

Marshall, P. H., (2019) The Hoisington tape: An oral history of E. B. Titchener's last years at Cornell (1921 – 1927) [Supplemental material]. *The American Journal of Psychology*, Vol. 132, No. 4: Winter 2019

This is the complete transcript of the oral interview conducted by Dr. Joseph “Bob” Ray, and given by Dr. Louis Benjamin Hoisington, April 7, 1965. The transcript has been edited by the author only to identify certain esoteric terms, names, and most other inaudible utterances missed initially in transcription. The transcript is presented otherwise in its raw, unabridged, and unannotated form. There are a few occasions where either Ray or Hoisington demonstrate some confusion over historical details. Such lapses in detail have been left uncorrected in the transcript, and speak to the authenticity of this unrehearsed, impromptu conversation.

- 1 Dr. Ray: We're okay. Now we can start in terms of just thinking back to years past of how you got
2 interested in this field of psychology and what psychology was and we'll just kind of spin
3 the yarn of Dr. H.
- 4 Dr. H: Yeah. Well, at the University of Oregon, I intended really to major in philosophy. But
5 they had not much of a philosophy department there so I chose what I thought was next
6 best which was psychology.
- 7 Dr. Ray: Dr. H, when was that roughly?
- 8 Dr. H: Nineteen-four.
- 9 Dr. Ray: Nineteen-four?
- 10 Dr. H: No, not nineteen-four. Nineteen-eight.
- 11 Dr. Ray: Nineteen-eight?
- 12 Dr. H: Yes, nineteen-four is when I graduated from normal school. Dr. Dallenbach had just
13 come to Oregon that year from his doctor's at Cornell. And he got interested in
14 experimentation. He was doing an experiment about all I remember about it was I got
15 burned a couple of times with electrodes on my wrist. But he also took a sort of an
16 interest in me and wanted me to do an experiment. So, he helped me set up an
17 experiment in what he called eccentric projection. It was judging the length of two
18 successive rods punched against a board judged the second as equal to, longer, shorter
19 than the first. No observation of any sort, just a judgment. We come out with a beautiful
20 exemplification of Weber's law. But more than that we didn't get much I guess. That
21 was my first introduction to experimental psychology.
- 22 Dr. Ray: Was this the first course in [inaudible 00:02:12]
- 23 Dr. H: Yes, the first course.
- 24 Dr. Ray: What drew you to take this course? Why not take other courses rather than this
25 psychology?
- 26 Dr. H: Well, I had started to major in journalism. But I decided I was no journalist. I was just a
27 green country kid that had no contact with people in general, no cultural development,
28 no literary development, no anything. Just a green country kid. Though I was married at
29 the time I entered university.
- 30 Dr. H: But I took psychology as I said because I saw it as a substitute for philosophy. Then I
31 taught school in the high school for a couple years in Oregon after I graduated
32 university. Dallenbach kept track of me and he still had an interest in me for which I
33 shall ever be grateful to him. He had gone on to the University of Ohio at Columbus and
34 he got me a scholarship there, an assistantship really. And so, in the fall of [inaudible]

- 35 00:03:40] I packed up and hiked off to Columbus, Ohio. By the time I got there,
36 Dallenbach was had left. He'd gone up to Cornell.
- 37 Dr. Ray: But he'd gotten you the research assistantship there?
- 38 Dr. H: Yeah. And so, I stayed there just a semester. As I said, he'd gone to Cornell and they had
39 got a big influx of students so they needed more help up there. And he persuaded
40 Professor Titchener to take me on at Cornell. So, at the end of the first semester, I
41 moved on up to Ithaca, New York.
- 42 Dr. Ray: Did Dallenbach have his doctorate at that time?
- 43 Dr. H: Yes, he had completed the work for his doctorate at that time.
- 44 Dr. Ray: Did he take it under Titchener?
- 45 Dr. H: Yes, yes, he took his doctorate under Titchener. He worked in the field of attention.
- 46 Dr. Ray: So, you found yourself, you and your wife at Cornell.
- 47 Dr. H: Well my wife didn't come up until middle to the end of that semester. She was still in
48 Oregon. She didn't go to Columbus with me.
- 49 Dr. Ray: It's just as well because your stay was very brief there, wasn't it?
- 50 Dr. H: Yeah. And of course, I didn't get very much money. And I hadn't any money. I hadn't
51 been able to save any from teaching. Very little. So, there I was at Cornell and as every
52 graduate student soon finds out, he's supposed to participate in experimental work.
53 He's supposed to serve as observers for other people and they'll serve as observers for
54 him. There were only five major courses at Cornell in the whole department, graduate
55 and all. So, the place was run for the experimental side of it. And it was a research
56 institute really.
- 57 Dr. Ray: When you say there were only five major courses?
- 58 Dr. H: Only five courses.
- 59 Dr. Ray: Five courses all told? Do you recall what these were Dr. H?
- 60 Dr. H: Oh yes. There was elementary. Then there was Dr. Wells' psychology two which was
61 about what you'll find in his book. Then there was qualitative experimental and
62 quantitative experimental at the undergraduate level. And at the graduate level, there
63 was systematic psychology and that was it.
- 64 Dr. Ray: All told.

