

June Schaefer

Location: Unknown

Date: Unknown but possibly early 2000s

Start of Interview

(June Schaefer) He isn't going to like that cause you know he and his wife were happy to do work but they won't recognition.

(Susan) He deserves so much of it.

(J) Right I was in one of his classes and I don't remember which one it was but it was one of the foundation courses that you had to take after... at that time after student teaching. So he recommended or asked me if he could recommend me for graduate assistantship in the Department of Education and I don't know there was such a thing. I had already signed made a commitment to go teach in Alaska.

(S) Really?

(J) Yes so this was a real change and anyway I asked him more about it and he told me about and he said it would be an opportunity for me to work within the Department of Education and also to have my, you know gradate course work for my master's payed for the tuition well I mean that was mana from heaven! I mean you know I worked my way through college and so it was just outstanding. And I got it! Which was I had to give up my plans to even think about going Alaska because in those days we didn't find out about graduate assistantships until graduation so I found out about my assistantship on gradation day which was in June. You know we were on different system.

(S) Right.

(J) So that be about 1967 so I spent 1967-68 working within the department and Jim was just has always been a mentor for me I mean he was the epitome of a researcher and I needed models like that at that time. I needed to know that research and evaluation and so forth was valued in the education system and I hadn't had a lot of good models at that stage in my life for that. So then by becoming a part of the department as a graduate assistant we worked under the direction of Elmer Eschasht.

(S) How do you spell the last name?

(J) Eschascht and this would be a person Susan that I would really recommend too because he is a critical piece of the educational department's history in that era. Dean Berg you know Berg was the dean of education.

(S) And how do you spell the last name?

(J) Berg but Elmer was a key person in the 60s to bring, we were in real growth period at that time and I mean they added faculty, like that year I was grad assistant you know right during that, there were about two periods two years left and they were just adding faculty you know

from all over. So now those people are the ones that would have come during that era that Jim came and most of them have retired and gone. So I had the wonderful opportunity of working under Elmer and working with this group of faculty for the most part who had come from all sorts of different experiential situations and learning from them and then we had the first NCA accreditation that was occurring at that time and Elmer was in charge. So there were two of us as grad assistant that had to help him, I mean our part of our job was to help him as well as to assist you know in teaching classes and things like that. So we would often work because so much of this couldn't be done during the day so we would often work with Elmer until about 2:00 o'clock in the morning in his office with all of these records all over the place! I mean you had to review every record for ages in whatever period of time was that we were finding stuff. I certainly saw from you know the ground up what accreditation meant and as I said working with people like Jim I mean you certainly learned a lot about the big picture of research and evaluation and how to be accountable to a constituency once you became an educator. I was also teaching part time at...

(S) Coughs I hate the cough on tape.

(J) You are going to listen to it so... I was also teaching part time at Marquette Senior High School in the English department. And at that particular time in order to do that while you had a bachelor's assistantship you had to get permission from the dean because that was not allowable otherwise so I was granted permission because it was in my field. I was getting a master's in specializing in Secondary Education in reading and psychology. So because it was so closely associated and the fact that my processes I was taking were at other hours at night and you know a lot of our work could be scheduled when you could do it I was allowed to do that too. So I considered myself extremely fortunate to you know in one year to have the opportunity as you know working with a really wonderful staff who was capitalizing on this whole growth at Northern in the Education Department, be part of the first NCA accreditation, get my feet wet out for teaching in high school and you know be in partnership and collaborate with instructors at the university and teach classes for the university doing workshops. So it was quite a dynamic year.

(S) Did you sleep?

(J) Not very much. Thank goodness I never required a lot sleep but I didn't even then. So when I got my master's then we were married that summer and then we moved to Illinois, spent a year in Illinois.

(S) Your husband was a student at the university too?

(J) He had graduated when I graduated, yeah we graduated with a bachelor's together and then he went into retail so we moved to Illinois so he could be on the boards. And that was management and then we were transferred up here so...

(S) What were the chances of that happening?

