Oral History Interview with Lee W. Clark

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California Department of Education
Adult Education Oral History Project

Oral History Interview

with

LEE W. CLARK

San Jose State University, Coordinator and Instructor, Designated Subjects Credential Program, 1970 - Present

Santa Clara Local Educational Agency, Santa Clara Unified School District, Adult and Vocational Credential Coordinator, 1987 - Present

Fremont Unified School District, Administrative Staff, Fremont Adult School, 1980 - 1986

San Jose Unified School District, Director, Metropolitan Adult Education, 1964 - 1980

Fontana Unified School District, Principal, Fontana Adult School, 1958 - 1964

Clovis Unified School District, Adult Education Instructor and High School Administrator, 1952 - 1958

Gilroy Union High School District, Adult Education Instructor and Administrative Intern, 1950 -1952

May 18, 1995

Newark, California

By Cuba Z. Miller

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RESTRICTIONS ON THIS INTERVIEW

None.

LITERARY RIGHTS AND QUOTATIONS

It is recommended that this oral history be cited as follows:

Lee W. Clark, Oral History Interview, Conducted 1995 by Cuba Z. Miller in Newark, California, for the California Adult Education Oral History Project.

PREFACE

Adult education in California has a proud history of helping its citizens to meet the challenges of life in a huge, complex, multicultural state. Through the years, California adult educators have provided leadership to the nation in the development of innovative instructional practices and creative educational solutions.

The California Adult Education Oral History Project began in 1992 as a companion to a print history of adult education commissioned by the California Department of Education. As the century draws to a close, the growth and energy of California adult education in the sixties, the institutionalization of competency based education in response to the influx of refugees and immigrants in the seventies and eighties, and the innovative uses of technology of the nineties will be recorded.

The oral history project started with a small group of leaders whose careers began in the 1950's and 1960's and who witnessed and influenced important events in the development of the nation's largest adult education program. Seven interviews were added in 1994 - 95.

Significant assistance to the project was initially provided by the staffs of both the California State Archives and the Oral History Program, History Department, California State University, Fullerton. This project could not have begun without the vision of Raymond G. Eberhard, Administrator, Adult Education Policy and Planning Unit, California Department of Education, and the support of the late Lynda T. Smith, Consultant, Adult Education Policy and Planning Unit.

Linda L. West
June 30, 1995

INTERVIEW HISTORY

Interviewer

Cuba Z. Miller

Interview Time and Place

One interview was conducted in Newark, California, on May 18, 1995.

Editing

The interviewee reviewed and edited the transcript. When the tape was inaudible or when necessary for clarification, some information was added and is indicated by brackets [ ].

Tapes

The original cassette tapes were transferred to reel to reel format at California State University, Fullerton and deposited with the California State Archives.

CALIFORNIA ADULT EDUCATION ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

INTERVIEWEE: LEE W. CLARK

INTERVIEWER: Cuba Z. Miller

[Session 1, May 18, 1995]

[Begin Tape 1, Side A]

MILLER: This is Cuba Miller interviewing Lee W. Clark, a retired adult school administrator. The interview is being conducted in Newark, California, on May 18, 1995, for the purpose of recording Lee's recollections of significant events and trends in California adult education during his career.

Lee, I know that you're not fully retired because you remain active in teacher training and in credential programs, but you are retired from public school administration. Why don't we start by you just giving us an overview of your career and how you first became attracted to and involved in adult education?

CLARK: Okay. When I first started or got interested in adult education I was a teacher at Gilroy High [School]. And because it was interesting, I suddenly got into teaching night school as well as day. I was a business teacher, and at night school I taught folk dancing, business subjects, and I don't remember quite what else but—

MILLER: The folk dancing fit in with your business background, didn't it? [Chuckling]

CLARK: Well, they had nobody for that, and it was really popular at the time, and it was an a.d.a. subject, of all things. The interesting part was that they wanted somebody to do it, and I kind of enjoyed [dancing], but I was only one dance ahead of the group. I went to [a class at] San Jose State on Monday night, on Tuesday night I'd come back and teach it. [Chuckling] But I got interested in that. While at Gilroy, the vice principal was running the small adult education program and he said to me one day, "Son,"—I was a little bit young at the time—he said, "Son, why don't you help me with the administration of this adult education program?" I said, "When would I do that? I teach at night, I teach during the day." He said, "Right after school. You have plenty of time." [Chuckling] And I said, "Okay, what do you want me to do?" He said, "Well, I want you to help set up the registration system and keep track of paying the teachers and [things like that]." "That sounds good." I said, "What's in it for me?" And he said, "Experience, son, experience." [Laughter]

MILLER: The way we get hooked into a lot of things.

CLARK: So for one solid year I helped this fellow Frank Mann with the adult education program after school. And the interesting part of that, six

or seven years later I was hired as the principal of an adult school primarily because of donating that year's time. I got [course] credit for it at Stanford, so it wasn't all lost.

MILLER: So it did pay off for you.

CLARK: In the long term it [did]. I tell people quite often, "Don't be afraid to volunteer some time."

MILLER: Yeah, and that's still true.

CLARK: Yeah.

MILLER: Okay, from Gilroy then where did you go?

CLARK: I was going to Stanford and got a master's degree and a secondary administration credential. I then went as a vice principal over to Clovis High School.

MILLER: How big was Clovis then?

CLARK: Clovis was 1,200 to 1,300 kids at the time, and it grew during my being there to about 1,600 kids. I was hired as the vice principal and hatchet person.

MILLER: Yes. [Chuckling]

CLARK: I had to correct some problems there, and I did a pretty good job because [the kids] were starting to leave cemetery wreaths on my doorstep. But all during that time I did, as a matter of fact, stay with adult education because they had an [unsupervised] program. So I

kind of organized it and taught a couple nights a week in accounting and typewriting. So I stayed with it all those six years.

MILLER: So you actually did kind of administrative work with the adult ed program there, too.

CLARK: Yeah. It wasn't paid work or any such thing as that because I was being paid as vice principal, but it was just a matter of not letting the adult school go down the drain.

MILLER: Yeah, and then you finally got a full-time adult ed job next?

CLARK: Yes. I had looked all over the state for some kind of an improvement over my vice principalship and had virtually given up. I'd gone to eight different cities, and would come close but wouldn't quite be elected. Then all of a sudden I got a notice from Stanford placement that there was an opening in Fontana, California, for an adult school principal. So I went down to Fontana, and they wanted to get a program started there. Because of my Stanford connection—one of the people interviewing was from Stanford—and because of that year's experience [in Gilroy], strangely enough, [they] hired me over twenty-five other candidates.

MILLER: Very good.

CLARK: It was a small program. But one thing that really helped out is when I got the job, then I went to Sacramento and sat down with . . . if you

remember Stan [Stanley E.] Sworder [Chief, Bureau of Adult Education], and Tom [Thomas F.] Damon [Consultant, Bureau of Adult Education and Palo Alto Adult Education] [who] was working with the state department then.

MILLER: That was the year that he was up there.

CLARK: Yeah, and Larry [Lawrence E.] Koehler was up there; he was one of the consultants [Consultant, Bureau of Adult Education]. I said, "I need to talk to you because I'm organizing a new program down here." Chaffey Junior College had been doing [adult ed], but [Fontana] wanted their own; they were newly unified. And so I met with those three people, and as a result of coming up and tapping into their brains, I was able to launch a pretty successful program. And they supported me all the way in that program and it turned out to be quite viable. We were graduating in this steel town 100 [adult] graduates a year as a result.

MILLER: That's a fairly large program, Lee.

CLARK: Yes.

MILLER: And you say you started the program then?

CLARK: Yes, from scratch.

MILLER: Very good.

CLARK: But because of the interest of these people in Sacramento, because I wanted to talk to somebody up there, they had three people talk to me for six hours. And that helped. And then they kept watching. And if you ask another question about my next job, I'll tell you what part they played [in that], too.

MILLER: Yeah. So you actually . . . I mean, that's testament to the fact that at that point the state department gave a lot of direct support to administrators in the field.

CLARK: Yes. As a matter of fact, Larry Koehler came down when we opened the registration and he helped with the registration.

MILLER: That's great! I'm not sure any of the consultants would do that now. [Chuckling] Okay, and so you were in Fontana about six years?

CLARK: Six years, yes.

MILLER: And did the program show considerable growth during that time?

CLARK: Not too much. I think it only got up to about 300 a.d.a., but nonetheless it was kind of steady growth. It was a one-man show. I was the counselor, I was the principal, and I did absolutely all of the work there. But we worked close with the local high school. We were right on their campus and they gave us their entire facility. Plus, they had one of the best libraries in the state of California, and we used that for people to come in and do make-ups, which was kind of

unique. But again we only went up to about 300 a.d.a., but I was still quite busy.

MILLER: So it was a big jump for you then to go from Fontana to San Jose, which had a much larger program.

CLARK: Yes. At the time, San Jose had 950 units of a.d.a. and we had 300 in Fontana, so it was quite a sizeable jump. But the interesting part of that, Cuba, was that I was working on a doctorate at the time and had just driven during that year 5,000 mile into USC. And I really did not want to leave because I wanted to [complete] my dissertation and get [my degree]. And so I got a call from Stan Sworder who said, "Would you be interested in being considered a candidate for a large Northern California city?" And I said, "Yes, I guess I would." And so they set me up with an interview. I came up and I thought, well, this is just window dressing, because they have two people who have already been working in the program and they both had Ph.D.'s. And I said, "Well, I'm just kind of window dressing or background to kind of make the other people stand out." And when the superintendent called me two weeks later and said, "You're appointed," I couldn't believe it. I absolutely could not believe I was appointed for this position. I said [to myself], "What am I going to do about my doctorate?" And then I said, "Well, where would you go after you get

your doctorate?" And then I told myself, "Probably to a large Northern California city." [Chuckling]

MILLER: Yeah, it was where you wanted to go anyway. [Chuckling]

CLARK: And so I was elected, and I spent sixteen years in that program.

MILLER: In San Jose. Again I'm interested in the fact that Stan Sworder made the contact for you. So, I mean, actively involved in helping to staff. . . .

