

David Berliner

Video 1: "Becoming David"

AUDREY AMREIN-BEARDSLEY

First section is, "This Is Your Life." Let's just put it this way, you have had a very colorful life. This is a picture of David at his Bah Mitzvah (points to picture). Do you recognize this picture?

DAVID BERLINER

That was a long time ago.

AUDREY AMREIN-BEARDSLEY

If you remember, where were you born and raised?

DAVID BERLINER

(laughs) I remember that. That's New York City (1:00) in the Bronx, particularly around the concourse of 181st Street, for those of you who know New York. And I was Bar Mitzvahed right near by.

AUDREY AMREIN-BEARDSLEY

What is one of the fondest memories of your childhood?

DAVID BERLINER

I lived on the same street as PS-79 and spent most of my youth in the schoolyard of PS-79. It was a great neighborhood to group up in—people were nice, they watched out for you, it was safe, it felt like a small town, actually when I hear of people talk of small towns. It was a lovely place to grow up in.

AUDREY AMREIN-BEARDSLEY

What was your family like? What did your parents do?

DAVID BERLINER

My father was a clerk in a today what would look like a Walgreens or a CVS store. He took a temporary job in the crash of 1929 and stayed on it for 35 years; so, he held a job during the depression, which was more than most people did. My mother stayed home, raising my brother and (2:00) me until I was about 10 or so. Then my mom went back to work and worked as a secretary—a saleswoman. They spent their last 15 or 20 years in New York, both working, and my brother and I had moved away at that time.

AUDREY AMREIN-BEARDSLEY

Tell us about, if you can see the screen up here, tell us about this picture with your family, and tell us about this picture with your dad.

DAVID BERLINER

Okay, well, the first picture is my Bar Mitzvah. My mother, my father, and my brother is here. My parents have passed away, and they were wonderful parents. That just brings back lovely memories. Now the other picture, I was already balding, so, and I don't remember where that was. But, my father was a great guy, and he loved to travel and do things, and we all went out and did (3:00) things. I would imagine that's place like Disneyland or Knott's Berry Farm or somethinglike that.

AUDREY AMREIN-BEARDSLEY
In front of the Schlitz Truck?

DAVID BERLINER
In front of the Schlitz Truck.

AUDREY AMREIN-BEARDSLEY
So they had Schlitz at Disneyland?

DAVID BERLINER
Okay, so, it must have been a brewery (laughs). I don't know. With my dad, it could have been a brewery. Well, he looks like he's having a great time, and he often did. So, that's a nice picture.

AUDREY AMREIN-BEARDSLEY
And you had plans to become a merchant marine?

DAVID BERLINER
Oh, boy, you did your homework. I...

AUDREY AMREIN-BEARDSLEY
I'm a researcher.

DAVID BERLINER
Yes, I know I trained you (laughs). Damn good, too.

AUDREY AMREIN-BEARDSLEY
Thank you.

DAVID BERLINER
Yeah, one time I wanted to join the merchant marine. I loved the water, boats, and I found somebody who was going to hire me; and I was going to sail off to Seville, and it fell through. I was broken-hearted, and I never joined the merchant marines. But, I would rather have done that than to have gone to college or anything else. I was finishing high school (4:00), and I wanted to go out and see the world.

AUDREY AMREIN-BEARDSLEY
Well, we're glad you're here. We're glad you didn't become a merchant marine.
Okay, so to get more scoop on David, I contacted four of his closest friends picked by him. Two of whom are sitting in the front row here. But what David doesn't know is that I contacted

others—starting with his children, Beth Anne and Brett. I think you'll find it interesting to hear what they had to say about their dad.

DAVID BERLINER

Me too.

AUDREY AMREIN-BEARDSLEY

So tell us about raising BethAnn and Brett.

DAVID BERLINER

Oh, they're wonderful kids. BethAnn was a charming child until she reached 14 and then woke up a miserable human being. And at 17, she woke up a charming woman again. She was great. And Brett was very steady, very quiet. He didn't talk much as a kid. We always wondered if there was something wrong (5:00) with him because he wouldn't talk. But he talks plenty now. He's made up for it—he's a professor. He talks all day for a living. But they were lovely kids. For a while I was a single parent raising them, and that was both trying and great fun. It was nice that I didn't have to share them with anyone; but it was hard to try to hold a job, try to be active in the profession and take care of teenagers—one of whom was acting out; but it turned out well—they're lovely kids. They're both successful and doing well.

AUDREY AMREIN-BEARDSLEY

What does it mean that you're on the family business?

DAVID BERLINER

Oh, my kids make me very proud. I always think it's an honor if your kid chooses to go into the family business. There are parents who push their kids into the business, but BethAnn is working for WestEd, a place that was once called Far West Lab where I worked. They do educational research and development, and my son became a professor. He's an associate professor of French history at Morgan State University; so I have two educators, and I'm (6:00) very proud of that because I think it's as honorable a profession as one could be in.

AUDREY AMREIN-BEARDSLEY

Great. Okay, so here's what BethAnn had to say about you. "While you happily and proudly wear holey socks, bargain ties, and

DAVID BERLINER

Three for a dollar, three for ten dollars

AUDREY AMREIN-BEARDSLEY

Which you've already alluded to....And cheap glasses

DAVID BERLINER

Twelve dollars a pair

AUDREY AMREIN-BEARDSLEY

That's what she said. She said, "Can't you tell?" No. "You share your good fortune with everybody. You quack like Donald Duck."

DAVID BERLINER
(Quacks)

AUDREY AMREIN-BEARDSLEY
Oh, that's really good.

DAVID BERLINER
That's how I entertained them when they were little.

AUDREY AMREIN-BEARDSLEY
"And double over with laughter at dirty or sophomoric jokes." Who is Paul Boomer of Fart Fame?

DAVID BERLINER
Oh, my. I had a famous record that my son and I would play every now and then and double up laughing all the time. It was when the famous contest about who could make louder (7:00) expulsions of gas, and it was recorded; and Paul Boomer was the Australian challenger who came over on a cabbage boat to face his rival, Lord Windesmere. Now this is, talk about sophomoric, you know, this was the height of sophomoric records, and my son and I used to laugh at it all the time. We never stopped laughing at it.

AUDREY AMREIN-BEARDSLEY
That sure rolled off the tongue. I wasn't sure if you were going to remember.

DAVID BERLINER
Oh, how could you forget Lord Windesmere and Paul Boomer?

AUDREY AMREIN-BEARDSLEY
She says you are a tease. For years, BethAnn thought the highway signs, "Watch out for falling rocks," were about an angry man throwing rocks from the top of the road, and "Soft shoulder," meant she needed to reach over the car seat and give you a massage.

DAVID BERLINER
I told them some of the most outrageous stories, and, until they were adults, they believed them (8:00).

AUDREY AMREIN-BEARDSLEY
You let BethAnn ditch school, no wonder you had issues with 14 to 17. You let BethAnn ditch school and tag along as you collected data and taught her about time on task and interrater reliability.

DAVID BERLINER
All true. I didn't have much else to teach her on how to earn a living.

AUDREY AMREIN-BEARDSLEY

You'd mist at sappy movies and sing at the top of your lungs at Passover Seders. You have a zest for life, but are outraged by social injustice. You know a lot about a lot, and when you don't know a lot, you chime in with confidence and certainty anyways.

DAVID BERLINER

Everyone's convinced that's true.

AUDREY AMREIN-BEARDSLEY

That's coming up too. You are an "ideas guys," a big name in the small world of the Academy, who ardently and passionately works to improve teaching and learning. Brett had this to say about you, he agreed with BethAnn, "you have a zest for life whose hardy passions span food and wine, the performing arts, travel, hockey (9:00), your family, and junk mystery novels. You used to watch Johnny Carson's monologue with him, and then sit down and eat a box of...

DAVID BERLINER

Oreo cookies.

AUDREY AMREIN-BEARDSLEY

Yes.

DAVID BERLINER

At one time in my life, we would get those three rows of Oreos and a half gallon of milk, and he and I would finish the milk and the Oreos—almost every night.

AUDREY AMREIN-BEARDSLEY

Your bonding moment.

DAVID BERLINER

I can't do that anymore (laughs).

AUDREY AMREIN-BEARDSLEY

He says that his passions came from your passions, including your love of learning and teaching. He also says, you began your career as a fairly narrow social scientist.

