

## Mary J. Wright

- Born 5/20/1915 in Strathroy, Ontario; died 4/23/2014
- B.A. in Honours Psychology and Philosophy (1939) University of Western Ontario, M.A. in Psychology (1940) and Ph.D. in Psychology (1949) both from the University of Toronto

## Major Employment

- Assistant/Associate/Full/Emerita Professor, Department of Psychology, University of Western Ontario: 1946-2014

## Major Areas of Work

- Early childhood education history, systems of psychology

## SRCD Affiliation

- Member



## SRCD ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW

Mary J. Wright

University of Western Ontario

Interviewed by David R. Pederson

At University of Western Ontario

October 20, 2005

**Pederson:** SRCD Oral History Interview of Professor Mary J. Wright, Department of Psychology, University of Western Ontario. She's being interviewed by David Pederson at the Department of Psychology, University of Western Ontario, October 20<sup>th</sup>, 2005.

**Okay, Mary, we're going to start with general intellectual history.**

**Wright:** Oh, intellectual history? I thought it was going to be family background.

**Pederson:** Yes. Well, that's the first question. Describe your family background, along with any child and adolescent experiences that may be of interest. Include--

**Wright:** Well, I grew up in small town Ontario, in a place called Strathroy, and I was a youngest child in a family of five that consisted of four brothers, all of whom are older than I, and five to ten years older than I, so I ended up with six parents instead of the usual two. So anyway, my parents, of course, being born in the 19<sup>th</sup> century they didn't -- they weren't university graduates; they were high school graduates, secondary school graduates. Although my brothers, all four of them -- three of four of them went on to be lawyers, and I think successful professional businessmen. My parents, however, my mother was quite talented musically, played the piano and sang contralto. My dad was a lot of fun, a businessman; manufactured pianos at the Wright Piano Company. The fun part was that he was a Gilbert and Sullivan "Koko" (in the Mikado) type and we always had lots of music and lots of fun in the family. In terms of my interest in early development, the only thing I can say is that my dad was a person who was very concerned and interested in kids in the town, and of course was involved with the boy scouts -- with four little sons of his own -- but was also an innate capacity brought in lots of youngsters who were underprivileged, who really turned out, in the end, to be quite wonderful people. And so I guess I always was oriented in the directions of social work or whatever you want to call it in connection with children at least. So that's my family background and child and adolescent experiences.

**Pederson: What about schooling?**

Wright: Education and occupational characteristics of parents? My schooling? Well, I went to the regular public schools. In those days nobody much went to private school unless they had a problem where they were not manageable and they were sent off to be disciplined. So we -- and as I say, the town that I grew up in was, at the time, only about 3,500 people, so it was -- we all went to the public school system, primary and secondary, and so everybody knew everybody, and it was I think a great way to grow up.

**Pederson: How big were the classes?**

Wright: I -- well, I don't know, but I would think in kindergarten -- in my first grade class -- classes would -- I would think they'd be about 40 kids in those classes. I'm trying to visualize them. And one teacher. But in those days, I mean, we were -- the times were tough and I was born in 1915, and of course lived through the Depression years, graduated from high school in '35, and university undergraduate in '39 just when the war broke out. It was an interesting time actually to be alive and young.

**Pederson: Yeah, well, I didn't realize the classes would be that big in a small town.**

Wright: Oh well, because there were only two schools in my day, one in the north end of the city and one in the south end, and then we were all put together in grade eight in the one school before we went to high school. In Strathroy we really did have a very good secondary school. At least the institution had some very prominent people that ran it, so it has a long and good history. So that at least I think the high school was involved in that. My grandfather was an English -- he came out here in 1857 and moved to Strathroy in 1865, and so our family went with the old -- and my mother was a Scotch -- Scotch background, and my dad married this gal who was a Scotch/Presbyterian, because that's really what the population was like at the time. And they were -- those were the two groups, see, the Anglicans and the Scotch/Presbyterians, and there were some Irish, and they were Roman Catholic. So -- and there weren't as many of them. But anyway, so there was the intermarriage in those days was relatively simple with what it is today. Now it's Muslims versus Christians, and now -- and one of my nieces that I -- at a second time around married the first of July this year has been a Buddhist for a long time. So--

**Pederson: It's a different world now.**

Wright: It sure is. Anyway, music: our family was shot full of music. So there was -- and putting on shows and all that kind of stuff. So I don't know. Is that enough of my family background?

**Pederson: Well, what about -- you went to University of Toronto?**

Wright: For my graduate work, yeah.

**Pederson: But for undergraduate work--**

Wright: I went here, to Western.

**Pederson: I didn't know that.**

Wright: Yes. Oh, you didn't?

**Pederson: No.**

Wright: Oh, well my parents were so glad that Western was created. Clark, my oldest brother, graduated in '29. He was at least ten years older than I was, and I remember mother and dad saying

how glad they were. My father's brother, who wanted to be a doctor, went to Detroit. Toronto seemed a thousand miles away. We were closer to Michigan here, and of course, all that branch of the family is in the States, because once you're trained over there, at least in those days, it seemed right. However -- so we all came here to Western and then went on to Toronto; Ernest, of course, to Osgoode Hall for law as well. But Clark and Donald went to Toronto, and we all then went on to Toronto to get postgraduate.

**Pederson:** There wasn't a psychology department here then, was there?

Wright: Oh yes, there was. I have that in that book I wrote with Roger Myers; there's a chapter on Western there. No, there was an honors program in psych. It was a combination philosophy and psychology, and -- but it was a four-year honors and it was modeled after the one in Toronto. It was heavy with prescribed -- we had four solid courses every year, and then -- so when I went to Toronto they didn't require anything additional. But the only thing that I always felt was weak about it was in the last year we really didn't have anybody that was doing research, and so we didn't get going on the kind of thing that we do now with the kids to get some research experience. So I always felt -- when I went to Toronto I always felt very insecure in that area, although I did get my MA in one year. So that was talking to people like Nora Weckler, and not so much the faculty, but the senior students that we found quite stimulating in Toronto.

**Pederson:** Wow.

Wright: So we were -- Western was really developing. My brother Clark always talked about the education he got at what's now the Ivy School of Business. It was just when they were starting it. Somebody here had a vision about it and the first people they had running a business program were three from Harvard. They were all three Harvard professors, and he spoke -- he's always spoke about them as absolutely fabulous people. So he was a professional businessman; came back to Strathroy and built the business into an international one and then left me an income from his estate, which has allowed me to be a philanthropist. As you know, I've been able to be that in the last little while. So Western was -- when Roy Liddy came here in 1931 they had decided that they needed to have a strong psychology department. So at the end of two years you could either make it philosophy that you graduated from or psych, and of course, and there were only two of us that graduated in psych in '39.

