Oral History with Ruby Takanishi

March-April 2020

Following Oral History Protocol of the Society for Research in Child Development (SRCD)[1]

Name of Interviewee:

Ruby Takanishi

Current Affiliation: Senior Research Fellow, New America, Washington, DC

Interviewers' Names:

Kimber Bogard, Senior Vice President for Strategy and Programs, New York Academy of Medicine

Martha Zaslow, Senior Scholar and Consultant, Child Trends; Senior Advisor, SRCD

Interview Conducted on March 16, 2020

Context for the oral history

Martha Zaslow (MZ): We are really honored to be able to do an oral history with someone whom we truly respect and esteem, Ruby Takanishi. We are conducting the oral history in March and April 2020. It's an intense context, with the COVID-19 pandemic and sheltering in place. We view conducting this oral history as steadying, helping us to place our experiences in a broader context. We are doing the oral history by phone rather than in person because of the Coronavirus and social distancing. Let's begin with the interviewers talking a bit about their relationships with Ruby Takanishi.

Kimber Bogard (KB): I have a lot to say about my relationship with Ruby Takanishi, starting with my postdoctoral placement at the Foundation for Child Development where I was for just over 2 ½ years with Ruby running the PreK to 3 (PK3) Forum. I worked closely with Ruby to build the Forum and identify advisors to participate in order to advance the research in the area of PreK to 3rd grade. Ruby continued to be an amazing mentor shepherding me through my career, guiding me and providing amazing advice at every step of the way. She walked alongside me as I left the foundation for a position at New York University, then in my position as the director of the Board on Children, Youth and Families at the Institute of Medicine, and now my current role at the New York Academy of Medicine.

MZ: I started to work with you, Ruby when you were directing the Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development. You gave me the assignment of reading the technical reports and publications, including books, at the Carnegie Council, and creating distillations that would be appropriate for wider dissemination. It was an amazing opportunity to learn the literature really well. I will never forget our meetings, which were always really exciting. We reviewed and discussed what I had written and worked

[1] The oral history conducted with Ruby Takanishi was conducted in the Spring of 2020 using the protocol previously developed by the SRCD Oral History Committee. While the Oral History Committee was no longer a standing SRCD committee at that time, John Hagen generously shared the protocol and procedures previously followed by the committee so that they could be used in conducting the oral history with Ruby Takanishi. If other SRCD members are interested in conducting oral histories following this protocol and set of procedures, please contact Martha Zaslow at mzaslow@srcd.org for further information.

to get them to the next step. You always scaffolded, working with me to make them clearer, make them more useful. Afterwards I was really grateful to stay in touch and to be mentored through all the positions I have had, including as a researcher at Child Trends and director for policy at SRCD. I continue to be mentored. I am really grateful.

Ruby Takanishi (RT): Thank you.

Family background and early influences

MZ: We'd like to begin by asking about your family background and your years growing up. How would you say your upbringing influenced the early years of your career and your educational and professional choices?

RT: Well, I was born and raised on the island of Kaua'i, in what was then called the Territory of Hawaii. And I grew up in a sugar plantation town. At that point in the 50's, the small towns on the island were sugar plantations, because the economy was based largely on the production of sugar and to some extent the production of pineapple.

So, I grew up in a sugar plantation town that was dominated by the plant which operated 24 hours a day pretty much. And I was very fortunate because my parents were college-educated. So, my mother was the first in her family to graduate from the University of Hawaii and she was a teacher. And my father also graduated from the University of Hawaii. And he took over the family general merchandise business. So, I was quite an advantaged person in the sugar plantation town, but I grew up with and went to school with children who were, the vast majority of whom, were children of sugar plantation laborers.

And I remember quite vividly growing up, especially in the early 50s, there was successful labor organizing of the sugar plantations. The labor organizing had pretty much started at the end of the 19th century and into the 20th century, and it was quite a violent period in history. But finally, after the second World War, in the early 50s, labor organizing was successful. But I remember growing up with strikes that lasted for a very long time, and having classmates whose parents were not working, and soup kitchens and so on. So I would characterize my upbringing as spending time with the vast majority of kids of plantation workers, but sort of slightly having some contact with the level you would call the sugar plantation managerial class, whose children pretty much did not go to the public schools.

One of the things I would say is that growing up in a multi-ethnic, largely immigrant community, there were very few children who were Anglo or Caucasian in my growing up. And really the first time I encountered Anglo and Caucasian people in large numbers was when I went to college. So, I had this kind of experience of being quite advantaged in terms of my parents' education, and my mother being a teacher, being exposed to books and current issues.

I think the thing that is important is that my mother had never trained to be a teacher, which was her profession. But it really took her until my senior year of high school when she completed all of the course requirements for her to be certified as a teacher in the Hawaii public school system. So, I really kind of remember growing up as a student in elementary school, and my mother studying and writing papers, and reading books and papers like by Kenneth and Mamie Clark, I remember so well Rachel Carson's book *Silent Spring*. And growing up in that kind of environment, which was quite different from most of the children in my town.

My elementary school, Kekaha Elementary School, and my high school, Waimea High School, both public schools, are still the Western most elementary school and high school in the United States. They still

both function. The students are mostly from immigrant families and people who work in the tourist industry in Hawaii. It is very much a distressed community, given the wages and so forth. And now with the Coronavirus many are out of work.

So, I think I had the sense early on that since my parents were college-educated and had a comfortable income level, certainly a middle-class income level, that I was quite an advantaged person in that setting. And the other thing that I would say that was really important is that just because of historical circumstances with the Russian launching of Sputnik, and the American governmental response in terms of supporting new math, new biology, new physics, I really benefitted from that, because it was my teachers in the sciences and mathematics who were able to go to the mainland and be trained in the new curricula, and brought them back certainly to my high school, and were able to share those with me. So, I felt that I had a very strong training or education in the sciences and mathematics because of governmental investment in teachers at that point. I think it was called the National Defense Education Act or something like that. So that was extremely important.

And I think the other extremely important tuning point was that by the sixth grade, I was pretty much going to turn out to be a school dropout. I wasn't particularly challenged in school, and found it quite boring. And I just wasn't a very strong student. But in the 7th and 8th grade again just by circumstances, I was selected to be in a gifted and talented program based on standardized tests at that time. And it involved about 10 people in my grade level from the western half of the island. And so, we were in this special program for a couple of years with teachers who specialized in teaching the so-called gifted and talented. We had an educational experience that was quite different from what everyone else was having. And then by high school, I went back into the normal high school. But I also had these teachers who had gone to the University of Illinois at Champagne-Urbana and to the University of Wisconsin at Madison and who had really learned about new ways of educating high schoolers. And I was an enormous beneficiary of those programs. It really showed me that governmental investment in education and teachers is so crucial, certainly in my development, and I think in other people's development.

MZ: Such a range of experiences both in terms of how the children in your community were growing up and then also what the range of educational experiences might be like, all the way from boring to very stimulating. And the role of government investment. Were there any teachers or particular community leaders who took notice of you at that point or influenced you? Who would you say were your earliest influences?

RT: Well so, in the gifted and talented program, there was an enormously inspirational teacher who really loved teaching and really loved science. His name was Takeshi Fujita. He was trained, he would go to Boston University and other places from time to time to be trained. But we had this incredibly rich education. It was an education that was very much experiential and hands on with direct experience. And this was in the sixth and seventh, or rather seventh and eighth grades, so you can imagine what this was like compared to what everyone else was having, which was certainly kind of standard didactic kind of education without any direct participation. He passed away very recently. He was very much beloved by all of the students who had contact with him. We would go on excursions, we would go to the beaches and collect samples of marine life or we would collect botanical specimens, and so forth. It was an incredibly rich experience. In the sciences I had another teacher named Bill Higa who had been trained at Wisconsin in teaching chemistry and physics. He was very very important. In mathematics I was able to learn new mathematics from a teacher named Ruby, Ruby Doi. There were teachers who were really wonderful.

I should say, these teachers were rather unique. I would say that most of the teachers I had in elementary school and in high school were not like these teachers. So clearly I had some pretty big gaps in my education. I would say that basically that I had a fine basic education in many of the subjects, certainly in English, for example, and social studies. But they were not very deep at all. They were quite superficial, were text-book based, and so forth. But that was not the case in the sciences. I myself was extremely interested in the sciences, did science projects, really loved science.

I think this is really important-- when I applied to college, I remember, at that point you had to write a 100-word essay. I don't know what it's like now, but I really do remember my college essay of 100 words. And basically the theme of it was that I was really interested in how science could improve the lives of children, because I had seen many children and many classmates growing up in conditions, you know, conditions that were low income conditions. The sugar plantations were very, what shall I say, they were like patrons. So they provided the housing, they provided the health care and so forth. But the wages were quite low, because these were agricultural workers.

So, I had a sense very early on that there were so many people that were so talented, smart and intelligent, but didn't have the opportunities that I had. And so, I was quite aware of this very early on. And what I think my college essay did was to sort of combine this very strong interest that I had in the sciences and the scientific method with a feeling that there were very drastic inequalities in the communities and schools I went to. The schools were tracked. There were always a few kids who sort of got the best. And then there were kids who were in the lower tracks who, you know, were not being well educated. And I think I understood this quite early on. And so, that was my college essay--how to bring the methods and resources and approaches and ways of thinking about science, the sciences, to improving the wellbeing of children. I always liked children. I think that was very important in going to college and deciding to major in psychology and in developmental psychology.

MZ: It's amazing how that college essay anticipated many of the themes that followed. I want to ask you to turn to your college experiences. But first, Kimber, is there anything else about family background and years growing up that you want to ask about or shall we move on?

KB: No, I thought that was a very rich and full description. Ruby, I actually understand a lot more now about your trajectory and sort of where it all started, so thank you for all of that information.

College and choice of professional field

MZ: You've already answered our questions about the goals you had in your high school years. That essay just wove it all together, and the awareness of the range of children's experiences. Could you turn now to how you made the transition from high school and that community setting to college and into psychology as a professional field? Please start with your decision to go to college.

RT: Sure. Yes. So, I went from this very small sugar plantation town with a population of 2,000 and a public school that was, you know, adequate but had these incredibly rich experiences along the way, to Stanford. And I remember going to Stanford, and it was a cultural shock. It was quite amazing. In addition to what every kid goes through when they go to college, I had the additional challenge of being in an environment which was quite unfamiliar to me. The thing I remember the most was-- that was the first time I had been in an environment where most of the people were white, were Anglo. At that point Stanford had very few African Americans. There were also very few Asian Americans in my class which was about 1,600. And so, it was, I like to say that it was the kind of environment where you could go for months and not see a person of color. This has really changed now. The demographics of Stanford University have changed a lot since then, but that's the way it was.

So I had to adapt and adjust and learn how to be a student in an environment, who lived in a dorm, where a lot of people certainly had not had the experiences I did. One of the things I sort of say in a jesting manner, is that I noticed in the first few weeks or months that I was at Stanford that I could never remember people's names. And I think part of it was that I really had to adjust to the fact that these were, you know, completely new human beings that I was relating to because I had never had very much experience relating to Anglos or Caucasians or white people or Black people. And I remember one other student who came from Shaker Heights in Ohio and who was Black and going through some of the same things. We kind of bonded.

All of that in addition to being in an intellectual environment where people had really good educations, had gone to the best high schools and private schools in the United States. I must say I was quite disoriented. But I did manage to make it through.

MZ: Ruby, what helped you navigate that situation?

RT: I think that is a very important question. I think it was that I felt that education, certainly in my upbringing, in Japanese and Japanese American culture, the importance of education, doing well in education, was at that point, extremely important to my family and to me. Even though I really struggled a lot, I really felt that I have to keep my focus. I am a focused person, so I was able to do that. But it was hard.

I still remember in my freshman English class, a woman was talking about the Great Books. I had no idea what she was talking about. I think what I mean is that I had the basics, but I didn't have sort of a deep wide-ranging education at all. I had a lot of catching up to do.

And the other thing that I would say, is that, just because of the selection process at that point at Stanford University, you really had a lot of people who, I felt, felt very entitled, and very sure of themselves. And so, I had to struggle with that as well. And I think the way I did it, was to, to sort of try, as my mother would say, as we say in our Japanese-American culture, "Always do your best." So, I would always try to do my best. And I think that really helped me.

But it was quite a period of disorientation. I mean, food, for example, you know was different, people were different, cultural processes were different. And so, I really had to try to address that. And I think the focus on my studies was a very important thing.

MZ: During this period, when did you take your first psychology course or education course? How did you begin to move in the direction you eventually took?

RT: When I started at Stanford, I had a very strong science course of work: chemistry, calculus, all of that kind of thing, in addition to the required Western civilization and English and so forth. So, I took my first psychology, introduction to psychology, course in the summer of 1965, when I was at the University of Hawaii. I knew I was going to major in psychology and certainly developmental psychology and so forth, so I needed to get that out of the way. So I never took the intro psych course at Stanford, which was a wonderful course that was taught jointly by J. Merrill Carlsmith and Thomas Landauer; it was kind of legendary. I didn't have that course.

And then when I came back to Stanford as a sophomore, I took Eleanor Maccoby's developmental psychology course, which I absolutely loved. And at that point, Stanford was very much a liberal arts college. And so, they limited your major to 45 credits of psychology. You couldn't, even though I wanted to take every psychology course that existed, I couldn't because that was against the rules. So, I had to, as I said, take humanities courses and music courses and literature courses as requirements for the

degree, which were such that you did have a quite broad education. And I think that was certainly very good. You know, biology, anthropology, sociology. So, in that sense the Stanford liberal arts education at that point really educated you in a very broad way in addition to your major.

In terms of research, conducting research, I first went to work with Leonard Horowitz (I think he might still be alive). He was a very beloved psychology professor at Stanford. We did some, experimental work and that was actually published in an experimental psychology journal (Horowitz, Lampel and Takanishi).

Starting in my junior year at Stanford when you declare your major and you got to focus more on psychology, I started to work with Eleanor Maccoby. She was starting her attachment studies at the university. And developmental psychology, because of Eleanor and others was quite a strong program. She took me under her wing. And I got to go to the seminars at Owen House and listen to seminars by Harold Stevenson and John Hagen who were graduate students in the Stanford program who have gone on to careers in their own universities. Working with Eleanor was really a wonderful experience. And she was at the beginning of her attachment studies, setting up experimental situations. I also did that with Thomas Landauer as well, because he was part of Owen House and we did some research together. That was a really wonderful experience.

At the same time, because I was so interested in children and their education, I did something which might have been quite unusual for a psychology major at Stanford. I also went to work at Bing Nursery School. Bing Nursery School was a laboratory nursery school at Stanford University, and it was run by Edith Dowley, who was a nationally known teacher, early educator, who had worked in the Kaiser Child Development Centers during the second World War. And she also was a mentor and kind of took me under her wing. So I was working as a teacher's aide in the Bing Nursery School, and at the same time, I would be behind the one-way mirror in the nursery school conducting research with Thomas Landauer and Eleanor Maccoby and her graduate students, and being able to go to the seminars, and you know, have a bit of a personal relationship with Eleanor and her young children, her young children who probably now are 60-70 years old. And, of course, Eleanor was married to Nathan Maccoby who was a wonderful professor in the communications department.

