

Interview with Warren Brodey
Conducted by Catherine Rakow
Tape 1

Narrator: This is a September 4th, 2002, interview by Catherine Rakow of Dr. Warren Brodey. In fact, this digital audio file is the first of four that are being used to circulate their discussion almost a decade after it took place. Dr. Brodey was a Co-Investigator on Dr. Murray Bowen's 1954 to 59 NIMH research project. The papers from which are now housed at the National Library of Medicine.

Brodey's recollections give us an inside look at the practices within that project. A project that, as you probably know, laid the groundwork for the formation of Bowen Family Systems Theory. This discussion took place at the Bowen Center for the Study of the Family, again, on September 4th, 2002, and there are three additional audio files that complete the carryover of content from those original tapes.

Rakow: What I was interested in, you had said, that the Scher project complemented the project you were on in a way that they were both-they had their own way of thinking about what they were doing.

Brodey: Yeah, but, your name is again?

Hargrove: Scotty Hargrove.

Brodey: Scotty Hargrove was asking me, about Lyman. And I said, yes, they complemented, but the problem is that, here were these projects, which were- in some ways, had the similar goals, to try and find a understanding of schizophrenia, and also to move not just to understanding, but to do something about it. To find the, you know, the heart to doing something. And, so each of them chose a different way. Lyman and Scher and ourselves and actually, there was another man who was working with children.

Rakow: Reidl. Fritz Reidl.

Brodey: Fritz Reidl. And, then there were professional alliances in this too. We were much more medically-oriented. I don't know about Lyman. But in any case, we were very- Murray's thinking was much as a doctor.

Rakow: Okay.

Brodey: As I have given and he was an unusual doctor, but very much a doctor. And, so these three groups, (as I was saying), they, each had their own individuality. And there was some competition.

And, you know, who's right and who's wrong?

Rakow: Yeah, I wondered about that.

Brodey: And then- natural, natural enough, you know. But really as I see it, the problem was, that, if they'd cooperated, they could cooperate to some degree, but, cooperating very much, would mean they'd be exchanging ideas and at this point, everybody needed their own ego to be involved with their own ideas. Because we were so strongly invested in a particular idea, and that was necessary in order to keep going in a particular direction.

Rakow: Well, you're actually, we're kind of started off one place, I had a number of places to start with, I found this book, and, have you ever, you remember Perry Stanley?

Brodey: I remember him a little bit.

Rakow: Anyhow, it's a so-so book. But it's, it's actually written about the time that you all were there.

And what he's describing here, is this conflict. A conflict between research interests and therapy interests. That's what the whole book is. He goes on and on and on and on about this. And- you know, I can't speak for any other projects, but it certainly seems clear to me that the project that you worked on with Dr. Bowen, that they were well-integrated, that there was not a conflict in this particular project. And it's interesting, I don't think he brings this project up at all in this book. He talks about – it is some project with LSD, but- as an example, he gives a lot of excerpts from meetings with the head of the clinical investigations. And the discussion on and on and on about-

Brodey: Well, there was a conflict. It- not for Murray,

Rakow: It didn't seem to be. Everybody (inaudible).

Brodey: No, there's no conflict for Murray, but there's a conflict for the National Institutes of Health, and the Mental Health Institute there of NIH.

Brodey: Because they wanted from us this statistical kind of analysis which we tried to get in to some degree, with, as you know, with some social charts and all the rest of it. The, you know, the charts of who spoke to who and all this. But by and large, we felt that that wasn't, that comes later. This, again, we'd be talking about search and research.

Brodey: And, in the process of search, is what- what really is very close to therapy. And research is where you take the data and you analyze it in the manner in which is accountable according to science. In this way, we were not really so involved with, because we didn't know any measures that would help us. Because we were so involved with the holistic approach to the family.

Rakow: And that- see that now that's the question, because I think that's the criticism that comes up about Bowen Theory. That, it seems to me, at least, and I've tried to be so careful not to speak about what was in Dr. Bowen's head unless it's in writing somewhere. But it does seem to me that the organization of what you're calling research, existed in his head. In other words, he was incorporating what was being seen, observations that were being seen into a theory, eventually, that became a theory. But- and- but it was the kind of the foundations that built the theory. So he had a trajectory and it seems to me that that is different. If I listen- listen in the sense of reading as you listen to what he said, in, in this book, that- it was kind of a helter skelter, kind of people going this way, and going that way, and then changing gears and there, you know, I don't know about the other parts in terms of the progression. Certainly Lyman Wynne went on, had some progress and went on to formulate ideas in an organized way. But it seems to me that part of the- what- what NIMH had to offer was that kind of freedom. On the other hand, you know, you have to have some way of thinking about what you're doing. [laughter] So, it-

Brodey: Well, it was a way of thinking that was relatively clear what

Rakow: In the- in the broader- broader system? In the project. Okay.

Brodey: In the project.

Rakow: In the project. Okay.

Brodey: Yeah.

Rakow: Okay.

