

## Ellin K. Scholnick

- Born July 10, 1936
- A.B. (1958) Vassar College, Ph.D. (1963) University of Rochester

### Major Employment

- Assistant/Associate/Full/Emerita Professor of Psychology, University of Maryland: 1967-present

### Major Areas of Work

- Cognitive development

### SRCD Affiliation

- Chair of Local Arrangements Committee (1987), *Child Development* Editorial Board (1974-1977)



## SRCD ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW

Ellin Scholnick

Interviewed by Melanie Killen  
At the University of Maryland at College Park  
June 14, 2004

**Killen:** This is an SRCD Oral History Interview. I'm talking with Ellin Scholnick, and this is Melanie Killen conducting the interview, and we are at the University of Maryland at College Park, Maryland, and today is June 14<sup>th</sup>, 2004. This will be an interview where we have some guidelines and questions and we'll just talk with you about what you'd like to talk about and cover things. And we've got sort of an outline of questions, but we can jump around and do whatever we'd like. We have several different sections. Is there a particular way that you'd like to go into it?

Scholnick: No.

**Killen:** Okay. Well, I'd like first to ask you about your general intellectual history, I guess to start off, to describe your family background with any childhood or adolescent experiences that are of interest. And you can include the educational and occupational characteristics of your parents, where you were born, you grew up, your schooling, that kind of thing.

Scholnick: Okay. I'm the, I guess, the third generation in America of a set of people who—my grandparents emigrated from Eastern Europe. And I never knew my paternal grandparents, but my maternal grandparents were, you know—my grandfather was a tailor, didn't speak much English. The next generation, which included my mother and father, were—well, my father was a furrier during World War II. Things were going well, but at the end of the Second World War the furs that he was dyeing were dying, lost their popularity. And so he—his business folded and he actually then ran a gas station and he had a heart attack. And so it wasn't a very affluent family at all. My mother used to do interior decorating for friends, it started out for friends and then it moved to just a general clientele. So she was a working mother, wasn't home very much, and I had an older brother. But my father had maybe a year or so of college, my mother didn't have any, but that didn't mean that they weren't very intellectually vibrant people; very, very much interested in politics, you know, did a lot of popular reading, but not well educated. And so, in fact, my intellectual history was more determined by my friends than anyone else. And I had a very, very close friend whose mother was a Vassar graduate and she was going to go to Vassar, and in our group of friends everybody went there and so, so did I. And what was very, very lovely is that the mother was the head of Brooklyn Vassar Club, and so I applied for a Vassar Club scholarship which enabled me, in part, to go to Vassar, and that was what I did. And now we're going to move into—that's going to quickly get us out of childhood. And when I went I was

going to be—I had written poetry since I was very small and I was going to be the great American poet and novelist, until I started taking English courses and I didn't like them. I guess what I didn't like at that time was that literature is a very interpretive medium, and so what one person sees the next person doesn't see or sees in a different way. Moreover in—early in my sophomore year my father died, and I thought, well, that's lovely to be the great American novelist, but maybe you don't have the talent. And besides, what are you going to do a couple of years from now when you're going to graduate. And so I decided, well, what does one do in those times? One becomes an elementary school teacher, so I switched to child study. And that turned out to be extraordinarily fortunate. The choice at Vassar was fortunate; the choice of child study was very fortunate. Yeah, I learned how to be a nursery school teacher and immediately discovered that wasn't my thing. I'm just—I'm—maybe now, but not then that wasn't. I was very shy and that wasn't it, but intellectually it was. Vassar was an extraordinary environment. In fact, probably as extraordinary as I encountered until I became a college professor. That was because it, it was really a liberal arts college education, not just that you could explore, but the idea that you would read textbooks, take multiple choice exams was just not in, in their vocabulary, their teaching vocabulary.

**Killen: What were some of the courses you remember that you liked?**

Scholnick: So, oh, yeah. So I'll talk about one that has nothing to do with child study, which was my major, and then I'll talk about child study itself. The course that I liked the best was a course in art history. It occurred in my senior year because everybody waited to get into this course, and it was one of the largest courses in the university, which meant that you had a hundred students in this course. But the course was team taught and every teacher was an expert in his or her field. So the person I'll remember, because later there was contact again, it was a guy whose name of Adolph Katzenellenbogen and he was doing research on the iconography of the windows at Chartres and you wouldn't think that that was exciting, but it was.

**Killen: Sounds exotic.**

Scholnick: It was, it was wonderful. Moreover, discussion sections were led by the faculty, so it was a just wonderful aesthetic experience. My second most influential course was indeed child study in the introduction to child study. It was, again, a team-taught course. And the people who taught it were Joe—Joe Stone and Joe Church. Church was a graduate of Clark University and Stone was related to Columbia University, and they were friends of the famous Dr. Spock, who would come in. And the very first thing—

**Killen: Would come to Vassar?**

Scholnick: Yeah. And the very first thing that we read was something that, Melanie, will ring true to you; we read the manuals for child care at different times in the twentieth century, which will remind you of the Hulbert book review that I did. And the very first thing, in effect, that they taught you was that there weren't any magic formulas, that it in fact was all filtered through different scientific sensibilities. We—and that continued in the child study courses. They had Stone and Church, Church growing up in the Clark-Wernerian tradition; they had Henrietta Smith, who grew up with—in the Sears-Maccoby tradition; and they had some other faculty members. And there was a senior seminar in which we would sit down and all of a sudden the professors would be arguing with one another about research and theoretical issues. So the background that I grew up with at Vassar was one where you immediately understood the interpretive nature of knowledge.

**Killen: How many students were in these courses? Like, how big were they?**

Scholnick: Well, generally there were 10 or 15 or so—

**Killen: Small.**

Scholnick: –so there were small classes, you got to know one another. You also did a senior thesis, that I did, and that was my first attempt to ever do any research of my own, and that was kind of interesting, too. I did it on the child's concept of time, and I made up a little interview and I went out and I, you know, interviewed students and–

**Killen: –child's concepts of time.**

Scholnick: –of time, yeah. And so–

**Killen: That's interesting.**

Scholnick: Yeah, and it was interesting, and so you had to learn to analyze data and to report it and write it up. And because I was a child study major but not a psych major, I hadn't had the background and laboratory courses, but, you know–

**Killen: Let me just ask you, so there was–child study was a separate major from psychology?**

Scholnick: Yes it was.

