



SRCD ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW

Harriette Pipes McAdoo
Michigan State University

Interviewed by Algea Harrison
in East Lansing, Michigan
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Harrison-Hale: --is August 26th. This is Dr. Algea Harrison-Hale interviewing Dr. Harriette McAdoo for the Society for Research on Child Development's oral history project. Okay, Dr. McAdoo, describe your family background along with any childhood and adolescent experiences that may be of interest. Include the educational and occupational characteristics of your parents, where were you born, grew up, what was your schooling like, any military experience, early work experience.

McAdoo: Okay, my family. I can start with that. I came from a family that, on my mother's side, had three generations middle class and college status before me. And on my father's side, he was the first generation person and he was the first generation to ever get through elementary school, college. And in Mississippi during those days, the school for negroes went only up until the sixth grade. So he had to go out of the state to be able to go to high school, and he went to Tuskegee. So, he went to Tuskegee and he did his high school, his college. He ended up teaching there and so he, you know, did his whole career there. He came home the first Christmas and the money that was for his bus trip back had been spent and he almost didn't get back out. So, as a result, he never went home, you know. But he went on. He and my mother both went to Atlanta University in Atlanta and they got their master's there. And then my father went and taught at Fort Valley State College, where I was born. And then he went to the University of Michigan one year and they would live there and then he would come back and teach another year and then he would go back up. And he got his doctorate in 1943. So, he was the first black who was able to get a degree in speech in the United States.

My mother's family was much better educated. Her grandmother and her great grandmother was a slave and she was impregnated by her white owner. They had two kids. The child became a college teacher and that child, named Harriett, she met her husband at Berea College and they both went there and when I went down for a meeting in Berea. The president sent his staff back into the vaults and we were able to get copies of their grades and it was really nice because, you know, it was the very fancy writing and everything. And they went there. Of course, they went to Berea before Berea was segregated. And then when they came through with the Jim Crow law they segregated and then they had to, you know, leave. My grandmother—my great grandfather was a minister; my grandmother was a professor. She went on to teach at Livingston College and they have a dorm named after her. They've named the music department after her. So, my mother was—and that woman was sent to college by the white owner and he really took care of—they built a big, huge house similar to ones in Georgetown. And so three generations of that family grew up in that particular house and they didn't take it down until within my lifetime. That house paid for my wedding and, you know, it paid for different things for different people in the family. So, there was kind of a—my father didn't quite feel he was up to her family and, you know, so you get that little tension. But my parents were very loving people. My father ended up at Michigan State and he was the first black professor there, here. And my mother was, you know, under the spousal law she could come in and teach. After the registration she could come and teach, but she could not be hired as a faculty because of, you know, a husband and wife could not in those days. And they didn't allow blacks to move into East Lansing. So my parents had to live in Lansing. Okay, my mother was able to finish all of her Ph.D. classes—the French, the German—and she had a straight-A average right here in the English department at Michigan State. When she passed all her exams and she got to the point of having a dissertation advisor, nobody would

sponsor her. Therefore, she could not finish her doctorate. So she had done all of it, up to that point, and then it's just pure racism. And that was in '58, '59, so it wasn't that long ago. She went on to teach at Lansing Community College and that's where she retired.