(J) The odds were far greater than we probably ever find in Las Vegas. Just unbelievable we just assumed we would be going to some, we thought maybe we would stay in the Midwest but we

had no idea. So he we was transferred up so once we got up here and it was that I didn't come until August, late August and so I couldn't get a teaching position, all the English teaching positions were taken. So I was encouraged by some colleagues at Northern because I got to know so many of those people to check into the intermediate school district that was an opening in special ED and Keith Forester who was at that time the president director said well he said you know Lou Mayefsky [Spelled phonetically] and I said well yes because I and worked for Lou Mayefsky he was the director of housing at Northern and I worked as a resident advisor under him. And I said yes I do but well he is now at the intermediate school district, I said oh, and I said to Keith, what is an intermediate school district? I don't know but ask Lou. So I called this office which was in this building and I had no idea what this was and I called and asked for Mr. Mayefsky and when we got over our initial hellos and how nice it was to be talking to each other again um I ask Lou what is an intermediate school district and his voice got kind of quite now this is 69' August of 69' and he said well I just started here in April he said I haven't figured it out yet! [Laughs] Well Lou but this story is rather funny is Lou went on to become the Superintendent, he wasn't at that time he was the deputy Superintendent and so Lou went on to become the Superintendent of the ISD. I got hired here as a teacher you know and that was 69' and then in 74' became a special education director here and then now of course as of 95' became the Superintendent. But Lou and I worked together for all those years I knew I had a story for his retirement party cause [Laughs] you know when he started here he didn't even know what an ISD was and I had of course evidence of that. But it was this was also a growing organization I mean we were just emerging ISDs had become part of the Michigan constitution as part of the three tier system through the Michigan Department of Education being that there local school districts, intermediate school districts which are regional service agents. Regional education service agents that's really what we are, it's a strange name ISD but the cotton and the Department of Education. But the... you know the concept at that time you know the intermediate implies is was an intermediary by the local and the state department and the bigger picture of education. But I don't know what else you want to know but that was that's how I got here, want to know more about my education life or do we go to Jim's or what you do?

(S) Um what I kind of do with these, this is the first one I've done for the book but when I do live histories I'll tell you generally what I am interested in and then you know what is most important so you kind of direct it. I do want a little bit of background which you have given me about what getting your degree at Northern has meant for your educational career. If we could talk a little bit about the importance of intermediate school districts in general and this one specifically what you see the mission? And then if you could talk about you career and what had been have some quaint stories or some funny ones but also what has meant to you, what are the most important things you've learned through teaching?

(J) Ok I'll say lead of all I hope whatever you do these and it's your business but going back to the connects with Northern and the intermediate school district, I think one of the great assets that I have experienced in having had the experience at Northern not only as student but as a Graduate Assistant and having developed that early relationship with the people in the Education Department, all the professionals there and many others at the university, then coming to the intermediate was that immediately you know I started to hold connections together between

intermediate and Northern. For example in the early 70s I had the opportunity to participate in national level training and at that time was called Helda Taba teaching strategies program because Helda Taba was a foremost researcher in education.

(S) How do you spell that?

(J) Taba Helda was here first name. And Dr. Taba was a researcher at Stanford University and she had like a 15 year research project funded out of the U.S. office of education on how children develop their thinking skills and how you have to understand this is back in the 50s you know that her research was going on, and how then educators can capitalize on understanding this process so they in turn can develop the strategies that really initiates this type of thinking in children. By type of thinking I just mean thinking skills the cognitive skills that all people need in all walks of life all the time and especially in the learning process. So I had the opportunity through the intermediate to participate as one of Michigan's trainers. I was one of the first group in 1970 maybe? As their one of their first trainers so as a result of that when I came back one of my goals was that I was a classroom teacher in special education by this time now I was here. One of my goals was then to train other teachers here in Marinette well I didn't want to just do that without the connection with Northern so I approached Elmer Schad [Spelled phonetically] and Deeber [Spelled phonetically] and Dr. Schad and Deeber were both supportive then of allowing that to become a class that I could teach for teachers so we developed for practicing teachers we don't do it in the pre-service area you did it for the people out in the field. So for a number of years Susan I offered, like one time I was teaching six classes at one time. You know of teachers in the local districts and then I would teach the classes afterschool and in the evenings and Elger county, Marquette area and then the west end of Marquette county and then during the days I would now this I had moved from classroom teacher by this point consultant here. So then during the days I would be out in the classrooms with those teachers providing technical assistance for them in the strategies and then doing demonstration teaching. So it was from you know from those early opportunities that I had like when Jim opened the door to me to become a graduate, you know consider a graduate assistantship and then to be selected, you know gave me that opportunity to immediately then bring a strong connection between Northern's Department of Education and the intermediate school district for the benefit of our local teachers. And of course I was learning throughout this whole process so then I was also at that time still in the summers continuing to work with the institute for curriculum instruction. That was where Dr. Taba's work what her research was being...

