David Shakow

September 7, 1976

Today is September 7, 1976. I have the great honor and pleasure of being in the office of Dr. David Shakow, who consented to participate in my oral history of psychology.

Interviewer: My first question to you, Dave, would you tell me something about your hereditary background, your parents, grandparents, and so on.

Shakow: My parents came over from Russia back in the late ‘90s. My grandfather had come from Russia a little bit earlier, and when he got settled, he sent for my father. My father met my mother, apparently, on the boat coming over from Russia, and eventually they got married in about 1900 or so, approximately 1900, because I was born on January 2, 1901, that is, the second day of the century I was born.

My grandfather was a very interesting man. He – this is on my father’s side. He was a scholar and did his business on the side. He started a store eventually, which was going at the time that I was born, a retail and somewhat wholesale business of woolens and silks, and that was on Monroe Street, about 115 Monroe Street near Rutgers Street. He – I don’t know how he got my father into the business. My father had been a _____ peddler and gone into the Catskills and done quite a bit of traveling

then. Of course, then it was very, quite unusual for a Jew to be connected with that area. And he made something of a name for himself because they knew very definitely that he was an orthodox Jew; at least he had to have time set aside for Friday evening and Saturday with no activities at all, so they had a little corner in their house for various people, and they would not bother him and something else of that kind. And on Sunday he would start off again and carry his pack.

Now, getting back to my grandfather, when he got my father involved in the business, he would never appear before 10 o'clock in the morning in the business because he would go to the synagogue and would study the Talmud all the time, and he was very adept at the Talmud and he would finish the whole Talmud in seven years, and then they would have a _____, a so-called _____, which is a great party. Then he'd start all over again. And so he did it I don't know how many times during his life. And he was a very, very gentle man, just about as gentle a person as I know.

I remember some instances of his sending us to leave some gift of food or something else at a house, and the important thing was for us to sneak up there and leave it in the doorway and then get away so they wouldn't know who it was. It was that kind of a person. And so I had a very, very exalted opinion of him. And I never saw him angry or anything else of that kind.

My father, on the contrary, was an irascible person, and very kind and very quick to anger, so I remember when I was about 13 or so, when I was about 14 or 15, I decided that I wouldn't go through the ceremonies that were connected with Judaism. These are very, very difficult ceremonies, and I just didn't believe in it. And my grandfather came and talked to me just as gently as possible. My father was just as angry as he could be. This _____ around. But I stuck to my opinions.

Anyway, the influences on me that began to have, began to play a role were really my association with Madison House, which is a settlement on the East Side, which played an enormous role in my development. I went there when I was about 13 and continued there – well, I continued my relationship with there until I was 21, when I went off to Harvard; 20 or something, I went off to Harvard. But it was a very, very deep relationship. In fact, my high school days – I went to P.S. 31 and P.S. 147 and I did well, and then I went on to the High School of Commerce because I thought I was going to be a businessman. But I never paid very much attention to high school. It was just no work for me and I just got by or I did B's and A's or something else of that kind. The important thing was Madison House, and Madison House was a very, very unusual place where the workers were people, largely those from quite a different orientation. They were gentiles, they were people who had been at college

and other things of that kind. And you know the background of settlements at the time, and this was a typical settlement and had a rather gifted group.

The first person was a _____ worker, when I first joined, was a man by the name of Howard Bradstreet, and he'd come from this family of Bradstreets who went right back to the early settlers in this country. And he had a club that was very much oriented towards hiking and things of that kind, nature study and so on. There were about a dozen of us. And he used to talk to us about things, and one of the things – I've got it written down somewhere in my, in some of the biographical things that I put out – he talked to us about Jung and Freud. And I went to the library and asked the librarian for any books they had by Jung and Freud, and she was a very smart person and was the son of an analytic _____ use the _____ terminology. And so she took apart Jung and Freud and she told me where Jung's books were and where Freud's books were, and I started in. I got interested in Freud, and so it's about when I was about 15 that something that happened.

The other thing that happened at the same time was that I was very much interested in socialism and the movement toward labor and so on. And at that time, there was a very, about 1917, I guess it was, something around that time, a very interesting biography that was put out by Cornelia

Stratton Parker. That was *The American Idol*, and it was an account of life with her husband, who was Carlton Parker. And Carlton Parker had been a person who had done his graduate work at... Well, in fact, I think they met at the University of California, but he was very much interested in applying psychological techniques to labor problems. This was a time in the IWW, as though he was very, he was the one who was sent by the president to look into the IWW to see what can be done because this was wartime and this was a very important problem. And he wrote a number of essays, "Casual Laborer." I don't know when they were published, but in these essays and in the biography, there was a lot. He died quite young. I think he died about 1918 or '19, but he'd done considerable work on the labor problem. And in that book, he mentioned Dewey and James, and that started me on James and on Dewey, but James became my lifelong hero, and since then I've been a Jamesian right through. So that was that part of it.