Okay, me. [Laughs] I was born in Georgia. Because of my father's move up the academic ladder, we went to many of the southern schools. We went to Southern University, where he was the Chair of the English Department, and then we went to Alcorn State University, where he was President for four years. At that point, he was told by the Governor of Mississippi to read a statement on the radio that the negroes were happy and they didn't need to improve their schools. He refused to do it. And, of course, the Governor said, "Well, if you refuse then I'm going to take your job." So, at the end of the four years, he was off. We went to Philander Smith in Little Rock, Arkansas, and that's where I did my major course work, high school, and then he took a sabbatical in the—at Wayne State. And so my last year was spent in Detroit. Then we went—he went to Michigan State because when he was there on sabbatical after three months the President said come home because he was afraid he was going to lose him. And he decided not to. And then they cut him off without money. So, here he was, in Detroit, with three children and a wife in grad school and he had no money. So, you know, he cashed in everything he had, his insurance and all, and we stayed. And, of course, he never went back. He went to Michigan State. Because Alcorn was the black land grant college and Michigan State was the first white land grant college, so he had contact with the President so he came up here. Okay, I went to undergraduate here and I got my master's and then I taught special education for three years in a high school, and decided I was not going to be doing that 30 years from now. And so I went back to graduate school, and that was in 1967. And my husband and I both went back to Michigan and we graduated in 1970. And I was the first person that Lorraine Nadelman out of her—she was a very, very good mentor, taskmaster, and professor. Very, very good. And I have a lot of what I've been able to do as a result of the training that I got from Lorraine. No military experience. Early work, I worked with the high school students in special ed and many of them were in early child development programs in Ypsilanti. So, I went to—I was able to get in to see how children work and how daycare centers work. And, of course, in the process I was having my own kids. So, by then I had three kids. And my husband brought two within the marriage and then I had two afterwards. And then I worked all the way through Michigan while we were in school; we had to, you know, we were totally broke. My husband went to school too and I ended up with a Ph.D. in child development and that's how I got started. So—

Harrison-Hale: Okay, number two. What early adult experiences were important to your intellectual development, collegiate experiences?

McAdoo: Well, I think my working, actually having children, working with the different preschool child development centers when I was in grad school led me into the child development. Now, what I realized once I finished my thesis and I did a Mississippi comparison, I went back to where my father was born in Mound Bayou, Mississippi, and compared children, preschool kids, with those in Dearborn Heights and I was looking at racial attitudes, self concept of children, in both centers and I found that there was no difference in the racial attitudes of both, of the two sites. Because basically the black children were white oriented. You know, even at that young age. But I found out that the self concepts of the Mississippi children in Mound Bayou, and they were living in an all black town that had always been black ever since enslavement, they had a very strong, a very positive self concept and it was significantly higher than those who were in Dearborn. And social, SES, was about the same. They were the low income children.

Harrison-Hale: Collegiate experience?

McAdoo: I met certain colleagues over the years. In grad school I met a lot and over the years, through SRCD, through the Association of Black Psychology, all of these people have had a way of helping me form what I really was interested in. Now, one thing I did find is that when I went back, I did a five year follow up with my Mississippi data, and I really found that you can't just look at the children. You have to look at the child and the family. And at that point I started changing my

emphasis from just straight child development to more family focus. So I'm looking at the interactions that occur within the context of the family, particularly the black family.

Harrison-Hale: Well, what are the origins of your interest in child development? What individuals were important to your intellectual development? Who were your research mentors, significant colleagues?

McAdoo: Okay, my interests came out of being a mother, working with daycare centers, having daycare centers for my children, and being able to—trying to get the best education for them and being able to be flexible in the different avenues. For instance, we had, at one point, two of our kids were at the University School in Ann Arbor, on campus, and that was so good. I was working in the statistics lab and I could go to the window and look out and see two of my children play. So, I felt very close to them. So we were doing different things on the way up, trying to get a good education for them. However, we know that black kids, even black kids who are in a good economic educational background, once they go to school they are hit with the stereotypes of the teachers. So, I could put my child in a good school, but what went on in that school between that teacher and the child was kind of up to the teacher, her attitudes. Did the teacher think that this child was smart or did she think he was dumb because he was black? And was she free to let go of many of her stereotypes? I found many cases that my children were there, as the result, they were interacting with people who were looking at them from a stereotypical point of view.

The individuals, starting with Nadelman, with you, with different people I was in school with, all contributed. After we got our doctorate in 1970 we went to Howard University, and that was really good because we then had been—I had been in Michigan State, I'd been in Michigan for a long time and then it was very good to be in an all black university that had, more or less, everything, every division that a big, white school has. So, that was good. This was the point of the black consciousness movement and so this was very key to my development.