(S) And it's called what?

(J) It was called Institute of the Curriculum and Instruction. And they were based out of the offices are out Florida. But when Dr. Taba died very suddenly the institute one of the fellas who formed the institute had been working her so he had the ability to have the rights to her research and to something that had been developed and so that was how we were able to use her research and then many other researchers that had been associated with Dewey, John Dewey [Spelled phonetically] and others in the field at that time in the 60s early 70s were all contributing to the further development of the Taba teaching strategies. So that was... I thought that was probably one of the biggest opportunity I could ever ever ever presented itself to me and I had the

opportunity like I said to work nationally to train people in the summers through the institute so we would do leadership training throughout the United States in the summer and then here I was able to, I was the leadership person here so then what we did was develop better leaders as well. But then when I became a special education director in 74' as a full time administrator on a twelve month schedule I did not have the flexibility so I taught classes for a while but I just couldn't keep it up because I was already you know engaged in twelve fourteen hour days. But it's interesting because then we were still able to develop other connections with Northern, so we from those early connections that I had as a student and as a graduate student you know we built a lifelong system here now of working with the department and now for example some of our most recent work with Northern and the ISD has been in the area of we are now in our tenth year of conducting a summer institute for teachers and all educators from throughout the Upper Peninsula. But that started on a small scale and now you know there are hundreds of teachers that participate in and we do this each summer together and it gives people the opportunity to really get some hands on application orient learning experience for people from outside the area as well as from within. That's been a very long standing a very successful project, another has been a research project that Jim Hendricks [Spelled phonetically] and Dr. Barbara Lee Roy [Spelled phonetically] from Wayne State university and I have developed to look at collaboration within the school classroom setting and within the building the school building, and we've had two pilot sites we finished three years now of research at Whiteman Elementary and at Aspirin Ridge Middle School. Those are just examples of really sustaining partnerships that we have created all from going back to you know those early days in the 1960s of taking a class from Jim Hendricks! [Laughs] you never know what those experiences produce.

(S) What has what do you think the most significant changes in the philosophy of teaching?

(J) Ok that's not very difficult to respond to because in the era that I was trained a lot of teachers were trained to be lectures particularly at the secondary level you know we were kind of the tellers, that we had all the knowledge and we were to give it to the students. And through my exposure that I've had in those early days working with the Taba program and later we called another program BASIC that's an acronym that was all capital letter BASIC you know as we really studied learning and what was learning all about and how does the learner learn? Then you know I had the opportunity to be exposed to a very different kind of instruction and that is where the learner is actively engaged in the learning process and that they utilize and learn thinking processes but utilize them constantly all the time and that they become the discovery people of this information that we used to give people and tell them and moving from textbooks to the point where learning occurs everywhere so that the classroom should be an application oriented experience for you. When they have to be totally engaged youth, the learners have to be engaged in their learning in order to benefit and the more that they then use the knowledge that they have acquired or the skills that they have developed or the attitudes that they are working on, the more they can apply those into other situations with other people the strength that gives to the depth of their knowledge, to the sustainability of their skills, and in terms of their attitudes so that they move more of value based behaviors rather than just understand what this is an attitude. So the biggest change I see, it's taken a long time now but I had the opportunity to be exposed to that in the early 70 so I was very very much a component of it but I was not in the midst of great