Then there was the whole atmosphere of the East Side of New York. It was just an amazing place, just as lively as can be and full of activities of one kind or another, so that you could see why I didn't pay much attention to high school. And I was involved in all kinds of things at Madison House and went to the camp that they had, and then afterwards became a leader at the camp and all kinds of things of that kind. And at

the same time, of course, I graduated from high school and still sort of interested in continuing the business thing for the first year. I wasn't quite sure, so I worked for my uncle, who was an importer and exporter of raincoats. He made raincoats. And at that time I studied Spanish in high school, so I used to write the letters in Spanish that he had to have to customers in Mexico and other places of that kind. And in the evenings I went to New York University, but that was just the first year. I took courses in accounting and so on. But by that time, I'd become quite disenchanted with the whole idea and decided that I wanted to go to Harvard because William James had been in Harvard.

And so I graduated in 1918, and about in the year 1920 or so, I made application to Harvard, and I guess it was maybe late in 1920, but I was – I wrote an essay on William James and I was admitted to Harvard at that time, so about 1921 I entered Harvard. And they let me come in without taking the entrance examinations, which I couldn't have passed, I'm sure, because I didn't have the kind of background I needed. And even I didn't have to take English A, which was also required. So there I was in my first year at Harvard, and then the first year I made the first groups and I had a scholarship after that and so on, and so I had sort of, I was launched on my career.

Now, do you want me to go on _____? You ask me.

Interviewer: All right. My next question was to tell me something about your high school and college experiences, but you've already said something about it.

Shakow: That's right. I can give you a lot more, but...

Interviewer: Let's get more into the substance of psychology. Now, would you say that you discovered psychology by getting involved _____?

Shakow: The first thing was...

Interviewer: How did you discover psychology?

Shakow: I discovered psychology by being told about Jung and Freud, and it's now become a kind of a... I was told the other day that it's become a kind of a special interest of the Analytic Association because it's a kind of peculiar Jung and Freud and I didn't know what it was, and then it turned out to be Jung and Freud and so on. But that's where I got interested in psychology. I don't remember anything else that played such a role.

Interviewer: But you discovered James on your own.

Shakow: That's right. From Carlton Parker because of his interest. It was a few years afterwards.

Interviewer: All right. Now let's get into the teachers. Who, as teachers, influenced you the most?

Shakow: As an undergraduate, I suppose that... Boren [sp.] came along to Harvard in the latter part of my stay, my first year there, 1921, but I didn't take any

work with him, so as a graduate student, I took work with him. But during my undergraduate days, it was McDougall [sp.], who had come to Harvard in 1920, I think, and I took several of his courses, _____ psychology and general psychology and the abnormal psychology, and Freddy Wells [sp.], who was into Psychopathic and who was a very erudite and very unusual person. I'll talk about him a little bit later. And Truland [sp.] had a little bit of influence on me. Dearborn [sp.] didn't particularly. He gave one course in educational psychology, but I wasn't very much interested in that. Floyd Orport [sp.]. That was his last year there. See, he left in 1922.

Interviewer: He went to Syracuse.

Shakow: He went to Syracuse at that time. But he had some influence. But Lundholm [sp.], who was his assistant, Halcomb Lundholm [sp.], who was Floyd Orport's [sp.] assistant, had an influence on me in a peculiar way because, when Lundholm [sp.] learned that I was interested in psychopathology, that is, even my first year I was interested in psychopathology because the Jamesian influence had permeated me, and so I got to talking with him and I told him about it. So he invited me out to McLean [sp.] Hospital. And so, in the last part of my freshman year, I went out to McLean [sp.] Hospital and I sat in on the conferences that were there. And then in my junior year, Lundholm [sp.] went on a year's sabbatical to Sweden. He asked me to be the psychologist, so I was the

psychologist at McLean [sp.] Hospital during that time, you see. So I had an early kind of experience there. And it was a very interesting kind of experience because Whitehorn [sp.] was there. He was a chemist at the time. But the... It was a very leisurely atmosphere, so people used to sit around in the anteroom to the biochemical laboratory and talk about things. I probably spent about half my time there. And so it was all kinds of psychiatric topics and other things of that kind. And I learned an awful lot there in an informal way. So that was quite an influence on me.