DAVID BERLINER

That's quite true. I was trained as a behaviorist, and I had a pretty strong ideology about how to do research, and what learning theory was, and all that. Fortunately, I changed over the years, and I'm pleased with the changes.

AUDREY AMREIN-BEARDSLEY

He's pleased as well. He said the only reason he kept you as a father (10:00) in terms of professionally is because you are one of the greatest champions of public education. The very institution that took you, a "scrappy kid from the Bronx," to Stanford and beyond. You remind Brett of Nietzsche's affirmism, suggesting that maturity is when one regains the intensity of a

child playing. You have that infectious maturity in your life, your work, your advocacy, and your love for your family.

DAVID BERLINER

That's nice. I did good.

AUDREY AMREIN-BEARDSLEY

Kids are great.

DAVID BERLINER

That's wonderful.

AUDREY AMREIN-BEARDSLEY

Except for when they're toddlers.

DAVID BERLINER

Yeah, or when girls are 14.

AUDREY AMREIN-BEARDSLEY

That's true. Okay, tell us about your relationship with Kenny Bergman.

DAVID BERLINER

Oh, my gosh. In seventh grade we got to junior high, and the junior highs, the elementary schools in New York send maybe three or four elementary schools to a junior high. He came from a different elementary school, and we met in seventh grade, and within just a couple of weeks we were, you know, bosom buddies and (11:00) stayed friends right into college until I ended up leaving the city and moving west, and we were almost inseparable. We even owned a business together. I'm sure if you talked to him, that was one of the highlights, the adventures of our lives. He was studying economics at Hunter, and I was in the business program at the Baruch School, and we were both bored, and we decided we needed business experience, so we would buy a business. So we bought a bar and grill. We were 18. He turned 18 in April, and I turned 18 in March, just before him; which was legal, you could drink in New York at 18 at that time; so we bought a bar and grill. And we drank the profits up (laughs). No, we actually made money and worked together that summer and had the most fun summer you could ever have. Two young guys owning a business (12:00), and, I might add, I changed my major from business to psychology because when you sit at a bar and listen to people, you realize how crazy people are in this world; and, so, I decided to become a psychologist.

Video 2

AUDREY AMREIN-BEARDSLEY

Tell us about your relationship with Frank Sobol.

DAVID BERLINER

Ah, one of my first, one of my first courses at Stanford was in a course in social psychology of education. And it was taught by N.L. Gage, who eventually became my very dear friend, mentor, colleague, co-author, and Gage had employed some research assistants to help him with this course, and this Frank Sobol was one of them. And I turned in my first paper, and Frank wrote all over it, and I went to see him, and I said, “what are you criticizing me for? You don’t know this field.” We got in a fight. He didn’t know anything about psychology. He was criticizing what I wrote, and I resented it. And I went to Gage, who was running the course (1:00), and I said, “you can read my paper, and you can comment on it; but that jerk can’t.” And we became friends because he admitted it. He didn’t know anything about it. He was just trying to make a living. So, that was our first meeting, and we’ve been friends now for, that was 1964, so we’ve been friends ever since.

AUDREY AMREIN-BEARDSLEY

Who were the vandals, and why were they attacking?

DAVID BERLINER

Oh, gosh. He told you that story too. My first AERA paper, I was running the data sets. In those days, you built the cards to check a hypothesis, then you had more punch cards, more punch cards. You had decks of cards, and I had to program a big IBM main frame and make sure it did the hypothesis. And it was like the night before the paper was due, and we’re going to leave for New York, and my two professors had not even shown up to (2:00) know what we said in the paper. I was third author, he (points up to picture of Sobol) was fourth author, and they were the first two authors, and they had no clue what we were doing or saying, and I was angry. It was two, three in the morning, and I finally finished. I put the last numbers in, the last T-test, significant of course. I put in the numbers, and I said something like, “I’m pissed that they don’t even know what’s here.” And he said, “Yeah, we ought to get back at them.” And I said, “Yeah,” and I picked up the cards, and I flung them all around. And then he picked up the cards and flung them all around. We flung, literally, thousands of IBM cards all around and giggling and laughing and so silly; and we went home happy as could be. And the next morning, my major professor called, “David, vandals have attached us.” (laughs) That’s what that was. And I had to say, “Professor McDonald (3:00), that was me. I was letting off steam.” And he was quiet, and he goes, “Do you feel better now?” I said, “Yes, thank you.” He said, “I’ll see you at ten.” He was very kind to me. He knew what a jerk he had been, so I think he was feeling guilty too.

AUDREY AMREIN-BEARDSLEY

When I asked Frank how he would capture your essence and nature. He responded that your life represents a dedication to the wellbeing of others, and your professional work extends this concern for the wellbeing of public school students and their teachers. He also mentions your integrity, your honesty applied to your work, and what that work should mean in establishing, assessing, and revising education policy and practice.

Tell us about your relationship with Ursula Casanova.

DAVID BERLINER

I can’t tell you all of it.

AUDREY AMREIN-BEARDSLEY

Oh, PG-13.

DAVID BERLINER

Okay. I went to Washington in 1981 to spend a year to build a conference (4:00) on research on teaching to follow up to a conference that had been held six, seven, eight years before to see what strides had been made, and I went there, and I had been recently divorced, and I went to Washington. I thought, "a great place to meet women." I was down at the U of A and went to Washington. They gave me an office right across from Ursula, and I see her in the morning and say, "hi." She'd say, "hi," and somewhere around the end of September, I got there around September 1, and somewhere around the 20-something, we were at a conference together, and we went out for dinner together, and the next week we went somewhere out again, and we became lovers and been together ever since. It was wonderful. It's terrific. So, that's 27 years ago now.

AUDREY AMREIN-BEARDSLEY

And you have a blended family.

DAVID BERLINER

We have a blended family. Ursula has three children, I have two children, and we (5:00) have eight grandchildren. So, we have done very well as a blended family.

AUDREY AMREIN-BEARDSLEY

To whom you are very devoted. That came through in everybody I interviewed.

When asked how Ursula would capture your essence and nature, she responded that you reminded her of a coconut, speaking of the neurosis, you are a tough, hard-to-break shell that hides a sweet and sentimental soul. Once a tough, rough street kid, you love to joke around and possibly cry at a beautiful symphony or a powerful theatrical experience.

Speaking of Lee Shulman, tell us about your relationship with him.

DAVID BERLINER

Let's see. Lee came to Stanford, he started his career a couple years ahead of me because I was delayed raising kids and working and all of that, but we're the same age, and he came to Stanford on a sabbatical when I was maybe, maybe it was 1973, it was his first sabbatical, and I was working (6:00) at WestEd. I heard this guy was doing some papers on ed. psych., so I went to meet him. We just hit it off right away and discovered we like hockey together and took our kids to hockey games together; and our families merged as well. His wife was a charming woman, so that was 1973, and we've been together for 35 years to us, friends who have gone through our careers together. He became president of AERA, I became president of AERA, he got some honor, I got some honor. We've moved together, and it's been very nice to have a buddy like that.

AUDREY AMREIN-BEARDSLEY

He stated that over the years, his students have often commented on how encouraging it is to see two active scholars and scholarly activists, often on different sides of the same issue, remain so very affectionate, so respectful of one another's views, and so gracious and caring in their personal relationship. Tell us about the night that (7:00) you two Jewish guys tried to take on two Irish guys drink for drink.

DAVID BERLINER

(laughs) You know the end of the story is not, is not pleasant. Frank Sobol, who you saw, and the wonderful, late Dick Snow, who was a dear friend, we were in Washington D.C. together with Lee Schulman and me on some conference I can't remember, and the two Jews went out with the two Irishmen, and Snow loved the ole Bushmills. Snow and Sobol are drinking ole Bushmills, and I said, "let me have one of those," and Schulman's drinking his water and a glass of wine, and I'm drinking ole Bushmills with my Irish buddies. I staggered back to the hotel with Schulman propping me up. The Irishmen are singing bawdy Irish ballads because they do that sort of thing, and (8:00) I just had the worst hangover, and I was glad I had the Jewish guy to take me home.

AUDREY AMREIN-BEARDSLEY

He said he had to tuck you in night night.

DAVID BERLINER

That's right.

AUDREY AMREIN-BEARDSLEY

Tell us about...