company you know because most people were still extremely tied to their textbooks and to what is right and to what is wrong. You know you couldn't put things on a chalkboard that were quote incorrect but if children had said them you know what you are working with was the child's information at that point and you wanted the child to discover and you helped the child through the process discovering that the data perhaps were not accurate but if we just told them that it was they didn't have the opportunity to learn how to process that to become you know the kind of trickle mind that accuracy. So to move from a very closed system in which teachers told kids what everything was about to a system which is very open and engages the learners all the time is a significant and now the piece that we can add most recently which I think is extremely strong now the strength of this, is that we are now focusing on standard based outcomes and we set up benchmarks and so forth. So that what we have is now we finally been able to get to the disciplines which we will like the field of science and you know all the subfields of science and fields of math and English language arts and whatever in that region works with the professionals who are in those disciplines to come together as educators and recognize the standards that need to drive the curriculum. A curriculum is a plan for learning that's what Dr. Taba always called it a plan for learning and I think educators need to be empowered and I strongly subscribe to this that educators need to be empowered to develop those plans for learning and not to just buy textbooks you know and the curriculum becomes hardcore bias I have nothing against publishers but that isn't curriculum. You know those are resources that we can use and that is only one set of resources but now of course you know technology, the internet bounds of other sources. But the other thing is that children have to learn how to evaluate the data that they are working with and the information that is out there. That just because somebody has provided you with information does not mean that information is appropriate or can be substantiated as being accurate and appropriate for what you need to have to make decisions on it. So the other part to that is helping children to be able to support their inferences by finding collaborating data and other sources from you know kind of triangulating your data? I use it for my own research I'm an ethnographer if you will for a researcher so I strongly believe in triangulating your data and helping kids to realize just because somebody said that or wrote it doesn't mean that has any merit even! And so that the more a child can learn to substantiate that and like I said triangulate it with other data then it becomes something we can draw conclusions and say in fact we have these situations here and we can support those situations with this data. Now you know a child gets very excited about the power they have through the process of learning to product their own and construct their own information and it becomes theirs and it's not somebody else's it's not the textbooks, it's not just the producer over here. So it's those kinds of challenges that keep me going I mean why I am so excited to continue to work with educators is because the whole field of learning is just is kind like a flower you know it's, in some ways for years it was kind of in its stage of let's see what do you have up here maybe maybe like a rose? That would be kind of tight yet but as it starts to open up you start to see the beauty and the possibilities that it brings. I just don't want it to die I want to always have new ones, new plants coming up you know? Which role will do that and I just have had I've had the benefit Susan of wonderful wonderful role models and mentors and support systems, personally my family you know we come from a family where we grew up on a farm and we all learned to be workers as young children and you know a family farm is a business

(S) I grew on a family farm too.

(J) and your community so you know that. So we all learned by working together, we learned teamwork it took all of us, we all had different role, we realized the responsibility factors of all those roles. We realized what you know we could anticipate what would happen if we didn't do the things that we were supposed to do or we could anticipate what could if we all did those things and we could see positive outcomes. We lived it. You know we lived the learning like running a business we lived it by being there! And we learned to have to communicate because the family entity you know we were the workers so we had to communicate with one another and realize how important that was and for everybody to accomplish what they needed to do. So I had that and I have a very strong support system with my husband in the sense that we always knew that I was never willing to give put my role as an educator aside but that was always going to be very predominate in my life because I live and breathe it. He was supportive of that. And then in my professional role coming to the intermediate school district my first Superintendent that hired me was Frank Mead [Spelled phonetically] and Frank is from Grand Marie and you know he was at the time the intermediate before me we really from the county government we have a county governmental units and then this merger to an intermediate for this area which meant Marquette and Alger county come together.

(S) And that was the 60s that those were newly formed?

(J) The laws were in the late 50s and I forget what the exact year but in the 60s yes finally the constitutional changes occurred and resources, meaning money could you know tax could be actually developed so that resources could here and get school districts. And special education was a big priority at that point because services were not provided through any degree at all at the local school district. You know some had some but not all so that way it provided a unifying base for children with disability so in that sense for the evolving process of the intermediate school district you know my Superintendent then Frank Mead and then later Lou Mayefsky gave me opportunities I mean they open they allowed the doors to be there, open to pursue the opportunities that I personally had from my professional perspective. To work with a wonderful staff you know we were all strong colleagues here of I think demonstrating leadership in education and being able to provide technical assistant and resources for other educators which means our local school districts and through that strong network I haven't realized what a problem some women were having you know in terms of moving into leadership positions because I was so young I wasn't paying attention to that.