CLARK: Yeah, San Jose had contacted him, "Could you recommend some people?" I guess, and that's all I know about it. So then he contacted me and said, "Would you like to be a candidate?" And I said, "Yes, I guess I would."

MILLER: Okay. San Jose eventually expanded into the Metropolitan Adult Education Program [MAEP]. Tell us about that.

CLARK: Okay. I think I was in San Jose just a couple of years or so [when] they decided. . . . They got three districts together. Campbell, San Jose, and Santa Clara got together and they wanted to have a joint program. Somebody had discussed this, and so we had to do a lot of [work]. Because when you have three programs or three places like that, you're sort of beholden to all three boards of education. It wasn't the true type of organization we have now with the joint powers type of thing; it was more informal. We had to develop all

the ground rules. And the ground rules were this: that anybody who was a resident of the cooperating districts who came anywhere in the program to take education, we had to attribute [their attendance] back to [their] district. And so we were gathering attendance, which was kind of complicated. And all of the outside attendance that we brought [in was] divided on a proportional basis with the three districts. Then [MAEP] gradually went to East Side and to Milpitas, so it was a five-district consortium for several years.

MILLER: And then you finally formalized that into a joint powers agreement?

CLARK: Then there was a vocational joint powers agreement that developed about the same time . . . [which later included adult ed]. This always was kind of a loosely jointed [agreement], but nonetheless it was unique. We decided to call [the adult ed portion] Metropolitan to engulf the entire five school districts. The contract said that anybody could pull out anytime they wanted if they weren't happy with it. And that's about it on that.

MILLER: Okay. Now, some of the districts have since withdrawn. Do you know what was involved in their decisions to sort of take their a.d.a. back and run their own schools?

CLARK: Yes. It was Santa Clara who decided to run their own, as did Milpitas. Well, East Side has too now, so that the program merely

involves Campbell and San Jose Unified at this time. And I was sorry to see this happen because jointly we had so much more power and emphasis and influence. We would publish our schedule twice a year—it was quite a large schedule for all those—and we would send it to about 330,000 homes in the cooperating districts. And the response! We went from 950 or so a.d.a. in San Jose Unified to well over 8,000 [in all five districts] in our heyday.

MILLER: Okay, so that was about the largest of the MAEP a.d.a. then, about 8,000.

CLARK: Yes.

MILLER: And that placed you where in the state in terms of size?

CLARK: At the time, despite Tom Johnson's [Hacienda La Puente Adult Education] concern, [Chuckling] we were second to Los Angeles. Because San Francisco and San Diego had withdrawn from the regular [public school] adult ed [and moved] to the community colleges. Now, they might have been as large, I'm not sure, but nonetheless we were second in terms of the total a.d.a. rendered at the time.

MILLER: Okay. Between Gilroy and Clovis and Fontana, and then going to San Jose, you've actually had experience in a lot of different settings then, rural and suburban and then metropolitan, or urban. And one

of the strengths of adult ed is being able to meet needs of the communities. I think that your broad experience puts you in good position to make some comments on how adult ed programs can be tailored to different communities.

CLARK: Well, first of all, adult education has been head and shoulders above almost any other level of education, including colleges and universities [in meeting local needs and desires]. And it may not be quite as much today, but it used to be that anybody who wanted a program. . . . Let me give one example. Some people walked into Metropolitan and said, "We would like you to teach a foreign language for us." And I said, "We already are doing about [twelve] different foreign languages. What do you want?" He said, "Well, you're not doing [our language]. We are from Yugoslavia, there's quite a gathering of us, and we would like to have classes in Serbo-Croatian." And I said, "Serbo-Croatian? Is that a language?" [Chuckling] And they said, "Yes, it is." And I said, "Okay, then let's have a little advisory committee and plan out the program. Are you sure you can get enough people interested?" Yes, they were sure. As it turned out, we had two classes of forty people each in these Serbo-Croatian . . . and that went on for three or four years, as a matter of fact. But that's an example of how they can walk in. I used to pride

myself on that, and we would say in our bulletin, "We can have a class going for you in two weeks."

MILLER: Yes.

CLARK: Now that [ability to respond to community requests] has dampened down somewhat. But one concern that I have in today's adult education is that I see some programs—and it happened then too—that go to the easy mark type [of class] instead of really using advisory [committees]. In the Metropolitan adult and vocational system, we had over 125 community advisory committees.

MILLER: That's amazing!

CLARK: And that's a bunch of committees. They were, in the main, in vocational [training], but we had them in our own adult ed as well. But we really tapped into the community, or tried to at least. But today, for example, I will see some programs that will be 30 to 40 percent for handicapped. And I don't think it's philanthropic thinking; it's an easy mark. In other words, they go, they cooperate with the convalescent scene, and they don't really find out what is the fair shake for the entire community. We, for instance, had a very active student and community advisory committee we called the senate, and they helped us determine what are the community needs. And a lot of places just don't bother to. It's too much time or

trouble, and so they get disproportionately [involved in handicapped programs]. Sometimes they go to the easy mark now.

MILLER: To the residential facilities where . . . a captured audience, so to speak.

CLARK: I keep saying, "You've got to have a balanced program because everybody's paying for it." And that's my concern.

MILLER: Can you make any generalized statements about, say, the difference of adult schools in rural communities and the more urban ones, and the kinds of offerings that they would have?

CLARK: I think they're doing a better job now than maybe we did early on because we were the. . . . Being beholden to the local school district, whose primary interest was in, quote, "the day school," [adult ed] was kind of this stepchild in a lot of areas, and the programs were just minimal. I saw citizenship and I saw a little bit of ESL and the basic ed stuff, and sometimes not even the high school [level]. I think that the rural places tended, in my day at least, to have somebody mainly attached to the high school who would be running the program, and their primary interest would not be really adult education. They were doing it as, quotes, "strictly extra." But I think today we get a better representation in those rural areas. We get some solid, committed adult ed people.

MILLER: Okay. Your active career as an adult educator has spanned part of four decades, and can you tell us just a little bit about what adult education was like in the state in the '50s when you first got started? Did it look any different than it does today?

CLARK: Let's see . . .

MILLER: Well, you mentioned folk dancing, for example, was one of the first things that you taught.

CLARK: Well, it was scrutinized very, very carefully. As you know, they used to have some shenanigans going on. The high a.d.a. renderers, such as physical fitness and exercising, would be basketball leagues and things like that. Now this was—

MILLER: Actual leagues.

CLARK: Actual leagues. This was a minor part of it, but this caused the ire, and the "Fun with Frosting" type programs would creep in and there would be a big hullabaloo about that. That was a minor part of [adult ed], but when a legislative person who had no truck with adult ed got a hold of it. . . . For example, in the physical fitness area where they would go into leagues, they re-legislated so that out of every hour of any kind of activity like that you had to have fifteen minutes of pure, organized calisthenics. And so that put the damper

on some of these basketball. . . . One of the worst things I heard about, and naturally I didn't involve myself in this, but . . .

MILLER: Of course not. [Chuckling]

CLARK: But it was that you'd go to a basketball league, which was adult education sponsored, and they not only would count the players, they would count all of the audience.

MILLER: Oh, I can't believe that!

CLARK: Then most of the legitimate adult educators generally were in horror of that, but they claimed that happened. But when they talked about [abuses], they forgot to talk about how people were in the basic ed programs and the high school programs and the rest of them were really getting a new start in life. But they would just emphasize all this frill stuff. That was a favorite word in those days.

MILLER: Frills. Yeah, okay. Okay, obviously limitations on these kinds of excesses then would have been a dominant issue of the '50s. Were there other major issues of the '50s that you can recall?

CLARK: I don't really know of any other issue of any great significance, no.

MILLER: Okay. What about the '60s? What were the main trends or dominant issues of the '60s?

CLARK: Well, I don't remember when that 10-cent tax came into being, but I think it was sometime during the '60s. And I think that 10-cent

tax. . . . In San Jose Metropolitan, for example, George Downing was Superintendent of San Jose Unified, and he [refused] that 10-cent tax. Virtually every district I heard about imposed it, but he said, "We don't need that 10-cent tax. Adult education is part of our program." And I really felt pretty good about it. I thought it was a little bit silly not to take advantage of it, but he wouldn't impose it, and he said, "Adult education is as integral as any part of our whole [program], and we're going to pay for it out of regular. . . . We're not going to throw on a new 10-cent tax." But the importance of—

[interview interrupted, tape turned off]

CLARK: Okay. The important part of the '60s to me was the fact that adult education with that 10-cent tax was being recognized as being a part that didn't have to depend totally upon the rigors of the efforts of the elementary and high school people. And I think people started gaining some stature and some confidence. Because otherwise you always had to be looking toward the east and the elementary and high school people, and it was not too pleasant sometimes.

MILLER: Okay. Federal funding for adult ed got started in the '60s too, didn't it?

CLARK: In the main, the basic education programs, the basic education funding. . . .

[interview interrupted, tape turned off]

MILLER: I was asking about the federal funding that started during the '60s.

CLARK: The federal funding that affected my life and my program most was the basic education. It had different kinds. It offered some direct help so you could have additional counseling. You weren't supposed to [use funds for] any additional teachers or instructional [salaries].

MILLER: It was supplemental.

CLARK: Supplemental, yes. And we profited from that. Roy Steeves [State Director, Adult Basic Education] was head of the state basic education program, and he kind of liked our program a little bit. He invited me to inquire about some additional basic ed funding, which eventually led to three trips to Washington, D.C. to inquire about it. And over a period of three or four years, we were able to get well over a million dollars. We started a program called *Escuela Amistad*, Friendship School. All the CBOs [community based organizations] and people who were getting funding besides adult education were getting money free of charge practically. And so they were taking some of the workers, the migrant workers and what have you, and educating them and training them for jobs along with us, but the women were left behind. And the social welfare department was noticing problems were widening between husband, wife, and families,

and that kind of thing. So we said, "Okay, well, let's do a program for the women who are left behind mainly. They can't work because they have children." So we started this *Escuela Amistad* and we brought them in. . . . They couldn't speak English, so we tried to teach them English, not through direct instruction but by doing [daily living activities] within [a laboratory setting], and then [teaching] them [to] converse in English on just a person-to-person basis. Then, after a month or two or three, as they gained some confidence, we would route them into formal classes, all in this one complex. The first year we had over 300 visitors from all over the U.S. coming in and seeing it. And because it was called Friendship School, we told our students, "This is a Friendship School and we want you to act like it." And so they would wander all around, and a visitor would come and they would be all smiles, and the visitors would be so impressed: "This must be a great school. Everybody is so up and happy." [Chuckling] But we got that [grant] by invitation, and it turned out [well]. They still employ the concept of *Escuela Amistad* in many parts of the Metropolitan Program, I think.

