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A Graduate
School in Child
Development

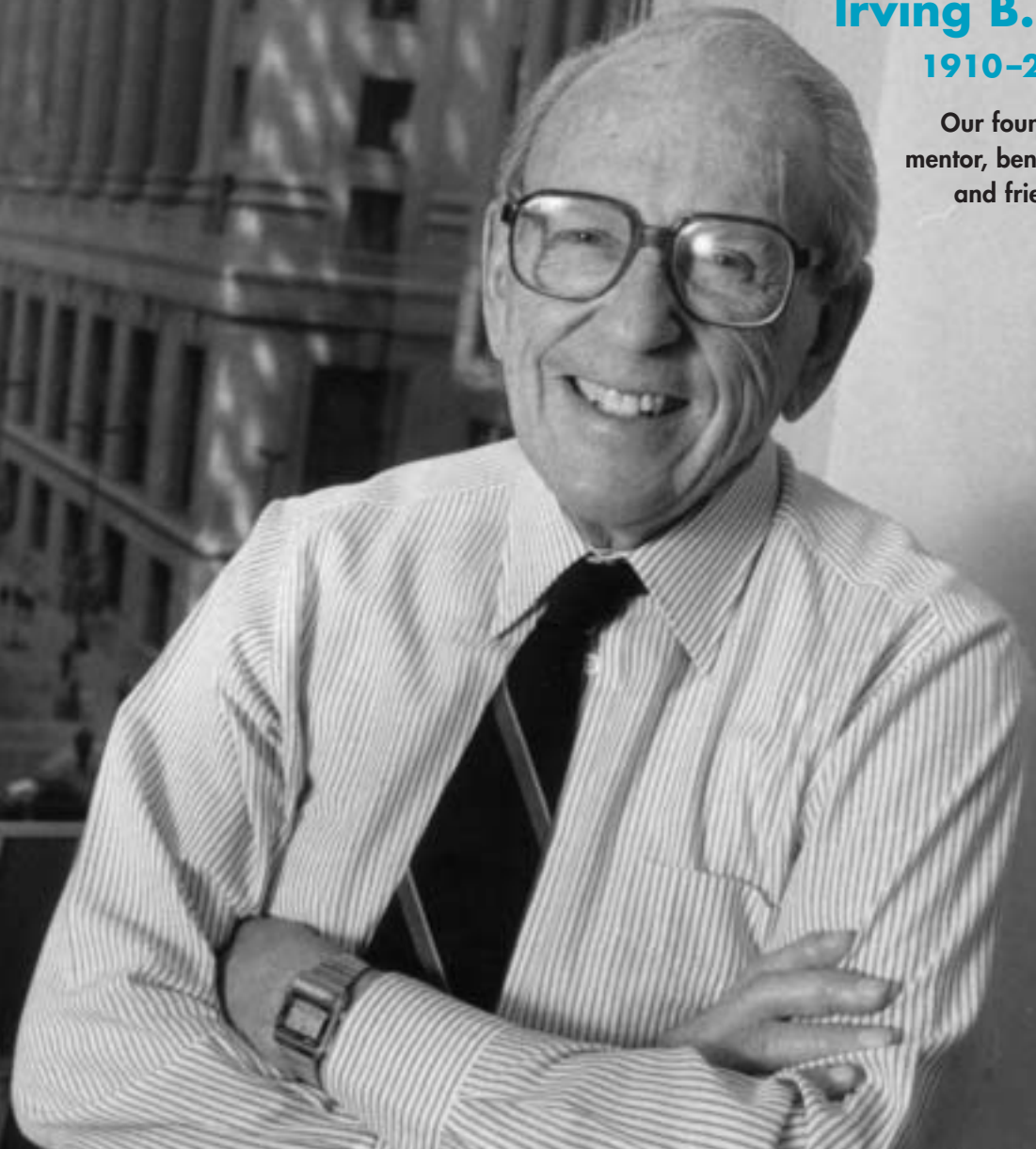
Fall 2004

Erikson Today

In memoriam

Irving B. Harris
1910-2004

Our founder,
mentor, benefactor,
and friend



Erikson Today

Fall 2004

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On the cover

Irving B. Harris

Photo by Kathy Richland.