**Killen: It was a separate department.**

Scholnick: In a separate department. And so I took–so that meant I could take the courses in child–in, in psychology that I wanted to take. So, yeah, I took statistics and I took abnormal psych and intro to psych, but I guess I, I wasn't grounded at all in the experimental method. Which, as it turns out when we get to the next stories, was a good thing. And the people–

**Killen: Sounds rather progressive actually, that they had child study–**

Scholnick: It was a–yeah, an outgrowth of the Child Welfare Movement. Though I think that that was typical, there were places that had laboratory nursery schools and this was one of them. So–

**Killen: –laboratory nursery school at Vassar?**

Scholnick: Yeah, there was a very famous one. They trained many nursery school teachers and they were very much aligned with your–with Bank Street College of Education. So there was–so they were at the forefront of child psychology as we know it. Not the experimental necessarily, because the other thing that was interesting is, you know, they, rather than breaking up psychology or child psychology into modules–we'll do, study motivation in this one, and this one is social development and this one is intellectual development was–no, they, they saw and they tried to do something that I've always tried to do, which is to understand that whatever takes place doesn't take place in a module, it takes place in the head and body of a kid, and that was–so from the very beginning I was trained in that tradition. Now the thing that was interesting about that was I was going to be this nursery school teacher and I was a very, very good student. By the way, Sandra Scarr-Salapatek was a classmate of mine.

**Killen: Oh really?**

Scholnick: Okay, so she grew out of that tradition–

**Killen: Do you remember her then, or–**

Scholnick: Yeah, a little bit, but not much. She was a sociology major and she got into child psychology later, so there wasn't anybody else in developmental who was going to go on to graduate school in, in developmental. And in fact, when I was in my senior year this is when Henrietta Smith

and Joe Church took me aside and said, “What are you going to do with your life?” And they persuaded me to apply to graduate school.

**Killen: What had you been thinking about before they talked to you?**

Scholnick: No. I was—you know, there I was, I was going to be a primary school teacher, which would have been a disaster, but, yeah, I was going to do that and—but they told me that—they didn't tell me where to apply, and this is very funny. And so I, I—what did I know about psychology? I didn't know that there was a separate field because—called developmental. I thought the only place you really got to deal with people was in clinical psych. So I applied to clinical psychology graduate schools; I applied to Yale and I applied to Michigan and I applied to Clark. And there were two very strong impediments—I didn't realize that even then—that clinical was a highly competitive field and you couldn't get in very easily. I thought, well look, I'm a Vassar Phi Beta Kappa, how hard is this going to be? But I hadn't taken the standard courses and that was—

**Killen: Do you—any professors didn't—**

Scholnick: —tell me that. No, so I didn't have that kind of guidance. So there I was—

**Killen: You had the intellectual guidance—**

Scholnick: I had the intellectual guidance. And then there was sec—the second issue: I was a woman. And women didn't go to graduate school in psychology. And in fact, most of the places were pretty explicit about that—

**Killen: How did they convey that? I mean, how did you get that message?**

Scholnick: Well, I went to an interview and, and had an interview with a famous developmental psychologist, Bernie Kaplan, and—who's very well known at Clark. You may remember him because you went to Clark as an undergraduate. And do you know that Bernie took one look at me and he said, “Why are you going to graduate school? What are you going to do with it afterwards when you're going to get married, you know, and there—this education was going to go to waste?”

**Killen: What did you say?**

Scholnick: Oh, I—and I didn't realize at that point that I was already a closet feminist—and I said to him, “Look, you're doing this because you have to earn money. I'm going to do this because I love it.” I didn't get into Clark. So there I was wanting to go to graduate school and all of the graduate schools, which you have to realize were the top of the line graduate schools—how stupid was I not to know this—wouldn't let me in. And there was Joe Church and Joe Church said to me, “But I have a good friend whose name is John Flavell and he's at Rochester”—a clinical psychologist at that time, because if you're in Clark, developmental and clinical were very closely intertwined. So I applied late and they were so impressed that a Vassar woman would apply to them. And not only was it the Vassar issue, but they never allowed women in; there was not a single woman on their faculty. And they—

**Killen: At University of Rochester?**

Scholnick: Rochester, that's right. And they would let in maybe one a year on sufferance, but I was an alternate and I got in.

**Killen: So what was that like when you first went and you were in this—**

Scholnick: No, it was wild. It was, you know, it was wild in two ways. First of all I was going in clinical and my background academically was far superior to all of these folks, and I mean that. So we would be in seminars, we would read textbooks, and these people would give what's a sort of

knowledge telling question, which is, didn't Wundt have this effect? And the professor would say, yes, and so they were showing off. So I was very, very quiet because this wasn't the way that I was educated, et cetera. And, yeah, I was surrounded by guys and that posed a problem for them and for me. I was isolated in many ways. And for them, because at first the reaction was, well, sweet little girl, we'll take care of you and, you know, but we'll say all the wonderful things—

**Killen: From the faculty or from the students?**

Scholnick: Students. And then came the first exam, and that ended, and that kind of—

**Killen: You did well and they were surprised and then—**

Scholnick: Then—that's right. So, and the professors, in some ways, were very good to me. For example, I was—everybody else went to the V.A.—Veteran's Administration—to do their clinical internship and I went to the medical school and was able to work with child clinicians. So that was wonderful. On the other hand, psychology was not only sexist in who was coming through, but in what they were studying. So psychoanalysis was still in its heyday, which doesn't say anything good about women. And, in addition to that, I was working in a hospital which was psychoanalytically oriented and very, very interestingly, this is the time when, I guess his name was Engel, was working on psychoanalytic—psychosomatic internalizations of psychoanalytic theory, so infants who were having difficulty feeding because there were problems in the mother-child relationship. So this is obviously the time when Bo—around when Bowlby was also beginning to emerge. And the guy's name was Renee Spitz, and he also talked about the development of foundlings, you know, of what happened in the orphanage and the withering of intellectual capacity. So they were very, very highly influenced in this. And this was at a medical school so the guys went around in starched white coats with long cigars, and I wasn't quite going to make it.

**Killen: You mean the others, the other residents, or—**

Scholnick: And, and, and the, and the, and the psychiatrists where I was.

**Killen: What, what time period are we talking about now?**

Scholnick: So we're talking about the early '60s.

**Killen: Okay. Early '60s. So that's when you were at Rochester and that's when you were doing the medical training. I mean that—**

Scholnick: I had my clinical training there. But I also had John Flavell.

**Killen: So what was it like?**

Scholnick: —and Emery Cowan. So let me—Emery Cowan, who broke the model of clinical understanding of children by beginning community psychology. And that was the time when he was developing prevention, primary prevention, going into schools and trying to find kids who would have difficulty and developing programs for them that would ward off difficulties and, and—though would be very, very reminiscent of Ken Rubin, because it was of teaching them interpersonal skills, friendship skills, et cetera. So the kinds of things—

**Killen: So Emery Cowan was on the faculty—**

Scholnick: So Emery was on the faculty, but he was not whom I worked with, I worked with John. And this—John was a clinician and John was doing stuff on word association by schizophrenics, et cetera, and his—that's who his students were until me. I was his first developmental student, and he was writing his book on Piaget which—and, and of course since I'd come from Vassar I already was pretty

conversant in Piaget. And in addition to writing the book on Piaget, he was doing the work on role taking, and I said, "John, I need to know how to do research." And he said, "Well, I'll let you code my data." And so I did that, I coded some of tapes on, on the role-taking task. I'm trying to think, it, it was the task on trying to outsmart someone on guessing game in which you, in effect, had to do recursive thinking. It was the one where, you know, the guessing game was hiding a nickel or you had a nickel and dime, one on one cup, one on the other, you removed one and the person either was allowed to choose one cup. And the question—and you got to keep the money if he, if he chose the wrong, wrong cup. And so you may remember this, and so you had to figure out, well, the answer is, I—he obviously removed the dime, so I should choose the nickel. And then it goes on from there, but he knows that I'm going to do that. So I coded those data, and that was—