**Pederson:** Wow. As you reflect on your undergraduate experiences here at Western, were there any intellectual milestones that had any influence on either your choice of specialization in graduate school or--

Wright: Well, I did apply to teacher's college and Stanford. And I was accepted at Stanford with no money, but I was accepted at Toronto, so that's what made me go to Toronto. But the teacher's college thing, I wasn't accepted there, but I think that that reflected my developing interest in developmental psychology--

**Pederson:** Sure.

Wright: --because here we were kind of clinically oriented, because we didn't -- they weren't basic -- we weren't doing physiological stuff or laboratory research like Leolra Neal. They were making use of the community resources, and there were -- I became interested at that time in (which was what I did my doctoral thing on) was on special ed because London had been doing that sort of stuff. That was -- there was a heyday in the '30s about all of that. That Florence Dunlop in Ottawa, and everybody was -- now, of course, they've reversed the trend and put everybody back in the -- integrated them into the classrooms, but in those days they were setting up in London, too, classes for hard of hearing kids -- had difficulty hearing, or classes for kids with visual problems and so on, and special classes for the gifted, and some of my contemporaries like John Robarts became famous as a premier of Ontario (we were contemporaries). He graduated in '39 too when I did from here, and he had been in, of course, London's special classes for the gifted. So I was curious, was interested in that right from the start,

whether his success, for example, had anything to do with the early experiences he had in public school as a gifted child.

**Pederson: Let's first continue with your -- this education theme. So when you went to Toronto for graduate school you specialized then in special education.**

Wright: Actually I got caught up, in a way, right away with Blatz, only because they -- I suppose because I was thrashing around for somebody to work with, and somebody said to go over: "Why don't you go over and talk to Bill Blatz?" And so I did, and I walked into this Institute of Child Study, which was in an old house with dark, at the time, with dark corridors, and I wondered where I was going. And finally this guy stuck his head out the door and said, "Who are you?" And I said, "I'm a new student," and he said, "Well, what do you want?" And I said, "Somebody said I should talk to you." And he said, "Well, come in and sit down." And that was my first encounter with Bill Blatz, and we talked that day about a lot of different types of things. But anyway, that was in 1939, and the Institute of Child Study as an Institute of Child Study had been just created in 1938. It had been operating as a child study place from the time that he came in 1925, '26 when they brought him in to set up the child study preschool, nursery school to study kids. Do you remember the Carnegie money and the mental health - whole mental health -- the child study movement was--

**Pederson: Sure.**

Wright: --related to the mental health movement, and they had discovered -- realized that they had to find out more about children and child development in order to do preventative or to promote health rather than just dealing with the problem, so that they, at McGill and at Western, they set up these things, these nursery schools. And at Toronto, of course, with this ambitious young character, Bill Blatz, who was really quite a mischievous guy, they didn't know whether they liked him very much at first, the funding people. But he was very keen to make things work, so he set up and got all the support from the Bott, head of the Department of Psychology, and Ned Bott and his wife, who were very excited about all of this stuff, and so he had a support there. Whereas compared to McGill that didn't. And so they were into parent education as well as studying, and it was basic research in the sense that they were looking at kids and trying to do naturalistic observation to just find out what children were like and how they changed over time. There was so little data really available, so that they were doing the primary sort of things that people in the field had to do. So anyway, so I wasn't involved with them directly at the beginning. There was Bill Line and other people that I worked with, because I was interested in the special education stuff. But I did take -- I was sort of around a little bit at the Institute, because I had to get subjects from there, and in order to use the subjects the principal of the nursery school would give me lots of instructions about how to behave and learn to do with the kids. So I got to know them there. And then the next year I went on because there was nothing else to do. The war was on and everybody was -- I was going to be a clinical psychologist. That's what I thought I was going to be, and I was working towards that in my MA year, and I had done two internships prior to that. At the end of my BA I had an internship at the Ontario Hospital out here, the London Psychiatric now, and the next year I went to Whitby and lived in a -- did an internship there after my MA, and in both cases was involved in traveling clinics, mental health clinics that went out from those centers. So I was really on my way to being a clinical psychologist, and then the war came on, and everybody took off to the war, except the Institute people who were still -- they were still there. So I looked for a job, and I talked to Carl Bernhardt at that time, and they took me on. Well, I was really a research -- I don't know what I was.

Anyway, I had enough to live on in that first year, so I started in my doctoral program. I still was oriented towards clinical work and did a session down at the London Psych -- or the Toronto Psychiatric Hospital. Took a series of -- I took a course through them. But they (the Institute people) invited me to -- and by this time they'd found out that I could play the piano well for the kids, so the Institute hired me to play the piano there for the kids part of the time. So by the end of that year, I -- the institute people and myself were -- we were all part of -- you know, were great friends. And then they got this business of going overseas, but that's really how it came about that I always said they asked me to go

