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## Howard N. Jacobson Oral History Interview

Howard N. Jacobson

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This is Charles Mahan recording an oral history on Howard N. Jacobson, M.D. from notes taken on weekly visits to him at his home Plant City in the first five months of the year 2015.

Howard N. Jacobson, M.D., born August 13, 1923 in St. Paul, Minnesota. Currently his wife is Barbara D. Jacobson, Master of Music, an internationally known flute player and teacher.

Dr. Jacobson's education was St. Olaf College, Minnesota, 1940-1943, pre-medicine; Villanova College, Pennsylvania, 1943-1944, completing pre-medicine under the Navy V-12 program. He then served in the Navy from 1943-1946 on the USS Boston in the South Pacific as a radar officer. He took part in the signing ceremony when Japan surrendered, which occurred on the USS Missouri. After his Navy service, he entered Northwestern University Medical School in Chicago under the GI Bill and trained there from 1946-1950 receiving the Doctor of Medicine degree.

He also had a Bachelor of Science in medicine from Northwestern. He did his internship and residency at Presbyterian Hospital in Chicago from 1950-1952, but left there because he was unhappy with the program and went to Harvard Medical School from 1952-1958 to do a post-doctoral program in three departments: Physiology and Obstetrics & Gynecology in the College of Medicine and Maternal & Child Health in the School of Public Health.

Academic positions he has held include: Harvard Medical School, instructor in obstetrics and gynecology, 1960-1965; the University of California San Francisco Medical School and University of California Berkeley School of Public Health, associate professor of obstetrics and gynecology, 1965-1969; Harvard Medical School, director of the Macy

Program, 1969-1974; Rutgers Medical School, professor of obstetrics and gynecology, 1974-1979;

University of North Carolina, director of the Nutrition Institute for North Carolina, 1978-1988, after which he retired and joined the faculty of the University of South Florida College of Public Health as an associate in research in public health nutrition and maternal and child health, and was at USF from 1988-2003 when he completely retired.

Added Section: Doctor Jacobson also held State and National appointments alongside his academic appointments, including: HEW Children's Board, consultant, 1964-1973; GAO, Washington D.C., consultant, 1974-1983; AMA, Chicago, consultant, 1980-1982 and 1988-; NRC/NAS Food and Nutrition, board member, 1971-1974; White House Conference on Food, Nutrition and Health, Washington D.C., panel vice chairman, 1969; Quality of Life Conference, Mass. Medical Society, chair, 1972; and Florida Healthy Start Initiative Working Group, member, 1991-1996. He received the NIH Career Development award from 1963-1965 and the Agnes Higgins Award in 1987.

His early life: Doctor Jacobson's parents were American Lutheran missionaries of Norwegian background in Hangchow, now called Wuhan at the confluence of the Han and Yangtze Rivers in China. As he was 6 months old, he often slept in dresser drawers because of frequent moves by the family. He spent no more than two days in the same bed.

His parents had to leave China in 1927 due to the rise to power of Chairman Mao Tse Tung and the Communist party. His father was reassigned to churches in North Dakota throughout the Red River Valley. They were moved often and ended up in Detroit Lakes, Minnesota. A quote from Dr. Jacobson, "This unsettled life, I think, made me a rebellious person."

He loved his college years at St. Olaf College in Minnesota. He was majoring in pre-medicine, but three years into it applied for the U.S. Navy V-12 Program. (In this program, the Navy provides financial support in school with an obligation to serve in the Navy after graduation.) He could not stay at St. Olaf to be in this, so he had to transfer to Philadelphia to complete his pre-medicine at Villanova College. He then served in the Navy from 1943-1946 on the USS Boston as radar officer in the South Pacific.

He took part in the signing ceremony when Japan surrendered, which occurred on the USS Missouri, and stayed in Japan as part of the U.S. occupation force. He was then accepted at Northwestern University Medical School in Chicago, where he got his M.D. and his Masters of Science in Medicine. He was in Nu Sigma Nu medical fraternity. (Medical fraternities such as Nu Sigma Nu and Phi Chi for the most part disappeared in the 60s and 70s. There are a few of them left. This was after existing at medical schools for over 70 years.)