**Killen: What, and how old were the children?**

Scholnick: And these are seven, seven—I think they were seven to eleven, I'm not sure—

**Killen: Oh, so elementary school.**

Scholnick: But that was his first—that was his first developmental research monograph. But it was also a time because, and this—where I was still very interested in children's thinking and much was happening in the development of—

**Killen: When you worked him, were you working with a team of other students or were you working pretty much just with him on this?**

Scholnick: No. No. There, there were two other students, but that I was doing this alone. There was a guy named Charlie Fry, a social psychologist, then went off to Virginia, and eventually my roommate who, having started the Vassar tradition, she applied and got in, although her area was social: June Baker Higgins, who then went on to—I think she's now was at Bridgeport or somewhere, so there weren't developmental students. The—

**Killen: So you were pretty much on your own?**

Scholnick: Very, very much on my own. In fact that's probably been, in some respect, the history of my work in developmental psychology, never in a large group of developmentalists. But we got to talking a lot and I was interested in categorization and he gave me this study by Jack Wohlwill, another Clark professor—

**Killen: All these names—**

Scholnick: —another Clarkie. And so, and it had to do with Piagetian theory and using scalogram analyses to test the theory. And particularly the issue was the issue of developmental sequences. And so I—you know, Piaget had a theory of the development of categorization as to—you know, that had to do with things like being able to build the single class, that that class was exhaustive, that that class was imbedded in other classes, that the higher up you go in the hierarchy the more classes that are encompassed, et cetera. So I took Wohlwill's analysis, which he did on number, and I did my thesis on categorization and the argument being that if there were indeed a sequence that it ought to show up so that kids ought to go from the earliest—from the easiest to the hardest, stop at one point and not be able to go any further. And so that was my thesis.

**Killen: Do you remember the title of your thesis?**

Scholnick: Yeah, it was "A Scalogram Analysis of Classificatory Behavior." And it actually won an APA dissertation prize for the best thesis in the developmental and mental health area.

**Killen: Excellent.**

Scholnick: So, and it really was the inspiration for one of the early pieces of Flavell, a piece that I still go back to that had to do with developmental sequences, but now go back to in a different way. Because what you began to discover when you did this is all of the issues in Piagetian theory. The issues that come from—you don't get, you don't straight sequences. I did, but they, they really—there, there were a lot of problems. Kids don't master something overnight despite the qualitative nature Piagetian theory. That is they have it shakily and then—so, so the criterion that you set isn't that people do zero and then, let's say, if you give three tests that they get all three right, so that became an issue of where is the right cutoff point. It's more probabilistic and it turns out that things are indeed contextual, so you change the stimuli, the number of things on a class inclusion and you're going to get different answers. And why is that? Because they're not really—either they're using logic or they're not and they're rather relying very much on stimulus properties so that it's much more contextual than you think. And there isn't this domain-general, logically driven notion of the development—

**Killen: So this is sort of part of the arguments of *décollage*, I mean was this—**

Scholnick: That's right. It was the part of the arguments of *décollage*. Yeah, and the arguments that eventually, you know, undo Piagetian theory, though it took me a long time to realize it. But it was John who was thinking about and we had discussions about one part of it, and when you say, even, that there is an invariant sequence it—sometimes that sequence is almost given in the nature of the logic, so how could you have class inclusion if you don't know what the class is, okay? Whereas other things might be theoretical leaps and that the analysis of Piaget was made up of both of those. So he then took it and this was this wonderful paper he wrote on developmental sequences. Was that the one—one of them was in the *Genetic Psychology Monograph* and another one I don't—there were two of them, but where he began to talk about the different paths and influences in development, the development might be bi-directional, that there might be things that moderate others, et cetera. So it was absolutely wonderful.

**Killen: So you had a lot of conversations with him about this; I mean, this was part of your thinking, part of what you were working on?**

Scholnick: Part of it, I think, was there, was conversations, yeah, and part of it just was. I don't know how it generated, but yeah, so we either both thought about it or we had conversations. And certainly when I wrote my dissertation on—you know, he had read that and he had input in it, so yeah, there were conversations. What that's also telling you is that I think that what I got out of it was highly theoretical. Now what you also have to realize is what developmental psychology was like at that time, and it really was—

**Killen: By the way, what was the year of your dissertation?**

Scholnick: '63.

**Killen: Okay. So—**

Scholnick: —ago, incredible was that developmental psychology, was a dif—was really just emerging and it was in an era in which, yeah, there were grand theories, but logical positivism pervaded a lot of psychology. You were lucky in Clark that you escaped it, I—and Rochester was one of the places, one of the more eclectic places, but you were reading it. Now if you were reading logical positivism there is no mind.

**Killen: Right.**

Scholnick: Behaviorism was just emerging. They were still in the throes of psychoanalytic theories. There weren't really interesting theories of personality, but it was a time when Bruner was just

beginning to assemble his group and doing the work on concept learning that began to talk about strategies, ploys, et cetera, and that tasks that were given to animals were actually conceptually complex. And Roger Brown was beginning to record Adam, Eve, and Sarah.

Okay, so there I am and all of this is going on and I'm getting towards my dissertation and what am I going to do now with the rest of my life. And so I applied for a clinical job. John tried to get me a job with the Roger Brown group, but that didn't work. And there—and I decided that I would go to the Eastern Psychological Association and find out what it was like to do a job interview because I wasn't serious at that point, I was still in the middle of my dissertation, but if I practiced then when the time came I wouldn't know how to do this. And lo and behold I met Sonia Osler—

**Killen: What city was it in, do you remember?**

Scholnick: Atlantic City I think. Okay. At Hopkins, and I was thinking I'd get a clinical—

[pause in tape]

**Killen: This is side two of the continuation of the interview with Ellin Scholnick for the SRCO Oral History interview on June 14<sup>th</sup>, and with Melanie Killen at the University of Maryland. So you were talking about meeting Sonia.**

Scholnick: Okay, Sonia Osler. And she was at John's Hopkins Medical School and she invited me for a job interview at Hopkins Medical School. She had a research unit there, I could do research and also do clinical work. And though I had another job offer at UCLA in their clinical program, that seemed to me to be wonderful, and it was. So—

**Killen: That's interesting, your first job then was with a woman advisor, supervisor.**

Scholnick: That's right, a woman mentor and the rea—and that—you have to realize that Sonia went to Hopkins when they wouldn't accept women and, in fact, when you went to the Hopkins Faculty Club, women could go in for lunch but they couldn't go unescorted for dinner.

