

MARION MacDONALD WRIGHT

MYERS: This is part of the Oral History of Psychology in Canada. I am talking with Marion MacDonald Wright in the Department of Psychology at the University of Manitoba on April 15th, 1970. One of the reasons why I have asked Marion to add to our collection of reminiscences is that I received, last week, a letter from Bill Gaddes in reply to one I had written him asking him to make some arrangements for me to meet some of the senior psychologists on the West Coast, in which he said, "Be sure that you get a tape from Marion Wright, who was the first clinical psychologist to practice in Vancouver, or perhaps on the West Coast." So I have taken advantage of this chance, Marion, to add to our recollections.

Well, I don't think you would be pleased to be referred to as a veteran?

W: No, I don't mind.

M: However, let's start at the beginning. Where were you born?

W: I was born in New Westminster, British Columbia.

M: In what kind of a family? What did your father do?

W: He had a small shoe store where the mill workers bought their logging boots.

M: I am right about the "MacDonald" am I?

W: Yes.

M: When I first met you your name was MacDonald. This was a modest shop?

W: Yes, and he died when we were in school. Then we sold the store.

M: Was it a modest home economically?

W: Yes. But mind you, it was a fairly small town then, so there weren't any very poor or very well-off people in the town. It was in the

Depression so everyone went to the same schools. It was a good place for children to grow up in. It wasn't a very exciting place for adults.

M: Was it hit hard by the Depression?

W: There were a lot of lumber mills there. All I can remember is that they still needed their boots and stuff for logging but there was very little cash. But I wasn't aware that we were hard-up at all.

M: You would be a bit young to be aware of that unless you were very hard-up. Your mother was what kind of a person--educationally?

W: Both my parents were from the Outer Hebrides. They were Gaelic speaking. She had always been very ambitious about schooling. Of course, for a lot of those people their only hope was to emigrate. They either became ministers or teachers. She had gone to the Royal Academy in Inverness on a scholarship as a young girl and then they all emigrated. She was very keen on education and she had taken nursing training. She was overseas with the Americans in the First War and she was a psychiatric nurse.

M: Really? How interesting!

W: But she always hated New Westminster. She wanted to go back to the States.

M: Brothers and sisters?

W: I had one younger brother who got his Ph.D. in animal science at Oregon. He went to New Zealand and then he was a professor at McGill at MacDonald. Then he died very suddenly leaving young kids. My sister lives in California. Her husband is a teacher. I think he is a Headmaster at some private school, and she teaches school too.

M: And you went to school in New Westminster?

W: Yes.

M: Do you remember what you were good at and what you weren't good at? Or were you good at everything?

W: Yes, I was good at everything. I liked school. It was the place that I was happiest in those years.

M: And you were the eldest of these children?

W: Yes. When I finished high school my mother and some relatives thought I should be able to earn a living. She was very insistent that I go to normal school. I didn't want to go but I went. It was the only year of my life that was a complete and utter waste of time. I hated every minute of that normal school. In the summer I got a job and then I went to university the next year and carried on.

M: I was just waiting to hear you say that about normal school because so many of the people I have talked with were teachers who went to normal school. I have yet, in any part--in the Maritimes, in Ontario, the West, everywhere I go--I hear nothing but unqualified condemnation of what they got or didn't get at normal school. Did you get psychology there?

W: We had a course but I don't remember much about it. We spent endless hours making the things that we were supposed to be teaching kids to make--we stuffed and sewed four animals, and did little science projects, and so on. I think the psychology course was called "child development." It was taught by a woman. I remember my total impression was that there was all this time spent on all kinds of projects and almost no time spent on the child. It may not have been child development. I don't remember what we had in it.

M: Apparently quite frequently, in early times--before your time--psychology was something that was taught for a couple of months by the

Principal of the school. It turned out to be the anatomy of the brain, or something of that sort.

W: Yes I think we had the sensory zones.

M: Had you encountered psychology before that in your reading so that it would have any meaning for you?