MILLER: Lee, was that . . . okay, like the federal funds are divided between local assistance grants and then special projects. Sometimes they have been 309, 310, 353 projects, but special projects. Was the *Escuela*

Amistad one of those special projects, or was this something that was directly funded out of Washington rather than being channeled through the state?

CLARK: It was channeled through the state, so it must have been a special project that came through the state, although, as I said, I went [to Washington] three times to get approval. It seemed kind of silly at the time because it was almost a rubber stamp, but I had to go back three times and review everything and get a stamp of approval for continuing sustenance.

MILLER: Sometimes those federal acts had kind of obscure special sections to them that were nationwide demonstration grants rather than specific kind of state special projects, and this sounds like it might have been a national demonstration grant. And sometimes there are only a half dozen or ten of those national demonstration grants given nationwide.

CLARK: Yeah. The reason that I thought perhaps it was more of a state [project], Roy Steeves, the state head of the Basic Ed, brought it to our attention and encouraged and endorsed it heavily. But you're probably right. It was of such a magnitude that it must have been a special demonstration thing.

MILLER: Whatever it was, it sounds great. [Chuckling] And I had never heard of it. I've learned something today. [Chuckling] During the '60s,

adult school attendance still generated the same revenue that the high schools did, and I'm curious as to whether more adult schools didn't move in the direction of full-time staff and benefits, more of a full-time professional staff during that period of time. Do you have any thoughts on that?

CLARK: I think the 10-cent tax generated some confidence. In our Metropolitan Program at one time we had well over thirty full-time contract teachers, besides hundreds of part-timers working, and then the people were surprised that I visited. But as you pointed out earlier, that the larger the program the more likely that you would venture into this. Because [of] the old folks' tales about, you know, tenure being a problem, the districts were worried sick about getting too many tenured teachers. That didn't affect us because of being larger and having many programs contribute, although they brought it to my attention several times: "Well, if we break up this program, what are we going to do with the teachers involved, the full-time teachers?" I'm not sure I answered the question, really, but I do feel that we were gaining in confidence and feeling that it wasn't too illegal or immoral to have teachers becoming tenured.

I want to say I don't remember, Cuba, but the funding at one point . . . as you know, we had to [identify] students that were taking

ten or more hours per week of classes, as I recall, or were . . . under age, under twenty-one. Then they were in one category of attendance. And if they were less, fewer hours than ten, then they were in a different category of attendance, which was at a lesser rate. Do you remember that?[1]

MILLER: I think that that was probably before I came into the field.

CLARK: I see, okay.

MILLER: Because the separate revenue limit had already been established when I started.

CLARK: I think the revenue limit had to begin sometime during the . . . maybe even late '60s, '65, '66, something of that sort. For many years we operated under that rather peculiar system. You had to collect attendance on two different levels and it was kind of complicated.

MILLER: I would imagine that really made your a.d.a. calculations much more time-consuming, if nothing else. What about the '70s, Lee, in terms of again sort of dominant issues of the '70s?

CLARK: Remind me, Cuba, when did [Proposition] 13 come in?

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[1]Prior to the revenue limit concept of school finance, adult education had attendance categories which called for separate a.d.a. stipulations. The adult "as defined" included persons over twenty-one years of age taking fewer than ten hours of classes weekly. The "non-defined" adult, which earned a higher revenue, included adults taking ten or more hours of classes a week, plus all persons under twenty-one years of age. [Clark]

MILLER: That was right at the end of the '70s.

CLARK: Somewhere around '79 then?

MILLER: Seventy-eight. So, you know, there was almost a decade of. . . . I mean, that was right at the end of the '70s, so there were other things earlier.

CLARK: I felt during that time I was at Metropolitan that growth was moving ahead but not at a pace that would bother too many—

[interview interrupted, tape turned off]

CLARK: Our program, in terms of Metropolitan, had expanded because every [participating] district was contributing more. And we had an unusual situation. I think our growth was somewhere in the neighborhood of 15 to 25 percent, but throughout the total state, the growth was only perhaps less than 5 percent total, even during the times when you could start classes for a.d.a. reasons anytime you wanted. [Restricting] that was part [of the results] of Prop. 13, as you recall. So I felt it was a time of fairly healthy growth, and I think one might say that adult education asserted itself pretty strongly at that time, and yet did not go overboard with the "Fun with Frosting" type of courses and things that the legislature picked up. The State, I think, gave quite good leadership at the time and kept us under control, in

terms of that fringe and frill stuff that would cause some problems. But I felt it was a very healthy time, right up to Prop. 13.

MILLER: And yet you were mentioning that you thought that statewide that growth was right at or a little under 5 percent, and yet that's what. . . . There was a growth cap established at the time, wasn't there, at a 5 percent growth cap?

CLARK: No, I don't think so, not until after Prop. 13.

MILLER: Not until after Prop. 13, okay. [Note: A 5% cap was set in 1975 after a five-year average growth rate of 14%.] Lee, it was during the mid-'70s that the competency based education movement got its first strong push with the publication of the APL [Applied Performance Level] Study out of Texas, but it was in the early '80s that California adopted that as a requirement for the federal programs. In the local schools, was that competency based movement felt much during the '70s at all?

CLARK: It was talked about a lot and whatnot, and it may have been implemented to a certain extent—I don't think quite as much as it should have been. I'll give an example. At one point prior to the basic ed funding, California, for example, had more publicly sponsored adult education of its type than the rest of the nation put together. But once the basic ed funding came in, the [other] states

started picking it up and they started [making] basic education programs available to their publics. I'm sorry, repeat the question.

MILLER: Well, again, was the competency based education movement felt much at the school site level in the '70s prior to the time that our state department made it mandatory?

CLARK: Adult educators essentially tend to resist change a bit. They don't mind change, they just don't like to have anybody there telling them to change. [Chuckling] But I think that people were making an effort in that direction. Even today I tell my classes that as you're teaching people to speak the language and adopt the culture, you've got to also teach them how to get a job and how to speak practical English. During the time in Fontana when I was principal and janitor and everything else there all at one time, I would counsel people, hundreds of people, who would come into the high school program. Because we had Kaiser Steel assisting us, and we'd graduate 100 people every year, and that was pretty [good]. That was a legitimate high school diploma. But the interesting part, the people coming back to be in that program, those that had dropped out of school, generally dropped out because of the teaching of English—not math, not social sciences, not science, but the teaching of English. And the reason [was that] the way it was taught [made] them feel inferior.

Instead of teaching English for them to use in their daily lives and to get a job and do all that kind of thing—and that's what I call competency education—they were teaching them to conjugate verbs and to do all that structure stuff. And that had already made them feel: "I'm too stupid. I can't learn that stuff." And so competency [based education] had put an aura, as it were, on teaching them things they could use in their lives. It infuriated a lot of pure English teachers, I noticed.

MILLER: Also, during the '70s, a separate revenue limit was established for adult ed. Did that cause any major changes in the way the programs were administered?

CLARK: I don't know the statistics on whether any new programs came into being as a result of it. But I do feel that it had a definite effect upon the programs because it essentially helped the budget planners. In my own position, we had to plan out the budget for the year. Where you had sort of guaranteed funding within some of the rules there, it made you confident, and I think we began to see a lot of expenditures that were for the benefit of adult education. For example, we were hiring more aides in our program than we had ever done before, and we were getting in some special, talented people to give us workshops as well. And we started a program by which if anybody worked

fifteen hours a week they got benefits, partial benefits. Then if they got up to twenty they got additional benefits; and if it got beyond twenty-five or something, then they got full benefits. And that was unheard of at the time.

MILLER: I know it's hard to generalize for the state, but certainly before the separate revenue limit it was common for the districts to use a lot of the money that adult ed had generated, to use that money in the kid programs. Are there any general statements that can be made about how common that was or how much of the money was used for the youth rather than the adults?

CLARK: I don't know any statistics. I do know that some people, some in our own ranks, were against [separate revenue limits] because, at least in their minds, they were getting [in] trouble at home. They were saying, "If I can't kick in all this money to the district, if they don't have a free rein to abscond with this money, they're going to shut down my program, and they've told it to my face." Well, that I'm sure was an isolated few cases, but that became the talk of the town. That if we are able to run the program independently without worrying about the position of the day school—in other words having that [independence]—they just wouldn't want to have us around. And

there were some cases where that was exactly right, but I think that blew over fairly quickly.

MILLER: You know, in terms of whether it was just talk or not, are you aware of any schools that did close down when the separate revenue limit came in?

CLARK: I had heard about one or two schools, but honestly I don't remember who they happened to be.

MILLER: Okay, so it may or may not have happened in a couple of cases.

CLARK: Yeah. I think this, Cuba: I think the school that I'd heard about was a pretty small, inconsequential type of school to begin with, with both the people running it and the school district not really caring about it.

MILLER: Okay. Prop. 13 came in at the end of the '70s, and we'll talk about that a little bit later. In the '80s, are there dominant issues that you can identify? Certainly our offerings were restricted during the '80s.

CLARK: Yeah. After Prop. 13, of course, they wiped out a lot of the programs. [Metropolitan lost 54 percent of its financing.] And programs, well, maybe one quick reference to that is after Prop. 13 passed, people came to us in large numbers and said, "We didn't know it was going to affect adult education." But they found out that [many courses] were not [funded] immediately after [Prop. 13], and so they couldn't go to [those] classes without paying for them. Some

districts were charging for their programs, the so-called community ed programs, at the same rate as their revenue limit.

MILLER: That was high.