**Killen: Is that right?**

Scholnick: So, so her—and so you're going now into an elite institution, I mean it, somewhat southern, but an elite institution. Hopkins Medical School is, was number one, may still be. It's either in the one to three range. And so this is a very elitist institution in which psychologists are the lowest on the totem pole, but she was in psychiatry and medical psychology with Leon Eisenberg and—oh, this is wonderful to remember all of this—and this was the time when Leon was working with Leon Kanner on autism, okay, so that was there. In addition, Leon Eisenberg started to be interested in hyperactivity and the group that he gathered around him, and this included Keith Conners, was interested in the effects of Ritalin and the paradoxical effects of Ritalin, you know, on young children with hyperactivity. So that was going on at that—

**Killen: So you found yourself in a number of very sort of intellectually kind of exciting moments in time—**

Scholnick: Very. These were intellectually exciting people. So with Sonia, she came out of the learning tradition, and she was working on concept learning. And there was this woman, Tracy Kendler, who was trying to bring this down to the developmental level and talking about young children, something, by the way, is absolutely not true, that young children learn response by stimulus response, stimulus response connections, whereas older children can categorize. And the way that you know that this is true, that is, if you're rewarding, let's say, press this lever for the reds and this lever for the blues, and all of a sudden you switch the contingencies so now which lever is rewarded, which the older child immediately makes a reversal shift whereas the younger child doesn't, or if you switch

dimensions. So Sonia was interested in this and we were running a lot, and, and Sonia—when I was in Rochester I really didn't get any background in experimental psychology because that was John. John is not an experimental psychologist; he comes out of the mold of Piaget. He's not interested in manipulating conditions, he's interested in presenting challenging, creative tasks to children and seeing what they do and then making a story of it. And that's, you know—and so Sonia was an experi—a genuine experimental psychologist and that's how I learned how to do that. But, as we did this, what we started to work on was the nature of strategies in young children because the issue was that if you look at what their response patterns are what you discover is young children, very young children in a difficult task perseverate, whereas older children begin to develop not just win-stay, lose-shift strategies, but they develop complex strategies. And so we borrowed from—because we're at Hopkins and Wendell Garner was there, who was studying information theory and applying it to psychology, we used information theory to do response analyses to discover that indeed there were redundancies in the pattern of how children responded, et cetera, et cetera.

**Killen:** So this was very different from your graduate training—

Scholnick: This was very different.

**Killen:** —theory and the theoretical issue of the time and Piaget stages and—

Scholnick: Yeah, but Sonia was very, very interested Piaget—

**Killen:** It's cognitive. It sounds cognitive.

Scholnick: —and very cognitive, that's right.

**Killen:** So—and you were a full-time research clinician—

Scholnick: Yes. Well, I had started as a clinician. And quite frankly it—I'm probably one of the few people who was a clinical psychologist and said no, as opposed to everybody else who does experimental psychology and after a time says I want to help people, and now I've got to—got my clinical background. No, I love the intellectual part of it.

**Killen:** So you really didn't do that much clinical work there, you did more of the research.

Scholnick: I did some clinical work and I did it with Carola Guttmacher. Carola Guttmacher was married to one of the Guttmachers, there were twins, who was the guy who did Planned Parenthood. And—but she taught me a lot about child clinical work, and I did some assessment, but basically that really wasn't what I wanted to do. And that was also the time at which—now we're in the early—we're moving into mid-60s and—when Head Start—this is the Johnson era, when Head Start was formed, and we began to look at issues that had to do with socio and economic background and concept learning, there wasn't much you could tell about it, but we did, and the effects of Head Start on concept learning. But Sonia was thinking of switching and the money was running out, and you can be a mentee for only so long. And so by that time I, by the way, was married and so I had to go look for another job. And so it was also a time when universities were expanding all over the place. And so I really had my choice of jobs and I could have stayed, gone to Maryland Medical School and continued on to do research on soft money. I applied at GW where there was Jackie Goodnow and—I'm trying to think of someone who then went on to Barnard [Lila Braine] and they were on soft money, and they had a job opening, but they didn't think that that was—I should join them because I was a woman and they were on soft money, so this job should go to a man, and it went to Eugene Abravenel, who you know too, okay. And I went to Maryland and I interviewed for the job at Maryland. And the job was not a developmental job, it was a job for a clinical psychologist in a department that was a behavioral department. And so they were so impressed that I was doing stuff on experimental psychology, that I could talk to them about discrimination and concept learning, and that I came from Hopkins Hospital, you know, and I had a publication record that they hired me into their mental health program.

**Killen: So this is Maryland Medical School?**

Scholnick: No.

**Killen: No.**

Scholnick: Went from—I'm here at University of Maryland—

**Killen: Oh, this was University of Maryland. Okay, I see—**

Scholnick: That's right.

**Killen: —so this was your first—**

Scholnick: —this was in '67—

**Killen: Oh my goodness.**

Scholnick: —and so—

**Killen: So it was pretty unusual, you were a—**

Scholnick: And I—and you also had to know—

**Killen: —this experimental background—**

Scholnick: —again, what was the composition of that department—there were 25 faculty and two women in the department. One of them was Nan Anderson, who was tenured, and the other was Jan Johnson. And the way they treated Jan Johnson when she came was they immediately siphoned her off into the dean's office, so she was half time. So there was no way that that lady was really going to succeed well.

**Killen: Right. So you're saying that there are 25 faculty and there was basically two women.**

Scholnick: That's right.

**Killen: And one was half time.**

Scholnick: And one was half time. So it was a really big deal for them and, in fact, the old chair of the—former chair of the department was sure that during the interview I was flirting with him.

**Killen: That's amazing.**

Scholnick: It was amazing.

**Killen: Now how did you meet you husband? You met him—**

Scholnick: Okay, how did I meet my husband? My hus—I don't—this, this—does this—

**Killen: Oh is that, let's see—**

Scholnick: —part of their story?

**Killen: Well, just, just very briefly, out of curiosity, how did it happen?**

Scholnick: Well I'll—

**Killen: I was just thinking about the having two careers—**

Scholnick: That's right. He—I was in the lab and—with Sonia and I was—and Harry Osser, who was a student of Eleanor Gibson, and there were several laboratory assistants who were Sonia's students. Sonia had taught at Goucher and then she took the best of her students and brought them over. And she also hired Ruth Katzenellenbogen, who was the daughter of the Adolph Katzenellenbogen who was my college professor. But anyhow—

**Killen: Oh, that's—**

Scholnick: —so I was very friendly with one of them, Sandy Shapiro, and Sandy—and my husband was looking for someone to date and somehow or other he landed up, well, with Sandy Shapiro's name and Sandy said, "Well, I have this friend," and that's how we met. He was finishing up his graduate work in history at Maryland and his home was in Baltimore, so we dated. In fact, our second date was when the Kennedy assassination occurred and, in fact—and Sonia was having a party the next night and she was wondering whether to have that party. Anyhow—

**Killen: So you were two PhDs—**

Scholnick: No, he wasn't yet a PhD. He was working on his graduate—he actually took his comprehensives—he studied for his comprehensives over our honeymoon. And he went on and just when I got my job at Maryland he got his job at Towson, so—

**Killen: Oh, how nice.**

Scholnick: —we were always having—well, that was nice except, you know, we were always hoping that we'd live in the same, that we'd be, be in a place where we could be in the same city at once and that never happened, so we were always commuting. One went one direction, one went the—

**Killen: Well, how far was the commute then?**

Scholnick: Well, when we first got married he was still at Maryland and I was at Hopkins. He was doing his research and since he was using—and he was using, actually, the Library of Congress resources and—but we lived in Baltimore. So—and he was teaching as, you know, a part-time—you know, the graduate assistant, I guess you'd call it a lecturer, at Maryland Nursing School. So we stayed there for three to four years and that was when I got my job at Maryland and he had his job at Towson. But he was very chivalrous and he said, "I won't let you commute the long way, I'll do it."