As far as the colleagues and the research, what I did is I started—I did a five year review and then I started—I got several grants from the Office of Child Development looking at black families. First, I was able to get a big grant from OCD and I looked at middle class families because I was concerned that people who were looking at blacks were only looking at the most destitute blacks. So people, particularly whites, would go into the community where people, black people, may not have known their particular rights. And what I wanted to know was how would the normal black family appear. I was able to get a sample in suburbia and a sample in Washington, D.C. And I was able to look at their different things. I didn't find a difference, an urban/suburban difference, but I did find out that one of the things, that they were very connected with their family, even when the family had moved away 30 miles to Columbia they would come back on Sunday to go to the church. So, the family support, the church support was something that was very important in those families and in their lives. The one thing I did find out is that people who had only one income, one mother, even though that mother may be a psychiatrist making a lot of money, they had higher stress levels than the people who were in two-parent families. So, then my next grant was in Baltimore and it was a big grant. Again, I looked at 300 mothers who were single. But I also, to avoid the orientation of only getting the most destitute single, I had one-third middle class and two-thirds working class, because I wanted to be able to get the economic and educational differences. I found that all of the mothers, regardless of the income, were under significant stress, mainly because they were the provider, they were the mother, they were taking care of family members all by themselves. But I did find out that one-third of the mothers were in good contact with their former husbands. I met—most cases the children were born in marriage or they were conceived in marriage. There were very few who just had children, as the stereotype about black women would be, that they had kids as teenagers. There were some of those, but basically those were women who had gotten married and had gotten divorced because we know the divorce level is about three times higher for black women than it is for white women. Then I started doing overseas work, and that's where I did—I went to Kenya and I looked at women who were in education, who were English speaking. So, I was looking at a particular group of women and I was looking at their family interaction patterns as they moved from the rural area up into the educated area, into the urban area,

and found a lot of very fascinating things such as their parents, these women had fathers who had had a couple of different wives. They, themselves, only were in a married relationship with one person but there was some of the pattern of multiple wives with girlfriends, but they still had the legal access of the one person.

Harrison-Hale: Okay. What political and social events have influenced your research and writing, teaching?

McAdoo: Okay, I think one of the things, at Howard I was teaching research. So that was kind of apolitical. I mean I was doing a four-year—four semesters of research with the graduate students, but I also was teaching child development and that's where I got more into the people, you know, and especially Washington, the people who were making policies, who were implementing plans. And I think that the political swings within the government, both at a federal and at the local level, was something very important because I was working within a school of social work and so we had students who were going out working with many families from different strata. And it was—you had to deal with the reality of their lives, with what they were actually dealing with.

Harrison-Hale: Okay, now the last question in this section, would you characterize the development of your ideas in the field of child development as evolving in a rather straightforward fashion or in a way that involved sharp turns in theoretical or research style? Why do you characterize your work in this way?

McAdoo: Okay. I don't think it is really possible to be straightforward in your orientation, particularly over 30 years. So, there were turns, there were sometimes sharp turns, sometimes kind of modified turns that I took at different points in relation and in reaction to what was going on within the environment and that that was incorporated into my theoretical thinking of families. And at this point I was still dealing with black families but gradually I started dealing with families of color, including the Hispanic, Native American, Asian families. So, my research reflected that. Later on, I had—and because back to my old beginning in special education, I had just finished a five year project in which I was looking at African American and Mexican American Latino families and these parents were parents of children who had learning disabilities. And so what I was doing there was to see, first, were there differences between these two groups of color. As far as the reality of what those families faced when they went into the community, when they went into the school, I found little differences. Even though the black families tended to be Baptist, the Latino families tended to be Catholic, they spoke Spanish and they came out of the Spanish heritage; blacks spoke black English; differences with the school system were very common. You know, in other words, there was an inability to deal with their race and ethnicity and, at the same time, they were trying to say how do you deal with learning disability with children and how can the school give you help. And in many cases I found the school was not really being adequate. So they were finding resources within their families. Both groups had extended family that were very close and that's where they got a great deal of their support.

