

ISSBD ORAL HISTORY



Willard W. Hartup

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PART ONE

Brett Laursen: Brett Laursen here, with Bill Hartup doing an ISSBD History interview. Today is 13 December 2018. I'm going to start by asking Bill for some background. A lot of Bill's personal history is available at the SRCDD oral history site, so I'll ask him just provide a synopsis.

Bill Hartup: I was raised on a farm in Northwestern Ohio, although my parents were teachers and not farmers. My father taught agriculture, my mother had to leave teaching when she got married because married women weren't allowed to teach in that school. I graduated from high school at the close of World War II. As a matter of fact, it was that summer that the war ended. But I decided to go into the army rather than directly to the university. I probably would have been drafted anyway. So, the next two years were spent in uniform, mostly in schools of various kinds. There were other experiences, though, during those two years that had a formative influence on me. It was during a tour of duty in Panama that a young man wanted to be friends with me, providing I would read two books. One of them was *Das Kapital* and the other was the New Introductory Lectures [on Psychoanalysis] by Freud. Well, I got part through *Das Kapital* but I think the only outcome of that was an added liberal brush to my political views. And we also attended to a couple of labor rallies in Panama City. But more important to me was the experience I had reading the New Introductory Lectures. I did that during guard duty on the post where I was based, out on the fringes of the jungle at night, and it profoundly affected me. I left the army a year later and went to the university with a vague intention of pursuing psychoanalysis. Well, in the course of doing that, one would take Introductory psychology, which I did, and found that was, of course, not psychoanalysis. But I continued on, interested in what I found there, and ended up studying that as my major field.

Brett Laursen: Let me jump with a question for clarification. Panama City...

Bill Hartup: Is in Panama.

Brett Laursen: ... instead of Florida.

Bill Hartup: Yes

Brett Laursen: And you took your undergraduate degree at...

Bill Hartup: Ohio State. I also majored at that university in English but I decided at the time of my graduation that I didn't want to be an English teacher. And although I didn't know what a psychologist did, really, I decided to go on with no clear goal into a graduate program at that same university. Well, midway through the first year, one person, his name was Boyd McCandless, took me aside at the class one day and wanted to know what I wanted to do as a psychologist. And when he found that I had been at that university for four years and had no idea what I wanted to do, he suggested that I might be interested in studying children. And that made a great deal of sense to me and the second thing he said was: "you must leave this university, you've been here long enough" and within three months I had a research assistantship at Harvard and worked on the study which became famous by Robert Sears, Eleanor Maccoby, and Harry Levin called 'Patterns of Child Rearing.'

I got from there a few years later to the Iowa Child Welfare Research Station, at the University of Iowa. That unit was an old, well regarded unit devoted to developmental psychology and it helped begin the movement in the 1950s that came to be known as 'experimental child psychology.' Most of my colleagues were interested in utilizing Hull-Spence learning theory as a basis for thinking about developmental change. I spent my time basically "painting my nudes." I did a little bit of this, a little bit of that: evaluation of preschool programs, doll play studies of adult influences on children's imitation, and others.

Brett Laursen: Did you do anything that built on your work at Harvard?

Bill Hartup: Very little. Except that my main interests dealt with the influence of parents and parent-child relationships on development. It was only during my last year at Iowa, through student questions in a seminar, that I become interested in what children's relationships with other children might contribute to development.

PART TWO

Bill Hartup: I reached the point where I was feeling like a fish out of water in that program. Harold Stevenson, who had become the director of the Institute of Child Development at the University of Minnesota, came to Iowa for a summer session and got to know me. And that led to an invitation three years later to join the faculty at Minnesota. Stevenson was the fifth president of ISSBD. At that point, ISSBD was not yet born. But I moved to the University of Minnesota and found a place where I really wanted to be.

Brett Laursen: And this was in what year?

Bill Hartup: In 1963. And I began work on the part of social development which interested me through the rest of my career, which was namely "How are relationships among children implicated in individual development?" This took the form of studies of social attraction, structures of children peer groups, peer status and its implications for development, and then, most extensively, the study of friendships and their developmental significance. I ended my active research career in the late 1990s with studies of children's antipathies for one another and studies of conflicts as involved in children's peer relations.