Erikson remembers founder Irving B. Harris

ON SEPTEMBER 25, 2004, Erikson Institute lost a member of its family with the passing of Irving B. Harris.

To call Irving Harris a remarkable benefactor and friend to the institute is truly an understatement. For nearly 40 years, in ways both great and small, Irving's philanthropic support was the foundation and the scaffold for Erikson's development.

Yet Irving was much more than a benefactor. He was one of our founders—without him, Erikson quite simply would not exist in its present form. He was also the

adviser every enterprise dreams of—attentive, informed, experienced, practical, yet passionately committed to the cause.

He used his enormous energy and even greater intellect to lead a generational change, both at Erikson and within the fields of early care and education, early childhood development, children and families, and infant-family studies. Directly or indirectly, Irving touched nearly everyone in these fields, nearly everywhere in the world.

He was not content to help a few people with a few ideas. Instead, he saw to it that the researchers, educators, and practitioners whose training he shaped and supported went on to train the next generation—a generation that in turn is already at work training its successors.

At Erikson, we talk a lot about how children and adults learn best in—and through—interaction with others. This “relationship-based” model of education is an Erikson hallmark, central to our programs, to our daily functioning, and to our very identity. Over the course of nearly 40 years, we learned so much from Irving that we experience his loss as we would the loss of a parent. We miss him tremendously. But every important relationship changes each partner, and like all good parents, Irving made it possible for us to carry on without him. He made us strong, he sent us on our way, and we are already off and doing the best we can to live up to what he taught us and what he made it possible for us to do.

In January, we will take the opportunity to more closely examine Irving's legacy to Erikson, but we could not let this moment pass without acknowledging our tremendous debt to him and our resolve to be worthy of his investment. Perhaps there is no greater memorial than this for a man so deeply committed to leaving the world a better place than he found it: to carry him in our hearts, yes, but to carry him forever in our ideals and our deeds.



Irving Harris's passionate commitment to children touched countless lives. 2000 photo by Kathy Richland.

Getting it right from the start

Erikson, DCFS deliver front-line support

When children from birth to five enter the Illinois foster care system, one of the first people they see is an Erikson-based—and probably Erikson-trained—early childhood specialist.

“Our goal is to see what services need to be in place, both for the child and for the



Laura Esikoff

caregiving adults,” says Laura Esikoff, executive director of the Department of Children and Family Services project and herself a graduate of Erikson’s infant studies certificate program. “DCFS contracted with Erikson on this project not just because of our expertise with young children but also because of our emphasis on children in the context of their families. You can’t help children in a vacuum, and you can’t

help parents if you don’t know anything about the needs of their children.”

The original project, launched in 1998 by Molly McGrath, ’97, provided developmental assessment and evaluation for children only. Every child from birth to age three who entered the foster care system was seen by a project specialist, who identified potential problems and made referrals for further services when necessary. Andria Goss, ’01, the

project’s director, says that over 25 percent of infants evaluated did not pass the initial screening, and a further 15 to 20 percent passed but were identified as at-risk. The initiative’s success in reaching those infants led DCFS to give Erikson the \$2.5 million budget to expand the program’s scope and reach to include children up to five years of age as well as their birth and foster families. Twelve new Erikson-based clinicians will be added to the team to handle the increased caseload.

The broadened mission requires Esikoff and her staff to bring together areas of knowledge that traditionally have had little contact. “Child welfare is its own area of expertise, as are clinical acumen and child development, and we’re trying to fuse all three together,” she says.

Not surprisingly, Erikson alumni make up about 90 percent of the specialists doing that fusing.