The honors psychology program at Stanford was a really important one. And one of the people who was in it was Steven Suomi, who built on Harlow's work at the National Institutes of Health. And it was, just because in chemistry you were assigned to a lab alphabetically, and Suomi and Takanishi were next to each other. So that is how I knew Suomi. He was also in the psychology honors program which was a rather small one.

Working with Eleanor, my thesis, my senior honors thesis in psychology, was focused on sex differences in the attachment behavior of children that were observed in the Ainsworth experimental setting. It was also during that period of time that Eleanor and Carol Jacklin were writing their book on sex differences based on the extant studies. It was really very wonderful to have contact with these individuals.

And I think that Eleanor was so important because she was a woman, and she believed in science, and she also was, I would say, very politically and socially active. But she was able to kind of have a line between her social activism and her science. And she really believed strongly that psychology was a science. I still remember her saying to me "Ruby, psychology is a science." But she also had ideals about social justice. The Vietnam War was very salient at that time. And so, I had a person who was obviously so confident in her own right, had children, had social values that were very strong.

One thing that I thought was very interesting about Eleanor is that she, until I think pretty much until the 90s, when she was on the Board on Children, Youth and Families at the National Academy of Science, she always had a skepticism about the application of research to social program issues. I remember

really having a conversation with her about this early on, maybe in the early 70s, because she was called on to do things, and she would say "I just don't know whether I should do this." So on the one hand she had, you know, very strong social values, but on the other hand I think she struggled with how to connect them, which I think really emerged after she retired from Stanford and did the work with Robert Mnookin on joint custody and research like that.

So that was my experience at Stanford, and she was very influential in advising me about graduate schools. She graduated from the University of Michigan where I went. I was very fortunate to have someone like that in my undergraduate years.

Graduate school

MZ: What a wonderful description of the undergraduate years and about going from a sense of disorientation to increasing clarity and focus about what you wanted to do. You were beginning to talk about Eleanor Maccoby encouraging you to go to University of Michigan. Could you talk about how you decided to go to graduate school and if you decided right away to pursue a doctorate? And tell us some about that transition to graduate school.

RT: Well, at that point my undergraduate years were quite focused on psychology and doing research, and of course my participation in the nursery school, and so as I remember it, there was, you know it's all generational, but I just didn't have any question that when I graduated from Stanford, I was going to go to graduate school. So I applied to graduate school, applied to what were considered to be some of the strongest psychology and developmental psychology programs in the country, and decided to go to the University of Michigan where Eleanor had done her work.

And I remember graduate school because John Hagen was there. I don't know to what extent, maybe John had something to do with it as well, because John had graduated from the graduate program in psychology and developmental psychology at Stanford. But the Michigan graduate program at that point was very large. I think the incoming graduate numbers were about 60 graduate students in psychology in all of the specializations of psychology. There was clinical, and experimental, and social and all of that. And the developmental psychology program had five incoming students, one of whom was Lynn Liben, so Lynn was in my class, in my cohort. One left and became a lawyer and I did not keep track of the other two.

So we were a little subgroup in developmental psychology for a while in the psychology department, which was quite large. And Marty Hoffman, Martin Hoffman, was one of the professors there. It didn't have a large group of people and certainly didn't have a large faculty. But John Hagen and Marty Hoffman were some of the main people. And I remember taking courses in social psychology and all of the others. And because I had had a very strong undergraduate psychology program at Stanford, I was able to get my masters degree from the University of Michigan in two semesters. And so that was very helpful. I mean I did take a full course load and learned a lot from the other psychologies as well. But basically my home base was developmental psychology, the cohort of five, John Hagen and Martin Hoffman.

I think I would say because of the period, it was, '68-'69, developmental psychology was not what it is today. It was probably, what should I say, it was lesser, it wasn't as prominent as social psychology for example, or experimental psychology. It was really years afterwards that developmental psychology kind of came into its own. So, it was a small program. I guess I would say it wasn't a high status specialization in psychology at University of Michigan. But I think our little group of five had a kind of a comradery that was quite good. So that was Michigan.

Then in '69 I moved to the University of Chicago. I had gotten a fellowship which was really pivotal in my development. It was a National Institute of Mental Health fellowship. It was a grant that supported individuals and I still have contact with some of these individuals. The program was called Social Psychologists for Schools. At that time, NIMH had scientific officers who were extremely innovative and forward-looking and who were trying to think of training programs and ideas and approaches that were very forward-looking. The idea for this NIMH fellowship at the University of Chicago was that it was to train individuals, not to be school psychologists working with individual students, because by then of course I was very very interested in the intersection of psychology and early education and education in general, but it was to train individuals who knew the social organization of schools, and who would really work with teachers and principals to help them understand the functioning of the schools, and that by working with these adults there would be ramifications for the students. There was a group of us, maybe there were about five fellows, I don't remember exactly, but who were active in this program.

Part of the experience, in addition to coursework at the University of Chicago which had really wonderful professors--Bruno Bettleheim and Robert Dreeban in the sociology of education program, and they had the most wonderful people—after a period of time, we were placed in a school. And it was an incredible experience.

MZ: How did you come to understand the social structure? Was it from the immersion experience?

RT: That's important. What we had was, the other half of the fellowship, which was funded by the National Institute of Mental Health, was coursework. We had coursework in the sociology of education, and social psychology of groups was a very important part of that. So we had, I guess I would call it, the intellectual foundations. It was basically a kind of ethnographic case study approach in which you were also trained in your classes and you were a participant observer basically in these schools. And you would hang out in the teacher lounge, and you would hang out in the halls and then in the classrooms. And you would observe contacts between teachers and students. And the coursework at the University of Chicago, and the internship I guess as it was called, were very much aligned.

And that experience was again extremely pivotal in the work that I did since. When I think about it, I see that the fellowship was the starting point of three themes that continued throughout my work. First, I learned how important it is to have an understanding of the daily experiences of teachers and children in schools. I returned on multiple occasions to have immersion experiences in schools and also in early childhood education. I don't think it is possible to apply developmental science to educational settings without really engaging in these settings. To be effective in applying research to educational practice, I think, requires a depth of understanding of educational settings and how they function.

Second, I learned that schools are a critical place for anyone interested in increasing equity for children. The teachers I observed and engaged with during my fellowship were deeply committed to using education as a way of opening up the options for the students they were teaching. This was a school in which the doors needed to be locked and there had to be guards at the door because of violence in the surrounding neighborhood. The teachers and principal had chosen to work there to give the students a set of tools to improve their futures. I respected this choice and came to understand better what it entailed. I learned that security at the school door did not mean that students could lock out their experiences of poverty, racism and violence entirely. They brought strengths with them from their family and community experiences, but sometimes also trauma. We are still learning how to work to increase equity in the face of such experiences.

Third, I learned that we need more than one bridge: not only between research and educational settings but also between early childhood and K-12 educational settings. Much to my surprise, the teachers in

my immersion school spoke about the children from Head Start --and that was just the second year after the launching of Head Start. But what they commented on was how Head Start had prepared the children for a different kind of classroom. The children tended to want to pursue their own activities, and their curiosity led them to interrupt and ask a lot of questions. The teachers didn't know how to help the children adjust to the very different kind of classroom culture they were in. So it was really that experience in 1969-1970 that got me thinking about the whole theme of continuity and discontinuity in children's educational experiences, and how that had an effect on their development and their educational outcomes. So that experience in Chicago was really very important.

Then in 1970, I returned back to Stanford and embarked on three years in the Graduate School of Education and got my degree there. One of the things I remember at that point is that when I graduated from Stanford, Stanford had a formal or informal policy not to accept any undergraduate students into a graduate program. Which I think makes sense because you want people to have a broader experience, you don't want people to be ingrown. So, I never really even considered going back into the psychology department.

But also by then I was just terribly interested in education. And so, I wanted to learn more about education, the history of education, educational evaluation. All of those, that set of courses, coursework that the school of education offered. And, of course, it was an excellent school of education. And so, I embarked there, and I learned a lot about education and did a lot of research. I was involved in the Stanford Research and Development Center for Teaching in Low- Income Areas and did a lot of research in schools in the Bay Area and Redwood City. It was a very rich time in which psychology and education had a relationship and joint appointments. So, I was able to take some courses in psychology as well. And I had a really good graduate experience while learning a lot about education which really again was a major focus of my interests.

MZ: Who were you studying with? Who were you doing research with at that point?

RT: Well, my major professor was Robert Hess who had come from the University of Chicago actually, and who had done those studies that were then very well known at that time on maternal teaching styles in experimental settings. So, he had a fairly large research program. And he was also very much involved with governmental agencies, federal governmental agencies. I think it was in 1970, as I made my transition from Chicago back to Stanford that Bob engaged me and maybe another graduate student, and we were involved in the production of a federal report I think called Day Care in America or something like that. It had lots of research chapters, what was the existing research at that point, and what were the implications for programs and parent education and so forth. Really at that time a decisive work.

I had learned about the Perry Preschool Project. One of my assignments was to go to Ypsilanti and I met with Lambie, I forget her name, Dolores I think it was, who was running the parent education program there, and Perry Preschool and the Ypsilanti project. I went to downstate Illinois to look at the Head Start and summer education programs, because I think I was involved in the chapter that had to do with parent education, and I was one of the co-authors of that. So those were the kinds of resources that were published and then distributed to early childhood programs. It probably was that, I think, that gave me a first experience of what it's like to be a university professor like Shep (Sheldon) White and Ed Zigler and so forth, and to try to summarize the research and to think about what it means for program development and policy. And so, that was my first experience in the summer of 1970. So, I was very fortunate.

And then in the years I was at Stanford, I was involved in the research program at the Stanford R and D Center. I don't think it exists anymore. Those were a network of research and development centers supported by the U.S. Department of Education on various issues to focus on doing research on effective teaching methods in what they called low-income areas. It was at that point that I went into schools in Redwood City and Alum Rock near San Jose, and really encountered English learners for the first time and what was not going on at that point.

But it was at that point that I was also very much involved in courses and teaching. I was a teaching assistant in the educational history course under David Tyack, who passed away but who was one of the leading educational historians at this time, and that was really a wonderful experience as well. And Lee Cronbach was my teacher in research and evaluation. He was really a wonderful person. And Dick (Richard) Snow who unfortunately passed away early on was another person in educational psychology. So I really had a good group of people who were important in my graduate years.

MZ: During this period would you say that there was anything you read or any discussions that you had or any research experiences that you had that you would say were transformative? Were there any experiences or interactions with mentors that you would describe as particularly influential or transformative?

RT: I had a little contact with Eleanor, more as her former mentee, because I was not in the psychology department. And, you know, a group of people like Robert Hess who were deeply engaged with the federal government and federal agencies around the implementation and evaluation and shaping of early childhood programs. I can't think of anything I read, particularly. It was more the direct experience, and being part of a research team in the Stanford R and D center that was clearly doing research directly in schools, in low-income schools, I think that was extremely important. So, for me, it wasn't so much something that I read but the direct experience I had with researchers and training research teams to go out into schools. I think that was more important than any particular piece that I had read.

Models, having role models--I think it was at that point Eleanor was asked to write a Harvard University Press book on early childhood programs, which she did. But I remember having a discussion with her about it, and she wasn't sure if that was something she really wanted to be engaged with at that point. And I think she was asked because she was a distinguished developmental psychologist and they thought she would have something to say.

So, I felt that I had several mentors who were engaged in different ways and who exemplified different functions in the relationship or the connection or application of research to practice. Because at the Stanford Research and Development Center, a laboratory of the U.S. Department of Education , clearly the purpose of the research was to collect findings that would improve the education of children, especially children in low-income areas, which included a growing number of English learners, given the location of the schools. So, the research wasn't so much in and of itself, but more to inform practice.

What I am now reminded of is that my first paper presented in a scientific meeting was in AERA in 1973, in New Orleans. That paper focused on challenges to integrating theory into practice, which was the framing then of how research informs practice. There is even a journal called Theory into Practice. I tried to use my experience as a researcher working on how to improve the practice of teaching and instruction in low-income schools. How do you make that connection between what you find and what schools are like in practice?

MZ: And you spent a lot of time in schools, both in Chicago and at Stanford.

RT: Yes, yes, I think I would say I probably spent a third to half of my time in schools.

MZ: What would say are the big "takeaways" from this period of your professional preparation that stuck with you to the next stage? What were the most important things that you took from this period into your first professional position or your postdoctoral position?

RT: I think that what I would say is that one takeaway was that change in education, educational experience, change in teaching and learning, is very, very hard. And just because there is good research--and there is so much more good research now than there was in the early 70s about learning and instruction in terms of development-- making that connection and informing teaching and learning and instruction with that knowledge, is not straightforward. It really has to do with how people are prepared in teacher education and administration of education programs. So, I think that was one thing: just because you have research doesn't mean that it's going to go into practice.

The second takeaway is that education, and changes in education, are really out of the control of research. So, the specific example I have is that as we were doing this research in low-income schools in 1970 to 1973, California decided to move to open-space schools. Part of this was economic. They started to build new schools and to change schools from the traditional classroom into spaces that would hold 60 kids, for example, without preparing teachers for that change. And of course it was very disruptive to research because it happened to us as we had developed observational methods and so forth. So, we had to adapt to the fact that there was a move from self-contained classrooms to open-space classrooms, and how do you conduct research? So, the research process, as it occurs in schools, has to adapt; is really at the mercy of whatever educational changes occur, and those changes are not necessarily research- based. They are based on budget, economics, and size and things like that.

I think a third takeaway that I had is that education, particularly of young children and particularly elementary school, was not, in general, informed by work on analysis of children's learning and development, but it was the opposite direction. That was something that I think is still to a large extent true but it was certainly true then. And it was very sobering to me that all I had learned at University of Michigan, at University of Chicago, at Stanford in my undergraduate years about developmental psychology, children's development, really had very little impact on the experiences that children had in classrooms. And I think that was quite sobering.

I think a fourth takeaway I had was that I realized that having a somewhat strange and eclectic graduate school experience, strange for someone from my generation at that time, was actually an advantage. That is, I didn't have a singular or more narrow view of things. I had been exposed both through classwork, coursework and direct experience to a whole variety of perspectives and viewpoints and ways of thinking, that, I think from a personal point of view, I saw as an advantage.

I think the fifth probably is that having a strong background, given my graduate experiences and certainly my undergraduate experiences, in research, and having a strong loyalty or adherence to science or scientific method, was firmly inculcated. I really thought that was an important part of understanding the kinds of educational issues that I wanted to address.

MZ: This is bringing us to a beautiful point to pause with these takeaway messages from your graduate school experiences. I want to turn to Kimber to ask if there are other questions about graduate school you would like to ask?

KB: No, I am just really enjoying this. I just really want to thank Ruby for taking the time to do this. I am really enjoying and soaking it up like a sponge. Thank you.