- 65 Dr. H: All told. Of course, systematic ran two years, the course was a two-year course. They
66 covered the whole field in that two years or tried to. I quickly found myself observing for
67 this person and that person and the other. And I hadn't started my doctorate research
68 yet.
- 69 Dr. Ray: Dr. H, can you back up just for a minute, what was your impression when you first got to
70 Cornell in Ithaca?
- 71 Dr. H: Well, of course I met Dr. Dallenbach met me there and that was old friend. And it was
72 cold, snow, and everything. And he took me over to Professor Titchener's I think that
73 same afternoon. I got there in the morning and it's pretty hard to describe my first
74 impression of Titchener. He's a well-built man, not very tall but robust, muscular. But he
75 impressed me, and he was a kindly sort of fellow and he always did. Although I've seen
76 lots of graduate students come away from their conference with him in the evening,
77 that's when he met his graduate students, he had them come to his house. And they'd
78 come away crying. One of them felt he was a tyrant. He could knock their knuckles
79 alright.
- 80 Dr. Ray: But your first impression was a stout, robust, really a man of strength?
- 81 Dr. H: Oh yeah. And it was that I think that impressed me more than anything else at that
82 moment. He talked a little about a research problem even on that first meeting. I hadn't
83 settled on anything. As it turned out I really pursued the same problem I had started on
84 in Oregon. Although, in quite a little different fashion but it was basically the same
85 problem. I think I won my first spurs as an observer in an experiment by Michael Zigler.
86 He was working on the perception of geometrical forms, rectangles, horizontal
87 rectangles, vertical rectangles, circles, triangles. And the first intimation at least that I
88 had from Titchener that I'd really done rather a bit of rather outstanding observation
89 was in connection to that experiment.
- 90 Dr. Ray: How did Titchener observe you? Was he there?
- 91 Dr. H: Oh no.
- 92 Dr. Ray: He read your observations?
- 93 Dr. H: Yeah, he stayed at home.
- 94 Dr. Ray: He did?
- 95 Dr. H: He came to the campus two days a week in the first semester. He came to the campus
96 one night a week in the second semester for his seminar.
- 97 Dr. Ray: As I recall now you're saying everyone had to attend that graduate and undergraduate
98 seminar?

- 99 Dr. H: Oh yes, [inaudible 00:10:12] just graduate not undergraduate. Every graduate student
100 had to attend that seminar? Yes indeed. And no one attended without a personal
101 invitation from Titchener. But all graduate students got an invitation. When Koffka was
102 there for one year he was invited to attend.
- 103 Dr. Ray: Kohler also?
- 104 Dr. H: Hmm?
- 105 Dr. Ray: Kohler? You say Koffka?
- 106 Dr. H: Koffka yes.
- 107 Dr. Ray: Was Kohler there too?
- 108 Dr. H: No.
- 109 Dr. Ray: He wasn't there.
- 110 Dr. H: No, he never stayed at Cornell. He visited Cornell occasionally but never stayed there.
111 So, he wasn't in the select group. After I worked with Zigler, Titchener would sometimes
112 say to a graduate student, "Well, you can take that problem if you can get Hoisington to
113 observe for you." He put a great deal of confidence and faith in my observation. And in
114 that way, I sort of gained my spurs as an observer.
- 115 Dr. Ray: That's saying a great deal now to have the chief say ...
- 116 Dr. H: Yes, he was known affectionately as the chief.
- 117 Dr. Ray: And everyone called him this but not to his face.
- 118 Dr. H: Not to his face. He was Professor Titchener to his face. On these Monday nights when
119 he came over for his seminar, he usually took a stroll through the laboratory to see how
120 things were, see that things were in place. If a piece of apparatus was missing, he'd
121 know it. He'd want to know where it was and what it was doing. He knew that
122 laboratory perfectly.
- 123 Dr. Ray: Well, Dr. H, did he ever talk much about his study with Wundt? His work with Wundt?
- 124 Dr. H: Well, yes and no. Quite a little bit. Quite a little bit. Wundt lectured, of course, at 1:00.
125 o'clock but he always had a big crowd. And of course, over there, you attended lectures
126 if you wanted to and if you didn't want to, you didn't. You didn't sign up for a course like
127 you do in this country. And after the lecture, Wundt would take a small group of his
128 graduate students over to his home and they'd serve tea and sit around and talk
129 psychology for a couple of hours or so and then they'd break up and go home. The
130 students would go home, Wundt, of course, was already home. But Wundt of course
131 was guarded by his wife while she was alive and by his sister after his wife died. Wundt

- 132 never left Germany. He was an out and out German. In the first World War, he was alive
133 in the first World War, and he'd signed one of those German manifestos damning the
134 rest of the world.
- 135 Dr. Ray: A true, true German.
- 136 Dr. H: Yeah, a true German.
- 137 Dr. Ray: Through and through.
- 138 Dr. H: Through and through.
- 139 Dr. Ray: Titchener now was with him over there for how long? Do you recall?
- 140 Dr. H: About, I think two years. And he did his doctorate thesis over there and got his degree
141 over there.
- 142 Dr. Ray: What led him to come to Cornell? Titchener.
- 143 Dr. H: I never knew exactly what induced him to come to Cornell. I suppose, and this is partly a
144 guess, he needed a job and there was an opening there. And he accepted it. He was just
145 out of his doctorate in Leipzig. And he came directly to Cornell. And of course, at that
146 time, psychology was a part of the department of philosophy which he soon terminated.
- 147 Dr. Ray: He did.
- 148 Dr. H: He got psychology as a separate department. He had lifelong friends in the philosophy
149 department. Of course, he was a good philosopher himself. He knew his philosophy very
150 well. And of course, he knew psychology from A to Z. He subscribed to every leading
151 psychological journal in the world except the journal put out by the Gestalters. He never
152 subscribed to that journal.
- 153 Dr. Ray: He didn't? Do you have any idea why?
- 154 Dr. H: He just didn't like that psychology
- 155 Dr. Ray: As far as he was concerned they didn't exist?
- 156 Dr. H: They just didn't exist.
- 157 Dr. Ray: Or he wasn't going to read about them?
- 158 Dr. H: No. I doubt if he would have subscribed to a behavioristic journal if there had been one.
159 He didn't like the behaviorists either. He just didn't have any use for the behavioristic
160 doctrine.