(S) Right.

(J) You know I was in my 20s when I became an administrator and so I was probably 28 years or so when I became a special education director, I didn't realize the significance the only time I realized the significance of it was when I'd be at meeting and they were all men. [Laughs] You know then it kind of dawned on me but I mean all of the men were always I found them to be great team workers and so forth so that was kind of a uniqueness that I just kind of never went through, I experienced it and learned it from experience but I was never sabotaged in anyway as being a female in a leadership role. And I attribute that to the fact that the people around me you

know supported me and gave me opportunities of which you know obviously in the world that some people didn't have so I feel as nobody ever said anything, well for example when I was in the fifth grade I thought I was very strong as a youngster I was a very sports minded and grew up with three brothers and a sister. Between my brothers and my dad and my sister you know sports were always you know a very big part of our life because first of all growing up on a farm like you know that was our, we created our own entertainment.

(S) Right.

(J) You know we'd go out and play baseball and whatever so when I was in elementary school I followed the Detroit Tigers I mean holy and of course all the while you'd be milking cows you'd have the radio on every day you go over and listen to Detroit Tiger ballgames. So I just assumed that I would grow up and I could be a Detroit Tiger I wanted Al Kaline was my role model.

(S) Yeah.

(J) I mean I knew everything about Al Kaline I knew all of his statistics, his birthday is the same day as my mother's and I don't mean the year but the date but I just assumed that I could be an Al Kaline and so in my fifth grade, I think I was in fifth grade. And my brother my oldest brother was an avid baseball player and in fact he was recruited by the Boston Braves is what you call them. I don't know anything about that team cause he was older than I was but he was recruited as you know but he couldn't go and you know participate in that because of the farm and you know other things. But anyways the Detroit Tiger travel team came to the college to play my brother's team and my brother was playing on the team. Well it was on a weekday and I hadn't missed school for a number of years so I had a perfect record of attendance for a number of years. Not that was significant to me I didn't hardly realize it but I think my family did and my teachers did and when I wanted to that ballgame and so I didn't realize but behind the scenes my brother who was also school bus driving my oldest brother who was playing on the team was also a school bus driver of which I have to share with you too later the school buses is still our family my third brother is still driving so since about 1951 or the early 50s anyway there has been a school bus in our family and each of the three brother has been drivers. So it's still my and my youngest brother is still driving but anyway going back to the funny part of this was that I wanted to go that game and I didn't realize my brother had talked to my teacher and they had figured out some connects where I would go to school and be in school I have no idea how long I was there that day and someone in the family was going to come pick me up so I could go to that baseball game. You know realize my goal was to see the Detroit Tigers and still not miss school so I didn't break my attendance record, it's that silly? I mean that's what that would have been like an early idea, and nobody ever told me as a girl you are never going to be a baseball player like no. They just never said but the point is I am making is that when you have people who are very supportive around you they let you work those streams out you know in a way, I mean that certainly wasn't a lifelong goal that I had but at that time in my life I thought it was possible and nobody said it wasn't. So until I changed my mind, but my early teachers that I had in elementary school because we were like three grades in a room as you might have been to if you had known.



(S) My mother went to country school so she was eight grades in one.

(J) Ok we had like three, we had eight grades in the building but we had three grades in the room it was that sort of thing. Those teachers were significant in my forming the idea what teaching and learning is all about because you know those teachers had so many kids. I mean three grades in a room that's about 50 some kids in a room.

(S) I can't imagine.

(J) Yeah they were doing that. So we became those of us who could get our work done and whatever were asked to be like teaching assistants.

(S) Right right.

(J) So we learned to work with kids of all ages in those early days.

(S) My favorite my first job was an education recorder, I just loved it and in the classroom and I would sit in some of those classroom, fifth grade classrooms with you know with 25 students and this person is gifted and this person is struggling and its exhausting. I can't imagine three in one room.

