

IP&T 564: Dr. Robert Stake Transcript

Start visual description. Robert Stake is talking to the camera. End visual description.

- [00:00:09] **ROBERT STAKE:** It's nice to have a chance to bring our center for evaluation.
- [00:00:17] It's called the instructional research and curriculum evaluation center here at the University of Illinois.
- [00:00:23] We're old-timers around here.
- [00:00:27] We got started in the '60s.
- [00:00:30] It was really about the beginning of educational program evaluation when we got started and we did a bit of helping to get it started.
- [00:00:43] The scene at the time was the curriculum development time, post-Sputnik interest by lots of professors and seeing if they could make the school curriculum better.
- [00:00:58] And in order to get the support from the National Science Foundation, they needed to evaluate.
- [00:01:05] We tried. We rolled out some of our best tests to see if we couldn't find what was good and what was bad about those new curriculum materials, and we add lots of trouble because the tests weren't sensitive to what the curriculum developers and other people wanted to know about the things they were developing.
- [00:01:28] So gradually, we crawled out of our past, the things that we knew how to do, and into a more ethnographic, a more responsive, and more personal kind of evaluation that looked at the experience, looks at the teaching, looks at the context in order to try to decide what would be helpful to developers and other people with these new materials.

- [00:02:03] Now you know, those materials didn't catch on whether that was because they weren't well evaluated or not, probably something else, but we got some good experience in how one went about the business of formative evaluation, helping those who formed the curriculum of the schools and the universities and the preschools and the nursing schools and other folks who have teaching as their responsibility.
- [00:02:38] It took us a long time, really, 10, 20, 25, 30 years, to come into where we are now.
- [00:02:46] And we're probably still on the roll, on the move, to deciding how we can provide information about quality, quality of institutions, of curricula, of teaching, the things that are most important in education.
- [00:03:07] We haven't gone very far into finances, not very far into politics.
- [00:03:13] There's lots of complexity in education, and we only manage to deal with a little bit of it.
- [00:03:21] But we have managed to put out so books and examples of good evaluation studies and some that weren't so good, and gradually we now have a responsive evaluation, I call it, other people call it different things.
- [00:03:40] But we try to respond to the realities, the phenomena, the way things are actually happening in schools.
- [00:03:48] And look for quality.
- [00:03:50] In other ways than by student performance on testing. We don't ignore it.
- [00:03:57] In fact, there's a long history in these offices here.
- [00:04:00] We had the Illinois state-wide testing service housed here until 1969 when we decided that with the move away from counseling students to assessing students

for graduation and assessing teachers in schools and accountability, we decided we didn't have the validity studies or the money to do them, or the interest maybe, to do them and got out of the testing business.

[00:04:34] So you'll find our evaluation ideas relatively separated from the things that we did in 1960, see if it makes a difference on a standardized test as to whether or not teaching this way or that way over there.

[00:04:54] The flow of our work has been a very personal flow.

[00:04:59] We've been really greatly benefited by this campus as a whole and by the College of Education.

[00:05:06] That's been extremely supportive since the '60s through the '70s and on and still today.