

Leonard Eron

- Born 4/22/1920 in Newark, NJ; Deceased 5/23/2007
- Spouse - Madeline Eron
- B.S. (1941) Columbia University, M.A. (1946) Columbia University, Ph.D. (1949) University of Wisconsin

Major Employment:

- University of Illinois at Chicago – 1977-1990, Professor of Psychology and Research Professor of the Social Sciences
- University of Illinois at Chicago – 1990, Emeritus Professor of the Social Sciences

Major Areas of Work:

- Television/Violence



SRCD ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW

Leonard D. Eron

Interviewed by John Hagen
At SRCD, Ann Arbor, Michigan
September 27, 2000

Hagen: It's September 27th, the year 2000, and this is John Hagen. We're just beginning an interview with Len Eron for SRCD's Oral Histories. Len, why don't you begin talking a little bit about anything you'd like to say about your family background, places you went to school, where you were born, where you grew up and so forth, just to get us started?

Eron: Well, before we start I ought to say something about the fact that I was very surprised when I got the invitation to be interviewed by SRCD for this Oral History, because over the years I've never really identified with SRCD. Only until recently did I consider myself a developmental psychologist.

Hagen: Well, it's never too late.

Eron: Well, I'm eighty. As I say, I was surprised.

Hagen: What is your main identity in psychology?

Eron: Well, it had been for many years as a clinical psychologist, even though I haven't seen a patient since -- 1962 was the last time. I've been mostly academic and clinical psychology, research in clinical and developmental too. I've belonged to SRCD since 1960, I believe.

Hagen: Well, that's a good sign.

Eron: And I've gotten in Child Development, in the journal since then, but I must tell you I stopped my membership a couple years ago.

Hagen: Well, you'd be eligible for Emeritus membership, so we should get you re-enrolled that way.

Eron: I should, but I belonged to too many things, and here I am in my later years, and I've cancelled some of them. I still belong to APA and APS and –

Hagen: I do too.

Eron: -- Ortho, I guess is all.

Hagen: I still enjoy APA in spite of people's complaints about it. In fact, you and I had a drink together there.

Eron: I like APA, and APS too. Well, let see. I was born in Newark, New Jersey in 1920, although I actually grew up in a town called Passaic, New Jersey, and my family actually lived there. My parents were married in 1906 and they settled in Passaic, but then for a brief period we lived in Newark because my father had a business there, a clothing store of some kind. And as I recall, and from the stories I've heard, he was kind of duped out of some money by his partner and then they closed in 1921 or '22, and my folks went back to Passaic.

I was the youngest of four children, four boys actually. The oldest of us passed away at age seven, before I was born, but I always felt that I knew him because my mother talked about him every day. I don't remember a day that she didn't mention him, and he was quite a kid, as I understand. He was seven years old and he was in the fifth grade. In those days they kept pushing kids ahead, and he was always a model to look up to.

Hagen: So he was the oldest.

Eron: He was the oldest.

Hagen: And you were the youngest.

Eron: And I was the youngest. And I had two brothers who were quite successful, they were graphic designers and industrial designers, primarily in package design, and they designed most of the packages you know and all kinds of products. They retired about ten years ago. My older brother passed away, but my next older one just before me, he's four years older and he's going with great guns.

Hagen: Does he live in the East?

Eron: He lives in the East, yes. They live in the Jersey/Princeton area. And then my father, after the decline after he lost his business, became a traveling salesman and actually was only home on weekends. During the week he was out traveling around New Jersey, New York, Connecticut, and selling, I think it was pants; trousers that he sold. And then when I was about seven he gave that up and he and my mother opened another business, a dress shop in Passaic, which was quite successful until 1929 and 1930, the crash, and they lost that and my father became an insurance salesman and he did that. And then about the time I graduated from high school, he was transferred from Passaic to New York City, and that was a good move for me, I think, because then I was able to register at City College because I was a New York resident and was able to go tuition free. When I graduated from high school, Passaic High School I graduated from, I had applied for a number of colleges and had scholarships actually to Bucknell and Lehigh University in Pennsylvania, but I couldn't -- even with the scholarship -- I couldn't go, we couldn't afford it, so it was very fortunate that my father moved to New York.

In high school I was active in a number of things, not in sports actually, but I was on a debating team, the dramatics club, the school newspaper, which incidentally until I joined the paper was called the Parnassian, because the school was on top of a hill. And while I was on the paper they changed it to Hill Top Star. Parnassian was too obscure a name I suppose. I didn't know it then. But I had took -- they had a number of --

Hagen: Was it a good high school?

Eron: Yes. Very good.

Hagen: Very good academically.

Eron: Yes. Very good academically, and it had a number of programs. You either -- if you were in college preparatory you were in a classical curriculum, then they had a general curriculum, a commercial curriculum and so

on. I was in the classical, so I had four years of Latin and three years of math and four years of English, and three years of history and all that, so I had – it was a very good high school.

I graduated from there in June of '37, but I didn't enter college until February of '38 because of that change in residence. And during that time, while I was...

Hagen: So you moved into the City?

Eron: We moved into New York City after I graduated, right in Manhattan.

Hagen: It must have been quite a change.

Eron: It was quite a change. Actually, I lived only about four or five blocks from the City College campus. We lived on Riverside Drive and 137th Street I guess it was. This was an important time for me, I think, between the time I left high school and entered college in February I worked as an usher at the New York Paramount. I don't know if you know that, it's right on Time Square, and at that time it was quite a place. And this was in the height of the Depression, 1937. And when I applied for that job I was one of hundreds, and the line formed -- went all the way down to 43rd Street and then turned around and went down to 8th Avenue.

Hagen: That large!

Eron: And then the manager of the theater just went by and picked people out, and fortunately he picked me. And we had to take a week of training, for which we weren't paid. Things really have changed since then. And then they eliminated some people during the training. And the training was kind of funny. We had close order drill.

Hagen: Really!

Eron: So I was really prepared for the Army, but we had to do all this drill. We wore these uniforms, and we had the ten iron clad rules of conduct, the first of which was no flirtatious conduct. And another one of the ten iron clad rules was that you had to have two nickels at all times in case people wanted change for a telephone. Telephones were just a nickel in those days.

Hagen: I remember when they were a dime, but not a nickel.

Eron: So we had to have two of them. After that I started at City College. I also had a job at Bloomingdale's Department Store, which was not a chain at that time; it was just a great big store on Lexington and 59th Street. A big square block building, which was very nice. And I worked there Thursday nights and Saturdays, then I was on the -- of course, it was open in those days -- the stores were open on Thursday nights because that was the traditional time that domestic help was off on Thursdays, so they kept open so those people could shop. And I was on what was called the 'flying squad,' because we were assigned every day, and every week actually, to different places depending where they needed somebody. So I sold flowers, I sold haberdashery and all kinds of things. I wrapped packages, worked in the cash room and so on, and that was a pretty good experience.

At City College I say I entered in February of '42 --

Hagen: No, you said '38.

Eron: Oh, I'm sorry. That's right, February of '38, and graduated in June of 41. And I graduated in three and a half years, because at City College there was a system where for every four credits you had an A you got an extra credit.

Hagen: Oh, how nice.

Eron: And for every eight credits in B you got an extra credit, for every four credits in D you would subtract --

Hagen: Oh, really?

Eron: I was Phi Beta Kappa, so I got out in three and a half years. That was a time – when I started there, incidentally, it might be of interest, there was no department of psychology. It was the department of philosophy and psychology, which was the situation of many.

Hagen: I was going to say, I think Michigan's department didn't begin until the mid-forties. It was right after the War. Yes.

Eron: This started, it actually started about 1938 or '39, and Gardener Murphy was brought in from Columbia as the Chairman of the Psychology Department.

Hagen: So what was your major?

Eron: My major was psychology. You could still major in psychology, although I was in the philosophy department.

Hagen: I see. Okay.

Eron: And then it was an independent department while I was still there. It became an independent department, and there was no child psychology. Child psychology wasn't taught in that department, and that's been my experience with my graduate work too. I never went to a school or worked where there was a child psychology course given in the psychology department. Actually, Max Hut, do you know that name?

Hagen: Oh, sure.

Eron: Who was here.

Hagen: Yes.

Eron: He only had an MA degree as I recall, and he taught on kind of an adjunct basis, and he had a course on child psychology that he taught.

Hagen: And that was at City?

Eron: City College. And then he was tossed out. I don't know if you know this, --

Hagen: No.

Eron: -- but there was a Rapp-Coudert Committee, and they were communist hunters. They accused him of being a communist along with a lot of other faculty people. Then I believe during the War -- he was a psychologist in the service, and later I think was Chief Psychologist in the Army, and then I think also in the V.A. Then he came to Michigan, I guess, and got his degree after he started here I believe. Isn't that so?