Then in my senior year, I went to the Psychopathic quite a bit, and there was - Wells was an important person, and I took a course in Stanford-Binet with him and Poisson [sp.]. You know, Poisson [sp.] was a very interesting person who had had a psychosis before. He was a forester and he was a minister and other things of that kind. And he was taking psychology at the Psychopathic and some things at Harvard, and he and I were partners. We used to give each other the Stanford-Binet. And so I got acquainted with him.

And then in 1924, he went to the Worcester State Hospital as the chaplain, Protestant chaplain, and he started the movement, the theological movement, which has become a very widespread movement. In fact, it's very, very prominent now. But he started it there and he worked with patients and so on. So I got that.

And then Campbell was the head of the Psychopathic, and he gave a seminar in which we had to prepare papers on different persons, and I had Meecher [sp.] and I gave a paper on Meecher [sp.], and some other people gave other people. So there was quite a bit of an influence there.

Then there was – I had a course with Hooper, but I had just beginnings in a course in race mixture, and I learned something about race mixture, but I found Hooper a very interesting person. And then, as a graduate student, I went back to _____ so on.

And, well, I guess these were about the influences. McDougall [sp.] I'd say was the person, and Wells, were the two people who influenced me.

Interviewer: What about the obverse of the question: Who as teachers influenced you the least?

Shakow: Well, either I've forgotten about them, you see... _____. I wasn't antagonistic to anybody, but if I had a list of the courses that I – I have it somewhere here – but I could... Trueland [sp.] was a very interesting man, but I had more contact with him as a graduate student. That's why I'm not saying anything about him.

But then there were persons with whom I had, fellow students with whom I had contact, and one was Knickerbocker [sp.], who taught at MIT with McGregor [sp.] – he was a fellow student of McGregor's [sp.] – and

with whom I've kept contact ever since. I made a few friends, but not too many. I just worked more or less on my own. So I can't really...

Interviewer: Well, I raised the question because sometimes one does not want to be like _____.

Shakow: That's right, that's right. But I don't think I had any _____ there. There were _____ negative people; that is, I mean, not positively negative but negative or just a little... Dearborn had a little bit of influence, but I didn't...

Interviewer: Did you ever meet Delabar [sp.] there?

Shakow: No. Delabar [sp.] was _____ that time, but he was down at Brown. You see, that was in 1921. I think Delabar [sp.] was there earlier.

_____ a course in philosophy; that is, my first year I had a course in philosophy. Now, that's another thing I might say. I'm not saying very much about it, but I had people like Hocking [sp.] and...

Interviewer: I studied his book in college.

Shakow: Oh, did you? Well, Hocking [sp.] and the younger people. Well, in history, I had very distinguished people like Merryman [sp.] and Haskins and Coolidge and so on. See, this was the introductory courses, so they had a flow of very distinguished people. The most distinguished people in the department would give the courses. Philosophy the same way. And I took – my introductory year, I took philosophy, history, and languages.

Well, I had one teacher I took language, which was a double language, a five-day-a-week course, with a fellow who was absolutely deaf, and he was one of the best teachers I ever had. He would – no sooner did you raise your hand when he was down in front of you and put his hearing aid, you know, it was one of the boxes, and he'd just put his hearing aid beside you and you'd go ahead and talk and he'd give you an answer, and I took that course, well, it was a double course. It met at 8 o'clock in the morning or something else of that kind, and he was terrific. Herrick [sp.], his name was. But I was thinking more of in psychology rather.

Interviewer: Right. Now, what is your sustaining trend of intellectual curiosity?

Shakow: Well, it's been psychopathology in one sense, and it became schizophrenia afterwards, so that it, really, from the time that I... See, after my undergraduate days, I went to Worcester for 15 months to work with Grace Kent, and that's the time when I got interested in schizophrenia. But I'd already become interested in schizophrenia at the McLean [sp.] Hospital, so that it really was a more or less continuing trend with me after I'd reached Harvard.

Interviewer: Does this trend of interest in schizophrenia _____ both your professional and scholarly endeavors?

Shakow: No, because I have a historical trend and I have a professional trend. Now...

Interviewer: You want to elaborate on that?

Shakow: Yes. You see, it's come out very interestingly in the last year, when I got a scientific award for my work in schizophrenic, and then this year the professional award for my professional activities.

Interviewer: Did you get the professional award this year?

Shakow: Yes.

Interviewer: Oh, I didn't know that. That's marvelous.

Shakow: It was just that my activities in one thing didn't overlap with _____, but I'd been always interested in developing a clinical psychology program, which was what I thought would be the ideal. And so that was the state hospital. When I went there in 1928, 1928 to 1946, I had a whole crew of people each year, about six interns and some staff and so on, so that I had for about almost 20 years a developing program that I continued at the University of Illinois. And then when I came down here, I just – this was a research job and _____ so that we had trainees, but just _____ whatever training they did was in research and nothing else. But before that, it was a combined clinical and academic kind of atmosphere. And now the historical trend shows up in my book on the nature of _____ on the Freud book. I don't know whether you know anything about it.