W: No. I knew my mother had preferred working with psychiatric patients rather than, say, surgical ones, but I really wanted to be a journalist. I wanted to work on a newspaper.

M: Had you written in school?

W: For the school paper, yes. Articles. Journalism, as such, really appealed to me.

M: Now you finished normal school and instead of going out into the wilderness to teach you went to university. How did you manage that economically?

W: In the meantime we had moved to Vancouver to a house on the campus. In those days it was quite sparsely settled and those houses were going for taxes. That was a very nice house and it was just a two-minute walk to campus. I had a summer job working in the Schoolboard Office typing. Fees weren't very high in those days.

M: And it was handy and you could live at home.

W: Yes. The other was really kind of an insurance, I think. People felt, in those days, that a girl had to have something she could fall back on.

M: But you couldn't get a permanent certificate until you taught for a while?

W: No, that's right, I never did.

M: So it wasn't made a very effective insurance. Anyway, you went in as a freshman. What year was this at U.B.C.?

W: In those days you could take your first year of university, or Grade XIII. It was much less expensive to take the Grade XIII so I had done that in high school. Most of my friends went to university for first year but there were a few of us who didn't. You see, it meant going to Vancouver. So I went into university in second year arts. Then I went on an exchange scholarship to McGill in my third year and I was back in my fourth year so I had a broken time.

M: What year did you enter U.B.C.?

W: I graduated with my B.A. in 1943 so this would be 1940.

M: You arrived as a sophomore, and what did you take?

W: French, English, biology, psychology and philosophy.

M: Was there any particular reason for that selection?

W: You had to take French and you had to take biology, and you had to take English. Philosophy and psychology were the options. I think a lot of kids like to take something that they haven't taken in high school. The other reason was that they had a new Head of the Department and he became a real conversational topic for a while in Vancouver. People were talking about this fellow because he was so good. That was John Allen Irving.

M: Now tell me about your impression of him.

W: I just thought he was the most brilliant lecturer and most wonderful professor I could imagine. He lectures were awfully good. They really were outstanding. I don't think I have ever encountered a formal lecturer that was as good. I don't know how much of this was due to my enthusiasm

and inexperience, except that his classes were packed with kids from all kinds of other faculties--not taking his course--commerce kids and other students used to come and sit in on his lectures. But they were formal lectures. You didn't breathe during them, and if you borrowed a pencil you were out! He was very very strict and hard to get along with. We didn't have any discussion in the class.

M: I just heard a few minutes ago that you were assigned to a seat and you sat in that seat!

W: Oh, you did! People thought he had magical powers because he had a little book--I remember a friend of mine leaned over to borrow a pen or something from someone and Irving pointed his finger and said, "That man will stay after class. You are creating a disturbance and furthermore you were creating a disturbance on November 14th and November 2nd." He would look at his book, and I am sure he didn't have it there, but we were terrified of him. He was very stimulating and excellently prepared. Every lecture was a unit.

M: Were you there or were you away during the period when he became so unpopular with the students that they persecuted him out of U.B.C.?

W: I was his assistant after I graduated. It was the year following this when I had left the campus and gone to work at the DVA army hospital that these handbills appeared and they put false ads in the paper about his department. The student council set up a committee to try and investigate this and I was one of the people they interviewed to see if I would have any idea who his enemies would be, but I don't think they ever found out who did it.

M: No. It was pretty sad. I know when Jack arrived back in Toronto he was a pretty sad--really broken--person for a while.

W: This was too bad because I am sure it was just a few. Maybe one or two.

M: They certainly were very effective in the campaign they waged. My goodness that was sadistic.

W: Yes, it was.

M: Who else did you have in that first year that impressed you?

W: Not anybody else.

M: And on your third year you went on an exchange scholarship to McGill?

W: Yes, I just happened to notice that there was such a thing. I had always wanted to go to France which was impossible but this paid the fees so I applied and went for that year and lived in residence.

M: Did you take psychology there?

W: Yes, I did. This was war time and there weren't very many at McGill. We had an old fellow named Tait and a man named Kellogg and Dr. Webster.