“This kind of work calls for a new kind of professional, someone who understands early development, family systems, and families at risk,” says vice president and dean of academic affairs Fran Stott, who also leads the project’s faculty advisory board. “Erikson has been talking about developing that new kind of professional for a long time—it’s something we are doing in our dual degree and infant mental health programs—and this project is an important application of that idea.”

Exelon powers Fall Appeal

On the heels of last year’s success, Exelon Corporation has stepped up to the plate again with a \$25,000 matching gift challenge for Erikson’s Fall Appeal.

“In addition to educating our students, Fall Appeal gifts help Erikson educate families, parents, and the community at large,” says Jenifer Vargo, the institute’s director of development. “We’re fortunate that Exelon shares our commitment to education and the Chicago community and recognizes Erikson’s excellence.

Working together, we think we can make this the most successful Fall Appeal in Erikson’s history.”

Exelon has agreed to match every new or increased contribution to the 2004 Fall Appeal, to a maximum of \$25,000. Exelon’s chairman and CEO John W. Rowe and Erikson trustee Katherine K. Combs, Exelon’s vice president, deputy general counsel, and corporate secretary, backed the matching gift. “This was a perfect fit for Exelon,” Combs says. “Exelon is strongly committed to improving education in Chicago and all the other communities we serve.” Last year, the Fall Appeal raised more than \$250,000 for Erikson’s academic programs, research, and community engagement.

News from Erikson

Erikson awarded grant for growth

The Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity has awarded Erikson a grant of \$254,000 through the Illinois First fund to aid in strengthening the capacity of the institute. These funds will allow Erikson to advance its information technology systems and service for students, increase recruitment efforts, expand the Edward Neisser Library and Learning Center, and broaden Erikson's impact through the development of informational publications and a community outreach plan.

Putting talent where it's needed

Stephanie Bynum, '02, has joined the staff as Erikson's first director of career services. Bynum, an adjunct faculty member and experienced practitioner, will help place students and alumni in internships and jobs that make the most of their talent and training—and in turn make a difference for those they serve.

A welcome addition to a distinguished board

Rudy R. Mendez has joined the 38 civic leaders who form Erikson's Board of Trustees. Mendez is vice president of diversity initiatives for McDonald's Corporation in Oak Brook, and serves on the board of Chicago City Colleges and the corporate advisory boards of the National Puerto Rican Council and the League of United Latin American Citizens.

First M.S./M.S.W. cohort gets dual degrees, dual expertise

Ten Erikson alumni became the first cohort to complete the joint M.S./M.S.W. degree program, offered in conjunction with Loyola University Chicago. Erikson founded the program—the only one of its kind in the country—to train professionals in both child development and clinical social work. The students, who received M.S. degrees in child development from Erikson last year, received their social work degrees from Loyola in May.

Erikson's newest Ph.D.'s investigate schizophrenia, learning process

Congratulations to **Ann Masur** and **James Geidner**, both of whom successfully completed Erikson's doctoral program, affiliated with Loyola University Chicago. Geidner received his doctorate last December for his dissertation on mother-child interaction between a mother with schizophrenia and her young child, while Masur, who wrote "Working Approach: A New Look at the Process of Learning," received her degree this spring. Both newly minted Ph.D.'s were recognized at Erikson's graduation ceremony in May.

Helping children cope with divorce

In May, Erikson teamed up with Loyola University Chicago to present the Children's Summer Institute, a week-long program that dealt with "The Heart of the Matter: Children and Divorce." The interdisciplinary program for social workers, psychologists, educators, legal

professionals, and child development specialists focused on working in the best interests of children whose parents are divorcing.

Children's Defense Fund honors student

Frank Gettridge, a second-year master's student, has won a highly selective Emerging Leaders Fellowship from the Children's Defense Fund. Gettridge attended a leadership and policy training conference in October, and will join a network of early childhood activists who have the potential to be leaders in the field. In January, he participated in Florida State University's leadership in child development program.

