

RUTGERS, THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW JERSEY

NEW BRUNSWICK

AN INTERVIEW WITH MARTIN KLING

FOR THE

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INTERVIEW CONDUCTED BY

SHAUN ILLINGWORTH

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TRANSCRIPT BY

SHAUN ILLINGWORTH

Shaun Illingworth: This begins an interview with Dr. Martin Kling in East Brunswick, New Jersey, on October 4, 2012, with Shaun Illingworth. Also in attendance is...

Roslyn Kling: Roslyn.

SI: His wife, Roslyn Kling. Thank you very much, both of you, for having me here today. I want to also thank on the record your daughter, Miriam, for putting us in touch. To begin, Dr. Kling, could you tell me where and when you were born?

Martin Kling: I was born in the Bronx, August 6, 1928, and I think I have a document of that. It's not far from my home, at Lebanon Hospital, on 1815 Longfellow Avenue. My father's birthplace was, at that time, Russia, which became Poland. The particular city was Bialystok, like the Bialystok bread. My mother was twenty years of age at that time. That's about it at the moment.

SI: What were their names?

MK: My father's name was Louis. It was Americanized. It was originally Lazar, L-A-Z-A-R, and my mother's name was Ginda, G-I-N-D-A. Before marriage, she was Ginda Rosen, R-O-S-E-N.

So, basically, I was brought up in the Bronx and went to the New York City schools, public schools, from elementary school, kindergarten through the fourth grade, and then, PS 41, the middle grades, and then, Olinville, O-L-I-N-Ville, Junior High School from the seventh to the ninth grade.

Evander Childs High School, which was a few blocks away, I chose that because it was close and had a good academic program. We had a choice of going different places, but that was a choice that I'm glad I made, in retrospect and prospect. I graduated Evander Childs High School in 1945.

The yearbook, which I was one of the co-editors of, called *The Oriole*, O-R-I-O-L-E, was published also in 1945, commemorating our graduation. It was dedicated to the life and death of Franklin Roosevelt. A memorial statement was written at the beginning (and as well as a picture of FDR) written by one of our students, co-students.

It says, "'I have come very close to God. God lived for me in the greatness that was and forever shall be,' Franklin Roosevelt. 'I've come very close to God. I have seen his eyes and the light of freedom that never dies was always there. I've come very close to God. I remember years when his smile brought sun and dried the tears of grieving children. I've come very close to God. He's not dead. I know that he has only gone away instead, our Mr. President.'" There was a very beautiful portrait of him facing the dedication to "Our Mr. President."

[Editor's Note: President Franklin D. Roosevelt died on April 12, 1945.]

SI: Can I break in with a question?

MK: Sure.

SI: How did your family feel about Franklin Roosevelt, who had been President for most of your life?

MK: Well, we all felt, during that Depression, that he helped get us out of it and was one of the most creative Presidents that ever lived. The way he worked with [British Prime Minister Winston] Churchill, easing into World War II, calculating how to get people aboard for that involvement, was a fantastic diplomacy of the best kind that I could ever think of, in terms of thinking it through and working at it right along.

So, he knew how to work with issues that were not immediately solved, but was a very creative thinker and very operationally pragmatic in terms of solving small and big problems, inching up to his big issue as needed. Willkie, who was one of the competitors at the time running for office, was nowhere near his caliber.

[Editor's Note: Republican Wendell Willkie was defeated by Franklin D. Roosevelt in the 1940 Presidential Election, but became a staunch supporter of Roosevelt's interventionist policies in support of the Allies on the eve of America's entry into World War II.]

It's no accident that he was elected going on four times, I guess, more than any other President ever. Of course, they restricted that to two terms. I don't know exactly when that happened.

SI: I think in the '50s.

MK: In the '50s, I think that was passed.

[Editor's Note: The 22nd Amendment, which set a two-term limit on the Presidency, was passed by Congress in March 1947 and ratified by the states in February 1951.]

SI: You mentioned before we started recording that your father, when he came here, was a journalist.

MK: Yes.

SI: Tell me a little bit more about your father, maybe what you know about why he came to this country, what his life was like before he came here, what he did when he first came here.

MK: That's kind of vague, because his parents died early, but he did start on his way to academia at two years of age. He remembers his father carrying him on his shoulders to, call it Hebrew school, and learning all the basic background that goes with being a Jew, not necessarily on a religious front, but on a secular issue in terms of questioning and finding answers that are not too easily solved, but recognizing that things were pretty complex and not very simple.

He shared that kind of interest when he came here to escape the ruthlessness of Europe at the time, in terms of the Communists and the Stalinists and that kind of thinking (or non-thinking). I have a vivid picture of that because I was in Poland--when, honey, exactly?--in the early '80s, when they were still behind the Iron Curtain.

I was invited there for two weeks, to what was their version of the Library of Congress. The main theme was adult literacy. Since I was pretty well-known about that around the country, around the world, I guess, they sought me out and said, "You're invited to come present your views on adult literacy."

I was the only one, except for three Scandinavian countries, that was there from outside the Iron Curtain. I saw the effects of Communism and dictatorship. One incident that stands in my mind vividly was, they presented their papers around the table and they had translators around the table, in a dozen languages or so, from all over Europe, from behind the Iron Curtain.

This was in Warsaw. We were also in a castle that was a thousand years old. If only you were a fly on the wall here, whatever was going on behind the Iron Curtain, that'd be some story, but they presented papers. Everything was the way the line went among Communists, toeing the line.

I said, "Your survey about what people read and what people had said to the interviewers was Communist-oriented." In other words, everything was just right and nothing wrong with the world. So, I questioned that publicly. I said, "I don't believe your findings." So, I raised my hand, I said, "I'd like to question the validity of your findings."

"All right, so, what does America have to say?" I said, "I don't represent America. I'm just a little, old professor from Rutgers." [laughter] So, I said, "They just told you what they want you to hear, that they read all the classic literature and all the Communist literature and everything's just hunky-dory."

So, afterwards, we got to meet different people, of course, and exchange views. Many of them spoke English, even if it was broken English, but it was intelligible. A professor from the University of Vilnius said, "Come with me. I want to talk to you about what you said." We walked out the door. There are women in the backyard of where we were meeting cultivating the ground and picking things up. Some of it was good food and some of it was not good food.

He was looking around, seeing whether anybody could hear what we were saying. He was whispering to me and walking away from the women and looking at them, see whether they were looking up or doing anything that could essentially make us vulnerable to whatever they thought about or didn't think about. He says, "Marty, you're right on the ball."

He says, "These people are brainwashed, scared as hell. Only ten percent of them are really Communists, because they have to tithe ten percent or more of their monies, whatever they make. They're investigated like the FBI. Everything is checked out before they're invited to become Communists."

That taught me kind of a lesson about what the world is like, because, if a dedicated group of gangsters get together, no matter where they are, in this country or anywhere else, or in a town or a city, they can wreak havoc with the other ninety percent, because they're not prepared and they don't have that focus. That was true of Fascism and all the rest of it, tyrannical dictators.