CLARK: That was very high, and they had required thirty people to be in [each class]. . . . And it wasn't the adult educators doing that, it was other [district] individuals. And may I say parenthetically that all the time I was yelling at people [about] these tuition-based classes, community ed classes, you don't play under the same rules. You've got to learn how to merchandise the program. That means you reach out and you get people to come in and you pay for that program entirely, but you don't have to charge [as much] because you don't need to have so much administration or counseling or subsidiary services. And then finally people started realizing that, but some programs never realized that and so it was kind of traumatic.

[End Tape 1, Side A]

[Begin Tape 1, Side B]

MILLER: Okay, so during the '80s we had the program restrictions that were the result of Prop. 13, and we had the mandate for implementation of competency based education, and you've already made some remarks about the value of that. Generally speaking, during the '70s and '80s, do you have any comments about the relationship between the field

and the State Department of Education? You had mentioned earlier that the state had been very supportive of local programs, and did that carry through in the '70s and '80s?

CLARK: I don't think that the later groups [were as supportive] because of several factors. They had grown in size, they were administering more funding, and they were getting some resistance. I don't think the rapport was quite as good either way at that time, and there were a few more suspicions and things like that. I'm not exactly sure what could have been done about that part of it. But generally speaking, larger programs tended to be favored, I think, over smaller programs. Maybe it was not intended.

MILLER: They maintained a sort of unofficial advisory committee that was kind of made up of the directors of the larger programs, did they not? Were you a participant in that? It certainly wasn't anything official.

CLARK: Yeah, I was early on. As part of it I was [adult education] chairperson of ACSA [Association of California School Administrators] for three years, and during that time I had frequent contacts with people at the [state]. And I also spent a lot of time in Sacramento in the legislative process visiting different people and going to joint meetings. But no matter [who] they brought in, in the way of advisory people, it sounded to me like the leadership of the

state was . . . that their conclusions were pretty cut and dried to abide by the feds. So I didn't notice too many innovative things occurring because of the field participation.

MILLER: Okay. Prior to our interview, we talked about some topics that you had some particular interest in, and one of those was the movement from evening high schools, or night school, to just plain adult schools over the years. You have some comments on that, the scope of the change and how long it took and so on.

CLARK: Okay, it took quite a while because [at an earlier time, adult schools were almost exclusively held in district facilities during evening hours]. We had some storefront things going all the time on a very minor basis all through the state, as I recall. But when the enrollments in the day schools started fading, in many, many instances adult schools were able to take over those [buildings]. In some cases they [districts] just sold them, but in many programs we took over empty elementary schools, and we still have them today as a result of it. And that added to [program growth] because the adult administrator, in order to keep the school, had to keep it filled. So it was kind of a motivational thing for him to have this school. Now, is that talking to that point at all?

MILLER: I think so. In other words, possibly the reason that classes had been at night was because that's when space was available?

CLARK: Yeah.

MILLER: And as space became available in the daytime, classes were moved to the daytime?

CLARK: Yes, [and many people were surprised how popular classes for adults became when scheduled during daylight hours]. I think it was just that logistically, because of the financing, the availability of space, and the thought. . . . For example, early on the thought of an adult education program renting prior to having funding available. . . . As you know, some of the [federal] basic funding did allow you to rent space in order . . . and we did that on our main project. But without that and without the availability of the free schools, [for] most programs just . . . it was unheard of to go out and rent space. [In many instances adult schools cooperated with local agencies. They provided space and students, and we provided teachers.]

MILLER: And of course growth was taking place also in the adult ed program, so that more space was needed on that.

CLARK: I felt a lot of gloom and doom at the time of Prop. 13 [caused programs to aggressively push the legislature for additional funding as well as to increase their contract programs]. As you look now adult

programs are being paid . . . there's inflation, of course, but being paid much more money than we were getting prior to Prop. 13. And that suggests that we have [recouped from the trauma of Prop. 13 and are growing again despite current program and financial restrictions].

MILLER: Yes. Do you have any comments, Lee, on the status of adult education in comparison with other levels of education in the state?

CLARK: Well, I think contrary to what people say about ACSA and all who are disgruntled, I think it has tried, and in the main, with few exceptions, it has [succeeded in giving] recognition to adult education. I've served on several committees involving other level administrators and have made my presence known, in the past at least. I really think that we have gained some stature and acceptance by other levels as a direct result of integrating with ACSA, despite the claims to the contrary. And without that I don't think our position would be as good as it is today. I don't know of any . . . When I go to a meeting, I don't hear a lot of people talking about, "Well, [regardless of our size] we are at the same level of acceptance [as] their. . . ." But I'll tell you about two things. One, a few years ago Paul Belomy [Fremont and Santa Clara Adult Schools] made a survey of community members, and the [details] I don't remember now, but at

the time the [approval] rate of [adult education to] the general taxpaying public turned out to be about 85 to 90 percent.

MILLER: That's very high.

CLARK: Yes, and that whenever the question was asked at elementary and high schools, it was about 45 percent. And I saw one other study which said the same thing. So I think a lot of our brethren at other levels of education have caught onto the idea that we're generally quite acceptable to the public. [I have heard several superintendents indicate that the best public relations arm in a given district is adult education.]

MILLER: Because we serve the public and they like what we make available for them.

CLARK: Exactly. The voting public comes to us, you see.

MILLER: Yes. Lee, are there any general comments that can be made about the size of adult ed programs in comparison to other levels of education?

CLARK: Well, I'm not quite sure what you mean, "the size of." . . .

MILLER: Statewide. Number of people served.

CLARK: To the best of my knowledge, the statistics I hear is that we're pushing close to two million people in adult education.

MILLER: Yes.

CLARK: Now, I use that quote a lot when I'm dealing with teachers coming in from other states, and they don't know that . . . "Does this credential just allow me to teach adult education?" I say, "Well, don't say 'just adult education.' Two million people are coming to our programs. It's big business in California, and it's worthy of having a separate credential." I think that the Consortium [California Consortium for Adult Education] that I helped develop, and it's not perfect but it's helped bring to the public's attention better than we have in the past, that adult education is worthy of consideration. And hardly a day goes by, or hardly a teacher candidate goes by that I don't hear them say, "Oh, I took these college courses, but I've also taken these adult ed courses or ROP courses." So, in answer, I think we're doing okay.

MILLER: Yeah. And our programs now have more students than any other segment in the state, except elementary school. More students than the secondary and more students than community colleges and more students than the university system.

CLARK: Yeah, I use this quote that I heard some years ago, and I still use it, that one out of seven high school and GED type graduates are coming from the adult schools now. I know it did at one point, but I continue to use that statistic, and it may or may not be absolutely accurate, but I think it comes pretty close.

MILLER: But close to it. Another change that's been evident through the years has been in the profile of adult school administrators. Have you seen this, and what have the changes been, and. . . ?

CLARK: Yeah, I'm really impressed with the . . . in general, I'm really impressed that we're finding more and more true adult educators in the programs rather than [someone] simply being kicked upstairs [as was common] when I arrived on the scene. I don't think any . . . I could be mistaken, but I don't think any level of education has more participation administratively of women. . . . What the minority [representation] is, I think it's certainly well above average, but I'm more impressed with the fact that women are participating more. They get into it and we're finding them at all levels. When I was head of the ACSA state committee, I think we had one or two women on that whole business. And I think now we've got at least 50 to 60 percent.

MILLER: And that's been a fairly recent phenomenon, really, the advancement of women.

CLARK: Yeah, quite possibly. But it started happening. When you say recent, I would say it started happening about ten years ago.

MILLER: Yes. I know the first meetings that I went to, there would be four, five, six women in the room. Statewide meetings.

CLARK: Yeah, but look how popular you were. [Laughter]

MILLER: So you certainly do see the difference now. In addition to your talking about more kind of professional adult administrators rather than people who have been transferred into it, I think that possibly the element of choice, that people are now choosing to go into adult ed, is very important in that respect.

Lee, it's hard to talk to anyone about adult education in California without mentioning the role of the community colleges, and everyone seems to have their own perspective on this. How do you interpret the relationship between the two systems, in terms of adult education?

CLARK: Well, I harbor the bias. I actually ran, in my early days in Metropolitan San Jose Unified, I ran for maybe two, three, or four years an evening junior college. It was one of five [in the state]. Evening junior colleges [were] specially organized, and it could issue the associate of arts degree and [certificates to adults].

MILLER: Now, this was when the junior colleges were still under the same school boards as the K-12 schools?

CLARK: Yes. And then when San Jose City [College] separated from San Jose Unified, then it was the decision to give up the junior college, which I certainly agreed with. But I think, and for a good while, the

community colleges were doing the technical and transfer type student, and they were pleased and cooperative and we spoke to each other and all that kind of thing. Then as the number of people faded out of that transfer group, they started looking around and latching onto a lot of adult education programs. I'm more generalizing, though I think that happened. And so we started getting at each other's throats. In many cases they outwitted us because they could pay teachers at higher rates than [adult] ed, and for a good while there in their financing, they could get the same reimbursement for their adult ed as for their transfer students. They were having their heyday. Well, as you recall, there were a lot of hearings and they got cut back fairly substantially and had delineated for them what they could [do] . . . what type of student, and I'm not totally up-to-date on that. But that helped the adult programs quite a bit.

One quick example, in San Jose Metropolitan we had two community college districts: West Valley and San Jose City. They were taking people as low as the fifth-grade level of competency. We were saying, "Why don't you let us take those up through about the eighth or ninth grade, and in exchange we'll send you a whole bunch of high school graduates to participate in your college programs, better qualified than otherwise." People could [attend] the

community college without a high school diploma and. . . . But once they failed there, they failed everywhere, and they wouldn't come back and see us for five years. So my feeling is that some progress has been made since the financing is not so one-sided as it once was. But at the same time, I think that they try to think of themselves as more sophisticated and [that] they do the job better. I know they steal a lot of adult education teachers.

MILLER: Yes. [Chuckling]

CLARK: We train them and then they steal them quite often. But right now I don't know what's happening.

MILLER: Lee, during the late '60s and up to 1970, early '70s, in some areas they made a distinct decision as to where the adult education program should reside, and, well, we can talk about San Jose and the Metropolitan program and the Los Angeles program as examples of large districts where adult ed remained with the public school system. Other large systems such as San Francisco and San Diego opted to go with the community colleges and to place all of their adult ed there. Do you know what was involved in the decisions as to where to place adult ed? You know, when those divisions were taking place? That's a little different point than the community colleges encroaching once their own enrollments dropped.