DAVID BERLINER

Those are good friends, right?

AUDREY AMREIN-BEARDSLEY

Tell us about Judy's pewter wine glass.

DAVID BERLINER

Oh, boy. People have been talking. Okay. Again, we became friends, and we stayed friends as our careers moved, and Lee invited me to the research center on teacher thinking to give some talks and work with the staff. And he said, "Why don't you come the night before? We're having some people over, and you can join us for dinner, and we're having Kutchins," I think it was, or, "Hutchins for dinner." And I go, "Oh, I'm so excited." No, it was Joe Schwab, he was having Joe Schwab for dinner. I thought, "Oh, Joe Schwab, philosopher, scientist, I never met him, he's a great man, oh." I went early to get there, and I get into their house (9:00). Judy sits me down, and Judy Schulman says, "drink," and there's wine, so she gives me some wine; and I'm sitting there listening to the conversation, and it's so rich, and I'm feeling so good to be a part of it, and I look at the glass, and I go, "Wow, that's not my glass, that's crystal. That's really nice," and while no one's looking, I go (taps glass to his teeth), to hear it ring, and that sucker breaks right, right down the middle. The wine goes, and I'm looking jagged glass, and Judy looks over, and I says, "Judy, the glass broke," and she goes, "Oh, no problem, no problem! I'll get you another," and

gathers things up, goes into the kitchen and comes out with a pewter cup of wine. And I thought, “she never said a word. She never lost her cool. And she knew for this do-do, you give him something metal.” So she became my friend for life, too.

AUDREY AMREIN-BEARDSLEY

When asked how Lee would capture (10:00) your essence and nature, he responded that you are a persistent advocate. Your favorite phrase is, “Life is good.”

DAVID BERLINER

It is.

AUDREY AMREIN-BEARDSLEY

Tell us about your relationship with Gene Glass, who happens to be sitting here also tonight.

DAVID BERLINER

Well, the first time I met him, I was terrified of him. He was in his _____ stage (video 2, 10:22). I think he even had a beard to make himself look meaner. And this was during the time of his life where he was writing real good criticisms of people, and I would be terrified to say some of the things he said. But those people deserved them. But I hired one of his students. I was new in my job, and I hired one of his students, and I got to meet, and I was scared of him, and then we went to meetings together because we’re in the same rough age group. He’s a little younger he’ll tell you quickly. The same age group, and we met over (11:00) the years; and I think we developed mutual respect. But then we came here, and he was very gracious when I came here. Ursula ended up in the office next to Gene. I was still a little afraid of Gene. He’s a very powerful intellect, and when he was young, he swung. He’s much nicer, he’s mellowed beautifully, I think. I asked Ursula, I remember, I said, “You’re sitting right next to Gene. Your office is near Gene.” And she said, “Yeah.” I said, “Well, how is he?” She said, “Oh, it’s easy.” I said, “Boy, I would never think Gene would be so easy.” She said, “I taught junior high.” (laughs) So, she pegged you, Gene. And we’ve been friends and colleagues now, we’ve been together at the institution for 20, 21 years, I think; and I can’t ask for a better colleague, certainly everyone knows what a (12:00) rich intellect Gene has. And working with him on committees, working with him on postdocs, and doctoral students, and the stuff of the college, it’s, it’s been my pleasure. I might add, to show you what a friend he is of both me and the college, he heard that I had been offered the deanship, and I don’t think it was common knowledge yet, but the provost asked me to be the dean, and I kind of got cajoled into it. I said, “Yes,” and I was coming back from, I think, the office, and Gene comes up to me, and he says, “You going to take the deanship?” I said, “Yeah, I guess somebody has to, and they want me; and I guess I’ll have to do it.” And he said, “Okay, I’ll be your associate dean for research.” Now, I had no idea that I needed an associate dean for research. I had never thought, I was trying to figure out how to find my way home, and I thought, “Isn’t that nice?” (13:00) So we served four years together as two of the three or four decision-makers of the college, and you can’t ask for a better team player. So, I think the college profited a lot from his joining our team.

AUDREY AMREIN-BEARDSLEY

He actually noted that too. He said when you arrived, it was one year after he arrived, and there was no talk of a turf war because both of you were such experts in the field; and, so, he didn’t

know if you knew that he urinated on your door to make sure that you knew. To make sure that you knew that your turf was and what his turf was. And your turf was obviously just your office.

DAVID BERLINER

(laughs) He's big dog. He's big dog.

AUDREY AMREIN-BEARDSLEY

He is the big dog. When, and you're so nice to him, and then when I asked him about a funny memory, he replied, there really is nothing funny about him. He stated that your most significant accomplishment is that after some fits (14:00) and starts, and like Mark Twain and John McCain before you, you married well above your station in life. When asked how he would capture your essence and nature, he responded that you combine two contradictory qualities, passion and integrity. It is hard to be passionate about something, like the circumstances in which so many in this country are uneducated and maintain an open mind that is willing to follow where the evidence leads. You care deeply both for the plight of those less fortunate and for the cannons of scholarship that are the only sure path to a better life.

DAVID BERLINER

That's really nice. Thank you, Gene.

AUDREY AMREIN-BEARDSLEY

And that concludes our first section of "This is your Life."

Video 3: "Significant Accomplishments"

AUDREY AMREIN-BEARDSLEY

Okay, the next segment of the show is called, "Significant Accomplishments." When I asked the friends that you saw before in the previous section what they believed your most significant accomplishments were, each replied first, and foremost about your family. Having raised your two wonderful children who are extensions of you, much of the time as a single parent, and your continued devotion to your family and its togetherness. First they mentioned your significant success as a committed educator and scholar and leader in the profession. Lee Schulman said, "It is so hard to isolate one or two significant accomplishments within a long career of such remarkable distinctions." Ursula most admires your ability to move within the depths of journal-driven academia where you earned your stripes at Stanford, to your current role as public (1:00) intellectual where you apply your well-honed skills to high relevance to the skill. Gene replied, "Whose to say that your most significant professional accomplishments are not still ahead for you. Sure, we're putting you out to pasture. But Ben Franklin helped to write the Declaration of Independence at age 70. Grandma Moses didn't start to paint until she was 78. Frank Lloyd Wright created the Guggenheim when he was 80, and Picasso was still working hard at 91." But to highlight a few of your significant accomplishments to the field of education and educational research, I'd like to ask you some questions. Why were your early studies with the Far West Lab, now known as WestEd, so important?

DAVID BERLINER

Some of them were teacher training studies that showed that you could really improve teachers' classroom behavior, and you could do it using micro (2:00) teaching techniques. We could train teachers. We could get them to ask teachers that are higher order. We could get them to manage classrooms differently. We could teach them that in a week, or two, or three, and we were able to show long term effects a year later. That their behavior not only changed but stayed changed in ways we all thought were positive. So it was the application of behaviorism and new technology and good research in the sense of long-term follow-up research and training studies that showed you could probably do some interesting things in improving teaching. But, as I was doing those, teacher training materials, I also bid on my contract that became pretty well known in the country, at least at that time. And it was called the "Beginning Teacher Evaluations Study." But, by the time I actually got the money to do it, we had very few beginning teachers in the state (3:00) of California. They were going through a recession and firing teachers. So, I reconfigured the study to look at teacher allocations of time in classrooms. How do teachers spend their time? We didn't have good records of what teachers do in classrooms. This was well before the qualitative research movement, which gave us documentaries of what teachers really do; and I was convinced there was something in the resources issues that needed to be studied. So, anyway, I ended up with about five million dollars over four years; which, in 1970 something, would have been like 20 million or 30 million today. A big staff doing field work, second and fifth grade work on how, essentially on how teachers spend their time. And we identified teachers also who were better teachers and less better teachers. We don't want to say "bad," that's not right; but they were bad. (4:00) We looked at how they did things in the classrooms, and we coded all sorts of things. But the study was significant because it was the first time we could show huge differences, I think, between who might be teaching right next door to each other, in how much time they allocate for reading or for mathematics, or for in the mathematics they might spend more time on drill computation or problem solving word problems, or they might do comprehension problems in reading. We had a micro-analysis of how time was used, and it led me to develop a theory of instruction about academic learning time and how it's used; and we still think, 30 years later, that we have still the best classroom predictor of achievement at the end of the year than anyone can find, if you look at how time is spent when kids are engaged in curriculum that's (5:00) the ones you want. And it's fascinating stuff. What's interesting is it died. Nobody paid attention to it. It's gotten buried in time; but it's come back now. So I've been working with the state of Massachusetts. I'm working with the Balsz district here in Phoenix. They're all adding time, and they want to know how to use the time. In fact, today I got a call from the Washington Post asking about the use of time. And I keep telling people, "We found time matters, but time isn't an empty vessel. It has to be filled with something worthwhile; and just adding time isn't going to make a difference. But it was a very important study in it's day, died, and I think it's coming back now. Brighter people than me are trying to figure out how to use that scarce resource. If you're studying a business, you look for how they spend money and where they get money, profits (6:00) and the costs. If you look at a classroom, how you spend time is equivalent to how you spend money. It's the one resource under teachers' control, and it represents their view of the world. So it's a very important variable. It's a proxy for their philosophy, I think. Though not many other people do, but I do.