That's going on in the Middle East at this point. They're in power for thirty, forty years. They maintain that power by sheer force. They single out people who are not believers or want to go along. They and their family are in continuous danger or eradicated. So, that was quite an experience, the Polish experience.

SI: Had your father come to the US after the Russian Revolution, before or during World War I?

MK: Before the Revolution, but it was in the making. He was not inclined that way and he wanted a better life. Nobody else came before him from the family. I know his father fought in the Crimean War--he was drafted and almost killed--before he was born. That's all I know about him.

[Editor's Note: The Crimean War lasted from October 1853 to February 1856.]

His writing was for most of the Yiddish newspapers. He was one that went to live, so-to-speak, on the spot, wherever people were, and interviewed them to see where they were, homeless people, whatever. He wrote for all the Yiddish papers, *The Jewish Daily Forward* (he knew the founding editor) and *The Day*, *The Jewish Day*, *Der Tog*, it's called, and even the Communist paper, *The Freiheit*. He was eclectic in that sense.

[Editor's Note: Louis Miller and Abraham Cahan published the first issue of the Yiddish-language newspaper *The Forward* (*Forverts*) in April 1897.]

On his grave, he wrote, "Journalist." That's what he wanted to be, although he was also a Yiddish teacher and certified to become a Yiddish teacher, going to classes at night. We could've moved to Canada and other places where he was offered positions full-time to do this, but he turned it down, figuring that it's better where we were and doing what we were doing.

So, I always knew I was quite different, in the sense that I was a very avid reader, but not a sports guy. Kids made fun of me when I was growing up, which made me even more introverted and seeking pleasures and adventures vicariously in reading.

What happened was, when I was reading things (and here's the compensatory part of it, in terms of humanness or interaction with my peers), was, when I was reading a book, I'd come the next day and share it with the kids, my cohorts. I remember reading [Joseph A. Altsheler's] *The Star of Gettysburg* or [H. Rider Haggard's] *King Solomon's Mines*, among other things. *Star of Gettysburg* was about the Civil War here. They said, "What happened? What happened?" I says, "Tune in tomorrow, tune in tomorrow, tune in tomorrow." [laughter] So, it was a natural.

Although, I did play passive sports, in terms of who can run faster, what was called ringolevio. If you're caught, you were put in prison for a while, and then, released. You're running around, that kind of stuff.

The other game was marbles. I was an entrepreneur in the sense of--you carved out, out of a shoebox, little squares and holes. You situated yourself so many feet (ten, fifteen feet) away from the gutter. If you hit the left side of the shoebox, in that hole, you got so many marbles. We called the marbles "aggies."

That gave me an entrepreneurial edge on things, in terms of finances, in terms of worldliness, in terms of seeing how people function and how they are motivated in different ways. So, that started the thinking of psychological things that go on in people's minds or heads, in terms of where they're heading (or not heading).

The streets were the kids' streets. There were hardly any cars running by, because people didn't own many cars at that time. You're talking about--I was born in '28 and we're now in the middle '30s and early '30s. People didn't have cars at that point. They couldn't afford them and they were out of their league, but the streets were pretty isolated. I mean, they were kids' streets.

Oh, you also played baseball in the streets and you'd batter up, as a miniature baseball [game]--not a Yankee game, although I did attend a Yankee game. I saw Joe DiMaggio, which was one of the most exciting times I ever experienced, actually. I was a teenager. When the bat hit the ball, he would lope out there and know exactly where the ball would go.

He would, like a deer, go right under the ball and capture it in his glove, as if it was meant for him alone. Nobody got in his way, because he knew exactly how to negotiate that space. Of course, his whole family was involved in baseball. They were born in the Bay Area.

So, that was the kids' life on the streets and in the school.

SI: For some context, could you characterize your neighborhood, what the makeup was like, economically, culturally?

MK: Yes. It was primarily a Jewish neighborhood. Most people were first-generation. The kids were first-generation kids. Yiddish was well-known in the area and spoken. However, transitions took place even while I was there. About in junior high, some more Italians started moving in. Later on, Hispanics started moving in. Jews started moving out, to the Grand Concourse and other places in the Bronx.

It was a very safe neighborhood. One felt like one could call anybody for anything any time they needed some help. We lived in an apartment building, which was six stories high. It was very comfortable living, although there wasn't much space in the sense of room. So, somebody lived in the living room and other people [lived] there, because the income wasn't that great.

Oh, my father was also a union organizer for the International Ladies' Garment Workers.

SI: Oh, really?

MK: And he knew very well the people who were in that area. So, he was a union organizer in that sense.

In fact, a trailing part of it, in terms of tradition (I have documentation here) is, I helped organize the AAUP at Rutgers. I was one of the founding organizers of the AAUP, American Association of University Professors. I was given an award of some sort and some sort of honorarium/honor statement of my involvement in the forming of the AAUP.

My daughter is carrying that out in terms of the musicians' union on the West Coast. She's been the West Coast representative of the recording industry, of musicians.

SI: Did your father work in the factory originally? How did he get involved with the union?

MK: He did, for a while, and saw the outrageous ways in which the sweatshops, and so forth, were organized (or disorganized) in favor of whoever was running it. Of course, there was some vicious things going on in the '20s. The sweatshops, women got caught in fires. That's well documented. It was documented several times. So, he was a union organizer for the ILGW and other such related union activities. He also wrote for their papers and literature, doing that.

We're not sure how old he was. He wasn't sure either, but he died in his middle or late eighties. My mother lived to a hundred and I just turned eighty-four. So, genetically, I'm looking forward to another ten years. [laughter]

SI: Good, very good.

MK: But, I guess it's a nature-nurture issue.

SI: Do you remember him being involved in activities like marches or strikes?

MK: Oh, yes, the May Day marches on 14th Street. We marched; I also marched with him as a kid. We were active in the unions, honoring unionization going on.

So, by the way, when I was in Poland, I tried to visit where he was born and couldn't negotiate that at the time. During the day, we had these presentations, but, at night, we went to the Warsaw Concert Hall and were wined and dined as if everything was just right--but there was a continual reminder that the Communists were in charge. There was a statue of Lenin that you could see from wherever you were on the main streets of Warsaw.

There were also people trying to do black market stuff, in terms of getting American money and exchanges and all that, continually confronting you, knowing that you were an American. They could lay it on to you and say, "Help us out, we poor peasants," or whatever, "and maybe you can help us get out of here, maybe," as they would whisper to you, knowing that they might be monitored or checked out.

We got the best seats in the house and a gay time was had by all, overtly, but we knew that it was all a fixed deal and making us think or believe that things were just hunky-dory in Poland at that time. There was a reminder of this, because we landed in--I had a stopover in Germany--and then, when we landed in Poland, we were checked out for anything that we had.

We had to lay everything out. There were people with machine-guns all over the place at the airport, as if they were at war. They were continually concerned about their power and who's in charge. Of course, that was really a traumatic kind of feeling to experience.