Brett Laursen: So your undergraduate years were roughly from when to when, your graduate years were roughly from when to when?

Bill Hartup: My undergraduate years were from 1947 through 1950. My graduate years were from 1950 to 1955. I taught at a Rhode Island college for one year and then went to Iowa in 1955. I stayed there for eight years until 1963, when I went to the University of Minnesota, and I stayed there for the remainder of my career. But in 1969, a serendipitous event occurred which had a major impact on my life. And that was the visit to the Institute of Child Development by Franz Mönks, who was recently appointed to the chair in Developmental Psychology at the University of Nijmegen, now Radboud University. Franz was on a study trip designed, in part, to see if he could recruit some people from the United States and Canada to come for periods of time to Nijmegen in order to augment the program that he was trying to build. Well, when this invitation came, I was ready for a sabbatical leave, and having discussed this with my family, we took off for a whole year in the Netherlands during 1970-71. My kids went to Dutch schools, my wife did theatrical activities in English for her friends in Nijmegen, and I began work with colleagues in the Institute of Psychology at that University. One of the things that Franz was doing in the fall of that year, was organizing the first congress of ISSBD. Well, I had never heard about ISSBD. It had only been organized in 1969 by a relatively small group of developmental psychologists who were attending a meeting in Bonn, Germany. Discussion about forming such a society had taken place at various meetings over more than a decade.

Brett Laursen: Can you remember and give some names for that group?

Bill Hartup: The names I can recall from among the founders are: Hans Thomae; Jan de Wit, who was at the University of Amsterdam; Jarmila Kotaskova, who was at the Academy of Sciences in Prague; Marcello Cesa-Bianchi, who was at University of Milan; Ursula Lehr from Bonn, and Franz Mönks. There were probably others.

Brett Laursen: It's a pretty good list.

Bill Hartup: Oh, and there were two Americans: Robert Havighurst and Bernice Neugarten from the University of Chicago. The complete list can be found in my history of ISSBD during its first quarter-century published in the Journal in 1996. Back to 1970, Franz Mönks, Jan de Wit, and I became the Organizing Committee for the first Congress. And we set about doing that in a fashion that I thought was a little unusual. It was pretty loose in some ways. But we did nevertheless issue the invitation and about 100 people came, maybe slightly more than that, to Nijmegen in July of 1971 for that congress.

Brett Laursen: Mostly from Europe, or equal parts from North Americans?

Bill Hartup: More Europeans than Americans, although there were a lot of Americans who came.

Brett Laursen: And was there anyone from outside of Europe or North America?

Bill Hartup: I don't believe so.

Brett Laursen: By Europeans at this time we're only talking about Western Europeans.

Bill Hartup: Yes, yes.

PART THREE

Bill Hartup: So, the program consisted mostly of plenary sessions. There were, I think, a few times when there were two sessions going on at once. But the audience was quite enthusiastic and quite attentive. I remember one incident: Robert Cairns, who was a friend of mine, was giving a paper dealing with his early work on aggression and he was not paying much attention to his delivery. Suddenly, a voice came booming out of the audience (it was Ase Skaard, a formidable lady who had been a member of the Norwegian resistance during the war and was widely known in the field of early childhood education) saying "Please slow down. You must remember that we are not all native speakers of English." Bob blushed deeply and, of course, slowed down.

Brett Laursen: Can I ask you a little more about this... Mostly senior faculty or was this something that students or junior faculty might attend?

Bill Hartup: There was no effort to invite junior faculty. I think the only ones there were probably the junior faculty at Nijmegen, who were also graduate students, and I think there might have been others from Amsterdam and maybe Bonn. But I don't think there were lots of junior faculty there from other countries.

Brett Laursen: You make it sound as it was not a male only affair.

Bill Hartup: Not, it wasn't. I don't remember how many women were there but I think a sizable number.

Brett Laursen: So, the content came and went ...