CLARK: And there were others, such as Modesto, where they were running the program. If a community college takes over the adult ed totally, including the high school/elementary [programs], then they have to have permission to do that. They don't exactly contract, but they have a legal agreement [with the public school district]. Because technically a community college is not supposed to issue any kind of an elementary or high school diploma. And they're supposed to actually go back and have it issued by the [public school district]. It didn't [always] happen that way, but that's the way it was supposed to be. But in the [case] of San Diego and San Francisco, at the time they had huge programs and participated with us in adult ed. When we heard of that law [allowing adult ed programs to be moved], we were really appalled. It's because they [got] an extra million bucks [due to different funding levels] for simply transferring what they [were] doing over to the community colleges. And that was a sore point for many years.

MILLER: Yeah. Have you ever given consideration, or statewide was there ever much consideration given to a third separate system for adult ed? You know, separate from both the community colleges and the public schools?

CLARK: It was talked about a little bit. I think Tom Johnson was one individual who felt that way, and I personally felt eventually that that really was the only way to travel, to get out and not to cut all the connections and all, but to. . . . For example, the joint powers ROP programs, like in the Fremont area, the Mission Valley, they have the business department of Fremont Unified doing all of their business and hiring work and things like that. They contract with them. And I think a separate system . . . I think Wisconsin has a separate system like that, but I think having autonomy of the community college people who are in pure adult education and whatnot, it certainly is a way we need to think about, but you barely hear about it as a . . . I don't know what.

MILLER: As an option.

CLARK: Yeah.

MILLER: And certainly on some level the community college-sponsored adult ed programs are very integrated and very cooperative with the public schools. And in other areas where the encroachment has taken place, then there's . . . you know, the tension is there.

CLARK: Interestingly, I think San Francisco has gone back, and they have a small, pure adult education program there, and I think San Diego has a small, pure adult education—

MILLER: With the public schools, you mean?

CLARK: Yeah.

MILLER: I was not aware of that.

CLARK: Yeah, I could be mistaken, but I believe it does exist, very meager now compared to what it was, but I think they do exist. I think they had second thoughts.

MILLER: Lee, you've been involved in teacher training at some level for about twenty-five years, and certainly to a greater extent since your retirement, since that takes up the bulk of your time now. Tell us what you do in that regard and kind of a general assessment of the state of teacher training for adult educators in California.

CLARK: Okay. I was hired at Metropolitan, and within the year I was invited by [Dr.] Frank Wiley from San Jose State to teach some part-time classes for teachers in their personalized preparation programs. And I told Frank, "I can't do it. I have a program that's expanding." So he kept after me for five years, and I [said], "I can't do it. It's too much." But after five years I decided, well, okay, I'll go ahead with it. I had been invited to do some guest shots for UC Berkeley and also UC Riverside previously. And I ran one program for them when I was in Fontana, so I enjoyed that kind of thing but I just didn't have the time. Finally I said, "Okay, when I get enough time that I can

really devote to these programs. . . ." Because the reputation overall was that they [were] just another hurdle that we were making the teachers jump through that really had no meaning, no help. I said, "I don't want any program I do to be just a hurdle that they have to jump through." And so I got interested, and it is about twenty-five years now that I've been working on that, more heavily of late. And my feeling about training is . . . I tell everybody that comes, I say, "We are not going to waste your time. We're going to have you do things which will make you succeed as a teacher."[2]

One of the things that might seem really off-the-wall is we say, "One thing we're going to make you do is to learn how to listen to your students." And as dumb as that sounds, that kind of works. We make them learn how to listen.

And we teach them. . . . On an accreditation visit, I would find that about half of the [course] outlines—we call them blueprints—would be totally school- or teacher-oriented. They would say practically nothing about what the student could do as a result of it. And so, in the training I do, we teach them how to write a student-oriented course outline, how to develop unit implementation plans. And we insist on it: "We want you to do this. And if you

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[2]Susan Clark assists with the classes. [Miller]

learn how to do it, you'll be better than 90 percent of the teachers in the state."

And so we are really hard-bitten, demanding teachers, and we say, "You've got to assume responsibility." And as a result, you might think, well, nobody will want to come classes. But our classes are filled to overflowing. People come from Crescent City, from Fresno, from Napa, from Watsonville, from all over the place.

MILLER: When there are other programs that are closer to them.

CLARK: Exactly. One side issue, Susan and I a year ago did a CCAE conference in Sacramento, a year or two ago, and it was on the very scintillating subject of how to teach responsibility. [Chuckling] You know, really, and we were at nine o'clock in the morning on a Friday, and we thought, well, maybe we'll get about six people to come out to this very interesting subject. And about nine o'clock there were six people, and suddenly a couple minutes later there were ten. Before we were through, we had fifty-five people in a room that held twenty-five. They were hanging from the rafters. We handed out material, and we had more compliments. We said, "We're not asking you to [change] your teaching style, we're not asking you to change your curriculum. We're simply saying: 'Add the element of teaching your students to be responsible,'" and we gave them kind of a blueprint for

that. So I think the harder you work and the more you do for people, the more they respond to it. And they respect you.

MILLER: I visit a lot of schools throughout the state, and what you've just mentioned about building lessons and outlines that are student-centered, the need for that is so great. I just see it all the time, that the teacher is dominating the classroom in too many instances. Something else I want to mention that I remember about you [Chuckling] when I visited your school once, this was when you were at Fremont, and that all of your teachers had the outline of their lesson plan on the board.[3] And again, a lot of times you go into a classroom and you see teachers doing a series of activities, but they're not necessarily drawn together into an integrated lesson.

CLARK: Yeah. We spent a lot of time saying that everything you do has to be based upon your blueprint of what you want . . . we say, "What you want your students to do or be as a result of your influence and your course's influence. And if any of you do anything that does not relate to that, then you're wasting their time." And you would say, "Well, what if my blueprint isn't up-to-date?" Get it up-to-date. [Chuckling]

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[3]In Fremont, it was a requirement that each teacher post the daily session objective. This meant the blueprint or course outline had to be consulted daily in order for the teacher to develop the session objective. The purpose of this was to be sure the instructional plan for the day related directly to the course outline. [Clark]

So we are really pleased with the response of the people, and in the past five or six years our program has doubled in size, simply because we take it seriously.

Let me say one other thing. It may sound like I'm really bragging about it, but I'll have teachers come up to me, and I won't even recognize them, and they'll say, "We have your materials you handed out to us." We don't have them buy any books; we give them all the materials. "We have these materials for fifteen or twenty years." They don't throw them away. And that's a pretty good compliment.

MILLER: Yeah, that's very good. Have you been active in the discussions over the recent recommendations for changing the adult ed credential?

CLARK: They wouldn't accept me as a member of the [official] group unfortunately. And so I was invited to one [advisory] meeting by the CCAE [California Council for Adult Education], one full-day meeting, and we made a bunch of recommendations, one or two of which were accepted, but that's about it.

MILLER: Okay, at this point do you have any predictions on what's going to happen on that, on how the final product's going to look?

CLARK: No, I guess not. It has some changes that I don't agree with, but that's okay.[4] I think most people will just simply abide by them. What I look for is, rather than to say, "Okay, this is unnecessary or so bureaucratic," I look for a greater need to get the locals invited to participate in that, like that professional growth thing. Some of the local administrators really resent that, because they're going to have to keep track of everything. But from the time that first came out and everybody was fighting against it, they are softening a little bit, I think. I told them, "As the LEA [Local Educational Agency], we will volunteer to keep the records, if you want. If you'll input it, we'll keep records." But now they're starting to say, "We'll do it ourselves."

[tape turned off]

MILLER: Okay, we were talking about some of the recommendations for the changes in the credentialing and your responses to those.

CLARK: Yeah, I feel that, in the main, we can live with most of them. I do feel that the ESL lobby, whether it's real or imaginary, has kind of taken over and unduly influenced the new credentialing requirements,

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[4]The Commission on Teacher Credentialing has approved all of the proposed changes, and they are in the process of being implemented. Implementation of some of the proposed changes requires new legislation, and that has not been accomplished. The most dramatic change is the imposition of the continuing professional growth requirements and requirements for instruction in English as a second language. [Clark]

and I think in the long run we're going to see some problems there. I really feel also that [putting art] in the academic side [and requiring] CBEST [California Basic Educational Skills Test] [for that] is the ruination of [those] programs. And by the same token I think that there should be some practical experiences which are not allowed now for academic subjects that could be construed to be part of the requirements to get the academic listing, if you understand what I'm saying.

MILLER: Yes.

CLARK: And that isn't there. Sometimes I feel people working in education don't know the reality of [the wants and needs of] everybody around them, the public at large, the taxpayers, and I'm amazed that we can sort of stay shielded from the reality.

MILLER: [Chuckling] And also how adult classrooms may differ from elementary and secondary classrooms, in terms of what's needed from the instructor.

CLARK: Occasionally in our San Jose State program, with the adult and vocational teachers, we get elementary people, and a lot of secondary teachers [who] are moving to vocational, and they have to have a new credential to do that, that pure vocational. And they get in and they say, "Well, we know it all already," but they change more than anyone

else. Seriously! [About halfway through the program they discover the difference in teaching adults and students in vocational education.]

MILLER: Yes.

CLARK: They find they have to change their attitude. I can really document that, case after case.

MILLER: There's always a big difference for people that have come from other systems that the adult system is a voluntary one, and that you have to know something about the learner that's in the adult classroom to be successful there.

CLARK: Yeah, one thing, Cuba, that is very apparent that many of these people don't know is the amount of promotion we have to do to keep our [program]. And some of them, "Why do you. . . ." I've had our superintendent tell me, "Why don't you just let the people come? If they want it, they'll take it." I said, "It doesn't work that way. Why don't you let your students just come on a volunteer basis too in the elementary and high schools and see how many you'd get." But we have learned how to promote better than any level of education in California.

MILLER: Do you have any comment on the dropping of the credential requirement for community college instructors?