So, I have the passport--oh, issue date was May 1980, I guess--yes, expires five years later almost. So, it was the beginning of that year. It was that year I was issued that and, shortly after, I was there in Poland.

So, where do you want to go now?

SI: I also want to ask about your mother's background, what you know about her and her background.

MK: She was a full-time Jewish mother, knew how to cook like heck and went to the market. I remember tagging along in the market. She knew exactly what to get and wouldn't settle for anything less. There were plenty of stores nearby that catered to the Jewish population, kosher foods and things that were fresh. She was always concerned about being fresh and clean and clear. She kept a very neat house.

I had two brothers, and they were entirely different than I was. I was very introverted. They were very extroverted, more of a salesman type. One became a photographer for Macy's, actually, full-time photographer for all their work. He was one of the last photographers for Macy's. The other one was a salesperson for toys and very effective and did quite well in that, made a heck of a lot more money than I did because of sales.

So, she kept us all going and was there for us all the time when we needed her and was very willing and very loving in terms of taking care of us. So, I was hardly sick, actually. I was pretty healthy. What did I have? Did I have the mumps? I had the mumps, honey.

Roslyn Kling: I wasn't there for your childhood illnesses. [laughter]

MK: Yes, but I was hardly sick. I was hardly sick. None of us were very sick at all. We were a pretty healthy group, including Mom and Pop, yes.

SI: Did she ever talk about her early life?

MK: Not really, not really. She just was a typical Jewish mother, actually, if there's such a stereotype. The home was the main activity and kept her busy all the time. We never were hungry. There's always food on the table and it was on time.

We would play down the street. She would call us when things were ready and everything was ready. Homework, we did our homework and went to sleep and slept well, but we always did our homework and kept up with school. I did quite well in school. The other two did not do that well in school, but I did very well, which brings me to graduation of high school.

The question was--we knew I was going to go to college--but where? So, I went to the *World Almanac* and looked at all the schools that were there, about a hundred or so that were listed at that time. So, I bought myself a hundred postal cards and sent away for a hundred catalogs. [laughter] I think they're still coming.

We didn't have that much money, but we made do with what we had. So, the question came down to, "Can we afford it?" I would describe ourselves as middle-middle class or maybe even lower middle class, depending on how you define it, but I didn't feel that we were low-low.

We were pretty happy with what we had and didn't look for anything expansive or expensive, because we knew how to budget and do what we had to do to survive. It's still the Depression, obviously.

Of course, that's what got Fascism going. Hitler said, "I can get you out of the Depression here--come with me." Of course, it went for the war and everybody worked for the war effort--that's how he got out of the Depression. So, he was elected and reelected, legitimately, but he was also very focused. We're talking about this ten percent thing again, surfacing from the bad guys.

So, I knew that we couldn't afford real big-time money to go to these kinds of schools. So, I looked at all the catalogs and looked at what they had and stuff. It was piled high in the living room. I was parsing through them.

I said, "Hmm, Brooklyn College seems like a good place. It's nearby. It doesn't cost very much," but, also, what caught my eye was Berkeley, University of California, Berkeley. What I reasoned is, it was a college town. I knew I had to work my way through, because we couldn't afford a lot of money. So, I said, "They probably hire college kids." It's a town of, at that time, eighty-five, ninety thousand. It's never more than a hundred thousand. I think it's still a hundred thousand now. I reasoned that I could work my way through, the tuition.

Oh, I took the exams, an eight-hour exam for Brooklyn College, by the way. Boy, they were rigorous, boy, oh, boy. They said, "You're invited to Brooklyn College. You passed our test." Berkeley, I said, "I'll just apply and see what happens," but my safety college was Brooklyn College. So, I did apply.

They accepted me, and then, there we go. So, I bought a one-way bus ticket, Greyhound bus ticket, for fifty-five dollars for five days and five nights across the country. [laughter] Of course, we stopped for layovers, take care of basic needs, but you slept on the bus.

I landed in the middle of Berkeley--where to stay? I had applied to a Berkeley men's dorm run by the University. It's called Bowles Hall, B-O-W-L-E-S, named after a guy who dedicated it to

the University and funded it. They said, "You can come. We have a place for you. You'll work here for your room and board."

I landed there and she said, "You can't stay here very long." I said, "Why?" She says, "The [US Navy's] V-8 and V-12 Program is still in operation," officers-in-training for the services. The war was still going on, winding down. This was the leftover. "So, you could stay here a couple of weeks," and I was going to do my room and board by waiting on tables or working around the hall there.

She said, "You can stay here a couple of weeks until you find a place, and then, you're on your own." So, by the way, the tuition at Berkeley was 150 dollars for out-of-state students [laughter] and twenty-some-odd dollars for medical care or services.

So, I said, "Hmm, what am I going to do now?" So, I got myself a bicycle to go around town. Berkeley has a lot of hills, too, up and down. So, it's easier to get around by bike and, also, to classes--and so, got myself a room a block away from the University Campus. The landlady had three floors in this house.

They were French Canadians. I said, "I'll work for my room. If you can give me some work to do, I'm ready to do anything you want me to do." She says, "That's good." She says, "How would you like to clean up the place every Saturday? You get a dollar an hour for eight hours. You'll clean the toilets, you'll clean the carpets--you do it all. It's all yours." So, I got my thirty-two dollars a month--it's eight dollars and I got my room for nothing.

Then, up the street was a co-op, which was founded during the Depression. If you worked three to five hours a week, you got your free food. What you did is, you cleaned up or you did the dishes or you made lunches for people who couldn't come for lunch. Depending on how many hours you worked, you got credit for it and you could end up with paying nothing or paying five or ten dollars, whatever.

So, in the end, I would have fifteen, twenty dollars extra a month to do as I wished. So, movies were twenty-five cents. [laughter] This is 1945. I could have a date with a movie going and a soda or something for fifteen, twenty cents or a cone, ice cream cone, and I was on the town.

SI: You had only just turned seventeen when you arrived, right?

MK: That is right, that is right, exactly. I was in some of the more gifted classes and stuff like that, moved along faster. So, I graduated, actually, just before my seventeenth birthday. August 6th was my birthday. So, I'd just turned seventeen.

SI: It sounds like an incredibly independent thing to do, to cross the country by yourself and set yourself up like this.

MK: I always had confidence in myself, was sort of a loner in that sense, but, also, trusted my instinct and my good judgment, and was supported [in] that by Mom and Pop, in that sense,

because I was different. I was recognized as different. Some of my teachers were quite outstanding, too, in school. They were very encouraging and very well-prepared.

That began my journey into about seven different professions, actually, because I was also a teacher, among other things, before I came to Rutgers. That's documented in several places.

SI: Before we get deeper into Berkeley, I want to ask a little bit more about your high school years and your early education, but you were going along that line anyways.

MK: Yes, sure. Yes, okay, here, wait a minute, I'm trying to get my...