- 161 Dr. Ray: Dr. H, on the Monday night seminars where all the graduate students came, as I recall
162 you talking one time before, you indicated there was a seating arrangement on the
163 stage wasn't there? Or something.
- 164 Dr. H: No. He had a seminar room. He had a special seminar room with a long table and we all
165 sat around the table. Of course, he sat over at the head of the table. Otherwise, there
166 wasn't any particular place for each person. We just gathered around that table and he
167 sat over there at the head. And each Monday night, one of us would give a paper on an
168 assigned topic.
- 169 Dr. Ray: He made the assignments?
- 170 Dr. H: Oh yes, he chose the major topic. We'd have a major topic for the year, for the
171 semester. Then he'd break this big topic up into segments and assign part of the
172 problem to each student. And it didn't matter, this was all in German, he never thought
173 about that. Or all in French or all ... You just had to get it.
- 174 Dr. Ray: And was anyone ever late on presenting their paper?
- 175 Dr. H: No. No.
- 176 Dr. Ray: Everyone was punctual.
- 177 Dr. H: Oh yeah. A lot of them sat up all night two or three nights before to finish their paper.
178 But they got that paper finished before the seminar time.
- 179 Dr. Ray: Was this out of respect or fear?
- 180 Dr. H: I suspect for most of them it was primarily fear. A lot of them feared him. As a I said, he
181 could rap their knuckles. And he would if he thought it was coming to them, he didn't
182 hesitate. He was a man of strong convictions. But, also a man of lots of tolerance. If he
183 hadn't had lots of tolerance he never would have tolerated me.
- 184 Dr. Ray: Apparently his tolerance paid off handsomely, because you became one of his best
185 observers.
- 186 Dr. H: Oh yes, yes, I think that's fair statement. He relied tremendously on my observations.
- 187 Dr. Ray: What sort of thing now Dr. H did you observe and report on?
- 188 Dr. H: Oh, we had all sorts of experiments. One, Moller for example was working on the Phi
189 phenomenon. Dimmick worked on phi phenomenon. Moller worked on ... Can't say this
190 moment.
- 191 Dr. Ray: It'll come to you later.

192 Dr. H: Yes, it'll come to me later. What did Gleason work on? Bishop worked on after effects of
193 the ending of a sound. Been lots of reports of the kind of a little hoop at the end of a
194 sound. And Bishop was working on that. He was probably my main side kick while I was
195 a graduate student there. H.G. Bishop and I worked together. Of course, the graduate
196 students ran the undergraduate laboratories, the qualitative and quantitative. Well I say
197 the graduate students, that's only party to it. In one semester, I had charge of the
198 qualitative and Dallenbach had charge of the quantitative. Next semester, he would
199 have the qualitative and I would have the quantitative. But we always had the graduate
200 assistants help. So even before I had my degree, I was doing quite a bit of teaching.

201 Dr. Ray: Now, what sort of training did you get, Dr. H, in order to be an observer. How did
202 Titchener go about teaching you?

203 Dr. H: He didn't.

204 Dr. Ray: He didn't?

205 Dr. H: He didn't. He just left me to my own devices. I just picked it up.

206 Dr. Ray: Did he teach or anyone else train any of the others to be observers?

207 Dr. H: No. He never tried to train an observer. Well, certainly not while I was there. I don't
208 think he ever did before.

209 Dr. Ray: Well, how did you know what to observe?

210 Dr. H: That's a good question, Bob. I learned simply to observe everything I could that was
211 going on inside me while I was performing.

212 Dr. Ray: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

213 Dr. H: And I don't know how I got on to that. I just did. And that was I suppose if there was any
214 key to my success as an observer, if there was any success, it was just that. That I
215 learned to observe, tried to pick up every little muscle twitch anywhere in my body. Any
216 little movement, any little verbalization, any little something that went on functionally
217 inside me while I was performing a particular task.

218 Dr. Ray: Dr. H, did you write this down immediately? Your impression or this experience that you
219 had?

220 Dr. H: In some cases, we wrote it down. In most cases, we reported it verbally, immediately of
221 course, and the experimenter wrote it down.

222 Dr. Ray: Wrote it down for you. So, that relieved you of having to take your attention over here
223 to something else.

224 Dr. H: Yeah. In almost all cases, that was the way it was done. Give it verbally immediately.

- 225 Dr. Ray: Mm-hmm (affirmative).
- 226 Dr. H: When I got to my own graduate research, it was a matter of primarily reporting, and
227 again as I said, a matter of judging the length of two rods lifted in succession and poked
228 against a board. Of course, in my doctoral thesis, some of them I would poke and some I
229 just lifted and some I had just a handle in my hand but attached to it was a set of strings
230 that gave the same effect as if there was a rod out there and having judged that and
231 then report. It was primarily, mostly a report of experiences in the hand while it was
232 lifted.
- 233 Dr. H: I had a chance to go to Harvard before I finished my doctorate. But they wouldn't ... I
234 thought maybe they would grant me my doctorate on the basis of this opportunity. But
235 no, I hadn't been there long enough. I'd been there long enough only if I had taken full
236 work but I'd been an assistant all the time. So, I got credit for only partial work. So, I
237 hadn't had enough work so I didn't go. But it was a good thing for me as it turned out, I
238 really hadn't completed my thesis at all, my experimental work. I really hadn't come to a
239 final solution to my problem, at all. It was only after I had had this opportunity that I
240 succeeded in getting to the bottom of it. Of course, another thing, after I got to be a
241 pretty good observer, Titchener would often tell me what the problem was that the
242 other person was working on. No other observer ever knew what the problem was.
- 243 Dr. Ray: You mean, he just was given?
- 244 Dr. H: He was just given something to do and he had to do that and observe. He didn't know
245 what the problem was at all.
- 246 Dr. Ray: Now that kept him unbiased?
- 247 Dr. H: Yeah.
- 248 Dr. Ray: Was that Titchener's reason for doing this?
- 249 Dr. H: Mm-hmm (affirmative). But he'd tell me what the problem was. I knew. In fact, all
250 experimentation after I'd been there a year I knew what the problem was. But I don't
251 think it affected my observation and he didn't think so either.
- 252 Dr. Ray: Undoubtedly. If he thought this, he would have never permitted you to know.
- 253 Dr. H: Of course, I observed in my own experiment. Something no other experimenter did.
- 254 Dr. Ray: That's where I was going next. This was most unusual wasn't it? Back in the day.
- 255 Dr. H: Yes.
- 256 Dr. Ray: For the experimenter to be his own observer.
- 257 Dr. H: Yeah.