M: What was your impression of them?

W: I don't think they had much impact. Dr. Kellogg was quite elderly. We had the psychology of aesthetics from him. He used to go into harmony on the blackboard and play his violin and I didn't really ever understand very much about it! But he was a nice man. But ^{Dr. Tait} / was very impatient and didn't like students much.

M: He was an Army type.

W: Yes, he bustled in and gave his class and then bustled out. We had industrial psychology from Dr. Webster. He was a bit more competent, twentieth-century man.

M: What else did you take at McGill?

W: I took international law, just for the heck of it, from Percy Corbett from Geneva. And I took a drama course in English in which we studied plays. We even had a lab where we did things for the theatre.

M: I suppose neither at U.B.C. nor McGill would you find a course in journalism you could take? It just wasn't offered.

W: No, there just wasn't one anywhere. It didn't really occur to me to take a course in it. That summer, instead of going home in April, I got a job on the Gazette as a reporter. They had never hired women before but their reporters were getting called up. That was a very interesting summer. I just loved it.

M: I am sure. Did it cure your ambition to be a journalist?

W: No, when I went back--I took the train home in the fall, and I wrote the definitive article on how to solve the French-Canadian problem! I took it into the News Herald in Vancouver. Pierre Berton was on the City Desk then. I had known him very well at university. The managing Editor was old Ellmore Philpott and he decided to run this down in the left-hand side of the editorial page. I don't remember one solution to the French-Canadian problem but as a consequence I became campus correspondent and I managed to do quite well on space. I worked there from about 4:00 p.m. on until about midnight every day in my last year, and did a lot of general reporting.

M: When you came back to U.B.C. what did you take--in psychology especially?

W: Professor Irving thought that I should take what they called a "double honours" course in philosophy and psychology. I think partly because

there weren't enough people around any more to make an honours course in either. So my fourth year was quite largely philosophy. I had had experimental psychology and I took a sort of anthropological social psychology course from Professor Irving. And we had a seminar on George H. Mead's theories for a year. And I had ethics and logic and the history of philosophy from a Russian named Maslow, with a heavy Russian accent. There had been a fellow who taught the experimental called Dr. Morsh.

M: That's right, Joe Morsh.

W: But he had gone to the Air Force and then he went to Hawaii.

M: You didn't take Fleury's course?

W: No, I never encountered him.

M: And journalism was looming large because you were really a working journalist now.

W: Well, I thought I was anyway. So then I did very well in my exams and got the prize and got a scholarship with an average of over 90. So I went to work on the News Herald, but Professor Irving was very keen that I come back and be his assistant and use the scholarship. So in the fall I did go back although I was very ambivalent about it. I did my Master's courses.

M: Did you continue anything in the journalism?

W: No, because I was assisting Professor Irving. Between the courses and his work I didn't have time. I think I got \$60 a month.

M: What courses were there available to you for a Master's program?

W: There was a visiting American who came--a Dr. Ralph Gundlach. I think I took a course from him in the summer and then I had a directed

reading course from Dr. Irving. This was Ralph Linton and the Study of Man. We read about 20 books and reviewed them. I had some more philosophy from Dr. Maslow. Then I used to mark all Dr. Irving's papers and give classes.

M: Did you do a thesis for your Master's?

W: Yes. Oh, now when I graduated Professor Irving thought I should go to Brown University and get a Ph.D. in philosophy. I was tired of having no money and being at school. During the War it was difficult to arrange--whatever financial arrangements that were available weren't very good. So I lined up a job on the Film Board. They were looking for someone. In the meantime the psychiatrist who was in charge of the DVA Hospital, which was also the active service hospital in the area because there was no military hospital, phoned Professor Irving and asked him to recommend a psychologist. This fellow had been at Hartford Retreat and wanted a psychologist. So Professor Irving suggested me. I went for the interview though I was not trained for any kind of clinical work, but nobody was. The salary was a little lower than the Film Board but they felt I should be patriotic. The salary was \$150 a month which was very good I thought. So that's when I went to work there and I stayed almost five years. This was Shaughnessy Hospital. They put us in huts so we had all the active service personnel. There were a lot coming from Hong Kong and the Orient.