Interviewer: I don't.

Shakow: It's a book that Rappaport [sp.] and I wrote on the influence of Freud on

American psychology. And various papers. For instance, a paper I have on the place of psychoanalysis in the Worcester _____ coming out this fall. It's part of a book which gives the early days of psychoanalysis in this country and so on. And I've always been interested in the history, and most of my papers have a kind of historical – not most of my papers – but many of my papers have an historical introduction, which leads back to the early days, so that there are these three. I think that Norman _____ has sort of recognized these three trends in my approach to things.

Interviewer: To what extent does theory dominate your thought processes?

Shakow: Well, theory plays a considerable role, especially theory in relation to schizophrenia. And the paper I gave yesterday is a theoretical paper which deals with segmental set as an explanation of schizophrenia and is part of a monograph which, I'm just reading the last parts and I'm sending it for review, too, my old assistant, which is about 150 pages or so, which deals with the theory of schizophrenia.

Interviewer: In relationship to mental set.

Shakow: Yes, in relation to mental set.

Interviewer: Would you elaborate on that just a little bit.

Shakow: Yes. Well, it's the notion that the conceptual function is the most important function in man, really. And the patient, the schizophrenic reacts, instead of getting a generalized set as he deals with the functions

which really play a part in the situation, he picks up a small part and reacts to that, or he reacts to something quite different, whatever it is, but it's not in the special attention – and attention is an important element of this – where he puts his emphasis on the thing that really matters. It's that kind of a thing.

Interviewer: So attention and mental set are the crucial...

Shakow: That's right, the crucial parts of it. And it's a developmental theory from there.

Interviewer: How would you characterize the shape and development of your professional life?

Shakow: Well, I think that, on the whole, I've tended to be sort of independent. I've sort of made it myself, in a way, taking from these various people, and I've been very much influenced by individuals, but always taking my own way. And it wasn't a conventional way because I think I'd put it in do-it-yourself program in clinical psychology. For instance, my becoming a clinical psychologist has been a do-it-yourself kind of thing rather than the conventional. I've never been in the system.

Interviewer: Well, there's no clinical psychology _____.

Shakow: That's what I say. It started that way. And the same thing is true about psychopathology. There's been a tendency in academic psychology – and this is very important – to be negative about psychopathology because

there's been an attitude of, that smacked of the applied, and I've always fought this thing because I felt that psychopathology was a tremendously important area for normal psychology. And once you've got the understanding of it – and this is why James appealed to me so much, his religious experience and so on – and that's more or less the attitude in which I've taken it. And I fought for this all along, and for a long time I've been in a sort of minority, but I think maybe it's beginning to take. I'm not sure.

Interviewer: I believe so. The applied aspect is becoming very important.

Shakow: Yes. But it isn't applied, you see. This is an area where it's the basic... Here's the extreme behavior on one hand, and the understanding of this extreme behavior can be a very, very great asset to the understanding of it. And then there's the applied aspect, too, but not the question of pure, but the ability to see what is the situation in a person who sees things in such a shattered way. It's that kind of thing which the academic psychologists sort of stayed in this narrow field here. It's a worthwhile field, but not to say that the people on the outside must be. So I've stayed in this field and I've constantly been pushing towards the normal whereas the other people have stayed in the normal.

Interviewer: From a historical perspective, what would you say about the specifics of your contribution to psychology?

Shakow: Well, I think that it's been that kind of a contribution, is from the psychopathology to the psychology, that my contribution, if any, has come.

Interviewer: Well, you qualify it.

Shakow: Well, I know, but, I mean, some people might not think that way, but in my own opinion. It's part of my modesty. But I think that that's it, really, that... And, of course, as far as that's concerned, the book by Rappaport and myself on the nature of Freud's influence on American psychology is also kind of a measure of that kind of thing, a kind of an aspect of that kind of thing, and I think it's a very important contribution. I'll give you a copy of this so you can see what it's like.

Interviewer: Would you characterize psychology as a science?

Shakow: Well, I'd characterize it as a potential science rather than as a science. That is, I think the excitement of it is because it's not really a science, but it's on the way to being a science, and that's why I think that research is tremendously important, and research not only in the conventional fields that psychology deals with, but research in the fields outside the conventional; that is, in pathology and so on. The field situations are important ones for psychology, and that's where we have to work very hard, which is a situation which the other scientists on the whole – of course, sociology, etc., has it – but the natural sciences don't have that

kind of situation. They can take into the laboratory and deal with the laboratory situations. The biologist sort of takes from the outside but he can pretty well control it. But our situation is, if we take the natural situations for us, the live situations, then it becomes a very difficult matter of how can we control the situation, at the same time observe it and measure it.