- 258 Dr. Ray: That just permit too much of a systematic bias.
- 259 Dr. H: Yeah. Well that's pretty much the story of how I got started and all. There probably are
260 things I left out.
- 261 Dr. Ray: Well, this is a basic part of it.
- 262 Dr. H: Yeah.
- 263 Dr. Ray: But the man Titchener had a profound influence on you.
- 264 Dr. H: Oh, my yes. He made me his flunky. I'd clean his house once a year and the first year
265 he'd followed me around to see that I didn't break up things. After that he'd turn me
266 loose. I'd get out, put up his storm windows in the fall and take them down in the
267 spring. Do various jobs for him. But he was always very kind to me. It was only once that
268 he was a little provoked with me.
- 269 Dr. Ray: What did you do?
- 270 Dr. H: One year he chose his seminar topic that was simply out of the reach of ordinary
271 mortals I thought. And first night of seminar, the first paper he was thoroughly
272 disgusted with it. And I practically told him well I told you so.
- 273 Dr. Ray: So, he let you know he was displeased?
- 274 Dr. H: He let me know. It didn't last. I was soon back in his graces again.
- 275 Dr. Ray: As I recall you mentioning years ago, Dr. H, that he imported his cigars and he had a
276 pretty filthy study. Is my memory right on that?
- 277 Dr. H: He imported his cigars from the Philippine islands. And they were some cigars. He
278 smoked them continuously and he insisted on everybody who came into his office to
279 smoke. He had his office in his home. And when he'd put out his garbage, he'd put out a
280 couple of cigars on top of the garbage for his garbage collectors. Lots of jokes about his
281 cigars knocking people over. His office, he got the mail and pretty soon the office floor
282 was just littered and covered. That had to be cleaned up once or twice a year and all
283 sorted and thrown out or put away. He had lots of boxes throughout his house in which
284 he kept off prints and such like.
- 285 Dr. Ray: And this was your task to clean out the office?
- 286 Dr. H: Yeah, among others that was it.
- 287 Dr. Ray: And he was married, wasn't he? Didn't he have a daughter or something, Dr. H?
- 288 Dr. H: He had three daughters and a son. His oldest daughter was a perfect specimen of
289 Grecian beauty. She was a model and she contracted sleeping sickness

- 290 Dr. Ray: Goodness
- 291 Dr. H: and she just went clear down. She couldn't talk for a long time and when she got so she
292 could talk a little, she couldn't make sentences. And that was Margaret, the oldest one.
293 The second child was a boy, Jack. He teaches language. He is at some school in Ohio. I
294 haven't kept track of him, I don't know where he is.
- 295 Dr. Ray: And was he there now at the home when you were Titchener's flunky?
- 296 Dr. H: Oh yes, most of the time. He was there most of the time. He played tennis with us
297 occasionally. The next child was Bertie, a girl. She didn't get married until a little later,
298 later than the others. Well, Jack didn't get married too early either. That's what I
299 remember. Bertie had scholarships abroad, she was a very good student. She had two or
300 three scholarships abroad. She studied language too and she taught. The youngest was
301 Clel, she was the one who could stand up and sort of defy her father. She was the only
302 one who ever did.
- 303 Dr. Ray: Out of the whole crew, huh?
- 304 Dr. H: Mm-hmm (affirmative).
- 305 Dr. Ray: She stood toe to toe with the chief and slugged it out with him?
- 306 Dr. H: And she got married young. He didn't want her to. He wanted her to go on and finish
307 her schooling. The others had all got their doctor's degrees. But Clel didn't want any of it
308 so she told him no and she got married. Married a glass blower down in New York.
- 309 Dr. Ray: A glass blower? I bet this made the chief most unhappy.
- 310 Dr. H: Yeah. But he never said anything about it. Any public statements that I know of.
- 311 Dr. Ray: Now what about all the struggles between Titchener and the functionalists and the
312 behaviorists?
- 313 Dr. H: The functionalists weren't very strong yet. They were just coming up. He didn't have
314 very much to say about the functionalists. Of course, the behaviorists were in full swing.
315 He admired Watson as a man. He had Watson in his home. Watson was coming to
316 Ithaca and he invited him to stay at his house and all the natives advised against it
317 because he had unmarried daughters in his home. Watson was not a safe man to have
318 around.
- 319 Dr. Ray: And Watson was single at the time?
- 320 Dr. H: Well he'd been married and divorced. He just didn't accept the behavioristic position at
321 all.
- 322 Dr. Ray: Did Watson now come and stay with him?

- 323 Dr. H: Oh yeah.
- 324 Dr. Ray: He did? How did the two of them get along personally?
- 325 Dr. H: Beautifully. Beautifully. Yeah.
- 326 Dr. Ray: But fought bitterly in terms of position?
- 327 Dr. H: Yeah. In terms of their doctrines. Watson said publicly if he weren't a behaviorist, he'd
328 be a Titchenerian. That wasn't enough for Titchener, he was still a behaviorist.
- 329 Dr. Ray: As long as he was a behaviorist, he was on the other side.
- 330 Dr. H: Yep. As I said, he didn't like the Gestalters. They had come into prominence. He
331 wouldn't subscribe to their *Forschung*. But Koffka was there for a year. Half a year. He
332 was there a semester. And he gave public lectures and all of us attended the lectures.
333 Titchener of course didn't.
- 334 Dr. Ray: He wouldn't go?
- 335 Dr. H: Oh no. And when they had a meeting at Cornell, Titchener didn't attend the meetings.
336 They came to his house. He didn't kowtow to anybody.
- 337 Dr. Ray: What is that cliché? The mountain is going to come to Mohammed? And he lived up to it
338 and made them come.
- 339 Dr. H: Oh yes. He appreciated his ... He was really dean of American psychologists. There's no
340 question about that. He was the outstanding American psychologist for a long time. And
341 he knew it. And he was going to maintain the dignity of the position.
- 342 Dr. Ray: Would you say there was a little of the German in Titchener too?
- 343 Dr. H: Well, he acquired a good deal of the German ways. I think as far as blood is concerned,
344 he was pure English. I think he was straight out English as far as blood goes. But he
345 acquired a good many German ways while he was over there.
- 346 Dr. Ray: And they sort of fit him?
- 347 Dr. H: Yeah. This business of staying in his office at home and making everybody come to him
348 was totally Wundtian trait.
- 349 Dr. Ray: I wonder if Wundt worked this way with his students. For some reason, I always
350 assumed Wundt went to the laboratory and observed and taught. I don't know where I
351 ever got this idea.
- 352 Dr. H: No. He did take a swing through the laboratory on lecture days after his lecture. But
353 otherwise he shut himself up at home and he was guarded by his wife and by his sister