M: Who was the psychiatrist with whom you had the interview?

W: Gordon Hutton.

M: This is the first mention, mind you, of clinical interest even.

W: Yes. I was interested in it but it wasn't taught. We had a course in abnormal psychology but that was about it. Joe Morsh taught that.

M: Tell us about Morsh. What sort of teacher was he?

W: I didn't like him at all. Actually it is rather intriguing when you think of student power. There were a tremendous number of complaints about him. I had two good friends, one was his assistant and the other was a very good student, both of whom had so much trouble. He used to sort of threaten the girls if he didn't feel that they were "co-operative". He used to let them know that they wouldn't pass. Even when I was Irving's assistant and girls came to me ^{to complain} /I would say, "Go to the Head of the Department or go to the Dean." But nothing was ever done. This is unthinkable in these days. We figured we had to put up with these things. It never occurred to us that there was any way out. You just had to cope the best you could with these people.

M: He was a pretty rough customer. I didn't know him well but I encountered him in TRB. He always struck me as being a rough type.

W: He wasn't anything like the calibre of Irving.

M: Now you are at the Hospital and you have got to learn some clinical psychology I guess, eh?

W: That's right. One interesting thing was that in the summer after I graduated, there had been an anthropologist from New York--I can't remember her name--who had been studying the Sikhs. There was quite a large Sikh population in Vancouver. She had written to Professor Irving and sent the Rorschach ink blots. This was the first I had ever heard of them. She asked if some student would administer this to the ^{Sikh} children. Irving asked me if I would do this so I did in the summer. But meantime the Sikhs had moved all over the Fraser Valley. There were 35 of these kids and finding them meant a separate trip for every one. I just administered the tests.

She had also sent Klopfer and Kelly so I learned the administration. When I went to Shaughnessy Dr. Hutton was familiar with the Rorschach because they had started to use it by then. I think this was probably the first set of cards around in Canada. He felt I should use it.

M: I am going to correct you there. I used Hermann Rorschach's text in diagnostic testing as my exercise for German for my Ph.D. requirement in 1932! We sure had him at Toronto, I'll tell you that.

W: That's very interesting. I told him that I didn't have any training but he said, "That's fine, you work away." I used to send something sometimes to Klopfer. Another man who was very helpful was Don Ross, the psychiatrist, in Montreal.

M: He was a great Rorschach enthusiast.

W: Yes. I had never met him but sometimes I used to write him and ask about things. I knew Klopfer and Kelly off by heart, every word of it, because I had nothing else. Then when we had other psychologists and we had some students I used to teach them. Then I went down and took some workshops down in Claremont, California.

M: Did Klopfer hold workshops out there himself?

W: Yes, he used to hold two on the East Coast and two on the West Coast.

M: What about more conventional things such as Wexler and things like that? Did you just take those for granted?

W: I can't remember whether I had had a course in testing or not.

M: At any rate you were already familiar with the existence of that kind of literature, and techniques.

W: Yes. There were just a few of us there. There was just the psychiatrist, and the social worker and me. Over the five years this expanded enormously during the rest of the War. So we all did a variety of things. It wasn't quite so role defined. I used to do intake interviews. Then the group therapy material started to come out. For three years I always had at least two groups going. I did all the group therapy. I found that very interesting.

M: Any psychodrama mixed in with that?

W: Yes. I remember one time having a holiday and I went to Marino's in New York.

M: Wasn't he a funny character? A real Hungarian temperament.

W: I didn't see him that time but I have since.

M: I used to say that you needed an umbrella if you sat in the front row!

W: So really my clinical background came from on-the-job experience and from the psychiatry. We had some very good people on the staff as they came out of the Army or were in the Army and were attached.

M: Did Hegler Gundrie arrive about that time?

W: Yes, and Ted Margetts who was Head of their Psychiatry Department recently. He was interested in all kinds of odd things and we used to try lots of things.