AUDREY AMREIN-BEARDSLEY

Tell us about your work with the late Nate Gage.

DAVID BERLINER

Oh, that was just a wonderful relationship. When I went to work for Far West Lab, now WestEd, he was my boss at Stanford, and a man named Walter Borg was my boss at WestEd. They were joint heads of a project, they didn't want to work on, so they hired me. And, so, I moved from my first job at UMass Amherst back to the Bay Area where I loved it and wanted to work. And Nate Gage asked me if I would work with him on a textbook he'd been (7:00) trying to write for 10 years or so; and I thought, "What a wonderful opportunity. This wonderful guy. I had known him. I had not worked closely with him at Stanford, but I had known him; and I knew he was a decent fellow. We became such good friends. He was a mentor, a brother, an uncle, a friend, and we worked together. We started working together in 1970. The book came out in 1975, and it was a hit. It was not the best selling book ever in 25 years, but it was always up one, two, or three, well two or three, the second, or the third, or fourth place. But it was used at the most prestigious institutions. It was considered the better book of the field, which made us very happy; though we wish it was used in more places. We could have been happy with more royalties too. But, anyway, it was used in nice places. It became the textbook, the leading textbook in Germany, and a whole generation of German scholars were trained with Gage and Berliner. We revised it six times (8:00), the last in 90 something, and it still sells a couple thousand copies a year. And it's now going to be revised by Sharon Nichols who was my postdoc student a few years ago, and she's going to take on the book now and bring it up to date a little because it's gotten a little rusty. But working with Gage was working with a paragon of integrity, a wonderful academic, and a really decent human being. One of the nicest things that ever happened to me.

AUDREY AMREIN-BEARDSLEY

Then came your bestselling book, *The Manufactured Crisis*. What inspired you to write this book?

DAVID BERLINER

Oh, that's an interesting tale. Gary Fenstermacher, one of my friends, a philosopher of education, was head of AACTE, the president one year, and he wanted me to give a talk on expert teachers, which I had been studying, at the convention. And I (9:00) said, "No, I want to talk about education in general because people don't know that it's really kind of good. And they're all saying nasty things." This was shortly after *A Nation at Risk* had come out. And what made me say that to Gary Fenstermacher was I had been a respondent at an APA convention to a series of papers that were all critical of the schools. And I got up and said, "I think you're all full of bologna. I go out to schools everyday. I'm in schools. I watch teachers. They're not bad. They're wonderful. They're occasionally lazy, occasionally not prepared. But day in and day out, these are wonderful people doing a really good job." And I left the podium, and Gage was in the audience. Nate Gage comes up to me and says, "David, do you have data for what you said?" And I said, "Well, the data's everywhere, Nate." And he says, "If it's everywhere, why didn't you cite it?" Good old Nate. And I said, "Yeah, yeah, yeah." That's when I got the phone call, and that's when I thought (10:00), "I'll get the data that the schools really are good." So, I got the data and gave the speech in February. I worked from September to February on the speech about how good the schools were. I met Gerry Bracey at that time. I learned of the Sandia Report at that time. A number of people were beginning to understand that the criticisms of the schools were not accurate. And, so, I gave this paper, and poor Ursula, my long-suffering wife, I often try out papers the night before I give them on her. And I tried that paper out on her, and she said,

“Your career changes tomorrow.” Very prescient. I said, “What do you mean?” You know, anyway. I gave the talk, and 500 deans jumped up and cheered, and they made Xerox copies of it, and 10,000 Xerox copies of it went out. Gene Glass published it in EPAA, one of the first papers (11:00) to be published in EPAA—in a very rough form. The word got out that, you know, the schools are doing really pretty good. And Bruce Biddle came for dinner. I had known him slightly—he was a friend, a colleague. He was visiting town. We invited him, he and his wife for dinner, and he said, “That was a terrific paper. You got to write a book on this.” I said, “I can’t write a book on it. I don’t know enough. I can’t do this.” But he said, “You can write on this.” I said, “No, I don’t know that.” He said, “I can help you.” Well, at the end of the dinner, we had agreed to write the book together. And, again, co-authors are so important. I love working with co-authors. Bruce and I hit a friendship that’s wonderful, and he’s a wonderful scholar. He knows lots of things I don’t know, and we wrote this book together, and it became a bestseller. And, then I changed my career because I became a policy person, not the, I had studied teachers, and teaching, and teacher education (12:00) until then, and at that point, I started studying education policy; and at that point, I became a pain in the but to politicians and others because they were lying. People have been very kind—they use the word “integrity.” I never think of myself as having integrity; but you shouldn’t like, you know? It’s wrong to lie, and when the Reagan administration is lying, and politicians were lying, I thought someone should tell them that they’re lying, and so I did. And I’ve sort of been doing that ever since. It’s fun to say, “You lied, you lied!” And I wrote the book with Bruce, and we sold 50,000 copies. For a book with tables and figures, that’s a remarkable achievement. In the hierarchy of things, you have to understand, our book came out the same time Colin Powell’s book came out—same publisher. They published 700,000 copies of his book and (13:00) 7,000 copies of ours. So, it was a 10 to 1 ratio. No, more than that, a 100 to 1 ratio, of what they expected the books to sell. His ended up on the remainder list. Ours sold out. So, we did good. It was nice.

AUDREY AMREIN-BEARDSLEY

It was more than nice. It was truly inspiring; and I think everyone who’s read it would agree.

Okay. Describe your work on high-stakes testing.

DAVID BERLINER

Again because my research is really about teachers and teaching, although I had not visited classrooms a lot, I have been teaching teachers, the Delta Program, my ed psych. course. I was talking to teachers about, at that time, the AIMS test, and I had colleagues here working on some criticisms of it. Colleagues on the West campus, Tom Albanese here, Mary Lee Smith was working on some issues with the testing at the time here. And these teachers were telling me stories of (14:00) testing problems, and I got interested in it. I got a little grant through the Great Lakes Center, which is an NEA affiliate. Alex Molnar got. We got some money to get you involved. I think we were able to hire you for a year.

AUDREY AMREIN-BEARDSLEY

Postdoc.

DAVID BERLINER

And, so, we got you, and a little after you, I was able to get Sharon Nichols in; and, so, the money was used very wisely to support brilliant young scholars like you and Sharon. And slowly build up the evidence that high-stakes testing was hurting people, and it was hurting our country; and what looked like a very sensible lever for causing change in the schools turns out to be a very harmful social policy. It hurt students, it corrupts teachers, and with you we did a lot of studies (15:00) showing that it's not improving test scores. It's driving kids into the GED, drop-out rates. You and I were criticized for our research. It's all been backed up and supported now. Linda McNeil and others now have found exactly what we said they'd find with the GED and SATs and all of that; so we have been vindicated. But we stirred the pot, and with Sharon Nichols we stirred the pot again. We wrote the book, *Collateral Damage*, and told the stories of the corruption in our schools as a function of high-stakes testing. And now we have a Secretary of Education who's continuing the program, and our schools are slowly getting worse, and the people who used to come here to study our schools are going to soon stop because we're going to look like the schools they've created that they don't like, and it's a very sad commentary, so I'm going to stay with that a little longer. Somebody needs to tell people, "They're lying." (16:00)

AUDREY AMREIN-BEARDSLEY

About one of my personal favorites that you've written is your article in the highly esteemed journal, *Educational Research*, titled "Educational Research: The Hardest Science of All." What is that about?