with them to England to set up this training school, because Margie wanted me there to play the piano. However, I also had a master's degree. I had all this testing experience from clinical work, and so I was able to -- while over there I was able to -- they got me doing all the assessment of the kids and the impact. And of course, we saw the impact of the early program -- education program in these kids through that data. But then, of course, in the end -- then he sent me up to -- well, we were overseas at Garrison Lane. Of course, he sent me up to teach. We had the classrooms upstairs, and the demonstration school downstairs, and when I'd come out of those sessions I'd be red in the face and all that stuff, and he'd say, "You enjoyed that, didn't you?" I said, "I don't know whether I did or not, but I found teaching very stimulating." So anyway, then he announced that I was going to stay and do all the -- they were all going to go back to Canada, at least the three, the key people, the principal of the preschool, Dore Millichamp, who was the assistant director of the Institute, and Ann Harris, who subsequently became Bill's second wife. They were all going to go back to Canada, and I was left there with a couple of others who had come over with us and a new team that was coming in from Canada, but I was to do all the teaching. And I said, "Well, I can't do that, Bill, because I never had a course from you that really was more than an argumentative session," because we had no graduate course. We'd sit and debate this and that and the other thing. So he said, "Oh, well, you'll take Dore's classes, and you'll sit through my classes and Dore's," because what they were teaching over there -- and he was doing a theory and she was doing the practice. And in the meantime Margie Fletcher, who was the principal of the school, had been going after me every moment about actual practice in the school with the kids doing my duty as a teacher. Anyway, so I got a lot of training right on the ground and fast. So I took all -- and then Bill says, "You'll also come down to Exeter," where he was giving a talk, and Anna Freud was there and Gwen Chesters and some of the other people in the field in England at that time. And he said, "We'll talk all weekend." I think he had generated some confidence in me, because during that first summer there were a lot of people that would walk in and look at us, you know, as if to say, "What are you doing here?" you know, "We've been in this early education thing for a long time, and we're good at it. We even have" -- they did have nursery classes in the public schools starting at three. And then they'd say, "You don't even have special -- you don't even have compulsory education in Canada," and we'd say, "What?" And then it turned out they -- somebody, I remember, one day pulled out this clipping that was Quebec -- Quebec didn't have compulsory education at that time. And we said, "Oh, that's Quebec." Anyway, but they would also -- they decided we were Watsonian behaviorists, and a lot of them -- and of course, I had to deal with that. And of course, I knew his functionalism. Well, I knew Mary Ainsworth said to me one day -- I think I said that in some of the things I've written about Blatz, that a lot of us didn't really know -- well, Bill never wrote down this stuff. The only -- what we knew, we got it from our inter -- I'd say to him, because after these sessions I'd tell him what I'd said to these people. And he would sort of smile, so I knew that he knew that, or figured out that I had used his functionalism of the group at Chicago. Anyway, and I had taught the system. I loved systematic psychology and so I'd been fitting them in there. And I had taken -- subsequently taught it here for a while. Anyway, but that whole -- so then I had to do that. I not only had to teach the classes, but I also had to go and cover off in all sorts of other weird places for Blatz. He said he'd make speeches there, and then he got back to Canada, so I had to do that. So I grew up PDQ I'm telling you overseas, and I had to do a lot of things I would never have had a chance to do if it hadn't been for the war and those circumstances. But it changed my whole orientation towards psych. I was really excited about what I felt as if we knew what we were doing.

And when I came back after the war, because it was too late to go back to school and it was too late for everything in the fall of '44, I took a job. Then of course, the clinical background I had, I didn't have any trouble getting a job. And I went on the clinic out of Hamilton and all that Niagara peninsula. It was a traveling mental health clinic and working with the kids. But I -- and I lived right in the hospital in Hamilton in an old place on the hill in a doctor's suite, which was completely infested with everything. There weren't any doctors back from the war yet, so -- and I worked on that clinic for a year, and then went back to school. But during that period were you -- have I said this? I remember the day that they had -- the President was up to say thank you for the endowment for the preschool that I gave; do you remember that day? And I had got off on some kind of a talk, but I think I said that day that I discovered there how inadequate we were in the mental hygiene field with adults, and we -- and yet in 25 years of child study we had a lot to learn, but we'd learned enough so that you had a

feeling that you knew what you were doing. And I certainly did come away with -- so I was glad to have -- and then, of course, I went back to the Institute and finished off my residence requirement and my language requirements and didn't have a thesis done, and Roy Liddy had already talked me into coming back here to teach. So that was '46. I came here in '46 and spent my summers in Toronto and my winters here on the side. I got my PhD in '49, finally got the thesis work done. Anyway, that's how I became involved in child psych.

**Pederson: Hmm, wow, that's a--**

Wright: And then, of course, when I came here there wasn't -- I couldn't do anything in that area really, not -- except teach just a class. Except I tried very hard to get something like this preschool here on campus. And actually, I did get money approved. And in those days all the people that had been involved overseas, medical people and so on, it was like such a small community, and I'd gotten to know a lot of them just through Blatz and his cronies in the medical world. And I can remember the day that I applied for this money. It was a five-year -- and I got the telephone call in the attic I lived in that's saying, "Mary, you got your money." But I never did get it, because Ed Hall -- I don't know who stopped it, but it was a matching grant from the federal and provincial and they were afraid of all that. Well, of course, two things. Ed Hall, who was the president here then, and he talked to me about it, and he said that it should be a medical person that would run anything like that.

**Pederson: Really?**

Wright: And they were -- and obviously they were afraid that at the end of five years maybe somebody would pull the rug. So it never came to--

**Pederson: Wow, was that close.**

Wright: --but it was, it was. Yeah, but it's probably a good thing because when I look back on it now I think, Gee whiz, I was biting off probably more than I could chew at the time. But anyway -- and maybe they were wise. So it took until I got to be the chairman of this department--

**Pederson: Yeah, yeah.**

Wright: --and was able to sell the university on that, and there was a recognized need for people to be trained in the field at that time. That was when they started all the community colleges and so on. Anyway, so I -- you've got me talking and I've been not answering any questions, but one thing sort of leads to another, doesn't it?

**Pederson: Yeah, yeah. Well, I think you've answered all of the questions.**

Wright: All of these first ones anyway.

**Pederson: Political and social events influenced your research? You've talked about that, the effect of the war. And how your ideas -- maybe in this question about the development of your ideas in the field of child development as evolving in a rather straightforward fashion, or in a way that involved sharp turns or theoretical -- in theoretical research styles in terms of continuity of your own ideas?**

Wright: I think that, well, I don't know how to answer that question. When I think of the field of psychology, because when I -- I was saying to you when I first came back here I couldn't -- there wasn't any -- you couldn't get any money, that's a very important factor. There was no source of money for research in child development. Remember when I was serving chairman here in the '60s we were out -- I was down in Ottawa trying to beg the people to create sources of money for social psych people, because there wasn't any. So it was in those -- that first 10 years or 15 years before I -- when I came here I was teaching all sorts of things. I mean, I wasn't doing much in the way -- all I was doing was

being involved in the organizational side of early education where they started the Ontario Nursery Education Association, which is now -- and I was involved in that. I was involved in the development of psychology, the Ontario Psychological Association, and the Canadian Psychological Association, which I was president in both. And in the certification, trying to help the -- it had to do with the -- with training women to work in nursery schools and day nurseries. This is where in Ontario we got this whole different one through the Health Ministry and the education -- the teachers wouldn't -- when I started this project of the preschool project, the first people I applied to was the Department of Education for money, and they just wrote me back the day after they got my letter and said they didn't fund anything for anybody, any kids under six. I was telling somebody about that, and they said -- and they were saying how that reflected the time. And so then I had to really talk Elsie Stapleford and the crew that I knew in Toronto in the nurseries branch of the Ministry of Health to set up a research funding to do that kind of work. So that research funding was a problem right straight through the whole discipline. It wasn't until the '60s when the Americans said, "We're going to stop funding you guys in Canada," such as Dave Amsel and people like that, where their research was being funded from places -- from various sources in the United States. So we were -- the world has changed and what I think about the changes that actually have been brought -- come about in basic things like that, not just computer and technology. But some of those other fundamental things that we were always a pioneer, but we were -- society here.