CLARK: Well, [the community college requirement is still in transition, I believe, emphasizing the master's degree more than expertise in the subject being taught]. Community colleges have more local autonomy on that. I know some will accept the vocational credential now that we issue, and a few the adult ed credential. I'm perfectly acceptable to the fact that the. . . . It seems a little strange that they would teach the same subject to the same person and not have to have a credential, however, and that bothers me a little bit.

MILLER: Yeah, it does a lot of people. [Chuckling] Okay. Another kind of teacher training is staff development, and there's a lot of emphasis on staff development today, but let's go back again to when you first entered the field. What kind of staff development was available in the '50s, '60s, '70s?

CLARK: Most of the staff development was a little bit on the light side, but most staff development in those days was to train the teachers on the mechanics of the school itself. In other words: How do you register people? How do you keep track of their attendance? And it was kind of a mechanical thing, with a little bit of emphasis upon a new ruling that would come forth from some kind of a funded program and whatnot. It never really got down to the brass tacks of: How do you improve your instruction and do well? And we felt, well, we have

so many different kinds of teachers that everything we deal with has to be at a generic level. And sometimes when you get it too generic you miss the point. So it was a little bit . . . a little bit do-it-yourself. [Since we have received supplemental funding from various sources, departments benefitting most include ESL and vocational.]

MILLER: So, in that regard, we certainly have better organized staff development than then.

CLARK: Could I make one comment on what I feel staff development ought to be today? I know there are some innovative things, but I hear at practically every conference, and at all levels of education, the word "change": change, change, change, change. And I'm kind of tired of seeing that and hearing it all the time. It sounds a little strange, I suppose, but my feeling is: Why don't we do what we're doing right so we don't have to change so damn much?

MILLER: Yeah.

CLARK: Let's learn how to do what we're doing effectively. Whatever you do, you've got to do it hard enough that you get some results back from it. So, if I may say one other comment on in-service and whatever that staff development is, I feel the primary staff development function ought to emanate as a result of administrative findings on the level of instruction going on in the classroom. In other words,

you don't say, "Well, what will we talk about at our meeting?" You don't just put it on a survey. And if you'll forgive me for going on about this, but if the administrator or lead teachers and department chairs will visit and observe the classroom instruction, and then from the results of discussing that, set up your in-service, set up your staff training. "Here's what we're observing in our school here. We have twenty dropouts. Why is that? Why do we have so many dropouts in this program? Okay, what can we do instructionally that will do something about that?" Do you follow what I'm saying?

MILLER: Yes. So build your program around both observation as well as what the instructors may express a need for help in.

CLARK: Sure. The emphasis is not on administering the school, the emphasis is on: How do we improve our classroom instruction?

MILLER: Lee, do you think that part of that kind of administrative-type emphasis is because schools don't have enough administrative staff, that one person is trying to oversee everything and therefore these are the problems to them because they don't have enough help? Or do you think it's because the people, some of the people who have become administrators, don't have the understanding or ability to provide the instructional leadership?

CLARK: I think they get so involved [with paperwork] that they rationalize [not scheduling time for] visiting classrooms and improving instruction. Let me give you an example. In Fresno, for some years the superintendent was directed by the board of education to spend 40 percent of his time out in the schools looking at the classrooms and teachers and whatnot.

MILLER: A nice requirement. [Chuckling]

CLARK: I thought that was a pretty uplifting arrangement, but it's so easy to get bogged down in the trivia, you know. People like to talk about budgets and they like to do a lot of things like that. But at the conferences that we've attended and presented workshops, we say, "You've got to put [a priority on] visiting the classrooms and seeing what's going on. . . ." You say, "Well, I don't have enough people. I'm a one-handed person here." Okay, in other words you can appoint people. One administrator told me, "I offer this out to my instructional staff and colleges. I say 'If you'd like some real experience, come and I will train you as an administrator. I want you to visit my classes, and here's what you look for.'" So he was training people, volunteers, to come in—not to evaluate but to just make simple observations.

And forgive me, but in the Supervision and Coordination Program we do, we say one of the most important things you can do in any administrative function is to really learn how to evaluate and observe instruction-type things. As a mid-manager you can evaluate [with] that credential. And so we send them out and we make them go to the [classrooms]. We have set a criteria to look for, and we make them report back: What are they seeing? And more people have got to put a priority on that.

MILLER: Yes. You've always been very active in the professional organizations throughout your career, and, as we've mentioned at one point, serving as chair of the ACSA Adult Ed Committee. What do you see as the role of professional organizations, and what importance do you attach to them?

CLARK: I think, in the main and through ACSA, that they've had some pretty good leadership going there and they have done some good things.[5] But they are still, in the main, shielded from the harsh reality. Was it

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[5]I believe that participation in professional organizations should be a mandatory function of the professional educator. Only some participate due to cost. However, those who do elect to participate gain high visibility and achieve promotions. Professional organizations are effective avenues for pursuing continuing education and overseeing and promoting legislative issues to the benefit of adult education. [Clark]

[Proposition] 187 that passed that has got everybody up in arms from the schools?

MILLER: Yes.

CLARK: And finally I saw somebody write to the *Thrust* magazine [an ACSA publication], a retired administrator who said, "Hey, slow this down. The public has voted, and you'd better learn . . . you better learn what the public wants and start living with it a little more. No matter how emotional you may feel about this issue, if the public says we shouldn't be educating people who are here illegally, maybe that's what they want." If we start doing things essentially with the public in mind. . . . And I think the professional organization needs to start saying, "Okay, I'm being purchased, I'm being supported by this public at large. Let's find out what they're doing." And they're not doing a bad job, but we still need to get back to the reality of what does the public basically want us to do? I tell teachers this.

And the legislature, when I was up there, frequently they say to me, "We need some hard evidence that you're getting results with the money we're giving you." And they keep saying that to me, and I tell people, "If we learn how to teach and to evaluate and to communicate those results to the right places, to the right people, they'll give us more money than we'll know what to do with if we are

willing to do that." But we almost have to have it dragged out of us. Professional organizations should start putting a premium on that. How do we get results and how do we communicate them? And one last thought in that area, I get sick when I hear people [say], "Well, we have to improve our image." To hell with the image.

MILLER: If you're doing the job, you don't worry about the image.

CLARK: Exactly. Right.

MILLER: Now, ACSA was formed in '71, I think it was. Was there any controversy over folding the old California Association of Adult Education Administrators into ACSA?

CLARK: Yes, there was a lot of agitation, a lot of concerns, and some of them were well-grounded. But I feel that in the long term being with and working with [others] at an ACSA level. . . . For example, being a member of ACSA, I'm participating on the various committees up there. I may not have the best rapport with my superintendent locally, but when I go and participate, the Sacramento superintendent, Tom . . . what's his name?

MILLER: Guini?

CLARK: Guini, yeah. I met with him on a committee several times, and he and I got to be quite good friends. Well, he probably wouldn't have been so friendly or intimate with his own [adult ed] people, but me, I

was coming from a different district and we could afford. . . . And I was able to influence him [on adult education] and he was able to influence me, in terms of my attitude toward the administration.

A quick example. The San Mateo Adult School had been in operation seventeen years and never been accredited. I was invited to be the chairperson for WASC [Western Association of Schools and Colleges]. We went in and they said, "We want to just lay our breasts clean. We're going to tell you everything we think is a problem here, and some of which we're working on." I said, "That's fine, you do that." I met with them several times. And so we came back with a committee and we saw not only this ongoing list of things they recommended that we develop for them, but in the process of doing that I said, "Okay, these people have been straightforward, they've got a lot of problems, but they're already working on them and have cured many of them. Let's give them a full [six-year accreditation]." And so we got back, the people at WASC said, "You can't do that. That's really bad and you can't do that." I said, "As chairperson I want to do this, and I'm going to do it. I want to meet with the Commission itself, not just with the [executive secretary]." And so he begrudgingly allowed me to do it. Well, Tom Guini of Sacramento was chairing the Commission, and so I pleaded my case and they

agreed with me 100 percent. And as a result of that ACSA association, you see, with him, he agreed with my view of what had been going on. So they got their six-year accreditation, and they [WASC] have never invited me to participate again. [Laughter] That's okay.

MILLER: So, I mean, that certainly does point up the value of a professional association, the bridges that you can make with other people in the field. This may be a misinterpretation, but it seemed to me that it took awhile for the Adult Ed Committee to be able to make its influence felt in ACSA, and that there were some rough roads along the way. And one of those that I had asked you if we could talk about was the conflict that developed involving the reassignment of an adult education principal while you were Adult Ed Committee Chair. Can you share some of that with us?

CLARK: Yeah, it was the Fremont Union High School District, and the principal there was very upstanding and I thought a good principal. Somehow [he] got reassigned due to . . . I don't remember the circumstances, but he got reassigned. I [as ACSA Adult Ed Committee Chair] took it upon myself to write directly to their board of education indicating that it needed a review and gave several reasons for that. And the superintendent felt that adult education

people should not have that kind of a voice, and so he was going to send me to the Professional Ethics Committee [of ACSA]. He was threatening me with all kinds of things, went to ACSA and raised a hullabaloo. It all kind of bounced around, and the ACSA [committee], which was sort of a neutral blob at the time, took [no] action . . . and so nothing happened. I was a little sorry for that because the guy was assigned to another job when he had done really nothing to deserve it.

MILLER: And ACSA at that point then did not do anything to try to protect his interest, beyond . . .

[End Tape 1, Side B]

[Begin Tape 2, Side A]

MILLER: Lee, do you think that that situation contributed to the redefinition of the position of adult education within ACSA, or was that due to other circumstances?

CLARK: I think it had a direct effect upon it because a lot of people become incensed about things like that and they start talking to their [ACSA representatives]. But I think nothing ever happens because of just one incident only; it takes a combination of things. And I think the fact that we invited ACSA officials and officers to participate in our conferences and integrate them with our activities, much more so

than before ACSA's [existence], all that has caused people to take another look at adult education. And I think that incident and several other incidents were very instrumental in helping. For example, administrators in adult education, which were just less than 2 percent of the entire [ACSA membership], speak at a rate of about 40 percent. [Laughter]

MILLER: So we speak loud. [Chuckling] I think that both you and Will Hopp [Simi Valley Adult School], who followed your term as ACSA chairman, did a lot to make adult education's presence known and respected within the organization.