DAVID BERLINER

Well, somebody gave me the nicest compliment when the article came out. It was a student of Crombach's, and she emailed me, Ellen Mandinach, and she said, "Crombach lives." I thought, "Isn't that sweet." I realized, in a way he does. Crombach understood that the social sciences have tremendous limits, and this notion that you can run social sciences the way physical science is run, or you can do randomized clinical trials like the drug companies so and get information that perfectly sensible to use, which they can't either, but they lie. In education it's harder, and I just got outraged over the report about educational science that was written by my dear friend, Rick Shavelson (17:00), and others. That they made it sound like educational science really could be like the other sciences; and I think educational is a science, certainly, but it's not a science like other sciences. It's got problems. I, they in the field talk of the "hard sciences" like physics and the "soft sciences" like psychology and educational research, and I kind of turned it on its head and talked of the easy sciences—physics, chemistry—those are easy sciences. The results are likely to hold up in Peru and Canada. The hard sciences are when you get findings that only work in Scottsdale and may not generalize to the other side of Phoenix. That's a hard science. It's no lesser science, but it's harder to do. So I contrasted easy and hard science, and the usual ways to talk of hard and soft science. Well, there's nothing soft about educational research. It's really hard work. It's the most intellectually challenging (18:00) research field you can go in to because you can't control the variables like you ought to. Physicists have vacuums, you know. You can chart where a leaf falls in a vacuum. Well, classrooms are not vacuums. You have problems that arise, including the role of the researcher. That's why it's the hardest science of them all. Science—it's tough science. They eek out our knowledge. And we do, we do very well.

AUDREY AMREIN-BEARDSLEY

Do you have another favorite topic in educational research of which you are most proud?

DAVID BERLINER

Well, I think the *Handbook of Educational Psychology* that I co-edited with Bob Calfee is something I'm proud of because educational psychology is my home discipline and it's been very good to me, and people had not brought together what they field was. We had textbooks (19:00), but we did not have a sense of what the key areas that make up what our field are—individual differences, intelligence, motivation, social psych. in schools. We put in to that handbook the psychology of subject matter that was very popular in the 1920s and died out completely. But we kind of helped to bring back because the psychology of math and the psychology of comparative literature in the 10th grade, those are different fields. They have different epistemologies. You have to work with kids differently; and we were proud to bring back the psychology of subject matter, which Shulman had educated us on and others. And, so, we're very proud of that one. That's one I'm proud of.

AUDREY AMREIN-BEARDSLEY

Great.

DAVID BERLINER

Oh.

AUDREY AMREIN-BEARDSLEY

Another?

DAVID BERLINER

Yeah. I wrote a book with my wife called (20:00) *Putting Research Together in your School*, in which we took articles. I, we, I would describe the article in terms we thought people could understand, and then she would talk about what that means for a principal or a teacher. And the two would be packaged together. We did it as a column for *Instructor Magazine* for many years. We would get fan mail from teachers all over the world. People saying, "Thank you. You helped us." You know? We got a phone call from a teacher in Peru once. That was fun. But we packaged those for a book, *Putting Research Together in your School*. That book got us a lot of fan mail. It's nice to be able to take research and put it in the form that's useful because that's one of the big gaps in our field. We have researchers talking to other researchers and teachers talking in the teachers' lounge. You don't get the two talking together. We helped bridge that. (21:00)

AUDREY AMREIN-BEARDSLEY

Well, your work is truly inspiring, and I think everybody here today and people who will watch this show in the future would agree.

Video 4: "Philosophical Questions"

AUDREY AMREIN-BEARDSLEY

First question: What one person helped you become the person you are today?

DAVID BERLINER

Well, for the last 25 years, I think it's pretty clearly my wife, Ursula who's, those of you who know her, she's opinionated; and will tell you so and has helped me through argument and discussion and shaped my thinking a lot. But, along with her, there's not one—my teachers, my friends, my colleagues, teachers' friends. I'm social, I think you know that, and if you're social, you are working with people, co-authors in particular, Biddle, Gage. If you work people, live with people in their houses (1:00), you're asking to be shaped in a way. You're entering into relationships, and so, lots of people have shaped me. I'm very proud of the friends and colleagues and coworkers I have that had influence on me; and hopefully I had some influence on them.

AUDREY AMREIN-BEARDSLEY

What inspires you?

DAVID BERLINER

People who try to remind us of our better angels—Marian Wright Edelman, Jonathan Kozol, a whole host of, Ralph Nader when he wasn't being a jerk. But people who have tried to remind us of what we can be. That inspires me. I wish I had more of a public platform to remind people of the schools and why they're there and what a democracy needs. People like that (2:00), I just marvel that they've devoted so much of their time to the public good, and I always think our country could be much better than it is. That's what inspires me.

AUDREY AMREIN-BEARDSLEY

What do you find uninspiring?

DAVID BERLINER

No changing. It's uninspiring, it's scary not to change what you do, your work, areas of interest. What's uninspiring is doing the same thing over and over. I've kind of moved my career in different patterns, and I think that's really healthy. I don't do the same stuff I did 20, 30 years ago. I would bore myself.

AUDREY AMREIN-BEARDSLEY

What is your favorite word?

DAVID BERLINER

Giggle. I love to make little children giggle. I'm good at it (3:00). (Quacks) That's what my kids remember. It's such a funny word, giggle; but when you see teachers giggle with their kids, that's one of the descriptors, I remember, I was coding a teacher, and I said, "She giggled with her kids," and there's something about, not just laughter, but giggling. That's a wonderful word, I like it.

AUDREY AMREIN-BEARDSLEY

That's great.

DAVID BERLINER

See, you're giggling.

AUDREY AMREIN-BEARDSLEY

I'm giggling. What is your least favorite word?

DAVID BERLINER

I don't think I have one. A trite answer would be, "no" because I never want to hear, "no." But I don't have one.

AUDREY AMREIN-BEARDSLEY

Okay. So what is your favorite curse word?

DAVID BERLINER

Shall I say it?

AUDREY AMREIN-BEARDSLEY

Is he going to do it? What do you think?

DAVID BERLINER

Well you can always edit it out. I grew up in New York. (Edited) is my favorite word. And as I reached high school and hung around with black kids (4:00), it, we brought in the family. Well, it's true; so then it was (edited). But I was also in a Jewish neighborhood and that was the secular term. Inside the neighborhood, probably "schmuck." Everyone was a schmuck.

AUDREY AMREIN-BEARDSLEY

Okay. What's your second favorite curse word? I'm totally kidding. We could go on with this one for hours.

DAVID BERLINER

I do have a long list. As my wife will testify to.

AUDREY AMREIN-BEARDSLEY

Okay. What is your favorite movie, and why?

DAVID BERLINER

Oh, *Picnic at Hanging Rock*. I thought that was the most wonderful movie I had ever seen. I saw it, I usually don't see movies over, about 3 or 4 times. It was beautiful (5:00), it was mysterious, it was sexual, it was a magic movie. I thought. I can't remember the director's name. It was his first major hit; and he went on the direct lots of major movies. I just thought that was a terrific one.

AUDREY AMREIN-BEARDSLEY

We'll have to rent that. I've never heard of it.

DAVID BERLINER

Picnic at Hanging Rock—Australian movie.

AUDREY AMREIN-BEARDSLEY

What profession, other than your own, would you like to attempt?

DAVID BERLINER

When I was dean I went down to the legislature one day and met with some people who were yelling at me to put more phonics in our program, and I remember coming home and saying, "I didn't know how stupid some of them are." And I said, "I could have done this. I could have been running the state." So after that meeting, I always thought I really should get into politics; but I was a little too old, and I enjoy what I do so much. So politics (6:00) was something I should have done earlier. I think I would have been good at it and helped legislation.

AUDREY AMREIN-BEARDSLEY

As Gene was saying, it's never to late. At 85 years old, superintendent of instruction for Arizona. That would be great. What profession, other than your own, would you not like to attempt?

DAVID BERLINER

Oh, that's easy. Early in my career as a psychologist I did family counseling. I was the trainee family counselor. The woman would come in and cry, and I would cry with her. Then the man would come in and cry, and I'd cry with him; and then they'd come in together, and we'd cry together. And I thought, "I wouldn't be a family counselor for anything; and I wouldn't be a family lawyer for anything, or a psychologist working with families." That's just heartbreaking. That's maybe why their suicide rates are so high. That's tough stuff. I wouldn't do it.

