



EDWARD M. KENNEDY ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

Interviewer's Briefing Materials **Sam Beer Interview, 02/17/2005**

Robert A. Martin, Research Director

Miller Center Documents¹

- Sam Beer Timeline.

Secondary Source Materials

- Sam Beer bio, <http://www.harvard.edu>.
- Kenneth P. O'Donnell and Dave F. Powers, *"Johnny, We Hardly Knew Ye": Memories of John Fitzgerald Kennedy* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1972), pp. 103-117.
- Steven M. Gillon, *Politics and Vision: The ADA and American Liberalism, 1947-1985* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987), pp. 131-146.
- Interview with Samuel H. Beer, John F. Kennedy Library Oral History Program, John F. Kennedy Presidential Library, 11/7/2002, pp. 26-31, 37-40.
- Betty Taymor, *Running Against the Wind: The Struggle of Women in Massachusetts Politics* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 2000), pp. 69-77.
- Burton Hersh, *The Education of Edward Kennedy: A Family Biography* (New York: William Morrow, 1972), pp. 157-183, 207-209.

¹ These are original documents created by Miller Center researchers for the Edward M. Kennedy Oral History Project. Please acknowledge credit for any use of these materials.

SAMUEL H. BEER TIMELINE

Prepared by Ethan Sribnick

Miller Center, University of Virginia, 02/04/2005

1911

July Samuel Hutchinson Beer is born on the 28th in Bucyrus, Ohio.

1932 Beer graduates with an A.B. from the University of Michigan.

1935 Beer marries Roberta Frances Reed.

At Oxford University, Beer completes his studies as a Rhodes Scholar.

Beer works on the staff of the Democratic National Committee in Washington, D.C. through 1936. (Contemporary Authors Online, 06/12/2002)

1936 *The New York Post* hires Beer as a reporter. (Contemporary Authors Online, 06/12/2002)

1937 Beer becomes a writer and researcher at *Fortune*. (Contemporary Authors Online, 06/12/2002)

1938 Beginning his academic career, Beer becomes an instructor at Harvard University. (Contemporary Authors Online, 06/12/2002)

1942 During World War II, Beer serves in the U.S. Army where he reaches the rank of captain and earns a bronze star. (Contemporary Authors Online, 06/12/2002)

1943 Beer receives his Ph.D. from Harvard University. (Contemporary Authors Online, 06/12/2002)

1945 While still in the Army, Beer works on a study of the attitudes of the German people under the Nazis. He conducts many interviews in Germany immediately following the war and publishes several reports on this topic. (Finding Aid, Samuel H. Beer papers, John F. Kennedy library.)

1946 Beer is hired as an assistant professor at Harvard. (Contemporary Authors Online, 06/12/2002)

1949 Beer publishes *The City of Reason*, a work of political philosophy. (Mulford Q. Sibley, *The American Political Science Review* 43: pp. 1060-1061)

1950 At Harvard, Edward Moore Kennedy (EMK) takes Social Science 2 taught by Beer. The class is “a broad overview of interrelated problems of sociology,

history, and government.” (James MacGregor Burns, *Edward Kennedy and the Camelot Legacy*, New York: Norton, 1976, p. 43)

- 1953** Beer is appointed a full professor at Harvard. (Contemporary Authors Online, 06/12/2002)
- 1954** Beer serves as chair of Harvard’s Department of Government. He remains in this position until 1958. (Contemporary Authors Online, 06/12/2002)
- 1955** Beer becomes active in the liberal organization Americans for Democratic Action (ADA), serving as the chair of the Massachusetts chapter from 1955 to 1957. (Contemporary Authors Online, 06/12/2002)
- 1956** Beer publishes *Treasury Control: The Coordination of Financial and Economic Policy in Great Britain*, a study of the British Treasury. (Herman Finer, *The American Political Science Review* 51: pp. 522-524.)
- In a struggle over the control of the Massachusetts Democratic Party between Congressman John McCormack and Senator John F. Kennedy (JFK), Beer and the Massachusetts ADA support JFK. (John F. Kennedy Library Oral History Program, Interview with Joseph L. Rauh, Jr., pp. 17-18)
- 1959** Beer becomes national chair of the ADA. (Contemporary Authors Online, 06/12/2002)
- 1960**
- July* Beer and ADA Vice Chairman Joseph L. Rauh, Jr. push for a liberal platform at the Democratic National Convention in Los Angeles. (*ADA World*, September 1960)
- August* While many members of the ADA are ambivalent about supporting JFK for president and hostile to Lyndon Baines Johnson (LBJ) as the Vice-Presidential nominee, Beer, the historian Arthur Schlesinger, and attorney Joseph Rauh push for a strong endorsement of the Democratic candidate. After debate on the issue, the ADA issues a “subdued” letter of support for the Democratic ticket. In a letter to JFK, Beer expresses surprise at the extent of the opposition to Kennedy among liberals. (Steven M. Gillon, *Politics and Vision: The ADA and American Liberalism, 1947-1985*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1987, p. 135.)
- 1961**
- February* Beer and other leaders of the ADA meet with JFK to discuss economic policy and civil rights. JFK seems receptive to the organization’s views on the economy, but questions their civil rights strategy. Still, Beer attempts to steer the ADA toward close cooperation with the Kennedy administration. (Gillon, pp. 140-141)