Interview Conducted on March 19, 2020

Context for this segment of the interview

MZ: Ruby, at the end of our interview on March 16th , we talked about your graduate studies: first completion of a masters at University of Michigan, then an NIMH fellowship at the University of Chicago, and then completion of the doctorate at Stanford University. We are now going to transition to talking about your professional positions. It sounds like your first professional position was as an assistant professor at UCLA.

Experiences as an assistant professor in UCLA Graduate School of Education

RT: Yes, that's correct. When I got my Ph.D. in June of 1973, it was a time in American higher education when there were really no jobs in academe, or there were few jobs, and we were entering a period of major recession, which did not abate until about a decade later. People would express in humor that what PhDs did was they drove taxis. And it was really true that Ph.D.'s were driving taxis. So as you can imagine that when I had the degree and I really basically had no job, it was a very anxious time in my life, since I had gone through five years of graduate school and so forth.

What happened was extremely fortuitous, I think, and again I am grateful to the federal government. What happened is that Norma Deitch Feshbach, who was a developmental psychologist at UCLA, had received a training grant from the National Institute of Mental Health, and her proposal was to train educators who worked in schools--superintendents, school psychologists, teachers and so forth-- in research--theories and research--on children's development, and to integrate that with educational practice. She received the grant probably in the late spring of 1973. She then got approval from UCLA to advertise for positions. This was all a late development, it occurred very quickly. I was hired because of that grant as a tenure-line professor at UCLA. I don't know all of the details of what happened, but basically I got a tenure-line position, and in the fall of 1973, after spending a good deal of my summer watching congressional hearings on Watergate, I moved to Los Angeles and started my position there.

Because of the purpose of the grant and what I was hired for, I was assigned to teach courses, basically introductory courses, in child development, child development research and evaluation, to graduate students in the Graduate School of Education at UCLA. That was my teaching and my training responsibility. I basically have never had any experience since then teaching undergraduates. All of my university appointments have been at the graduate level.

I did that for a number of years, from 1973 to 1980. Even though it was a very brief time, I had some students who now have really gone on to make major contributions to the field. Luis Moll, for example, who is associated with "Funds of Knowledge" at the University of Arizona was one of the students in my child development course and my research and evaluation course (because I taught a course on research and evaluation of early childhood programs). I was in the specialties of research and evaluation in the graduate school and also in the developmental studies program, so I had my feet in two specialty areas. Marlene Zepeda, who has also since retired, was a major figure in the training of teachers for English learners in the State of California, quite active, was in those courses. Hortensia Amaro who is very active in health issues related to people of color, I think she is at the University of Southern California right now, was also in those courses.

Those courses were fairly large, as I recall, for graduate school. They were probably somewhere between, I would say, 40 to 50 people, because they were introductory courses. There were a lot of students who came through those programs. Some were superintendents in schools, and some were school psychologists, all graduate students, of course, and some went on to do research as well. So that

was my first experience in graduate education, which was really very clearly focused on making a connection between developmental psychology, child development research and particularly educational research, practice and policy. So, I did that, and I was involved in training graduate students who went on to become professors themselves.

I also taught a course in child development and social policy, which was really very much an in-depth course at that point. About in 1978 or so, we were visited by Ed Zigler at the UCLA Developmental Studies Center, along with the President of the Bush Foundation in St. Paul Minnesota, Humphrey Doermann, and one of the chief program officers, Stanley Shepard, to start to develop a proposal for one of the Bush Centers in Child Development and Social Policy. There were eventually four, and UCLA was the western center, and the only center located in a graduate school of education. The other centers were located at the University of Michigan in the department of psychology with Harold Stevenson; one was located at Yale University under Ed Zigler; and the third was at the Frank Porter Graham Center under James Gallagher, who had returned from federal service in the U.S. Department of Education and ran that particular center.

In the fall of 1979 I had earned a sabbatical and I went to Harvard University for a full academic year, and did a lot of my own thinking and writing. I also took a few courses in the Graduate School of Education and all of the courses that I could do in the Science Policy Program of the John F. Kennedy School of Government. There were some of the giants of science policy, like Donald Price, who were teaching in the Kennedy School at that point.

I think the other thing that I would have to mention about my work at UCLA, in addition to the normal tasks of teaching and doing research and supervising the dissertations of graduate students and so forth, is that I decided to embed myself in the University Elementary School (UES), which was one of the sole surviving publicly supported laboratory schools in the country at that point. There certainly was a lab school at the University of Chicago, but it wasn't publicly supported. It was supported by the University. But UCLA's University Elementary School was a laboratory school which had been established probably in the 30s which was publicly supported. So what I did was, I attached myself to a teaching team at UES which had team teaching in an open-space classroom, which was the way they delivered educational services then for children who were 4-, 5-, 6-years-of-age in one space, and also with I think a quite good integration or inclusion of children with disabilities, including children with Down's Syndrome. It was really a form of participant observation and action research. I spent a lot of time in those classrooms; I attended all of the team meetings of the team that I worked with.

I was there so much, that I was actually appointed to be head of the admissions committee for University Elementary School. You can imagine what a position that was because University Elementary School is located in the neighborhood of Bel Air. Bel Air is a very high-income neighborhood--Ronald Regan lived there--of Los Angeles, and adjacent to Hollywood. What was clear to me then was that a lot of the students in the school did not reflect the total community of Los Angeles. And because many of my students, my graduate students, came from South Central and so forth, if I went out to speak to parent or community groups in those areas, my talks had to be translated into Spanish. I think that the fall of 1979 was the first time in which the entering population of the kindergarten in the LA Unified School District was 50 percent Latino based on their last names. So, it was a rapidly changing demographic. Meanwhile, University Elementary School, which was supported by state taxpayer funds, was basically an elite school, serving the children of the elite.

So, what I did was I said that the school didn't reflect the community and we needed to have a change. And I actually instituted a lottery system. We got the applications in, and we basically applied entry to University Elementary based on that lottery. So obviously it was not popular. I actually got called in to

the office of the Chancellor, Charles Young, about it. It did not make people happy. But for a very brief period of time, University Elementary School, I like to say, had children of butchers. But that did not last. When I went on sabbatical it reverted back; rapidly reverted back. So those are the things I remember about my time period there.

Sabbatical at Harvard University

And then when I went on my sabbatical, I really immersed myself in the science policy studies area. At that point, developmental psychology, certainly at Harvard among the science policy professors, was unknown territory. They had almost no background knowledge. If I talked to an economist or I talked to people who studied science policy in the World War II and post-World War II period, or a historian of science (I took a history of science course), people just didn't know what to make of developmental psychology or research on children. They were just totally puzzled that there could even be a field like this. So, my interest in developmental psychology and child development research was certainly marginal, certainly not part of the scholarly work there. But that was what I was interested in and what I spent a lot of time thinking about.

I think I will end this section by saying that I think it was in June 1980, after I had been selected to be an SRCD-AAAS Congressional Science Fellow, I received tenure at UCLA. I had already been gone a couple of years, and at that point, leaving for two years was considered to be the limit. And so, I had to make a decision. I still remember my conversation with my Dean, John I. Goodlad, about coming back. He basically said, something like, "Well, Ruby, you are not Henry Kissinger." And I said, "I know I am not Henry Kissinger, but I want to do this." So, what I decided in the fall of 1980, was to take the Congressional Science Fellowship, and to basically give up my position at UCLA.

SRCD-AAAS Congressional Science Fellowship

That was also a very tumultuous period. The election of 1980 resulted in the election of Ronald Reagan and the defeat of Jimmy Carter. But most significantly, I think for me, since I was working in the U.S. Senate Appropriations Committee on the Democratic staff, was that the Democratic majority of the US Senate became a Republican majority. So the election of 1980, as I was a Congressional Science Fellow, had two major impacts: one, the election of Ronald Reagan and all of what happened after that (I like to say I had a front row seat to seeing it, at least on the appropriations side), and secondly that I learned what it was like to move from being the Democratic majority staff to the Democratic minority staff, which is like being all-powerful to having no power at all. So that transition was, I think, a very important one for me.

MZ: How long had you witnessed the majority position before the transition to minority?

RT: Very briefly. What happened was, in September what you do as a fellow is you have this orientation by AAAS. And at that point SRCD was part of the AAAS Congressional Science Fellowship. So, there are all of these fellows in geology and biology and nuclear science and chemistry and physics and so forth and so on. There were very few behavioral scientists. I don't think American Psychological Association had a fellowship at that point even. The SRCD Fellows were probably the only behavioral and social science fellows at that point in the AAAS program. And it was basically structured for the non-behavioral scientists. So that was one thing. And then in October you selected your site. So, I was working in Appropriations. And then in early November the presidential elections occurred. So then in November the Senate turned Republican. And there was a transition period in November and December. And then in January, the Republican staff took control of the Senate committees. Very brief. So, I was on the minority Democratic staff from January to June, which was the end of my Congressional Science Fellowship.

MZ: I am wondering if you could talk a little bit about what you focused on during your Congressional Fellowship. What was possible to move forward with given that transition?

RT: My idea was, or my sort of mantra, was "follow the money." I felt that the way money was appropriated was a very important place to be. So that is why I chose to work in the appropriations area. And the Senator I worked for was Senator Daniel K. Inouye. He was on the Appropriations Committee and he had Department of Defense, which I actually did some work on, which was passed along and which actually led a few years later to the Military Family Advocacy Program. So, I guess you would say I was involved with the human side of DOD.

But the main agencies that I had which I focused my work on were three that were clustered in a subcommittee: Health, Education and Welfare (HEW) and Labor; it included also NSF. So, they clustered three agencies together in one subcommittee. I had very little to do with the other agencies, like HUD or Energy (though I don't think Energy existed at that time).

And also, because I was working under the supervision of Patrick DeLeon, he also had responsibility for the human side of the DOD. So, one of the issues I worked on was child care. And at that point, the child care situation in the Department of Defense was considered to be of poor quality; terrible quality. We tried to work on appropriations and the structure for paying attention to the family needs of military families. This was 1979; very early. So, the work had to do with separations of families in the US Navy, when people would go on ships. It had to do with issues of domestic violence, mental health issues. We were concerned with the health needs of veterans, again particularly on the mental health side of things. The other is that DOD had an international network of schools. The DOD schools-- that was another issue.

On the education side that was the period for the reauthorization of the Education of All Handicapped Children Act. So, I was involved in that a little bit. And things that were part of HEW, like Head Start level of funding. A big part of my interest was the National Institutes of Health which were part of HEW at that point. And a funding issue at the NIH was the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development. In '79, it was probably about 20 years old. There was this long-lasting persistent issue, which some people would remember, which we considered to be the underfunding, or the unfair allocation, of research funds to human development, particularly research on children and research in the behavioral and social sciences.

That was '79, just prior to the time that the Reagan administration started to gear up, and there were major threats to the funding of behavioral and social science research. And that was the period in which behavioral and social sciences started to become more politically involved and engaged in advocacy. That was the period of time that the Consortium of Social Science Associations (COSSA) emerged, the Federation of Behavioral, Psychological and Cognitive Sciences (which is called something else now), and APA and so forth. There were a number of associations of sciences that emerged in that post '79 period to try to advocate and support for the continuing funding of research. Education research in the Department of Education was decimated. And the U.S Department of Education Research and Development Centers were going to be totally eliminated.

There were a lot of science funding and policy issues that were occurring during that period of time. And I was just staff of a congressional committee; I was just a little staff person. I didn't have too much power or anything. But I was able to see, to observe what was going on, and to see how advocacy occurred, how effective it was, how ineffective it was. And now when you think about it 40 years later, it is a totally different scene. The issues may be similar under the current administration now, but the associations have at least 40 years of experience in trying to push back on levels of research funding.

So those are the things that I remember the most. I was a legislative assistant, so I certainly didn't have very much clout or authority, but I did work with Pat who certainly had more, and who had been on the scene for at least 10 years, so he was quite experienced, and he taught me a great deal. Our friendship has continued to this day. But it was a very tumultuous period.

MZ: Thank you for relating that to what is happening now 40 years later. I imagine also that the sabbatical year, learning about science policy, was also integrated. What an incredible background to take to that experience.

RT: It was certainly book learning or academic learning. But it was very helpful background, because for many of the sciences, non-behavioral sciences, they had decades of experience and lobbyists and associations and so forth to try to sustain their levels of funding. And in contrast, the behavioral and social science communities were only beginning their efforts. So, it was very helpful to have that academic learning at the Kennedy School.

Brief period as adjunct professor in New York

MZ: What did you do after the Congressional Fellowship? What was the next step?

RT: I came to New York and I was an adjunct professor, assistant professor, at Columbia, when Leslie Williams took a sabbatical. So, I was back into teaching about theories of child development and courses like that again to graduate students at Columbia Teachers College when Williams was taking her sabbatical. That was a half time position. I also had a half time position at Bank Street College of Education. I supervised teachers, I taught courses on policy, on child care, and so kind of basically an academic kind of experience.

I also did some work with Jim Comer. Ed Zigler took his sabbatical at Yale and I taught his seminar at Yale in social policy and child development and got to meet more people there at the Yale Bush Center for Child Development and Social Policy.

Return to Washington to work at APA and Federation of Behavioral, Psychological and Cognitive Sciences

I think there was always the pull and interest in Washington, to go back. So, in 1982 I went back to Washington, and I then had two jobs. I don't know why I always have two jobs. I was the Administrative Officer for Children, Youth and Families as a registered lobbyist in the National Policy Studies Division of the American Psychological Association. The American Psychological Association at that point had a lobbying arm or a policy arm, and I believe I was the second or third person to fill that particular position of Administrative Officer for Children Youth and Families. My portfolio was really to monitor research and children's programs at the federal level, programs affecting children and families. That was always my niche there.

The other job that I had was that I was the Founding Executive Director of the Federation of Behavioral, Psychological, and Cognitive Sciences (I'm not sure I am getting it right). It was a small federation, very similar to COSSA, the Consortium of Social Science Associations, but of small scientific societies. I think the Society for Neuroscience was the largest, the Cognitive Science Society, and SRCD was also part of that. It was a group of the smaller experimental psychological science organizations who wanted to get together to have advocacy for research support at the federal agencies in Washington. I was the Founding Executive Director of that.

We did some things, at least for that period of time, that really turned out to be quite sizeable. We had a science policy division that dealt with things like indirect costs, and what research was funded at the

Department of Defense, which was a major source of behavioral and social science research at that point. We had the Congressional Science Seminars, which began with ten people and then mushroomed out within a year or so, to be held on Capitol Hill, with about 50 or 60 congressional staff coming to lunch in the Capitol and hearing about research and its uses or applications to children's programs or health issues. It was a way of scientists being able to present their research and their case to congressional staff to try to enhance communications and knowledge about the contributions of behavioral, cognitive and social science, neuroscience and so forth, directly to congressional staff.

So, I was involved in starting all of that up. But after about a year or so, I felt that having two jobs was not exactly what I had signed up to do. I had really signed up to be the Administrative Officer for Children, Youth and Families. So, we made the transition. A new Executive Director was hired, and she went on to run the organization.