**Killen: I see.**

Scholnick: And that didn't last very long and we then moved to Columbia and bought a house in Columbia.

**Killen: So you've been in this ar—in this region, geographical region, for a long time.**

Scholnick: Yeah, so I've only had, really, two academic jobs. Although while I was at Hopkins Medical School I wanted to do teaching and I taught both at Hopkins, in the Homewood Campus, and I taught a very interesting course at Goucher for women who were returning to aca—to, to school and so they had a special program for these women.

**Killen: Well, that's interesting.**

Scholnick: And it was, it was very interes—we're getting off topic, but yes. And that was very interesting because these women were extraordinarily bright and extraordinarily unsure of themselves. I remember having a student who got the top grade in the course and she never showed up after the exam, and I wondered. Time went by and I called her and, and got her back to—

**Killen: Oh, that's nice.**

Scholnick: —doing it so—yeah, so there was—

**Killen: So you were able to kind of reciprocate after you had—some people helped you along and encouraged you—**

Scholnick: Yes, so—right. Anyhow, so I came to Maryland and I came in the clinic in clinical. Now I came in their mental health program and they were just splitting it apart into clinical and counseling, so it's the origin of their clinical program, and I was in the clinical part of it. And the very first year that I came one of the clinical professors died and I went in and took his co—took over his course, and that was also a very interesting—

**Killen: Was it child clinical or adult clinical?**

Scholnick: No, it was all clinic—

**Killen: Whole range.**

Scholnick: —you know, because I was already—I could teach clinical very easily, it was an abnormal psych course. And I remember the first exam he asked them why it was that women were more prone to depression than anyone, the males. And I re—and I told the class, "I'm not going to grade this question. I cannot do it for you, because I don't believe that that is true." But anyhow—

**Killen: Was there a developmental area—**

Scholnick: No, there was not.

**Killen: Okay.**

Scholnick: And there was no developmental area. But after that first year I, I went up for tenure and I got tenure—

**Killen: After one year here?**

Scholnick: After one year here, or maybe it was in the second—

**Killen: That's amazing.**

Scholnick: —that they put, put, put me up. I guess they were very happy because I was publishing, and this was still not a time of great—

**Killen: Yeah, this is unusual. You had a publication record in experimental.**

Scholnick: That's right. And, and that was true, and I'd stepped in and done these things. And so the chair, who at that point was Jack Bartlett—I guess this was in my second year—put me up and I went and got tenure. Now, at that point they, they had hired with me Dave Horton to build a cognitive area, and I was in the clinical area and it was—and I wasn't a clinician. I was, I was—there wasn't the developmental program, though I began to teach the developmental course and I developed the

developmental curriculum, the courses in child psychology. And I also—the graduate course in child psychology because I was the only one, and I taught my theories of development—

**Killen: So you're really the founder of the developmental area at the University of Maryland.**

Scholnick: Well there wasn't a developmental area, but yeah—

**Killen: But you were the initiator.**

Scholnick: —but I was the initiator of it in that ar—yeah, I was. And so I went into the cognitive area and that was better. But cogni—but cognitive psychologists, at that time—and, and the whole department really didn't understand developmental psychology. I think it—I worked very hard, I still do, to teach them what developmental psychologists do. So they sort of thought of that as baby stuff. That is, not only do you study children, but you did it in childish ways. That's okay, they could, they did their own thing. And—

**Killen: Well, it's actually not okay because it was a—**

Scholnick: But I had no mentor. What?

**Killen: Actually it isn't okay in that it is a, you know, a legitimate field in its own right.**

Scholnick: That's right, but it took them a while to do that. And so they went their own way and I went my own way, and I had my graduate students, et cetera. But eventually we hired Bill Hall and Dana Plude and there was Jan Johnson was already there. And so for a while we had a developmental area. And then—but again without—and, and, you know, the department did, by the time I left, it did have an appreciation of developmental because one of the good things is that, if you teach a core developmental theory course, which is just terrific stuff to teach, it is, as you know, I—

**Killen: Well, you do a wonderful job of it. We have many students who have taken your course.**

Scholnick: No, but the students, you, you proselytize students and it's not just that they do developmental stuff, but they begin to ask the developmental questions and they bring these questions to the areas in which they work. So it wasn't long before people in, in the various areas of the department understood that there was some interesting things going on. And so, you know, so that their students, so I sat in on their committees and that meant that the faculty understood—also began to understand what a developmental perspective was.

**Killen: Yeah, that's important.**

Scholnick: And that was good. And then also, I was forging links over to your department in human development, which was also undergoing transformation in terms of who it was that was in there and moving from an old line education department into developmental psychology.

**Killen: What do you think of as, you know, some of the papers and the studies that you've done that you—**

Scholnick: Just let me talk about that, because one of the questions—let me do it another way, not with papers.

**Killen: Okay.**

Scholnick: Because we really haven't, we haven't gone through—we haven't gone to an intellectual biography. So I started out as a Piagetian and I went into concept learning, but when I moved out of Hopkins back into psychology I did some concept learning stuff, but I also got hooked up with Frank

Murray and Bill Overton, who were transforming the Piaget Society. And so I got into, again, back into Piagetian research.

**Killen: So this is through the Jean Piaget Society?**

Scholnick: Yeah, because I didn't have the intellectual—I didn't—my intellectual soul mates weren't going to be in psychology for a while. And so I, you know, continued to do work on two aspects, on, on, on the larger theoretical questions, the question of does—you know, is development—you know, is there an invariant sequence of development, number one. And number two, were there linkages between cog—various elements in cognitive develop—in cognitive development and Piagetian theory. So, you know, was it true that if you mastered one conservation you mastered another, this is the *décollage* issue. And did certain conceptual bases of thinking influence language acquisition, et cetera? Now, so, so it was sort of looking at those kinds of issues. And when one does that in some ways there's a dismal story to tell, because sooner or later you're going to say, hey, what's wrong, something is the matter. In the meantime, I started supervising a student, Clara Wing, who was in speech and hearing, who was a speech and language specialist in the Department of Speech and Hearing, but there really wasn't anybody there who she was interested in. And she was interested in the semantics of logic. So what it is when chil—not just the, if P then Q, but what it is that children understand about words that have various entailments between clauses, that if which is probabilistic, although conveys something negative, et cetera. And so we did a lot of work on that, on the semantics of—

**Killen: Sounds like linguistics.**

Scholnick: Well, that was right. It was. It was a—and children, but it can—semantics not grammar. Now, when you do that then you're immediately going to ask about adult understanding. More than that you're going to begin to ask questions about what do the semantics have to do with the logic itself. And at that point Clara Hill, who was my good friend who was a counseling psychologist, was looking at therapy tapes and I was beginning to do everyday-reasoning interviews, okay? Using if—et cetera, on events that had to do with voting, for example, qualifications for voting, so if he is 21 then he can vote. Does that mean if he's not 21 that he can't vote, et cetera? So working on that.