- 354 and nobody got to see him except at certain hours at the day and they just wouldn't let
355 them in.
- 356 Dr. Ray: Dr. H now, was this just protectiveness. They were just protecting him from being used
357 up?
- 358 Dr. H: Well that's what they thought and I guess he just didn't want to be bothered.
- 359 Dr. Ray: They served as excellent guards.
- 360 Dr. H: Titchener had quite a bit of that in his arrangements. His wife didn't stand guard nor his
361 children but we knew and we very carefully avoided calling him except certain hours of
362 the day. Oh, I suppose if a serious enough thing had come up we would have called but
363 it never did.
- 364 Dr. Ray: It had to be extremely serious.
- 365 Dr. H: Yeah
- 366 Dr. Ray: Now he also lectured in addition to his seminar, he also had a lecture as I recall you
367 saying where all the undergraduate students came.
- 368 Dr. H: No, not all of them. He lectured once or twice a week in the first semester to
369 sophomores.
- 370 Dr. Ray: To sophomores.
- 371 Dr. H: He had one hall or one room in which he lectured that held 207 I believe it was. And
372 that was filled every first semester. He lectured only in the first semester. That was filled
373 every first semester with sophomores.
- 374 Dr. Ray: Once a week?
- 375 Dr. H: No, twice a week. Tuesday and Thursday. Nobody would get in except the sophomore.
- 376 Dr. Ray: Graduate students couldn't come?
- 377 Dr. H: No. Well ... Was there something Louise?
- 378 Louise H: No, I'm just anticipating you all may want to stop while I'm taking her outside. [inaudible
379 00:37:55]
- 380 Dr. H: Not all the graduate students attended his lectures. But members of the staff did.
381 Dallenbach and Wells and the assistants, myself and Bishop and sometimes Dimmick but
382 usually not. Just Dallenbach and Wells and myself and Bishop attended those [inaudible
383 00:38:25].

- 384 Dr. Ray: And this is where I was thinking about it, didn't you have a certain place that you had to
385 stand or sit or something?
- 386 Dr. H: Yeah, we had a certain place we sat. And it was a narrow room at the back of the lecture
387 hall where we kept all the apparatus. There was a door at this end and a door at that
388 end. And [inaudible 00:38:46] we would come out this door and take our seats right
389 down here. There were some seats ...
- 390 Dr. Ray: Very front row?
- 391 Dr. H: Oh yes. [inaudible 00:38:57] he would come out of this door and take his position right
392 behind this long desk like and deliver his lecture. When it was over he'd twirl around go
393 back through that door, we'd file back through this door. And then we'd go back in to
394 the little office he had back there and sit for an hour or so and smoke and gab and talk.
395 So, that was the routine there.
- 396 Dr. Ray: Now did everyone stand when the chief came in?
- 397 Dr. H: No.
- 398 Dr. Ray: He didn't require that?
- 399 Dr. H: No, he didn't require that. But nobody came up and approached him.
- 400 Dr. Ray: There was no such thing as a student discussion.
- 401 Dr. H: No, there was none. Nothing like that. But of course, in summer he once in a while did
402 lecture in summer session on year and things were a little more informal during the
403 summer session. But in regular session, there were all sorts of stories about how he got
404 from his home over there and how he got from there back to his home. Nobody ever
405 saw him come or go.
- 406 Dr. Ray: Did you ever see him?
- 407 Dr. H: No, I never saw him.
- 408 Dr. Ray: Never did? Imagine, I would imagine his students did whip up some pretty wild stories
409 about how he'd [crosstalk 00:40:40]
- 410 Dr. H: Yeah, tunnels and everything else imaginable. He always came early to see that Bishop
411 was the man who set up his demonstration apparatus. To see that demonstration
412 apparatus was all in tip top shape. And of course, after the lecture, like I say, we went
413 back in there and talked for an hour or so. And he didn't go immediately. So, they didn't
414 see him go home.
- 415 Dr. Ray: What were some of these lectures on, Dr. H, for the sophomores?

- 416 Dr. H: Well, about the best answer I can probably give to that is chapters in the text book.
- 417 Dr. Ray: As we find today.
- 418 Dr. H: That's the short answer but it's an accurate answer.
- 419 Dr. Ray: How close would that textbook that you wrote years ago follow this?
- 420 Dr. H: Not very close. No, not very close.
- 421 Dr. Ray: What prompted you to write that textbook?
- 422 Dr. H: Well, when I came here Woodworth was the text. It had been ordered, it was in the
423 bookstores and we had to use it. And I didn't like Woodworth very much so I thought I'd
424 try to write one of my own. With which I'm fairly out of tune at the present. Today I've
425 grown way beyond it. I was groping my way then, done a lot of thinking since that.
- 426 Dr. Ray: Yeah, that's what I wanted to get around to because you, over the years you've had
427 some theories which I think were unique to Hoisington.
- 428 Dr. H: Yes, I think you could say that, Bob. [inaudible 00:42:45] may sound a little bigoted for
429 me to say it.
- 430 Dr. Ray: We both know that it's true.
- 431 Dr. H: I think it is. I haven't ever found anything that I felt was comparable.
- 432 Dr. Ray: It would look right now, Dr. H, as if even though these theories had not been accepted
433 and they're coming more and more into acceptance in the present-day experimental
434 work. Wouldn't you say so?
- 435 Dr. H: I feel that, yes, I do. But statistics had its day, behaviorism had its day, and I feel
436 statistics still looms very large. It's losing its grip on people. I really don't feel it has all
437 the answers anymore.
- 438 Dr. Ray: Mm-hmm. I don't know whether it's asking the impossible of you right now. But I recall
439 you talking about and proposing, not promoting just proposing for the student to
440 consider, this neuromuscular set.
- 441 Dr. H: Yeah.
- 442 Dr. Ray: You were way ahead of your time in that.
- 443 Dr. H: I think probably so. I have come to the conclusion that when we get a stimulus on the
444 sense organ, we don't get the full-fledged color of all forms that we see out there. But,
445 we have to make a neuromuscular adjustment to that, what I call sensory cue, and then
446 it comes out full form in color and so forth. The same with audition and then with