His fondest memory of Northwestern was time spent at the Chicago Maternity Center, the home-birth service on the south side of Chicago, and he loved the great instructors there.

He thought Loyal Davis, the chief of surgery, was a bully, as did the majority of graduates at Northwestern. Loyal Davis was a neurosurgeon who was eventually Nancy Reagan's step-father.

He did his internship and residency at Presbyterian Hospital in Chicago, but resigned from the residency at the end of the second year because he experienced too much interference there with the natural process of labor. One bright spot though was the arrival of Dr. Allen of "Allen Maneuver." Until Dr. Allen arrived at the hospital, the big, strong resident would push the baby's head up preventing it from being born until the obstetrician arrived.

In 1952, Dr. Jacobson applied for and won a 5-year fellowship at Harvard Medical School. This involved two departments in the School of Medicine, Obstetrics and Gynecology was one and Physiology was the other. It also involved an appointment in the School of Public Health. Quote from Dr. Jacobson, "This is when I knew I wasn't going to spend my life in medicine as a regular practitioner."

Here he was under the tutelage and influence of Dr. Duncan Reid (1905-1985), who was chair of the Obstetrics and Gynecology department, Dr. Eugene Landis and Dr. Harold Coe Stuart and Ms. Bertha Burke of the Harvard Growth Study. He wrote a chapter in Reid's famous obstetric and gynecology textbook on maternal nutrition and its relationship to toxemia and edema in pregnancy. Quote from Dr. Jacobson, "I invited Paul Tillich to speak about death and dying at the annual OB-Gyn residents' dinner and that upset a lot of the faculty."

In 1957, the day after he finished his residency, he was appointed to the National Institute of Nervous Diseases and Blindness at the NIH in Bethesda, Maryland. And from 1957 to 1960, Howard was assigned to Puerto Rico to set up a monkey colony to study the origin of cerebral palsy. He did this by asphyxiating the newborn monkeys and then reviving them at last gasp. Doctor William Windle at NIH took credit for Howard's work and received the Lasker Award for for it. The NIH monkey colony at the USPHS station on Caya Santiago Island still exists today.

Doctor Jacobson also at this time divorced his first wife whom he had met in Chicago. Quote from Dr. Jacobson, "She said I studied too much and my work was all consuming." After his post-doctoral training at NIH, he was offered a residency position at Harvard. The first project he was assigned after his success in Puerto Rico was to set up a similar monkey colony to be the first such research colony in New England.

He and Barbara married in 1961 and Howard's obstetrical duties included being on call for emergencies at all Boston hospitals including City Hospital, where he saw so many deaths due to illegal abortions that he became firmly pro-choice. During these years, 1960-1965, he traveled widely for his research: to Norway and Poland.

In Norway, he met Karl Evang, M.D. (1902-1981), who was Norway's health officer and Jacobson was able to observe that every Norwegian citizen was assigned to a nurse or a

doctor or some other health professional and had a “medical home.” Doctor Evang was being considered to be the director of the World Health Organization, but was blackballed because of his support of abortion.

In Lublin, Poland’s ninth largest city, Dr. Jacobson was assigned by the U.S. Children’s Bureau to audit a post-World War II reconstruction grant that studied toxemia of pregnancy in Poland. This was in the early 1960s. The mystery to be solved was why the protocol of the toxemia study did not have better results. There were three layers of obstetric care: from midwife to general practitioner to specialist.

Doctor Jacobson found that the midwife and general practitioner were fudging the blood pressures (reporting them lower than they actually were), so they would not be required to refer the patient to the specialist. This was an economic issue for them, but it also undermined the protocol of the study. Dr. Jacobson also had an important opportunity to observe a historical example of how the scientific community makes decisions. He spent two years at the Nuffield Institute at Oxford in England at the behest of the United States National Institutes of Health.