Brodey: And, but the gathering of measures. You see, my own career, has more to do with gathering measures that don't exist. That's what I've been working on all the time. The next thing after I left the project, I started for example, a project with blind people. Blind, quote "Autistic," brain-damaged, you name it, they had it. Kids. And their families. To try and understand well, people say schizophrenia is affecting the family rather than family affecting schizophrenia. And just to explore, here's another group of people that are blind: children born blind with retrolental fibroplasia. So, what kinds of families do they have? What's the relationship? And, I find again, that as in the first group, that if the families had an object relationship, if, if they actually saw the child, the child did relatively well. Given the handicap. But many of the families we had didn't see their blind child.

Rakow: So that would have been consistent, that with what you'd seen

Brodey: That would be consistent and I was surprised at the consistency. I was, like the story that, you know, the mother who has this intelligent child who really is quite capable of learning a lot, but doesn't speak and not the-the mother is unable, really, and the father, to relate to the particular child. They're not able to see that the child is blind,

they're treating the child as if it wasn't blind. The child who isn't- who's blind and is treated as if it isn't blind, is going to be in a mess. Because then it can't use its extra- its own gestalt. Its personal gestalt about sensing and understanding and the like. So, this was my observation anyway. And that generally seemed to be true. So I was again involved with the fact that it's obvious enough how families deal with their handicapped children relates very much to- there's this, how the family handles the child is important and also how the child stresses the family is important. Cause here, here are two kinds of families, that are both stressed intensely by the child. And you can say, "What is the ultimate cause? And ultimate cause is another thing that I'm not interested in terribly because I don't believe in that, I don't believe in ultimate cause. You know, that's the chicken and the egg question. Which comes first, the chicken or the egg? I became interested in the- what is this interaction that takes place. Ultimate cause is in the interaction not in A or B. And so then I started to work with, ah, gradually working over, I did the family work with children as the focus, and then I went on to working with cybernetics. Where the focus was, (inaudible). If you have a mother, and my last paper in official Psychiatry, was that (inaudible), information exchange (muddled) in a time delay. And that paper was the fact that if a mother responds to the child and the child responds to the mother and the mother responds to the child like ping pong. Then the child would grow up like a vegetable. Because there's no possibility of packing enough information in a ping pong relationship.

Rakow: It's never just two, anyhow, there's always more, more people getting involved! [laughter]

Brodey: Well, it doesn't have anything to do with more. It has to do with the real relationships are going on simultaneously between people, interactions, simultaneous interaction, it's not, it's not A then B.

Rakow, right, yes I understand that.

Brodey: So that's what I've continued to work on the rest of my life.

Rakow: Be nice if we could show that, and I think maybe someday, biofeedback can do that or neurofeedback can do that.

Brodey: Well, I'm- I think it has to do with something everybody knows about but nobody has language for. We have no way of measuring. And the best example is two people making love. You know, one waits for the other then there's no real love affair. They have to be doing something together.

Rakow: I want to go back to the

Brodey: laughter]

Rakow: [laughter] get out of the bedroom, here, and go back, go back to the

Brodey: You've heard all this before, (inaudible).

Rakow: Yes, (I have). [laughter] You know, I'm- I'm forming my impressions, of the place. And,

Brodey: Yeah.

Rakow: I have a sense that there was a core group, who had a, kind of a fair amount of camaraderie, of groupyness, whatever you want to call it.

Brodey: Yeah

Rakow: corps d'esprit, whatever. And then you had someone like Jordan Scher, who got into this kind of head-butting, wanting to have his own way, pushing things. So that was going on, and then he got thrown out, and then you had, the Bowen group over here that seemed to be pretty quiet. That there- they weren't- they were moving forward doing their work, but the emphasis wasn't on the fellowship, and the relationship with colleagues. But it really was more focused on that. And that, in some ways what I hear described about Bowen, is that he didn't let on what he was thinking. He didn't put it into the group, that sort of thing. That this project, kind of went on gathering its information, and trying to make some sense of it, within this administrative system, that had more of a, you know, "We're all in this together," sort of thing. That's the impressions I'm getting from reading books and talking to people. So, I don't know how accurate that is. I don't know how much people knew what you were doing - in the larger system.

Brodey: Well, you can't expect them to know. Because what we were doing didn't have a framework that was already present. They had to create their own frame- framework.

Rakow: Yes, well how do you talk about that then?

Brodey: Well, there were a lot of things we couldn't talk about. We just did.

Rakow: You said, "Go ahead." Take that a little further from me."

Brodey: Well- the- Bowen was expert at not- not throwing his- there's a statement you just made, which is- which I like very much, it actually comes from (Indians) in Guatemala, and the statement is, "No projection of expectation onto the outcome." And this, of course, is what science is supposed be.

Rakow: Right, right.

Brodey: But it's not the way science is. But science research is proving a hypothesis. But in the development of the hypothesis, it's very important to be an observer to follow things rolling. To- let them roll. And not put in your hypothesis at every moment to prove that you're right.

Rakow: Seems to me that that was the conflict that was going on.

Brodey: The conflict is an old conflict, it's a conflict between Goethe science, which is the science of observation, and Goethe was a scientist He's- his work on light was- you know, completely changed science. I mean, it was accepted as science at the same time he and Newton were these two schools.