Anyway, how did we get onto -- oh, you were talking about ideas. So I guess that's why, because of watching the changes in the field of psychology from the Skinnerian and the hard-nosed Hullian stuff when I came back from the cognitive, the orientation of Bill Blatz, which by the time I got through with the war I was so wrapped up in thinking of things in his way with the choices that kids made, and the cognitive side of it all, and then having to start to teach the kids and get excited about it and so on. And then, of course, in the '60s we get the Piagetian shift back, which for me was so much more comfortable, and I could see all of this stuff. When I think of you or Mary Ainsworth and her approach to research, that fundamental, that business of actually looking at people, operating, you know, that went back to the very beginnings. That was my own -- I still think that my -- the work we did on social competence, the data that I had generated, the difficulty with all of that is teaching people what to look at. But I can remember that with Mary (Ainsworth) down there one time in the summer when Nora and I spent a few days with Mary, and we were looking at all of that stuff, and the difficulty, I wasn't -- didn't know whether it'd ever take off the way it has, has been absolutely fabulous. But anyway, so there've been big shifts in the field, although my own -- so you know, these were all the controversial areas in which you had to deal -- look at it. But for all those years of teaching in classes and in graduate classes, you were looking at all of these points of view. But my own comfort level was, of course, with what I really got wrapped up in the years when I was young and teaching it systematically and trying to interpret it in terms of what you actually did with kids, and how you thought about them and tried to understand what was going on in their little noggins and so on.

**Pederson: So this -- for you there was this continuity what you experienced in terms of this functionalism and systematic view, or systems view that Blatz had taught--**

Wright: That's right, and it was very nice to come back to Piaget's stuff.

**Pederson: So there was a continuity in terms of your own thinking?**

Wright: That's right.

**Pederson: And that eventually psychology--**

Wright: I don't think I ever changed my orientation.

**Pederson: --eventually psychology caught up with you--**

Wright: Well, in a way, yes.

**Pederson: --it went through the dark period of behaviorism and--**

Wright: Well, we did -- well, I mean, that was the popular way, even when I became chairman of the department and wanted to really -- because I knew that we had to have a strong, highly respected department before we could do any of these other softer things that I wanted to, and we did. We did. I worked at that, and I remember trying to bring all three of their top people from McMaster here, offered them all a job and they were all hardnosed learning people. And of course now it's a bit out of date, but at the time that was the stuff that was turning everybody on. Oh well, so in the field of child development at first I was looked at and very proudly thought of myself as very old fashioned, but it came full circle.

**Pederson: Sure.**

Wright: People are not even afraid to talk about mental things anymore. Yeah. So that's one thing about talking to somebody in these oral histories, you know, you think, What are you going to say when you look at it cold blooded, and then one thing is it just flows from one thing to another.

**Pederson: I wonder if -- I want to get back to your personal research contributions, but just in terms of the development of your own history. I wonder if we should jump to the institutional contributions, because -- and then go back, so looking down--**

Wright: In your institutional contributions?

**Pederson: --yeah, that, I guess--**

Wright: Oh, the eight dates.

**Pederson: --and then--**

Wright: I've pretty -- I've covered that pretty much, haven't I?

**Pederson: Well, just for the record talk about when you became chair of the department, and you started talking about your goals at that point in terms of chair of the department and your involvement also then with CPA. So let's first of all talk about your time at Western. You said you started in '40--**

Wright: I came in '46.

**Pederson: --'46, and then you got your PhD in '49.**

Wright: Right. And then I had -- so then I got -- I guess then I became -- well, I came as an assistant professor, even though that -- because they were hard up for people in those days after the war, so I don't know, because without a PhD today you wouldn't be an assistant professor. So then early in the '50s I became an associate, but I was an associate professor when they decided to -- they'd asked me to become the head of the department. And of course, they first of all -- I was -- because they didn't appoint women to these. I remember Roger Myers telling me in 1959, we were coming back from a meeting, and we were sitting at the -- in Toronto in Quonset huts. Now, in 1959 the Toronto Airport was -- they were just -- there was a row of Quonset huts and I remember that, and I remember because he'd say, "Oh, I don't think they'll ever make you chairman of the department because you're a woman." And I said, "Well, I don't know. They're talking about it." So that's when I became -- or that was when that started, and I was so keen to -- and that was at Middlesex College, so I was not really the chairman of the whole show. They split the department along with several other departments. Ed Hall was interested in setting up a college system, and nobody ever knew whether it was his dream, or whether he could get money that way. But anyway, so -- and as soon as that happened, I was



embarrassed about this department, really embarrassed. And so that year I wrote up a ten page submission to the university about what they ought to do if they -- and my first dean said to me (Brandy Conron) he said, "We've been waiting for somebody to tell us this." So I did get some support then, and then the university desperately tried -- I've written that all up somewhere -- tried, because nobody had told them that they needed this and that. We had a lot of trouble getting facilities and so the first five years of my tenure we were all over the place, and creating labs here and there, doing the Collip lab, getting the staging area. But it was at the end of that ten years, or just towards the end that I talked them into having, in the new building, a facility where we could study children. And there was lots of opposition to that and concerns about safety and all that kind of stuff. But anyway, we pulled it off, and so that school's 30 years old now, and I think it's doing a very good job anyway.

**Pederson: So you became chair of the department at Middlesex College in 19--**

Wright: In 1960. I was designated chair in '59, and I stayed with it for ten years, because I figured you'd need it. The first five you do the foundation and then the thing begins to grow into what you're hoping it would do, and it did. And I gave it up. They actually didn't want me to, but I gave it up in order to run the preschool for what time I had left before I officially retired. So I ran that for seven years, and was able to do the research about this, because at that time everybody was very skeptical about all this early education stuff. Do you remember all the controversy and stuff? And I just believed that they -- and of course I also believed that they were doing Sesame Street and all that approach to these kids was absolutely wrong. That was the worst thing they could do I thought, and so we developed the program that we did, which is sort of a cognitively oriented one where it was much broader than that, and I never used to like to use that term because it could be so easily misunderstood.