**Killen: —everyday examples. So is that sort of the very beginning of your planning strategies—**

Scholnick: Oh yeah. No, no, the planning strateg—I'll come to that one. Thank you for reminding me. So that was going in—so what—I'll talk about that and then please remind me and I'll go back to the planning stuff. And so we dec—as we were doing the everyday reasoning stuff, we began to look at language protocols and discovered, indeed, that you could find in everyday language a lot of logic and et cetera. But I was using therapy tapes and, and interview protocols and I wondered what it was like younger. And at that time, related to SRCO, the Childes database was being assembled. And so I went into the Childes database with Clara and, lo and behold, we discovered that three and four year olds were doing the same thing. So that got me into what I—what I did for a long while was to look and to plumb those data, not just for issues that had to do with reasoning, but emotional language, and so it had to do with issues of when do children begin not only to use the language, but also use this causally, and also into metacognition. That is children's understanding of *know* and *think*, et cetera. So it's sort of odd that I wandered back into exactly where John Flavell was going—

**Killen: I was going to say, that's—right.**

Scholnick: But doing it in terms of their various uses of the word *know*, which might mean very, very different kinds of things working up to the certainty of evidence. So I was doing that. Now, in the middle of all this I took a sabbatical and went to what—the National Institute of Education. And it's appropriate that we talk about it because it was when Reagan was president and it was downtown Washington and I commuted the day, commuted on a bus from Columbia that passed by the Hilton at the very time of the assassination went on. But Reagan was also an assassinator in that he was about

to dismantle one of the most wonderful institutions for educational research because that was when they funded, for example, Pittsburgh and Illinois centers, and those were centers that were looking at the cognitive basis of reading, instruction and because there's a liberal bias they were also beginning to look at language, what we would call, not bilingualism but bi-coding. That is that the semantic codes that African-American versus middle class whites were using. So this was, yeah, sort of the Ebonics kind of stuff, but looking at the structure of that language. And I was working with extraordinary people, including—and the person who headed the unit was Susan Chipman. And so, and Sarah Freidman was there, who had come from NIH, and she said, “Well”—and Susan said, “You know, we're doing this, but these are specific skills. And what we really need to do is to ask how do children succeed in school? They succeeded if they were playful. So Ellin, why don't you read, why don't you spend your year reading”—

**Killen: I see.**

Scholnick: Okay.

**Killen: So that's how you—**

Scholnick: —on planning. And so I read with—and it was with Sarah, and out of that came planning book one and eventually planning book two.

**Killen: I see. Interesting.**

Scholnick: Right.

**Killen: So that sabbatical is pretty key in—sort of as a catalyst to get you into the planning research.**

Scholnick: Right. Right. So we did and that was what pro—and we sort of worked, and Sarah moved over as NIE began to collapse because Reagan literally dismantled it in order to have local control over the money spent in education, and local control meant conservatives. So I remember going to a White House conference that he had drawn up on, on the issue. And basically it was run by a Mormon and he said that, you know, what we need to do is inst—instead have local grants with people in the community doing it and, of course, I'm going to run our grant section and I'm going to have grants from it. And that was when, you know, you began to see not the liberal values, but you saw the other values creep in and also creep in in ways that I found slightly unethical. So, yeah, so I was there when that was happening. And the dismantling of N—of NIE, which began OERI with Judy Segal—you remember? Okay. And OERI became downsized and the people that were associated with all of the good programs moved out, some into the government and some back into universities. And those centers have virtually disappeared.

**Killen: Yeah, it's really—**

Scholnick: So there I was and I was doing that stuff and all alone because I was the—was one of the few women and was one of the first women full professors in BSOS Behavioral and Social Sciences, I was interested in kinds of women's issues. And so one summer I took a course in curriculum transformation with Debbie Rosenfeld, Rosenfeld and a whole group of people—

[pause in tape]

**Killen: This is a continuation of the interview with Ellin Scholnick at the University of Maryland, and it is June 14<sup>th</sup>, 2004 and this is Melanie Killen conducting the interview, and this is the third side. And Dr. Scholnick was talking about one of her more recent lines of research in the area of feminism.**

Scholnick: All right. So for the very first time I was with a group of women faculty and I was reading feminist literature. Now—and that had two different sorts of impact. One, it's out of that that I moved on to doing administrative things that were related to women and into my current job on faculty policies. But it also was the beginning of my rethinking of my research.

**Killen: Just for the record, can you say your current position?**

Scholnick: The position is Associate Provost for Faculty Affairs. And there've been some good things for women that I was able to do as a consequence of that, but it also changed me intellectually. We were not reading psychology, we weren't reading Maccoby or people like that, we weren't reading the sex difference literature. Instead we were reading feminist psychology. Now feminist psychology, the most recent part of it, is in a post-modernist tradition whereas the Piagetian tradition in which I grew is in the modernist tradition. It deals with abstractions, it deals with the universal child divorced of who is learning abstract structures divorced of con—divorced of content, but also was learning in no context whatsoever. It's as though there weren't a society that was influencing the child, because the child was learning universal structures and truths. You read the feminist literature and on the feminist literature makes an assumption that people might not agree with, that it's a—that this disembodiment of the child from the context of life is a highly masculine strategy—

**Killen: Can you identify just some of the people you mentioned since feminists—you know, feminist literature's a—feminist theory's a big field—**