And Goethe was the one who said, "Well, okay, we watch things, we see them happen, we put our heart into them and try and know them. And then we come to our conclusions and we try and examine our conclusions without taking the conclusions and putting them first." While Newton was making laws, and, and then he made hard proofs of his laws, and that was fine. But it doesn't have to do with biological systems.

Rakow: And that, to me, seems to be the- I don't know if conflict's the word to use,

Brodey: Well, conflict is right, it-it it's two different points of view.

Rakow: But that's the work that you were doing, and then there's this expectation within the system, that that's going to be talked about, discussed, put out there. I mean it seems to me that you could waste a lot of time doing that. Or you could stay. There was so much to watch and so much to take in and pay attention to.

Brodey: Yeah.

Rakow: And that you could stay with that or you could get into these discussions.

Brodey: Well, we did discuss- we went out to, when we felt more sure of what we were doing, then we had lots of discussion with each other. And the team of four met quite often.

Rakow: That's what I wanted to talk- that's on my list. I have my list of questions here.

Brodey: That's fine.

Rakow: You're- you're getting them all, you're getting them.

Brodey: Well, the list of four, there was a group of four, we met, a group of three met, and a group of four met.

Rakow: So, the-the three were you, Dysinger, and Bowen, and the four would be-

Brodey: The four would be and Betty.

Rakow: Betty. Would have been four? Okay.

Brodey: Four. And then Marge would come in as the head nurse. And then there was another head nurse, too, another woman under her.

Rakow: O'Flaherty?

Brodey: Yeah. So she'd come in too. And-

Rakow: And they were the research meetings, is that what they were called?

Brodey: Yeah, yeah.

Rakow: The research meetings? Okay.

Brodey: Then we, well, I think they were just the staff meetings, I mean there were staff meetings and there was, let me think, the meetings were the three of - the four of us, with Betty came together. And then, the three men, as it were, we also were very close. And then, O'Flaherty would come in, and Marge would come in. Marge was very close to us too. So Marge was really in close, she was not a theory person, her calling was how to deal with the situation. She'd bring in practical problems and we would discuss them and think about them.

Rakow: That's what- that's what I wanted to know. How- oh, I had a lot of questions, about, about these kinds of discussions. What actually were you bringing in to these discussions- what were you - It seems to me, I can read all these- there's all kinds of observations. So,

Brodey: Well we weren't- we weren't- these were not structured.

Rakow: Mmhmm.

Brodey: You didn't have an agenda. They may have had an agenda, in that Murray had some questions and I had some questions, and, Marge was wondering how to do something.

Rakow: Mmhmm.

Brodey: And Bob was sort of, ah, on the sidelines, sort of trying to organize things.

Rakow: Hmm.

Brodey: That was his, his joy, was organizing, making charts and stuff like that. And, Betty, you know, was always being practical about, "Well, what can we do, given these situations in the practice." She was also relating to the stuff outside, you know, the applications.

Rakow: Right, because she worked on another project.

Brodey: Yeah, she was- yeah. So, she was also in the outpatient business too. And they had an old relationship, (inaudible).

Rakow: Mmhmm.

Brodey: And, and those- but those- these were not very personal kinds of meetings. Cause- Murray wasn't a very personal guy.

Rakow: Well,

Brodey: In a sense- let me explain what I mean by that. It wasn't that I talked - I could talk about something that was bothering me about, about myself, or the world- I could talk about myself alright. But he's- he always sort of was a kind of psychiatrist. I mean, he, he had his focus on the business at hand. He was not telling us about his family troubles unless it had to do with as an example of something. He was not talking about this or that. He was- the whole thing was extraordinarily focused on this particular problem of these families, how do we understand schizophrenia, how do we- we were externally focused every minute.

Rakow: And that's

Brodey: This is one of Murray's great advantages, we didn't get focused on, are we focused on sometimes on the people who were making difficulties because they didn't agree with us-

Rakow: Well, I would think that- well, okay, that's a different issue, but I was thinking that, when you had this family staff meeting, that really those

Brodey: Well, that's another-

Rakow: those issues, a lot of things got talked about in that meeting, but

Brodey: They did.

Rakow: Okay, but in this, this meeting with you it would have been at a different level, of

Brodey: Oh yeah.

Rakow: trying to understand what it is you're seeing, and how- how,

Brodey: Trying to make a theory out of it.

Rakow: Yes, exactly, and the question I had is- it was about functioning, and the interest in functioning rather than the inner, inner connections of functioning between the family members. And the observation of reciprocity, that you know it looked like a domineering mother with this helpless father and the acting out kid, and then over time you would see a shift - changes in that. And to begin to put that together. So that, the question to me was, how did the idea of the family unit, which was the word used in

these papers, and the family as a single organism, how did you, how were you coming to that? Betty says that family unit idea was hers, but how, how did you come to it?

Brodey: We've probably all thought that at different times

Rakow: Well, it's in there before she got on the project, But, there had to be something in the way this was set up, and people were talking and looking at it, that it came to her also, which to me seems to be a validation. Here it's coming from someone who wasn't programmed to see it. And seeing it!