M: Now, in what sense do you have to admit that you were probably the first clinical psychologist to practice on the West Coast? Is that true? You were the only one there.

W: Yes, but there was a fellow who used to be at Essondale by the name of Watson. I never knew him but he certainly had some kind of testing going on. (End of tape)

W: Marge Munroe had been working at the Child Guidance Clinic for a number of years.

M: Marge was working virtually without any background training, I think, at that stage. But you must have felt from where you were sitting, as far as you knew, that you were really pioneering in that area.

W: Yes. In a larger setting and with a different kind of person it really wouldn't have worked out at all. But it was a small unit, relatively, and the psychiatric people were certainly interested in teaching and I was interested in learning

M: About this time you must have begun to hear of and encounter a wider area of psychologists. You must have begun to hear about Bill Line.

W: Yes. In DVA psychology at that time there were no upper echelons. at Deer Lodge and Shaughnessy They appointed individuals/but there was no head. We had no communication with each other and there were no policies. They were sort of autonomous units. So I guess they decided to appoint some senior consultants and I think that was when Dr. Line became involved, and then Mary Ainsworth and Magda Arnold. That was a tremendous shot in the arm.

M: Did they come out and visit?

W: Yes. The first time Bill Line had a workshop in Toronto and I went to that. I met the others and we had good meetings and lots of exchange of ideas. Then it was later that Magda Arnold and Mary were appointed. Magda came out and spent a week every year. We had been using the TAT and reading Murray's stuff. Magda Arnold was very interested in the TAT and the way she handled it, and then Mary Ainsworth came along with Henry's method. They were both very bright gals.

M: Who else was in your position in DVA, that you met at Toronto?

W: The two Quarringtons who were working. I don't know if it was just for the summer, but they were at that first meeting. They had just been married. And who is the one at Sunnybrook?

M: Helen Porter. She was Porter then, she is something else now.

W: Yes. There was a girl at Deer Lodge later called Mary MacDonald. She eventually took social work and has been with some analytic clinic in Chicago. George Dufresne and Herb Dörken were there.

M: You carried on with this kind of in-house training and stimulation from consultants and colleagues--your psychiatric colleagues particularly--from when?

W: From the fall of 1944 until 1948 when I went to Toronto. Excuse me, what started me on this was that you were asking about my thesis. Since I had become much more involved in psychology than philosophy I decided to switch and instead of doing my thesis on Walter Lippman I was going to do it in psychology. In the meantime--of course Professor Irving had left--I had a friend working with me, Gordon Bryenton's wife, and we designed a projective test to facilitate M responses. We felt we had so many simple fellows who never gave any M responses. These were 40 cards with line drawings singly and in pairs, and we asked them what they were. We had thought we would give them to clinical groups but this wasn't possible. We ended up that each of us gave that test of 40 cards to 250 people, individually, very carefully matched for less than Grade VIII education, more than high school education, age, sex. It took us almost two years to collect because I went to all the Union meetings and I would get two or three. It was really a matter of norms, you see. She did it

with children. She did 4-year olds and 7-year olds and compared them, boys and girls. Mine were adults.

M: Who was supervising this? John Irving had gone.

W: I am not really sure. Joe Morsh had returned for a year or so before he went to Hawaii. There wasn't really anybody that knew very much about it, or was very interested in it. So we just went ahead and did it. Pardon me, I shouldn't say that. I got help on the statistics, a great deal of it, from Ed Belyea, who had arrived on the scene.

M: So there was Sperrin Chant and Ed Belyea. There was Reva Potashin and Sampson?

W: No they were both in Toronto. I think there was just Sperrin Chant and Ed Belyea.

M: Ed helped you on the statistics, not Sperrin?

W: Yes. Sperrin Chant was made Dean very soon after arriving and he really wasn't very much around the Department.

M: Was Ed the whole thing for a while there?

W: He really was, in a way.

M: Signori must have been there at the same time.

W: I guess he was there then but I didn't know him.