Hagen: I think so. I think he worked with Fritz Reidel on some things too, both in child psychology. The University had a summer camp for disturbed children --

Eron: I see.

Hagen: -- and they both worked there for many summers.

Eron: Yes. So he went back to child psychology, I guess.

Hagen: I'm sure Bill McKeachie knew him well.

Eron: Well, in 1941 I started graduate school at Columbia, and of course -- and this was in the Department of Psychology, which was part of the faculty of pure science of all things, and so they had no child psychology because

all child psychology was taught at Teachers College. And Teachers College and the Department of Psychology were quite distant at that time.

Hagen: And, of course, Robert Woodworth was one of the real pioneers in child psychology.

Eron: Was he?

Hagen: He did a wonderful job on getting SRCD going, through the National Research Council.

Eron: Is that right?

Hagen: Yes.

Eron: See, I didn't know that, because all I know about him is he was a – I had him as a teacher, actually, he was retired, but he still taught some course. I've forgotten what. And he was – his famous text in experimental psychology was a standard for many, many years, but I didn't know that about him. And actually the professors I had were Woodworth, Carl Warden -- I don't know if you know – ?

Hagen: Yes, sure.

Eron: Maze man, Albert Poffenberger, and then they didn't -- as I said they didn't have any clinical psychology, but they did have a course in psychological testing that you could take, and for that I had an instructor by the name of Marion Outhit –

Hagen: That I don't know.

Eron: I don't know, she's never -- but she taught that. And you could take psychological testing either with her -- and her practicum was in the New York public schools, or with Glady Talman who was in The Neurological Institute, or with Elaine Kinder who was at Rockland State Hospital. So you had three choices, and there were about three or four students in each section. So I did it with Outhit, learned the Stanford-Binet very well –

Hagen: I did the same thing at Stanford many years later.

Eron: Back then they were probably using a different version of the Stanford, this was –

Hagen: Yes. It would have been the second. It was the revised version. But I was actually learning to give Binet's the day that John Kennedy was killed. I was in the nursery school and they came and told us that, but they said, "We don't want the children upset, so don't react in any way." So we had to go through the day until the parents came to get the children, and pretending as though we didn't know something was going on.

Eron: Yes. Everyone has his memories of where he was. I was walking at the University of Iowa to a class, abnormal psychology or something, heard that and then we dismissed the class.

Hagen: It was a shocker.

Eron: Well anyway, I was at Columbia for one semester. In February of '42 I was drafted in the Army, and was there until the end of '45, and then got out –

Hagen: Where were you assigned?

Eron: Well, that's a long story. I was in the infantry and was assigned to the basic training to the 118th infantry, which was the 30th division. And that had been a National Guard division and was National Guard in the south in Georgia, Alabama, North Carolina, South Carolina, and I was stationed at Fort Jackson, South Carolina. I never finished basic training because someone in the company or division office noted that I had been studying psychology and they transferred me to the medical detachment so I could give tests to get all the Section 8 soldiers out – the people who were not competent, you know, the –

Hagen: Right.

Eron: And so I did that for a while. And actually I couldn't use the Stanford-Binet so the Wexler-Bellevue had come out by that time. And so The University of South Carolina was in Columbia and I went to the Psychology Department there and saw Kermit Walsh, who was there as a clinical psychologist at the time, and he lent me a Bellevue-Wexler set and showed me how to do it. I took it back to the Army camp and started giving the Wexler-Bellevue and got rid of a lot of soldiers. And while I was in this, I don't know, I'd been doing this for a few months, an order came through encouraging anybody with an I.Q. over 110 to apply for Officer Candidate School because they really didn't have enough –

Hagen: I can imagine. Yes.

Eron: -- enough soldiers in that division who had AGCT scores over a 110, so I was automatically sent to – and I had my choice of Officer Candidate Schools. I could have gone to the Infantry, the Artillery, Quarter Master, and I picked Ordnance. So, just briefly I have this story where I thought, "Gee, that's good. When I get out maybe I can go to law school," but Ordnance has nothing to do with – it has to do with supply of tanks and ammunition. I became an ammunition officer and served in North Africa, Sicily and Italy as an ammunition officer. As I say, I got out in 1945 and went back to Columbia and was there for the winter semester and the summer semester and got my Masters. I didn't write a thesis. You didn't have to write a thesis if you took three extra credits, so I had thirty-three credits, and I was able to get a Masters. I didn't want to stay at Columbia because they really didn't have any clinical, and I didn't want to go to Teachers College, so at that time the Veterans Administration started this great program training clinical psychologists, in which you would go to classes during the morning, you know, half time, then you'd do your internship in the afternoon, and so I applied to the University of Wisconsin, got into their program. I also applied to the University of Iowa and was accepted at both places, but I decided to go to Wisconsin and I was there from '46 thru '48 working in this half-time program. I got my degree actually in '49. I finished my coursework in '48. I had worked -- again, there was no child psychology until my last year in 1948 when Peggy Kuenne came from the University of Iowa. It was her first job after the Ph.D. at University of Iowa. She taught child psychology. I don't think I took her course though because I was, you know, doing other things. And then she married Harry Harlow, she was your predecessor here.

Hagen: Yes, she was the Executive Officer of SRCD. In fact, we're still officially registered in the State of Wisconsin and we have to file papers every June to keep our head – when you're a 501C3 you have to be located in a state.

Eron: I see.

Hagen: And all the years that Dott Eichorn did it at Berkeley, they kept it at Wisconsin, and it would cost several thousand dollars legally to move it, and also some states have more favorable laws about 501C3's, and Wisconsin's are very good, so there's no need to move it.

Eron: Well good.

Hagen: So thanks to Peg, we're officially in Madison, at least –

Eron: Do you ever get over there?

Hagen: I don't – there's no reason to. I mean, I've been there several times. It's a wonderful town –

Eron: It's a great town.

Hagen: -- I really liked -- similar to Ann Arbor in a lot of ways, I mean they're similar.

Eron: Yes. I think it's bigger.

Hagen: It's bigger because it's the capital. Yes. And it's got the beautiful lakes.

Eron: Well, as I say, I was there for two years from '46 to '48, and my dissertation supervisor was Ann Magaret, who was quite a prominent psychologist in those days. She was a Stanford Ph.D.

Hagen: I know the name, yes.

Eron: And then she married a guy by the name of Garner, she's Ann Magaret-Garner, and then she left and had a family. And then she went back and I think she was out in Oregon for many years.

Hagen: What was the title of your dissertation?

Eron: Comparison Between the Thematic Apperceptions: Stories of Schizophrenics, Psycho-neurotics and Normal. I had a group that I used, then – and this wound up in a psych monograph, actually that was called A Normative Study of the Thematic Apperception Test, which was not the title of my thesis actually. But what I did was have a group of schizophrenics at the VA Hospital, a group of hospitalized psycho-neurotics, and a group of non-hospitalized psycho-neurotics, and a group of normal college students, all of whom were Veterans. And I guess I had about fifty in each group, administered TAT's to them, and developed a scoring system, which the TAT didn't have for things that were given in response to the pictures, the emotional tone of the story, the outcome and so on. And I found that in terms of thematic content there was really no difference among any of these groups; they were all the same, so you really couldn't use content as a diagnostic – What was interesting was there were formal characteristics of the stories that discriminate a schizophrenic, for example, from normal subjects in terms of not being able to give an outcome, in terms of having alternative themes, odd use of language, various sorts. I can't remember now, but there were some differences between schizophrenics and other groups, but not in the thematic content.

Hagen: Were the schizophrenics hospitalized at the time?

Eron: Yes, they were hospitalized.

Hagen: I would imagine in those days they were probably –

Eron: Yes, they were hospitalized schizophrenics, hospitalized psycho-neurotics and some non-hospitalized. I think I had about fifty in each group. So that was in 1948 that I'd finished collecting my data. I had analyzed most of it and then I got my first job in September of '48 at Yale. I hadn't finished my Ph.D because I hadn't written -- Actually, it was during the first year at Yale that I wrote my dissertation.

Hagen: Okay.

Eron: And in 1949, then I received my Ph.D. after -- and I was promoted from Instructor to Assistant Professor at Yale, because I couldn't be an Assistant Professor without a Ph.D.

Hagen: That was in the psych department?

Eron: That was in both the psychology and in psychiatry. I was in the Institute of Human Relations.

Hagen: Okay.

Eron: Mark May was the Director, and the Institute had psychology, psychiatry and – I can't remember what it was called, they had an Institute of Child Behavior, Arnold Gesell was the head of that. He was a pediatrician, I guess, not a psychologist. It was after I had left Yale, several years later that the – or maybe while I was still there; the Child Study Center was started, which was really dominated – where psychologists had a common goal. I think Albert Solnit was the director, Sally Provence was the –

Hagen: Right.