Then approximately at the end of 1982, I became the Director of the Office of Scientific Affairs at the American Psychological Association. And I would like to at least mention that this was end of '82 to October of 1986. This was a very tumultuous period. I don't know why I am always in tumultuous periods! It was a very tumultuous period in the history of American psychology because it was the transitional point of the American Psychological Association becoming more dominated by the clinical; by the clinicians and professional psychology, when up till then the sciences were very important and reflected in the priorities of the American Psychological Association. It was a very traumatic period for psychologists who identified with research. And the American Psychological Association in its original conception was founded as psychology as a science, as a practice, and using science for human interest or human welfare. So, the three divisions were Scientific Affairs, Professional Affairs, and Science in the Public Interest. I became part of the Scientific Affairs Office during this period of time.

There were at least three or four areas of responsibility, all of which were tending to explode at the same time (I use the word explode!). One division had to do with ethical research conducted with human participants *and* with animals. The ethical standards for research with human participants were pretty clear. However, what happened in the period of time that I was head of the Scientific Office was that there was a major court case involving Edward Taub, who was accused of mistreating animals in the conduct of research. It was in that context that a committee of the Scientific Affairs Office was involved in revising the code and the standards for the conduct of research with animals.

The other thing that we were involved in was the revision of the standards for psychological and educational testing which occurs periodically, but it just happened that in that period we were involved in a major revision. And that involved the American Educational Research Association and the National Council for Educational Statistics or Measurement. So, there were three groups involved including the American Psychological Association. That was also an enormous review and input process and so that was a second area that I was involved in.

The third area had to do with public and private support for research in the behavioral and social sciences. That was a more recent effort that involved catalyzing and monitoring federal and private foundation support for the behavioral and social sciences. We issued reports and so forth.

And then all of the divisions started to focus on psychology as a science in the American Psychological Association, which was clearly moving towards becoming an association of clinicians, clinical psychologists and their interests, particularly in reimbursement for mental health services and the support of mental health services. So, one of the things I did, which has lasted actually till now, is institute a Chief Scientific Officer for the American Psychological Association, which involved finding a

prominent psychologist from the field who would serve as the chief scientific advisor to the association. So that was instituted before I left.

And I would say that within 12 months or so of the time when I left the American Psychological Association in October of 1986, the American Psychological Society developed basically being started by and involving those psychologists, research psychologists, who felt that the American Psychological Association no longer represented their interests, and they needed to have their own scientific society or association. So, I really got to see a lot of associational politics around science policy in this case. But it certainly wasn't a nine to five kind of situation. And when I look back, I think about being at the nexus of all of these developments.

MZ: Very intense. A major transition in identify of fields.

RT: Yes. And SRCD, and Dorothy Eichorn, was certainly on the scene, because of the interests of SRCD and research support. And the Federation as well. And many psychologists at that point still had joint memberships in the American Psychological Association and SRCD.

MZ: The association that you were the Executive Director of for a while, has that become the Federation of Associations in Behavioral & Brain Sciences, or FABBS?

RT: I believe that it has, yes.

MZ: It is so helpful for me to hear the origins and starting point of these. I feel that I have been interacting without full understanding. You are helping me to understand the roots of these associations and efforts.

RT: The Federation, as I said, the big association in it then was the Society of Neuroscience. And neuroscience in the early 80s was not what it is now. I think it is very important to know that. There were psychologists who were for example involved in research with primates. That was also a huge social issue; ethical issue. It was a very hot ethical issue. That pretty much died down and is not as prominent now, but it is very important to realize that it was in that period that the People for Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) was highly active. They are still very active. They were very focused in that period on psychologists who were doing research with any kind of animal and particularly primates.

MZ: Should we transition now or take a pause?

[Agreement from all to continue: Ruby feeling well and OK to continue; Kimber both participating in the oral history and needing to monitor and weigh in on the urgent activities at the New York Academy of Medicine in response to COVID-19 as needed; Kimber had an exposure to someone who had since tested positive for COVID-19 at NYAM; feeling that something may be going on health-wise but OK at this point to continue.]

Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development

MZ: OK, so let's go on. We are about at 1986, right? What happened at the next juncture?

RT: In October of 1986, I became the Executive Director of the Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development, which was a policy unit, an operating program, within Carnegie Corporation of New York, which is one of Andrew Carnegie's major grantmaking institutions. He established more than 10. This, in the US, is still the major grantmaking foundation coming from the Andrew Carnegie legacy.

This effort has been very well documented. I don't feel like I should really go into any major detail about it. There is a ten-year report that I did for the Carnegie Corporation in 1996, when we closed the

Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development. And all of the files have been archived at Columbia University, so people who are interested in the details of the ten-year effort can go there.

The Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development was established by the by the Carnegie Corporation Board of Trustees, I believe in June of 1986. The Carnegie Corporation has the unusual history of making the decision not only to fund outside organizations, which pretty much is the majority of their funding, but sometimes to establish internal operating programs and policy units on issues. So, the academic retirement system, the TIAA (which used to be called the TIAA CREF), the Carnegie Commissions on Public Television and Public Radio, these were all the results of the internal efforts of the corporation.

This particular effort in 1986 reflected the interest of David Hamburg, who was very deeply interested in the development of adolescents, and particularly young adolescents, which he kind of defined at that period as being about 10-15 years of age. And the mandate approved by the Carnegie Board was extremely general. It was, I am paraphrasing, "To elevate the period of adolescence higher on the national agenda." That basically was the charge. I still remember when I took the job and sat down and started to try to figure out what that meant and what to do, it was a little daunting.

I think that basically from a strategy point of view, the way I approached the Carnegie Council was, I would say, in two ways. And David Hamburg was a wonderful mentor and individual to work with because we really shared a lot of values and goals. One of the things of course that I felt was really important was science policy. That is, research on adolescence, research support for adolescence was relatively small in the National Institutes of Health. It was focused on problems that adolescents had, like they got pregnant or engaged in using drugs and things like that. And that is why I supported a focus on positive adolescent development: seeing adolescence as a period of opportunity and of assets.

I kind of established some "buckets." I started the science policy bucket by holding, convening, supporting the commission of a compendium called *At the Threshold*[2] which summarized the research on adolescence, and what the research opportunities were to inform federal agencies looking for research support opportunities; also, by engaging with the Scientific Review Officers at the National Institutes of Health. I think that the two big outcomes of that effort, which were really not as publicly visible as the other efforts, were that I think it is generally agreed on that the Survey of Adolescent Health, known as Add Health, emerged from the Carnegie Council's work in the science policy bucket. And increased support for research on adolescence also was certainly stimulated by the Council's efforts.

One of the things that we did involved grant making by Carnegie Corporation: identifying key opportunities, identifying researchers who could do that research, and hoping that it would become part of federal research support. One of the first things that Carnegie Council supported was the work of Baruch Fischoff of Carnegie Mellon University. He had worked with Amos Tversky and Daniel Kahneman to focus his attention on adolescent decision making. The whole idea then was that adolescents make bad decisions. They are governed by their emotions; they are irrational and do stupid things. Baruch was interested in looking at that area. So, Carnegie made a significant grant to him to begin some of this research. That developed into a major research program for him and also at the National Institutes of Health. That was Carnegie's approach that I would use.

[2] Feldman, S. S. & Elliott, G.R. (Eds) (1990). *At the threshold: The developing adolescent.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

The other area in 1986 that we took advantage of was the interest then, it seems almost archaic now, in adolescent violence, and particularly adolescent bullying behavior and intervention programs that had emerged: what to do about it, and what it meant for schools. So that was another area sort of in the science policy bucket but that also had implications for programs and intervention programs. So that was one line of support that we started off, part of the original effort.

Then I took what I call an institutional, a multi-institutional framework, to looking at adolescence and elevating it on the national agenda. The two areas which were really obvious, which we focused on, with David Hamburg and Julie Richmond, who were major advisors on this, were education and health, and the fact that both of those institutions were inextricably related. Now it kind of sounds kind of quaint, because I think we now have a better acceptance of this, but I think it is very important to realize that in 1986 this notion of the relationship of health and education in the development of adolescence was not a well-developed framework or idea at that particular point in time.

So, what I tried to do was to roll things out. To start one roll out, develop it and get it on its way and perking along, and then do the second and the third and the fourth roll out. So basically what I did, along with the Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development, (which was about 30 people, and had two governors and two senators: a multi-institutional body of very distinguished individuals who were advising and I could call on), decided to focus on education, the education of young adolescents in America's middle schools. When I look back now, in 2020, that is still a very major issue. And it's gone in waves: there have been at least two waves since 1986 of focusing on the education of young adolescents in our middle schools. So, we started a Task Force, and it was chaired by David Hornbeck, who was then the State Superintendent of Schools in Maryland, and people like Bill Clinton, then Governor of Arkansas, with a very distinguished Advisory Board. And we issued *Turning Points*[3].

And *Turning Points,* through the report and through the communications strategy, I think we distributed something like 800,000 copies. This was before you could get widespread coverage and downloads through the Internet. It became a really well-covered and major topic, particularly in state government and in educational circles, to focus educator reform efforts on the crucial early adolescent years, defined then as 10-15 years of age, and what could be done to more comprehensively and effectively educate them. Hopefully those years of development are not as lost as before.

And that report, it was a national report, got really widespread interest. Carnegie Corporation, through its grantmaking capacity, supported a significant grantmaking program to states to try to take the report and to implement it in the states as well. So, the Council really served as a kind of a synthesizer of research and policy and then informed the grantmaking capacity of the foundation to work through grants to state organizations. So that was the kind of strategy. And for a period of time, it was a very hot topic. But like many education reforms, it had a rather short-term life relatively speaking and other issues rise up as well. So that was a wave of focus on middle school reform, and there has been at least another one since, I think in the 90s, and I am still hoping there will continue to be another one, but that is another story. So that was in the field of education, and I think that was a very seminal report.

And then we started to roll out our adolescent health area. And at the point when we started to do this, which was about in 1990 or so. And Marty you were involved in this as well, the whole notion that adolescents were unhealthy basically, they engaged in risky behavior, they took drugs, they got

[3] Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development (1989). *Turning points: Preparing American youth for the 21st century.* Report of the Task Force on the Education of Young Adolescents. New York: Carnegie Corporation of New York.

pregnant, they bullied each other. It was not a very nice picture of this period of time. So, what we tried to do in a number of ways is to get a better grasp of what was *already* going on and what *could* go on.

And through the congressional members of the Carnegie Council, Senators Daniel K. Inouye, James Jeffords, and Nancy Kasebaum, we partnered, the foundation partnered with the U.S. Congress Office of Technology Assessment, which no longer exits, because it was eliminated, I can't remember when. At that point, Congress actually had OTA, the Office of Technology Assessment, which provided to the U.S. Congress, upon request, scientific advice on any issue Congress requested. So, the congressional members requested a report on adolescent health. The OTA report on adolescent health, which I believe was two volumes, looked at all aspects of adolescent health, looked at all aspects of what federal agency research and program support were doing, and it came out with a whole bunch of recommendations. And after the report, this led to the creation of the Office of Adolescent Health, which is in the Maternal and Child Health Division of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. It was an effort to put a focus on adolescents, their health and wellbeing, not only in terms of the health challenges and problems that they had, but also their assets, and how one could build on those assets.

And the fourth effort, back to this multi- institutional framework and multi-institutional influences on adolescent development, was what we called the out-of-school time, for the time that adolescents spent in either community organizations or in their communities. That report was very important because it was a neglected area. So, you had youth development organizations, you had school-based programs, but really not much attention was being focused on the fact that adolescents spent as much time out of school as they spent in school. The institutions that they did have contact with could be enormously influential, certainly in their healthy development.

So that report, which was by a Task Force headed by James Comer at Yale and Billie Tisch, led to a report that was called *A Matter of Time*[4]*.* And *A Matter of Time* came out in a December blizzard, and it rapidly sank into oblivion. However, what happened was that it also got taken up by U.S. Attorney General Janet Reno, who was also very concerned about adolescent violence and bullying and those kinds of issues, and really saw the report as being a positive set of recommendations and ways of looking at how we could support adolescents in their out-of-school time in terms of their positive and healthy development.

So, six months later after the report was released, it started to have its own kind of life. And it also got taken up by foundations and youth organizations, who I think saw themselves as relatively weak in terms of having any kind of influence on program funding and so forth. And it kind of led to a mini movement in youth development and community programs for kids. I felt good, like twenty years later, when I met a person from a local YWCA or YMCA who said "*A Matter of Time,* that was so helpful to us in terms of making the case for programming for young people and adolescents in our nonprofit community program." So that report came out and that was the fourth leg if you will.

And then to wrap up, the whole idea of how long a foundation program should exist is a very important issue, and there are differences of opinion about it. I did feel that ten years was enough, and it was time to close this Council and to transition to something else. And I think that was really the right decision. So, it closed in approximately June of 1996.

But what Carnegie did was to do some handoff grants. And I think the most important handoff grant was to create the Board on Children, Youth and Families at the National Academy of Sciences. So the Board

[4] Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development (1992). *A matter of time: Risk and opportunity in the nonschool hours.* Report of the Task Force on Youth Development and Community Programs. New York: Carnegie Corporation of New York.

was a direct outcome of the Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development and was set up by Carnegie Corporation to be an entity bridging research and policy: to focus on children, youth and families and to be informed by research and science, and to use that to inform to inform public and social policy for children youth and families.

So that is the 30,000 view of the Council and its work. I think that there were certain grants that did not work out, like in any kind of grantmaking. But certainly, the Board is a direct sustained activity.

Interview Conducted on March 25, 2020

Context for this segment

This interview for the oral history with Ruby Takanishi was conducted on Wednesday, March 25th, 2020. We note by way of context that it was necessary to cancel an interview scheduled for March 23rd. A colleague with whom Kimber Bogard had been in a meeting at New York Academy of Medicine had become ill with COVID-9, and Kimber was in isolation as a result. She unfortunately had also started to have a fever and feel sick. She was tested for COVID-19 as a result. On March 23rd as we were just assembling by phone for the next interview, Kimber indicated that she had received a call from her doctor but had been in conference calls for the New York Academy of Medicine that were urgent concerning the pandemic and she had not been able to take the call or call him back yet. While we were on the phone, she checked her medical patient portal and found a notation that she had tested positive for COVID-19. Kimber wanted nevertheless to continue with the interview on March 23rd but Ruby and Marty requested (Ruby insisted!) that we reschedule so that Kimber could take the time to call her doctor and make needed arrangements. The interview on March 25th was conducted at Kimber's urging, despite the illness. She indicated that while ill, she was not having severe breathing difficulty; it was thankfully a case of COVID-19 that could be treated at home with frequent contact with her doctor. She had been working at home because there were time-sensitive issues at the New York Academy of Medicine; she wanted to continue with the oral history as well, viewing it as high priority. However, as before, Kimber asked that Marty take the lead in asking the oral history questions, which Marty did but with regret, knowing that Kimber would have conducted the interviews with a wonderful depth of knowledge, shared experience, and thoughtfulness.

President's Office of Science and Technology Policy

MZ: In our last discussion, we were talking about the Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development. Today, could we please begin with your transition to your next position: How did that happen, what contributions did you feel you made during the next position, and how did it influence your own thinking and development?