M: In the final stages of getting your thesis examined and approved Ed was your supervisor?

W: The whole group must have done it. I never met with them orally. But they gave me a very high mark. And Marg^{Bryenton} got hers too.

So I was going to Chicago. I had arranged to go to the University of Chicago. I could get a Fellowship but there was some difficulty about

whether I could earn enough in addition. When I wrote to Dr. Line and told him I was going to do this, in typical Line fashion he sent me a telegram saying, "Please don't go to Chicago. Consider us in Toronto. We can make a consultantship available." So I went to Toronto in the fall of 1948.

M: And nobody knows what would have happened if you had gone to Chicago!

W: That's right! I met my fate.

M: What was your impression of the Department of Psychology at Toronto? What surprised you?

W: I remember going to Professor Bott's office right away from the plane. I just thought he was somebody out of a book. He was so nice. I guess I still idealized a professor in those days, although very few of them acted the way a professor is supposed to. He certainly did. I remember him talking about, "You know you should have time to read and to think about things and to develop, if you are to be a scholar." This was so nice. I have heard since welcomes to graduate students in different places and they all seem concerned with where the office key is and what do you do about your parking--you don't get this flavour that Bott--I really thought that he was awfully nice. I didn't have a great deal to do with him but I took his course.

M: Did you? What did you think of it?

W: I just enjoyed it, you know. That's the kind of thing I liked. I didn't worry too much about whether it was relevant or logical. I just really enjoyed the way he treated it. You know, that bit about the apple!

M: Everybody remembers that! And in an earlier phase everybody remembers the piece of plasticene he used to use. He shifted, you know.

He changed. The apple--the environment becoming organism--is a standard for your period, but for my own period in the early 30s it is the little piece of plasticene that represented the atom which was unbreakable and indivisible.

W: I had a Fellowship with Dr. Blatz and I met him that day too. I was very familiar with all the stuff that he had written. We used to have mothers' groups and I had taught a developmental course and I had found his writing very simple and clear and acceptable. I was very familiar with his ideas on security. He sort of scared me, but he was a very entertaining, witty fellow. I took his abnormal course. It is funny because I remember it mainly as an attack on Freudian theory. That was what most of it was about.

M: Whatever he taught it was Blatz. I guess the closest he ever came to anything really of the content of abnormal was his criticism or his rather wild views of Freudian theory, compared to his own. Who else did you meet?

W: I had that seminar with Dr. Line.

M: On the history of psychology?

W: Systems. I am not sure what it was called.

M: It would be Bill Line whatever the name of the course was.

W: I had never really heard anything much about Skinner before that. I remember we spent some time on the students' prepared material on Skinner and that was very enjoyable. There were only about four of us.

M: What did you think of Bill Line as a teacher?

W: It's hard to recall what he taught. He was so appreciative of everyone as an individual. This was what you got from him. What you were doing was "grand."

M: And you were "grand."

W: Yes. I think maybe because I was older I never experienced the disillusionment with Dr. Line that so many of the kids did who had expectations of people that were very difficult to fulfill.

M: You include expectations of himself?

W: Yes, I would think. So I never had as intense feelings about him and having him measure up. I could be a little more objective. So I never had any disappointments. He never let me down in any way.

M: That probably means that you didn't fall for his charm--I don't mean in the sexual sense--I mean that so many of his students, male and female, just really were swept up in this warm, accepting--oh gee, he was a great ego-builder.

W: He was. I picked this up at that first DVA workshop where so many of these kids were former students who obviously adored him. I felt he was just darling but some years later when I went back I think it was more of a peer relationship almost, instead of
But he certainly was a nice man.

M: Who else did you meet? The girls had left--Mary Salter and Magda Arnold weren't there, or were they?

W: Yes they were because Morgan was Mary Salter's assistant. I assisted her the next year in the projective course, and took it over when she left.

M: Did you help write up that enormous Rorschach notes thing that we sold for years afterwards?

W: Yes, I think it had both our names on it--the first one. I don't think it was so enormous then. Mary had come to the Rorschach later than her interest in the TAT. She was really just starting to add projectives to this personality appraisal.