Scholnick: So is reading—

**Killen: —identify three people that you—**

Scholnick: —people like Harroway, Bordo, Code, et cetera. And you start—Lloyd and—you start reading it and they're going to malign the masculine logical tradition with, you know, logic, the scientific tradition of, that the best science gets as close to atomic physics as you can go. Okay. And that was very appealing to me because it then occurred to me how, despite the fact that we are populated with women, this development psychology, the theory was highly masculine in that how is it that one grows? One grows through adversarial conflict on—it's a straight arrow, the metaphor is that of a straight arrow. And, again—or staircase models rather than embedding cognitive development in the affective life of children and in talking about how it is that they are influenced by their social status. And how the metaphors that one could use, could—instead of argument one could use conversation where there's more compromise, et cetera, where there's more mutual emphasis. Of course, we're beginning to get the notions of apprenticeship, friendship, et cetera. So I was beginning to think, well what is, you know, what is the issue? And, in addition to that, I'm talking with people, and I did with a group of women who were beginning to read that literature in developmental psychology, like Robin Fivush and Katherine Nelson and Pat Miller. But one can also say that, that the notion that there is a reality that one knows independent of the knower began to get to me. Now this is in a period now when we're moving into an abstract theory of mind which somehow or other children generate and they don't generate it out of social interaction. Instead they develop this theory of how people are. And so in effect you have a theory of people without people, without social relations, et cetera, and that blew my mind and it still does in that theoretically I—I'm still moving into trying to understand how you would do psychology if you were to lose the experimental psychology tradition because, indeed, like Uri Bronfenbrenner says, that tradition gets you to do strange tasks, you know, with strange material, you know, for the briefest period of time. And why do that? Your solution [Killen] is to move into interviews, mine was to actually study what went on between mothers and children, parents and children, and to begin to look at who the speaker is. So theoretically I'm moving in a tradition of a feminist developmental psychology, and this is where Pat Miller and Katherine Nelson came in and, and we began and, and, and Robin Fivush, because we all agreed, you know, it was amazing that, that there was something wrong about either the theory of mind or, or, or the nature of memory, because that's where you have Robin Fivush coming in, you know. And so we began to ask those kinds of questions. And that led to me doing a different kind of research on gender, which I'm still working on,

by reading the protocols of very, very young children talking to their parents and the gender terminology that they learn, the conversational context in which they learn that gender terminology, and the ways that conversation is gendered not just in whether you talk about emotions, but how often you talk about males and females and what they do. So—

**Killen:** And what database is this that you're using?

Scholnick: So I took—well, from the CHILDES database. Of course I had the classic ones, which Brown records, you know, so there's Adam, Eve, and Sarah and they're, you know—and Roger—that's Roger Brown's, but you also have Abe, most terrific child, and you had Brian McWhinney, his children, and you could go through all of those databases and you could get kids of a particular age and you could look at that. And then comes the question, but look when they were collected and from whom they are collected—

**Killen:** And who are those children?

Scholnick: And who are those children? And just as you say, well, you know, our whole notion of child language was based on children of linguists. You know, similarly, this was going to be the case there. But there still were some databases, often collected in England, of kids who were middle class and working class, but they were still in the early '60s and '70s. And more recently I—and, and it worried me because what was coming out was—I had this little theory, and it is a little theory, that parents would socialize their children into gender. And I don't mean just *boy-girl* but the whole raft of gender terms. They would talk more about the child's own gender because there was the child and because they'd arranged a gendered environment for the child and they would give them a richer gender vocabulary for their own gender than for the other gender. So they would know more different gender terms, not just mother, father, boy, girl, et cetera. I was looking at common nouns, garbageman, et cetera, king, queen, big one in young kid's vocabularies. But boys would know more masculine terms and they, they would not only use them more frequently, but there would be a larger number of words, and girls would know more about females. And what did I find out? Yeah, that was true for boys, but not for girls. And I thought, well, this is a very sexist era. I'll go to the most recent data I can find and, by the way, these are kids in the database, they mostly were one to—well, one set of data were one to two year olds. So these are kids who are barely—who are just combining words, and you're starting early and looking there so you can find out when kids begin to speak. And I'll go back to that in a minute. But also, they were, they were very—this was the 1970s. So what if I went to another era? And there—I, now, went to some protocols appearing in the database from the late '90s and there is no difference.

**Killen:** Same pattern?

Scholnick: Nothing. Same pattern. So they're very, very interesting.

**Killen:** So do you, do you pull in the feminist literature as well as the planning literature into this analysis, or—

Scholnick: Planning, no. The feminist literature, yeah. But really what I, I pull into this is, you know, there are people like Carol Martin, there are people who do this so you look at what they write about—

**Killen:** Gender—

Scholnick: —it. Yeah. So I understand that literature well. And, you know, and what the contemp— how they handle it, you know, the battle between Bandura and, and the so-called cognitive theories of gender, and it turns out you have to look at both of them. And, so I do that, yeah, right. But feminists, there aren't feminists—many feminist developmental psychologists, except in England where there's critical theory going on. And—

**Killen: Like Helen Haste—**

Scholnick: Like Helen Haste and, and Valerie Walkerdine, I guess, is one of those who writes a great deal, where they're very preoccupied with issues of social class and very anti-Piagetian, et cetera. And critical theory really hasn't filtered its way very much into developmental psychology. I mean they are there, but they're your, mostly, Europeans except for Joe Glick. So, so I draw—you can draw on those. But for me, my problem—this is why the recent Piaget conference was so interesting—was how to draw issues of power and hierarchy, which pervade the feminist literature, into an understanding of developmental psychology. And that's where I think that your work is so good because you ask—question, at least, what, what are the rules of social exclusion? Well, exclusion has a lot to do with notions of hierarchy. You know, the notion that there is an apprenticeship in thinking, I think, is a very idealistic one, because kids vary in their opportunities to be apprentices and their opportunities to not only be scaffolded, but to construct the scaffold themselves. So it's not as benign.

**Killen: Or it's just not always a choice. I mean some children—**

Scholnick: That, that's right.

**Killen: —could be very good apprentices but—**

Scholnick: And, and then what does, and how do you work that out? Well, one way one works it out is one says that these children don't achieve as well. But the thing that one could instead ask, though I haven't done any research on it, is the children must somewhere along the line begin to think of themselves as the epistemological agents and that what they say has validity or that what other people say has validity. That is they begin to be critical thinkers of themselves and must know, therefore, that the truth is in part "truth," in quotes, is in part socially determined. And that interplay between understanding of the self as a, an epistemological agent and one's understanding of society should somehow connect.

**Killen: Yeah. And that may be what people are struggling with right now. I mean, that may be where the field is.**

Scholnick: That's right.

**Killen: If there is a field. The small field that's not working.**

Scholnick: That's—that, that, well, the field that you're in talks about—what am I—you know, it doesn't yet talk about themself as able to declare what is true and what is not, as having authority. That gets to the issue of voice and which is, of course, the feminist view of things. But young chil—maybe that's young children's awareness of voice.

**Killen: That's an interesting way to put it. And just for the, for the record, we were talking about the Jean Piaget Society in Toronto, Ontario, in which the theme of social development, social inequalities, and social justice. And that's what Dr. Scholnick is referring to.**

Scholnick: Yeah.

**Killen: So they know what the theme was and so the theme ties into—**

Scholnick: Yeah. That's why, why I—

**Killen: So it must have been interesting for you because you've got this strong Piaget background and you've got this strong sort of feminist background. And in a way this conference really was a melding or an integration of the two, which hasn't happened much.**

Scholnick: No, I think the—it doesn't happen very much. When we once tried to do this for the Piaget Society 10 years ago, it was under Jack Meacham's lead, people weren't ready.

**Killen: They weren't ready.**

Scholnick: They were not ready to hear it. They, they still—I think they're just beginning to be able to hear it. To hear that there's a social develop—there's a social side of cognition. And I think Bandura does do this, though he's not my theoretical model that ha—he calls it self efficacy, but related to that are issues that have to do with yourself as a knower.