(J) And then like one of my teachers she was when I was with her it was third, fourth, and fifth grade in our room and she was also the principle of the building. You know not that was you know significant I mean we had there were no secretaries or anything so when the phone rang down the hall you know she had to run out in the hall and answer the phone and I mean, but it was like one big family. So you know I saw education I had a very personal attachment with everybody in my growing years in education and even all through high school you know being given the opportunity to be a teaching assistant with high school teachers being asked to be on the debate team as a junior high student. When I had absolute no confidence what's so ever in myself and you know being a public speakers? I mean even though in elementary I had done things like learn plays and everything but debate was a significant significant piece for me in terms of learning how to stand on my own two feet and you know publicly defend the arguments that we were debating in junior high and high school, that was significant and my debate coaches. And my high school English teachers were extremely strong in helping me to learn to be an effective oral and I mean an effective communicator both oral and written modes. And so those basic skills in all of those areas. And then my dad's insistence that we'd be strong in math cause he was very strong in math that we could all be in strong in math, you know coax me to make sure that I understood basic mathematical concepts and could apply them readily. Our parents, my parents had taught in my family, you know my parents really really supported education for us all because my mother went through the sixth grade and my dad through the eighth.

(S) Which is typical when you are on the farm.

(J) You are right. And they had to help as members of their families they had to help other people so and then my I'm the four out of five children and my oldest brother was a principle in the Escanaba system for 30 some years before he retired and he was the first school bus driver in

our family before he went to college. And then my second oldest brother took the life of partnering with my dad to run the family farm and the business so he didn't go on to college but he was a lifelong learner through a lot of Michigan State you know extension programs both my dad and him participate in a lot of those types of learning experiences. My sister went on to be a high school, college, high school teacher for the most part and she is retired but she still substitutes and then I became next and then my youngest brother went to Northern and left as a junior when my mother had a stroke and went back to the farm. In between the second oldest brother had gone on to college and whatever and then the second oldest brother became a school bus driver and farmer and then when my youngest brother came back and as the farm grew and just expanded my second oldest brother had to take more responsibly and then Denis was there to then to take pick up the bus route. So that bus has stayed there in Denis's and still doing it and he even though he couldn't finish his college education he was also very involved in that he became a football coach and he did a lot of coaching and that sort of thing so and he was very successful as a high school football coach and a hockey coach. And of course you know still involved in education and now I have a nephew that is on the school board, a niece who's been a high school secretary since she graduated from high school, a niece and nephew who are both teaching in education so I mean our whole family has had a lot of direct ties in education system. So there has been professional and a personal perspective.

(S) So where did you grow up?

(J) I grew up in Baraga Country in an area called Arnheim.

(S) Arnheim?

(J) In the Sturgeon River Valley.

(S) I don't know my way around the U.P at all.

(J) It would be in between it's between Donken and Chassell.

(S) Oh ok I know where that is. And you had a dairy farm or you had everything?

(J) Dairy yup. It's now dairy and wheat my brothers now run dairy and wheat but it was but it was just dairy and then a lot of other animals when we were young you know chickens and ducks and all sorts of things. And my parents loved by example I mean a lot of the education process was learning from example and my parents they just supported up we could learn to do whatever we wanted to do. And they really very supportive but had boundaries for us and you know helped up develop those things in the early years so we didn't have so much difficulty coping.

(S) My favorite great uncle died last year he was 86 and most of my favorite people they are travesties that's our family name have about an eighth grade education cause they were farmers and isn't it wonderful that people who have such limited formal education have these incredible learners?

(J) Exactly I mean I would ask them like when I was in college and I was taking these psychology classes and all these things how did you know? How did you know how to do that? We are learning about the behavior modification but they didn't study those books but they just

did it. They just knew it. Well they just called it common sense. I think that's what we have to, you know we have to take a lot of our professional knowledge you know and wrap it with a big wrapper of common sense so that we can really help learners to understand it for applications in the real world. I mean because textbook learning doesn't transmit you know into behavior by just reading about it. It's got to be internalized and you have to transition into ourselves.

(S) Aren't some of these things that you are talking about that were innovative in the 60s though that good teacher kind of always knew. Because I interview Laurence, Blair Loudi [Spelled phonetically] who is 96 and she taught in Detroit and she said she just somehow knew that she would always talk to children at their level and she would say can you get that I am not sure I can get that problem and they would do it together and she just sort of instinctively knew.