Then we had psychiatry from Dr. Stokes.

M: Did you have it the same year that Morgan had it?

W: Yes.

M: Give your retrospective impressions of Hall and Stokes.

W: I suppose everybody thinks of him--the jokes were that we expected him to say "Mr. Christian" at any moment because he looked so much like Charles Laughton. He was a scarey person. He used to take us in order and ask questions. I think one thing that impressed me was that he was a very good observer of people and his manner was so drastically different with a patient than with the class. **With patients,** he was very kindly and very perceptive and seemed to be empathic, although it would be hard to imagine that he would be with his background.

M: With the students it would be all a serious business.

W: Oh yes and ^{he} just didn't suffer fools gladly. If you said anything stupid you had this tremendous hostility. But I certainly enjoyed those seminars. He went a little further than most people do in dealing with psychiatric problems.

M: He went a lot further in the literature than most psychiatrists do.

W: Yes, he was quite a learned man I guess.

M: You were a Ph.D. candidate at Toronto on a supposedly two-year program?

W: Yes. It was a year after that Morgan wrote the comprehensives. I think I was considered to have fulfilled the course requirements. I had meant to continue but I got pregnant right after we were married. At that time they really weren't taking part-time students. There was an enormous influx of veterans and they really had to cut down somehow. So there was no way that I could do part time. Also we really needed the money that I was getting working for Blatz. So this is what I did. I kept on with the Fellowship working at the Institute until the baby was born. I sort of supervised his M.A. students that were working on those security scales. I didn't register as a student that fall.

M: Give a sketch of your impression of the Institute in 1949.

W: I had a little office there from the time I went to Toronto. It was mostly once a week that we met with the students. I didn't have very much to do with the Institute except with some of the staff at these meetings. I remember thinking, in reading about it and reading about Blatz and his writings--you assume this is one great experimental exciting place--my impression by the time I got there was that by now they were convinced that whatever they did was right and why bother investigating something else because "We know what we are doing." It was a more settled phase instead of a pioneering phase.

M: Of course, that was Blatz all over. He didn't need an experiment and he didn't use statistics or anything. He knew the answer before you started and if you didn't come up with that answer there was something wrong, that's all.

W: Yes! I felt that Blatz was at the top and the staff were all just obedient, and had to be.

M: What did you think of Mary Salter's role in that?

W: Well, you see, at that time I wasn't very interested in questionnaires. I felt that a questionnaire was a superficial way of getting at things. I was intrigued with how--with all her perceptiveness and tremendous interest in the projectives, how Mary was so enthusiastic about these security questionnaires and worked so hard with the students and with the items. She had a tremendous capacity for work. She certainly engineered the whole thing, really, for Dr. Blatz.

M: She has retained, you know, her allegiance to that theoretical position. This surprises me because she has been around since to Hopkins and all the rest of it, and she still feels very strongly that Blatz' contribution never was effective but that what he said--he never got into print in the right form--but that his position she feels she understands better than anything he ever wrote about it. She is ashamed about some of the things that came out. She wonders why somebody didn't suppress the last book because it was a disgrace. It was terrible according to her. She feels that what he said and what she learned through him has persisted through and her theoretical position is essentially what she now thinks was what he was talking about. Which is interesting.

W: Yes, it is.

M: I think others like Mary Northway and Dorie Millichamp probably just accepted it because it was Blatz. But not Mary Salter. She is not that kind of person.

W: No, she questioned everything.

M: What was your impression of the harem kind of situation? Did it strike you as consisting mainly of girls?

W: Yes, it did. At these meetings I felt that there was a hierarchy of the Chief and then a Second-in-Command and some of the rest of us. It was the Chief and then the sort of lackeys! Nick Laidlaw was one of the students who was part of this group and he used to make the odd witty remark, but we were pretty careful with Dr. Blatz. I also was struck-- he had his "good enemies" and he liked people that argued with him but he was another person who was very kindly toward patients and clients and would go to endless trouble.