Brodey: Oh well, I think again

Rakow: I think you ca- you had it, before you got it.

Brodey: I got it (inaudible).

Rakow: Right.

Brodey: and I, I had it, because I believed that in these you know, my- my approach is more biological. And the different groups of biological entities make up different units. There's a whole theory of this for me. But, I-I consider a city an organism too

Rakow: But even those terms, I mean, just in terms of historical information. To begin using terms like the unit of study is the family, the family is a single organism.

Brodey: Well, this is, this is, Murray brought it with him from his work with the Menninger Clinic. And then and then, I came in, and I think Bob sort of, I think it was sort of a part of Murray. That's the way he was. He- Murray was his hero and he worshiped Murray. And as far as I could see and so, he was sort of, Murray's back man. And, Betty was, you know, she was trying to solve problems. Because, as a social worker, her problem was how do you deal with these people, how do you get them in, how do you deal with them so that things happen, as a social worker does. And me I'm basically a theorist. And a concepts format. And so I'm, I'm trying to look at what Murray's thinking, and clarify it and set it into a framework, which he already had, and

Rakow: Well, certainly-

Brodey: and maybe I'll add a little bit here and there, I don't

Rakow: There certainly seemed to be room for people to be themselves on this project.

Brodey: Absolutely he insisted. He wasn't pushing his ideas, he was all the way through, he was insisting

Rakow: Because There's clear differences,

Brodey: that people think for themselves.

Rakow: There's -there's similarities in the observations but there's clear differences in how those observations are put together in the theory. So, that comes out very clearly. Another one I wanted to know about was the use of the family diagram. How did that come about? Cause there's a real nice- I've typed, xeroxed some things that I thought they could put on the wall, they could frame and put on the wall and show from this project, some of the work that was done, and one three generation diagram that was done in September/October '57, when the "A" family was being discharged. So, obviously, it's been in place already. Cause it's well constructed, well-used here. But I was just wondering how that came to be, where that idea, that's it, where'd these ideas come from?

Brodey: Well, I think the multi-generational idea in Murray, I mean, to me it was something I believed in also. And Murray- I

Rakow: But putting-putting the data into a diagram

Brodey: Well, Murray had his diagram. I had always used diagrams, cause that's my- I would use, I had my (inaudible) way of diagramming families too.

Rakow: I'm going to get these out, let you have a look at them.

Brodey: Ah, Murray had his and I think Murray's, Murray's was the main, main

Rakow: I-I think this is, these were just some things that I thought they could- now, they need to be adjusted for names, take the names out.

Brodey: I had my way of doing a diagram,

Rakow: These are two- two sets of copies, this is

Brodey: Well, that's a- that's a standard diagram, but the numbers are different than I

Rakow: and then, let me see who this is.

Brodey: This is Murray's type diagram

Rakow: Yes, this would be this fellow here, and then, I guess this, would be, yeah, these two people, this is them. So, it's all, clearly, by 1957, these are being used. And I just was curious, this is just a copy, where'd, where'd these ideas come from. Now, this is earlier,

Brodey: I think they come from primarily from Murray,

Rakow: putting his,

Brodey: primarily from Murray, and from his previous work in, in the- See, when I draw diagrams, I use, I make these lines thicker and thinner, I make- I do like him and make the, you know, the squares bigger and smaller, (inaudible) lines, I used thick lines for those big relationships and thin lines for, not.

Rakow: Okay, yeah. Okay.

Brodey: But I used the- that's- But, this is Murray's way. And I think Murray-

Rakow: Yeah. But- but even the idea, of doing this, you know, where did it- I'm guessing, it came out of

Brodey: Yeah, but no, but this- these are the standard, - this type of diagram is a standard diagram.

Rakow: Now. Was it standard then?

Brodey: Course, yeah. It's always been standard.

Rakow: So, you would have used these before you came to the project?

Brodey: Yeah, anybody who's, who's doing family, you know, family genealogy, uses these types of diagrams. There's a circle, and a

Rakow: Because there's one that uses a triangle for males.

Brodey: Okay.

Rakow: I think that's Dysinger's.

Brodey: But, you know, this this- Okay. But these are- These are not unusual diagrams for people who doing genealogies.

Rakow: Okay.

Brodey: So that's not special. But when you start to- when you start writing down relationships over three generations and you're looking at them, in the relations show-relational way, if you do it, if you do a family history, I think you, you, you just naturally do these genealogies, I always have. A lot of doctors do. It's- or psychiatrists that do that. It's sort of you know, write down, how else are you going to remember? You make a diagram, and here's the father and mother and so on, so forth. And then, when you're starting out to interview a family, as a psychiatrist, I always used to make these diagrams, because then while they're telling you, I want the first interviews to be as neutral as possible, so they don't keep the people from telling me too much.