Eron: -- head of the medical people. But then Ed Zigler and Bill Kessin and those people –

Hagen: Well, they didn't really come until the fifties I don't think.

Eron: Yes, that's right. Well, I left Yale full time in 1955, and Bill Kessin was there as a student while I was there. He was a student of Greg Kimball's, who had come from Brown University to Yale and brought Bill with him and his wife. Like I said, he was married.

Hagen: Marian, in fact, I had dinner with her in Albuquerque.

Eron: Is that right?

Hagen: Yes. Bill was supposed to get an SRCD award and he died before the ceremony, but Marian came and received the award and then several of us took her out to dinner. She's doing great.

Eron: Oh, good. She was a student there too.

Hagen: Yes.

Eron: I don't know if she ever got her Ph.D. or not?

Hagen: I don't think she did, but she worked –

Eron: But they both were students, I remember when they came from Brown.

Hagen: She still lives in their house on the water. And one of her daughters is divorced and is living – the daughter and grandchildren are living with her in the big house, and she seemed to be very pleased with that arrangement. They had six children. I don't know if you remember that.

Eron: Well, they didn't when I was there because they had just married –

Hagen: Right. Sure.

Eron: -- and they may have had one or two, maybe one when I was there. Anyway, I was at Yale from 1948 to 1955 and Paul Mussen –

Hagen: Did you know the Sears at that time?

Eron: No, he had left by that time.

Hagen: Okay.

Eron: I missed him at Yale and I missed him at Iowa.

Hagen: Then they went to Iowa.

Eron: And he had already left.

Hagen: Oh, really?

Eron: He was actually a significant person in –

Hagen: He was one of my main mentors; both of the Sears' in fact.

Eron: -- Pauline too.

Hagen: Yes.

Eron: Well, he -- in my longitudinal study I depended very heavily on what he and Sears, Maccoby and Levin -- I'm sure you know that?

Hagen: Of course.

Eron: Well, that was very influential in some of my thinking in starting my aggression research. But anyway, let's see. Where am I?

Hagen: So you're leaving Yale in '55.

Eron: Yes, but as I say Paul Mussen, Florence Schumner --

Hagen: Paul, you know, just died a few months ago.

Eron: Died. Yes, I know. That's too bad. He was a student. He hadn't yet gotten his Ph.D. I think he was in the same situation I was. He got his degree the same year I did, actually, but I was on the staff and he was a student while -- before I got my Ph.D. And it was at Yale that, of course, I got my interest in aggression, you know, traditionally that was the home of frustration and aggression.

Hagen: Of course.

Eron: Dollard, Doob and Miller, Mowrer and Sears. Dollard, Doob and Miller were still there and I knew them, and Carl Hovland who has also contributed to that volume. Carl was the Chairman of the Psych Department.

Hagen: When I was a student at Stanford, Anthony Doob was a student there.

Eron: Yes. I remember him as a kid.

Hagen: I don't know what's happened to him though.

Eron: He's in Canada --

Hagen: Okay.

Eron: I think.

Hagen: Because he was a good student but I just haven't --

Eron: Yes. He's a psychologist.

Hagen: Yes, I knew he got his Ph.D., but I didn't know --

Eron: See I think he's in the University of Windsor or Toronto or some such place. I met him once. I had known him when he was a little boy. But as I say, I got my interest in aggression there. It came naturally because of association with Dollard, Doob and Miller, and Hovland, and also I was on the dissertation committees of Patricia Pitluck. I don't know if you know who she was.

Hagen: No, I don't.

Eron: She was at the Bank Street College of Education.

Hagen: Okay.

Eron: And you must know that she married Salvador Minuchin, so she's now Patricia Minuchin. But I was on her dissertation committee, and she did a study -- these were more like real life studies, they weren't laboratories. They were kind of laboratory studies, but she looked at TAT stories of patients of various kinds and related that to their

aggressive behavior on the ward, and I thought that was very interesting. And then I was on Jerry Lesser's Ph.D. committee, and that's where I got the idea for the peer nomination, because his dissertation used peer nominations in a kind of elementary form. We then developed that procedure, you know, took us five years to come up with a good measure, and we started out with about two thousand or so items of aggressive behavior in ways in which kids can be aggressive to each other, and then we wound up with these twenty-two items, which turned out to be very good.

And also I was on the dissertation committee of Sy Feshbach, and he also had done something with aggression in college students. I can't remember just what it was anymore. But because of those experiences I got interested in aggression and started to do research in aggression. Jerry Kagan was also a student at that time and actually I taught him the Rorschach, as I did Herb Kelman, who was also a student at Yale at that time –

Hagen: Kelman was here and had an office near me for several years before he went to Harvard.

Eron: And then he came back, they had a dinner for him once, he got some kind of an award. Well, Yale was an interesting place. Students in all kinds of -- whatever their area was, took courses in clinical psychology. They were able to, and I cooperate in a course in the Rorschach and supervised their administration of the Rorschach, so I got to know Jerry and these other people that way.

Hagen: Did programs have to get APA certified at that time, or was that --?

Eron: It was just starting –

Hagen: Okay.

Eron: '48, I think was the first year of certification. You wonder what happened after that I suppose they had to actually take the whole program to do that.

Hagen: Well, I was at Stanford when they lost their certification.

Eron: And they don't have a clinical program?

Hagen: No, they decided that the requirements were too much and that it wasn't worth it, so they dropped it.

Eron: And Yale has continued to – Also, I've got a –interested, I told you that the frustration aggression hypothesis, and then in Hull Spence theory except, at Yale it was just called Hullian Theory. I went to Iowa later and there it was called –

Hagen: There it was called Spence, right.

Eron: -- there it was called Hull-Spence. But another very influential person in my career development, in my research interest was Seymour Sarason, and actually I owe my appointment at Yale to him. In 1948, as I say, I finished my coursework and work on my dissertation, and I went east from Wisconsin. I went home because my brother was getting married, and that weekend was the Eastern Psychological Association in Philadelphia. And there I ran into my future wife when I had known for some time actually, and she had been an intern at The Neurological Institute where Seymour's wife had been, in fact, this was before they were married. In fact, Seymour was courting Esther at that time, and so Madeline knew him and we, of course, we ran into him at the convention. Madeline said she was just staying for the day then she was going back, and Seymour said – well, he was going back too and did she want a ride, then she said, "Can he get a ride?" And so we all went back to -- I think Seymour went to see his family in Newark, and Madeline went to New Brunswick, and I was still there. So I got to meet Seymour, and sat in the front with him actually, because men always sat in the front, women in the back. So Madeline, and there was another woman with us, sat in the back. And I got talking to Seymour and he learned that I was just getting my Ph.D., and he said, "We have an opening at Yale, would you be interested?" And I jumped at it, of course, and then I – a few weeks later after I'd gotten back to Wisconsin they brought me to New Haven for an interview and I was offered the job, and accepted it. But Seymour was influential because after a few years he advised me to get out of psychiatry. He said, "There's no future for psychologists in psychiatry, you should be in education. That's where the psychologists belong, in education," and not as hand maidens inmate to psychiatry. And I actually started to do

research in the schools, and in 1955 I left Yale, you know, at that time you could only get promoted if there was a vacancy at the top, and one vacancy opened up in my sixth year there, and that was given to Bob Abelson. But a lot of people left. Harold Kelley left then –

Hagen: I think it's still true with Harvard and Yale –

Eron: It is.

Hagen: -- that they very seldom, if ever, promote people.

Eron: Well, I think they do now have associate professors for five years, no tenure.

Hagen: Well, in fact, Jerry Kagan's son-in-law was stuck in that –

Eron: Was that right?

Hagen: Steve – I'm blocking on his name, he's now at North Carolina.

Eron: No, I didn't know that.

Hagen: Ed Zigler really tried to get him there permanently because they were so short in development, but even Ed wasn't able to arrange for that.

Eron: Yes, well Rowell Huesmann also had one of those five-year appointments after being assistant professor for seven years, and then I was able to bring him out to UIC. Well, let's see, where are we? So I knew I was going to have to leave, and I was being wooed by somebody by New York State, a guy by the name of Caldwell Esselstyn, who was an old Yale. He had been on the 1924 Yale football squad as a guard, and that was the only time Yale had an undefeated season up until very recently. And his son was on the crew and he was very, very rah rah Yale. He used to come every one or two weeks to Yale, and he used to come with a psychiatrist named Frank Hladky, and I got to know them. And over the year he kind of convinced me to come up and look at things there.

Hagen: Where was this?

Eron: At the Rip Van Winkle Foundation –

Hagen: Oh, okay.