(J) I think that is very similar to what we were just saying about the parenting. Is that they didn't rely, they couldn't, I mean they couldn't rely on all those other resources. And I think that we went through some periods where we learned too much, we learned to rely too much on just other kinds of resources as being you know the way or the adage of what we were supposed to be about and we didn't blend it enough with the whole process of what we instinctively knew about the learning process and would you know apply like you just said is our good teachers. I mean my early teachers that I had you know they had gone through what they called those... what do they call them in those days I don't want to say the Normal school because that was incorrect you know they'd go to school for like six months or something and then they'd teach and then they'd go back every summer for 30 years you know to get their degrees! But they were absolute marvelous teachers but they didn't have the you know professional level of education that we have today and I think that we have that's another reason why history is very valuable to us is we have to constantly look back and assess what was known and how did they acquire that and how can we use that in a meaningful way and not just because it is new. And like when I am talking about this work the research Dr. Taba and granted look at well that research is and now you know it's been much more significant now in the 70s and 80s the people talking about cognitive development as if it's just been born! [Laughs] I mean we go back to I know what it's like to take something up together. But you are learning it's pretty formal in here.

(S) It's wonderful.

(J) That's dangerous with me.

(S) Um what have you learned from the students that you have worked with?

(J) Oh my students have been absolutely best teachers, I worked with you know persons of disabilities, children with disabilities and special needs for years and the concreteness Susan of that was really what's been grounded me in many of these strategies. For example people told me that cause when I was going through the training the Taba training I was teaching a classroom of young people who were considered mentality impaired and I was the only one in the training group that was working with special ED everybody else went throughout the state were curriculum directors and you know all these people. So they said how can you apply these thinking skills with your kids who don't think? I said what do you mean they don't think, they think! And so I proved them, I just took the strategies and I used them with my students and then

would we'd go back you know follow up training I'd record on what this, how my kids had been using the strategies. Well my kids could think a lot it's just that you know I had to adjust the content to some degree, I had to provide some structure to the opportunities for their acquisition of information and so forth so it was meaningful to them. So I made those adaptations and accommodations but my kids all my students were great, so what I learned from there was really that all kids can learn. And that we should not teach kids and I was teaching church kids at that time and my students said to me because we would use the community you know we didn't have any textbooks right. We'd use the library across the street was it. So we use the pay, go downtown that time downtown was you know had all kinds of stores of different kinds and restaurants and things. So we'd go down and practice you know how we were going to be learning to buy things and getting information or whatever. So we were always doing that and so my students one day said to me when we got back in the classroom, they said Mrs. Schaefer why are we here then there? Meaning like why are we going to school here and why are we going to school here and all those other people going to school in other places? You know it kind of shook me and I said well I said guess it's going to be up to us to try to convince those people that you do have the right to go to school and be in those other places. And so I never knew that I would have any influence over that at that time and so as I became a special education director of course you know this is one of the big pieces. Why can't our children be going to school? Why can't they be at school where the other kids are? Because they learn from those other kids

(S) Absolutely and the kids learn from them.

(J) Exactly so that was a significant piece of my learning is to let everyone can contribute to society. Everyone. No matter what you know their capacity is in any particular way that we all have strengths.

(S) I knew I should have brought an extra box of tissues. I'm sorry.

(J) No not a problem that's why I am sitting here... And that we all like even what field you go into you know everybody's better, there is always somebody that is better than us and whatever but if you learn we all bring something to it. Today we call that assets you know we all bring our assets forth and we should always look at what people's assets are. But that was the significant piece of my learning and for example another was I had always had an easy time as being a learner in the school setting. Well shortly after we were married, I mean after we were married and we moved back here, see my husband is an excellent skier and ski instructor he is actually on ski patrol. And I wanted to learn to ski but I had absolutely no confidence in my abilities to do something like that. So as he started to teach me I found out how difficult it was to learn something that was very different type of learning that involved all the cycle motor skills. Wow! I was just thrown by this whole thing and I was learning during Christmas vacation, I went out, he was giving a lesson in the morning and you work he was teaching ski patrol on the river so he would work and then come back to see how I was doing at noon and then we'd have lunch and then he gave me another lesson and I worked really really hard. I never worked so hard at learning how to do anything as to learning how to ski. One day I got very frustrated and I was like falling and I know I couldn't get up and I went on and on. My husband said to me now remember I teaching these kids at the same time and he said why is it he says that you don't have

any patience with your learning here yet you have such patience with your kids? And you know they can't do everything that they want you want them to do and whatever but you just. I started thinking about this and it was kind of like one of those teachable moments I guess, it was a huge part now. I was a teachable moment for the learner right is that I realize that then there were some things that I couldn't learn so easily so then I started to realize that my kids could not all learn the same ways and that I should provide far more variety for how they learn and this was all before we talked about multiple intelligence. This is in the 60s!