RT: Sure, I'd be happy to. As I said in the last interview, the Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development was a ten-year effort. It was approved by the Carnegie Board of Trustees in June of 1986. And we closed the doors on the Council in approximately June of 1996. So it was ten years of efforts which I described. As June 1996 occurred and we had a final meeting of the Council and hand-off grants, including the Board on Children, Youth and Families at the National Academy of Sciences, were in the works, I was without a job. I was on the job market and explored a number of different things.

And what happened was, again like for many of my positions, somewhat fortuitous. I didn't really even think of it. What was happening is that in the Executive Office, there is a group that still exits. It is headed by the President's Science Advisor. It is the President's Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP). It's a group within the White House Executive Office that is to advise the President and Vice President about basically what the sciences have to say about every issue possible. And at that point in 1996, it was the election year. President Clinton and Al Gore were running for their second term; it was part of that period.

It happened that there was a Science Advisor, whose name was Jack Gibbons, and who was a nuclear physicist. Because of Al Gore's very intense interest in global warming and science issues, he really was the Science Advisor. And he and Jack Gibbons worked really well. I think they were from the same state actually. It was a really good relationship. But the Vice President was really Clinton's Science Advisor.

What happened was there was a position of Assistant Director in the OSTP for Behavioral and Social Sciences and Education. And the woman, Joyce Justice, who was in that position, had had her two years leave from the University of California, Santa Cruz, and had to go back or wanted to go back. And a bunch of people decided that I was to take her place. I really didn't have too much to say about it. They just basically said to me, Ruby, you are going to do this position: Joyce is leaving, you are going to do this position. And because I didn't have a job, I said sure, happy to do it.

So, I started to go to the Old Executive Office Building every morning and work there. And in addition to Jack, who was my supervisor, there were a number of Associate Directors, and the Associate Director for Science was Ernest Moniz. Ernie Moniz is a physics professor at MIT, and he was President Obama's Secretary of Energy and was very influential in negotiating the nuclear energy limits with Senator Kerry in the Obama administration.

So, Ernie was my boss and he was a wonderful boss. There was a bunch of us, all of whom were civil servants; had really worked for deputies in NASA, or in some science-related field in federal civil service. And it was working with these individuals that really gave me such a first-hand and deep respect for the individuals who were not political appointees, but who had really essentially devoted their careers to working in many of the federal science agencies. It was a wonderful group. I was the only behavioral scientist. They were all chemists and physicists and environmental scientists. And it was really a wonderful group.

I think I write about this in the Fordham article.[5] Because I have not looked back at it; I hope I am not repeating things. I wanted to share a number of things that happened there from June of 1996 to December of 1996 as Assistant Director for Behavioral and Social Sciences and Education. One was that it was a period of time when there was intense lobbying by different science groups about the Census, the 2000 Census that was going to take place, around the issue of racial and ethnic categories.

It was very interesting: I was essentially visited by many science lobbyists who had differences of opinion about it. Obviously, it was a very hot issue, as it has turned out to be in the 2020 Census. That was a very interesting experience for me, because I got to see which scientific societies showed up and which scientific societies did not show up to make their cases. One of the things I learned in that position was that while there was a steady stream of people from chemistry, physics, geology, all of the other sciences, to make their cases for what they felt were important issues, the behavioral and social science organizations were not very visible. And we had to really seek them out. This was in 1996, and I started to really have a much better sense of what roles the behavioral and social science organizations took around issues that would greatly affect their disciplines and their members. So that was an issue I really remember, because it was a hot political issue in the 2000 Census.

The second big assignment that I had was to staff, with another person in the office, the Children's Health Study. What we did during the six months I was there (I actually worked on polishing the report after I left, into 1997), was we had the responsibility of convening all of the 40 or 50 federal agencies that supported research on children. It was not only basic research but research that was conducted in the Department of Agriculture, for example, or in the Environmental Protection Agency and so forth. And that was an interesting experience for me because what was really clear was that the federal agency representatives came to the meetings, when we convened them, because they wanted to know what was going on and how it would affect their budgets.

[5] Takanishi, R. (2002). Where are you from? Child advocacy and the benefits of marginality. In A. Higgins-D'Alessandro & K.R.B. Jankowski (Eds.), *Science for society: Informing policy and practice through research in developmental psychology* (pp. 17-28). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

But there was a lot of caution about what the implications might be of a National Children's Health Study, the major one being that they might not get as much money for their research budgets, and affect their research agendas. And in fact, a very seasoned person who was working with me, who had spent decades working in NASA and in the launching of the shuttle, described those meetings as "herding cats."

We issued a report that categorized all of the federal agencies and what research they supported around children. We had a subcontract with the RAND Corporation to check the numbers and so forth. And then we were responsible for writing the report. And as you can imagine, when something like this is proposed, a national longitudinal study of a birth cohort, to study all aspects of development, you can imagine that there is an immediate jockeying among the federal agencies of who is going to be in charge of this. And so that was another aspect of the politics and policy allocation of resources that I was witness to or privy to during that period of time. And it turned out that the director of the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, Duane Alexander, who played a very important role in the report and the convenings, basically was designated as the lead figure for the study. So that report was released.

And then, we will talk about this, but In January of 1997, I went to become President of the Foundation for Child Development. I had a little bit of contact finishing the report. But I was out of Washington and I was not privy to all the other things that went on. It took about ten years of lobbying by agencies, by what I will call the children's disease groups, some of the research societies, to launch the study. And it was housed in the NICHD, and there was a national advisory committee. I served on this national advisory committee for about a year. We heard a lot of testimony from different groups and we started to map out the study and so forth. I don't know how much has been written about this because basically the study no longer exists. But as you can imagine, the cost of the study itself was enormous and clearly would cut into the research budgets of agencies and divisions. Federal science administrators are very protective about their budgets.

It was a very interesting experience for me to be at the front end of it, and then ten years, almost a decade later, when the funding had been actually allocated by the Congress, to be on the advisory group side and to see what had happened to the original version. I think I would say from my point of view what happened was that a study that originally was to be a very comprehensive multidisciplinary study of children's development over a 20-year-period (the proposal was for a 20 year longitudinal study), became much more a study of children's health and I would say children's illnesses and disease. Part of it was because the organized societies for children, whether it was mental health or diabetes or cancer, were extremely active in wanting to have their interests represented, which was certainly important.

And I think it is a really good lesson about how you may start off with one set of goals and I guess through what people would call the "sausage-making," end up with something else. That was for me a learning experience at the very least in terms of scientific agency policy and practice.

So I will stop now and see if you have any questions about that.

MZ: Thank you. Kimber do you have any questions or should we go ahead?

KB: No, I'm good.

President of Foundation for Child Development

MZ: So how did the next step happen for you?

RT: I'm at OSTP in a position that basically I was asked to do and did, but I was also on the job market. I pursued a number of positions that were open in the second half of 1996. I believe that I could have continued to stay as Assistant Director in OSTP if I wanted. I think that certainly Ernie Moniz, who was my boss, was very supportive. He had a wonderful sense of humor. I remember him saying to me "So Ruby, you just want to go to New York and be with those poohbas!" It was so funny. I said "No, no, Ernie that's really not why I am going." I think he would have really wanted me to stay and work with the team. But this job offer came in November or December, well, in the fall of 1996. And after thinking about it, I decided to make the move to become the President of the Foundation for Child Development.

So that was why I left OSTP and I actually really had a great experience with the people I worked with, and as I said, came to personally admire individuals who work in federal civil service, because they were clearly professionals and really cared about their jobs and doing it well and so forth. Obviously, Ernie Moniz was a political appointee. But I think that all of us who worked in the OSTP who were not political appointees, we were civil service appointees. I learned a lot. I learned a great deal about the federal agencies, how they worked, it was very good background I would say.

MZ: How did it happen that you transitioned to FCD? Why did you take that job, and what were you hoping to do?

RT: The job opened in the fall I guess of 1996. And Barbara Blum my predecessor was leaving the foundation and there was a search. And I was part of the search process. I believe that I was not the first choice. I don't know if I was the second or third choice, but definitely not the first choice. At least one person that they offered the job to felt that the foundation did not have sufficient resources for grant making, that it was "too small."

At some point, they came to me and asked me if I would take the job, and I thought about it. And I remember thinking at that point, I was familiar with the foundation, I had been supported by the foundation as a Congressional Science Fellow, I certainly knew Bert Brim who was Barbara Blum's predecessor, I knew about the reputation of the foundation. There were very few foundations at that point that had a focus on children and almost none that had a focus on research. I felt that it was a really tempting opportunity to run a foundation that had the kind of history and reputation that the foundation had, because I think I would say that at that point, it might have been the only, or among very few foundations in the philanthropic sector in 1996, that combined a focus on children with supporting research on children. And I thought to myself, well this is thematic in my career so *why not*?

So I started to transition even when I was working at OSTP and then went full time at the foundation in January of 1997. That's how I remember how I got to the Foundation for Child Development.

MZ: What was your focus there, what were you trying to accomplish? Can you tell us about some of the ways in which you contributed while you were there?

RT: I think one important background for my coming to FCD in January of 1997 is what my predecessors did. I understand that we have a very good history of the foundation, with papers archived at the Rockefeller Archive Center,[6] and hopefully someone will do a very thorough and scholarly history of the foundation. But this is my understanding as President coming in in 1997.

[6] The Foundation for Child Development Records are in the Rockefeller Archive Center, a repository and research center for the study of philanthropy, 15 Dayton Avenue, Sleepy Hollow, NY 10591 (http://www.rockarch.org). See also www.fcd-us.org.

The foundation had really started around 1899 or the early part of the 20th century as a nonprofit service organization. It had a very strong interest in taking children from the tenements of New York, particularly those who were disabled by polio, and working to provide them with educational services and eventually their inclusion in the New York public school system. So that was the history. And once that was done, they had a very extensive visiting nurse program run by women. It was quite unusual at that time, certainly for a foundation. It was called the Association for the Aid of Crippled Children in its early years. It worked with children who were disabled by polio, providing them with support and educational services, home visiting, vocational education and so forth. And this history is quite well documented in a centennial history document, so I won't go into detail.

In the middle of the 1940s, on the board of the foundation was a wealthy individual and his wife who had no children. They decided that they would give all of their money to the foundation, to the Association for the Aid of Crippled Children. And that was the transition point. And I believe that Lawrence Rockefeller, who was on the board, was instrumental in all of this, and in transitioning it from a service-providing nonprofit into a philanthropic institution.

In the late '40s and early '50s, foundations were not very transparent; they were really private entities, and the sector was relatively small. What happened was that for the first decade or so, at least in the late '40s and early '50s, it started to have an *internal* research program. It had two groups of people: one was a longitudinal study of a birth cohort in Aberdeen Scotland, called the Aberdeen Study, with individuals in Aberdeen who were studied over decades; and the research program housed within the foundation of Thomas Birch and Stella Chess, people who had done research on children's temperament and how temperament changes over time. So, it was a period immediately after the bequest when the foundation did not give out grants but basically used the resources of the foundation which it had to support internal operating research programs. They did probably support a number of small research projects as well. But that was basically what was happening then.

Then in the early '60s, the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development in the National Institutes of Health was established. It took a lot of energy and time and lobbying and so forth, but it was actually instituted. For the foundation, the question became, well, what should we do now? There is a National Institute of Child Health and Human Development now. And also because I think the research program kind of spun off and people went to other institutions and so forth.

So what happened was, I can't give you the exact time, but it was sometime prior to 1964-1965, they hired their first Executive Director Leonard Mayo, who was a social worker by training, from I believe Cleveland, Ohio. He was one of the people involved in shaping the War on Poverty and Head Start. So, he was part of the group with Julie Richmond and Ed Zigler and all of those other people who were basically working with Washington policymakers in the Kennedy and then the Johnson administration to create and to implement these programs. So there certainly was some grant making and so forth. But his work was definitely at the federal level.

And then they hired a doctor from Vermont, Robert Slater for a few years, and then he was succeeded by Bert Brim, Orville Brim, Junior. And I think what's really important about that, in the early '70s, for the foundation and foundation history, is that at that point Bert Brim had been President of the Russell Sage Foundation and had been head of the Social Science Research Council. He was a sociologist and quite distinguished. So, he became President and started a grant making program. Some of the things he did led to the Federal Interagency Committee on Children, Youth and Families; Walter Mondale was invited to the, I guess it was the 75th anniversary of the foundation, and suggested the Family Impact Statement which then became a grant to Sidney Johnson at George Washington University. And the

whole idea was that whenever policy was made in Washington, one should have a Family Impact Statement.

So, the foundation made some grants that were really quite important and are documented in the history, but certainly very much supported that kind of work, the Family Impact work. Bert Brim supported Urie Bronfenbrenner's work for a number of years and I think it is fair to say that Urie's work on the influential Ecology of Human Development was basically started and funded by the foundation under Bert Brim's presidency. And I think Urie actually spent some time in New York. The foundation supported the early years of the Children's Defense Fund; I think it was called the Washington Resource Group, but it evolved into the Children's Defense Fund, I don't think it even had a Washington presence at that point. The foundation started to fund advocacy work and to start to make some grants.

As I understand it, after Brim was President for a number of years, and he clearly did a lot of other things as well, as I understand it, the board kind of wanted something new. So, the foundation board hired Barbara Blum who had been a commissioner in New York State government working on child welfare issues, mental disability issues, de-institutionalization and so forth. And I think the foundation still supported research, but took a more, I would say, practice and implementation grant-making agenda approach.

Sunset Park, for example, was a major grantee of the foundation in a very poor section of Brooklyn, which is now gentrified. But this would be in the '80s. It funded research on the first welfare legislation that occurred in the '80s. So, it was much more involved in research on the implementation of federal legislative policy, supported some basic research, had major grantmaking in terms of funding of direct service organizations in Sunset Park, Brooklyn, and so forth.

So my impression is that after ten years, again, the Board wanted something new, and so they instituted a search in 1996. I believe at that point they really wanted to have someone with a strong research interest, and less of an interest in some of the direct service activities, although I think the board was very diverse, a very large board and very diverse. So, when I got there in January of 1997, it was very clear to me that they wanted something different, but they weren't really sure what it was. So, I had to sit down and think what would be the new initiatives that the foundation would engage in.

I think that the social and policy context, certainly as I think these had influenced Barbara Blum's programmatic agenda, influenced my agenda as well. I believe that it was in 1997, that the New York State legislature approved the voluntary universal PreK program in the state of New York. I had, given my Carnegie days, and also I would say I advocated for it at OSTP, felt that universal prekindergarten was something that should be instituted. So we did some grantmaking around that, around advocacy for it. We also had a related grant already in place from the previous, from Barbara Blum's administration, which we also continued.

I would say that there were a number of other areas that I started to cultivate that basically led to some major initiatives during my tenure at FCD. One was development of the Index of Child Wellbeing, which was developed and supported within the foundation. The whole idea was to use federal statistics to develop a single index based on the data that had been collected pertaining to the wellbeing of children and to track that over time. So that was one effort that pretty much cut across a lot of my work at the foundation.