AUDREY AMREIN-BEARDSLEY

If you could tell President Obama one thing, what would it be?

DAVID BERLINER

Oh, I had that thought yesterday. He's using "I" too much. "I'm fighting (7:00) this war. My Secretary of Education." It's not his, it's mine too; and I resent it. We put him in office to represent us, and he's talking like these people are his. The attorney general is mine. I gave him the right to appoint him, but he's mine; and we confirmed him through other means. I wish he would stop saying, "I." It really caught me off guard yesterday when he was talking about, "I have this war to fight. I have this banking crisis. I have this auto crisis." We have those.

AUDREY AMREIN-BEARDSLEY

If you could have dinner with anybody, dead or alive, who would it be, and why?

DAVID BERLINER

John Dewey. I, when I was a graduate student, I was supposed to read a lot of Dewey, and I didn't (8:00) And I read kind of the *Classic Comics* version of John Dewey. He's impossible to read, and I learned that quickly, and I was busy, and I didn't want to learn it. And I didn't have any respect for philosophers anyway. And about ten years ago now, 15 years, on a sabbatical, maybe two back, I spent a lot of time reading Dewey. The breadth of brilliance of the person. And he's one of those people who speaks for the common good; and he speaks for research that's sensible and well-warranted—a term I like to use. He speaks, I just think he's as brilliant

as everyone thought he was, and I should have read him sooner. But I would love to have dinner with John Dewey.

AUDREY AMREIN-BEARDSLEY

And last question: If heaven exists, what would you like to hear God say when you arrive at the Pearly Gates?

DAVID BERLINER

I hope the first thing he would (9:00) say is, “Why are you late?” Which would be nice. But it would be the same thing that I hope that might be on my epitaph or something, “You didn’t hurt many people. You helped a lot of people. Welcome.” That’s all anybody can really do.

Video 5: “Words of Wisdom”

DAVID BERLINER

It’s kind of a *Reader’s Digest* condensed version of any wisdom I might have picked up, but, which is, of course, impossible to do. But I’m a professor, so I have a lectern, so I’ll fill the time I was given. I thought I would mention a few things that were brought to mind. First, directed to young educational researchers in the audience.

First, I learned from my accidental admittance to Stanford that my college teachers and the standards they set really, really are important. Those professors create an environment, a culture, that if you want to belong to it, I really did want to belong to that culture, you end up taking on their habits of mind. I cannot tell you precisely how that changed me, but I know it did dramatically. (1:00) I began to think a little bit like them and interpret the world a little bit like them, and that made me and them very proud. So my first lesson is directed at doctoral students here: Take the best professors and hang out with the smartest people around, so when you steal their ideas, you sound really smart in the next meeting that you go to. That gives you a great reputation. And then, that gets you invited to the next meeting with smart people, so you can steal or adopt more ideas. The idea is to hang around with really smart people, the best profs you can find, and learn what they have to offer.

Second, I learned from my first experience in a classroom doing research on teaching that really was no way that the formal, experimental psychology I was trained in, could prepare me for the world of schools and classrooms, within which I wanted to do my research. I remember clearly that day when I was in the back of the classroom wearing on my face (2:00) my objective scientific look, trying to be invisible and unobtrusive, as I walked around and coded teacher and student behavior. Then suddenly, a second grader tugged at my pants leg and said, “Mr., can you help me with this?” This was an existential, as well as a methodological moment. Kid or research protocol? Kid or science? Kid or methodological purity? That was the day that I discovered that traditional research designs that worked so well in laboratories are very hard to use in classrooms. And so some kid got to do two-column subtraction a little better—I hope—as I learned to cope with the complexities of schools. So, my second lesson is: There are lots to do informative and well-warranted research while being an integral part of the scene you are

studying. There are methodologically sound ways of studying teachers and classrooms (3:00), some of which even provide you better information than if you remained an outsider to the domain you want to know about. The etic, or the outsider, and the emic, or the insider, each can yield useful and different knowledge. All research, of whatever form, has to pass the same smell test, namely, are the conclusions reached in the study worth taking seriously. Are they well-warranted? Or do they smell fishy? Same test.

My third point is also for the young faculty and budding scholars. It's concerned with what I learned about tenure. Certainly in the university you should do what you need to earn that honor, and it is an honor. But despite what the public thinks, tenure never assures job security in this economic downturn—we've all heard a little bit about that. It really ensures only that you cannot be forced out of your job easily for opening your mouth, for writing op-ed pieces, for being politically active, for disagreeing, and even being disagreeable (4:00) with powerful people—Chief State School Officers, governors, and the like. **Tenure protects your mouth—which in a democracy is critically important. There is a kind of obligation to use this gift of tenure to do work in the public interest and to speak what you consider to be the truth to power. You have been given the right to speak up and speak out and not be hassled for that, and although the system sometimes fails, it mostly works. Thank goodness.** So the lesson that I learned was not only can I speak up, I found that I was kind of obligated to speak up—that I really enjoyed the sparring. And I enjoyed taking on the honorable role of public intellectual because that is what I believe my tenure was really granted for. I'll explain that with what now is a funny story. I was called in to the governor's office when I was the dean because she didn't like some things I was doing and the college wasn't her favorite place. She lambasted me for a while, and I was properly contrite. But I eventually said, "Governor, I am a professor (5:00). That is what you pay me to do. It doesn't mean I'm right on every issue I speak up about, but it does mean I have thought about the issue, and because I am a professor for the state of Arizona, I have this obligation to go ahead and profess. I should say what I believe to be the case. She didn't really like that, but the meeting was ending; and as we left, her aide, who had been present the whole time, kind of smirked and said to me as we walked out, "Tough meeting, huh?" And I said, "Nah, I'm tenured, and she's not. I'll be around long after she's gone." And guess what? That's what tenure's for. In the areas of your expertise, speak up. It's your duty, especially after they grant you tenure.

Okay, now I'll address a few more general issues that are floating on my mind in our times. As became less of a research producer and more of a policy analyst, I have learned that a majority of the business (6:00) and the political community has misunderstood the performance of the public schools or deliberately chosen to portray public schools in a bad light. That is, in my humble opinion, most people and politics on the issues of education are either dumb or lying. Moreover, I'm afraid that sometimes people, like former Secretary of Education, Rod Paige, and former head of IBM, Lou Gerstner, are both. See what I mean about tenure? It's a wonderful gift. 130 years ago, Americans were listening to business leaders and politicians who told us that our nation is in danger because we couldn't up with our German and British rivals in the world marketplace; but we did. 100 years ago those leaders told us we couldn't educate the ignorant and genetically inferior foreign masses coming to our shores, Jews and Poles, Italians, Chinese. But somehow we managed to do just fine. As I grew up, Americans learned that Johnny couldn't read, and we were losing the educational race to the Russians (7:00), who might well bury us

someday; but they didn't. As I went to college, it was the Japanese that our business and political leaders said that we couldn't compete with. Later, Bill Bennett and the writers of *A Nation at Risk* told us that we were incapable of competing economically. We were a nation at risk. The world was beating us in every way. But, then we had the 90s, and the dot-com boom when we generated more wealth in a decade than the world had generated in a millennia. Now, according to our new Secretary of Education, Arne Duncan, and Bill Gates, we cannot keep up with the Indians and the Chinese. When should we call this extensive record of fear-mongering predictions, in which the schools are implicated, and the demise of America, for what it really is, (edited).