Because they don't have a relationship with me. So, I'd ask them about it, they'd start telling me about their grandmother, and I'd ask them, this is part of family history, and you'd write down the family history. And then, you know, so then, as a psychiatrist I start to adjust the family history in terms of by the way people are talking I know, this was important, this was Grandma, here, she was very important. Uncle was very important, but that that was something, you know, I developed, and other-other psychiatrists develop other ways to do it. It's not that diagram itself isn't so unusual. But seeing-

Rakow: (Did-)

Brodey: When you start to see the relationships in terms of shadows from one generation, affecting the next and the next and the next, well that was something that I would say Murray was preoccupied with. This was very important to him. It was important to me, but I wasn't this is, this is part of, Murray's, was of major significance to Murray, you know, and he deserves all the credit for that.

Rakow: It's one place, where there's actually physical evidence of the development of that concept that's part of theory, the multigenerational transmission process. You can look at these diagrams, you can look at the interview, you can see what information is contained in there, and you can see, see the, the flow, of decreased functioning, cutoff, dependence, intense dependence in the relationship. Cutoff from extended family. Lack of contact with- you can just watch that come down in these generations. So it's one place where you can actually see where that the concept was all infor- what later became a concept, was getting worked out. And explored.

Brodey: Yeah, I think, I think Murray was, was holding close to that, but the concept of genealogy and genealogical tables, that's- that's not so unusual. But, when- and, you know, the idea is not so unusual, that the, you know, as is the father, so is-his son is the grandpa,

Rakow: All people know that. Like in folklore and a,

Brodey: Everybody knows that. It's folklore. And also, any kind of psychic is- psychic kind of thinking you also are involved with, you know, the spirit of so-and-so is still active, just because he died doesn't mean he's gone away. But, you know, all that sort of stuff. But-but the-

Rakow: Now, I've only found one other diagram. On a family and I have to look at my notes whether they were an inpatient family or not. But I've only found one other. Now, you know a lot of these records got lost, because of termites.

Brodey: I didn't know that

Rakow: So, but, I don't know, 25, 30 percent of them. So, I wondered, if - if diagrams were done

Brodey: They were done regularly.

Rakow: They were. On- okay.

Brodey: Yeah. Yeah. And, this is Murray's thinking, (inaudible).

Rakow: So were they being done when you came on the project already?
Or did they begin after you started?

Brodey: No, no. They were- cause Murray,

Rakow: Okay. Cause they're later - the ones I've found are later, you're already on the project then.

Brodey: Well, I wouldn't know the answer to that question,

Rakow: Okay.

Brodey: cause I'm sure I-I certainly joined in this way of doing things because I'd been doing it right along myself. And,

Rakow: Just to, get interested in what, when was something done,

Brodey: (And), one of the reasons we got together,

Rakow: Yeah.

Brodey: we got together, is that we did share thinking.

Rakow: Can things be dated

Brodey: My assumption would be that, the multigenerational theory was there when I got there. I'm quite sure.

Rakow: Okay.

Brodey: So that didn't rise out of it. It was, ah,

Rakow: You know, I was reading, there was a book called *Should You Leave* by Peter Kramer, who wrote that *Listening to Prozac*. Apparently he had some contact with Bowen. But he was talking about this project, and it's always interesting to me what people write about the project, who know things that I have no knowledge of. He said that grandparents were hospitalized.

Brodey: I have no remembrance.

Rakow: I have no knowledge of that at all.

Brodey: I think he's just taking a concept, extending it.

Rakow: I know that it was talked about,

Brodey: Yeah, we talked about it, because it would be beautiful. But getting it to happen is something else again.

Rakow: But I had no, there's nothing in any of these records, that I found, that says that there were three generations living together, grandparents, parents, and offspring.

Brodey: I don't remember, even, grandparents coming in.

Rakow: Well I thought you would know, I thought I'll ask you! Yeah, cause you read this out there as if it's fact,

Brodey: Well, let's, when the fantasies start, every- everybody- even I extend as part of the American tradition.

Rakow: That's a program. They're doing a family database here, collecting peop-family, all the genealogy and everything. Apparently they're going to have researchers look at this, look at the patterns across time. That's- that's the software book for it. Alright, well let me- let's look at some of these things.

Rakow: This paper, I mentioned in my email, my email to you, there's no author on this, it's a- it's a lengthy paper, it's, you can probably get the ideas by the second page, he goes on and on, whoever did this. But I don't know whose work it is. It's mostly quotes from books. So I think if you just- like, the first two pages kind of give you the idea of what they're trying to accomplish, and then go to the summary. It might help, I didn't know whose work that was, and I thought maybe I'd show it to you and see what you think. If it's yours, or [silence] [papers turning over]
Doesn't give a year on it. [silence]

Brodey: [long silence] Well, [long silence] [papers turning over] [long silence] Doesn't sound like Murray here.

Rakow: No, it doesn't! And it doesn't sound like Bob Dysinger, either.

Brodey: No.

Rakow: It didn't sound like anyone! [laughter] Unless it was someone's exercise. You have to read the final paragraph, and it ends rather funny. You know, he's saying that there has to be a new way to think about this. [Papers turning over] [Long silence] So, it made me-

Brodey: It's a very fine misquote

Rakow: I know, isn't it?! I thought well, maybe it was an exercise that someone was doing. I mean, the, the humor at the end makes me then think, well, maybe it is yours or Bowen's or somebody's work.