Bill Hartup: The contents came and went. We did publish a book of the proceedings.. "Determinants of Behavioral Development," Academic Press, 1972. Since this was in English I had a fairly heavy editorial assignment so I only remember the process and not the content. Anyway, so far as my stay in Holland is concerned, it opened up to me the possibilities that could derive from closer work internationally in our field. You have to remember that in the early 60s we were still in an age when communication between people was largely by mail. It was slow. Most of the people in attendance at these meetings had worked provincially, within their own countries, were identified with works going on in their own countries, did not know people from other countries, except maybe that group of founders.

Brett Laursen: This is 1969 and the Society is how old?

Bill Hartup: Well, no, this conference took place in 1971 when the Society was two years old. The Society was commissioned, or authorized, in the Netherlands during that period right after 1969. The documentation was signed by Queen Juliana. And all this was accomplished by Jan de Wit who was the general secretary.

Brett Laursen: Was there a business meeting at the meetings, and did you attend said business meeting?

Bill Hartup: I am pretty sure that I did but I don't remember anything about it (laughs). The governance for the Society at that point was really strange for a person like me who was accustomed to something quite different. The Executive Committee consisted entirely of those people who had founded the society in 1969. From then on, for about the next 6 years or so, that continued to be the case. There was no formal way for new members to be added; they were added just on the suggestion of members of the Executive Committee. There were no elections, there was no formal procedure for becoming a member of the Society. Dues, I think, were not levied in any systematic way. And so, it was in 1975, after two other meetings of the society that work began on an expanded set of by-laws, I was involved with Harry McGurk and Jan de Wit in writing them and these were operational by 1977.

Brett Laursen: So, Jan de Wit was still president or had there been some kind of rotation?

Bill Hartup: Well, there were rotations. Thomae was the first president, de Wit became president in 1975, that was four years later. And he continued through the meetings in Lund in 1979. I had been appointed to the committee in 1975 and by 1979 they thought that they wanted me to be the president.

Brett Laursen: How were those discussions conducted? The founders just sat around a table or they did it at dinner or ...?

Bill Hartup: I think it was a combination of both. It was very informal.

Brett Laursen: Happened in one sitting or this was a lot of back and forth over time?

Bill Hartup: Oh, I don't think there was a lot of back and forth over time. I think there was an agreement from very early on that the Society should have presidents for four years and not longer. Thomae, actually, was in favor of retaining rather loose regulations for doing the Society's work. He was afraid that if it would become too formal it would be too much like American societies and not as comfortable for many colleagues.

Brett Laursen: He gets credit for this very, very long term of presidency where you have two years, four and two....

Bill Hartup: The term of the presidency actually was suggested by an American sociologist whose name was Burt Brim, He was president of Russell Sage Foundation at that time, and he had come to the meeting in Nijmegen, and later on when he knew that we were thinking about drawing some bylaws he suggested to the committee that that would be a reasonable term. He felt that 6 years would be too long, that 2 years would be too short in view of the fact that meetings of the Society only occur once every 2 years. As I said earlier, I was a member of that by-laws committee with Harry McGurk and Jan de Wit, and that group got together largely at my instigation. I became really uncomfortable with this sort of old boy club that I was afraid the Society would become and I thought we should have more regular standards and procedures for membership and for elections and so forth. We actually drew up the bylaws using those of the Society for Research in Child Development as a template, There were some differences, and this document has been amended several times since. If you look to the two documents now I don't know whether you could tell that one was related to the other.

Brett Laursen: So, there was a Dutch president, and then a Dutch president and then you were president?

Bill Hartup: No, Thomae was German.

Brett Laursen: So a German president, then a Dutch a president, and then you were president?

Bill Hartup: That's right. My presidency was marked by further steps towards the formalization that I was just referring to. We had the bylaws and the organizational scheme, but just barely. The membership stood at about 250, maybe. And we did think that we were in line to do another meeting in North America and then one in Europe. The meeting in Toronto was nor a lot bigger than the one that had taken place in Nijmegen. We hadn't pursued members, and I remember asking that a membership desk be set up during the conference, and that people be urged to become members. The informality of the day was illustrated by my taking home bundles of travelers checks and different currencies which people left for their dues.