SI: Your vita.

MK: Yes, my vita, yes.

SI: It says you were an elementary school teacher in Oakland.

MK: Yes. That is an interesting story. The mantra I use for that story is, "Luck and pluck seize the moment." What happened was, I majored in general psychology, and a minor in social studies, and graduated in 1949. I knew I wanted to go to graduate school, but I didn't know how I would pay for it or what I would do.

Now, Berkeley was well-known for its Psychology Department. In fact, one of the professors there, a guy named Edward Tolman, for whom a hall was named, Edward Tolman, T-O-L-M-A-N, was one of the hundred outstanding psychologists of the century, but his forte was animal psychology and comparative psychology, not human psychology.

The program was also one of the strongest in the country, if not the world, in experimental psychology, statistics and that kind of research, basic research, which always intrigued me. So, I was, at that point, twenty going on twenty-one and said, "What do I do next, and how do I go about that?"

So, my roommate, who subsequently became a professor at Syracuse, said, "Marty, you've been doing all this animal work and experimental work. You never did any work with humans to speak of." [laughter]

He said, "There's a summer session course for six weeks called 'Psychology of Reading.' There's a guy from Western Reserve University in Cleveland, Ohio, who's visiting, who's giving the course." His name was Jack Holmes, H-O-L-M-E-S. It's for teachers coming back to school, keeping up-to-date with the latest thinking and work in the field, and, also, getting reauthorized in their work, and so forth.

I said, "Boy, how am I going to pay for that summer session and all that?" So, I became a monitor. A monitor is one who checks whether you're registered for taking courses for credit. If you're not, you're not supposed to go in. There were people who were taking courses without credit just to audit them. I would get free tuition and a stipend for being a monitor on campus.

So, I said, "I'll try that, Leo," my roommate. He said, "Okay." So, I show up at class and there's sixty-some-odd people there. They're all two and three times as old as I am. [laughter] I'm the youngest guy there, and I'm not a teacher. So, I said, "This ought to be interesting."

So, he gave quizzes and this and that. At the end of two weeks, he says, "Is there a Martin Kling here?" I said, "What did I do wrong?" to myself. He said, "Come to my office." He says, "You aced the class. You did better than anybody in the class." I says, "Really?" I didn't know that. He said, "A professor at Mills College in Oakland has a son who has a reading problem. You can do your term paper on him, by applying what you're learning here to him."

So, I did. I took him on and worked with him and did very well, so forth, and so on. Then, at the end of the semester (six weeks), he says, "I just got word from Western Reserve that I can have an assistantship at the reading clinic that I'm running here. I have twenty-four hours to get somebody to do it. Otherwise, I'll lose the line and somebody else will have to get it. You'll get eight hundred dollars, a hundred dollars a month, tuition-free. You listen with a third ear [to] everything I do, everybody comes to the clinic, both kids and adults."

So, I said, "I'll think about it." I said I wanted to go to graduate school and I didn't know how I'd pay for it and stuff like that. This seems like a sweet deal. Western Reserve is a very good school and Cleveland is not far from New York, six hundred miles and stuff.

He says, "Also," he said, "there's another guy from Southern California who's also coming. You can hitch a ride with him, and [we] have a car. You'll both drive together and take all your stuff with you and stuff."

So, we had very little time to get there. I was driving two hours on and he was driving two hours off. It was my turn between twelve and two in the morning. We're in Kansas and I see something shiny in the road. I said, "Hmm, that must be some rain or some water or something." So, I slowed down.

Suddenly, the car swerved off the road, turned around a couple of times and landed on its right side up. I said, "I'm glad we're alive, but how the hell do we get out of this?" Guess what? This is not an uncommon thing in Kansas. This happens all the time. Along comes a LaSalle, one of these big, huge cars that are like wagons in their own right; he takes out a chain, attaches it to the back--what do you call it?

SI: Bumper.

MK: Bumper, pulls us up, right side up, and away we went. Boy, that was a close call.

Then, it was all that he said, yes, and I was taking courses with him and other people, advanced work at the master's level--and maybe get a master's there, while I'm at it, then, go on for the doctorate afterwards.

In the middle of the year, at the end of the semester, he gets a call from his mentor, who was the Acting Dean at the Graduate School of Education at Berkeley. He was from the Bay Area, and so was his wife, from Southern California, and his folks and his whole family was out in the Bay Area. So, he was an associate professor at Western Reserve, but all he could be offered was an advanced assistant professorship at Berkeley. They wouldn't accept him as an associate. That's tenure. That's another story, by the way, tenure.

So, he goes back. He says, "Now, you're in charge of the clinic. You're the acting director of the clinic." There were adults and kids and stuff. I was holding the bag until the end of the semester. He says, "You could rejoin me and finish your master's at Berkeley." So, Jack--I called him Jack, of course, now--went back to Berkeley. At the end of the year, I rejoined him. This is now 1950.

He was working on a research project, which I was carrying out for him--he's in charge of it--on the psychophysiology of reading, which I was well-prepared to do, because I had this experimental work behind me as an undergraduate. I was just the perfect person for that. Nobody else could deal with the instrumentation and the details of that kind of experimentation around. Very few people were in that. So, this now is June of 1950.

So, 1950, the Korean War, June 1950--I was, of course, of draft age. Jack said, "I'll write a letter to the draft board saying you're in the middle of a very basic project that could have implications for the Army and everybody else," psychophysiology, this kind of stuff. So, they wouldn't listen.

Around Thanksgiving Day, plus or minus a few days, I took a bus in Berkeley to San Francisco and was off to Fort Ord, an acronym for "Overseas Replacement Depot," at Fort Ord, California, Southern California. Well, that was quite an adventure.

SI: Did you receive your basic training in Fort Ord?

MK: Yes.

SI: Okay.

MK: It's a six-week training program, and very, very rigorous. I was in no shape at that point, [laughter] being in academia, passive physically, and [went to] climbing poles way up high and jumping down and being in a gas chamber, not being able to put your gas mask on until you were told to do that. You were in a sand hut, with sand all around you and gas all over the place, preparing for a gas attack.

Hiking two-and-a-half miles an hour with a pack, fifty pounds--I've seen guys just laying by the roadside. One guy was a funeral director, next to me, and he just passed out after a mile, couldn't take it, physically or mentally; went on bivouac, which is an encampment, sleeping in tents, taking showers with ten thousand people, with all their junk; got up at six in the morning, like the phone rings, [Dr. Kling imitates bugling], "You're in the Army now," blah, blah, blah, "Get ready, get ready, shower."

So, what I did is get ready a half-hour before everybody else made a dash for the shower and everything else, but there was another thing going on. There were bunks, about a foot-and-a-half or two between each one. When we ran in the shower, you put all your stuff on the bunk, getting ready to come out and dress. Guys were losing money. Somebody was stealing money from them. It must be somebody in there.