- 447 further adjustment we may be able to name it. But, unless we can make a
448 neuromuscular adjustment to the sensory cue we just don't see or hear them.
- 449 Dr. Ray: It just doesn't exist.
- 450 Dr. H: Yeah.
- 451 Dr. Ray: And you were talking about some of these changes occurring down in the leg and in the
452 arm and the abdomen and right big toe and so forth and so on. Which I guess maybe a
453 student might have laughed at initially but it seems like lots of this is coming to pass.
454 We're finding more and more of these things to be true.
- 455 Dr. H: What we're doing in our thinking is the whole organism participates in its functioning. It
456 didn't just the muscles of the throat and some fibers in the brain, it's the whole
457 organism that functions and even minor functioning we get whole organism involved. I
458 believe that very thoroughly.
- 459 Dr. Ray: You did a good job of teaching because you got some pretty good converts out of it.
- 460 Dr. H: Of course, with very familiar things it all happens very quickly. So quickly that the
461 ordinary person would never observe any of it. They'd say there wasn't anything there.
462 But if you're on your toes and watchful, you catch them. You get them even though
463 they're fleeting.
- 464 Dr. Ray: This has always amazed me how an observer could do this, Dr. H. And I'm just not that
465 sensitive, I'm not that skilled.
- 466 Dr. H: Well, you'd be sensitive enough if you had the training. You could do it if you had the
467 training. The training that I had. I say it was self-training but still it was training and you
468 learn to watch, here, there, and yonder. You don't try to do the whole job at one sitting.
469 While I was observing in an experiment, I'd observe now one part of the organism, now
470 another part, now another part. Course the experiments went on for a whole semester
471 and we had the opportunity to make many observations. So, he didn't try to do it all at
472 once. You did it piecemeal as it were. But, by watching carefully and being alert and
473 being adjusted to make observations here, there, and yonder you caught them.
- 474 Dr. Ray: That still seems incredible. But I know as well as I know that I'm sitting here that you're
475 capable of doing it because I've seen you do it over and over and prove it. I guess there
476 is something to this. What is it, the proof of the pudding is in the eating. I guess I'm a bit
477 of a pragmatist really.
- 478 Dr. H: The behaviorists, of course always doubted the observations, and didn't put any stock in
479 them. The Gestalters did to some extent. To quite an extent. And then I think there is
480 quite a little bit to the Gestalt doctrine. But, I put in a different setting than they put it.
481 They are, like I say, the whole organism is more or less involved. You have patterns of
482 this, patterns of that. Little emphasis on this pattern here, little emphasis on another

- 483 pattern somewhere else, and so forth. But there are functional patterns and there are
484 experience patterns. Patterns in response to the demands of the organism.
- 485 Dr. Ray: How does mental set fit in with these patterns? Does it evolve from the pattern?
- 486 Dr. H: The pattern rather evolves from the set.
- 487 Dr. Ray: It goes the other way then. Set exists, then the pattern emerges.
- 488 Dr. H: You set up a situation, that is you set up an experiment and you give your observers
489 some instruction. Well those instructions start out with mental set. And that may bind
490 you as it does most observers, they never get beyond just that. But I took lots of
491 liberties with the instructions.
- 492 Dr. Ray: And Titchener never did get you for it, huh? In fact, he rewarded you.
- 493 Dr. H: But I'd break that general set up into little sets and start by seeing that little portion and
494 some other. And that's the way I was able to make my observations by breaking that
495 general instructional set all down into pieces.
- 496 Dr. Ray: Mm-hmm (affirmative). Dr. H, what happened to Titchener? Didn't he have a brain
497 tumor or something? Were you there at the time this thing set in?
- 498 Dr. H: I never underwent a more depressing time. He went to pieces while he was lecturing in
499 summer session.
- 500 Dr. Ray: Was this to the sophomore group?
- 501 Dr. H: No, this was summer. It was just anybody.
- 502 Dr. Ray: Everyone.
- 503 Dr. H: Yep. And he was up there, and he just began to gibberish. It wasn't Titchener at all. It
504 was just gibberish. And we got him out, got him back into the office.
- 505 Dr. Ray: Have any trouble getting him off the stage?
- 506 Dr. H: No. And then of course we got him home as quickly as we could. Called a doctor. But to
507 see that tremendous mind, that enormous mind just go to pieces right there in front of
508 you is most depressing.
- 509 Dr. Ray: Now there was no indication, no cue or anything that such was going to occur?
- 510 Dr. H: Nothing.
- 511 Dr. Ray: Just "bing."

- 512 Dr. H: Just "bing."
- 513 Dr. Ray: Oh, that must have been hard.
- 514 Dr. H: Yeah.
- 515 Dr. Ray: And did he recover from this at all?
- 516 Dr. H: No.
- 517 Dr. Ray: He didn't.
- 518 Dr. H: No. They got him home, the doctors made various guesses as to the trouble. One of
519 them guess bad teeth and someone guessed something else. But nobody guessed tumor
520 at the time. They brought in the experts, but he didn't last very long. His death was
521 really caused by breaking of blood stream in the brain. That was what really killed him
522 they said was bursting of blood vessel in the brain.
- 523 Dr. Ray: How long was this after this break?
- 524 Dr. H: He lived about a week after that break.
- 525 Dr. Ray: I bet this had a profound effect upon all the students.
- 526 Dr. H: Yeah.
- 527 Dr. Ray: Especially those that were extremely close to him.
- 528 Dr. H: Yes. I never saw the chief after he died. I just didn't want to see him dead.
- 529 Dr. Ray: I don't know that there's much value in that. I much prefer to remember a man alive.
- 530 Dr. H: Yeah, I just wanted to remember him as I'd known him as a teacher.
- 531 Dr. Ray: Well, he was quite the scholar. He must have been a good teacher because he turned
532 out some pretty good ones. Let's see, who came out of that. Boring?
- 533 Dr. H: Yes, Boring was one of his students.
- 534 Dr. Ray: Was Boring after or before you there?
- 535 Dr. H: He was there as a teacher. He was there as a teacher when I went there and he stayed
536 there for some two or three years after I went there and then he moved on up to Clark.
- 537 Dr. Ray: And Weld was there. It was a Boring, Langfeld, and Weld book.
- 538 Dr. H: Yeah.