So, as far as how do I characterize my work, for instance, I went to Zimbabwe for two summers and I took students from Michigan State and I was looking at pregnant women who were in the center, in both an urban and a rather, almost five miles away, slightly better educated but not much, and we went in and I was working with a medical microbiologist, Dr. Abu, who was in the medical school in the University of Zimbabwe. And what we found is that we tested the women, so we had actual blood tests, and we were able to be able to say whether or not they had—either had HIV or AIDS. And we found that one third of the women of both classes had infection. But in this case, in Africa, it was heterosexual, not homosexual the way we would tend to think of it here, within the United States. So we had women who were not the sex workers that you would normally expect, but these were women who were at home, who were taking care of their children, who were within the network of a family and yet they became victims of AIDS. And we asked them, you know, we asked questions about their lifestyle and everything and about did they know anybody who had AIDS and did they think their husband had AIDS or did you think you had AIDS. And roughly about a third were either uncertain or they just—or they said yes. So, and that was roughly the number that we found that, well, you know,

that were actually infected. So what it is, we had women who were not empowered to do anything because they could not expect their husband to use a condom at home because if you used a condom the man would say, "Oh, you must be a prostitute." And so, to keep from being put in that particular situation, they had sex with their husbands. The husbands were meanwhile going out and, as a result, they were becoming victims. So that was sad but that is a reflection of what's actually going on, both in the United States now and in the Zimbabwe.

Harrison-Hale: Okay. Now, let's move to the section on personal research contributions. What were your primary interests in child development at the beginning of your career?

McAdoo: Well, at the beginning of the career I was interested in young black children, what can we do to make them more effective, what can we do with the environment? And I then ended up with self concept and racial attitudes and race identification, things about their environment and their life that would be a reflection of their being within a person of color. And then gradually I've expanded up into, you know, families and then different class families, different family arrangements with kin or with extended family or single mothers and I've gradually gone, you know, overseas. But I'm always looking at the role of women and their children and what is society and what are the forces within the complexity of families are they having on them, what is the impact of those forces?

Harrison-Hale: Okay. What continuities in your work are most significant? What shifts occurred? What events were responsible?

McAdoo: I think I've covered many of the shifts and the continuities were, particularly in the area with black families, over 30 years, is the area that I have had kind of an expertise and a lot of publications, that I'm looking at the black family. And the shifts that are occurring, I'm thinking in terms of the changes, the economic, environmental changes that are occurring within the wider society that have a direct impact upon the families, that everything that is happening to black families are also happening to white families but they seem to have a greater impact on blacks. And many of the patterns that black families face, eventually we know within ten years white families will also face. So, the idea of women working, black women have always worked outside of the home. Meanwhile, white women tended to stay at home. Now they're out in the workplace. We have the single mothers, all of those, that's something we've had that now white women are dealing with that. And the feminization of society, of poverty, shows that poverty is not something that goes across the family but hits particularly women, and women and children.

Harrison-Hale: Please reflect on the strengths and weaknesses of your research and theoretical contributions, the impact of your work, and its current status.

McAdoo: Okay, the strengths, I think the fact that I'm trying to give a non-stereotypical pathological view of black families, that this is one of the things I've been doing and that I'm dealing with what actually exists. For instance, it's very important for me, when I'm writing an article, to be aware of the census data because we know that certain changes have occurred within our environment that are picked up every ten years or every five years by the census department and so we have to be very careful, as writers, to be able to make our findings, our thoughts, our theoretical premises basic to the census of the people that we are studying. For instance, we know that Hispanics, Latinos, are now more than blacks. They're almost at the same but they're a little bit more, mainly because they have a lower age and they have a higher birth rate. And we know that that rate will only go up. We know that blacks have had a tremendous increase over 1980 and 1990 in their socioeconomic status but we know that within the last three years that there's been a loss of status. And there are certain things that we know as a result of the census data. The realities are changing. We have more kids who are in single homes, we have more kids who are coming home to a place without a grandmother, without a mother, because she's working, or we have more kids who are in poverty and who will stay in poverty. And those are the issues that I'm dealing with. And so that has all had an impact upon my work. The current status is, right now, I wanted to write grants that would look at the impact of these families as they have a decline and, of course, that has not been funded because to do so would be admitting that

there are things that are not quite right. And I've had difficulty getting funding so I've had to make shifts in including other ethnic groups to be able to get what I'm getting at. Right now I'm writing a grant on grandparents, both mother and father grandparent, who are parenting their grandchildren because of the increase of incarceration of the parents or death because of AIDS or because of other illness and what are the stresses and the strains that those parents, many times women, who are parenting out of step with where they normally should be. They should be putting their emphasis on themselves, on their own physical disabilities, and yet there they are, dealing with a preschool or elementary school child. So that's my next area.