**Pederson: Mary, before we get -- because obviously an important part of your story will be the preschool and the research that you did associated with that. But I would be interested in your reflections about psychology, and particularly what your philosophy was in the early '60s in terms of -- because you really built the department in terms of both -- particularly in terms of the staff that you hired in, but also in terms of your fights over space and laboratory facilities. Could you say a little bit about that before we hear about the story of the development of the preschool?**

Wright: Well, I guess I wanted to -- I was ready to go. This was something that was difficult, I guess, for a lot of people to understand; although it didn't affect me so much as it did the situation in Toronto with Roger Myers. You know, we became quite good friends at the -- during the late '50s and '60s, but he was in the same boat, that he felt that he had a department that was -- nobody ever heard about them. And he was anxious to bring in people that were highly visible in terms of basic research. And so he -- but a lot of the clinical -- it was so clinical then people used to practically cry because they felt that he had -- he was clinical type, and that somehow or another they had been -- I've forgotten what. I can't get the right word for it--

**Pederson: Betrayed?**

Wright: Betrayed, yes. And so -- but that never really, I don't think, happened to me. But I felt the same way, and as Don Hebb -- talking with Don about it all, he had said, "You know, the only way you're going to be able -- it's okay, all these soft side of psychology, in the applied side, but you're not going to get your universities or anybody to support you unless you can make them see that you're a basic science, that you're a scientific discipline." And so of course, it wasn't easy because we didn't have the facilities, we didn't have labs. But -- and as far as Jim Stevenson, who was head of physiology, he had done a master's at -- he was -- his PhD, I don't know where he got that, but he did do some time at McGill, and he had apparently approached Gord Turner to see whether -- but Gord

didn't want to have anything to do with any of that stuff. And he didn't like -- I don't think he liked Jim. Jim was a powerful type of guy. But I latched onto that, because I thought that's the only way we're going to begin to demonstrate. And so that's how we got Gord Mogenson, and then Jim gave him the facilities, because he was so keen to have him, and of course, in the end they got Gordon over there. I was fighting to keep Gordon to identify with psychology, and we had lots of fun over that one. But it was true that as soon as we got people that would -- although Doug Jackson, I remember Doug saying to me, "Well, I think that Stanford developed its department when they didn't have any facilities either. So there are other areas." But as soon as the -- gradually these people that we got did get money, that that paid off with people like Ed Hall. As soon as they could see that we were bringing in people, talented people that could train graduate students and could bring prestige to the university, then the support was perfectly true. Then you begin to get the support of the people that can do something for you.

**Pederson: How did you recruit people like Doug Jackson or Al Pavlio or--**

Wright: I don't know. I think I did a lot of praying.

**Pederson: Divine intervention.**

Wright: Yeah. Well, anyway -- well, with Doug, who was one of the earlier ones, it was through a guy, former student here, but not in my day, Guthrie, he knew about him. And I think now, although I didn't know at the time, that there were probably things that were working for us that you know, I didn't know until when he died here and I went to the funeral and met his other family, who -- wonderful daughter, I liked his daughter. She's a physician too, a medical physician, pediatrician or something. But there was a whole family there, so I think that there were personal things probably that made it easy for us to get him here, although we made it very attractive. Well, I -- well, the other way in terms of recruiting, I went to -- this relationship I had with Roger Myers was a tremendously helpful one because he instructed me. We started to go to meetings together, and he knew everybody because he'd been sailing around one way and another, and he was well known and highly regarded. And of course, I met -- so I went to the chairman's meetings and I had met all these guys, so that I was able to call. You get on the phone and you could hear them say, "You know, it's Mary Wright," so -- that wants to know -- looking for -- I began looking that way. I never - applications, I didn't really like them very much. I'd go for -- where we were looking for the people. I went directly to the people that were training them, and said, "Who have you got that's good?" And Roger and I used to think if somebody was applying for a job there was something wrong with them.

**Pederson: Yeah.**

Wright: And so we looked in Iowa. You were in Iowa. We were looking for people out of there for these different areas, although today everybody's out to hire them. Now, they're presidents of universities, and we have here in -- when the medical school -- of course, Huron College with a woman, they -- that was quite a thing. I thought they -- when they made the Ivy School of Business, when they appointed a woman as the head of the Ivy School of Business, I thought, well, we've really finally completely arrived.

**Pederson: Wow.**

Wright: And so anyway, in that correspondence the guys were kidding about what they were going to call me. So then it's amazing the difference that has happened since that.

**Pederson: Okay. Let's go back to the point earlier in our discussion where you were talking about the development of the preschool, and that both the development of the preschool as part of the psychology department, and then also I want to hear about your research in teaching associated with the preschool.**

Wright: Well, I guess the idea -- the reason -- the way in which I sold the preschool to the university was because of the need, the fact that the Institute of Child Study had sort of gone through a phase. By this time the -- there's a long sad story about that if anybody wants to read about it. I certainly wrote that up in that book that the people from Concordia produced about what happened after Bill became sick, and all the period of -- now they -- then there's been a recovery, but at the time I was unhappy because I could see that in Ontario, staying with our own province where there'd been that leadership for -- like, for example, the first -- the Day Nurseries Act, the 1946 Day Nurseries Act in Ontario was the first one of its kind in the North American continent, and I'm talking about both Canada and the United States. And the leadership there had been from the Institute of Child Study, and now in the late '50s I could see that we weren't going to be getting out of there. They weren't teaching graduate students. They'd given all of that up, and that we weren't -- that the people like Elsie Stapleford were going to die off, and there weren't going to be other people that would really give the leadership that we needed in the province to maintain and develop all these early -- and even -- and at that time, of course, we had no idea that the public was going to finally capitulate to this thing. Right at the beginning of my arrival here in London when I was so impressed with what you do with -- when you started with the little ones, that I can remember going down and talking to the people I knew, Burt Lucas, who was the Director of Education at the time, he had been a high school teacher and had been interested in my brother, Donald, who was a great athlete at the time. He was a high school teacher, and I knew Burt well, and trying to talk to them about the importance of kindergarten. They didn't even have -- in Strathroy they didn't even have kindergarten there until when we started the program out there after the war. So we've come a long way, and of course, at that time they were just too busy with the baby boom to do anything. But eventually, of course, the classrooms -- the baby boom moved through they were doing it, but -- how did you get me started on that? I've lost track.

**Pederson: Well, I want to hear about the development--**

Wright: Oh yes, yes.