So, they asked me to be a ploy and they treated my money with fingerprints [highlighter]. Sure enough, some guy picked me off, who was not far from me, and his fingerprints were on his hand [money]. They got him. Now, how did he dispose of his money? There was a postal box in each bunk, in each hut, and you put it in. He mailed it to himself. He picked up his money.

Anyway, ninety-nine percent of the people that I encountered I would not call my friends in civilian life. Either they were drafted--your serial number was a "US" if you were drafted, US5605205062, or you were an "RA," Regular Army. There was a distinct divide between the Regular Army people who joined up and the draftee.

That dynamic played out for two years. That group was twenty years or out, retire, or thirty years and you're out, retired. That was the main motivation. In civilian life, they were essentially the people who are unemployed now. They were dull, normal or below that, and this was their way out, with a good retirement and stuff like that. So, it was a continual [grind].

There was fighting going on all the time. There was also regional differences between the North and the South. They're still fighting the Civil War down there. Of course, I was from the North, and then, most of them were from the South, blacks and whites, and a continual dynamic of surviving internal issues, because, in the service--and this is an ongoing issue--you need cohesion.

You have to rely on everybody, whenever. You never know what happens. So, you're continually on edge and you need to know that you can trust somebody next to you at all times. This is still an ongoing issue.

SI: This was all in Fort Ord. Were you ever sent anywhere else?

MK: This was in Fort Ord. Now, they didn't know what to do with me. They gave me a battery of tests, like they did everybody. So, I was way out there in terms of what to do with me. I became part of the US Medical Service. They called me a clinical psych technician.

So, after that, most of those guys went overseas. With me, they decided I need more training and they could use me in a more sensible way. So, they said, "You'll go down for further medical training as an aide, a psychometrician aide, down at Fort Sam Houston in Texas." So, I went down to Texas, did quite well down there.

Then, something else happened during the Korean War--frostbite, frostbite. It was December 1951 and six thousand guys came down with frostbite. They were pinned down. They said, "Boy, we've got to do something about this."

I was a PFC by this time. By the way, they offered me an officership, because I was a member of ROTC at Berkeley. It was required, two years of ROTC. They offered me a second lieutenancy and going to officer training school. I said, "No, I want to get out of here," because the second lieutenants and the first lieutenants lead the charge. I'm a survivor.

So, I turned it down, but I was promoted to a PFC because of what I had done, my test scores and all that stuff. That came very quick. So, they say, "Okay, Kling, PFC Kling, you go to Fort Knox, Kentucky." They have a civilian group of psychophysicologists and people who had PhDs in this field who were examining frostbite. The reason they chose me is, I had a lot of work with that kind of measurement.

It's called a two-point threshold. You take [an instrument] like a compass, has two prongs, and you go, "Do you feel it?" You put it on somebody's frostbitten area and you say, "Do you feel one point or two points? Even though there are two points, do you feel two points or is it one point?" You measure it in centimeters as to how far that frostbite is, because frostbite, by definition, you can't feel anything. So, they would say the wrong thing and you'd note that and make a record of it.

Then, because I was in experimental psychology, I said, "You've got to have a more systematic way of looking at this. You've got to find out where they were when this happened, what their educational level was, what their social level was, where they were, if they drank or not, were they pinned down, how long, where."

At my urging, they adopted this schedule. In doing so, I was ready. I did my mission. They developed a movie for this kind of stuff. When you get on a troopship and it takes a couple of weeks by troopship, three thousand guys, they show movies. They do all kinds of stuff to get you ready for that journey, that unknown journey.

Then, I got a thirty-day leave and, now, you're in Korea. Now, again, they didn't know what to do with me there. [laughter]

SI: This was early 1952 that you got to Korea.

MK: Yes, early '52.

SI: Okay.

MK: Now, I was there almost a year. I was sent to--first, you go to the upper part of the Peninsula of Korea, Pusan, and then, you go down to the down south on a troopship. Now, the ship cannot go to the shore, because it's too heavy. So, they send out a landing craft, mechanized, LCMs. It's a launch, which carries four hundred guys at a turn, with their equipment and everything else. They wait until the tide goes down, so [that] it can go right on the shore.

Then, I saw what happens to guys. All the guys who were big, strapping and saying, "I can do anything and I can carry on and be a big macho [man]," and all that, suddenly, I saw vomiting,

tantrums, fainting, out-and-out fear to the tenth power. I've never seen such childish, fearful behavior in my life, of the unknown that they were anticipating.

Then, we got on [land]--and this is like four in the morning--get on these troop carriers, with the round thing on top. There's no electricity there. The roads are like mud. When it rains, it turns to mud, rice paddies--this is a big rice place, Korea--and they have no electricity. The stench is killing. They have no toilets, nothing. They have candles. You see candles lit along the road. These homes, they're made out of nothing, with newspaper and old wood that they put together, cardboard. They're like the Middle Ages, 1950, Middle Ages, '51, Middle Ages.

So, we end up at the largest hospital in the world, the 14th Field Hospital, where the prisoners of war are sent, ten thousand prisoners behind barbed wire, and South Korean guards on these platforms that were twenty, thirty feet high, with searchlights circling the area to see if anybody was moving around.

What was I to do? What was I to do? They didn't know what to do with me. I was there. So, I became--still a PFC--a supply person, ordering supplies. Now, supply line is six to ten thousand miles away to the West Coast, and then, to the East Coast. While I was doing this, I found that the sergeants, and so forth, the people who were ordering these supplies, were sending "square pegs in round holes." They were ordering the wrong things.

I said, "What the hell's going on here?" because we traced who was doing what. I found that they were functionally illiterate. They were Regular Army guys who were at this position. I was just the executor of the order, just a robot doing what they said I should do. I said, "Who the hell are these guys?"

So, I wrote to the Lieutenant Colonel; (Lightbourne?) was his name. I think I have a copy of it. I said, "Something's going on here and you need to do something about it, because we don't have the things we need." So, he says, "You found out about it--you do it." [laughter]

So, okay, now, here I am [with] about twenty-five, thirty guys, all very much older than I am and outranking me like crazy. So, I said, "I've got to get these guys under control; otherwise, they'll be all over me." So, I says, "Shape up or ship out," had them right under me. They're all reading below the fourth-grade level.

As an aside, fourth grade is called "functionally illiterate." Now, there are six or seven levels of reading. There's, first, you have to have good listening, and that starts very early. If you don't have "speaking" speaking (people speaking appropriately or correctly), the kid will soon know it. When does he know it?

A cultural anthropologist did this work several decades ago with the Eskimos. He did sine waves of the patterns of speaking. Kids of six months or so (or less) say, "Wow, wow, wow." You think they're just bumbling around. Guess what? They took the sine waves of the kids while they were "Wow, wow," wow-ing and they took the sine waves of the adults and the overlap was ninety-nine percent. Even though they didn't have the exact words, the tone and the speech was almost identical.