Harrison-Hale: What published or unpublished manuscripts best represent your thinking about child development? Which of your studies seem most significant? Which contributions the most wrongheaded?

McAdoo: [Laughs] Okay. Let's see. The one thing that I really think is significant is my book, *Black Families*, out of SAGE Publications. I am now working on the fourth edition of *Black Families* and I have had a lot of fun working with the different people, picking up different authors, working with old authors, with them as they finish and work on their contribution. And that's been really good, and the fact that fourth edition, they wanted it September 1 which I won't make, but they—there's an audience. There is definitely an audience. I've also had a book that I edited also, *Family Ethnicity: Strength in Diversity*, and that's out in two editions. And then there's one that I did with my husband, *Black Children*, and that has come out in a second edition. And then I have one that I've done with members of the Association of Black Psychology and that was one that was very good because what we did, in that case, we went through all of the issues in all of the journals and we saw the articles that were significant. And so we pulled out those articles that were most significant and we presented that. Right now I'm working on a book on single mothers. I had the grant I told you about and then I got a Radcliffe grant and I was able to spend a month in Radcliffe, at their research center, and I was able to go back into the archives where my questionnaires are kept now and they've been all archived. And I was able to get expressions of what the women were actually saying. And what I want to do is to have a book that will reflect both the theoretical view and the temporary, extemporaneous census data stuff, but also what it meant to them, as women. So that I think is going to be a fascinating contribution. I hope to have that by the end of this year, school year.

Harrison-Hale: Please reflect on your experiences with the research funding apparatus over the years. Comment on your participation in shaping research funding policy implementation; for example, study sections, counselors, securing support for your own work and related matters.

McAdoo: Okay. Well, as far as the study section, I have been on three different study sections, NIH and NICHD, and I've been on one where you're there for eight years and I've been able to see changes in the research. One of the things I found is that no longer can one person usually get a grant working alone, but that the grants become more robust as you get three or four people who are able to pull upon their resources at their different institutions or within one institution and to be able to put together a really top-notch design. So that has been very educational for me. And I've been on many other study sections; they've called me in as a special reviewer or external reviewer, and so I've learned a great deal about that. So, you get to know the funding, the apparatus, and then you realize as soon as you get to really be comfortable with one, it changes! They change the administration or, like the OCD no longer exists, so the years of getting a good relationship with those people have to start over with NIMH and then NICHD. So, it shows you it is a political process and it's one that you must be able to approach from both the external and the internal point of view.

As far as shaping policy, I really think my work on black families has had some impact because, one thing, whenever anybody writes an article usually they have to quote me somewhere. But then that we've been able to make certain issues, such as extended family, kin, now everybody knows what extended kin is and at first Carol Stack and I were the only ones using those terms. So many things that we are using have been adopted by many other people.

Harrison-Hale: Okay, now let's turn to your—

McAdoo: The one thing also I wanted to say, that as far as a policy role, I was on President Carter's National Advisory Committee for the White House Conference on Families, and that was a really major experience. We went all over the country, we held sessions and we were able to hear what people wanted to really happen in families. And at that point was when a lot of the people who were—let's say the right was coming out for the first time, really articulating what they wanted and I had the experience of being the Chair of Sessions and I had a parliamentarian, a registered parliamentarian on both sides of me to help me be able to define how people could talk, what they could talk about and to be able to keep things going in order. And it's been very interesting to see how the right has come in with their own agenda and many times have taken over certain sessions. And the people who are center or even left have not been as well organized and we have not been able to put together those policies that are supportive of the family.

Harrison-Hale: Okay, let's turn to your institutional contributions. In which institutions have you worked, dates and capacities?

McAdoo: Okay, the university institutions. Howard University from 1970 to 1991. Then, at the same time, I was on the faculty at Smith College during the summer where they have their didactic teaching and the students go out into the field work. And I was there I think '88 to about '91. So that was the period I was in the policy area. I've also been a visiting professor at the University of Washington in St. Louis and at the University of Minnesota. Then, in 1991, I came again back to Michigan State and I've been here, within the College of Human Ecology, and I am in the Department of Family and Child Ecology there.