Interviewer: Does it have a social responsibility to this?

Shakow: Oh, yes. I think that it has. The question is, about the social responsibility is a difficult one. I think that we can be too much carried away by the need for social response. I think that we tend too much to be wanting to solve the problems immediately rather than wait, and I think that we would get along... I think some people should do it, but I think the rest of us should be investigating, investigating, and maybe doing a little bit less therapy and more investigation. I think that we're caught in a box; that is, that we have social problems galore, and unless somebody does the investigation or find out, then we'll just be in the same place. Now, it's a very difficult situation, and I don't get mad at people who feel that they have to do something even if it's, well, partially the right thing. But I feel a little bit better about the people who say, "Well, let's investigate three-quarters of the time and apply one-quarter of the time."

Interviewer: Well, would you say that we need two tracks?

Shakow: Oh, yes. We need two tracks, we do, we do need it. But the investigative track is the most important, it seems to me. But I think that the doing track is an important one, too. We'll maintain. But the reason that I was interested in the kind of professional development that I was interested in was the scientist professional, and that was the basis of mine; that is, where the questioning and the professional training went hand-in-hand, and so you kept on, that kind of thing. It meant afterwards that, after you had your training, you would go in for professional work and not do very much investigative work. And then some of them may go and do the investigative work and not the... But the understanding of the real situation is tremendously important for the field.

Interviewer: It seems to me that behavior modification is the application of some of this investigative...

Shakow: Except that it's too superficial, you see. Behavior modification is environmentally disposed and doesn't take into account all this, except this Lazarus, who's an important person because he sees the nature of the situations which may give...

Interviewer: Lazarus, the social...

Shakow: He's a behavior modifier, but he has very much, is very much interested in the dynamics of the process. So I think that of the behavior modifiers, he's the most successful person because he takes into account the various

factors which may play a role in the...

Interviewer: Well, what about Nate Azarin [sp.], who is a behavior modifier person?

Shakow: I don't know enough about him. If he's...

Interviewer: Token economy procedure to solve the problems of any _____.

Shakow: Well, the only thing is that I think, as a dynamic psychologist, I've got to understand the complexities of it, the dynamics of the person, and so the more that I understand this kind of thing, the more I can deal with it. Then whatever techniques you use are worthwhile.

Interviewer: I think you're very right in saying that the behavior modification is a very narrow...

Shakow: That's right.

Interviewer: And it solves the problem in the situation. But outside of that, does it survive?

Shakow: Well, that's it. And I suppose because I've worked with the people who are the most disturbed of all, the schizophrenics, that I see that the behavior modification is only a small thing; that is, that these reinforcements which have not taken place all through their life, that is, from early childhood on, when that adds up to a disturbed person, you can't take care of it by just modifying a particular thing. You have to deal with the whole thing, and that's why I think a more dynamic kind of approach is necessary.

Interviewer: Would you take the position, then, that schizophrenic is a psychological rather than a neurological kind of a problem?

Shakow: I would say it's a combined thing because the psychological changes to a physiological kind of thing with time, and I just say that the drug therapy is, can open up areas because of its affect, which enabled you to do lots of things. But I don't think drug therapy solves your problem.

Interviewer: Just abates it?

Shakow: It abates it, it opens up, and then if you do something about it, then it's all right. And I think that the recent studies have shown, more or less, that same kind of thing, that it is a... Well, there's an article by Wyatt in the last *Schizophrenia Bulletin*, which reviews things, and he's very much in favor of drug therapy, but he has some doubts about it.

Interviewer: But your direction would be mostly from the psychological point of view.

Shakow: That's right. And I think that I should do that because I'm a psychologist, and I'm all in favor of the physiological approach, but I think that in the end we'll have to come together.

Interviewer: So your role is really to understand and describe the elements?

Shakow: Yes, and also to, in the end, to try to do something effectively with it. But in the present I think it's first two roles.

Interviewer: Well, I'm running close to the end of this... _____ inherently promising some kind of an explanation that it doesn't quite deliver, the word

psychology.

Shakow: Well, I guess in one way you can say that. But I have to take a tolerant view of the situation and say that a word like that embraces an awful lot of things, and in some respects it delivers, more or less, in other respects it can't deliver it right now. It's a field. I think the same thing would be true about biology in the sense that it gets involved in very abstract, and so on, things. I think that there's an overlap between the whole area of the physical sciences and then the biological sciences and then the psychological sciences and then the sociological sciences. There's an overlap. And I don't think that you can say anything about its not delivering. It delivers here and it doesn't deliver there.