Doctor Geoffrey Dawes (1918-1996), head of the Institute, was studying the resistance to asphyxia of fetal and maternal physiology in fetal monkeys. How did the lungs open at birth—was it physics or biochemistry involved? Doctor Jacobson had worked with the pediatrician Dr. Leonard Strang (1925-1997), a Briton who spent a two-year sabbatical at Harvard. Doctor Strang later became chair of the University of London Clinical Services. Dr. Jacobson worked with him catheterizing the veins and arteries of sheep and found that the oxygen supply governed the opening of the pulmonary arteries in newborn lambs.

This finding was the opposite of Dr. Dawes work. Doctor Jacobson sent these findings to Dawes and told him that Strang was submitting a paper to the British Journal of Physiology with these results. Doctor Dawes was a reviewer for that journal and suppressed Strang’s paper until he, Dawes, did a series of studies to confirm Strang’s results and then he scooped Strang by publishing his own paper in the journal before Strang’s was published.

This was an example of the dog-eat-dog world of medical research, according to Dr. Jacobson. As a footnote, Dr. Dawes and Strang were never knighted, although Dr. Joseph Barcroft, doing similar work at Cambridge, was eventually Sir Joseph Barcroft.

(Side note from Dr. Jacobson: The sheep sold for experiments by the English farmers to the researchers were the least healthy of the flock. Today, researchers have to specify the kind and breed of sheep, monkey, rat, etc. that they are experimenting on.)

Along this line, Dr. Stuart of the Harvard Growth Study observed that patients followed in the study were often the least healthy people and insisted researchers had to describe the health of the people studied, were they clinic or private patients. During this stint at Harvard, Dr. Jacobson also got to experience Dr. Martha May Elliot, the head of the

Children's Bureau – described as one of the “women with the flat shoes” at the Bureau who it is rumored, looked upon men as “inferior beings.”

After experiencing Dr. Evang in Norway (every citizen should have a health contact person), Dr. Jacobson became an “evangelist” and observing the teamwork evident in maternal and child health care in the midwife training program in Sweden, Dr. Jacobson had the encouragement of his three mentors in the three different departments at Harvard to explore ways to tear down the boundaries between nursing and medicine in American maternal and child health care.

Many meetings were held at Harvard with representatives from both groups and some common ground was found. Doctor Reid and Dr. Jacobson used many of these ideas in a classic article on maternity care in the New England Journal of Medicine in August of 1964. For this Dr. Jacobson received the March of Dimes' highest award for prevention of birth defects.

Asked what he learned from his three “bosses” or “mentors” during these years, he replied: From Harold Coe Stuart [From The Harvard Growth Study] you can't measure diet by history taking. And from Eugene M. Landis, Chair of Physiology and international “guru” of capillaries, Dr. Jacobson obtained a broader view of science. The last of the three, Duncan Reid, the chair of Obstetrics and Gynecology, pointed the way for the rest of Howard's career in science.

In 1965, during the Vietnam War, Dr. Jacobson was recruited to be an associate professor on the faculties of both the School of Public Health at University of California Berkeley and the OB-Gyn department at the University of California San Francisco. At Berkeley, he worked with Sam Dooley, a pediatrician, and Janet King, who Dr. Jacobson helped start her interest in maternal nutrition. During this time at Berkeley, he went to Honolulu with Dr. Pauline Stitt, an assignee of the Children's Bureau.

He went with her in the years 1966 and 1967 as her consultant, trying to predict what would happen to health care in Vietnam and Hawaii after the Vietnam War was over. Nobody understood that the U.S. would not win the Vietnam War and the hasty exit from Vietnam was unimaginable, so these two years in Hawaii came to naught.

While at UCSF, Dr. Jacobson worked with Dr. Harold Fox, a British pathologist, injecting methylene blue to prove there are nerves in the uterus. They also measured the weight of the amniotic fluid, resulting in recommendations to change the healthiest weight gain in normal pregnant women from 15 pounds to 25 pounds. This outraged many obstetricians in the practice community who portrayed Howard as a pariah.