Brett Laursen: The president was also the treasurer?

Bill Hartup: We had a treasurer, and he had a small amount of money which had accrued in the previous 8 years through memberships mostly. But most of the Society's' funds came from profits from the biennial meetings. But the Biennial Meetings were set up entirely by the individual who was the organizer.

Brett Laursen: They still are.

Bill Hartup: And their funding was not provided by ISSBD, and the organization of the meetings and the whole operation of them rested with the organizer, as did any profits. Well, by the time I became president in 1979, there were profits in Ann Arbor, there were profits in England, there were profits in Holland, there were profits in Germany, and there were some other accounts in various other places, and I called them all in, although it took some doing.

Brett Laursen: When did the publication of the proceedings cease?

Bill Hartup: Klaus Riegel and Jack Meacham edited the second conference proceedings (Ann Arbor), Harry McGurk edited the third (Guilford), and Marcello Cesa-Bianchi edited the fourth set of proceedings (Pavia). The latter were published only in Italian. And then they stopped.

Brett Laursen: Who followed you as president?

Bill Hartup: Paul Baltes. My last two years as president were marked, as I said earlier, with settling in a more formal organization and a more formal way of doing business with conference organizers. Paul was asked to organize the 1983 conference which was held in Munich. It was the best conference that ISSBD had sponsored up to that time and he was elected president then.

Brett Laursen: Elected by whom?

Bill Hartup: By the membership, we had bylaws operating by then.

Brett Laursen: So you were the last president elected by the Executive Committee. Then the society moved to a membership election?

Bill Hartup: Yes, I think so.

Brett Laursen: What would you say were the Society's aims during these years, aside from just being organized? Were there overarching goals?

Bill Hartup: No, the constitution says just generally it is to promote the study of behavioral development over the lifespan.

Brett Laursen: Okay, but as the first international organization devoted to behavioral development, there must have been something beyond lifespan behavioral development that was motivating the participants to travel large distances to go to these congresses.

Bill Hartup: Well, I think it was the general flowering of developmental work in the social sciences during this time, rather than interdisciplinary considerations per se. Beginning in the 1960s, but especially apparent in the 1970s, theoretical models and research methods for studying "development" broke through decades of inertia, becoming vibrant across a wide spectrum. The number of academic positions, national research institute positions, and privately funded programs increased greatly during that period. And, I think, as that happened in the United States, it also happened in Europe. And the Society came into being at just the point in this expansion when international collaboration in research and dissemination seemed both feasible and to have great potential..

Brett Laursen: When you say international, you mostly mean transatlantic, I assume.

Bill Hartup: Well, it was at that time. There was really no representation in the Society much from Eastern Europe, although by the time I became president, we had organized one training workshop in Poland and others were being planned in an effort to bridge the gap between Western Europe and colleagues in Eastern Europe. People like Jarmilla Kotaskova, who had been a member of the Society from the beginning, helped with that. I think that expansion was also assisted by Magda Kalmar, from Budapest, and a number of others.

Brett Laursen: My reflection is that became an increasingly important orientation for the society as the Cold War years advanced.

Bill Hartup: Right. The first one of the workshops, I think, was organized during the time that Jan de Wit was president. But I was very anxious to encourage the continuation of that program. I take great satisfaction in the long continuation of that program up until the present and its expansion to Asia, South America, and Africa. The first Asian Workshop took place in 1978 in Indonesia. The organizer was Singgih Dirgagunarsa. He was a very experienced man from Indonesia who had, I think, come to the attention of Jan de Wit because of the historic connection between Holland and Indonesia. Jan de Wit spent a lot of time going back and forth from Holland to Indonesia, and I think that is how he came to know Singgih.

Brett Laursen: We're trying to round up all of the previous workshops. So there was one in Indonesia. The years were roughly...

Bill Hartup: The whole list of workshops that took place in the first 25 years of the Society can be found in my 1996 article in the Journal.

Brett Laursen: Oh, you've got all of the workshops in IJBD, very good.