The second was that I believed that investing in individuals, while not the sole purpose or sole way in which foundations should use their funds, certainly should be part of it. So, what I did was to work with Anette Chin and others to develop the Young Scholars Program. It was a way to invest in young people, (young not being chronologically young, but young in terms of their work as researchers), and

importantly to combine this with a neglected area of research activity, which was focused on the development of children from birth to ten who were children of immigrants.

And when this began in approximately the late '90s or 2000 or so, there was research on immigrant youth, largely around their transition to the workplace, but very little research on the first decade of life. So, both through the Young Scholars Program and through other grants to the Urban Institute, the Migration Policy Institute and others, we basically, I would say, contributed to building a field of researchers and people interested in policies affecting immigrant children and families. I think we sort of nurtured that particular enterprise.

And I think what is really important, and Kimber may remember this because she was part of this, there started to be a lot of activity among foundations on immigrant issues, in immigrant rights issues. But like many areas, there was very little attention to children and their families. We certainly as a foundation, tried to convince other foundations to become involved. But I would say we didn't have very much impact in that area. I think that maybe after I left, which would have been in 2012, there started to be more activity, and also because the children of immigrants were such a large part of school populations and young child populations in many key states. So, the Young Scholars Program was an investment in young scholars but was also accompanied with the clear goal of building a field of research: the development and wellbeing of immigrant children and their families during the first decade of life.

And by the time this focus of the Young Scholars Program ended (it continues but with a different focus), there were about 40 scholars, many of whom have been supported and developed and gone on to become tenured and senior professors, and have developed a field to a great extent. And I think the other part is we also tried to encourage the federal agencies to support research on immigrant children. That was very, very, slow and not, I would say, not too impactful, certainly during the years I was there. I think there was some hesitation on the part of federal agencies to get involved in this area. And, in general, foundation boards were not supportive of it. The FCD foundation board was very supportive. And that was very important. Because if they had not been, we wouldn't have been able to mount these programs.

I feel now, and its been about 20 years since the Young Scholars Program was developed, I just really feel that the investment by the foundation was so important in developing the researchers and the studies that have emerged. And, in fact, in 2015 to '17, when I was chairing the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine consensus study on the education of English learners, the work of the Young Scholars was very important, because even then there wasn't very much research on English learners, especially young English learners. A lot of the studies on young children, certainly from birth to five, was done in other countries or done with samples that were not of immigrant children. So even in that period, 2015-2017, there really was a dearth of studies on English learners involving children of immigrants, certainly during the first five to ten years of life. And the work of the Young Scholars, and the research that first FCD supported and that went on to get other foundation and federal funding (because as time went on the federal agencies became interested in the issue), was very important in informing the National Academies study.

The third area that I developed, which was a long-term interest and which I've mentioned in previous interviews, was my interest in connecting the early childhood education experiences of children with the K-12 education system. The foundation and Kimber Bogard and other staff were very much involved in developing what is now known as the PreK-3rd initiative. It is now part of other foundation agendas; it is certainly part of state agendas as well. There has been a slow growth of interest and work but it definitely exists. And people are working on making those connections.

And part of it is because there has been a growth in PreK or transitional PreK or kindergarten or early childhood programs, a growth in children's participation in these programs. I would say that part of the PreK-3rd initiative was based on foreseeing that that was in fact going to be the case. That is, as more children became involved in early education or PreK or transitional PreK programs and so forth, the issue of what the ramifications of their participation would be on the early elementary grades, was just not an issue that people were paying attention to. And I think now they are flustered because, as a state like California tries to extend those programs, they ask, OK, what happens after that?

And the other thing I think I would say is that as part of that initiative, and Kimber you may remember this as well, the foundation was the sole funder for many years of the Tulsa Oklahoma Universal PreK program. And we basically took the initiative. You know I believe I begged Bill Gormley, I think I did beg Bill Gormley, to mount that study, because what we realized at that point was that there was Perry Preschool, there was Abecedarian, there was the Chicago Longitudinal Study, there were a few other studies, longitudinal studies, that looked at how children did after their early childhood experience. But they were certainly decades old in implementation, and I think that, aside from the Chicago Longitudinal Study, had occurred in ecologies that were not urban, they were certainly low-income, but they were more small town and rural ecologies, and the samples were very small.

So, I felt there needed to be a contemporary study of the effects of PreK programs like Oklahoma's, like the Oklahoma Universal PreK Program on children. So that is how that particular effort was launched. And it still continues. And I think that with the advocacy supported by other foundations, like the Pew Charitable Trusts and other foundations, to argue for early childhood programs, the availability of the findings of the Tulsa Universal Program were really important in providing more contemporary larger-scale research on implementation of early education programs, and what their effects were on children.

I think that is sort of like the overview. We obviously did many other things as well, but I think those would be the major pillars of the time that I was there: the Young Scholars Program on children of immigrants, the PreK-3rd initiative, and the Index of Child Wellbeing work.

I would add that we also supported advocacy. Advocacy is not something that foundations tend to support for children and it has greatly weakened that sector. We definitely supported that as well. Fairly early on, I would say, in the late 90s, we supported a major study at the Urban Institute to examine the status of child advocacy organizations in the United States that resulted in the publication *Who Speaks for America's Children.*[7] I don't believe there has been an assessment since. And I would say that the child advocacy organizations have been weakened since that period of time. So, there are not many advocacy organizations that focus exclusively on children and are actively involved in shaping legislation and so forth. So that was certainly another area that we were involved in.

While conceptually you can talk about these as pillars, we also really worked hard at intersecting them or connecting them in our grant making program. So that is I think another thing that we certainly tried to do.

So I think I will stop there and see if there are any questions. And since Kimber was involved in a lot of this, she may have some thoughts as well.

KB: Thank you Ruby! No, I am good. No further comment at this point.

[7] DeVita, C.J. and Mosher-Williams, R, (Eds.), (2002). *Who speaks for America's children? The role of child advocates in public policy.* Washington, D.C.: The Urban Institute Press.

Interview Conducted on March 30, 2020

Context for this segment

As of March 30, Kimber Bogard was on the path to recovery, but not yet fully recovered from COVID-19. She was at home in isolation from the rest of her family, in touch with her doctor, and continuing to work from home. She placed a high priority on continuing the oral history with Ruby Takanishi, and so we continued.

Ruby started the interview of 3/30/20 by thanking Kimber for continuing with the oral history under extraordinary circumstances. She indicated that she would like to begin the present interview with some broader reflections on her time as President of the Foundation for Child Development.

Broader reflections

RT: I would like to say that on the last interview, as I reflected on it, I felt that I was giving datapoints. In other words, I was giving the kinds of approaches and programs that we funded and how they developed and so forth. I just wanted to spend a few minutes reflecting from a higher altitude about my work at the Foundation for Child Development.

One thing I would like to point out is, even in the period of time that I was President of the Foundation for Child Development, essentially 1997-mid-2012, the foundation had a very small amount of assets, and during the 2008 recession, I think we lost a third of our assets. It was always a very small foundation, and I would say that over the years we would grant anywhere from 3 to maybe 6 million dollars a year, which is a relatively small amount, particularly given the larger-sized foundations then and now. So, I would just like to say that when I went into the foundation in 1997, I knew that its assets were rather small comparatively. So, one had to be very thoughtful and strategic about how those assets were used.

I think the other thing that I would say is that one very important guiding point was something that David Hamburg, my boss and President of the Carnegie Corporation of New York, said to me when we discussed taking the job. He said that you can do really good things with small amounts of money. And I thought that was a very interesting comment from David because Carnegie Corporation was in the top 20 in terms of foundation assets and grant-making at that particular point in time. And that really stuck with me.

And when I went to the foundation I was very much influenced by a piece of writing by Paul Ylvisaker. Paul Ylvisaker was a program officer at the Ford Foundation. He was very much involved in the kind of grantmaking that complemented the War on Poverty. He also later became the Dean of the Harvard Graduate School of Education. And he was just a wise person in foundation circles.

Paul wrote a little pamphlet, and I am going to include it with the small amount of background materials that I gathered up for the interviews. It is called *Small Can be Effective*.[8] And that was like my bible during my time at the foundation. Because every time that we made a grant, it was really thought through very carefully. Not all of them were effective, but I think certainly some of them were. So, I think that's one overview comment that I want to make. So that was "Guidance 1."

"Guidance 2" for me was sort of the old school of philanthropy that existed at the end of the 20th century. That was the notion that foundations (because during the 20th century they were relatively small in terms of the amount of money that they were able to grant; small in terms of the federal

[8] Ylvisaker, P. N. (1989). *Small can be effective.* Washington, D.C.: Council on Foundations.

government, for example, or the NIH), that the whole guidance or guiding principle was that, and it is part, I think of the conceptualization of philanthropy in the 20th century historically, that foundations were what some people called the third sector. What it meant was, you had the business sector, the for-profit sector; you had the government sector, which certainly by the end of the 20th century or so was quite a big player in terms of research and funding programs and so forth; and the third sector was organized philanthropy, of which there were many forms. And the whole idea was that foundations should support and undertake initiatives that government and the for-profit sector, for whatever reason, *could not or would not*.

I think I had been quite thoroughly socialized to believe in that general principle. So, I would say that a very important part of the grantmaking at the foundation when I was there was always to ask the question: Are we doing something that the other two sectors could not or would not do, for whatever reason, whether it was because of an interest group, or the for-profit imperative, or for the government, because it was a bureaucracy or national politics or so forth.

So that was one of the ways in which we worked. And I think Kimber might remember this because she was part of it, was to really kind of look for opportunities, what we would call neglected or overlooked opportunities, that really weren't receiving attention, particularly in our case at the Foundation for Child Development, in terms, for example, of research. What were the NIHs, because of who they were, what were they *not* funding which they should have?

And so the example of funding research on children of immigrants, or children growing up in immigrant families, is a really good example, because that was an area despite the growing demographic changes that were already occurring in parts of the country, the federal agencies were really not supporting researchers' work with these populations. So that's a very concrete opportunity that the Foundation for Child Development identified and then really worked to develop. And I think to some extent we informed and maybe increased attention to that area and interest and federal support for research in that area. So, and I think it worked out that way. I think when you look at the kinds of grants that the Young Scholars received after our grants, some of them did get federal grants, some of them got grants from larger foundations. Because the issue of immigration was a hot potato for foundation boards and some foundations would not support work in that area in that period of time. So, we were able to, maybe I would say, encourage other foundations to do so.

I think the third thing which I think is also a principle, is, and it's somewhat of a cross-cutting theme, is to not fund only established researchers. We did fund established researchers, but we also really tried to fund more younger scholars, to sort of give younger people in the field, who had not gotten grants either from foundations or from the federal government, a way to try to get their foot in the door. And I think certainly the Young Scholars Program enabled young scholars to do that. So, I think that was another important guiding principle for us and for the foundation.

I just wanted to put those three guiding principles out. It is not that I am reflecting on them now after we did all the work, but they were very clearly part of the thinking during the time that we were making those grants. So, I just wanted to share that.

MZ: Thank you. The three principles are: small amounts can be influential, to address the gaps not covered by public and private, and to foster young scholars' development. Did I get them right?

RT: Yes, I think that is a really nice summary.

MZ: I feel like you were fanning embers, and they did turn into the needed fire in the fireplace.

RT: Yes, right, we were trying to light fires!

Civil rights framework in First Things First

RT: One of the things I wanted to also address, that you asked me last time that we didn't get to, you asked me to talk about why in my book, *First Things First,*[9] I have introduced a civil rights framework to my argument for creating a new primary school.

MZ: Kimber did you want to jump in here?

KB: Yes, I wanted to ask Ruby to pull that thread through, from your time growing up in Hawaii to writing the book, about why you chose to use the civil rights frame. I heard this thread throughout a lot of what you were discussing in our previous calls.

RT: Well I'm very happy to. So I begin one of the early chapters of *First Things First* by basically asserting that talent is universally distributed but opportunity is not. And I really wanted to put that out there, to present, I think, a point of view, certainly a belief, that when you look at people in general, of course there are people for various reasons who have health issues or disabilities, but for the vast majority of individuals in a cohort, or in a class, or in a school or community, every one of them has the potential to do really great things. However, we know, and I knew growing up and how I described growing up, that the opportunities to develop potential were not evenly distributed. And as a result, some people certainly had less opportunity to develop themselves, to develop their talents, to make contributions, than others did.

That was my own personal experience, I would say, throughout my adult life and growing up, and also in my interest in the research in that area. The research on inequality, which has flourished even since I wrote my book in 2015 or so, is just a really good example that we have societies and certainly our country where there is unequal opportunity for individuals, or kids in a cohort, or kids in a generation, or kids in a community or so forth. And we know a lot about how that is structured in our policies, in our institutions. And I really wanted to not only develop that argument, but also to argue that by some changes that we could make in how we began public education, and the time or age at which we began public education in the United States, and certainly in universal access to that education, and the kind of education that we provide to children, we could really widen opportunity. Not that it would guarantee opportunity or that we would solve the problem overnight, but it might make opportunity more evenly distributed than it is now.

And we are right in the middle of the COVID-19 pandemic--it's been going on through all of the interviews. And it is really clear that when the schools in the United States, whether public or private, close down because they have to, the opportunities to learn continue to be unequal and may be more unequal than they were when the schools were open. Certainly, one of the factors is access to technology, I would say, but also access to teachers and parents and their availability and attention to support student learning. So, we have a kind of a contemporary example of structured inequality in learning opportunities as we speak.

So the book that I wrote really tries to envision not necessarily a new way but a different way of thinking about the American primary school, which right now in most places would either be K to grades 5 to 6, or in some places because kindergarten is not necessarily universally available or even available for the same amount of time as grades 1-6, a grades 1-6 education system. In many places, universal public

[9] Takanishi, R. (2016). *First things first! Creating the new American primary school.* New York: Teachers College Press.

education in the United States begins at grade 1. So, what I wanted to do is to start the access to public education in the United States by 3 or 4 years of age with universal pre-kindergarten. And what I argued is that what the research which has been generated over the past 40 or 50 years is quite clear about in terms of where the inequality in opportunity really begins to have an effect, is early; it certainly appears much earlier than ages 3 or 4. But in terms of being able to provide public access to learning opportunities like many of our peer nations, the U.S. is clearly very much behind.

First Things First really tries to put forward a vision of a new primary education system that begins at age 3 with Pre-k and goes to grade 5 or 6, based on research and based on policies of other countries. I felt that while it wasn't the perfect solution and it wasn't necessarily the primary solution, it was a very important part of trying to address inequality, certainly of learning opportunities in the United States. And I basically made the civil rights argument for access to universal pre-kindergarten education based on the existing research on how children learn and develop in American society. And I made the argument that if the research is correct or if you believe in the research, then the argument to provide early educational experiences for *all* children is a natural outcome.

So I would say maybe five years later after I wrote the book, we are still struggling. And what is ironic to me today is with this Coronavirus pandemic, it is very clear that the impact of reduced revenues on public schools is going to be much greater than what we experienced in the great recession and financial crisis of 2008. So, whenever this comes to an end, we are going to have a greatly weakened, much more greatly weakened educational system, certainly in the early years, than we had in the 2008 financial crisis.