Eron: In Hudson, New York. So I took position there as Director of Research and Chief Clinical Psychologist, because this was a very unusual organization. It was one of the first HMO's in the country, I think. This was a group practice of medicine and Esselstyn's family had lived in this community since 1657, came with the original group of Dutch people and they stayed there. Esselstyn is a Dutch name. And he had been a very successful surgeon. He was Head of Surgery at Roosevelt Hospital in New York, and then he wanted to do something about medical practice in this area where he had lived. He wanted to show that you could bring high quality medical care to rural communities, and so he started this Rip Van Winkle Clinic, which was a group practice of medicine actually, which eventually had prepayment, so it was like an HMO. And the unusual thing about it was that all members of this clinic were Board Certified. You could not be part of this clinic unless you had your Boards in Surgery or Internal Medicine or Pediatrics, and so they had this one clinic in Hudson where all these specialties were, and then there were four other clinics around the county, each of which had a Pediatrician an Internist and a Dentist, and the other specialties would circulate around there. Well, anyway, what he wanted me to do was to do a mental health survey of Columbia County so you could talk about what mental health problems were in the semi-rural areas. Well, -- and I was challenged by this, and so I went there. However, it became obvious to me very quickly that even if you could define what mental health was, how would you measure it in large groups of subjects – to do this was supposedly like a census – Continuing.

So I thought I would select one aspect of mental health, one that I could define, observe and measure, and that was aggression, which we defined at that time as an act, which injures another person or which is intended to injure another person. And what – to make it more like a public health project I said I would do would be to measure

aggression in every third grade school child in the county, which we did. And it took us about four to five years to develop our measures, including the peer nomination inventory, which is now used by many researchers. And what I was interested in was relating how aggressive children were in school to the child-rearing practices of their parents. As I say I was much influenced by the work of Sears and –

Hagen: So you really were a developmentalist then.

Eron: Yes. Then I became a developmentalist. Well, then I was a child psychologist, not a developmentalist yet, not until my longitudinal study.

Hagen: Okay.

Eron: So I thought there were four classes of variables that I wanted to relate aggressive behavior at school to, four kinds of parent characteristics. One, in terms of their child rearing practices, was the reinforcers that they gave for aggression; second, the frustrators at home might lead to aggression. Then a variable that I really got from Sears, which was identification, which traditional learning theories tend not to talk about –

Hagen: Right.

Eron: -- but he found some, so I did that, and sociological characteristics like occupation, education, place of residence. So those are the four variables. And we interviewed eighty percent of the fathers and mothers, both fathers and mothers of those eight hundred and seventy odd children that were in the schools in the third grade. And indeed we found that there were relations between these four classes of characteristics and how aggressive kids were in school. One, which we had predicted, that kids who were rewarded for aggression would be more aggressive, kids who were punished for aggression would be less aggressive, that was turned around. What we found was that the more children were punished for aggression, the more aggressive they were in school. The harsher the punishments the parents administered the more aggressive were the children in school. Except for one group of boys, and this is where Sears' work was very important. We found that youngsters who were identified, boys who were identified with their fathers behaved the way we had predicted. If they were punished for aggression they were less aggressive in school. If they were rewarded for aggression they were more aggressive in school, that's just for the boys who were closely identified. My measure of identification, incidentally was not usual, this had to do with aspects of aggressive behavior and how similar the children were to their parents. So we would ask parents questions like, "My body is, tall, thin; I walk quickly, walk slowly, I talk quickly, slowly," a number of things like that. And we also asked the children those same questions, and the more closely the children's responses were to the parents responses the more we said they were identified with the parents. We were only doing behavioral measures with them, we'd never think of asking questions that had to do with cognition and that sort at that time, and as I say, we were quite influenced by Sears. And we found in general that the less identified the children were with their parents the more aggressive they were at school. Also we found that frustrators, the more frustrating conditions in the home lead to more aggression in the children in the school. Questions having to do with rejection by the parents, lack of nurturance, these were all objective questions, incidentally.

Hagen: This was all in the early 50's.

Eron: Yes.

Hagen: How did your boss react to these findings? Did he find it useful?

Eron: Oh, yes. He was very, very supportive of us, and we, of course, brought in a good research grant from NIMH, which helped.

Hagen: Okay.

Eron: And that again, was a strange – a funny story, our support by NIMH. We, in –

Hagen: When did NIMH begin?

Eron: I think it was NIMH, I'm sorry, not NIH.

Hagen: Okay.

Eron: NIMH had already started.

Hagen: Right. Yes.

Eron: It was NIMH. The ten years afterwards in 1970 while I was at Iowa, we applied for a grant from NIMH to do a follow-up, and we were approved but not funded. There was at that time, I don't know if you know, there was really a bias against longitudinal research especially by research panel members where there was a lot of money involved but you didn't get the results for a long time, and so committees, study sections were loath to support them, so we were approved but not funded there. But then the very next year – we had asked for this ten years later, when the kids would still be in high school. The very next year, the Surgeon General's Committee on Television Violence and Behavior was formed, and they came after us and said, "Gee, you have all these good data on television violence and kids, why don't you do a follow-up study now?" And we said, "Oh, gosh, how are we going to find them, they're all out of high school now," and stuff, but they took it upon us, of course, and we did it. So we said, "We will ask those questions about television, but only if you will support us for asking the other kinds of things we're interested in also," and they did. And, of course, we did find that the relation between television violence and aggression increased over the years, it was obvious now. You know, with a one shot correlational study you couldn't tell which was cause and effect, but with longitudinal data you were in a better position to do that. For example, the correlation between television violence viewing and aggression at age nineteen was significantly greater than aggression at age eight, and television violence viewing at age nineteen. In fact, that later was zero correlation. Further, if you looked at kids who at age eight were not highly aggressive but were watching violent television, by the time they were nineteen they were significantly more aggressive than those kids who at age eight were highly aggressive and were not watching violent television. So we did that study and I was already at the University of Iowa then.

Hagen: When did you go to Iowa?

Eron: In 1962.

Hagen: So you were at Rip Van Winkle quite a long time.

Eron: Seven years.

Hagen: Seven years.

Eron: During the time that I was at Rip Van Winkle I was also at Yale though.

Hagen: Okay.

Eron: I was a research associate in the School of Medicine, with a rank of Associate Professor.

Hagen: You went to Iowa in '62, to what department?

Eron: In '62. To the Department of Psychology.

Hagen: Okay.

Eron: And at that time the Child Welfare Research Station was still there, called that. I think it was still called that. And this is the place where Beth Wellman had done her research, had been started by Dean Seashore, it was really a well-established institution.

Hagen: Did you know Marie Skodack?

Eron: Yes.

Hagen: Do you know she still lives up in Flint? She's in her nineties.

Eron: I didn't know that.

Hagen: She used to come to a lot of things. She became a school psychologist in Dearborn for many, many years.

Eron: Is that right.

Hagen: And she was married to a G.M. executive and they had a beautiful farm up near Flint. She would come down to things regularly, but her husband died and she's in some sort of nursing home now up in the Flint area.

Eron: Oh, that's too bad.

Hagen: Her name - What was her married name? I can't remember it. Marie Skodack-Crissey was her married name.

Eron: Well, George Stoddard you know –

Hagen: Of course, yes.

Eron: And then while I was there, Ruth Updegraff was still there, Howard Meredith was there and –

Hagen: Joan Cantor.

Eron: Joan and Gordon Cantor, both of them. Charlie Spiker.

Hagen: Yes. I knew all of them.

Eron: And then they – while I was at Iowa the name was changed to the Institute of Child Behavior and Development, and then Charlie Spiker became the head of that. After I had left that closed down and all those people were transferred to the Psychology Department, Charlie and Joan.

Hagen: And developmental never really recovered at Iowa, that was really a shame.

Eron: Again, I went to Iowa, there was no child psychology in the department of psychology, it was all – and they had some real good graduates, Lou Lipsit, of course –

Hagen: Fran Horowitz.

Eron: Fran Horowitz, Jake Gewirtz. I'm trying to think of some of the others.

Hagen: Bill Hartup was on the faculty there for a while too before Minnesota.

Eron: While I was there he was on.

Hagen: He's a close friend of mine still.

Eron: Yes. He was in the Institute while I was at the Department of Psychology. And I was Director of Clinical while I was there, and when Kenneth Spence left I was acting Chair for a year, because I was the only one who still talked to both factions in the department.

Hagen: Oh, really!

Eron: You know, Kenneth Spence was very domineering and – he was quite a guy. People used to say that he was anti-clinical, but I never found that. I thought he was very supportive of –

Hagen: Was he married to Janet at that time?

Eron: Yes, he was married to Janet.

Hagen: And they went to Texas then?

Eron: Then they went to Texas.