Write on

Second-year master's program student **Rachel Rashkin** wrote *I'm Getting Better* for children entering psychotherapy for the first time. The book will be released in January 2005 under the APA's Magination Press. Rashkin's second book is in progress.

Fussy Baby Network reaches out nationally, internationally

Under the leadership of professor **Linda Gilkerson** and project director **Susan Connor**, Erikson hosted both the Fussy Baby National Network Meeting in April, and the Chicago Network Meeting in July. A second national meeting at Erikson took place in October.

Gilkerson also traveled to Alaska and Finland to share her expertise on helping challenging infants. She consulted with the newborn intensive care unit

at a children's hospital in Anchorage, and also attended the 9th International Infant Cry Research Workshop in Turku, Finland, where she presented on the activities of the Fussy Baby Network.

Erikson, CCC team up to improve early childhood teaching

Erikson and the City Colleges of Chicago (CCC) have formed a partnership to provide professional development seminars for CCC's child development faculty. With **Jana Fleming**, director of CCC's early childhood program and an Erikson research associate, Erikson faculty developed a series of nine seminars for this academic year that explore new directions in child development. In addition to presentations by Erikson faculty and other Chicago-area experts, speakers from Harvard and Columbia Universities will participate.

New demands bring new faculty

Enrollment in Erikson's degree and certificate programs has grown steadily over the past three years, increasing by over 60 percent since 2001. The demand for Erikson expertise has grown, as well, with parents, clinicians, and a host of organizations—Chicago Public Schools and Illinois Department of Children and Family Services among them—seeking advice and program support or collaboration. Fortunately, a national search for new faculty to meet those needs yielded some impressive results, and in September, Erikson

welcomed its two newest professors.

Associate professor **Zachariah Boukydis**, a national expert in the field of infancy, holds a Ph.D. in developmental and clinical psychology from Pennsylvania State University and has taught and conducted research at the University of Toronto, Harvard Medical School, Brown University Medical School, and the Merrill-Palmer Institute at Wayne State University. Boukydis is not exactly a stranger to Erikson. For the past year, he's acted as a consultant to the Fussy Baby

Network. As a member of the faculty, Boukydis will teach, conduct research, and codirect the Infant Mental Health Certificate Program with professor Linda Gilkerson, as well as continue his work with Fussy Baby Network, one of Erikson's fastest-growing initiatives.

Assistant professor **Molly Fuller Collins** holds a doctorate in early childhood education from Boston University. At home in any classroom, Collins has taught both preschoolers and university-level students, and her research focuses on young children's literacy and language acquisition. At Erikson, she's teaching cognitive and language development and spending a third of her time at Williams School, where Erikson has partnered with the Chicago Public Schools to improve outcomes for grades pre-K through three. In addition to consulting and providing professional development to Williams teachers with clinical assistant professor Patty Horsch, she will continue her research on literacy development.



Molly Fuller Collins (left) and Zachariah Boukydis



Making policy work

New Erikson program to guide thinking about early childhood poverty, school readiness

Public policy affects the care and development of young children as deeply as it affects other aspects of our lives such as business or foreign affairs. Now, with help from a \$40,000 planning grant from the McCormick Tribune Foundation, Erikson faculty and researchers are laying the groundwork to examine our nation's early care and education policies and the issues they address.

"More than 20 percent of the children entering kindergarten this fall were raised in poverty. Those children are likely to begin their formal education at a severe disadvantage compared to their more affluent peers," says Erikson president Samuel J. Meisels. "How can we as a nation address this problem? Our goal is developing a policy program to help governmental agencies answer that question—and create a better start in life for these children."

The new policy program will not only generate knowledge, it will provide much-needed analysis of existing knowledge. It will also work to increase awareness of the public issues that affect all children and families. Among those issues are early childhood caregiver qualifications, universal access to preschool, and the implications of changes in welfare legislation for children and families.