Brodey: Well, I- I think I'd remember something like that, I'm trying to remember.

Rakow: Probably I think you would.

Brodey: I think I- and all these people were (inaudible).

Rakow: And who's, you know, whose, who would have been thinking like this? You know, when you read the summary, who is it would have been thinking like this? Usually, if a paper is in here belonging to somebody else, there's a note on it.

Brodey: Well the only one I can think of is Dysinger.

Rakow: Okay.

Brodey: Um, [silence] Cause Murray wouldn't bother himself to write such a long thing. I don't think.

Rakow: I didn't know, you know, if you, there's only that one word on it that's handwritten to know whose that is. It could be Dysinger, I think.

Brodey: Dysinger is more of this style of thinking. Because he's sort of, he's so much more, say, generously meticulous person.

Rakow: Would he have had that kind of humor, though? That it ends with?

Brodey: It's conceivable, yeah. Cause he's a very bright man, no question about that.

Rakow: Alright, okay. Okay, alright. Well, here was a- I just thought I'd show you this, cause it was in here. This was something you had written. It's in here but you identified it, your name is on it, so we don't have to, I just thought I'd show it to you.

Brodey: You know, I have a book at home, which I wrote after, I think most of it was after I'd left. And some of it, I told you about that, and never got-

Rakow: Which one is it? I- Cause we have *The Family Dance*.

Brodey: No, no, no, no, no, this is one that never got published.

Rakow: Not that one. Oh, okay, yeah.

Brodey: It's short notes, which I wrote either at the time I was there, or just after, I guess I have to look at it myself. And the one thing I remember, is, is, (inaudible).

Rakow: [laughter]

Brodey: Is schizophrenia (and spinach). And, ah, it had to do with, you know, eat your spinach. Maybe. Ah, and, you know, and then the ridiculousness of it, the logic around 'eat your spinach' is completely crazy. But it- at the same time, it's completely logical. You know, and, and the pressure on the child to 'eat your spinach,' ah, it's just- it's sort of it's all nonsensical. At the same time, you- it's- there's an internal logic which is, which is a consistent logic, which is nonsense. Or in other words, you're dealing with another reality. At least that's what I remember, I haven't looked at it, but I know it hangs around in one of my drawers somewhere. If you remind me I'll pull it out, because I would only love to get something like that in, into somewhere where it might have some meaning, rather than seeing it in a drawer.

Rakow: Scott, you're- you're free to jump in here, and say something, if you want.

Hargrove: Thank you, I was going to ask if I could,

Rakow: [laughter] You don't need my permission, go ahead.

Hargrove: You have very interesting ways of getting into non-linear thinking.

Rakow: I'm going to put this away, unless you want a copy.

Brodey: But I think non-linear thinking, is, is capable of being, of being organized in the manner in which is, I mean, using chaos theory and the like. There's complex ways of looking at things, we just have avoided them up to now, because they don't fit into the - the kind of, notational system we had to use. But now we have the computer, that asks to describe non-linear systems in a way that they are biological, we call them bio-logic systems. In [background noise] biologic and biological treatment developed.

[Background noise] and I feel like I have had a part in developing it.

But it's not, you know, I'm not the one who's the conceptualizer, so I don't, I can't very well, Ah, there's lots of facts and figures and mathematize it is fine. Except that it needs to get out to public. Because if it isn't, we don't have a public language for non-linear systems then we are really doomed to disaster. Because we have such powerful tools. And we can't control them with Newtonian logic. You can, you can say this is a finger, and this is fingers and this is the palm and the arm. But, you know, you've got a family, a family's not just the five fingers. It's an integration altogether. And, and, but then the question is at what point does the finger become the integration, this is just a semantic problem. Mere words and most people have a hard time thinking beyond words. Because it's as if the words were the thing itself rather than the words represented something. So, words are representations of names of things is quite different than the word is the thing itself. This is maps and territories.

Rakow: Is-Isn't there that great quote from Einstein, that said, "I don't need words to think." or something like that? [laughter]

Brodey: Yeah, sure. It's also the map and the territory because many people, I've just written a paper about this, which was called "The Game of Knowledge". I have a copy, I could send you a copy. And so, "The Game of Knowledge" has to do with the people who use words as fetishes in a psychiatric way. So, they're, you know, they make love to the shoe rather than to the lady. And, you know, the word becomes a fetish which is just something that you attach yourself to as if it was, the name was the thing itself.

Rakow: Yeah, well I think that's, that's, an issue with (inaudible), to, to, not get attached to the families in emotional , and what does that mean.

Brodey: Well, this is the problem. Because all of the time we were trying to, to relate, trying to name them, or trying to put numbers on them, we were trying to relate to human (inaudible). And, this is, the whole project is about relating to these people. As close as we could. And at the same time, showing them how we related to each other. That was a very active part of the therapy. And how do you describe that? And, we actually were involved with how we relate to each other as, as a team, was the most powerful means of expressing to them, that there are other means of relating to each other than they are aware of.