CLARK: Yeah, Will Hopp was a feisty kind of guy. I suggested him as a person to follow me, and he was assisting me at the time. But Will was very feisty and outspoken. I think that we needed somebody like that. My approach was to work with these other people on a little different level and maybe not be quite so noticeable. But I think in combination we had quite a few contacts, and I am pleased that those six years did have some effect.

MILLER: Speaking of professional organizations, it's a little bit off, but certainly we've had some very strong leaders in the state, and one whose life was cut very short was Bob [Robert] Rupert. Could you talk to us a little bit about Bob and what his contributions were?

CLARK: I think of all the people I met [and worked with in adult ed], and I knew some way back, I think Bob was really the outstanding leader of not only Los Angeles but the state. He had more rapport with people outside of his own program. He was not so inbred [to Los Angeles] in terms of his attitudes, and he participated [throughout the state]. He personally came to me a couple of times when I was with Metropolitan and he said, "I want you to be the next state chairperson." He had told me personally. And I said, "I can't, Bob. I'm in the midst of putting this consortium together. I just can't do it." He came back a year or two later and said, "I want you to be that. . . ." So I said, "Okay, I'll give it a swing then." So he personally was trying to get people involved who might have been hanging back a little bit. And every meeting I ever attended with Bob there, I felt it was 100 percent professional. I wasn't a personal friend of his, and yet . . . even exchanging names, you know, was good enough for me. I think it was a terrible tragedy that we lost Bob. As I say, I can't think of anybody in the history of adult education that was more on top of things and more professional.

MILLER: And such a good spokesman.

CLARK: Yeah.

MILLER: I mean, his speeches were inspirational and they had a lot of solid content, and he could really rally people.

CLARK: Another thing, too, I like people who are not too ostentatious, who aren't so imbued with themselves that they. . . . And Bob wasn't that way. He was confident, he exuded confidence, and as a result of it he didn't have to lord over anybody.

MILLER: And he was still in his forties when he died. It was just a real shame. Are there any other statewide leaders that you might want to specifically comment on as having a great impact on the direction of programs in the state?

CLARK: The former San Francisco Director of Adult Education, and I honestly don't remember his name, as silly as that is. I think he came from back East. He was a big-city person, but an absolute . . . a strong leader. He led San Francisco before they succumbed and went over to the community college. He was at conferences and always . . . he and his wife, I noticed, always attended together. And if I could only think of his name, but. . . .

MILLER: We'll get it looked up. [Chuckling] [Theodore/Ted Goldman][6]

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[6]It was a tragedy that he and his wife were killed in an automobile accident. Had Ted been around, the situation in San Francisco (vis-à-vis the community college) might have been different. [Clark]

CLARK: Yeah, but really one of the leaders. Another fellow, a man from Los Angeles who is sort of historically one of the great people—

MILLER: Bill [William] Johnston?

CLARK: Not Bill Johnston, but before him there was M-A-N-N, Mann.

MILLER: Oh, George Mann.

CLARK: George Mann.[7] I had very little contact with him, he was earlier, but he is one of the big names in the state. And having a big system, he did a lot of things that allowed [other] people to follow on his shirttail. [When I was in Fontana I felt free to call him on several occasions for information and advice. He was perfectly willing to help people with small programs.] Stan Sworder. I don't know if Stan is still living or not, but I think he gave an element of leadership in the state group that really is kind of unsurpassed. He made you feel that you were part of the act, as it were, and so I will always remember Stan as being somebody that had no affectations, and he certainly encouraged me when I headed up a small potatoes program in Southern California, and he went out of his way to be helpful.

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[7]George C. Mann was Chief, Bureau of Adult Education, California Department of Education, from 1934-42 and 1945-56. The Los Angeles administrator, Assistant Superintendent, Adult Division, of the same era was E. Manfred Evans, serving from 1936-42 and 1945-59. From 1942-45 E. Manfred Evans was Acting Chief, Division of Adult Education. [Miller]

MILLER: It's not exactly a professional organization, but the California Consortium for Adult Education is a free association of adult schools, and you were instrumental in getting that started. Can you tell us a little bit about what that is and what it does?

CLARK: The California Consortium was primarily to have a professional group or individual start [publicizing] the nature of adult education and what it does [on a statewide basis]. But instead of just having every local program do its own thing, to have materials made available so that when people heard about adult education they heard about its most generic values, from high school to ESL and all the rest of it. We got a professional publicist from the Warriors basketball team to take over that. I think he still works with it. But the idea was to add a dimension of institutional advertising such as other places do, realizing that you have to do a good job locally but you also have to belong to a larger part of something. I can remember one of the Raiders announcers did some radio tapes. You may recall that, Cuba.

MILLER: Yes.

CLARK: Bill something or other, and to hear his voice, and we hear it all the time, in terms of the radio broadcasting and television broadcasting, but when he then would come up with these tapes that could be distributed all over the [state] . . . that short burst probably had more

effect upon people in starting to understand. The discouraging part of adult education is where people, you talk about what you do for a living, and they never heard of it. And we were trying to put that aside.

MILLER: How did a school become a member of the consortium?

CLARK: We sent out invitations to them. We said, "If you give us a dollar for each a.d.a. you accumulate here at the end of the year, then we will provide you with all these things by which you can get your own local radio stations to use and publicize." And we had different events, Back to School, or [for] drop outs . . . Drop Out Day. I forget what it was called.

MILLER: Drop In for Drop Outs, yeah.

CLARK: Okay, that type of thing. And the publicist himself had quite a few connections with the media, and so we really wanted better media coverage.

MILLER: And was this both Northern and Southern California?

CLARK: Yes, all over the state.

MILLER: All right. Well, inevitably we come down to Proposition 13. [Chuckling] I've sometimes felt that it was harder on adult education than on the rest of the public school system, and the effects were very

uneven. Can you describe some of these effects? What happened immediately in the first year after Prop. 13?

CLARK: The phenomenon at Metropolitan was that we lost 54 percent of our program the first year.

MILLER: That was fairly common across the state, wasn't it?

CLARK: Yeah. I think some places may not have lost that much. Our program was [balanced with] all kinds of [foreign languages], arts and craftsy things, [and] homemaking. All [those were] cut out at the time. [Homemaking] came back in later, but it was cut out, and we had quite a bit of that going. But it had a rather dramatic effect. Most of the greatest effect was on all those teachers, because to bring them back as community ed teachers when people had not been used to paying money for their classes was next to impossible. So losing the classes, and then putting the limitations on the a.d.a. . . . In other words, if you lost a certain number of classes, they didn't really let you build up to compensate for all that loss. They put the ceilings on the amount of a.d.a. you could claim in the so-called mandated areas.

MILLER: The first year there was a block grant, and then the specific limitations came in legislation the following year. But what determined then the size of the school after that restrictive legislation came?

CLARK: I believe they went back . . . they went back to the apportionment that you had earned. When would that have been? I think it was the first year. That was your base year then when they imposed the restriction on it, and so if. . . . I had a situation at Metropolitan where about 400-plus units of a.d.a. that was legitimate, mandated type was given away, redistributed to the day schools. So in perpetuity then [that 400] units of a.d.a. has been lost to the cooperating districts. That makes me a little upset [because] they used that as the base year for all [legislation that followed]. Many of the districts have been able to recoup quite a bit, because over a period of years they have simply got their quota plus their 2 percent growth and that kind of thing. I'm not sure that really answers your question.

MILLER: So that first year then that there was a block grant, if districts allowed their programs to run full-bore with the money that they had generated, they turned out better off later on. And the districts that took some of that block grant adult ed money, those programs then. . . . Like you lost your 400 a.d.a., that then became a permanent loss.

CLARK: Do you recall, Cuba, Fullerton?

MILLER: I don't know the details about Fullerton. I know that now the community college kind of has the program but that the public schools run an independent study program.

CLARK: I thought they were one of the districts which gave their program away for a few years, and then suddenly got struck: We need to get this program back in. And then for many years they absolutely were hamstrung and couldn't. But they started a program anyhow in adult ed and it went for one semester, and then the state had to bail them out. But I think then they put the curtains on any further . . . until whatever they're doing now.

MILLER: So they actually, because of actions that their district took during that block grant year, they actually lost their entire adult ed program?[8]

CLARK: They lost it. And then they suddenly decided they would come back, and ran it for a whole semester, and during that semester they were told . . . they were finally told, "We're not giving you any money," and had to be bailed out.

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[8]It was in 1965 that the local community college assumed responsibility for adult education in the Fullerton area, so that was not a result of Proposition 13. It was after Proposition 13, however, when funds for adult education were not available to districts which did not already have programs in 1978, that the high school district in Fullerton tried to reenter the adult education arena. After serving adults in their independent study program for several years, 1992 legislation made it possible for independent study a.d.a. earned by adults to be converted to regular adult education a.d.a. [Miller]

MILLER: And couldn't do it. Certainly, individual problems and horror stories following Prop. 13 varied up and down the state, but some of them were . . . Some districts became quite punitive towards their adult school personnel if the personnel were proactive in any way. And I believe you yourself took some personal knocks because of your public positions, and you were ACSA Adult Ed Chair at the time. Can you tell us something about that?

CLARK: Well, yes, I complained basically about losing that 400 units of a.d.a. rather strongly, and so they didn't like that very well. And even though I'd been given a letter from the superintendent, a strong, supporting letter, they decided that they would abolish my position. A number of state people wrote them and said, "What's going [on] here?" I went to the superintendent and he said, "Well, it's one of those things that we will just have to do without." And in complaining, they set up a new assistant superintendent who was primarily vocational at the time and really didn't care about the nature of [adult education]. So, anyhow, in canceling my position they were going to reassign me to one of the day school positions. I was chairing ACSA, and I decided that I would be better off to take another [adult ed] position. So I accepted an administrative position that was a much lesser one, in Fremont. But it was simply because I

didn't agree with the associate superintendent. And not only his shenanigans but his attitude was so negative toward adult education, and I sort of stood up to him. When I went to ACSA, I said, "They canceled out my position." And the best advice I got from them was that "Whenever a superintendent allows this thing to happen as you've described it, that superintendent is rarely in that district much more than a year or two." At least they were prophetic in that regard, because within a year the superintendent did resign. My incident was just part of the thing that caused him to. . . . Because he was under certain sort of cabinet pressures and a few other things, and he finally threw up his hands and got out of there.