- May* Beer ends his terms as national chairman of the ADA and is succeeded by Brandeis University Professor John Roche, who is more openly critical of the Kennedy administration. (Gillon, p. 143)
- 1962** After EMK announces his candidacy for the U.S. Senate, many liberal academics refuse to support him favoring the more experienced Edward McCormack. Notably, Harvard Law Professor Mark A. De Wolfe Howe writes a letter calling EMK a “bumptious newcomer.” However, Beer, Harvard Law Professor Charles Haar, and Robert Wood of M.I.T. publicly support EMK. In return, EMK promises them reform of the Massachusetts Democratic Party. (Adam Clymer, *Edward M. Kennedy: A Biography*, New York: William Morrow, 1999, p. 39)
- Beer assists EMK in developing his positions and preparing for the Democratic primary debates. (Burton Hersh, *The Education of Edward Kennedy: A Family Biography*, New York: William Morrow, 1972, pp. 169-170)
- 1963** Beer and economist John Kenneth Gailbraith sponsor a meeting between Boston-area professors and the recently elected EMK to smooth over tensions that had emerged during the election. EMK’s questions and comments impress the group of academics. (Burns, p. 247)
- EMK follows Beer’s and other reformers advice in selecting Gerard Doherty as chairman of the Massachusetts Democratic Party. (Hersh, pp. 194-195; Clymer, p. 88)
- 1964** While EMK recovers from the injuries he sustained in a plane crash, he asks Beer to organize a series of seminars taught by Harvard and M.I.T. faculty in his hospital room. (Burns, p. 122)
- 1965** Beer writes *British Politics in a Collectivist Age* an influential study of parties and interest groups in British politics. (Leon D. Epstein, *The Journal of Politics* 28, 1966: pp. 433-434.)
- 1966** *British Politics in a Collectivist Age* receives the Woodrow Wilson Foundation Award. (Contemporary Authors Online, 06/12/2002)
- 1967** EMK creates a Massachusetts Democratic Advisory Council made up of progressives from the academic and commercial community to lead state party reform. Beer is asked to serve on this council. (Hersh, pp. 194-195; *The Washington Post*, 01/07/1967)
- 1968**
- March* Beer joins a group of Cambridge academics supporting RFK’s campaign for the presidency. (*The New York Times*, 03/25/1968)

August Vice President and presidential hopeful Hubert Humphrey meets with the Massachusetts delegation to the Democratic National Convention. Beer, a member of the delegation, questions what Humphrey intends to do to end the war in Vietnam. Beer's challenge to the candidate reportedly demonstrates the tensions between Humphrey and his former liberal allies. (*The New York Times*, 08/19/1968)

1969

February Beer serves on a commission chaired by Senator George McGovern (D-SD) to "democratize the delegate-selection process" for the Democratic National Convention. (*The Washington Post*, 02/09/1969)

1982 *Britain Against Itself: The Political Contradictions of Collectivism*, Beer's study of the effects of what he terms the "New Populism" of the 1960s on British politics, is published. (B. Guy Peters, *The Journal of Politics* 46: pp. 580-585.)

1993 Beer's *To Make a Nation: The Rediscovery of American Federalism* is published. (Daniel Elazar, *The American Political Science Review* 88: pp. 987-988.)