Hagen: Yes. I still see her at meetings.

Eron: She's still going. She's living in Cap Cod now.

Hagen: Yes.

Eron: She lives next door to Don Brown's sister.

Hagen: Oh, I didn't know that. Interesting.

Eron: Yes. Oh, she's still going to – I'm glad to see she's still going around. Yes, she was very – Kenneth Spence's first wife was there too. I don't know if I should tell these stories or not.

Hagen: Well, it's on tape.

Eron: I remember we had them to dinner one night, Kenneth and Janet. They were married then, and Kenneth was feeling no pain. He was drinking and he was talking about how terrible divorce was, and here was Janet sitting there. It was very embarrassing. And then Kenneth, I guess he had prostate cancer, and he came back to Iowa for treatment, because they had a very good person there, and then I think he actually died – that was about the time he died. He died in 1967 or so, and I think he may have died at the hospital at Iowa. It was very unusual. He would be visited in the hospital by both of his wives. And they would just say, Mrs. Spence was there and then another Mrs. Spence. It was very confusing for those people.

In 1969 I then went to UIC and I went –

Hagen: That was the University of Illinois Chicago circle at the time.

Eron: Yes. Chicago circle at the time. And I went primarily because my good friend Farber was there. He had left, and he brought me to UIC, kind of – while I was acting chair, we – I hired Judd Brown as chairman. He had been at Iowa before, and then had an altercation with Kenneth, left and went to Oregon, I believe. And then after Kenneth died he came back as Chair. And after Kenneth had left – So, as I say, in 1969 I went to UIC. Actually, the first year I was there I was Director of the Developmental Division, but just for a year. The other, the developmental psychologists there were Leon Miller, I don't know if you know him, he had a Minnesota Ph.D.

Hagen: Right.

Eron: Judith Torney.

Hagen: Of course. Yes. I know her well.

Eron: And Gersh Berkson. Do you know him?

Hagen: Right. Sure.

Eron: He had them all as psychologists. Well, I was Head of the Developmental just for one year, and then I was Director of Clinical, and started the Psychology Training Clinic and then I became Research Professor, and I was there until I came here – before I came here. I retired in 1989, so I was there for twenty years.

Hagen: Did you overlap with Arnie Sameroff?

Eron: Yes. Yes, he was already there. Arnie was primarily at the Pediatric Institute.

Hagen: I was on a site visit for NICHD of Arnie's unit when he was trying to get one of the big program project grants –

Eron: Oh, I see.

Hagen: -- and unfortunately it didn't work out.

Eron: Unfortunately for UIC too.

Hagen: Yes.

Eron: He's trying to get one down here. Isn't he in the middle of a --?

Hagen: Well, they got a grant, yes, for the longitudinal study, that's NIMH, right. But this is one of the mental retardation grants.

Eron: Oh, I see.

Hagen: Right. Because I was on that review panel for several years. He tried to get a new one there because a couple of the original ones had fallen by-the-by, so there was some freed-up money for these.

Eron: I see. But he was unsuccessful, so he came. It was lucky for Michigan.

Hagen: Well, actually he went to Brown for a while --

Eron: Oh, that's right.

Hagen: -- and then came here.

Eron: That's right. That's right.

Hagen: So it did work out in the long run for us.

Eron: You knew that and then you turned him down. You kind of knew that.

Hagen: Probably. Though I didn't personally turn him down, but the committee did.

Eron: Yes, I understand.

Hagen: So you were at Chicago longer than any single place.

Eron: Yes, I was there for twenty years, actually, and I retired in '89. But in 1972 I applied – well, I guess 1971 I applied to do a twenty-two year follow-up on those original subjects I had seen in 1960; they were now thirty years old. I had done one follow-up when they were nineteen, as I told you before, and now I applied for this one. And as I understand it – well, we got the grant actually, but again, there was this bias against longitudinal research and we were originally -- didn't get a high enough priority score to get funded, but David Pearl -- Do you know --?

Hagen: I know the name.

Eron: He was the Chair of that section, and he was wiser than the others and he kind of pushed us up. He had the authority to do that. We were just slightly below the –

Hagen: That was still NIMH.

Eron: That was still NIMH, right. So that was funded, fortunately, and I did that when I was still at UIC. Now, you know, we've applied for another grant to do a forty-year follow-up, and again were approved but not funded by NIMH so we applied to NICHD, which is now a new institute, and they funded us immediately. So when you get developmental psychologists on the committee, I guess, they're more approving of longitudinal research, and so we are now in the middle of this forty-year follow-up.

Hagen: And Rowell is serving as the –

Eron: He the main P.I. Rowell joined me in 1971 at that – in our first follow-up, which was an eleven-year follow-up. Actually, Bob Abelson had been the statistical consultant to my project when we started in 1960, and when I did this first follow-up I went back to Bob and asked him to be statistical consultant again. Incidentally Irvin Child is also a consultant to that first go around. I asked Bob to be a statistical consultant again, but he said he didn't have time. He had just become chairman. He couldn't do it. But he said, "I have an assistant professor who was very hungry, and I'm sure he would be happy to do that. He's very, very good." And that was Rowell. And so Rowell was statistical consultant on that.

Hagen: Where did Rowell get his Ph.D.?

Eron: At Carnegie Mellon.

Hagen: Oh, okay. I didn't realize that. That's a very different kind of background for what he ended up doing. But isn't he from Detroit originally?

Eron: Yes, he was.

Hagen: Right.

Eron: He was a University of Michigan graduate; got his bachelors –

Hagen: Right. I remember talking to him about that, yes.

Eron: And I think his father was born in Ann Arbor. And that's how I joined up with him. After I went to UIC I was able to bring – when I was Chair I was able to get him an appointment in the department. And then after a while he became Chair of the department, and then when he -- as I say, I retired in '89, but I was still doing research. We had this large-scale intervention project in Chicago and I was working on that. And then in 1992 Rowell was offered this position at Michigan and he was – you know, it was kind of a package deal that I would come, and Nancy Guerra, but Nancy never worked out. I think she came for one semester. But I started here, and for four years commuted back and forth between Chicago –

Hagen: I remember you were always driving back and forth.

Eron: So after four years I said, "We've got to either stay in Chicago or go to Ann Arbor," and we decided to come to Ann Arbor. So yes, this is my ninth year here, which is –

Hagen: It's hard to believe, isn't it?

Eron: It's hard to believe. Let's see, what other questions?

Hagen: Well, I think we've covered quite a bit, so let me see. You talked about your primary interest in child development, beginning of your career, of what shifts have occurred and what events were responsible. What are some of the strengths or possibly weaknesses that you see in your research or your theoretical

contributions? And then along with that, what manuscripts best represent your thinking? Which studies seem most significant?

Eron: Well, the most significant one is – oh, what the heck is it? It's 1984-'85, in which *The Development of Aggression from the Prospective of a Developing Psychologist*, or something.

Hagen: '84?

Eron: I don't know exactly when.

Hagen: Okay.

Eron: Let me look. But that stated my approach to – my learning approach to and how it changed from – I started as a reinforcement psychologist, the Hull-Spence type frame of reference, then changed to Operant behavior and then became more cognitive, and I've really seen this shift. It was 1987. *The Development of Aggressive Behavior from the Perspective of a Developing Behaviorism*.

Hagen: And where was it published?

Eron: American Psychologist, Volume 42, 435-442. And then the one that brought me all my research funding was, and kind of a tail that wags the dog ever since is – again, it was American Psychologist. It was 1963, *The Relationship of T.V. Viewing Habits and Aggressive Behavior in Children*.

Hagen: Oh, sure. Yes.

Eron: And that was really the first real good study showing that there was – in real life there was a relationship. At just about the time that I was doing this Al Bandura was doing his studies with the Bobo Doll.

Hagen: Right. That's when I was at Stanford, and that was just going on then. He had just gotten tenure at that point. It was in the early 60's.

Eron: He was an Iowa PhD.

Hagen: That's right.

Eron: So he had some of that same kind of training that I did. And it was the congruence of his findings and our findings that bolstered my confidence in this relation between t.v. viewing and aggressive behavior.

Hagen: It's amazing that it's still such a hot potato though.

Eron: Still, despite all the evidence – and I guess there's some testimony today, The Federal Trade Commission was doing something on the advertising of violent programs to children, marketing to children.

Hagen: Well that new report just came out didn't it again? And that's the –

Eron: And this afternoon and tomorrow, I think as I told you, I'm being interviewed by 20/20 on this relation.

Hagen: Is that going to appear on their show in the near future?

Eron: I hope so. Yes. Although there have been a number of times where I've been televised and the things never shown because some other important news –

Hagen: I know how it can happen. Yes.