MILLER: Yeah, so it was just sort of anything to save the day school programs, and . . . you know, if it takes adult ed money to do it, that's what it was going to take. So that you, but also a lot of other people that were proactive, had some kind of recriminations against them.

CLARK: Yeah, it was the opportunistic thing that makes it difficult for adult ed quite a bit. In retrospect, and for the sake of others who may face a similar situation, our program had an assistant superintendent in charge of vocational and adult education that developed. . . . Now, part of it was the assistant superintendent had been there many, many years, well before I arrived on the scene, and he was the logical

choice for that job. But the fact was that I used to attend the board meetings fairly regularly before he took over, and he wasn't especially encouraging of my coming to the board meetings. And that was the mistake of my life. And if any other administrator in adult education really wants to be a little stronger, he should attend every board meeting. Because if you get chummy with the board members, and had I continued to go to the board meetings, my position would never have been canceled. So that was not a very good strategy politically for me not to go to the board. But he was representing us and I had other things to do than that, but that was a mistake.

MILLER: Yes. So that was certainly an example of the worst kind of thing that happened as a result of Prop. 13. Did any good come out of it for adult ed, in terms of strengthened leadership statewide?

CLARK: I think so. I feel, in the overall evolution of adult education, that despite being a tremendous setback that it helped people to realize that if you're going to keep anything you've got to work harder on it. And I think the efforts . . . I know my efforts, I continued to be the chairperson of the state, and my new position did free me up a little and gave me a little more time to do that. And I feel that I was able to do some things to encourage. . . . I got in touch with the legislature at least three or four times or so. As the chairperson of

the ACSA committee, I wrote to every person in the legislature at least three or four times about certain incidents and about adult education generally. I got in touch with the membership, inviting more [participation] than I'd seen [previously]. I developed kind of a committee structure, too. For example, it was all kind of informal and folksy, but I developed a letterhead listing every member of the committee, and that had never been done before. You say, "Well, that may not be important," but it started making . . . giving some liveliness to the committee.

MILLER: And some recognition to the leaders up and down the state.

CLARK: Exactly. And so from that I think right now, getting back to funding and whatever problems people have today, [adult ed] is still somewhat in a stronger position than it was.

MILLER: I think it certainly made everyone much more active in legislative matters and probably in sharpening their own budget skills.

CLARK: Yeah, for sure, for sure.

MILLER: And to protect their own interest, if nothing else. [Chuckling]

CLARK: One other thing that I think it really has done—I mean, you mentioned budget skills. In my earlier day I was surprised to see people . . . the adult administrators allowed their business manager to

do the entire budgeting for them. I couldn't believe it. And after Prop. 13 I didn't hear so much of that anymore.

MILLER: Yes.

CLARK: But you had to fight for it and the rest of it.

MILLER: Yeah, fight for every penny. [Chuckling] Okay, as you review your career, who or what would you consider to be the key driving forces in adult education programs in California? Kind of who or what made things happen?

CLARK: Let's see, I think that the key thing about adult education that helped is the fact that we knew that whatever we did essentially in the long term was not being scrutinized quite so strictly as other levels. For example, virtually all of the ESL and the basic ed type things that we do in our programs now and earlier have been adopted by many day schools.

MILLER: That's true.

CLARK: And so the fact that we were not scrutinized allowed us to use more ingenuity—and, of course, to stay alive you had to do that—but you really had more freedom to make decisions. Despite all the budget stealing and stuff like that, we were allowed to run our programs. And people who took advantage of that had some super programs, and now all that. . . . Then we'd go to the meetings, and people

would discuss: "What are you doing in your place?" And we'd exchange ideas.

For example, before I was the state chairman, we had kind of an informal network of leaders and we'd hear about something. I'd bring Tom Johnson up to do something for me; I'd be invited down to Terry Kraus's program in Southern California to do something. And we had more, by the end of it, a relationship [throughout the state] because of our smaller nature. We knew everybody by name.

MILLER: It was a family.

CLARK: Exactly. It's the personification of the word "networking"—I feel, at least.

MILLER: You know, part of that was. . . . The network was necessary because there weren't the job-like positions within the district. So to talk to someone who was doing the same thing that you were doing, you had to go outside the district for that. I mean, it was—

CLARK: Right. [Chuckling]

MILLER: So, yeah, that's been true for a long time, and adult educators seem to be willing to share.

CLARK: Yeah. Susan and I tell our class, people coming in, the teachers coming in, . . . and this applies to administrators . . . there's no group of people in education today—anywhere, I think—that are more

willing to share and join together and bail out each other than adult and vocational people, particularly adult ed.

MILLER: Yes. What have you generally found most rewarding about your work?

CLARK: Well, I touched on it awhile ago, and that was sort of having the freedom [to initiate new programs and to experiment]. In Metropolitan we would have our staff come together once a week for about two to three hours. We had a nice big table that had been done by a previous director that was really neat to meet at, and we had about thirty people altogether. We had principals, the director, we had. . . . And we had lesser people. The department chairs were there, center coordinators who were only part-time. And some of my principals got a little bit uppity one time and saying, "Why do you allow all these people to come to make decisions?" And I said, "Because they are out where it's happening." And so we got together, and by being together and having an open-door policy, many of my staff people . . . we were very progressive, I felt, and we did things and we grew and were able to take care of that growth with no major problems. And some of the people were saying, "You have one problem. You allow us to work too hard." [Laughter]

And I've liked the idea of being able to work with people and let them know what I expect. I'm going to be checking on them, going to be monitoring them all the time, and I'm going to call the rules, but once I give it over to you, it is your baby, it's your responsibility. And people like that. Even though you may say, "I'm going to observe, I'm going to have a lot of restrictions on this thing, so I want to know what's going on, but I'm handing it to you and you're going to do it." I think that to have five school districts get together with all kinds of internal things, rivalry and whatnot, and to work with me for sixteen years, not quite sixteen years, and to be able to operate and be beholden to all five districts separately and have absolutely no major problems of any significance. . . . Any problem I had was strictly at a district level type of thing. Anyhow, that I feel is the major accomplishment.

MILLER: Sort of the ability to see a need and to fill it in a creative way, and to foster that among your staff.

CLARK: Yeah. We had about 1,500 teachers working at one time, which was a fair number, and we were at well over 300 locations. And still, by meeting and comparing notes, we were able to stay on top of things. We knew what was happening, we knew where the trouble spots . . . where they would occur. And I felt that even though it was kind of

loosely organized we were still . . . everybody talked to each other. One person came to me and said, "Well, you need more principals," and so they raised the number of principals. They found out that more principals didn't help.

MILLER: Have we missed anything? Do you have any thoughts on anything that we haven't covered that you would like to?

CLARK: No, I would just like to repeat that I sincerely wish that all people in our business would feel more beholden to the public. And the reality is that instead of kind of pushing them away and no community involvement, we've got to be more closely aligned to what's going on. We may not like it, we may not like 187, we may not like all these other things, but they're reality and we've got. . . . We have to represent those people and not just say that they're dead wrong and we won't go along with it. That's not a very in-depth statement, but that's a strong feeling.

MILLER: Well, we wouldn't exist without the public, and we've talked about the voluntary [nature of our] program. I guess that the ultimate in competency based education is to assess your public needs and to tailor your program to meet those needs.

CLARK: Yes, in my lifetime of adult education it's absolutely astounding if you will take them into your confidence—even some of the critics, take

them into your confidence—and they will work for you. We had one person from a public relations firm, and he had some questions about [our program]. He was quite a younger guy, but he came in and he got so excited about working in adult education that he helped us develop a thirteen-minute film called *Success Is*, a 16-millimeter film. He got a high-priced radio announcer to do the narrating. And the whole thing, it was costing $1,000 a minute in those days to do that, and he got the whole thing done for $500. And we've showed that hundreds of times around the community, *Success Is*, if you had a big thing on adult education. But without inviting him in to participate with us it wouldn't have happened.

MILLER: And that kind of thing could probably be replicated again and again and again.

CLARK: Oh yes.

MILLER: Well, you've certainly had a rich career, Lee. Thank you, both for the interview and for the contributions that you have made to California's adult education programs.

CLARK: Thank you, Cuba, [for the opportunity to "recollect," "reconsider," and "revitalize."]

MILLER: This interview was completed as a part of the California Adult Education Oral History Project.

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LEE W. CLARK

PROFESSIONAL EMPLOYMENT

1987-Present	Santa Clara Unified School District, Santa Clara Local Educational Agency, Adult and Vocational Credential Coordinator
1970-Present	San Jose State University - Instructor/Coordinator, Designated Subjects Credential Program
1980-86	Fremont Unified School District - Administrative Staff, Fremont Adult School
1964-80	San Jose Unified School District - Director/ Administrator, Adult and Vocational Education
1958-64	Fontana Unified School District - Principal, Adult Education
1952-58	Clovis Union High School District - Vice Principal and Adult Education Teacher
1950-52	Gilroy Union High School District - Teacher, High School and Adult Education (Intern, Adult Education Administration, Stanford)

MAJOR PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES

Member and Chairperson of Western Association of Schools and Colleges

Originator of California Consortium for Adult Education

Presented workshops at both ACSA and CCAE conferences on various teaching and administrative topics

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

1971-Present	Association of California School Administrators (ACSA) - Region and State Chairperson of ACSA Adult Ed Committee
1975-Present	California Council for Adult Education (CCAE) - Lifetime Membership since 1985
1963-71	California Association of Adult Education Administrators - Member, Board of Directors

CALIFORNIA ADULT EDUCATION ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

RELEASE FORM

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In addition to the rights and authority given to you under the preceding paragraph, I hereby authorize you to edit, publish, sell and/or license the use of my oral history memoir in any other manner which the *California Department of Education* considers to be desirable, and I waive any claim to any payments which may be received as a consequence thereof by the *Department*.

PLACE Newark
California

DATE May 18, 1995

(Interviewee)

(Interviewer)
(for California Adult Education
Oral History Project)