- 539 Dr. Ray: And Dallenbach, you, Bishop.
- 540 Dr. H: Yes, Bishop. Dimmick.
- 541 Dr. Ray: Dimmick. Goodness only knows how many.
- 542 Dr. H: Yeah, there were a lot of them.
- 543 Dr. Ray: But many of them have gone on to ...
- 544 Dr. H: Yes, there were nine there at the time of Titchener's death.
- 545 Dr. Ray: Was Boring there at the time?
- 546 Dr. H: No, he'd gone on to Clark. When they canvassed these nine students to see who they
547 wanted to direct their, finish out their graduate work, eight of them selected me.
- 548 Dr. Ray: I wonder why.
- 549 Dr. H: I never knew. They never told me.
- 550 Dr. Ray: I suspect because you were Lewis Benjamin Hoisington.
- 551 Dr. H: May be. But Dallenbach was still there. Weld was there, but nobody chose Weld. One
552 man chose Dallenbach. That's the way the dice fell.
- 553 Dr. Ray: Well you cut a pretty wide swathe, when did you come to Oklahoma?
- 554 Dr. H: In '28.
- 555 Dr. Ray: Got more money in '28 than you did in '32 didn't you? After the depression.
- 556 Dr. H: Well, no, I was supposed to get a raise automatically every year. I never got cut below
557 my initial salary. Of course, they cut the salaries down in those depression years.
- 558 Dr. Ray: The reason I say that is I was talking to a fellow from Kansas and he came in here around
559 1924, 1925, he came in at one salary. And he said three years later, he was making less
560 than what he started at. He wasn't quite sure if he was heading in the right direction or
561 not. But how many students would you say you've had over the years, Dr. H, here?
562 You've taught history, how many over the years do you think?
- 563 Dr. H: Of course, there was a while where there was just three of us in the department here. I
564 had over 400 students a semester in elementary and all.
- 565 Dr. Ray: Well I think when I came here in '46, you, let's see, John Rohr was here. Bumstead and
566 Wilson.

- 567 Dr. H: That was the bunch.
- 568 Dr. Ray: That was the bunch. There was only four. Was Orwell here or did he come a little bit
569 later?
- 570 Dr. H: Let's see, you say you came in '44.
- 571 Dr. Ray: '46. But now Bumstead was here for about a year and then he left. But there was only
572 four or five in the department in '46. So, it wasn't a large department.
- 573 Dr. H: Oh no, I can't remember just when, John Rohr was here earlier and then he went out
574 into service and then later he came back.
- 575 Dr. Ray: That's the way it was. Yeah.
- 576 Dr. H: I just don't remember the exact year when he came back.
- 577 Dr. Ray: I think it was '45 or '46. It may have been he came in right about the same time I came
578 back to school. But it wasn't a big department.
- 579 Dr. H: No, it never has been a big department.
- 580 Dr. Ray: But we had a good experimental lab as I recall under a fellow by the name of Hoisington.
- 581 Dr. H: Yeah.
- 582 Dr. Ray: Where we did all kinds of experiments.
- 583 Dr. H: They were modeled pretty much after the experiments that we did at Cornell in the
584 qualitative lab. Well, usually I did one qualitative experiment.
- 585 Dr. Ray: Well, we got a great deal from it. Getting the answers weren't so easy though. I think
586 the greatest mark you had on me was not in terms of classroom behavior but as a
587 human being. You were a distinguished, scholarly statesman and professor. And to me,
588 you epitomized the last of the true professor that carried himself in that dignified
589 manner. By George, you knew that he was a professor.
- 590 Dr. H: They say I was scholarly. I knew a certain amount of psychology, I knew a certain
591 amount of history of psychology and systematic psychology. But, as far as general
592 cultural development was concerned, I didn't even have any.
- 593 Dr. Ray: You asked me a question now on my master's exam. I think it was my master's
594 examination. It had to do with Abraham Lincoln. You may not even remember that
595 question. But that dissertation I did and master's was on the comparison of normal and
596 feeble-minded children.
- 597 Dr. H: Mm-hmm .

- 598 Dr. Ray: And as I recall, you asked a very pointed question: "Well, Bob, how could Abraham
599 Lincoln been considered mentally deficient?" And you stumped me beautifully. So, I
600 don't know that you were so culturally deprived after all. At least it didn't show
601 anywhere.
- 602 Dr. H: Well, maybe not. Well, take for example I wanted to get a phonograph for the children
603 in Ithaca and it was a matter of getting some records. I could go to the store and buy a
604 phonograph and I could go and buy some records. But I didn't know what to buy. I
605 hadn't any idea what was extant in the musical world and what was good and was not
606 good. So, I hies over to the chief and asked him about some records. Well, do you know
607 the William Tell overture? Never heard of it. And so it went down the line. But he gave
608 me a list of very excellent records, and I bought them and we had very excellent music
609 out of that phonograph.
- 610 Dr. Ray: He was more than just a teacher to you?
- 611 Dr. H: Oh, my yes, he was a father.
- 612 Dr. Ray: I've heard you say and I wonder if you still believe it. That the way that you teach is in
613 part by example and in part by rub off, by association.
- 614 Dr. H: Yes. Oh yes, I do. Oh, I think that the good teacher will contribute something but a lot of
615 it is just rub off, and example, and so forth. The good teacher will add something to a
616 lab.
- 617 Dr. Ray: It's kind of hard to know what that something is.
- 618 Dr. H: Yes, it is. One of those mysteries.
- 619 Dr. Ray: But it's something. Because without it, that fire never gets lit. And somehow you were
620 able to make these boys in history live. You resurrected them and brought them to life.
621 Do you recall telling about the trouble Watson got into?
- 622 Dr. H: Yes.
- 623 Dr. Ray: What was it? I can only remember he got involved with a secretary.
- 624 Dr. H: Yes, his secretary had written a lot of letters to him which he had carefully concealed.
625 But his wife found them.
- 626 Dr. Ray: She did?
- 627 Dr. H: And she sold them to one of the big newspapers. And they came out published in the
628 newspaper. And he paid a lot of money to get that stopped. She didn't have any mercy
629 on him. She didn't think he had done her right.
- 630 Dr. Ray: He was involved with what, Secretary Ickes niece or daughter?