So, the kids, this is pre-reading. Then, you have "reading readiness," and that starts with parents reading to the kid at an early age. Even though they don't read yet, they're getting ready. Then, you have kindergarten or first or second, third grade, "learning to read." Then, the fourth grade, this is where "functional illiteracy" comes, the fourth grade is learning to read on your own, independent of anybody else, tutoring, and so forth. Then, the last thing is writing. That's the most difficult.

So, these guys, these sergeants, were at the fourth or lower grade level. They were second or third grade. They were like babies, because they just didn't have, not the brain power, but the exposure necessary to function. I also did a readability analysis of the things that they were supposed to do. Most of it was the ninth and tenth grade.

There are readability formulas for doing that and stuff like that. My colleague at Rutgers, Ed Fry, developed a very good readability analysis, where you can find out very quickly, like with a slide rule and stuff, what the readability level is of anything, in minutes, by sampling in a certain way.

[Editor's Note: Dr. Edward Fry (1925-2010) taught at the Graduate School of Education at Rutgers University for twenty-two years.]

So, since they were sergeants and above, first sergeant, second sergeant, short of being a lieutenant, I also taught them how to supervise. I took extension courses through the Army on supervision while I was there. You have some time on your own, now and then. I was hitting the books. They called them "TM," technical manuals. Everything has a technical manual. I even helped write technical manuals, "You do this, you do that, you do that," and stuff like that.

So, I found myself a job or several jobs, and I had several classes, just keep going. Then, I was discharged at the end of '52.

SI: Those classes were in addition to your supply work.

MK: No, actually, the classes were full-time, most of the time. So, I had to tutor them individually. People were laggards. I had them write home and back and forth. They were simply amazed and eating out of my hand, in terms of anything I wanted to do, they did with me.

Then, they became more and more independent, and they were just tickled to [learn]. They wanted to go on and on with me. I said, "You're on your own. You graduated." I had classes going. They were three-hour classes, which, incidentally, became a pattern for my consulting with industry and certain groups in New Jersey, over five thousand adults, here and also in California.

Interesting, a research university allows you a certain pattern of work or way to schedule your time and effort. Considering a five-day week, you have two classes to teach, whatever they are, and then, you have one day a week you can do anything you want. Then, you have office hours, and then, there's your research.

The one day that I had to myself, I did [things], but I was already aware of that and did that at Berkeley when I was--gosh, yes, it was from '54 to '63. Again, this is all a means to an end. Most of it was because I needed to make the money to stay in school. My mentor created these jobs or found out about these jobs.

So, between '54 and '63, [I worked] as a teacher and coordinator of a reading program, high school, college and adults, at the University of California Extension Division. So, I would get instructors for that and, also, teach this in San Francisco.

The program became so successful that, one time, I came to class and there weren't enough chairs to fit. So, we had to go from one room to--we went to three different rooms to have the class function as a class. Then, I had to get more instructors and I taught them.

So, fast forward, at Rutgers, I taught several [adult reading] classes, to PSE&G, including the atomic plant in Southern Jersey, the Colgate-Palmolive Research Center, and so forth, and so on. Also, the Northeast Power Grid, which monitors all the power in the Northeast, they're stationed in Princeton.

Most of these came to me directly. In other words, they said, "We want Kling to come by, because we heard somewhere that he's the guy to do this," because half or more of their day is spent reading.

I didn't call it speed reading. I called it a "reading efficiency program," because there was a lot of fads and people who didn't belong calling themselves reading people, because they were talking about superficial nonsense and things that [were] pie in the sky and no transfer of their learning. So, there's a whole thing related to that.

Many of my students who became professors themselves taught, teach people, that I taught, at Rutgers, a half a dozen different courses or more, invented some, too, on my own, but that's another story.

When I graduated, I had eleven offers, all over the country, and that's called placing power. My students also have come to very good placement powers, but that's related to who's who in the field. There's a notion that won me a big award, which is underlying the research award I got. It's called "the Invisible College." Anybody who's anybody in any particular field knows everybody and they know you.

In other words, when I went for this award, which, at that time, was 145,000 dollars, which now would be a couple million dollars, I got people from the University of Michigan, the University of California, of course, the University of Texas, Columbia University. Anybody who was anybody in the field was part of this team that I got together.

That resulted in several major publications, peer publications and, also, my own publications, which amount to some fifty peer-chosen journal [articles] in fifteen different journals. So, the biggie is *Reading Research Quarterly*. I've belonged to several organizations where you have to

pass muster to be that. I'm also listed in a couple of books. One is *Leaders in Education*, and the other one is--what's the other? What's that?

SI: *Who's Who in the East*.

MK: Yes, right. That's sort of a quick bio. Each one has a different version because of the time and date that it was done, but I could have been seven different occupations. That is because of my mentoring, because what Jack did is said, "I'm going to take you on a journey, so that you will be the number one in your field. Each journey will be a year or two and we'll pay your way through the next level."

So, it started with, of course, [being] the reading clinician at college and [in the] Adult Reading Service at Western Reserve. So, I had exposure to kids and adults in different fields--then, of course, the US Army Medical Service. [laughter]

Now, the elementary teacher [job] means that you were on the ground level where all this is applied with kids. That was quite an interesting challenge, because what happened there is, I wanted the middle grades, because that's where you're learning "reading to learn." That's the breaking point.

Oakland, California, of course, is near Berkeley, it's next door. I wanted the middle grades, fourth, fifth and sixth. So, I went to each one--fourth, fifth and sixth grade, I taught. Here's where a big, big light motif runs through my life and experience. It's called "individual differences and intraindividual differences." This is applied psychology, actually.

What happened there is, I had these thirty kids. I gave them the reading tests and stuff and got all that stuff, math and all that. By the way, all the tests that I give kids, I've taken myself. Before I give any test to anybody, I take the test myself, whether it's an intelligence test or a reading test or a spelling test, a math test, doesn't make any difference.

What happens is, the first thing I found out is, let's take a reading test, you're in the sixth grade (and this was for real), you have thirty kids. Guess what? There are a couple of kids who are reading at the second-grade level. There are a couple of kids reading at the third-grade level. There are a couple of kids reading at the fourth-grade level. There are a couple of kids reading, no, five or six, at the fifth grade, five or sixth at the sixth grade, two or three at the seventh grade, one or two at the eighth grade, one or two outliers on the ninth and maybe one at the tenth grade.

So, how do you deal with that group? That's reading. How about math?--not necessarily the same people. You could have the same kind of distribution in math. How about spelling? How about penmanship? How about science? How do you deal with that?

Now, at that time, the damn desks were screwed on to the floor. I says, "Get rid of them." I confronted the PTA. This is an upper middle class group in Oakland, California, Redwood Heights Elementary School, beautiful school, beautiful layout, near the hills of Oakland, the bottom people fairly good to go in terms of standard of living and savvy about the world.

Well, I says, "I want round tables," like this that we're sitting at right now. I said, "All right, group one, group two, group three, group four, group five, for reading; math, starting with a new group, again, one, two, three--and give yourselves a name," whatever name they wanted. Then, I had on the board, "Group one, group two, three."