So the initial organization and organizing principles were about development and then increasingly about international bridge building. Was there waxing and waning, shifts in focus during those years? How would you say that the focus of the Society changed over time? Clearly the founding fathers and mothers, so to speak, continued to lead the Society. Were there generational transitions, or any kind of transition during your years?

Bill Hartup: Well, there was a generational one. De Wit and I were about the same age, and Stevenson was a little bit older than I was. So maybe the generational transition, didn't take place, or part of it took place then, and moved on a bit later to Harry McGurk, Lea Pulkkinen, and Ken Rubin who were somewhat younger. You ask about changes, substantively. I think that changes simply mirrored what was happening mostly in developmental psychology during that time.

Brett Laursen: Somewhere along the way someone got it in their head to have a journal.

Bill Hartup: That actually happened also in the 1970's; the first volume appeared in 1976. I remember meetings that we had with Larry Erlbaum from Academic Press, and other potential publishers as well as our more general conversations about starting a journal. But I think Franz Mönks would be a much better informant about this than I am.

Brett Laursen: But you were on the Executive Committee. What was the rationale, the motive for starting such an undertaking with such a small group of individuals?

Bill Hartup: Well, I think they were consistent with the general purpose of the Society, which was to provide a mechanism besides the biennial meetings for stimulating international exchange. What we hoped was that it would not be a general journal of developmental psychology, but rather one in which collaborative work would appear, from laboratories across nations, and also that there would be publications from a variety of nations on issues that would touch on national or international themes. I think it has remained more or less true to that goal.

Brett Laursen: It was a big undertaking, the Society was not flush with funds.

Bill Hartup: No, it wasn't.

Brett Laursen: And journal publishing was not very lucrative in those days....

Bill Hartup: We didn't have much funding from the publisher. The initial publisher was Elsevier, and I think within a short period of time Elsevier was so severe in its lack of support for the journal that we felt we could not afford it. And its subscription prices were so high that

many libraries could not afford it. And that is when Academic Press came to our rescue. You'll need to get the exact chronology from Franz or look in your own files.

Brett Laursen: I'm more interested in the deliberations surrounding the decision to undertake the launch of the journal. Because it could not have been done lightly, given the financial considerations. Even when I was first involved in the Society, the financial burdens of running a journal were heavy.

Bill Hartup: All I remember is a lot of discussion, because we knew it was a big undertaking, and one that might not necessarily pay off.

Brett Laursen: And it had competitors. Child Development was already established.

Bill Hartup: Yes, it had been published for 40 years and was going great guns at this time with more than 700 submissions a year

Brett Laursen: And Merrill-Palmer Quarterly had already been established.

Bill Hartup: Developmental Psychology started in 1969 and was receiving more than 600 submissions per year.

Brett Laursen: But you didn't see the journal as any kind of competition with the main journals at the time?

Bill Hartup: Competitive only in the sense that they were the big guys, and we were the little guys, and we didn't know whether we could join the party.

Brett Laursen: Talk to me about the appointment of editors. How did that come about? We will have the Editors' perspective in an interview with Franz Mönks, but we don't know the deliberations around the Executive Committee's table.

Bill Hartup: Franz was, I think, the person who proposed the journal or, if he didn't do that, he was an advocate for it. And so it was decided to try it and there was a consensus that he should be the first Editor.

Brett Laursen: Who was the president at that time?

Bill Hartup: Thomae was retiring and de Wit assuming the presidency.

Brett Laursen: Talk to me about efforts to make the Society distinct from SRCD.

Bill Hartup: Well, the relation between the Society and SRCD is one that has been fraught. At the 1975 meeting of ISSBD, which was held in Guildford, in England, SRCD arranged for its entire Long Range Planning Committee to attend. The purpose was to discuss several of its objectives with the ISSBD governance: how to stimulate interdisciplinary research and, most relevantly, how to promote international endeavor in child development. That group had a vigorous set of discussions, and one of the issues was how ISSBD and SRCD would get along.