**Pederson: --for the preschool.**

Wright: Okay. So I was talking to -- telling them that we needed to produce people that were experts in that field that had graduate degrees. The other thing that had been going on in the '60s is that early -- or that nursery school, Ontario Nursery Education Association that I was involved in because of standards right from the start, and they had me and a gal from Carlton on their certification committee. There was all this business of getting -- and of course, there were no training programs for these teachers. Well, there were -- the public -- you could tell in 1960 when they said the Ministry of Education wasn't interested in any little kids in 1960 for God's sake, but there was all of this other movement, which was more on the social service type of medical side. And so right from the start Kay Turner and I, in London here -- Kay was a graduate of the Institute of Child Study when they were doing master's degree programs. And so we were, when they had the day -- when the Day Nurseries Act was passed there weren't any trained teachers. So well, there -- I shouldn't say that, because during the war that's what got the Institute off track because it suddenly had to pre -- when they started wartime day nurseries they were trying -- instead of a two year program with MA's they were reducing it to nine months and eventually to four months to try to get people out into the field, because they'd been -- Dore Millichamp was seconded to be in charge of all of that day nursery stuff during the war, and of course, she was getting the girls that had been at the Institute involved, because they were -- and they did set standards high, but there weren't people. And so during the '60s the Association had been attempting to do something about training, and they started what they called a four-unit program for these people that were already out in the field working. And Kay Turner and I were training the local ones here. Kay set up finally -- we set up a preschool in Strathroy right after the war, but we also did -- she started one at the Church of the Redeemer, I think the one they're closing, and of course -- and then we'd had these people in our living rooms once a month and would talk to them. Between the two of us we were trying to get them to know what they were doing rather than custodial care. And so then the Nursery Education Association actually put on paper these programs, and then they got the

universities to cooperate. And I had -- so I was chairman by this time, and we would find the instructors to teach these people and they would get some degree of certification through the Association. And they could get certified or recognized. That was -- so that was a period during which a lot was going on. Now, those four unit programs that were put together by anybody that would help, like us here at Western through our extension department, those were the basis for the community college programs. And what you have to look at from a historical point of view is there weren't any community colleges until the late '60s, and so they -- but those were the models, that then they -- so now we have in Ontario training programs for people who work in wartime day nurseries, and they get a professional certification. But because they -- well, I mean, they're -- I've forgotten what they call it now. I remember at one stage being very much involved in that and helping them with the OPA, their registration set up, and using those documents as a model for them to do that. I think they're still working on that. They -- I've lost track. I don't know what stage they're at now. But that was the other thing, that we needed people to go. Now, when you look to who's going to teach, who are the community colleges going to hire to do this stuff? There aren't any people. So I said, "We've got to train them at the university." Those are the two big reasons why I said -- and of course, the third one -- but those were the ones, the selling ones. The other thing was to have basic research going on here and the facilities for doing it. So anyway, we got it, we got the thing, and--

**Pederson: So this was part of--**

Wright: --so it became part of the department of psychology but as a laboratory, this is why I insist it be called a laboratory.

**Pederson: Sure. This was -- as I recall you worked hard to get a -- because at the time the psychology department was spread all over campus, there was--**

Wright: That was because we were trying to build a scientifically based department, and we hired people, and we had to find them labs.

**Pederson: So there were labs in almost every building on campus. There was--**

Wright: Yeah.

**Pederson: So that you worked hard to get a psychology building.**

Wright: Well, we did. They realized they had to do that. But of course, we went through the phase of showing what we needed by cooking it up here and there, and then they decided to give us the Collip lab and that was a temporary arrangement, and they spent a lot of money on that. And the other thing was that staging building down there, and that was new, and we put all the lab animals in there. The learning people went over there and the physiological people were all in the--

**Pederson: Collip, yeah.**

Wright: --in the Collip. But anyway, so we went through it, and I often wonder how I lived through it all. It was a real -- everybody maybe thinks it was easy, but it wasn't. It was a real struggle all the way through. And -- but by that time we'd learned a lot about designing labs, too, so that when we had--

**Pederson: Yeah, you had a lot of practice.**

Wright: Yeah. And so then when the -- and of course, the building was held up, because there was all of this competition, this "goings on" with the administration, with the political life of this university and with Ed Hall when they finally got rid of him, and you see Gord Turner was involved in that. He was the first president of the faculty association, and he hated Ed Hall. Well, I mean, they just weren't soul mates. Their value systems were different, and so of course -- and when he was -- when that was

-- and at that period when Gord was the head of this that was tantamount to a fight between union and, in those days, between Ed Hall and Gord Turner. And so you can see psychology didn't get much, either respect or any warmth. There was no love lost there. So that was a bloody mess. Anyway, so in the middle of all of this everything was closed down from a political point of view, and while Ed Hall and his cohort were persuaded about what psychology needed, and I was out for a separate building like they got at Queens, an all by itself psychology building, and they were ready to go for that when everything was just frozen until they got rid of them. They got a new constitution, and I remember the day in the Senate meeting when these three powerful guys, including Jim Stevenson who was one of them, a couple of the others (they're dead now) were looking, grinning at me because instead of us having our own and be tied in with biology (I had gotten so far as that), we were going to be with social science, and that meant that -- and they just looked at me. I just looked at them and, because they knew, with, you know, dirty -- just like my brothers used to when I was a little kid if they knew they were "fixing me," you know, they'd have this grin, spread grin on their faces. And because what that did was slow it all down. And then, of course, with the compromise we were made with life science in the graduate thing we had to wait for all these other departments to figure out what they needed in their spaces, and we nearly fell out of the loop when there was the money there. And it was just awful. So it was a real humdinger of a time, because the baby boom was rolling through the university, and everything was going with the provinces building universities all over the place, and then all of a sudden they started to realize they were going to run out of money. So that how it ended up that we ended up here. And we mustn't get off this, but sometime I want to talk to you about this new idea they've got of putting all the child over there. Just say, "Well, the future's in your hands." I worry about it being separated like that.

**Pederson: Yeah.**

Wright: I gave up the chairmanship one year too soon, because we should have -- we were in the business of also -- an additional wing to this building. We needed more space and the preschool shouldn't have been down on that floor. It should have been -- we should have been down on the floor where the preschool is, not the sociology. So it's always something -- slip ups that occurred then. Anyway, but that's -- but you do these things and maybe that's the way it should be. But however, that--

**Pederson: So the preschool opened. That was in--**

Wright: 1973.

**Pederson: --'73.**

Wright: I gave up the chairmanship in '70, and we hoped to get it open a year after that, but the building was messy and -- but anyway, I got Norm Greenberg and Carol Davis.