Then, I had a ditto machine. We had a ditto machine then, dittos to hand out to the kids. Then, when I had a person helping me out, you call them, these people help you out, who were in training. I had them later on, as a trainee, watching, monitoring what they were doing.

Now, this actually was founded by a guy named Durrell, D-U-R-R-E-L-L, in the '30s. They already knew about that, but the literature never got further than him, even though he was well-published and well-respected and even developed his own reading test, Durrell-Sullivan Reading [Capacity] Test.

Now, the same thing applies to the distribution of intelligence, and there's a bell-shaped curve, like this. Sixty-eight percent of the population has an IQ between 90 and 110. That's normal to slightly above. Now, twenty percent are below that. Eighty-eight percent are below normal, normal or below normal. That's the population at large.

Now, when I was becoming a school psychologist, I had an epiphany there. One of the kids I assessed had an IQ of almost zero, and a moron's about 80, as an example. Now, to get to Rutgers, that's gifted, 130 to 140. Now, [Meta (Facebook) founder Mark] Zuckerberg or Einstein--they didn't have IQ tests when Einstein [laughter] was around--probably 190, Zuckerberg, maybe, 175, give you an idea. So, eighty-eight percent of the population is normal to below normal.

Now, I had a kid that was almost zero--anything you did, a slight noise, a leaf would fall, couldn't focus on anything, couldn't focus on anything. So, this bell-shaped curve is the population at large, still is. So, you have to recognize these individual, intraindividual differences and deal with that; doesn't mean talk down to them, but that's why you have special ed and that's what a school psychologist does. So, the epiphany in terms of future teaching was, "Use case studies."

So, when I had the Reading Clinic, which I was director of, we had cubicles where the kids came on Saturday mornings for three hours. We distributed them the way I'm talking about, this curve. We had all these tests and measurements on them, applying what we'd learned.

Then, at the end of their two hours with the kids, we'd have an hour seminar sharing our experiences (and professionalizing their professional development) and went around a table, "Oh, I had So-and-So. They're like this. This is what they did, this is what they didn't do--what do you think?" So, everybody would chime in and say, "Yes, maybe did you try this? Did you try that?" and so forth, and so on. That's how they learned. That was the seminar in the Reading Clinic.

So, that was the epiphany I learned when I was training as a school psychologist, but the other part was (part of that epiphany was), the person who was training me, when I tested this kid who

was practically zero, she says, "That kid has a neurological problem. You marked it wrong. It should've been wrong. Yes, that's what it is--but you know what? This kid's brain, something's wrong there, has a neurological [issue]."

I says, "How do you know? I don't see it." She says, "You marked it wrong, yes, but there's more to it." PS, the kid had a neurological problem and was sent to further work on that. That was the epiphany, in other words.

So, the question is (from a professional point of view is), how do you take a neophyte and have them become an expert? The answer is by increasing their cognitive map. "Out of the thousands," she says, she told me, "after you've taught, after you've tested five thousand kids over thirty years, you know that that's so."

Fast forward--you've heard of [Mehmet] Oz, the doctor who is on TV and at Columbia? He makes the point--not in the terms I'm talking about, but that's how I'd interpret it--that when you go for a second opinion, forty percent of the time, the second opinion, who is an expert in that field, overturns the first opinion.

Now, my interpretation is, they're cognitive maps, and how long does it take for that map to develop?--twenty years or more. Guess what? After twenty years, it goes down, because they don't go to meetings, they don't keep up, they don't talk to their colleagues--they go downward. They slide on their old knowledge, which becomes passé.

So, that's one of the things that I learned, not only then, but now. Now, the approach I take is called "sophisticated naivete." I developed four levels of thinking, in terms of how to examine a problem, which we may go into some other time. I have a handout for that, other things, but these journeys that I took [as] the elementary teacher highlighted this. I was quoted in *The New York Times* about this issue at one time.

Now, as a school psychologist, I learned about these kids that I'm talking about in great detail. Then, as a teacher in adult reading programs--that was the five thousand people that I've taught--now, how did I teach them? I have a poop sheet which tells what the nature of an adult reading program should be, embedded in some of this stuff I have here, but we may go into that later.

The way I did that, again, is, most of these people were like Bell Labs. Bell Labs was probably the most interesting, bright, brightest group I ever taught anywhere. That's the old Bell Labs. The way I taught all of them was, I got into their brains.

The way I did it, I says, "What do you have to do to keep up with your field? Give me your stuff and tell me why you are reading it and why you have to read it and what you do with it." I collected all their sheets and went from there. So, I tailormade each program for each group, no matter who they were.

I got inside their brains and made it outside, very, very transparent. They could see it, I could see it, anybody else could see it. There's a lot of research in that and I've been, in that area,

published. Another thing I did with my students is, I co-published with them all the time and I gave them first name. So, that's how we made our professorship.

Being a professor, incidentally, is the most Darwinian thing that anybody could ever get into. Nationally, only half the people (including Rutgers) that make the grade--make it from assistant to associate--only half that go from associate to full. Associate, of course, is tenured.

The contract is three years. Then, we renew it for another three years and it's up-or-out. You give them a year to poke around and find [something else]; doesn't mean that it's the end of your life. What happens is, they go to a lesser place, either a community college or a lesser school, but they survive.

Professorship is the most challenging work at a major university, because there are five levels of determination whether you go to the next stage of professorship. First of all, it's research, basic research, new ideas. Of course, you have to have some ideas to have ideas. Second is peer publications, not *hoi polloi* or the newspaper, whatever it is. It's got [to be] your peers who are doing it.

Now, I've been on those peer-related things. What happens is, there are three people, usually, looking at the manuscript. If one of the three says no, back to the drawing board or out it goes. Most of the time, they went out. From my point of view, they just didn't cut it.

Three is actually publications--not just one, but are you active? Four is presentations--where are you holding forth?--and last and least is community service. That's junior college stuff. That's state college stuff. That's not university stuff--in that order.

So, that's why I gave my students a head start in terms of publications, a peer study. They're the ones that, even though the idea may have come from me or co-jointly, still, they get the first line. It indicates who's who below; it says who's who, obviously. It says [who] you are, whoever it is.

For example, this publication [on the table in front of him], "Semantics, Syntactic, and Spatial Anticipation in Reading," it was done by a guy in the Psychology Department at Livingston. The authors are given. Here's his vita and here's my vita, so, they know who's who. This is *Reading Research Quarterly*, which is the premier. There's graduation in terms of who's who in the scheme of things and *Reading Research Quarterly* is the premier research magazine of the International Reading Association, which is the one that monitors all, publishes these things.

[Editor's Note: The article, credited to Daniel M. Wildman and Dr. Kling, appeared in Volume 14, Number 2 (1978-1979) of *Reading Research Quarterly*.]

So, that relates to professional and academic association memberships, [Dr. Kling begins referring to his vita], "American Association for the Advancement of Science, Psychology and Education Sections." You have to pass muster and give your vita and all that related to it. "American Association of University Professors," that's the AAUP, which I helped found here, "AERA," American Education Research Association--again, you have to have credentials to be invited. All these are by invitation.