Harrison-Hale: The next question is for persons connected with well known research sites. Were you connected with a well known research site, like NIMH?

McAdoo: Well, I was funded by them on several projects and I was on their study section. So I've had that contact. Various universities. I did get the fellowship to go to Radcliffe, at Harvard. And then I also did a postdoc at the University of Michigan at the Institute of Survey Research, and that is working on James Jackson's data set. And that was very, very good.

Harrison-Hale: Describe your experiences as a teacher of child development research and/or trainer of research workers. What courses have you taught? Please comment on the tension between teaching and research in the field of child development.

McAdoo: Okay. At Howard I taught, I think I mentioned, four semesters of research, basic research. And then the doctorate class, I was starting to work with them on doing their work in the dissertation. So that was the one thing I was really involved in and taught their research. Then I taught regular child development for different semesters. At Michigan State I've been teaching introduction to the family, introduction to marriage and family, African American families, a graduate seminar, and that's one of the things that I'm well known for all over campus. We have people who fill up that class over a semester or so ahead of time. And that's a dynamic experience every time we do that. I've taught ethnic families today, I've taught courses on the new changing degrees in families. So, many of those projects. As far as training research, I've almost always have had a research project here. I had as many as nine graduate assistants on the project with Latinos and African Americans and it went for about four years. And right now I'm down to one researcher who's working, helping me work and produce articles for publication. You have to just—as far as the tension between teaching and research, you're always going to have it. You know, you have to teach and then you have research and one thing about research, you can buy out your time but you always have—you cannot ever give up your teaching because if you are not teaching then your whole being, the reason for being at the university, is gone. But I find a lot of fun in doing both, balancing out research, publications, writing, teaching. And so it's just an evolving thing that just continues every day.

Harrison-Hale: Describe your experiences in so-called applied child development research and applied work. Please comment on your role in putting theory into practice.

McAdoo: Okay, applied developmental research is an area that I have been working in. I've been looking at what forces within our society are having an impact on children and their families and then what is it that we can do, as far as implementing our research findings, to make them—to make the families have greater resources, greater facilities to be able to deal with the reality of the world.

Harrison-Hale: Now let's move specifically to your experiences with SRCD. When did you join SRCD? What were your earliest contacts with the society and with whom? Describe the first biennial meeting you attended.

McAdoo: Okay, I started—I've been with SRCD for over 30 years because I started as a graduate student at the University of Michigan. And so, you know, we went there as students and we—and the one—the first, well, not the first, but the first one as a full Ph.D. was in, I think it was in Minneapolis and the one thing that strikes out in my mind is that that was the place that we wanted to have a more active black caucus. And that from there we have developed and gone into a black caucus. There were very, very few blacks there. I remember about three or four blacks there and now we've grown, so we have many, many blacks, as students and as professors.

Harrison-Hale: Okay, describe the history of your participation in the scientific meetings and publications of the society and other non-governance aspects of the work of the society.

McAdoo: Okay, the most important I think was the fact that I was the first black who was appointed as a member of the Governing Council. And I was there for the four years, yeah, of the—and that was in the '60s, I think.

Harrison-Hale: No, it was in the '70s.

McAdoo: Okay, it may have been the— [Laughs] it probably was the '70s. But, I was there and at the same time I was on the Publications Committee. And then I've been in many different spots all over. So, and the caucus, I've been very active in the caucus, the black caucus. And so I've been able to—oh and I've reviewed, you know, every year, the reviewing papers for those who are wanting to present papers. And also I've published articles in *Child Development* and also I have—we've put on a book, I was associate editor for a book that was related by Bob. And there were just many things over the years, yeah, child development research. So, and I wrote an article, a reactionary article that was put into the *Review of Child Development Research*. So many different things over the past 30 years. I don't have my vitae with me so I can't give you the exact names of the articles or the year or whatever. But I'll let you have it if you need it.

Harrison-Hale: Describe the history of your participation in SRCD governance. What were the major problems and issues that confronted you during your time as editor, as counsel or committee member, as president or other offices?