PART FOUR

Bill Hartup: For a time, there was communication between the two organizations, but it never was really very clear how the small international society and the big North American society could really get together with more than just statements about the desirability of international work. SRCD was not interested necessarily in going to great lengths to share pages in its journal with another organization, although we were invited to participate in those pages. And there was a kind of case of David and Goliath, I think, and there was a small group of people who were interested in international cooperation, but that didn't include everybody. For this reason, there has not been much success in the ensuing years in formalizing a relationship between the two organizations. In recent years, I think there have been efforts in SRCD to increase the participation in its organization by people from abroad, but that's been very one-sided.

Brett Laursen: But isn't it fair to say that the North American participants in ISSBD were also involved in SRCD, for the most part.

Bill Hartup: Oh yes, I think they all were. As for me, my activities in ISSBD tapered off in the 1980s: I became the editor of Child Development in 1983, eventually president of SRCD. It wasn't my interests that changed, but the range, or the scope, of my activities. I did maintain regular involvement in ISSBD affairs until I retired and also spent considerable time abroad.

Brett Laursen: So there has always been some desire on the part of the leaders of ISSBD to make sure that the Society does not become too North American-centric. Can you talk a little bit about that topic and what kind of efforts were made in that respect? Was there something like a firewall built between the two?

Bill Hartup: Well, that was a big issue from the beginning. I remember Hans Thomae talking about it. There were some folks like him worrying that ISSBD would be just overwhelmed by North Americans. Largely because there were so many more of them and they had resources. And he saw that as an obstruction to the growth of the human development field in other countries. But the only rules that were put up to ensure that this wouldn't happen were unwritten. This was understood from the start: that no conference would be organized that wouldn't have a good participation from people from a variety of countries. And that a strong effort would be made to secure participation in the meetings from a range of countries, and that the meetings would be held in North America relatively infrequently. And committee work would be shared, and officers would be only periodically elected from North America.

Brett Laursen: Was there an effort to both ensure that most of the meetings were held outside of North America and that most of the officers came from outside of North America?

Bill Hartup: Yes. I don't know in the last 50 years how many North Americans have been presidents of the society, about five, six?

Brett Laursen: We have that online!

Looking back, to the extent you think you initially had goals and aims, how successful do you think the Society was in meeting them? Did the Society fall a bit short, was it too slow to develop, was it overly ambitious?

Bill Hartup: Well, I think, to some extent, we are still overly ambitious. The field of behavioral development has changed in lots of ways -- at different rates and speeds in different places. I think what may not have happened as much as I thought would happen is international collaboration. But there are exceptions to that, there are lots of exceptions to that rule. And that may be that such cooperation for its own sake is really not a meaningful objective. It's like a lot of things in the life course. When there's a clear superordinate goal you get the kind of cooperation you want from the participants as you want, and in the absence of that goal you don't. I think this is the case where people have gone about their work with much better information about what has been going on in other parts of the world. But that hasn't meant just a wave of international collaboration or empirical work.

Brett Laursen: So here's my final question: Where did the name come from? Why Behavioural Development?

Bill Hartup: Well, I think those founders who met in Bonn included a couple of people who were not psychologists, and it also definitely included people who were committed to the lifespan study of development. The emphasis conveyed by the word behavioral was to distinguish the Society's concerns from strictly non-behavioral ones.

Brett Laursen: I often wondered why it wasn't Human Development instead of Behavioral Development.

Bill Hartup: There was a journal called Human Development that had been edited for many years by Hans Thoma. Maybe to distinguish it from that. There's an interesting and funny story about 'behavioral'. If you notice, the Society uses the word 'behavioural,' spelled with a U in its name (the British spelling) while the journal uses the word without the U (the American spelling). Well, the U, I think, is in the name because the founders were mostly senior Europeans and the English that most continental Europeans used at that time was British rather than American English. But when Franz Mönks became the first editor of the journal, he really wanted to emphasize the relation between the North American and European activity, so he insisted that the journal be named without the U.

Brett Laursen: Was the journal name solely at the behest of the editor or was it a group decision?

Bill Hartup: I think it was Franz's decision.

Brett Laursen: Any final words?

Bill Hartup: No, I don't think so. It was my pleasure to talk about these things.