Most of Dr. Jacobson's time in California was sponsored by the National Research Council to study basic nutrition in pregnancy. He reported to Dr. Doris Calloway, who was Janet King's boss. They all worked on the question of how much protein is required for a healthy pregnancy. They analyzed the protein levels in the hair, nail clippings, etc. of pregnant women and studied what women eat for protein intake.

Increasingly, the UCSF Obstetrics Department pressured Dr. Jacobson to spend more time seeing patients and less doing research, the main reason he was there. Doctor Jacobson left in 1969 to go back to Harvard because of a great opportunity—the White House Conference on Food, Nutrition, and Health.

Another reason for leaving the two California institutions was a negative one. Ronald Reagan became the governor of California at that time in the mid 1960s and decided that the two big private universities, University of Southern California and Stanford, should be the flagship California universities to compete with the Ivy League and no tax money should go to the University of California system again, paralyzing University of California Berkley and University of California at San Francisco and therefore greatly decreasing opportunities for faculty.

Back at Harvard, in 1969 Dr. Jacobson was in charge of the Macy Foundation Program, which along with the 1969 White House Conference on Food, Nutrition, and Health, was supposed to provide the foundation work for a national health care plan and universal health care for Americans under President Nixon. Two questions posed by Dr. Jacobson were: What is the role of public health in this new order? Is public health only for poor folks, a la New York City, or for everyone, a la Boston at that time?

The other question was what should Harvard's role be in all of this via the Macy program. Doctor Jacobson's previous work with Boston College and nursing faculty helped inform this. Doctor Jacobson chaired a Massachusetts Medical Society work group on how medicine and nursing should work together in the future—the “joint practice committee,” which was the genesis of the Family Nurse Practitioner Program.

All of the Boston academic health institutions were represented. Ovita Culp Hobby—the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare appointed Nelson Rockefeller to take over health in the country and help get universal health care, but he stepped away from this because he perceived that there was no general political backing for the idea. The Macy Foundation stopped funding the program after the Nixon administration Watergate scandals. Quote from Dr. Jacobson, “Whatever happened to the nursing component of the Macy program?”

During this stint at Harvard, Dr. Jacobson did quite a bit of international travel related to his work: to Sweden, France, and Italy, among many other countries. He became the spokesperson for the United States for maternal nutrition in these countries.

While in charge of the Macy program, he was involved with the National Academy of Sciences in a maternal nutrition study. In the late 1960s, 20 years after the last comprehensive literature review and analysis, the National Academy of Sciences convened a panel of the nation's experts on maternal nutrition to update the state of the science and produce a new report.



Doctor Jacobson, then director of the Macy Foundation program in the department of obstetrics and gynecology at Harvard, was a member of 13-person committee in maternal nutrition, which included luminaries in preventive medicine, nutrition, pediatrics, and obstetrics and gynecology. They met under the auspices of the Food and Nutrition Board of the National Research Council. Their charge was to review the pertinent literature published in the previous 20 years and report on their analysis. The report was to be published in 1970.

The problems the report tried to address were: high infant mortality in the U.S. and high prematurity rates. In those years, the total infant mortality in the U.S. was 25 baby deaths per 1000 live births and for whites it was 22 and for blacks it was 41. The novel recommendations from the report were that the average weight gain in normal women in pregnancy should be an average of 24 lbs., a range of 20-25, and the admonition to providers to not restrict weight during pregnancy.

Also, they recommended that restricting salt and giving diuretics to women with preeclampsia was dangerous. Less helpful was a very short treatment of smoking (due to sparse research on the subject at the time), which said it produced smaller babies and had a dose effect, but concluded it caused no excess fetal or neo-natal mortality. The latter findings have since been disproven.