McAdoo: Well, I think the major one was the Governing Council and one of the things, we were very sensitive to the role of blacks who were attempting to get involved in SRCD in the different levels. And so I had a hand in actually helping nominate people to be on different committees. And in the publications, we were actually trying to get more blacks involved in writing and submitting articles for the publications of the society.

Harrison-Hale: What do you believe are the most important changes to occur in SRCD and its activities during your association with it?

McAdoo: Well, one thing about SRCD that is nice is it remains the same. You know, it's an area where we can go every two years and really find out the latest theory, the latest findings for research. And

then one of the changes, of course, has been the greater involvement of African Americans and other people of color in the—within the organization.

Harrison-Hale: Okay. Now let's move to the field. Please comment on the history of the field during the years that you have participated in it, major continuities and discontinuities, and events related to these. Have your views concerning the importance of various issues changed over the years? How?

McAdoo: My view about the important child development areas, the view has not really markedly changed because what I'm still involved in and interested in is how can we help black children develop into optimum adults, considering the pressures that they are under. So that is still, as I've gone through all of the different changes, institutions, still continues to be very much a very, very important part to me. The activities that I've had have been very—I have not missed but one meeting since the last 30 years, and that was because of surgery last year, I wasn't able to go. So, I missed that because I missed seeing the people and all of the people, both the high and the important ones and those who are just members, and the chance to mentor many people, the younger ones who are coming to us to find out how do you get on a committee, how do you get published, how do you get funding? That particular role I did miss this year.

Harrison-Hale: What are your hopes and fears for the future of the field?

McAdoo: Well, my hopes would be that we will be able to continue to grow and that the field will be more inclusive, but my fear is that as we've had attack on affirmative action we will also have fewer PhDs coming out and that with fewer PhDs you do not have people who are oriented toward particularly African American families or who will serve as mentors for the newer generation of people coming forward. So that would be one of my fears.

Harrison-Hale: Okay. No, it keeps going. Personal notes, please tell us something about your personal interests and your family, especially the ways in which they may have had a bearing on your scientific interests and contributions, on your applied contributions.

McAdoo: Okay, my family. Right now I have three sons and one daughter. That has been a very [Laugh] educational experience, just being the parent of people as they grow up and as they attain adulthood and go forth and do whatever it is they do. My husband was very active and he died about ten years ago, John McAdoo. So, actually losing him was very traumatic but I kept on working, I kept on teaching as a result just to be able to have something to do. And as a result, you know, people always say, "Oh, I don't see how you can manage and keep on going," but you do and, you know, you manage to do what you have to do. And as far as the area of child development, of families, this is something that I have continued to maintain my activities within the community, within the university, within the organizations. We now have one of the four or five African American and African doctorate programs and I'm on the executive committee here on campus. That has been one of the things that I can do. I am also mentoring and advising for people who want to do overseas work and I have a South African working—I'm working with now. I have a woman who has gone to Tanzania and I've worked with her. I've had another student who's gone to Zimbabwe. And this is something, because of my own experiences of working in different sites with women and children overseas, there are people who then gravitate toward me and I'm able to give them good, practical advice in addition to having them do more of the theoretical and the researchable topics.

Harrison-Hale: Alright, thank you so much Dr. McAdoo for your time. This is the end of the interview. There is an additional comment that is to be added to the interview, so please play both sides of the tape. It's on the other side.

McAdoo: --history, number one, I mentioned my husband. He went to college and graduate school, we both got our PhDs in 1970. When we went across—when we went up to the stage somebody grabbed me and wouldn't let me go until John came and so we were able to go across together, you know,

through a lot of hand clapping and all. But he went to Howard for about five years and he was there within the School of Social Work and then he moved to the University of Maryland in Baltimore and he was there within the College of Social–School of Social Work. He stayed there until we went to Michigan State and he was also a professor in the College of Human Ecology when he died. So he was a professor. His area of research was he was one of the first ones to work–to talk about black fathers and he was really very much involved in that. And he wrote articles about black fathers. SRCD, he was very active. He went to every conference; both of us, together, went to every conference and he was editor, as I had mentioned earlier, of *Child Development* and *Black Children*. And he was a reviewer for articles for the society. He served on several different committees over time. Minority participation was one of the major ones that he was on. Okay, thank you.

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