Interviewer: But in the layman's point of view, does it deliver what...

Shakow: Well, I think that depends upon how... I think in the layman's point of view, it's more a non-delivery than the delivery, because he expects something that is already called psychology to give him the answer. And, of course, this is a field where it's most important for him. Biology isn't so important and so on. So there are more demands made upon psychology than there are on other fields. It is the peak of himself. And so that's why we have so many non-professional psychologists.

Interviewer: That's beautifully put.

Shakow: And so many people are amateur psychologists, and I think it's one of the

problems that we must, again, we must be tolerant of it because this is a natural kind of reaction of a person.

Interviewer: What is the future of our science? Do you have any suggestions of improvement in both formal and practical education?

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Shakow: Well, I think that I would say that, insofar as possible, we should depend on proved facts. That's one of the things that we have... There's no use in talking about things that we don't know about. And then, when it comes to areas of controversy or areas of, then just to do research and investigate further. And then, in areas where we just don't know, if we can work out studies or experiments or so on, to go ahead and do it. If we can't, we'd just better keep our mouths shut.

Interviewer: But the education should continue about the way it is now?

Shakow: Yeah. Well...

Interviewer: Any kinds of improvements that we could bring on?

Shakow: Well, my own interests would lead me to _____ in clinical psychology that I want a combined program. That's one of the sure things for me. That's what I believe in. I think that it can be worked out in other fields as well. I've had, for instance, a very... In fact, from the early days, I think in our clinical psychology report and training – it's a 1947 report – we said something about a period of time in a state hospital or some other place

like that for a general academic psychologist because I felt that it was very important. In fact, about that time, I was talking to _____, and he told me that the most worthwhile thing for him was a year he spent in the state hospital.

Interviewer: Really?

Shakow: That's right. I remember his having had a mantelpiece or something else like that and he had his hand on the mantelpiece and he told me this. And I feel that it really is an experience which opens up the complexities of the human mind in ways which an academic course doesn't. And the same thing, I would say, for psychoanalysis or some process like that; that is, that you need something which makes you aware of how complex the human mind is, and little experiments don't do it. But when you free-associate and so on day after day, you get a feeling of what a wonderful but an exciting and at the same time a very threatening kind of insides we have, and that's very important.

Interviewer: Well, would you do this at the undergraduate or the graduate level?

Shakow: Well, I think it would depend on the person. I don't think...

Interviewer: But you had it as an undergraduate.

Shakow: That's right, that's right. But I think that it would depend on the person. I think mostly I would think about it in relation to the expansion of the person's psyche which must come in the undergraduate days, but I think

this is the time to learn. And I'm thinking more and more because I see in the tendency nowadays to get young people who are undergraduates to help in psychiatric hospitals, for one thing. There's such enthusiasm and so much life in them that it seems a shame not to take advantage of this and wait until a formal period comes in the graduate days. But I think they ought to have the life, and I see this all around me.

Interviewer: This reminds me of Harlow's young monkeys being better therapists.

Shakow: That's right, that's right. I think it is. I think that before you... You need the enthusiasm, but it has to be a guided enthusiasm, and if you have the right kind of mentor who doesn't direct you but just gently points the way, you can do an awful lot. I'm not concerned so much about the academic learning that takes place, but this openness to life is tremendously important, and I think that we can improve that way.

Interviewer: Great.

What are some of the interpersonal determinants of your career, that is, your family, social life, colleagues?

Shakow: Well, in the first place, I've been very lucky in the colleagues I've had – that's one thing – starting after I left college. I talked a little bit about this, the teachers who influenced me. But I came to the Worcester State Hospital _____ with Grace Kent for 15 months or so, and she was a tremendous influence on me. She was a person, a very controlled New

England kind of person, but very, very effective and a very generous person and a very, and just all around a person who, well, we had. I met her in 1925, in 1924, when I left Harvard for the 15 months at Worcester. And we had contact with her until the day of her death at Sandy Springs, at the home for the older people, the Quaker home, which is out here in Sandy Springs, which, she died at 96 or 97. And she – that was about four or five years ago. So from 1924 until, we had close contacts with her, and she was just a continual influence in our lives.

The assistant superintendent of Worcester, Louis Hill, who came to Worcester, and this is days before psychoanalysis, and when he was anti-psychoanalytic, and we had long, and he and I played tennis together, so we'd play and we were very close. And after a while he changed his mind about psychoanalysis and went ahead and got himself a psychoanalytic, psychoanalysis with Willoughby [sp.]. Willoughby [sp.] was at Clark at the time.