In a sense, it is a much more sobering situation now than ever before. And, also, the economic impact of the pandemic is such that not only is the public sector in terms of revenues and so forth going to have to, I think, reinvent itself, but it is also true in terms of the private sector. So, I think it is a huge upheaval that we are beginning to face for kids and families in the United States. And I can't see that inequality is going to… let me put it this way: inequality will only widen.

MZ: Were there any things after the 2008 crisis that helped that we can carry forward? Not to be "polyannaish" but is there anything we should learn from the last economic crisis?

RT: I think that's a great question. I'm not sure that I've really thought about it. But I think that what I would say is that the Obama administration had the big stimuluses in which they infused large amounts of money into the education system. But schools never closed, for example, and never got to face when are they going to open. And we didn't have the kind of massive unemployment of families in the 2008 crisis, which has its own impact, that is, you know the lack of financial resources on families. I think certainly research indicates this has a negative effect on children; we have that from data as well.

As far as I understand, most school systems, and I would say the early education sector, has not recovered twelve years later from the reductions that were made post-2008. So, for example, in California, even with Governor Newsom's new focus on young children birth to five, even those investments are really making up for what we lost in the post-2008 period. So, I don't think we came out ahead twelve years later from those reductions prior to the last few months when the Coronavirus pandemic began.

So I think what I am saying, the bottom line, is that the development of children is going to be very much affected, because of what's happening to families and their economic viability and because of what is happening to schools This has not happened to schools before. They have now had to scramble to close, to educate children while closed, and they don't know when they are going to open. They don't know

what revenues they are going to have after the pandemic. So it's a very, what shall I say, uncertain period.

MZ: I was looking for the right word too. Sobering maybe?

RT: Marty you were looking for something good about this, So Andrew Rotherham has proposed that schools stay open during the summer. And I think the United States has one of the shortest school years in the world, certainly in the developed world. And it has been very hard for the United States to change because the comfort of the long summer vacation is part of the culture. But what Rotherham has suggested recently is that schools not close during the summer months, to try to continue to provide students with learning opportunities, and certainly with learning opportunities that they might have missed because of the Coronavirus. And I find that's helpful, because it may change the way we think about the school year, for example.

That is the one thing I *can* think of. And I don't think we know what the effects of on-line learning are, and what is necessary to support it. And, then of course, part of the inequality is that many children and families don't have access to the technology.

MZ: I think at one point you gave me a statistic about that for New York City.

RT: Yes, in New York City, Chancellor Richard Carranza estimated that 330,000 kids in the 1.1 million in New York City public schools don't have access to technologies in their homes.

MZ: So in this context it may be that some things will now demand attention and focus.

RT: Yes, they already are; the question is how do we address those issues. And maybe it's too early and maybe because of the immediacy of the life and death crisis of the virus, it's very difficult to address those issues.

MZ: Right. Thank you for giving us a focus on children in this context and the enormous challenges that we will be facing.

RT: And the other thing that I would add, because we did support a lot of this, as well as other foundations, when I was at the Foundation for Child Development, is the growing decline in federal funding of children's programs, which also includes research, and also includes service programs as well.

I think when I was at the President's Office of Science and Technology Policy in 1996, it was double digits; I can't tell you exactly what it was, it was probably 10 to 15 percent when we did that study of the federal budget, that was devoted to programs for children from birth to age 21. Now I think today given the analysis of children's budget that the Urban Institute has done for all these years,[10] it's about 9 percent. And this analysis suggests that even without the pandemic, it will decline. And so, I think that unless we institute different kinds of policies, the share of the budget going to children will decline.

Chairing the Committee on the Education of English Learners

MZ: So please can you take us to the next step? After leaving the Foundation for Child Development, what have your next steps been?

RT: So, after I left the Foundation for Child Development in August of 2012, I would say that for a year or two, I did a lot of consulting and advising and working on projects and so forth. I would say that the one that sort of took about half time work for about two years was the National Academy of Sciences,

[10] *Kids' Share: Analyzing Federal Expenditures on Children*

Engineering and Medicine study that was focused on the effect of education on English learners in the United States.

And I don't know, Kimber, you may have some thoughts on this because you were the Director of the Board on Children, Youth and Families, but it was a very large study. It was focused on children from birth to age 21 who were English language learners. It had a very large--I always felt it was the largest--advisory group or committee that ever existed. There were 19 of us from different disciplines and experiences around research and education and policy and practice related to English learners.

And so, I chaired that study from about February of 2015 to February of 2017. And the report was released in 2017.[11] And not only did it span so many ages and grades, which in and of itself was a challenge, but the whole area of how do you effectively teach, educate English learners in American society and especially in that historical context, is certainly a very contentious area. And it intersected with all of the policies and politics around immigration. And, also, the National Academies of Sciences issued a number of very important reports on immigration policy and how immigrants affected employment prospects of native-born Americans and so forth and so on.

So, it was a very hot area. And I would say that it was a hot area not only in terms of the populations and their families, but a hot area I would say in the educational arena as well. And in fact, at the time I believe that we started the study, at least two states, Massachusetts and California, actually had policies on the books that said that English was the language of instruction. That was overturned in California, I think in 2017. I can't remember the exact date. So there have been some changes. Well, it occurred in 2017, because the report had the opportunity to inform what is called the *Roadmap* in the state of California,[12] which took a bi- and multi-lingual approach to their education.

So in general, although the report was supported by several federal agencies, was set up to be a review of the scientific evidence, and also based on that evidence, to make recommendations for policy and practice, that examination did not occur in a, what shall I say, a peaceful and rational environment. So, I think it is very important to look at that study in that context.

MZ: A very complicated context to navigate in.

RT: And also because researchers have strong and different opinions particularly about instruction. And there are tons of studies in this area. So that was another, what shall I say, difficult area to travel in.

And I think also what I would say is that because we had the mandate or the direction to cover children and youth from birth all the way up to the 12th grade or age 21 when they basically age out of the public education system, I think one of the, for me, very significant outcomes was the huge gap that existed in our knowledge of children and their learning of language and how to instruct them that occurred at the early childhood level, during the early adolescent and middle school level, and also at the high school level. So, a lot of the research clustered around elementary school. And I would say a lot of the research did not pay sufficient attention to the developmental characteristics, including the language learning characteristics, of children at different ages and stages of development. So that was another, well, it was very revealing. But it made it very difficult to make research-based conclusions about how education and instruction should take place.

[11] National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine (2017). *Promoting the educational success of children and youth learning English: Promising futures.* Washington, D.C.: The National Academies Press.
[12] California Department of Education: *English Learner Roadmap*

MZ: So you were navigating in a complex environment, but also with gaps in the research and also strong perspectives on the research. And it was a consensus committee, correct?

RT: Yes, yes. And we did come to consensus. But it was not easy.

MZ: But you brought it to closure; you brought it to consensus. Is there anything that helped in that process? Or anything that was important to it coming to a successful conclusion?

RT: I think I would put it this way: I really spent quite a bit of time, I would say at least half of work time during those years, sort of negotiating the disagreements and tensions, and trying to come up with a consensus agreement. And it really took a lot. It took dealing with individual personalities or factions being as neutral as possible. I mean obviously I do have strong opinions about things but as Chair, I couldn't have strong opinions about things. I think that was part of it. I think that we also had a very good staff who I think supported the committee and me and took that neutral position as well. I think that was also very important.

MZ: And then of course there was navigating the review process which is no small feat. Before we ask about other professional commitments in these most recent years, you talked about California as an important instance in which the timing of the report was helpful. Is there anything else you want to comment on about the report and its aftermath?

RT: Well, so the report came out I think about in February of 2017. It was very well received by the field. I think the other thing I would say, the committee members were, I wouldn't say uniformly, but certainly the committee members were generally happy about the report, so that was important, including the people who had the most different opinions and difficulties with it. That was a nice outcome of it.

I think during the first year that the report came out it was in the top ten of the National Academies of Sciences reports that were either downloaded or accessed. Which is certainly very nice because when you really think about it, there are not that many people who see the education of English learners as a big issue. It's a big issue for people who are involved in it, who care about the children and so forth. But in general, when you look comparatively, it is basically often an overlooked issue. So that was certainly very gratifying. And so, there was a lot of interest in the report by education groups and associations and so forth. And a lot of the members went out and spoke about it.

I think that what was really important to me personally was that that the Department of Education, now under a different administration, because the grant had been made under the Obama administration and the report came out in the Trump administration, that the Department of Education, certainly among the people who worked in this area, were very pleased with the report.

And I think that if I was to say one of the things that I remember being so important as I struggled during this two-year period with the internal processes of the report itself is that I was bound and determined that if the Department of Education invested over a million dollars in this report, it was going to be a good report. That was my end goal. That was what was happening; that was my end goal! It was very important, I think that the Department itself, even though there had been changes in the political appointments, and some of the people who had funded the study or had been instrumental in funding the study had left when there was a change in administration, but I think that in general people felt that it was an important study, and, in fact, the new political appointment for the Office of English Language Learners told people and me, he said that "I carry this book with me everywhere I go."

So, I think that we felt that we had done a good job; that we had justified the funding of this report. And I think even now three years later, I don't think any of our major recommendations would change. They have aged really well.

MZ: That's a great summary. Turning to other things you've been involved with since the report came out, do you want to touch on any other activities?

RT: One of the things I did after I left Foundation for Child Development was I continued for about a year or so my work with the McKnight Foundation, which I had started four years before, to try to develop an early literacy PreK-3 initiative in Minnesota in the Minneapolis, St. Paul and Brooklyn Center school districts. And I think I would say that that effort did not end well in terms of it didn't really change the outcomes, the measured outcomes for the children in the schools that were supported by the McKnight Foundation and the foundation terminated that particular effort. I worked on that from the very beginning to the very end. So, that was one of the things that I did. And I continued work on the board of First Focus, which is an advocacy organization, one of the few national advocacy organizations for children still in Washington. I continued that work.

I am a Senior Fellow at New America, where I work with the Dual Language Working Group and also with the Early Elementary Education Policy Group. I also started serving on the Sobrato Early Academic Language (SEAL) new non-profit board which, interestingly enough, I had been involved in when I was at the Foundation for Child Development when it really didn't even exist yet. That is a series of very, I would say, successful, comprehensive dual language immersion programs serving English learners in California which was developed by the Sobrato Family Foundation in the Silicon Valley of California. So, I started work on that as a member of the founding board. I did various consulting work for foundations in terms of research or funding opportunities for dual language learners and English learners.

I have worked with advocacy groups like the Children's Institute of Oregon around their initiatives, and they actually have begun a Pre-K to 5th and 6th grade initiative in two districts in Oregon: the Forest Grove and Beaverton school districts. I worked for a number of years with that group to develop it. They were able to get multi-year adequate funding to do that effort. However, with the pandemic it is going to be very challenging because, of course, there are no students in schools and teachers and principals and superintendents are working but working under very different conditions. So, things have really changed from the initial idea.

MZ: Thank you. So while all of this has been going on, for quite a few years, you have also been very involved with SRCD. I am going to turn to those involvements now, which seems impossible as an additional layer on top of everything else you have been doing. But we know you've been very involved in these as well. But let me pause for a moment to ask you and Kimber if you would like a break before we continue.

KB: No, I'm OK, Marty. Thank you, Ruby how are you feeling?

RT: I'm OK to continue.

KB: OK.

<u>Participation in SRCD</u>

MZ: OK, wonderful. So the general topic now is going to be participation in SRCD. We are going to be asking you about your involvement in SRCD governance. But before we do that, could you please tell us about the first SRCD Biennial that you attended and what your memory of that is like?

RT: Well, my answer is that I don't know. However, one of the things I have in this little packet to give you is, I do have the manuscript of a presentation that I made at the 1979 SRCD. And what is really interesting, and it is a fairly long paper, I'm sure I made the paper quite long, but I probably just verbally presented it. But what is really interesting going back to it is that in 1979, I was on sabbatical. And in the years that I had been at UCLA since graduate school, and all of the things I was involved in there, one of the things that interested me was the history of early education and particularly federal programs and investments in early education and child care, and then the history of the field.

I did actually write a chapter on the history of federal involvement in early childhood education and care. I can't tell you when it was published; it was published in the '70s. And I still meet people, like today, who come up to me and say, "I read that paper that you wrote on federal involvement." The paper included the history of the WPA, nursery schools, and the Kaiser Child Development Centers that had flourished for women working in military production during the Second World War and things like that.

But what I was really interested in is that the paper that I presented at SRCD in 1979 really is an effort to try to map out a future agenda for what I called a historiography of the child development research field. And I think I did that because during the '70s, second half of the '70s, I did an official oral history of one of the pioneers who had really been involved in the '20s and '30s in the founding of what is now known as SRCD and also in what is now known as National Association for the Education of Young Children. Her name was Lois Meek Stolz. I guess by then she was certainly in her 80s. But she had really been right there at the beginning of the founding of the Child Welfare Stations, which became Child Development Centers like at Berkeley and at Iowa and at Teachers College and so forth.

That oral history, which I don't think I have a copy of anymore, but which is archived in the National Archives and at Columbia and Harvard Schlesinger Center and so forth,[13] but it was an effort to try to capture *her* account of how SRCD had developed, how NAEYC had developed, how parent education had developed. And largely under the influence of the Laura Spelman Rockefeller Fund and Lawrence Frank. So, the paper I presented at SRCD really focused on trying to re-look at the history of the research field in children's development. I think that may have been my first experience. I don't recall going to SRCD in 1977, which would have been the prior biennial meeting. So, the only record that I have is really that paper which was given, and it is dated for the 1979 biennial meeting.

MZ: Could you turn now to your involvement in SRCD governance?

RT: Sure. Well, I think I would say that my involvement in SRCD has really been very, what should I say, intermittent. This is what I will say: I certainly knew SRCD because I was a AAAS-SRCD Congressional Fellow in 1980-1981. So, I certainly knew of the organization and so forth. And then in the years following that in the early '80s, there was temporarily a Washington office established. And Lindsay Chase-Lansdale and Barbara Everett staffed that office. I think it lasted for about two or three years. And I was in Washington working at the American Psychological Association and so forth, so I had contact with the Washington Office. And, of course, Dorothy Eichorn was the Executive Officer of SRCD. She was very much involved in Washington associational work and they were a member of the Federation, and she was active in APA where I was housed and so forth. So, I knew about the organization and got to know Dorothy, Dot, Eichorn, who was really just a great person. And then I went to work for Carnegie

[13] Lois Meek Stolz, "Lois Meek Stolz: An American Child Development Pioneer," Interview with Ruby Takanishi, 1978, 37-43, Arthur and Elizabeth Schlesinger Library on the History of Women in America, Radcliffe College, Cambridge, Massachusetts.

and I was working on adolescent development. I think I had probably very little to do with SRCD really at that point.