(S) Right.

(J) And you know now we are talking about you know all the different opportunities we can come to for learning processes you know and the different strengths that you have. Well for example that I thought it just occurred I had been frustrated one of my students, she I was trying to make sure all of my students could identify themselves by writing their name. Most of these kids were teenagers who had just started school, they had never gone to school.

(S) Oh dear.

(J) So these were their early school experiences but they might be fourteen, fifteen, sixteen years old. And she was making she knew what letters like the end of her name but she couldn't make them. So she'd make upside down As all over the page that what she could do very nicely upside down As and her name was Kathy and you know I wanted her to, mmm I wonder how you write Kathy? You know my other students were learning how to write their name out of print I mean and finally through this distant of learning how to ski I realize there is more than one way to skin a cat. There is many ways to do this, Kathy doesn't have to do that I can get her a stamp. I could you know lot of people use an X if they can't write their name for that, that's legitimate as long you are witnessed and I started to look at all the things that Kathy could do instead of what she couldn't do. And that was a significant turning point as far my approach to learners. I started to really focus on what they could do not what they couldn't do and then build from that, doesn't mean you don't work on the others but once they gain some skill in further skill in what they can do sometimes that can translate in some of the other areas. So those were some significant for me also like I said the opportunity to work nationally with the institute of curriculum and instruction. The Ehrenberg's they were the people that were running the institute, their last name Ehrenberg.

(S) I'm sorry I didn't get that Ehrenberg.

(J) The Ehrenberg's were running the institute and done research with Taba and you know I was like said I was in my 20s and I had the opportunities to work you know with a team one summer we worked for thirteen weeks throughout the United States. I was the youngest member of that group and to learn from the other people that I was working with and then with all the educators that we were training throughout the United States I mean that's grand. These are not things I could have ever just kind of applied to do they just came. So significant part of my excitement in my professional life was doing having opportunities presented in which I could access and follow through on. And then incorporate all of that into my professional roles that I've had. So that's where you got I'm not ready to give up yet.

(S) What year did you graduate?

(J) I graduated from Northern with a bachelors in 67', a master's in 68' and then I got my PHD from Michigan State University in 86'. That was done long distance you know I never stopped taking courses I was always taking courses along the way. We convinced Michigan State to work with the cohort group of us up in the U.P. and they were able to develop a PHD. I mean I did a lot of work down there but it was a lot of travel but for now I can concentrate on doing my learning outside I mean outside of my work group, learn my personal professional I have to do through workshops and through other things. But like for example you know things like the vital issue I learned every single one of those things and that's what I like to be involved with kids is being involved with the youth keeps be at rest of where our country is going and where we need to be because our kids are coming as I look at the analogy of my parents and where they were at with their education looking at what they were able to do and what they must learned from us through some of these stages. Now we should be learning from them and helping them to have opportunities so they can do. What I like what I really like this kind of a community is that we are a strong community of I hate to over use this word collaborated but of people who want to stay connected with each other to achieve the best for all. And by recognizing that if we work together we can achieve the best for our youth. We put aside our individual agendas a lot of the times too for the common good of our youth. So on that note that's about, I can share a couple of written things too that I might have some articles and stuff like that.

(S) Can I have a copy of your, can you send me a copy of your resume too?

(J) Sure.

(S) Um...

(J) With the last thing says is the most important. But I mean it will yeah.

(S) It will help me plug in some dates.

(J) I found when I applied for this job because this is the first job I ever really applied for.

(S) Really?

(J) Yeah kind of through where I was at the time presented itself so I had to finally after all those years I had to put together a resume. So that's what you are seeing I don't know. But I'll give it to you sure.

End of interview