**Pederson: Norm Greenberg?**

Wright: Norm Greenberg and Carol Davis later Wagg. He was in -- I got picked up there, too, so at least two of the key people, the teacher and the supervisor, and of course, Norm was then -- he worked on his PhD here. He'd had for a year and so we were able to spend a year. He was an assistant in my class, and by the time we opened we had really had the chance to sort things out in our own minds about how to do it. And I made everything, all the equipment in there was on wheels. They could be moved. I knew that the only thing that was fixed was the one thing nobody liked out on the playground, but you know, to have the flexibility to really see how things worked. But the basic design of the school was fine. I knew an awful lot about that, checked -- gone down to the States to at least look at space things, too. But--

**Pederson: So I know you've written about this on many occasions, but I think it'd be important in this oral history project for you to describe again your philosophy of the school, and what your**

**goals were, and then also, of course, the research that you did. So what's your philosophy of education that you realized as you were developing the school, the preschool?**

Wright: Well, that's -- I probably should -- it's too bad that people are doing -- for something like that I should have looked up some of where I've tried to present this really from the different points of view that you in education that -- certainly the cognitive orientation that was -- I was very keen that they -- of course, that the children were actively involved in -- and that you got them, because that's how they learn, by doing or by being creative, and in the case of the children from underprivileged families where their parents weren't educated and so on, I thought of it in terms of the child taking the initiative and being in an environment where that initiative would pay off for them, and they would develop their intellectual potential that way; that the worst thing would be to be telling them what was right and what was wrong, and that two and two made four and get that memorized, rather than their own problem solving type of approach to all of these things. And in our -- and that was one of the things we paid a lot of attention to in terms of teaching styles. At the Institute in Toronto they had been so anxious to throw the responsibility of the whole thing to the kids, and so the teachers were inconspicuous, almost the Montessori type, but we felt that there was more. The interactions between the teacher and the child would be very exciting, so we were -- could be the most stimulating and exciting, but it was not to tell them the answers, but to get that excitement of discovery involved. So--

**Pederson: So it was kind of the teacher's role was to structure the environment to enable the child to discover things and--**

Wright: Yeah. And not only that, but also the interaction of the teacher with the child was the thing that we thought we ought to be paying attention to, that it could be good. It would not be -- you got the idea that you could destroy the child, or interfere with the development of his own thought processes, and teachers do that all the time. They stop it, they spoil what's happening, that the facilitation, the role of the teacher as a facilitator or as one that turns on the curiosity is the thing that we should be striving for. And so that we spent a lot of time talking about that kind of thing and ways to talk to the kids about -- they would never tell -- never command them. We were always giving information that they could use to make decisions about what they were going to do in a disciplinary situation, as well as in any kind of other learning or intellectual situation.

**Pederson: I remember my daughters -- both my two youngest daughters went to the preschool, and when they went to public school they were saying, "I already know this stuff, and they're trying to teach it to us, but I already know it. And -- but they don't even know that I know it. They don't even ask me." And so that they had this, you know -- they obviously understood your philosophy of education and wished that the public school would have a similar philosophy.**

Wright: Yeah, I don't know how things are coming. I'm a very busy person, but I know I'm getting away from -- out of the -- you know, this kind of stuff. Tomorrow morning, though, I'm finally going to go over and see this new daycare facility at the university. I should have gone on the day it opened, but I didn't. But anyway, we've been talking about it, so it may be -- used to be when they started all these other things back in the early days they consulted me, because of the -- I helped the students start those early ones. And I don't know what happened to them in the long run. Maybe they -- I guess all sorts of things can go wrong. But so I didn't know about this, but the whole thought about it worried me just the size, the number of kids to be in one spot bothered me. But anyway, apparently Mary Lou was consulted. I used, of course, the Ministry with -- even from our place here. They -- the architects and I had been down to the space to look at a lot of places that they're doing that sabbatical year I had before we opened it. But anyway, there's nothing wrong with that facility we have here. It works. But anyway -- I don't know. But Mary Lou finally -- she's a -- rather than just walk in myself, she's arranged for tomorrow morning for us to go and meet somebody. So I'll be seeing what's going on, but it's hard to -- I imagine they've got different pads. They must have them in small groups, some of them, and the Y -- and see, they farmed it out to the Y, and they seem to be in the business. I knew they took over the one in Strathroy that had been there for 40 years that we started with -- that Kay Turner and I started after the war. And -- but the town suddenly -- and of course, now there are junior

kindergartens in the schools. And when we started it, as Kay Turner says, we started -- she was the teacher. I wasn't that involved. It was in the Anglican Church parish hall. They let them in, because they needed a new furnace. But as Kay says, they were kindergarten-aged children, and the library -- I was telling you about that when the issue about closing this thing down out there in Strathroy came up, it was all written up in the paper, and the librarian there for many years -- I was in talking to her about it. She told them about this, and she said, "I was in that class. I can remember on my little rest time and the" -- you know, Bill Blatz -- they had this afternoon little rest time, and you had your little blanket, and I can remember that in the parish hall. That was on Front Street. Oh dear. Well, anyway, so Kay -- they took over, and finally we gave up. I gave them 10,000 bucks, too, in the hope that it might -- and got somebody that cared about the -- put up a new fence. It was -- part of it was pushed by the new rules and what the quality of the kind of playground equipment you had to have. We had to change all of ours, too. I can't believe it. But they had just come and taken all the playground equipment away from this place in Strathroy. Anyway, but in the end the Y said they would take it over and make sure the service was still there. And they've expanded it all over the place, and they're the ones -- and I got -- they were talking about they were trying to use the high school that -- at least that's got a big name. You know? But anyway. So how are we doing?

**Pederson:** Well, one thing: if I can just go back, because I'd like SRCD oral history to have a record of the research you did. So the school started in '73--

Wright: Right.

**Pederson:** --and then, what was it, '74 or so that--

Wright: Well, I got started right away, of course, and had a -- got enthusiastic. I didn't want to waste any time. But of course, the first period of time a lot of it was developing our instruments, too, and finding out what ways in which to sense what was going on.