Interviewer: I knew Willoughby [sp.].

Shakow: You knew Willoughby [sp.].

Interviewer: Yes, at Brown University.

Shakow: Oh, yes, sure. And Willoughby [sp.] was a very, very great person, really. And so he was an influence on my life, Willoughby [sp.], afterwards. He was at Clark, of course, so I had interests with him.

We never got to my graduate days, when Boring [sp.] was a very great influence, and this was Boring [sp.] before his analysis, and he was a tough guy to deal with but a great teacher. And then I knew him afterwards, of course, and he, in our book, the book by Rappaport and myself, he had very, he was sick at the time but he kept on. Every couple of days we'd get another letter two or three pages long and so on. This kept on. He was very effective that way.

And McDougall [sp.] I had as a graduate student and, in fact, I got from McDougall [sp.] a lot of this reprints and publications because that's the time he left for Duke.

And Gordon. I didn't say anything about Gordon Orport [sp.]. Gordon Orport [sp.] was a graduate student when I was an undergraduate, and so I never had any courses with him. But in my senior year, he was getting his Ph.D. and he talked to us, to our colloquium on social psychology, and so he was... And he was going off on a fellowship to Germany and so on. And it was very effective in my, the influence it had on me because I saw then that Harvard had recognized a social psychologist anyway rather than just a straight academic psychologist. And afterwards, he didn't come back to Harvard. He was up at Dartmouth and he didn't come back to Harvard until after I left. I left in '28 without my degree because I'd done a study on the influence of undetected stimuli

on the psychometric function, and I came out with equivocal results, and equivocal results don't count at Harvard. And so after two years of experimentation, I had to quit because Worcester had offered me an appointment as chief psychologist and a baby was coming with us, so I went to Worcester and I went back to Harvard because Boring [sp.] and Orport [sp.] wrote to me and said, "Harvard is putting in the statute of limitations." As it was, I didn't get my degree at this time, so I went back in '42 and got my degree in '42. That was 14 years after my...

But these are people who played a very considerable role.

Interviewer: What about your present family, present colleagues?

Shakow: My present family. My present colleagues. Of course, I've had a laboratory here, which consisted of about 20 or so, 20 to 30 people who were colleague character. They were in different sections and I had them here until 1966, when I'd just retired and had my office here. I said I wanted to work and work on my own data. But until then, I had... Those volumes up there show the work of the laboratory from 1954 to 1966.

Interviewer: Oh, great.

Shakow: So it was a very distinguished group. And at Worcester, I had a very distinguished group. That's in my monograph on Worcester State Hospital, so you can find it there. Those were people from all fields, from physiology to sociology.

Interviewer: What advice would you give a novice who's contemplating entering our discipline?

Shakow: You mean as an undergraduate?

Interviewer: Undergraduate going into graduate work. What sort of advice would you give?

Shakow: Well, I would say make yourself aware of the realities of the situation, of what psychology is about. That is, have experience in life, various, summer school, other summer programs where you can work in the field, and hospitals and so on, all kinds of experiences of that kind. I think that's what means so much. I think that, for instance, youngsters who go on hotlines, they're suddenly faced with situations which just, they don't understand at all, and some of them get into these kinds of things and so they have a broad view of things, and that's what I think is the major thing. I got it from exposure to living on the East Side because there was life all around me. And then I had it at the hospital and so on. And I felt that was perhaps the most important thing in my life. And then, of course, I could go on for days talking about Madison House because it was the most advanced place for the democratic idea. The head worker just put it up to the board of delegates, and the board of delegates was the representatives of the clubs, and they were the ones who had to make the decisions, not the head worker. And there was constant responsibility on

these people to act, and if they made a mistake, then they saw it as a mistake and so on. And I don't know of any place where I've seen the democratic principle at work as it did in this Madison House, so that's why it meant so much influence.

Interviewer: What are some of the outstanding, unresolved issues, as you see them, in psychology?

Shakow: At what level?

Interviewer: At the simplest level, the more complex level.

Shakow: I don't know. It's all _____.

Interviewer: Well, some people say it's a resolution of the mind-body problem.

Shakow: Well, I know, but...

Interviewer: But that doesn't, you know...

Shakow: It's just too big.

Interviewer: Too big.