So, my third lesson, that I hope all of you will keep in mind, is that **an economy runs well on such things as innovative thoughts, along with copyright and patent protections; / access to (8:00) capital and trained labor; stable money supply; relatively low tax rates and relative freedom from corruption in our courts and among our police; transportation systems that are dependable; cheap energy; and so forth. The schools play little or no part in the economic success of a nation, after a reasonable level of literacy and numeracy is achieved, which it is in all the industrialized countries. We compete on other levels.**

Okay. My fifth one: The ability to change the achievement of students in our schools by means of a stronger accountability system was predicted to fail by many; and it is. It is now clear that the rate of gains on the NAEP test—our nation's best test—were greater before the *No Child Left Behind* law was passed than after it was passed. The *No Child Left Behind* law collided with Campbell's Law; and Campbell's Law, a social science law of great ubiquity, wins. Campbell's Law states that if you value any social indicator too much, like stock prices (9:00) or test scores, then the indicators, and the people that use them, both become corrupt; which is why the stock market crashed and the scores can't be trusted. After seven years patently obvious failure of strong accountability systems to improve our schools and reduce the achievement cap, gap, between poor kids of color and middle class kids who are white, should open the way to another theoretical approach, namely that various forms of social and economic inequality are the root cause of the lower achievement of the students that we worry about. I have come to understand that democracy isn't all that good at spreading the enormous wealth it has around. Because of our nation's large income differentials, that then result in housing patterns tied to income, poor children come in to schools that primarily serve poor children. School segregation by income, and therefore race, may now be at a all-time high because it's in the north as well as the south. Not only do schools who serve the poor have less money, newer (10:00) teachers, less well-prepared teachers, more teachers teaching out of field, and students who went to school well behind in language acquisition and are then lose ground in the summer, they also have children and families who are English Language Learners, have children with higher rates of Special Needs, higher rates of mental illness of both parents and children, higher numbers of hungry poorly nourished children, higher rates of ill children, particularly lead poison and asthmatic children, children who regularly witness violence in their homes, leading to brain in endocrine system changes that are not conducive to learning, children who move homes frequently, and so forth. So, my fourth lesson learned is this: **If you think the cause of low achievement and gaps in achievement are because of lazy teachers and students then perhaps a high stakes test with which to club those people into higher performance through embarrassment and sanctions is a reasonable social policy. But if you got it wrong, if you have your theory**

wrong, you mess up the schools and screw up America. That is what I think is happening now (11:00). I am convinced that greater achievement on tests might arise from our development of universal health care; hiring more counselors and nurses in schools for the poor; insuring that school breakfasts, lunches and weekend meals are actually delivered to poor kids; designing summer educational programs to stop summer losses in achievement; granting housing vouchers to reduce mobility; conducting family violence prevention workshops and parent education programs; and so forth. It's the out of school that are bigger blocks to achievement in America than it is lazy teacher and lazy students. What I've come to believe is that America needs a two-way accountability system. Schools need to certainly be accountable to the public for their performance and the public needs to be accountable for sending to our schools children who are physically and mentally healthy, ready to learn, and who live in communities (12:00) and home that are safe and nurturing. Children who do not meet these kinds of quality standards for entrance into our school simply cannot be expected to easily meet the curriculum and performance standards set by Arizona and the other states, as required by *No Child Left Behind* law. A lot more resources need to flow to the schools that serve these children. It is not unheard of, I know of two, but schools that are successful with such children over long periods of time and with different administrators are rare, unless they are skimming and dropping children, or have lots of extra resources, as do some of the most successful charters. It's hard to teach well in schools that serve the poor.

A sixth lesson I have learned is that language matters a lot in public policy. The journalist and bilingual education scholar, Jim Crawford, called my attention to how the Bush administration turned our concern for equal educational opportunity (13:00) into a concern about the achievement gap; and, in so doing, the Bush folks took our concern away from inputs to the schools—equal education opportunity—and made us think about the outputs of our schools—the achievement gap. It's as if the inequalities, the outer school factors I just mentioned, upon which so much depends, are irrelevant. What matters now is getting rid of the achievement gap between the whites and blacks, or between the Anglos and Hispanics. It's a great switch—it's brilliant because we switch from blaming ourselves, our society, because of its mal-distribution of wealth and opportunity, we switched to blaming teachers and administrators for the gap they must have caused because they're right there in the schools where the gap is showing. This is brilliant politics, but this is bad for the nation, and it continues in the current administration. The word "accountability" is a problem also—it implies counting, assigning numbers to things. But the root is probably in the phrase "to give an account." (14:00) That is to give voice to what happened. But voices are not evident in either this or the last administration; and, thus, the voices of literally millions of teachers are not heard as our government begins to reauthorize the *No Child Left Behind* act. Voice is important. People lead storied lives. They happily and naturally share their stories, their accounts, by focusing on one set of meanings associated with accountability, we silence another way of getting firsthand knowledge from people living the experience in which we are interested. On related issue, I heard the Secretary of Education the other day talk of data-driven decision making for our schools. It's a common phrase these days all around the country. You hear it all over Arizona. But wasn't General Motors and Chrysler data-driven? And look at them. Hasn't Motorola been the most data-driven company in the world, extolling us here in this college about the business methods that made Motorola famous in the 80s? Of course now they're about to lose (15:00) their cell phone business, though it was

driven by data. I think the schools need to drop the phrase, “data-driven.” It strikes me as kind of stupid actually. Schools should certainly talk of data to inform decision making; but “data-driven” is a crazy thought, suggesting that data stands someplace separate from a human mind that must make judgments about the meaning of those data. Language matters. Data may inform, but I wouldn’t let them drive me anywhere. Here is one more the new Secretary of Education is using. He talks a lot about pay-for-performance. Well it’s not that at all. He really is talking about pay-for-test score; and if he pays for test scores to go up, then they will. That’s what Campbell’s Law tells us will happen. If the Secretary wanted to evaluate teachers’ performance, then generalizability theory for the field of measurement informs us that he would probably need as many as five different accomplished teachers to go into a teacher’s classroom on, perhaps, five different occasions to judge their teacher’s performance. This is an expensive (16:00) but quite defensible way to judge and pay for performance. But the Secretary wants to pay for student test scores, not for visits by competent evaluators. And, by the way, the correlation between a teacher’s classroom mean performance on achievement tests from year to year is about .30, indicating that in any one year you could win a big bonus and the next year be brought up on charges of incompetency, and all because of the kids you draw from one year to the next. So the language in the program, as far as I can tell right now, is ludicrous, and that is not noticed in the news reports by the Secretary’s new agenda.

There are plenty of other words around that mess with our minds. “Reform” is one I’ve never liked; like in “reform schools” or “reformed schools.” Doesn’t that imply faults that must be remediated? But in the last TIMSS testing, The International Math and Science test, 20 million kids that were in schools without much poverty were only beaten by two countries. And some of our states performed right up there with (17:00) the best performing countries in the world. So improve always. Reform, well only if something is wrong, like our income tax code and our healthcare system. But not all of our schools need reform. Many are doing really well. They don’t need to be reformed, they need to be honored.

“Proficient.” That’s another word floating around, and which all our students have to be some day. But proficient is a place somewhere above average, according to the dictionary; though no one knows where above average. The law signed by most members of congress on both sides of the isle expect 100 percent of kids to be above average by year 2014. That’s amazingly stupid lawmaking. So I suggest: Watch for language traps. George Lakeoff informs us that words evoke frames that then condition our thinking. Linda Darling-Hammond, a recent candidate for Secretary of Education, was reported all across America as backed by the union (18:00). Arnie Duncan, the President’s eventual choice was reported all over as an independent reformer from Chicago. Union, bad; reformer, good. Union, status quo; reformer, change agent. Examine the words and the frames that are used by people in discussing education. As it turns out, Linda Darling-Hammond has an extensive record of reform, and Arnie Duncan looks like he’s a pawn of the Neo-Liberal forces of Chicago, the business community. Yet, it all got twisted by the language being used. **Examine the words and the frames that are used by people in discussing education, many of them are designed to evoke more than what first meets the eye. And it is so easy to get trapped.** I do expect to retire eventually, but that obligation to criticize and speak up doesn’t stop when I lose my tenured professorship. It just means that the university can distance itself from me happily, and I can fulfill my obligations as a citizen in the

same way that I tried to fulfill them as an academic. You read, you write (19:00), you think, you argue, you drink right, you eat well. Thank you.

“Audience Questions”

Audience Question:

How are you doing? Dr. Berliner, congratulations on this well-deserved reward. I was wondering, at the end of session two, you were talking about impact, and that as researchers, and graduate students, and new faculty members, we don't want to get caught up being in our offices and thinking sort of in the proverbial ivory tower; and I was wondering if you would extend on how we can take on our research and make sure that it makes an impact into the schools, into teachers' lives, and ultimately on students of today. And how that can work—from your experience, what the best way to make that happen is. Thanks.

