecke: Her daughter is in sort of a boarding school in Oregon. So I don't see her at all.

Cathy's brother lives in California, so he's now her guardian.

Q: After Cathy, you said you know Kim Marten. You must know—

Warnecke: I know Kim but not well.

Q: Yes, Tim [Timothy M.] Frye as well as—

Warnecke: Oh, I know Tim very well, because we worked—well, we worked together. I was head of the National Advisory Council the three years that Tim was—

Q: A director there, yes.

Warnecke: Yes. So Tim and I collaborated.

Q: What did you think of his vision for Harriman at the time?

Warnecke: I think Tim sometimes thought of it more as a caretaker role. He had a small child and a niece. He's a very smart, bright, able person. But I think he had a lot on his plate, plus a small boy that he was devoted to. I mean I could be totally wrong, but my feeling is he was not so much looking for new visions or new paths for Harriman as much as keeping Harriman going.

He was a very able person. I'm not putting him down in any way. He was fun to work with and all that.

Q: You mentioned Alex Cooley, too. So you worked with Alex and—

Warnecke: Well, Alex is there right now.

Q: Yes he is [laughs].

Warnecke: Alex was very instrumental and helpful in our Central Asia project. That's where I got to know Alex. Nothing to do with Harriman. It was to do with Central Asia.

Q: That makes sense. [Laughs] Yes.

Warnecke: Alex has been very helpful with the National Committee. I enjoy very much working with him, and I think he has new ideas, and he's trying to make some changes, which is always interesting.

Q: [Laughs] It is interesting. What do you think the future holds for these institutes like Harriman and Kennan?

Warnecke: Well, they've all been going a long time and I think they will keep going a long time.

Q: That's good.

Warnecke: I think that a lot depends on the people that lead these organizations. It's not so much the power or the day-to-day stuff, but they're the ones that have the ability to have some vision and to lead the organization in—they're all very efficient, respected academic institutions and they're going to continue to be so. But whether to what extent they're leaders, to what extent they play the kind of role you were talking about when you talked about the golden years, or the role that maybe, let's say, Marshall played, Marshall Shulman—I think that depends a lot on the person that's running the organization. It's always very important. I think all these organizations are going to keep going, particularly now. They will not only keep going, they will, I think again, become more important.

Q: I was just curious if your father ever had any opinions on the Kennan Institute or kind of—

Warnecke: Well, he started the Kennan Institute. Of course, it was his mission.

Q: Well, what they were, what he thought of it, especially after the collapse of the Soviet Union, and what he hoped for them.

Warnecke: I think he thought it was very important that we have one organization, *a*, that was based on Washington so that it could have more direct contact with the government, and *b*, that it was not an academic institution. It was academic in that it's the study of Russia, but it was not part of a college or a university. He felt that gave it a certain independence. He was very excited

about starting the Kennan Institute. The first directors were called the secretaries of the Kennan Institute. The first one was Fred [S. Frederick] Starr, and these are all people of considerable stature. I'm not going to list them all, because I'll forget one. But Fred is a definite scholar of Russia, and Central Asia, and that.

I mean they're all going to continue to exist for quite a long time, I think. But the future for each one of them is going to be a little bit—depending on what they do. There's also going to be new ones cropping up. When they started the Davis Center and the Harriman Institute, I think the role of Brookings, CSIS [Center for Strategic and International Studies] and all the think tanks were much more minor than they—they have greatly increased in importance. That changes the dynamics of things a little bit.

Q: Sure. That's a good point. So what's next for you, Grace? What are your—?

Warnecke: I just want to get my book published.

Q: I want to read it [laughter]. How's the book process going?

Warnecke: It's sitting at the University Press at the moment and I'm waiting to hear.

Q: All right. So it's all written and done.

Warnecke: Oh, it's completely written and everything. Yes. It's called *Daughter of the Cold War*.

Q: Very apt title, yes. It's a memoir about your life. Your life and your work and your family.

Warnecke: It's not so much about my family. My children really didn't want me to write about them. And so it's really more about my work, what I've done. What I've also been privileged to see. I really have had an amazing opportunity to be right—not in the center of history, but very close to the center.

Q: Close. I mean, you said you saw Hitler as a child. From the beginning, yes.

Warnecke: I just think it's important to write that up. Also as a woman who grew up and went to college in the '50s—I really felt it was important as a woman to—that women haven't had the same opportunities. Particularly women of my age. I really wanted to be a little bit inspiring to women, that you can do whatever you want to do.

Q: I think you are, so thank you.

Warnecke: No, I mean I think it's very important. I do think women get put down a lot. Sometimes not obviously, but in some sort of understated way.

Q: More subtle than it used to be, maybe, not as overt.

Warnecke: Oh, yes. Now people are much more careful, but still.

Q: It exists, yes.

Warnecke: Still it exists. My message is that you don't necessarily always need a traditional path to get to where you're going. I think that's one of my lessons, if there is a lesson. But what you do need is to be interested in the world around you.