When the draft of the final report was produced, there were a few dissenting voices who denied that diet made a difference in pregnancy outcome, one being Dr. Jessie Bierman, a pediatrician from Montana who was the supervisor for the whole project. Alarmed by her concerns, Dr. Jacobson rewrote the whole final report almost overnight and the final volume, *Maternal Nutrition in the Course of Pregnancy*, published in 1970 had his mark all over it.

He considers this his most important piece of work since the main point that it emphasized in its conclusion was that all maternal nutrition studies were very limited and that nutrition and its effects is a very hard subject to study. As he rewrote the report, it went from a negative vibe to a positive report.

He left Harvard in 1974 to become professor of obstetrics and gynecology at Rutgers Medical School in Piscataway, New Jersey, where he taught nutrition to medical students. The main project he worked on at Rutgers was the MRFIT program, which was an acronym for Multiple Risk Factor Intervention Trial, which was a study with 20 different locations in the United States on the effects of nutrition on chronic disease in men. MRFIT was a continuation of the Framingham Heart Studies.

Doctor Jacobson was in charge of the efforts at Rutgers. The funding was from the National Institute of Health and Rutgers got half a million dollars a year. The study looked at the effects of nutrition on blood pressure and cholesterol in heart attacks and there was a disagreement between the internists and the nutritionists on the study. The nutritionists felt that the dietary intervention was the most important part of the study.

This was backed by Dr. Jeremiah Stamler at the Chicago Board of Health, who emphasized that he thought diet was everything in this intervention effort.

Even though the study was designed very carefully, it fell apart because the intervention group and the controls were ultimately different. The diets of the men were prepared by their wives and when the men reported the diets, the wives got concerned that it sounded like they were poor meal planners and so the men changed what they said about the diets, even though it wasn't true, and that undermined the whole study. The MRFIT program was in Dr. Jacobson's words, "a great big flop."

The only thing that survived from the study was that the National Institutes of Health did a study on lipids that eventually did have some important outcomes. There were publications from the MRFIT study, but most did not believe them.

At this time Dr. Jacobson began a long association as a consultant to Agnes Higgins at the Montreal Diet Dispensary.

Another interesting situation that occurred while he was at Rutgers was that Dr. Richard Cross, who was the chair of Community Health at Rutgers from 1974 to 1979, tried to get more interaction between the medical school students and all the rest of the health care team, and to do this he brought in nationally and internationally famous gurus in sexuality to talk to the students. This vain attempt was referred to by the faculty as Dr. Cross's "fuck-o-rama." Doctor Cross was very supportive of Dr. Jacobson.

During the five years he was at Rutgers, he was heavily involved in the development of the national WIC program, the Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children at the U.S. Department of Agriculture. A documentary film from St. Jude's Hospital in Memphis in 1973 about infant and child malnutrition in the United States sparked much interest in this problem from the likes of Senator Hubert Humphrey, Senator George McGovern, and Senator Ted Kennedy.

Senator Humphrey wanted WIC to be nutrition for the whole lifecycle with demonstration programs in Chicago, Minneapolis, and Boston, but thought this was too ambitious, so he limited it to just women and infants and children. When the WIC legislation was ready to pass in 1974, Senator Williams of New Jersey, who was on the Senate parent committee, called Dr. Jacobson into his office.

Senator Williams thought that the WIC program was "a back door way for Senator George McGovern to get all the political credit." Doctor Jacobson convinced him otherwise. The WIC program passed easily.

The General Accounting Office (GAO) put together a "study committee" and Dr. Jacobson was asked to be on it. They issued a request for proposals to study the effects of WIC. Professor Jean Mayer (1920-1993) of Harvard School of Public Health got Dr. Joseph Edozien hired at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology to do a field test of WIC.

Nothing happened. Doctor Bernie Greenberg, dean of Public Health at the University of North Carolina, hired Edozien away from MIT to go after the USDA study grant saying, “no one will believe the results anyway.” Edozien was the only applicant for the grant, which paid for his laboratory at the University of North Carolina, but never produced any WIC results or even a WIC study.