DAVID BERLINER

Very good question. I spent most of my career believing I could make research bridge over from the research community to the teaching community or to influence policy. I'm much less sure of that (1:00) now. I think in the policy arena we know that research rarely affects policy by itself. That if you're lucky, your research gets into the hands of an advocate who will use it to clobber the opposition. So, your research might get used by ideologues, and that's okay if it gets used; but the research itself doesn't change people, it takes somebody promoting it. As far as influencing teachers, I mean, if you pick topics that you think can change the way they think about motivating students, or teaching literacy, or doing two-column addition and regrouping, whatever, then the question is, what happens after you publish your paper? There's been a huge gap for a hundred years in educational psychology and educational research, as we publish our papers, and teachers don't read the journals. Those are different worlds we live in. The William James said 107 (2:00) or eight years ago now, 110 years ago now, it will always take an intermediate inventive mind to go from the world of research to practice. And I think that's still true. We don't have the equivalent of people who keep an eye on the journals and figure out how to get that stuff into classrooms. We don't have mechanisms for professional development that help people do that very well. Little place here, little place there. But as a profession, we don't do that very well. And it seems to me that one of the weak points in our joint broad profession is that our researchers and our practice community don't work together very much, and we need intermediate, inventive minds to both funnel problems up to the researchers and to take solutions, we might actually have a useful one once in a while, back to the teachers. It's a very hard thing to do. (3:00)

Audience Question:

Hi. You said that the edic and the emic forms of research can yield useful and different knowledge. So, as a teacher and as the insider and currently working on my Master's for curriculum and instruction, how do you suggest that I become like an integral part of the research within my own classroom and my own school?

DAVID BERLINER

Well, I don't think you can avoid. So, what you're really looking for is a justification. I mean you're in the school, you're in the classroom, and you're obviously thinking of doing some systematic in the form of an inquiry about your own teaching, about your effects on students, about the relationships among teachers at your site. You're an insider writing an insider's view, and what you need to do is read the research literature on that—doing narrative work of your own, or that of your colleagues, or studying kids, doing qualitative work on kids and their families. You are the consummate insider, and your voice has been lacking until the last 20 or 30 years in educational research. People wouldn't trust (4:00) you as a scholar and as a person with valued knowledge; but that's all changed, thank goodness. Through some of the scholars here at ASU and around the country, who understand that the source of the knowledge, and John Dewey would say this, the source of the knowledge is irrelevant, the warrants behind it are important. You have knowledge about how that classrooms runs. That is valuable to us—us being the broader community, and you have to find a way to write it and present it, and you'll find places to present it, teachers' meetings, to the faculty at your district, and that sort of thing. But the edic or emic is irrelevant. There are techniques to allow you to do high quality, scholarly work as a consummate insider and to share your thoughts about that with others who will judge whether it's useful or not. (5:00)

Audience Question:

Okay. I have a question about test-based accountability. With the new President and the new congress, do you have any hopes that the *No Child Left Behind* will be altered or maybe discarded?

DAVID BERLINER

I'm very cynical thus far. The person he picked for Secretary of Education is committed to *No Child Left Behind*, though he says it needs modification. He's very committed to pay-for-performance—that means some high-stakes accountability. It would be nice if we had growth models. We might do a little better if we could actually plot growth, so we're not just measuring the social status of the kids in the school. If we had a pre/post growth or a school's growth over time, perhaps we could do better. But the psychometrics are not yet up to that. We don't have psychometrics for that. So I'm afraid we're stuck with some kind of high-stakes accountability, some form of judgment of schools. I expect they'll be a little, you and I (6:00) both remember when we had *Goals 2000*, and we were going to be number one in science and math in the world, and every kid was going to be safe. So that was all set up, and when 2000 came, they said, "Whoops, we'll keep working on it." I expect when 2014 comes, and 92 percent of all schools in America are failing, they'll say, "Well, there's something wrong with our procedure. We'll do something else." So I expect modifications; but I think high-stakes accountability systems with a lot of shaming and blaming on teachers and schools, I think that's going to be with us for quite some time.

Audience Question:

I'm an eighth grade teacher, and I think I have a lot of parents that are brainwashed on high-stakes testing; so how do I get them to buy in to the idea of 21st century learning skills, and getting the problem solving, and having them finding ideas, ways of assessing types of skills?

DAVID BERLINER

I'm not sure how you (7:00) can do it; but you and your colleagues, and your superintendent, and the district can do it if you all put your mind to it. But that means some agreement that that's worth doing. We have a lot of teachers and a lot of administrators in America—my estimate is about 30 percent teachers and administrators, based on work done here at ASU, some student work done by Wayne Wright a couple years ago—my guess is that about 30 percent of teachers and 30 percent of administrators really like high-stakes testing and *No Child Left Behind*. And that means there's a strong constituency for its maintenance, and that's a problem. But the notion of 21st century skills, we're always talking about them; but what I try to do it point out that we're developing a 19th century curriculum. We're beginning to have our schools look like Mr. Gradgrind schools in Dickens than they do like anything we envisioned the workplace of the future will be, which is a knowledge workplace where people do collaborative work and that sort of thing, certainly not a factory (8:00) model. And what we have to do is get parents to understand that the workplace of the future is going to require different skills from their kids. The problem is, every parent thinks school ought to be like school they went to, and it's very hard to get them to think of different forms of pedagogical, pedagogy. It's a tough, it's very tough. I don't always approve of what Tom Friedman says when he talks about the world is flat; in fact, I think he's sometimes a turkey, but on this issue, this issue of a different kind of workplace, and the schools' preparation for it, I think he's got it right. We've got a mismatch. So you find the books like that, and give them to the parents, and you start talking about, so what if you're kid lost one item of the AIMS, but instead did a project with other kids to see if there's pollution in downtown in Phoenix that was hurting them. What would be the grand lost, if you lost an item (9:00) versus a collaborative research project using scientific methods, collect data, and make a report to the town council, which they could learn citizenship skills, et cetera, et cetera? Most parents, when confronted with that choice, one lousy item or a project like I just described, they'll pick the project. Good luck.

Audience Question:

High-stakes testing seems to be the topic of the night. Can you talk a little about what you might view as a different process, by which you might use to measure student learning? A more valid process?

DAVID BERLINER

Well, student learning is measured everyday by their teachers. So, the first thing to do (10:00) is ask the teacher if you want to know how the kid is doing. What we have is incredible disrespect for teachers' pedagogical knowledge. That's just running through. We used to validate these tests on whether teachers agreed with the scores. Now we discount them, and say the scores are, that God gave us these scores, and teachers don't count. So the first thing to do is value the teachers' pedagogical knowledge and say, "How's the kid doing?" We have actual evidence here Ana (inaudible) and I are collecting evidence in the early grades that teachers can predict the AIMS scores, rank the order of the kids, look at the rank order of the classroom, the correlation is .9. If the correlation is .9, why are you spending a million or two every year? I can get you the information in 10 minutes for 18 cents. So we have to go back to figuring out how to value you teachers' knowledge in our society. But it's not just students' scores or information for parents, we're looking at ways to hold schools accountable, and there are other ways to do that. Other countries have inspectorates. The inspectorates are very time-honored procedure. Lots of countries that use them have scores on international tests that are very respectable. They have

people go to schools that do a one-week report on the schools, take the information back to the community and the leaders of the community (11:00), revise the report and say, “We’ll be back in a year to tell you how you’re doing.” Accreditation was supposed to do that in America. It doesn’t, it only does it every 10 years, and it’s often an old-boy and old-girl network. But these inspectorates are out there to make the schools better; so that’s another procedure. More use of formative assessments and other procedures. The procedure developed by Nebraska, I thought was among the best. Superintendent Christianson didn’t want to mess with the No Child Left Behind methods, and he said, “I’ll have my teachers make end-of-course exams, and they’ll all write the exams, and then they’ll score the exams, and then they’ll tell me what training they need to get the kids’ scores up because if kids don’t get stuff right, it’s their responsibility.” So it’s a system that would learn and get better all the time, and *No Child Left Behind* authorities, Margaret Spellings in particular, wanted to stop it. She told them she wouldn’t allow it. He got it through anyway because Nebraska is a republican state (12:00). He said, “You wouldn’t dare take away our money.” And she blinked. So they put the procedure in, but then they fired him. So now they have something more compromised. Teachers aren’t against accountability. Teachers are quite willing to give information. But teachers need to be a part of it, and the system has to be fair. There are other methods. They’re probably more labor intensive.