Q: And open to all the opportunities along the way. Not only were you there, but you took advantage of being there, which is really interesting.

Warnecke: Yes.

Q: Do you have any more travel plans?

Warnecke: Well, I've just come back from Georgia [laughter].

Q: You've just come back.

Warnecke: I mean, in the last twelve months, or thirteen months—after all I've been to Taiwan, China, Korea and Japan. I've been to France, I've been to Russia, I've been to Georgia twice

[laughter]. Before that I was in the Antarctic, I went to the Antarctic—yes. So yes, I do love to travel [laughs].

Q: You do. Have you been back to Russia at all recently?

Warnecke: In May.

Q: In May, okay. What did you think on your most recent visit there? What was the atmosphere like?

Warnecke: Well, it's very interesting. First of all, Moscow is the cleanest I've ever seen it. They've just scrubbed Moscow. Moscow looks great. It's very dolled up with little flower arbors here and there, and nice little out-the-door cafés with people in cunning little uniforms. None of that existed before, so it was all new to me. I was very lucky. I met with the ambassador a few times. I was doing some work for the National Committee on American Foreign Policy and met with a Russian think tank. But I also met with friends, and some friends who were happy and think they're—I mean, American friends and Russian friends. Some of which, you know, they just do what they do and they shrug their shoulders at the government. They're not wildly anti or wildly pro. They're just, "Oh, it's there." And then a few people who are intensely unhappy, and want to emigrate, and want to leave, and feel strongly against the regime.

I met a great variety of people and it's not all one—it's an interesting time, but a kind of scary time. But when you go to Moscow you don't completely feel it, because Moscow's still Moscow.

I went to the ballet, I did a lot of things that I—I went to the Benois [de la Danse awards] dance competition, which gives this incredible night at the Bolshoi Ballet, with dancers from all over the world. It's an international competition, and these were the winners who did this performance that I went to see.

Q: Extraordinary.

Warnecke: Yes, it was wonderful. It was packed. I mean, you couldn't get a ticket for—happily the artistic director is Nina Kudriavtseva-Loory whom I knew from many years ago in Moscow. And so I was lucky enough to get a ticket. Then I went out to country; I went out to see the new Dacha area, very near where [Vladimir Vladimirovich] Putin and Medvedev both have their dachas. Unbelievable what they've done out there. I mean, it's a whole new world. Comes over, it looks like Southampton, but instead of hedges they have walls. Seriously. It used to be nice little Dacha country with modest little dachas. No longer. I mean, the money is just extraordinary. The fancy cars. In Moscow you can't even move, the traffic's so bad, because everybody has those [laughs] fancy new cars. It's a different Moscow, but I was happy to see it again, to be back.

Q: You talk about it being a scary time. Do you mean for Russia? For the world? For the US?

What do you mean by that?

Warnecke: Well, we're not getting along well with the Russians.

Q: No [laughs].

Warnecke: I think that's always frightening. We're two very powerful countries that really have to get along. Right now we've had this very confusing presidential election—which isn't over yet, so I don't want to talk too much about it because I'll feel much better after election day when we know what's happening—has not helped.

Q: No. It makes everybody anxious, I think.

Warnecke: Yes. The fact of Syria, the fact of what's going on in Syria and the US involvement, the fact of what's going on in Turkey, speaking of tonight [laughter].

Q: Exactly. Preview of your speech.

Warnecke: Yes. It's a very unsettling time.

Q: I wonder, does it ever feel settled? I feel like there are so many unsettling times.

Warnecke: Yes, but there were times that were much more hopeful.

Q: Yes, that's what's missing.

Warnecke: After the Soviet Union fell apart, although I didn't like the fact that we went around crowing and saying, "We caused the fall of the Soviet Union," with which I totally disagree. I think the Soviet Union imploded. It was not us that took it down.

Q: Internal factors.

Warnecke: It was internal factors. It annoyed me, and I think we, the U.S. government, behaved in a rather condescending way to the Russians after they became just Russia. And then we immediately started [laughs] competing with them in Central Asia and things—a lot of things with it. But it was a great time of hope, and people were building, and people were doing new things. I don't feel there's much hopefulness right now.

Q: It's true. But hopefully we'll get there again.

Warnecke: Well, let's hope—let's hope a lot of things [laughter]. Because this—I don't want to talk about today's political situation because this is going to be [laughs] presumably read by people years from now, and it's not going to matter what we think two weeks before the presidential election.

Q: It's just a snapshot; it's true. A moment in time. But we'll see. Grace, thank you so much for your stories. Is there anything else that you'd like to talk about that we haven't covered yet?

Warnecke: I don't think so. I mean, there's thousands of other things one could talk about, but I hope this has been useful to you.

Q: Extremely. This has covered everything I've hoped for.

Warnecke: Good. I think that's great.

Q: All right. Well, thank you again.

[END OF INTERVIEW]