The Government Accounting Office put together a field study group and Jacobson was on this. Quote from Dr. Jacobson, “This is the best group I ever worked with.” They wanted to study a state with a good WIC program and selected Minnesota, California, New York, and New Orleans as study sites. They first went to Minneapolis and St. Paul – there the record study of teens showed the need for WIC. Next they went to New Orleans and toured the whole state of Louisiana, which at the time, Dr. Jacobson states, had the best nutrition programs in the United States.

Doctor Edozien invited the same expert GAO team to Chapel Hill and Dr. Jacobson was a member of the team, acting as an observer. Dr. Jacobson wrote an outline of what the study should do and then added that GAO can’t do such a study – in fact no one can – so just pass the bill to continue the WIC program without the study. Edozien did publish a study and, as Greenberg predicted, nobody believed it. The new WIC had two important provisions: 1, WIC should be veto-proof. 2, US Department of Agriculture should have an advisory committee.” [Doctor Mahan was an original member of this committee]

President Gerald Ford vetoed the WIC bill and was overridden in Congress by a huge margin.

Other important points about WIC:

1. No one ever thought about putting it in the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare with Title V Maternal and Child Health programs, instead of USDA where it ended up.
2. The question for USDA and a problem is: Is WIC just for poor folk or generally for healthy mothers and children of all backgrounds? The solution was to prescribe WIC based on nutritional need.
3. Doctor Jacobson said, “I think my greatest contribution in the development of WIC was to convince GAO and others that WIC was impossible to study—so just pass it. GAO never tried to kill it or study it again.

The Institute of Nutrition of the University of North Carolina System existed for 25 years. The Institute included not only the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill—its home base—but also North Carolina State, East Carolina, University of North Carolina-Greensboro, and North Carolina A&T. The first director of the Institute was a Ph.D. biochemist from Wisconsin who couldn’t figure out how to deal with the North Carolina data system.

Doctor Jacobson met him at a meeting and defended him at that conference. That man then recommended that Jacobson take over as director and Dr. Jacobson was hired in 1979. Since the Institute of Nutrition was a child of the University of North Carolina

System, Dr. Jacobson reported directly to William Friday, president of the University of North Carolina System and lawyer. The deans of the System didn't think Friday was worthy since he was a lawyer and not an academic.

Friday's charge to Dr. Jacobson was to, "Get the University of North Carolina System involved in nutrition concerns in the most visible way possible," and in doing so "keep me covered in paper."

While Dr. Jacobson was in North Carolina during 1979, the International Year of the Child, Dr. Jacobson was selected by Elaine Whitelaw, an official from the US March of Dimes, who helped pick someone from each country to represent that country at the International Year of the Child in Japan. From England, the Queen Mother went; from Japan, the Empress of Japan went; and Dr. Jacobson accompanied Dr. Whitelaw and 11 other doctors from around the world to accomplish this.

Doctor Jacobson's background and experience with Harold Stuart of the Harvard growth studies and Harvard's Bertha Burke gave him a strong background to lead the Institute of Nutrition. Burke's ideas that quantitative estimates of dietary intake were inaccurate and a waste of time and the counting of servings instead of nutrients was the most valuable dietary history were ingrained in Dr. Jacobson's mind.

His experiences with the 1970 National Research Council report and MRFIT at Rutgers were also valuable in running the Institute of Nutrition. Doctor Jacobson was physically located in the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill School of Public Health where Bernie Greenberg, Ph.D. was dean. Doctor Greenberg had done important work on the polio vaccine and was very supportive of Dr. Jacobson and the Institute of Nutrition.

The Institute of Nutrition board had three members from each of the five campuses. Doctor Jacobson appointed the president of North Carolina A&T, a historically black university, chairman of the board. The Institute of Nutrition staff included an assistant director, Tim Hesla from St. Olaf, a secretary, and an assistant secretary. Funding came from the North Carolina state budget and the March of Dimes.