Shakow: Yeah. And I think we ought to know more about what makes a person work and the whole question of motivation and other things of that kind. We just have to pin it down more than we've done so far. And I think that the problems of... I think anywhere you go, problems of sensation, perception are so complicated. In fact, the neurologists have made it so much more complicated for us because it used to be fairly simple at one time. But now, with all the reverberating processes and all the others like

that, and then a single neuron can be so complex, it's an amazing kind of thing. And a simple _____ like _____ had an article in the *Science*, well, the Sigma Psi magazine, and it's the simplest kind of organism. And then it has an ability to make distinctions between stimuli of all kinds, which you don't think of as a simple organism can do, so that the simplest organisms have a complex organization already. So when you come down to it, you're just lost. I think we just have to continue to build up our knowledge at a time. And the next year, the next two years, the next 10 years, are going to find it much more complex. I don't think that we'll find it simpler. I think we'll find it more complex. And so we do the best we can.

Interviewer: What thoughts do you have about the ultimate heuristic value of the experimental approach as a way of understanding man or men?

Shakow: Well, I think that I have a faith in it, but I think it has to be more broader. I think that we must learn to experiment with larger groups, and that means more controls, more statistical controls, as it were, rather than more instrumental controls. I think that's one thing. Then I think, on the other hand, we should be working with more precise _____, so that I think we should be working with more neurological things. But at the same time, I want to see both kinds of studies done, _____ studies and molecular studies, but I see both of them complementing each other.

Interviewer: Running parallel or interacting?

Shakow: Parallel at first and interacting later on. I think that interacting where it can.

Interviewer: Maybe like the genetic encoding.

Shakow: That's right. That's what it is, but it's a real _____.

Interviewer: Double helix.

Shakow: Yes.

Interviewer: If you were doing psychology again, what wouldn't you do?

Shakow: Well, I don't know because I've had a very happy kind of background. I've had only three jobs in my life, one at Worcester, one at Illinois, and one here. And it's been possible to do, in all of these situations, the job that I wanted to do. It's been very, I've been very fortunate because the Worcester situation that I've described many times is perhaps the outstanding research that ever was done on schizophrenia for about 20 years, and it was just a constant movement from one exciting thing to another. And the Illinois experience was a professorship at the University of Illinois and then at the University of Chicago at the same time. Because I was in medical school in one place, I could be in the department in another place. And then there was contact with students and other people like that. But it gave me a period of kind of leisure from research for about eight years or so, and more training and teaching and so on. And

then when I came down here, which was in '54, the opportunity to do research and devote myself entirely to research and to run research program, and they've all been very happy experiences.

So I don't know that I'd, if I had to repeat it again, I would say, well, I'd do it. I don't know. I could pick little things, but they're not worthwhile.

Interviewer: Would you like to speculate as to what we truly know in psychology?

Shakow: Well, if you ask me that at one level, I would say we don't know anything. I really...

Interviewer: My other part is, what is our ignorance of behavior?

Shakow: It is a very, very complicated situation. And I think I know more than a person who is entirely ignorant, but the degree of my ignorance, on the other side, is tremendous. And so I'm satisfied with the little bit I know and with the hope that I can gain more. I mean, what do I... I do reaction-time experiments and I find out that the schizophrenics don't do as well as the normals. They get worse as I increase the length of time of the preparatory interval and so on. Well, I know this, and so it's been repeated. Well, I know of that kind of thing. But when it comes to important questions, like the mind-body problem, I don't know what the relationships are and that's a problem that I've been intrigued with but I've more or less stayed away from. And I just want to say that I don't

know how to answer it.

Interviewer: Okay. My last question is, what is your philosophy of life.

Shakow: Well, professionally, I'd say that it's a tolerance for different points of view and also a recognition that the place of older people is to let go, that is, that an older person must not remain active in an organization beyond the period of time that he is ready to really give time to it. So at least in my own case, I've been very active in the American Psychological Association, in the Clinical Division, and so on, for a certain period of time, and then I quit altogether and went on to other things. But I think that the hand of the old person who maintains his hand on things is a very definite kind of a, really results in a loss of development. I think that's a very important principle. In fact, I think I'm more interested in that kind of thing, and I've seen it in organizations where it doesn't work. So that's tied up with the tolerance of different points of view.

My own philosophy is more or less represented by the need we have for a kind of a total point of view of life, not only the view of the academician, but the view of the person who sees life as a whole, and so I have always advocated a combined kind of a philosophy which sees the importance of the real-life situation as compared with the other.

Well, I think maybe that the business of not knowing the answers really, it gives one least to this tolerance, and I can become morally

indignant about certain kinds of things, certain exploitations and so on. But if it's within the limits of tolerance, then I say, "Well, this person is entitled to that point of view," because I don't know that the answer that I have is the proper one.

Interviewer: Well, thank you very much, David, for spending this time with me and answering these questions.

Shakow: Well, do you want some papers which will give more of the background?

Interviewer: Yes.

Shakow: Okay. Let me get this for you.

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