"Adding this policy program just makes sense; this kind of analysis has always been an important part of our mission," says Fran Stott, vice president and dean of academic affairs. "For more than 30 years, faculty members have been serving on state and national task forces, testifying before Congress on issues that affect the well-being of children and families, and conducting research that has led to changes in how public agencies distribute their services to children and families. The policy program will concentrate and focus those efforts and make them more effective."



Cultivating leadership from the ground up

Name: Tom Florek, SJ

Erikson class of: 1976

Current position: Founder and director, Midwest Cultural Leadership Formation Institute

Mission: To foster grassroots leadership in the Hispanic community, both in the church and in society.

On Erikson: He calls his Erikson education “invaluable” in his work.

Fr. Tom Florek, SJ, applies his Erikson education in the Catholic Church as it works with the fastest growing minority population in the U.S. With the Hispanic/Latino presence in the Church now at 40 percent, Florek’s expertise fills a real need.

“Most of my work is with newcomers—young families raising kids in a cross-cultural environment,” Florek explained. For the past seven years, Florek has directed a program called Instituto Cultural de Liderazgo

en el Medio-Oeste (ICLM), or Midwest Cultural Leadership Formation Institute. It prepares the Hispanic community for leadership and decision-making positions in the church and society.

Florek also directs the Jesuit Hispanic Ministry Conference and is vice president of the Federation of Pastoral Institute—a group establishing national guidelines for unity and diversity in multicultural ministries.

He says his Erikson education prepared him well for serving the Hispanic/Latino population.

“Erikson Institute helped me understand the psychosocial development of children and how family contact impacts it,” Florek said, noting that many Latinos lose the support of their extended family when they move to America. “ICLM produces adult leadership that takes into account the family in which children are at the center.”

—by Karyn Odway

Erikson

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Erikson events offer something for every generation

Over 40 young moms—and moms of the young—gathered at the Highland Park home of **Elizabeth Lund** in June for “Life with Your Toddler: Development, Growth, and Challenge,” a talk by Erikson professor **Linda Gilkerson** and child development expert **Karen Benson**. The lecture and breakfast, cohosted by Lund and **Heidi Bartelstein**, gave mothers valuable insight into navigating this critical—and wonderful—stage of their child’s development.

For the group that assembled at **Doris Adelstein’s** Lincoln Park home earlier in the month, dealing with the “terrible twos” is old hat, but settling into the role of grandparenting presents new questions. Where do grandparents fit into their grandchildren’s lives, and how can they establish a meaningful relationship? Professor **Barbara Bowman**, herself a grandmother, addressed these and other topics in her talk “LUVU: Connecting with Grandchildren.”

Both events were part of a popular lecture series that brings Erikson experts into local homes to address a wide range of early childhood issues. For more information about these events, contact Jenifer Vargo, director of development, at 312.893.7114.

continued on back



Attendees included Sheila Keeshin, Myrna Bartelstein, Gail Baron, Carole Brownstein, and Elise Sacks.



Erikson president Samuel J. Meisels and host Doris Adelstein at the June outreach event “LUVU: Connecting with Grandchildren.”



Professor Barbara Bowman addresses the assembled group in Adelstein’s home.

*Events at Erikson
continued*



Professor Linda Gilkerson and Fussy Baby Network expert Karen Benson led an event for parents of toddlers, cohosted by Elizabeth Lund and Heidi Bartelstein in June.



Jill Katz (left) and Nicki Woldenberg chat with Benson and Gilkerson at the event.

Speaking of . . .

It was the adults who did most of the cooing and giggling when **Doris Adelstein's** own granddaughters, **Alice** and **Kate Blanks**, visited Erikson in August, along with mom and former trustee **Sally Adelstein Blanks**.



Above: Alice Blanks

Below: Sally Adelstein Blanks, Barbara Bowman, Kate Blanks