The Institute of Nutrition held large seminars each year. The first major conference held was a three-day exploration of the history and development of nutrition science. Another conference focused on "How do you measure health?" The Institute of Nutrition changed standards for self-assessment with questions such as "How healthy do you think you are? Good or poor?"

When the Montreal Diet Dispensary—founded by Agnes Higgins, (who died in 1985, Dr. Jacobson wrote her obituary)—lost its Canadian funding, Dr. Jacobson moved it to the Department of Nutrition UNC School of Public Health, where it continued its two-week Nutrition Institute Program funded by the March of Dimes until the year 2011. A woman from Canada came to a meeting in Washington to show the Institute of Nutrition in North Carolina how to collect good nutrition data. There was very little interest in the five campuses in doing this collectively.

The Institute of Nutrition essentially died when President Friday retired in 1985. C.D. Spangler became the University of North Carolina president in 1986. Doctor Jacobson worked directly under him but the two men never met. He was chair of the Bank of America and a big advocate of cost cutting. In 1987, the Institute of Nutrition was the victim of his budget axe.

(footnote: Spangler was UNC president from 1986-1997 and after retirement was appointed to the Board of Overseers of Harvard thanks to his being one of the largest stockholders in Bank of America and one of three billionaires in the state of North Carolina at the time. The Spangler Center Building at Harvard is named after him. He left no legacy gift to the University of North Carolina.)

After Dr. Jacobson retired from the University of North Carolina in 1988, he joined the faculty of the University of South Florida in the College of Public Health. He was involved with other faculty in a study in Sarasota doing a nutrition survey based on the availability of food in the house. He spent time with other physician faculty holding seminars and counseling medical students, but was disappointed that many of the students were looking narrowly at what they could make for a living at and not the broad medical sciences.

During this time, Dr. Jacobson learned about customer service training given at the Disney Institute in Orlando and got support to spend a week there, where he introduced the Disney people to the idea that the areas of health care, hospitals, clinics, etc., could certainly use the Disney training to improve their customer service. Other doctors he talked to about this disapproved of the idea by saying things like, How could anyone possibly meet patients' expectations?

During his time at USF, Dr. Jacobson, who had long studied issues of health care provision and health care reform, wrote a review of all the important writings about what kind of health care service is successful in other countries and in the U.S. and what should be done to bring about reform in the United States health care system.

He was greatly inspired by the approach of the 2008 election where Barack Obama was a candidate. He had read now-President Obama's book *The Audacity of Hope*, which talked about his ideas for making a real *system* out of U.S. health care.

The very interesting thing in the essay that Dr. Jacobson wrote on health care reform is his observation that throughout his career he had been part of what was called "organizational slack" in whatever setting he found himself, which was a situation made possible by a succession of enlightened superiors from Duncan Reid at Harvard to William Friday at North Carolina.

The term "organization slack" comes from an economics concept related to an organization's ability to take advantage of opportunities and new developments in its area of interest. This requires enough staff so that some people have the freedom or flexibility

to be freed up to address new or unexpected opportunities as they appear. His report, entitled *Health Care Reform*, which he published in the year 2007 in preparation for the presidential election of the year 2008, will be attached to this biography.

Finally, in summing up things from his long and eventful professional life, Dr. Jacobson observed that a lot of the subjects he learned were dead ends. For instance, the approach to cancer prevention and cure had too narrow a focus and cancer, like nutrition, is not one thing, but many things and is very complex and difficult not only to study, but to change or treat. Mapping the human genome was a big deal, but so far there have really been no therapeutic results after more than 10 years. In infectious disease, huge progress was made with immunization and, in some cases, treatment. He refers to autism as an example of a large and growing problem that we don't have a grasp on yet.

Doctor Jacobson says he had seen huge changes in obstetrics, maternal and child health' and surrounding philosophies over his lifetime. His wife Barbara says he used his various leadership positions in major scientific institutions as a "bully pulpit," and preached changes in medicine and public health as if influenced by his father, a minister.