Eron: But I've been on a number of – you know, I've been – Frontline devoted a whole program to our program. I've been on The Oprah Show, Good Morning America; a whole bunch of things.

Hagen: Oh, really!

Eron: Anyway, those I think were important. And I've been publishing ever since, in the area – both of aggression without television and television.

Hagen: I think in terms of institutional contributions, we've talked pretty much about those too.

Eron: Yes.

Hagen: How about teaching? You haven't really specifically talked too much about teaching. The question here is, your experiences as a teacher or a trainer of research workers. Comment on tension between teaching and research?

Eron: Well, I've never done much teaching. I've always been lucky. At Iowa I did some teaching, but I got excused because of my administrative duties, and I was also Editor of The Journal of Abnormal Psychology while I was at Iowa. So I didn't have to do too much teaching.

Then at UIC I was a research professor, so I didn't have to do any teaching unless I wanted to, so I haven't had too much experience. And I don't think I ever taught a course in developmental psychology. The teaching I did was in abnormal psychology and personality, not in developmental.

Hagen: But, of course, those fields have changed tremendously over your career.

Eron: Oh, yes.

Hagen: I remember I had abnormal from Gardner Lindsey at Minnesota in the early 60's, and that's gone through a huge transfer. I guess all the fields really have in some ways, except it still seems when I look at what social psychology's doing in some ways it still seems very much the same as back in –

Eron: Same laboratory.

Hagen: It hasn't gone through the big change that cognitive has or developmental, or clinical.

Eron: Well, it's now called cognitive social.

Hagen: Right. And I guess that's been the big change, but cognition has kind of influenced all aspect of psychology.

Eron: It's interesting your mentioning Gardner Lindsey. It's because of him that I was editor of The Journal of Abnormal Psychology.

Hagen: Oh, really!

Eron: Things were done so much – you know, it was the old boy network at that time.

Hagen: Oh, I know.

Eron: So he called me one day and said, "I'm on this publications committee for APA. We'd like you to be editor of The Journal of Abnormal Psychology. Don Peterson had a heart attack and can't do it," so I was editor for the remainder of his term. So for seven years, or eight years, I was editor of The Journal of Abnormal. So that's why I haven't done much teaching. I was excused from teaching for that too. And then as I say I was a research professor. And then here at Michigan I haven't done any teaching.

Hagen: I'm surprised Pat didn't talk you into one of the freshman seminars, because she twists everyone's arm for that.

Eron: When I came in, psychology contributed to my salary when I came here, it was ten or twelve thousand dollars. And I interviewed with Pat and she said, “What would you like to teach?” I said, “I really don’t want to teach. The best thing about being retired is I don’t have to teach.” She said, “Well, that’s all right, we’re just interested in having your intellectual presence here.” And that was the crowning moment of when I said, “I’ve got to go to Michigan.”

Hagen: Have you had any regrets?

Eron: No. Not really. I like Ann Arbor, and I like my association with ISR.

Hagen: It’s truly, I think, an amazing environment.

Eron: It really is a great place.

Hagen: I don’t know if you just saw those statistics on the huge increases in external funds, --

Eron: Yes, I –

Hagen: The whole university did a big jump, and ISR’s was incredible. It seems like we’re riding a wave right now.

Eron: I’m on the policy committee for ISR, I get all the statistics.

Hagen: The next thing that I’d like to talk about has to do with your experience with SRCD, but I’d like to expand it to APA and APS and the role of professional societies. Why don’t we take a little break though. Is that okay before we transition into that?

Eron: Okay. Your mention of Alberta Segal reminds me that she was my best teacher in child development.

Hagen: Really!

Eron: She taught me the difference between relation and relationship when she was editor of Child Development. She taught me that relationship only refers to kinship.

Hagen: Kinship. Yes.

Eron: The association between two variables is a relation, not a relationship, and I’ve never forgotten that.

Hagen: That’s great. She’s still a good friend of mine.

Eron: She’s very good.

Hagen: My cousin Burt, who lived in L.A. for thirty years, was one of the top Vice Presidents of Great Western Savings, and Alberta was on their Board of Directors, so we had this connection too. And I would get messages from Alberta about Burt and his children all the time, and I would hear likewise. She became a new grandmother this past year. Her stepson, Jay Segal, whose in his late fifties became a father for the first time, and so Alberta has a granddaughter living just two or three miles from her, so she’s thrilled with it.

Eron: That’s great.

Hagen: Well, I mentioned a bit about some of the roots of SRCD, and you mentioned that you had been a member, that you’re not now. Are there things about SRCD that you would like to comment on in terms of our journals, Child Development obviously, the monographs, the biannual meetings, any committees?

Eron: No, I’ve never been in the power structure of SRCD.

Hagen: Okay.

Eron: I've been to your meetings. I remember one meeting especially which was in Detroit at the Renaissance Center.

Hagen: I was the Program Co-Chair at that time.

Eron: That was a great program.

Hagen: Yes. 1983. That was the fiftieth anniversary and we brought in – the Sears came to that.

Eron: Yes, I remember.

Hagen: And Myrtle McGraw.

Eron: Myrtle McGraw. Twins.

Hagen: Yes, the twin studies that she did. And Bob and Pat both came to that, and even Lois Meakes-Stohl, who was then well into her eighties and lived to her mid-nineties. I lived in the basement of her house for several years when I was a graduate student. Her husband had died and she needed a little bit of help on things, and so it worked out very well. And she used to serve martinis every night at five, and sometimes I would be invited. People like the Sears came and Paul Mussen would come, and so forth –

Eron: That was very nice.

Hagen: That was quite an experience, that time.

Eron: Well, I really, as I say, I think Child Development's a great journal. As I say, Alberta was my great teacher. I've published a couple, three articles in Child Development, or more than that. And I've given papers with a couple of Child Development meetings, none of which stand out in my memory except that one at the RenCen. And I was more active in APA –

Hagen: Right.

Eron: -- and I've done some things there. I was Chair of the APA Commission on Violence in Youth, and we issued our report, which was in a book called, Reason to Hope. And the reason it was given that title was because the theme of that volume was that aggression is a learned behavior, and that if it's learned it can be unlearned, or not learned in the first place. And therefore, we called it Reason to Hope.

I was also a member of the National Research Council panel on understanding the control of violent behavior, which was headed by – what's his name, the sociologist at Yale, Reese, and David Farrington was Co-Chair. And that was quite an experience because Reese was really a sociologist, and really not interested in psychology. He didn't think psychology had much to say. He was not interested in child development and how children learn to be aggressive. And in the volume that they put out, there was nothing about the learning of aggression or child development, and a number of us, Jerry Kagan was on that commission too, said we would not sign for that volume, that we would not be contributors and we would publish our own version. And so then they said they would put something in, and what they did was put an appendix to the volume –

Hagen: Oh, really!

Eron: -- on child behavior and how it affects future aggression. I've been on a number of APA committees.

Hagen: Have you been on council?

Eron: No, I've never been on a council, but I've been on the Committee for Scientific and Professional Ethics and Conduct. I was on the Board of Convention Affairs.

Hagen: That could have been interesting.

Eron: Yes, that was.

Hagen: Was Candy Won involved in that?

Eron: Yes, she was.

Hagen: Oh, I worked with Candy over the years. She does a good job.

Eron: Yes, she's wonderful. Yes, she ran the thing and the subcommittee on films, so I've also been President of The Midwestern Psychological Association once. But I haven't gotten involved too much in the governance of these associations. I belonged to them.

Hagen: Were you tempted to abandon APA during some of the hard times?

Eron: No, I never did. I thought that was a phony – although I had joined APS immediately –

Hagen: I did too. Yes.

Eron: But that's too bad. But I think APS is doing a good job.

Hagen: And I also think its actually helped APA –

Eron: Oh, yes, they're very much aware.

Hagen: -- the science side has really strengthened a lot.

Eron: Yes, that Board of Scientific Affairs.

Hagen: They're doing a good job. The last few meetings, I find more than enough to go to. It's a strong program.

Eron: I think so too. But APS is good too.

Hagen: Yes.

Eron: Well, I suppose there's enough room for both.

Hagen: It's a big enough field compared to some other fields. All of the American Sociological Association is only the size of APS and there there's only one organization, just to give a comparison of where -- The two themes of SRCD that really were set back in the 1920's. I mention that Woodworth was very involved in a committee on children that was set up by the National Academy of Science, NRC, and SRCD was the culmination of that committee that was set up in the 1920. But the two themes that were established at that time I believe still are just as relevant. One was a commitment to applied as well as basic research, and that the two should feed back into one another rather than one be put on a pedestal and the other sort of do its thing after all the basics had been established. The other was multidisciplinary and the founding fathers and mothers felt that no one discipline had the answers to issues and problems and concerns of children, and I think that that has served us very well.