**Killen: And your status and your position—**

Scholnick: And your status and your position. And my concern has been that, well, when I started and it was—Piaget was everything. And then we moved to social issues and then neo-nativism. And meanwhile neo-nativism grew. Well, neo-nativism has a lot in common with Piaget, it's adevelopmental, not developmental cognition, and it still is divorced from—

**Killen: Divorced from the world children grow up in—**

Scholnick: It's the world—then the world that children grow up in. And so a theory of mind, without taking into account—you and I are talking and we're accepting that what I say is true, and, and, you know, and—but you can see it. I think I tried to point out through my interview where my biases come in. Kids have to learn those kinds of things. That cri—that critical to a—to a theory of mind is not just that it is representational, so you could have false beliefs, but understanding where that, that reality is ambiguous that people select from it different things. So it's sort of moving, we're—you are into a kind of social psychology that is developmental on those issues. And we really don't have that, I think, at all.

**Killen: No, we don't. It's just—they think there are pieces here and there that's being put together, but it's not—**

Scholnick: Yeah.

**Killen: —quite there yet. So that's interesting. So it's sort of a place that people are trying to work on.**

Scholnick: Yeah. Right. And it's hard because there's no vocabulary to do so, no techniques to do it.

**Killen: And you still have people who come from the standard traditions and don't understand how these different traditions could—or how they could—**

Scholnick: Right.

**Killen: —inform one another.**

Scholnick: Right.

**Killen: So that's a stretch for some people.**

Scholnick: Yeah. But it's nice.

**Killen: Yeah. Just a few more thoughts, this has been wonderful.**

Scholnick: Yeah. It is wonderful that you have listened.

**Killen:** As—no it's, it's been a wonderful history, sort of, for me too. A little bit about SRCD—

Scholnick: Yeah. Let me do that.

**Killen:** —just sort of when you joined—

Scholnick: And let me do a—

**Killen:** —and your role and what you've thought—what do you believe are the important changes that have occurred in SRCD and its activities. Just a little bit on that.

Scholnick: Okay. SRCD. I joined just about when I finished graduate school. And conferences then were spectacular in that there was a small group of people and you'd go to session, there weren't that many of them, and then you'd sit out in the corridor and talk.

**Killen:** How many people are you, when you say not that many—

Scholnick: I'm trying to think. I don't know, I'm trying to remember when my first conference was, and I don't. But if—I would say that there were certainly under a thousand. And it—and you really got to make friends and do things that way. And so that was my first contact with SRCD, it was a wonderful meeting. And it, it, it still is wonderful, but it's no longer the same kind of thing, so SRCD's challenge is, it's, it's no longer as user friendly, it's too large to do those kinds of things and that's why one has small conferences to do it. So that was con—and, and, and I think that that's still problematical. My second contact came through *Child Development* in that when I was publishing in concept learning so was Wendell Jeffrey. And Jeff—I was honored to be selected as associate editor very early in my career, I would say in, in the '70s, early '70s, around when Matt was born. And he taught me everything there was to know about manuscript editing. And what you discovered then was also, I was pretty young in the field, that that was a time that so many people, when you're an editor, and you probably have this too, they've published their first paper with you. And how it is you treat it and nurtured those articles has a tremendous impact on people.

**Killen:** Yeah, it does, yeah.

Scholnick: Right, right.

**Killen:** Do you have any particular memory from that time?

Scholnick: You mean anyone that I'm going to remember. No, I don't think I can pull out a name now, but I do remember people doing—

**Killen:** Was that a lot of pressure, to be an associate editor so—

Scholnick: Yeah.

**Killen:** —your career?

Scholnick: I think, I think that there are—I think that it's a mistake. Especially for me because, well, because it was when I had my first child and, and, and managing all of that was very, very rough, very, very rough.

**Killen:** Well you were a pioneer all the way along.

Scholnick: I, I don't know. Yeah, that's funny, I'm—this, this is making me feel ancient. But, yes, I think that that was true. And so that was my first contact with SRCD. I—and, and, and with Jeff, who was just an absolutely superlative editor and taught me what to say and what not to say, and, and how

to handle manuscripts. And, and, and you, of course, then learn a lot about your own writing from doing that. Well, somehow or other I was beginning to do that and one of the things that I did early in my career in Maryland was that we did a—we had the money to have graduate seminars in the summer where you can invite new people in. And so I invited Bill Kessen and Boyd McCandless and a couple of other people, and I got to know Boyd McCandless, and he started *Developmental Psychology*, so he asked me to be an associate editor. So there was the role of associate editor, so I went on and did that. And I think by then it was pretty clear that I had very good organizational skills and people knew who I was. So when SRCD had their conference in Baltimore in '87—no can't be, but somew—no, I'm trying to think. Matt was 13, so that's got to be '87—

**Killen: He was born in like '83?**

Scholnick: No. Was that—it was either '85—it was '87-ish.

**Killen: Yeah. There was definitely one around '85 or '87—**

Scholnick: It was either '83 or '87 I did that one, I did SRCD as chair of Local Arrangements.

**Killen: Oh, okay.**

Scholnick: And whatever the year was, in Baltimore, and that was as close as I've ever been, until I got in the job I am now, to being as stressed out, because SRCD did not—Carolyn Waxler did not have an, a professional agency do it so it was all volunteer. Carolyn Waxler was the program chair. And so we did this together and at the end of it we—and we did this with Dorothy Eichorn, who was absolutely terrific, and she would, you know, go and scope out the places and we would go with her, and she was just wonderful. And at the end of that we said to her, you cannot ever do this again. It was a large conference by—it set the record—

**Killen: What was the—large?**

Scholnick: —it was, it was over 3,000 people, yeah.

**Killen: I went to it, it was fabulous. I remember—**

Scholnick: And it was a fabulous conference—

**Killen: —liked it a lot, yeah—**

Scholnick: And, you know, a good location too, but never do it again. Never, never do it that way again, and they didn't. And they've become much more electronic. So I guess then—I, I don't know that I've been that active in SRCD since there, then. I've been active, I was active in APA in Division Seven, but not in SRCD. So SRCD has challenges because SR—because SRCD has become an industry and that's hard. And it, and it's not homogeneous field, everybody's doing everything, right. So I think that that's one set of issues that it has to deal with. Okay maybe we—

**Killen: Is there anything else you'd like to—**

Scholnick: —running out of—no, I think we're kind of—

**Killen: —that sounds—**

Scholnick: —running out of time. We've talked for almost two hours and—

**Killen: Well, thank you very much.**

Scholnick: No, thank you for doing this, it was easy to talk to you—

Killen: This was a wonderful interview, and—

Scholnick: Oh, you're, you know, sort of nodding sympathetic.

Killen: Oh, it was fascinating; it's fun to do. Thank you so much. And this is the conclusion of the interview with Dr. Ellin Scholnick.

[End of Interview]