M: Oh yes. He was, for years, our staff therapist. To see him deal with a member of staff or to hear from them how he had dealt with them in contrast to a recent colloquium in which he had torn them to pieces!

W: In attacking people.

M: But that all dropped away and he was just a very concerned, involved human being.

W: I only got this impression from either students I knew or people who had seen him.

M: Of course he was very helpful to Mary in her more troublesome phases in the same way, and I think this is perhaps partly why she has such a strong personal involvement in it.

After that, and your family coming along, because of Morgan you have been in touch with psychology and psychologists ever since, directly or indirectly--what do you think of the developments ^{since} that period--through the 50s and 60s? That's 20 years ago and a lot of psychological water has

gone under the bridge. Apart from the problems, difficulties, discussions, arguments and so on, what do you think is going to happen now? Where is psychology headed now?

W: I don't know whether I can make a prediction. It is one thing to say what you would like to see and it is another thing to guess what will happen.

M: Would you like to see what George Miller calls "giving psychology back to the people?"

W: I am not sure what George Miller means by "giving it back to the people." I certainly would like, for instance, to see a behavioural science of some kind, preferably psychology, introduced in high school curricula. I feel quite strongly about this. I thought in my next community project-- I usually have one--I might take on seeing what could be done. I know what is done in other places.

M: The place you should go to see what can happen to psychology at that level is France, I guess.

W: Is that right?

M: They have psychology all through high school. It is a good excuse to go to France, eh?

W: Morgan is thinking about a sabbatical and he doesn't want to go to a foreign country, but that would at least be an excuse for a little tour around. I think that there are enough things that are known about behaviour and that are useful to people that it could be, certainly, given to the people. Off and on I have taught the odd class here in introductory. One was interesting

where I had the student nurses at the Children's. I asked them what they felt they had got out of this course that was of any use in their life or in their work. What was interesting was that the learning theory really intrigued them. They could see this working with children on the wards-- this idea that there is some consequence to how you handle the kids' whining as requests and so on. It doesn't mean it is an "either or" thing. It is just like another hidden weapon for them to use effectively. I think the applications of some of the learning stuff would be very, very useful to people in all kinds of walks of life.

M: Yes. It seems sometimes that this has been the band-wagon of the 60s in scientific psychology--learning. But until recently with behaviour modification and so on, so much of it has stayed at a highly theoretical level that seems to be extremely remote from practical affairs.

W: Not very relevant.

M: This is what you feel--that surely we are now in a position to bring some of this progress, if that is what it is, or some of this understanding to bear on ordinary human problems.

W: Yes, and I think this is the appeal of a lot of Harlow's material too. It seems to be not only theoretically interesting but it has applications.

M: Of course, it is more obviously relevant--this early development and early environmental factors influencing it. That could be the next band-wagon except that it is already another band-wagon that is certainly boiling. It is a little puzzling that there is so much excitement going on in physiological psychology, which perhaps now is at the stage that learning theory was back in our young days.

W: I can see, in a way, why because technology has changed the physiological so much, hasn't it? There was nothing that even Pavlov really could do about **neurophysiology**.

M: The gadgets that can tell us so much more and do so much more.

W: I really think sometimes, although I have no mathematical or physics talent, that if I were a young fellow starting out that I would find neurophysiology and all this electrochemical development with regard to the brain very interesting. You feel that there is so much there.

M: But think how different that is than it was when I or even you started psychology.

W: Yes, even the EEG came along afterward.

M: That was a great breakthrough. I must tell you an anecdote about the first EEG we got at the Psychiatric Hospital. It was installed in 1939. I was working with a team including Goodwin, who later became the EEG expert. We had this room with copper screening all around it. The very first time we took an EEG record on a patient who was a Lieutenant, it came out Morse Code. It was the wierdest looking thing and somebody who knew Morse Code said, "That's Morse Code." And it was. It was a message being sent out from a Naval Station tower! That was my introduction to the EEG!

W: Isn't that priceless! A really clever device!