- 631 Dr. H: I don't remember that. I don't know.
- 632 Dr. Ray: Seems to me that was who it was, secretary of state or some big gun.
- 633 Dr. H: Yeah.
- 634 Dr. Ray: Big man's cousin or niece or something. Did you ever get the chance to talk to Watson?
- 635 Dr. H: Oh, some.
- 636 Dr. Ray: How did he impress you?
- 637 Dr. H: Oh, he was a bright fellow. Brilliant man. And he was pretty thoroughly convinced of the
638 rightness of his position. He was ready to take up arms in favor of it anytime. Watson
639 was a shrewd chap. Handsome fellow.
- 640 Dr. Ray: He was?
- 641 Dr. H: Oh yes. Women went wild over him.
- 642 Dr. Ray: He must have had something, some sort of appeal.
- 643 Dr. H: Yeah. Yes, he was a handsome fellow. He was six feet tall, maybe a little over, well built,
644 well proportioned, good looking. Glorious black hair, dark hair.
- 645 Dr. Ray: Let's see now when Freud and Jung and that crew came over to Clark University, that
646 was what? Nineteen-nine, somewhere along like that, you were just getting started out
647 in Oregon at the University of Oregon. Did you ever have a chance to meet with any of
648 that crew of Freud and Jung when they came around on their visits?
- 649 Dr. H: No, I never did. I never met Freud.
- 650 Dr. Ray: I don't know what the opinion was, but he came over on an invited address.
- 651 Dr. H: Yeah.
- 652 Dr. Ray: To Clark. Back in your day, Dr. H, could you hold your head up and face the public and
653 say you were a psychologist?
- 654 Dr. H: Yes.
- 655 Dr. Ray: You didn't have to duck your head or turn sideways?
- 656 Dr. H: No.
- 657 Dr. Ray: Do you think the profession has changed much as you've come through the years?

- 658 Dr. H: Oh, yes. But I don't know quite how. Of course, after Titchener's death, people dropped
659 him like he was a hot potato. Wouldn't even mention him in a doctor's exam. Same
660 thing happened to Wundt of course after his death.
- 661 Dr. Ray: Mm-hmm (affirmative).
- 662 Dr. H: Up to the time of Wundt's death, you had to know something about Wundt to pass the
663 doctor's exam. But after his death, never mentioned. And the same thing happened to
664 Titchener. And behaviorism of course just swept the country. I think behaviorism is
665 pretty well on its course. But the Gestalt of course had its swing but never came to
666 popularity in this country that behaviorism did.
- 667 Dr. Ray: No, sure didn't.
- 668 Dr. H: No. No.
- 669 Dr. Ray: Somehow Watson sold that behaviorism beautifully.
- 670 Dr. H: Oh, he did that. And you see people didn't have to go through this period of trained
671 observation. And to experiment, you could set up your experiment without recourse to
672 anybody else. All you had to do was to get some statistical data recorded by some
673 instrument and then subject it to statistical treatment and that was it and they thought
674 they had something. Well they had something, but I don't know what it was.
- 675 Dr. Ray: Wasn't much there.
- 676 Dr. H: No, that's my view on it.
- 677 Dr. Ray: Well, we may come back to giving this introspective report a little more prominence one
678 of these days, you think?
- 679 Dr. H: Well, I'd be glad to see the day of it.
- 680 Dr. Ray: It's kind of hard to take the subject out of the experiment. And we've tried over the
681 years but I don't know that we'll ever succeed. As long as we keep that subject in there
682 and he's an experiencing being then maybe we'd better ask him to report on his
683 experiences just a little bit.
- 684 Dr. H: Well they pretty near got to work on subjects in psychology. They almost have to. Of
685 course, you can work on a rat as a subject and we had our long term with rats.
- 686 Dr. Ray: Well we've gone through our schools and we no longer have our schools of psychology
687 as such.
- 688 Dr. H: That's right.

- 689 Dr. Ray: I don't know whether this is so good or not. Because we've got this school of eclecticism
690 now. And I heard you speak on this on occasion, or speak to it. I don't know whether I'm
691 reflecting your view or mine. I'll just say its mine. If a man's an eclectic he's basically
692 nothing. So maybe we're back to a point where we can start again.
- 693 Dr. H: Yeah
- 694 Dr. Ray: I heard Harlow say a couple weeks ago, well your professors and other students have
695 gone before you in this field of psychology have investigated all of the insignificant
696 problems. And they've left only the important ones for you to be concerned with.
- 697 Dr. H: And there's a lot of truth in it. Yes, there is. There's a lot of truth in it. All the surface
698 things have been investigated. But they are on the surface. And to really get inside and
699 get at the real basic fundamental problems is quite a task.
- 700 Dr. Ray: You think maybe we're going to get back to that observer?
- 701 Dr. H: I hope so.
- 702 Dr. Ray: And if we do we may get to that neuromuscular set.
- 703 Dr. H: I think we will. I don't think there's any way of escaping it.
- 704 Dr. Ray: May even talk about proprioceptive, isn't that the term you used? Proprioceptive
705 stimulation.
- 706 Dr. H: Yeah.
- 707 Dr. Ray: I'm not trying to impress you but you impressed me. And some of those hang in there
708 and it's been a few years, you know, Dr. H.
- 709 Dr. H: Mm-hmm (affirmative).
- 710 Dr. Ray: Well, you had the capacity to light some fires. And I guess maybe raise some questions.
711 And to get us moving. And to that I guess we'll be forever indebted to you.
- 712 Dr. H: Huh?
- 713 Dr. Ray: And for that we'll be forever indebted.
- 714 Dr. H: Yes, well, if I've done any good in the world I'll be glad for that.
- 715 Dr. Ray: Well there can be no doubt about that. Dr. Hoisington I've taken up a lot of your time
716 this afternoon. I hope I haven't imposed upon you too much.
- 717 Ended 1:12:28