Then in about the early 90s, for about six years, I was on Governing Council. And at that point SRCD was located in Ann Arbor. And John Hagen was the Executive Officer, he had succeeded Dorothy Eichorn. And so I was involved then. And I remember we had a discussion about moving the office from Ann Arbor to Washington, which didn't occur. So, then I got off SRCD's Governing Council and I finished my work at the Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development and then six months for OSTP and then was at Foundation for Child Development.

So I think I would say I really wasn't an active member of SRCD. I would go to the meetings. I certainly remember in the mid '80s, I think it was around 1985, I remember working with Carolyn Zahn-Waxler and Marion Radke-Yarrow, on pre-conferences on child development and social policy. So, I would do things like that, largely when I was asked to, because I really wasn't active in SRCD.

And then SRCD became more active in Washington and the policy work, the Congressional Fellows and the Social Policy Reports and so forth. And I started to become involved in that, largely as a reviewer and as a person who was very interested in the publications and very supportive of the publications. And I was asked to be on the committee on the Child Evidence Briefs, in fact, I reviewed one today. And then most recently on this Rapid Response group, which was set up just recently for SRCD to respond on a timely basis to either legislation or legal actions or statements that could be made on salient policy issues. And so, I participated in that.

So, I think I would say that my participation in SRCD has been less in the meetings and in the committee structure and so forth, and more contributing in terms of the issues that I'm interested in. Which is how you connect research to policy issues. And that continues to be. So, I am now in the Rapid Response group, in the Child Evidence Brief series groups. Whenever I am asked to do something I do it, because I think it is very important and I want to be very supportive of the society doing that kind of work.

I served on the Finance Committee. I basically, I think what I would say, I've been more reactive. So when I've been asked to serve on committees I certainly have. And I do recall that when I was at the Foundation for Child Development, the Hispanic Caucus and the Asian Caucus started up. And the foundation provided start-up funds for both of those caucuses. The Black Caucus had already existed certainly since the '80s, so that was already there. So, I think it's been more; I don't think I've been proactive in terms of SRCD. I really responded to requests to contribute or serve.

MZ: And would you say you've seen big changes across your years of this kind of involvement in SRCD, and how it prioritizes or how it functions?

RT: Well, when you sort of look at SRCD, I think, from 1985 or so to the present, I just think if you want to celebrate progress, to me, it is very gratifying. So, I remember sitting with Carolyn and Marion and Dorothy Eichorn at NIH and planning this pre-conference that looked at various aspects of child development and social policy, and thinking "Why do we have to have a pre-conference? It should be part of the regular program." And I would say that certainly within five to ten years, it *was* part of the regular program. So, I think that was really wonderful.

I think that the fact that the Congressional Science Fellowship Program has continued all this time, and that we have the Executive Fellowship, is, I just think, fabulous. Because it has created all these individuals who have worked in state government, federal government, the agencies and academe who have direct experience with federal, state and agency work. That has certainly diversified the field a lot

and created some more opportunities for individuals who want to have different kinds of career paths. I just think that's wonderful.

The fact that we have now the *Social Policy Report* is, I think, as a continuing regular part of the publications of SRCD, I just think is really great. Because I think we tried to do that when Barbara Everett headed the Washington office, but it was not the time, it was going to have to take time.

The briefs, I think are really important. The fact that there is a policy person, like you were, Marty, and now Kelly Fisher is, who has responsibility for policy issues in the Washington office, the fact that the office is located in Washington, finally, is really great. And the Rapid Response group is relatively new. We have dealt with two issues. But it has functioned really well and on a timely basis. And made recommendations to Governing Council that have been accepted. I think these are all things to celebrate. Things have really changed.

However, I think I would say that based on the things that I see in terms of the lack of engagement of the members in policy issues, I think we still have far to go. So, on the one hand, SRCD has a division, a full time person there, full portfolio of activities, working with the Congressional and Executive Agency Fellows, the publications, the *Report*, the engagement with other scientific societies, being present in Washington and so forth and so on.

But I do wonder in the vast membership, what awareness there is that some of these activities exist. And the reason why I say that is that, being on the Rapid Response Committee, we have had two issues that have been brought up. One of them was by a member of SRCD, which was great, and one was brought up by a member of the Committee who recused herself. But when I think about all of the ways in which the research that we already have could be used in many of the issues, policy issues, that exist today, we don't see, I don't see that much interest on the part of the membership. So, I think that there is more work to do.

Experiences teaching and mentoring

MZ: We'd like to take a step back and ask you about your experiences training researchers and teaching child development research, and the tension in the field between teaching and research. Could you describe your own experiences as a professor and then as somebody who has been training people working in child development and influencing or launching them, as you describe. What have you seen and what have been the most important personal experiences in that aspect of your work?

RT: Well again, I have had what I call intermittent teaching experiences. Certainly, the first one was at UCLA from the fall of 1973 and I think I left in 1980 and that includes the two sabbatical years. I did adjunct appointments at Teachers College at Columbia University and at Bank Street College of Education. I did a semester teaching Ed Zigler's child development and social policy class when he was on sabbatical at Yale. I think those really pretty much would be my official faculty positions that involved teaching research and mentoring or supervising and supporting. I never taught undergraduates.

I think I would say that what I found is, just for me personally, having those three legs of a stool, that the research production, the teaching, and the supervision or mentoring of students, was too big a task for me to do all at once, and certainly from the UCLA experience, a very huge strain. And the fourth leg for many faculty members is committee service, for example, and that can be quite large as well. I have a daughter who is an academic who has very similar responsibilities. So, my feeling, is that, as I reflect on it now, that, producing research, teaching, supervising students, and so forth, and then administrative, responsibilities. I just think it is too much to ask of one person.

I am a pretty energetic person, and I work very hard, and I'm pretty efficient at what I do. But I just think to have to do all of those things well, or even the teaching and research responsibilities, is quite demanding on a person. And I have really, I think, enjoyed moving out, or appreciated moving out of that cluster of roles to the other roles that I subsequently took which were really much more focused. Either administering scientific affairs at APA, or the Federation, or the Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development, and Foundation for Child Development, you could focus your energy and attention more on sort of one thing, if you will. So I think that I feel at this point like I made some really good choices, and that I don't think I would have been as effective or survived as long if I had had to do so many responsibilities at one time. I think that I feel very fortunate that I've been able to focus my energy in one area at a time in my work.

MZ: In a moment we are going to zoom way out and ask for your perspective on the history of the field and what your hopes are for future of the field. But before we do that because Kimber and I are conducting this interview, it seems fitting for us to ask about how you have continued in less formal structured roles to mentor and to support people's careers apart from formal teaching or apart from formal roles. Has that been a part steady of your commitments?

RT: Yes, I think so; I think so, yes. I wouldn't say it has been very extensive. But there are certain individuals that I have come into contact with throughout m y career; I don't think I encountered anyone with whom I worked closely after I left the foundation; with whom I have developed a relationship, a good working relationships, where I thought I had something to offer or to say about the kinds of professional, largely professional and career decisions that they are going through.

So, in a sense I kind of see myself a little bit like a coach, and a little bit like a mentor, to individuals, and I think that's very important because it is really part of giving back. I think my family really inculcated from a very early age that it was really important to give back. So, if you were an individual who had privileges in life or advantages in life, it was your responsibility to give back.

So, I feel that I have had, and still have, some really terrific individuals who have kind of mentored and coached me in my own professional life, and so kind of it's my turn or my responsibility to do the same. And so, it's sort of kind of a natural thing to do. And you know, its' fun.

MZ: It's wonderful to bring it back to the starting point of this interview and your family, and certainly helps me understand my own experiences. So now could you please comment on the history of the field during the years that you've participated: major continuities and discontinuities, and events related to these. Have your views concerning the importance of various issues changed over the years, and if so, how? And then the very last question will be: What are your hopes and fears for the future of the field?

RT: Well that's a whole conversation isn't it? So how can I do it in a pithy way, I guess? And I thought about this because you shared the protocol, and I read the questions, so it's not like I am totally unprepared. So, I have thought of it. And this is the way I kind of see it and it's changed over time.

Clearly the history, when I did that oral history, and some of the writing I did, and so forth, certainly for SRCD and to some extent APA, though I really only want to focus on SRCD, really comes from a period, a historical period, at least in American society, where knowledge generated by research, or what was then research (which is very different from what it is now in terms of methods, and body of knowledge and the concepts and so forth, which are different), so, really I think about some aspects of the agricultural station model, the land grant model, which was basically that research that was generated particularly in the public universities, in the land grant institutions, in the United States, were supposed to be used for practical purposes. So, if you look at the early history of SRCD, you see that, and certainly

the founding of the National Academy of Sciences itself during the Lincoln administration, you see that there has been, what shall I say, an imperative or an emphasis to generate knowledge and to use that knowledge to inform, pretty much the ideal was, in an impartial, nonpartisan way, whatever pressing issue there was.

And in the '20s and '30s, or early '30s, in American society, it had to do with the raising of children, and in some aspects the raising of children among college-educated women, and using that knowledge to inform their practice. Because there really was a documented fear that as women became more college-educated they were going to lose their natural mothering tendencies, so they had to be informed about the research so they would do the proper thing.

So, I think that that was certainly part of SRCD, and it kind of went along and so forth. And then I think, it was reflected in my own life and my own experience in the field, I would say that in the '70s, '80s, '90s, at least developmental psychology, what was then earlier called child development research, really aimed to, or was very much wanting to be, the equal of the other specialties of psychology and to become respected, as respected as experimental psychology or social psychology or mathematical psychology, whatever.

So, I think the field became much more "normal science." And I think there was sort of, again as I said in my previous interviews, a concern or a tension about being too applied. And so, we went through that period, and then there was the emergence of applied developmental psychology. I feel like I certainly at the beginning was an applied developmental psychologist. This didn't happen until the 1980s or even the '90s maybe? Certainly the '80s. So that emerged as a specialty within developmental psychology.

But I still think there is that tension, if you look at *Child Development*, which is the premier journal of SRCD, between what is good or high-status research vs. research that deals with some form of social problems or social issues. So, I think we sort of are still at a period of trying to work that out. And I am not involved enough in the central process to be able to tell you how it is working out. I am basically on the fringes of it. So, I can't really tell you that.

But if you look at the last SRCD conference in Baltimore, which I did attend, you could see this explosion of research, very diversified research of all kinds, from laboratory work to work in the field, to very applied work, to research and evaluation, to policy implications and things like that. So, I think I would say that we are much more diversified in what gets published and what gets accepted at the Biennial conference and so forth.

But what I'm not sure of is what that means or how it will continue to evolve, I guess. And the one area that I've always been interested in is teaching and learning: how do you effectively, or more effectively teach children various things: reading and math or anything else. And what I see is that on the one hand we have all of this research, and wonderful research, and I think certainly a lot of it was very nicely summarized in *Transforming the Workforce*, [14] when you think of changes to practice. But there is a huge gulf between that body of work and, for example, the preparation of teachers.

There is a dean's impact group, and in the past several months we did a survey to ask about teachers in training: what did they experience in their preparation to become teachers, how were they prepared to teach children reading and things like that. And the teachers in preparation said, "Not very much." So not only for people who are in the pipeline now but in the classrooms themselves, they are not being

[14] Institute of Medicine and National Research Council (2015). *Transforming the workforce for children birth through age 8: A unifying foundation.* Washington, DC: The National Academies Press.

exposed to a lot of the research that is being generated and being published in the journals like *Child Development* for example.

So to me if you believe, as I do, that we could be a lot more effective, and things could be better for children, if how they were educated in schools was informed, not necessarily dictated by, but informed by the thinking and the results of research, there is this huge gap. And how you address it, I'm not really sure.

Because as I described in an earlier interview, my first job at UCLA, funded by the National Institute of Mental Health, was really to introduce or expose or to bring to the attention of graduate students in education, what we knew about the cognitive, the social, the emotional development of children and their environments, particularly their families and their communities, that influenced their development. But we are not there right now.

So, I think that is the big challenge for SRCD and the field. And you know it is a lot more complex, because when I think when SRCD began in the '20s and '30s, there were these research stations at 4 or 5 public universities, though Teachers College is not a public university, but you know, Iowa, and Berkeley and so forth, and the idea was that what they were studying there would inform teaching and child raising in the same way that research that was being done in the agriculture or whatever departments in these universities were to inform farmers or the production of food, for example. And you know, that's pretty quaint when you think about it.

But to think of it now in 2020, the research field is so diverse, right? It's much more complex, our knowledge is so much greater and more complex. And then we are faced with the challenge of how can we integrate this knowledge into let's say our educational system that would benefit children and students. So that is really something that we have to think about.

MZ: So if I'm hearing you correctly you are seeing a major change in diversification of the kinds of research that is focused on children, including greater acceptance of applied developmental work, and a greater range of applied work. But the key challenge we are facing is how to bring it back to benefit children.

RT: Right. I think that the National Academies of Sciences has, and I played a small part in trying to promote this, has published *How People Learn.*[15] And so, they just released a couple of years ago, I think, *How People Learn II*[16] (they released *How People Learn I* in 2000). And it's been really interesting because it's a really wonderful report and it has so much to say, it's trying to say what does this mean for people's learning, not only young children or adolescents, but everyone, in the society, what does it mean for them to learn, and what are the conditions in which people learn most effectively. And as far as I know it's been very difficult to penetrate the sectors: higher education, teacher education, and so forth, with this knowledge and framework, to be even connected with the education of educators for example. To me that's a really interesting problem.

So, right now, another example would be, the "reading wars" which have surfaced again. And the reading wars are: we know all these things about reading, we've reviewed the research and so forth, but this research is not being incorporated into elementary schools. And, of course, we have a lot of children who can't read. That's another example, a very current example, a very salient example, that the

[15] National Research Council (2000). *How people learn: Brain, mind, experience, and school: Expanded Edition.* Washington, D.C.: The National Academies Press.
[16] National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine (2018). *How people learn II: Learners, contexts, and cultures.* Washington, D.C.: The National Academies Press.

research that is being generated, largely in universities, is not informing the reading education of children, which has enormous consequences for the society.

MZ: Bridging that gap, having the research actually inform practice, is a big challenge ahead. And its needed in many different areas.

RT: Right. And there are spots where it is happening. It's not to say its uniform. But I would say for the most part a gap exists and has been identified and pointed to.

Wrapping up

MZ: Let me pause and ask Kimber if there are other questions you want to cover before we wrap up?

KB: No, I think we've covered a lot of territory, and I'm really excited about it. So, thank you Ruby and thank you Marty. This has been great.

MZ: Thank you for doing this under unexpected circumstances--that is an understatement. I agree with Kimber this has been really wonderful.

RT: Thank you very much for doing this. It's a very unusual time, and I think we should definitely say that we did it during the pandemic, because I think it's a very important context.

MZ: To keep children a priority as we move forward even in the pandemic is such an important thing.

RT: it's almost unthinkable what's happened. I feel like I should go back to the *Children of the Great Depression*.[17] But it seems even larger than that. I really wonder how children are going to develop. Maybe somebody will undertake that.

[17] Elder, G.H. Jr. (1977). *Children of the Great Depression: Study in social structure and personality*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.