Eron: Are there many non-psychologists in SRCD?

Hagen: More than you would think.

Eron: I thought it was almost all psychologists.

Hagen: No. About thirty percent are not psychologist. Unfortunately, of the student members, over ninety percent are in either psychology or child development programs, but that's the other aspect of the field. There are still many places like Cornell, Penn State and others, where the child development is not in psychology –

Eron: Like it was when I grew up. And they're still that way. Isn't that interesting.

Hagen: Like at Penn State it's in a College of Human Development, and I think Cornell's, the old home-ec is now called the College of Human Development in Family Studies, something like that. So you do find those doctoral programs are producing students with a somewhat different orientation or bent to things?

Eron: Well, what I've seen, you talk about the two sides of the Society, of course, I think that is coming to fruition more than it has. I think, I guess of one child study and the kinds of experiments – the laboratory experiments that many child psych – developmental psychologists have been doing, the laboratory type studies in memory and perceptions. The study that you used to do, the early studies in memory; you're not doing them anymore. You're more interested in real life things.

Hagen: More difficult to study things unfortunately.

Eron: And so these have been the two – I think though the laboratory studies type still holds sway, but there are more and more of these real life studies. I think people here at Michigan show this spilt too. As I say, you're doing studies with foster children –

Hagen: Foster children and children with diabetes have been the main areas that we've worked in.

Eron: -- interested in things like attachment. Are you interested in resiliency –

Hagen: Right. Resilience in kids who are out of home.

Eron: Which is quite different from early memory research.

Hagen: Right.

Eron: That made you famous.

Hagen: At least got me tenure.

Eron: But then there are things like what Sandra Graham-Bermann is doing. She's a clinical psychologist – guy -- observational studies she does in Jackson, is that her main –

Hagen: Yes. She and Eric have been working with the families from Headstart.

Eron: Yes. Headstart.

Hagen: And then looking at aggression and violence in families. Yes.

Eron: And Sheri Olsen is doing some –

Hagen: Sheri's actually now at the Growth Center part-time.

Eron: Oh, is she? Good.

Hagen: So her research is fitting into the group over there, which I'm very pleased at.

Eron: Oh, good. I'm glad she's there.

Hagen: I think like we were talking before about how the famous center at Iowa eventually went by the by, and an awful lot of the freestanding centers at different universities, as well as the freestanding centers like Fells have all disappeared. There aren't that many left. And for a time we were worried at the Growth Center here with a lot of the changes and the fact that the administration was saying they wanted to put all centers under colleges, which I think would be a disaster, because then the college is still not going to view it as important as a department probably. But also, if you're not in that college how do you relate to it? And we especially are crossing between LS and A and –

Eron: And disciplinary line.

Hagen: Right. The medical school, public health. And it's absolutely imperative to have that, so –

Eron: Well, at the beginning of developmental psychology, wasn't that the main theme when G. Stanley Hall started his child study center, whatever it was?

Hagen: Sure.

Eron: They were interested in real life kinds of development of children. How children develop in lots of areas, not the specific learning memory perception.

Hagen: Well, I think also, again, back in the late 1920's there was a realization that children in families needed to be studied in terms of what's normal or what's typical because so much of the focus had been on problems or atypicality. Then there was the realization, but we don't even have good idea of what's normal.

Eron: Yes. What's supposed to happen.

Hagen: It seems now strange that that wasn't understood, but I guess just to study children per se was only done by very few people in kind of odd ways up to that point in time. Or people were developing test norms and so forth as you were saying before, and actually my understanding is that it was during World War I that they realized so many recruits were not fit to serve, that that's when the – I think the army alpha and beta were then developed. And then for World War II you got into that same issue again when they –

Eron: When they then had the army general classification test, which was much improved over.

Hagen: And I think that the realization that within children and families, there's a lot of diversity, but there are also some things that are sort of viewed as normative and some things that are not normative, and that certainly intrigued people early on. The other part of the beginning of the child development movement was something you mentioned again, like Gesell, the physical. The physical and the biological was very important in those early years, and that's before we really understood very much about either genes or environmental interaction. People were just starting to get interested in how those kinds of factors came into play. And then, of course, what I always say are the big three in our field: health, education and welfare; they've developed sort of specialties. And you remember the old days of HEW before HHS, but I mean those were all terribly important for children and families. Then we saw the development of some specialties, and over the years SRCD has tried to represent all three of those. Sometimes the balance has been more one way than the other, and of course, now we've got so many specialties and subspecialties in all of those areas that I belong to about ten or eleven different professional organizations --

Eron: Is that right?

Hagen: -- myself, including AERA, which is the American Education Research Association, which is a very good organization and has good meetings now, especially on education, but also groups like the National Council on Family Relations which goes back to the 1930's. It was founded and still is in St. Paul, Minnesota and publishes the journal Marriage and the Family and Family Relations and so forth, and it's been very interesting I think, especially to me over the past fifteen or twenty years how I think we're slowly starting to see some of these come together again. They had gone out more and more on their own, but now we're realizing we studying the same things, that we're concerned about the same kind of things. The other thing I

wondered if you wanted to comment about, and it's certainly – your work it speaks to, and we talked about it a little bit, but it has to do with the translation of knowledge from research in the laboratory to policy and ultimately the practice.

Eron: Well, the research that I've been doing certainly has public policy implications, and I've been called upon on numerous times by government agencies to bring them my results. I've testified before congress a number of times.

Hagen: Was that a friendly environment or a hostile?

Eron: No.

Hagen: Okay.

Eron: Congressional committees were very, very friendly. That's why they asked me, because they wanted me to state my position. Senator Hollings was very friendly. Again, I'm trying to think of some of the other names and can't all of the sudden. But they've been very receptive. When I grew up and was doing – started my career, the point of view of most psychologists was 'I don't care what policy implicates. I just want to do this research and find out, and science is my forte and that's where I should be focusing my energy, and scientists, psychologists kind of look down on people who were kind of broadcasting their ideas. But I always felt that it was the responsibility of a social scientist when his findings have implications of public policy, to make them known and to get involved.

Hagen: I think for the most part people would agree with that these days, but twenty years ago they didn't.

Eron: No, they didn't.

Hagen: I remember Eleanor Maccoby was very nervous in the early 80's –

Eron: Yes, I'm sure.

Hagen: -- and now she's on the forefront of speaking for the implications of the national daycare or her studies of sex differences and so forth.

Eron: Yes. She's been very good. Ever since her early days with Sears she's been doing good stuff. And I would agree, I think it's an obligation if you know something and it's going to affect how kids are raised or how – you should do something about it.

Hagen: The problem is when it gets to the level where emotional reactions are greater than rational –

Eron: Yes.

Hagen: I remember two or three years ago I was at some meetings in Washington about whether we should have national testing at the high school level. The government representative from AERA was there and said basically they had decided as a group not to take a stance on it, because even though they thought a good case could be made for it they could see where the political climate was and it wasn't going to go any place. So I think you have to sometimes put your – you have to decide how to prioritize and when it's worth it and when it's not.

Eron: That's true.

Hagen: And certainly the area you're in is as hot or hotter than that with aggression and violence and the things that have been coming out.

Eron: Yes. All the school situations and so on.

Hagen: The National Rifle Association. Unbelievable!

Eron: That really – Charlton Heston is –

Hagen: He's from northern Michigan.

Eron: Oh, is he?

Hagen: Yes. He's from a little town called St. Helen. I drive by it when I go to my place up north.

Eron: You have your bulletproof vest on when you go by there?

Hagen: Yes. He grew up very poor in this little rural area.

Eron: But he always had his gun.

Hagen: Yes. I guess that got him through. Are there things that we haven't talked about that you would like to add?

Eron: I'll look at my notes here. I don't –

Hagen: The last item was, are there any things of your personal interests you'd like to comment on or ways in which your personal interests or your family has had a bearing on your scientific interest? You mentioned Madeline a couple times.

Eron: Well, Madeline's a psychologist.

Hagen: You worked with her I know.

Eron: Yes. She worked on the original study with us, she interviewed parents and she – Madeline never got her Ph.D., though she got married, raised children. She could have gotten it I suppose, but she did a lot of work, she had a M.A. from Columbia and did a lot of post-M.A. stuff, though she never wrote her dissertation, so she never –

Hagen: You know Nancy Stevenson didn't get hers until the 80's, and then after she worked as a clinician she decided that she didn't like it after all that work.

Eron: And she became a sculptor.

Hagen: And she became a sculptor.

Eron: But as I say, Madeline has always been very helpful to me in my work. My children have their own careers. My son is a writer and a poet, and teaches writing at the University of Colorado in Boulder.

Hagen: Oh, how nice. That's a nice place to visit. I have a son in Denver, so I get out there once a year or so.