Rakow: Well, I-I think what you were describing earlier, would be you know, I had an idea, and I could talk about that idea, it's a good idea, someone else could incorporate that idea, into their thinking, and vice versa. And within that project as I would see that as part of what the families could want to absorb. Going on. Because what I hear described in these families is, is a, is a, I don't know if it's a competition, but to me it comes over, in in that way, of their being one, not many. You know, that one person has the point of authority not many people, having it.

Brodey: Mmhmm.

Rakow: And that there wasn't room for difference. That's what I hear you saying. There was room for difference and room, also, to incorporate good ideas from others, without - it wasn't an ownership, per se,

Brodey: No, it wasn't an ownership per se, but no, it was, Murray was, he used his method of domination, which has to do with the way psychiatrists dominate, which is, you know, which is by your stillness. Get other people talking but he would not, psychoanalyst you know, he would not, sort of, express what he thought, he never told you, you know as we discussed, with his wife, he was not one to say, "Well, you know, you did a wonderful job at this," and you, you were forced to feel what was going on in yourself. But you were forced to deal with your own conflict, much more than is normal, in a normal situation. So this camaraderie, was not a part of his, his way of life.

Rakow: And it seems to me that, that could work well in this project because all of you could be yourself and represent yourself but when you put that into the larger system, then it-it was- wasn't a good fit.

Brodey: So much was personal, so much was, was, ah, the power of, of, of feelings and emotions and logic's closely connected with emotions. These- so, we could call this a holistic project much more than most projects. But at this time there was no language for holism at all, so-

Rakow: But this- and those same characteristics,

Brodey: not even the concept was was popular. It hadn't arrived.

Rakow: And those same characteristics, though, that weren't well received in the other system, they were

Brodey: They were the things we were working on. They were the things that mattered.

Rakow: [laughter]

Brodey: So this- I-- let me tell you, to make an illustration, Nathan Ackerman, was one of the, he was in on the group of what we call, what I used to call, multiple individual family therapy, and the multiple individual family therapy people were strong because after all, they were just taking the ordinary therapy, psychoanalytic therapy particularly, and then doing multiple individual therapy, and then trying to piece it all together in your heads. And so they weren't really, and then they'd name it to the people, but they weren't really working with the family as a unit. It's quite different. So, Nathan was, you know, he had his ideas, and one time I was invited because there was a whole period, where I was going out, and Murray was going out some and I don't remember how much Bob and Betty were, but anyway, they were too, I think. They were going to psycho-psychia- psychiatric meetings, and so on and so forth psychiatric meeting and talking about family.

Rakow: Mmhmm.

Brodey: And sometimes, the opposition was such it was just that way, being in the, in the boxing ring.

Rakow: Okay, go ahead, tell more - tell me more about that.

Brodey: And it was very- Well, I mean, people would say "But it's silly. How could you ever have any confidentiality if everybody knows about everybody else, and your talking all together, how can you ever tell anything?" We said, well the important things are what you, not what you tell about sacred issues, what you what you experience together. And how much you're able to sort of make a, a relational field, where people are able to put in the things because they have trust in each other. And if they don't, it's

fine, who cares, it- we're doing family therapy, not individual therapy. So different kinds of material come up in family therapy than in individual therapy.

Rakow: But-but it's really addressing a real distinct difference, which is that it was understood that being able to say these things, one member to another, or in the presence of other members, added to the health of the family.

Brodey: Absolutely, hidden agendas were to be- the ideal was to get at the hidden agendas. And not, not to help people hide them. So this is all part of, part of the game. And, because hidden agendas, you know, they're like the informal structures of business and everything else, this is where the real business goes on. And so, we were trying to get at hidden agendas but part of doing that was keeping this kind of neutral position in terms of the family not engaging ourselves with asking them questions so much as getting them to behave, and then trying by our own behavior to relate to that in whatever way we felt, again, in hypnosis, the power of this is enormous. In hypnosis, you don't necessarily try and hypnotize somebody else, you take them along into a meditative state with you. As soon as you get into a meditative state, they come in too, they can't help it. If your, it's just the way it is. So, if you get into a state where you're sort of involved with a relationship between yourselves and the staff, and trying to think about how we relate in the best possible way to your people, then they have to think about how they relate to us.

Rakow: Well, I think about that as it led then to the reality of how they were related.

Brodey: We had to relate, our struggle to deal with how they relate then to each other, we made open.

Rakow: And-and the relationship with you didn't obscure that.

Brodey: We tried to- we tried not to obscure it, by, by commenting on them which was forbidden, strictly, to say "You are this or this." Make a diagnosis. No. We're talking about process all the time. This is what we see happening. Do we understand it right? And so, you know, we're always trying to engage in process with them.

Now, when I, when I gave, I did some family therapy for, for, two- two cameras going, and I did family therapy with one patient and then Nathan did it with another. Nathan Ackerman, to go back to that. And, Nathan was so upset with my family therapy, that here's a whole audience, he said we can't show this. Couldn't show it. Because, you know, it was so different than his own, it opened up other territories. To him, this whole thing was inconceivable.