"The American Psychological Association, Divisions 15 [Educational Psychology], 26 [Society for the History of Psychology] and 28 [Psychopharmacology and Substance Abuse]." They all have specialties. If people say "psychology," they think of clinical. There are about fifty different divisions in psychology. You have to pass muster for each one of them, not just that one or every one, but ones that you think you were in.

"International Conference on Research in English," there's a research division in English and I was invited to do that and became a senior member; "National Society for the Study of Education," another group, "New Jersey Reading Teachers, Phi Delta Kappa," which is the honor society in education. PDK, it's called.

"Professional Committees and Consultancies: Rutgers University, Chairman of the AAUP, '68, Secretary, 1970-72, Editor of Chapter Newsletter in '70-'72; Member of Studies of Research, International Reading Association, 1970-'73; Committee on College Reading Competencies, IRA, '73-'74; Teacher Trainers in Reading, IRA, '73-'74; Dissertation Awards Committee, IRA, '74 to '76; and Reading Resources Committee, IRA, '77-'78;" now, all these have to pass muster. You can't just say, "I ought to be that." You have to put up or shut up. That's why I'm talking about Darwinism.

"Consultancies: City Schools, New Brunswick, '72-'76," now, they invited me. I didn't go there and say [take me]. Now, that's my day-a-week type of thing. "District 26, Queens, New York City, '72-'74; Rockville Center, New York, '76; and then, State Department of Education, Right to Read, '73-'74; New York State, the Research Division, 1972."

"Publishers: John Wiley & Sons, Prentice Hall Allyn & Bacon, Random House;" this last one, I recall what it is, *Rate Tratec*, T-R-A-T-E-C. I could look it up online, but I don't think they're around anymore. "Professional Organizations: Consultant to the Editor, *Journal of Ed Psych*, '74; Consulting Editor, *Research Quarterly*, '76; Consultant to the Editor, *Adult Education*, '77," so, again, it's your peers who are the ones who finally decide whether you're that or not, and [it is] by invitation.

So, I have publications (most of them here) that were peer-related. I also have a dedication to my late mentor in a symposium that was held on his behalf at the International Reading Association, which I read to a couple hundred people who attended and from all over the country. He was also a poet. He had a heart problem which did him in. So, he died at fifty-six years of age, 1911 to 1967.

One of his poems was, "Against this God-like hoax and by a plan/Fight on with God and win a place for man." He wrote this in '36, a poem called "A Strange God." This was the paper I presented to these hundreds of people. It was a paper prepared for a symposium called "Theoretical Models in Reading, In Honor of the Late Jack Holmes, Spokesman, Department of Ed Psych, UC, Berkeley."

[Dr. Kling reads from the program], "This symposium was held in Kansas City in Missouri, May 1968, and was jointly sponsored by the International Reading Association and Youth Department of Health, Education and Welfare."

"Participants in 'The Symposium on Theoretical Models in Reading, Honoring the Late Professor Jack A. Holmes' were many of his students and other colleagues from around the country: University of Pennsylvania," this is what I'm talking about, "the Invisible College," "University of Delaware, University of Florida, University of Minnesota, Rutgers (Me), University of Georgia, University of Toronto, University of Chicago, University of Rochester." All these were former (or most of them were former) students of his. This was the actual paper I presented, which was published by the Rutgers Press.

It's been quite an adventure. So, that's some of the inside and outside of a professor at Rutgers in an era. Related to that was some things that they did for me at Rutgers. They presented me with this honor, [Dr. Kling reads from the plaque], "The Grad School of Education and Department of Learning and Teaching, Honoring Dr. Martin Kling as a Founder of the Rutgers Reading and Writing Conference, Celebrating Its Fortieth Anniversary in 2008." I presented it to several hundred people. Actually, I was a co-founder with my colleague, Ed Fry.

That's an interesting story, how I got to Rutgers, because, as I said, I had eleven job offers all over the country. The question was, "Where do I go?" So, in looking at these choices--first of all, before I had the choice, I presented a paper at Cobo Hall in Detroit. It was a paper that was based on my dissertation, which is this--here's my dissertation [on the table]. It was called "The Generalization of the Substrate of Factor Theory to General Open Systems Theory."

There were several hundred people who were in the audience. This is 1965. There's a lot of debate going on about this particular approach and a lot of challenges. After I presented my paper, I was put on the carpet, so-to-speak, in terms of defending it all over again.

At the end of the session, one of the people in the audience was a guy named Edward Fry, F-R-Y. Ed came up to me and said, "I like what I hear from you. How would you like to come to Rutgers?" I says, "Really, after all this?" He says, "Yes." Then, we started negotiating. It was a negotiation process, as much of life is negotiating, and moving and income to do that and finding a place and looking the place over and all that stuff.

I was already married and had a couple kids. He gave me everything I needed to do this, set up shop, so-to-speak. That's how it went. It's been quite a ride.

One of the things we did was to start [new programs], because one of the things that charmed me into coming to Rutgers, aside from negotiating the financial end, but the substantive part, was that he was just starting a master's and doctoral program in reading. He wanted me to be part of that group, to give it heft and direction and leadership.

He saw me as one to be a cohort with his efforts, but it also turns out that we were, at one time, in five different departments, because reading is not any one place. It could be in Ed Psych, it could be in the Department of Curriculum, it could be in Reading itself, and so forth, and so on.

It ended up (in terms of the way the field was emerging) as Department of Learning and Teaching, because it incorporated a lot of other things. I have the catalog of my era, to show you what being a chairman of a department is and how that went forward.

Being a chair is another issue. They did a study of several dozen major universities in terms of what does the chair do. First, they said that the chair really is the underpinning of any major university, because they hire, they fire, they do all these things, they play with budgets, they [get] grants.

Guess how many tasks are involved?--288 tasks that a chair is involved in. For example, when we put out an ad, we get a hundred applications. Where do you begin, who, what, where?--and so forth, like that. You have to know what's going on and what your needs are, stuff like that. That's why they say that a chair undergirds the entire university operation from the ground up, including budget.

We had a five-million-dollar budget, stuff like that, hard times, good times and stuff like that, and stuff in confidence--the door is always open and your style. People tell you things that they don't want anybody else to know, rivalries and all kinds of issues, being a leader as well as a friend and a companion and a hand-holder. Guys and gals at the professorial level have all kinds of issues beyond covering the entire scope of humanity--hence my Darwinian analogy.

SI: Do you mind if we take a break for a second?

MK: Yes.

[RECORDING PAUSED]

SI: I'll get out of your hair.

MK: Okay.

SI: This concludes the first interview with Dr. Kling. Thank you very much for having me, thank you both, and I look forward to coming back and adding to the series.

MK: Thanks.

-----END OF INTERVIEW-----

Reviewed by Shaun Illingworth 1/22/2025