Eron: He says he has two jobs. One is his teaching and the other is his writing, so he has written. He's had a lot of poetry published and short stories, but never – he's written a few novels but hasn't been able to get them published.

Hagen: Are there any of your mentees or graduate students of whom you're especially proud, or who you see, obviously Rowell is continuing the legacy?

Eron: Yes. And Eric Dubow now was my research assistant in 1980. He worked on that thirty-year follow-up.

Hagen: Oh, okay.

Eron: He did that, and now he's at Bowling Green and I think he just made professor and he is working with us on this forty year follow up.

Hagen: I see. Great.

Eron: So he's a co-principle investigator. And Lori Miller is also working with us, she was my Ph.D. at UIC. She's now at NYU. She had been at Columbia, and she's gotten tenure now at NYU. I don't know if you know Rolf Peterson who was at George Washington?

Hagen: I know the name. Yes.

Eron: He was a student of mine who's continued to publish and so on. I've had about thirty Ph.D.'s, most of them in clinical and they haven't been published, but these are some exceptions.

Hagen: I know when I was here in the early days it was almost a joke that the clinical faculty and students didn't publish.

Eron: Yes. They all became psychoanalysts.

Hagen: It was a separate little enclave and that has changed dramatically. But clinical was by far the biggest program also when I came in the sixties. It had over a hundred graduate students and thirty faculty, and most of them were psychoanalytic and they were being trained to have three or four patients a year and make their living that way.

Eron: And most of them settled in Ann Arbor.

Hagen: One of them is on this floor, he has his office right down here. In fact, two of them, because Carol Smokler, who is our landlord here. I don't know if you know Irv and Carol Smokler, they both got their Ph.D.'s in psych, but Irv left it as he said for his mental health and he's now a multi-millionaire in real estate, but his wife still has a small clinical practice up here.

Eron: Well, things have changed though, fortunately I think. There's still some of that old influence isn't there?

Hagen: Oh, yes.

Eron: -- your new appointments.

Hagen: There's very little in the department though because the students they recruit now too aren't really coming to do that kind of thing. It used to be that the students in clinical took ten, twelve years to finish and they -- we're just a different breed. And as you well know, we now have this pretty good program, I think, providing developmental and clinical as well, and developmental psychopathology --

Eron: There are not too many students.

Hagen: And there's not many in it.

Eron: And I think it's a good program.

Hagen: But just the fact that it's there and we are starting to get several through now shows that we have made progress, and I think that's certainly to Arnie's credit that he's pushed on that.

Eron: Arnie's going to retire soon isn't he?

Hagen: I think another three or four years. I think they'll stay here anyhow because Susan's really just sort of getting into her career at this point. And my guess is that Arnie will --

Eron: Can tag around.

Hagen: I hope so. I hope so. He makes very important contributions. Harold is retiring in June.

Eron: Yes, I know that.

Hagen: So that's the –

Eron: Is he going to hang around or is he going to China?

Hagen: As far as I know. Well, he'll probably still go there back and forth but they just spent a lot of money remodeling their house, so I think they're committed to staying at this point in time.

Eron: Oh, I haven't seen it. Very good.

Hagen: Amazing how many people do.

Eron: Well, I came –

Hagen: You came to retire here.

Eron: Most people go to Florida or Arizona or Palm Springs, but I come here. I'm here for the seasons.

Hagen: Is there anything else you'd like to add? I think we've pretty well covered the waterfront?

Eron: Yes, I think so. We haven't said anything about clinical child psychology.

Hagen: Okay. That's a good idea.

Eron: Alan Ross, incidentally, he was one of my students that I think was very instrumental in getting that going. Marion Radtke-Yarrow, I think, is – is there a program here – well, our child developmental psychopathology program would be.

Hagen: Right. That's certainly – and I would guess that the majority of the students are interested in child/family kinds of things.

Eron: Yes.

Hagen: Because we have the Center for the Child and the Family too and it's actually in the psych building. It's run as a freestanding clinic, but it's where a lot of the students do their training.

Eron: I think Alan passed away in about –

Hagen: I think you're right.

Eron: It's interesting, his wife was a student of mine at Smith while I was – so starting it while I was at Yale, and from 1950 to until I went to Iowa in 1962 I taught at the Smith College School of Social Work.

Hagen: Oh, really!

Eron: They have a very unusual program, they did at that time, where they took all their academic work during the summer and then had their field placements during the year.

Hagen: Wow, that is unusual. I've never heard of that.

Eron: Yes. It was quite a place, and his wife was one of my students.

Hagen: It wasn't Dorthea Ross was it? I knew a Dorthea Ross.

Eron: No. Ilsa Wallace, it was.

Hagen: I know one other thing I wanted to ask you about because we're getting more and more interested in it. What about in your career, what do you see happening now in terms of international influences?

Eron: Oh, I think they're much greater. There's much more communication between psychologists across borders, and I think cross-national cross-cultural studies are very important. We are certainly doing them, Rowell and I. We have our study of development of aggression in four different countries; in the U.S., Poland, Israel, Finland, Australia and –

Hagen: And you have genuine collaborators in each of those countries?

Eron: Yes. These are actually people that I have known through the years who I vaged into study groups and now we have a close collaboration with Adam Franczek in Poland, and Rita Bachrach in Israel, Kristi Lagerspetz in Finland, Peter Sheehan in Australia. We've kind of – not doing much in Australia any more but we are very much involved in longitudinal studies just like ours which are being done in Finland, Poland and Israel.

Hagen: And they're being done so that you can compare data of cross- cultures.

Eron: But for example, with the television findings we find they've pretty much consistent with a number of other kinds of differences. It's interesting in Israel we had two groups of subjects, one of which is a city school in Tel Aviv and the other is in the kibbutz outside of Tel Aviv, and we've got completely opposite results in those two communities.

Hagen: Oh, really!

Eron: In the Tel Aviv community there is this relation between television violence viewing and aggression that we've had before. But in the kibbutz there's no relation.

Hagen: But is there enough TV viewing to even --?

Eron: Yes, there is TV. viewing, but it's always done, all the children together with adults present and they discuss what's going on the TV., and that, I think, is very --

Hagen: Well, that's a very different situation.

Eron: And aggression itself is discouraged in the kibbutz, that is, aggression towards each other. In terms of outside forces I don't know if that's discouraged, but certainly within the kibbutz there is discouragement, so there we find no relation.

Hagen: That's interesting.

Eron: Whereas in the Tel Aviv area there is the same –

Hagen: Sure. SRCD set up an international committee in the mid 70's, so it's been about twenty-five years. And initially I think it was set up to encourage scholars from other countries to get involved with the society and with research activities. In some ways there's been a bit of a backlash in recent years. I think that there was a feeling that we're primarily American U.S., and that we sort of thought we set the stage for things and that many people in other countries feel they're doing work that – well, it might be different, it's as good or better than, and so we've had to be very sensitive to that. And there actually as you know now some international organizations that some people view as being competitive with us. I don't think that we view them that way. I think they should be viewed as complimentary, but it is a real tension as to know how to work out those kinds of relations. And we try to get people from other countries on our key committees, but of course it's difficult because it's incredibly expensive to bring to the meetings and so forth. So it's something that we're still wrestling with, and I think APA is seeing some of the same things as well.

Eron: Oh, sure.

Hagen: There's no easy answer. But certainly the quantity and quality of work being done in many different countries has improved dramatically. In some places, I think, have really been catching up to the U.S., whereas I think –

Eron: I know the work in Italy, for example, has been very, very good. Gian Vitorio Caprara -- So you know who he is?

Hagen: No, I don't.

Eron: He's been working with Al Bandura early in his career. He's done some work with us.

Hagen: Oh, I've seen the name with Bandura. Yes, now that you mention it. Yes.

Eron: He does very good stuff.

Hagen: So again, I think that's one of those directions where we're going to see a lot more happening and a lot more positive kinds of things. I think the other thing it's really done is make us be much more aware of limitations on the kinds of findings we have because it's easy to think, well these are universal or they apply to all children and families.

Eron: Well, just like that Israeli study that was –

Hagen: Exactly. Yes.

Eron: -- there were important differences.

Hagen: And then we found in China some very interesting things over the past fifteen or so years with children with diabetes, because when we first started going over to China and met with people there they didn't even admit they had children with diabetes. What was happening is they weren't getting insulin and they were dying, so of course they didn't have them. Now they do have insulin and they're finding the same things we find, and the same kinds of issues and problems are coming up. So a lot of it has to be put in time and place, using Glen Elders' phrase, you know, which I think is again one of the very important lessons. And if I think back in my early days and my training wouldn't even think of those things. Those weren't part of the zeitgeist. Now we realize we have to. I think we've covered the waterfront, so we'll be signing off now.