**Pederson:** So you had a low income group as part of--

Wright: Yeah. In a smaller city like this -- when I first came here to London I, of course, did anything to make extra money, you were paid so little. But they had talked me into being a consultant for the children's aid, and I did all that with their babies, and so I got to know the people and the children's aid and so on, so I was able to get their cooperation. They're the ones that found the kids for me. And then, in order to finance, to get them into the school, I got the Richard and Jean Ivy Fund for two years to pay their fees and transport them. And then, by this time I'd sold the Ministry. As I say, there were no funding agencies, Education wasn't interested, but of course, Elsie Stapleford was the director of the nursery branch, and I'd known her from years back. I worked with her one summer when I was at the Whitby Clinic. She was the psychologist out there. And so she -- so anyway, she talked them into setting up a research fund, so then I began to get money from them. And then the rat race began of applying and applying, and reporting and reporting and everything. But -- and even in the middle of it one time when the delay was so great I used political influence. I got my brother, Clark, to talk to the member from there who walked in and said, "What's going on?" A big burly farmer, "What's going on with Mary Wright's money?" And I got it. It came through. But then I've never talked about that very much. People don't like to ever hear that that sort of stuff goes on, but I'm sure in Quebec it must be going on all the time. We've now discovered that this is the way they function. Anyway, that did happen just once for me, but I remember being desperate because I didn't know how I was going to pay everybody. So anyway, that was how I financed that thing.

**Pederson:** Hmm, wow.

Wright: And anybody who wants to know about that, they can read the book. Although it's out of print now, so I don't know; it wouldn't be very available. So anyway, it was a great thing, and I followed them up in the public school. But one of the problems with applied research -- and I think that it'd be interesting to some of the Americans, and especially high school people in Ypsilanti, they have a static

population there and they can follow them up, and they don't lose them. Here in Canada where we've -- from the early years we have systematically tried to avoid -- and I can remember as a young professor talking about all of this, too, saying what we should do is not have ghettos and so we've got these facilities for low income families, or at least -- what's the more delicate way to rephrase it -- geared to income facilities. They're all over the place, and that was one of the reasons it cost so much to bring them in. So I tried to have the morning class from one area of town, and one from the -- and the afternoon class from the other. But once they're -- and of course, those families are awfully mobile, and while we had the kids in the preschool we didn't lose them, because they loved coming so much. And they would get in touch with -- the mother would let the driver know where they were, so the kids could come to school. But once they were out, then you lost them, and they were in the public school. You couldn't find them, and so the follow up study was difficult because of the loss. And of course, also, the red tape about having permissions, so you were writing letters to principals, and I was lucky that some of them I'd had in my classes, so I got away with that, but a lot of others weren't, and so you had to go through all the paperwork, and then that kind of side of that kind of applied work is really horrendous. So anyway, however, it's such a contribution, but in terms of the basic research, that business about -- there was social competence stuff, I always feel as if that -- it was too bad that we -- I was -- you see, it all came too late, and I regret I was up to retirement years, but I think we pinpointed the behavioral stuff that really just differentiated the children in those areas. So how are we doing? Is that about enough, do you think?

**Pederson:** Well, do you want to say anything--

Wright: Or should we have another go for the bits and pieces or--

**Pederson:** --what's your feeling? It feels like we've covered -- the one question I do want to ask is about this, on page two here about -- I don't know if you want to say anything about SRCD or--

Wright: Oh yeah. Now, you're -- well, yeah, I should have done some more work on this ahead of time, because as I lay in bed last night I realized I couldn't remember being at SRCD. The one most interesting was when they were having their golden anniversary and they had an exhibit for the Institute of Child Study exhibit. Was that in Detroit?

**Pederson:** I think so, yeah.

Wright: I mean, in order to really be accurate I'd have to look, and I could look -- could have looked those things up. And in terms of the first time I was there, I don't remember. I'm not sure without checking, but I think it may have been Minnesota, and that was in the middle of the -- that was when we were recruiting. I remember being there at this SRCD meeting with -- now, you see, Roger Myers was doing this citation count, remember?

**Pederson:** Yup.

Wright: And he used to send down to me piles of stuff and I would just look up the stuff in order to find out if they were phonies, you know? Some people would get a high citation count, maybe because they -- people didn't like what they had said, or they were riding on the backs of somebody else, and so we -- but we would spot people too -- we were both spotting. We tried not to get into each other's way, which was very nice, but we were both trying to develop departments at the same time, and -- but we'd go and listen to people, and we'd go to talk to people. And I can remember Minnesota's being at least clearly one that we were doing that stuff with. But I can't -- I'm not sure the first -- I'm not sure when was the first time I did that. And of course, there was always -- the features would be to talk, to get a chance to talk with Mary Ainsworth; that was a relationship that started way back and continued through the years. And she -- we both went through the war together. We didn't see much of each other. We were in different things, but I'd stayed with her a few times in Toronto in the -- and then when she got her honorary degree there I was her companion. That was the last time I saw her, and -- no, I guess it was. Anyway, but -- so I don't know whether--



**Pederson:** One -- the question that I would like to ask is this one about the field and what are your hopes and fears for the future of the field of developmental--

Wright: -- during the years that you have participated.

**Pederson:** I think you've talked a little bit about that, but do you want to say anything more about the history of the field?

Wright: --important or various issues changed over the years--

**Pederson:** I think we talked a little bit about -- earlier about your -- when we were talking about your own philosophy, that there was this philosophy that you -- seemed to be very consistent for you in psychology -- kind of went off into behaviorism for a while and then returned to a more functionalist view of -- more systems view of the child.

Wright: Right.

**Pederson:** And so I don't know if you have anything more to add to that about the history of the field. You've written, of course, a lot about--

Wright: I don't know. Of course, I -- if the things there I guess probably -- I really don't know. We -- it's a chronic kind of anxiety about some of the programs that are offered and that, for example. But when you talk about a thing like Montessori in the turn of the century, her ideas made sense in a certain area. But, I mean, people that are -- it's so hard to educate people about things like that, and so a lot of people are in Montessori, they tell you proudly, "My child's in Montessori," but it's a prestige thing rather than I think they know what's going on. And of course, we all know that they vary tremendously because people play fast and loose with them. They don't -- and you're no -- you have to go and find out. It's pretty hard for anybody to know. And I don't know what's going on -- well, I think you're asking a 90 year old now to talk about what's going on and I think I don't know anymore what's going on. And I listen to these debates I hear and I think, my God, they're -- nothing has changed. They're all talking about the same bloody things as we were when I was 25 and if we made any progress there, debating the -- saying that -- they seem to be saying the same things.

**Pederson:** Yeah, it's fascinating, isn't it?

Wright: Yeah, and getting nowhere. So -- and then I say to myself, well, the marvelous thing is that kids, too, grow up in spite of everything and they do in spite of what -- when I see some of them -- in spite of some pretty awful things that have happened to them. Anyway, even in our little family, oh dear. Well, however -- so I don't know, but I think I've said a lot of things.

**Pederson:** I think we've done a wonderful job, Mary. So--

Wright: So that's great.