Hargrove: Did that have to do with the focus on the relationship between, say, Ackerman and a given person in the group, and in your group, you were focused on the process of what was going on in that

Brodey: Exactly, exactly. And I was saying things, that, to him, were in support of (inaudible) How could you possibly say that. But I was saying it in relation to family. So I was, I was always working in relation to the wholeness of it. And he's relating to individual people. Well,

Rakow: I think that's such a hard idea to think of. Hard to grasp

Brodey: Well, it's hard because

Rakow: what the difference is

Brodey: That's because nobody's willing, to, to, because it's so fundamental. That, you know, we have this dyadic world we live in. Dyadic until the non-linear world. And there's A then B, and B then A.

Hargrove: So it's back to the linear/nonlinear world.

Brodey: Really it is because,

Hargrove: It's too complicated it seems, to- what I hear you say, is, it's too complicated to try and engage a family in non-linear thinking you couldn't- there's no way you could keep up with it. It's too much.

Brodey: It's too much, it's too, ah, you know, the words become meaningless, almost immediately. And then the words are only carrying their emotional value. But you're not getting any descriptions, which you, which give any substance to the situation. Let's say, the map is not really disciplined. It's not relating to the territory. The map is sort of key words, which are relating to the emotional sort of garbage that's there. And not the- not to the- to the intense relationa- relational field. (Inaudible). So here's an intense relational field that's going on, it can be a company, can be a family, it can be all sorts of things, in can be an ecological situation.

Rakow: Mmhmm.

Brodey: And this- Gregory Bateson and I had long discussion, we spent a weekend, just the two of us working at this problem. And I was disagreeing with him. Because Gregory was, was talking about levels, it was A and B and C and D. I said that isn't the way it is in a complex system. If we are talking about ecology, it can't be in levels. Because ecology doesn't have levels. In families you can talk about levels but each level is integrated into the next. They're all weaving together and they're all affecting each other at once.

So you, you say the causality as we know it goes out the window. But when it goes out the window and we accept that, the new causality enters. New methods of thinking of causality. Circular causality, complex causality, (inaudible) logic all these things come into it, (inaudible) and then we'll open again.

And this is- these are things I spend my life. Let's go on, to, to your questions, cause otherwise we could spend all day here.

Rakow: Okay! Yeah. Um- I know [laughter] Okay. Now, this is-

Brodey: To me it gets too vague, you know.

Rakow: I don't know if you remember, I'm just trying to identify who people were, is this one, because this is a quote from a letter, following it, do you remember that name?

1:02:48

Brodey: [long silence] [papers turning over] [silence] [silence]

Rakow: That ring a bell, with you? I mean, because all the records aren't here it's hard to identify who all the families are. Now, it seems like that would be one.

Brodey: I think that is one.

Rakow: Okay.

Brodey: Um, but, wasn't one that was up in the

Rakow: An outpatient family?

Brodey: Oh, I didn't see outpatient-

Rakow: You didn't see outpatient families.

Brodey: No, and that's, again, you know, that schism, I had nothing to do with outpatient families whatsoever.

Rakow: Okay.

Brodey: And, and Murray kept the whole outpatient thing completely separate. Nobody else that I know of could keep things- I could never keep things that separate. But he could. Completely separate. So,

Rakow: But others did. Betty did, Dysinger did,

Brodey: Betty's work- I guess so, but I didn't.

Rakow: You did not, okay.

Brodey: And that was fine with me, I mean I didn't, I wasn't (inaudible).

Rakow: Okay, so, but you didn't remember that being- so that may, have not been on the project at all.

Brodey: Maybe, before I came, that's also a possibility.

Rakow: Well, that's the date, what's the date? Here's the

Brodey: It does sound familiar.

Rakow: reference I think.

Brodey: Yeah, well you know- [silence] I think I don't know the answer to the question.

Rakow: Okay. Well, there's all- there's a lot of mysteries in this, in these files, so it just one of them. Okay, so we'll just [papers being moved] leave that a question. And this name came up here, too. This was just written on a handwritten on a piece of paper. Okay.

Brodey: There may be some consultations that, that Murray had that I don't know about.

Rakow: Okay, but there- in, I think I have that file here, if you (wouldn't mind) moving those- Yeah, right here. There's, somewhere in here there's -alright, so we don't know about- I'm just trying to identify-

Brodey: What is your- What is your relationship to the (inaudible) project, you're writing notes on this or (something else)?

Hargrove: [inaudible]

Rakow: Yeah, he's just-- he has no relationship

Hargrove: [inaudible]

Hargrove: small town) I appreciate you-

Brodey: Well that's fine.

Rakow: He's doing a sabbatical,

Brodey: Well that's fine.

Rakow: sabbatical here

Brodey: I just need to check cause I, you know, part of me says, you know, (what's going on and)

Hargrove: Well, I (wouldn't) be here if I wasn't intensely interested in what you all are talking about.

Brodey: Yeah, that's fine.

[end of the first audio file]