

## **The Twenty-Two IFs of The Interns' Years**

### **The Intern Program**

At the time I decided to be an age-group swimming coach and a fifth-grade teacher rather than a lawyer, I also made the decision to get my military obligation out of the way before starting on my teaching and coaching career paths. The Stanford School of Education had accepted me into their elementary teachers credential program and then agreed to postpone my training until I was out of the military.

On November 23, 1965, my ship, the USS Midway CVA-41, returned to Alameda after its nine-month deployment off the coast of Vietnam. My time in the Navy was to come to an end on May 17, 1966. Because my exit from the military was imminent, the day after my ship returned to Alameda, I contacted Stanford to reactivate my acceptance.

I was surprised to learn that Stanford was no longer training elementary school teachers. Stanford's Department of Education suggested that I apply to the University of California instead. Cal was just across the bay from Stanford and just minutes away from Alameda. I applied to Cal immediately. Stanford expedited sending a copy of my transcript to Cal and I was accepted to Cal's teacher credential program on November 30<sup>th</sup>, exactly one week after my ship had returned to port.

When I applied to Cal, I asked if it would be possible for the University to waive any undergraduate educational course requirements, since my Stanford degree was in Economics. My asking was all it took to have me referred to Cal's special Intern Teachers Program. The Intern Program was looking for people who wanted to teach but had no prior educational training.

### **The Two Job Interviews**

Once I was accepted as a student in Cal's Intern Program, the next step for me was to meet with school principals who had agreed to accept Intern Teachers from Cal's program as full-time teachers on their staffs. Both the Oakland and Richmond School Districts had principals willing to accept Intern Teachers. However, acceptance was not automatic. An Intern first had to meet with the principal for a job interview. I was assigned to the Richmond School District. I set up two interviews there.

At my first interview the Principal spent about a half an hour asking me a variety of questions. At the end of that half hour, he called in his Vice Principal and started the interview all over again. He asked me every question I had just answered, so his Vice Principal could hear for himself what I had just said. I found that to be annoying. The challenge for me was to give the same answers, but word the answers differently, so they

would not seem to be rote responses. The Principal was impressed enough to offer me a teaching position at his school. I thanked him for his offer and said I would give him my answer after my second interview.

As I walked into the Principal's office for my second interview, the Principal stood up behind his desk, pointed at me and said, "I want you." The "I Want You" expression was well known at that time. It came from a First World War Army recruiting poster. It was still actively shared. I even had a copy of that poster in my eventual home office.

The Principal then asked me if I could bowl. My answer, "Yes." He offered me the job and I accepted right then. We then talked about his views on teaching and what he looked for when he visited classrooms in his school. He liked seeing children quietly sitting at their desks, heads bowed over their work. That was not at all the kind of teacher I was to become. The Principal had shared his views. He did not ask for mine.

### **The Interns - Two Departures and One New Arrival**

On March 31st, I was sent my letter notifying me that I had been accepted to be an intern teacher in the Richmond School District. Shortly after that we had our first meeting of all the Interns in the Program. There were twenty-four Interns - twenty women and four men. A substantial number of our group had been busy raising families and were now looking to enter the workplace as teachers. Everyone in the younger group except for me would be graduating that Spring. I was the oldest of the young ones. My class had graduated five years before.

Shortly after our group began meeting regularly, one of the four male interns dropped out. He had been a probation officer and he simply decided he wanted to go back being one. Enrollment in the program had ended, so there was no thought given to replacing him. After the probation officer quit the Program, our supervisors were informed that when her college transcript was finally received by Graduate Admissions one of our female interns was found to be ineligible for admission.

The difference between the man's leaving and the woman's leaving was that the woman was part of a study on team-teaching for which our supervisors had secured special funding. It was not a matter of simply switching another intern into that position. The now gone team-teacher's salary was to be \$3,000.00 for the year paid from the special funding. The teacher she was assigned to train with, as well as all of us who had been hired to teach our own classes, were being paid \$5,000.00 for the year. There was no way any other Intern would take the pay cut that stepping into that team-teaching situation would require.

Our supervisors began calling applicants to the Program who had previously been rejected. Unless a person had been rejected because he or she was an ax-murderer, whatever had caused the earlier rejection before was not considered. The person chosen to fill the vacancy would be the first person to accept the offer. That first person to accept when a supervisor called her at home was Mary Baratta.

### **The Third-Grade Teacher**

As Intern Teachers, we were to skip the traditional year of training that would have included extensive time serving as a student teacher in a classroom alongside whomever had been designated as our master teacher. Instead, we were to be full-time teachers with our own classrooms when school started in September. The entire extent of our teacher-training experience before striking out on our own would be to serve as student-teachers in a five-week summer school that would only be in session for half of each day.

By the time Mary joined the rest of the Interns we were already meeting for several hours each day in preparation for our student-teacher lives. Apart from simple greetings, Mary and I had no interaction with one another. The same could be said about me and nearly every other Intern, both young and old. At this early stage in our training, there was very little interaction between the Interns. Class time was spent listening attentively to our supervisors and guest speakers as we prepared for our summer school assignments.

We had all been selected because we had no previous teaching experience. Now, all of us were going to be full-time teachers in the Fall. The only actual teaching experience we would take with us to our eventual classrooms would be the five-weeks of student-teaching at our summer schools in either Richmond or Oakland.

Mary and I and were among the Interns assigned to the summer school in Richmond. We were both assigned to fifth-grade classrooms because both she and I planned to be fifth-grade teachers in the Fall. The first assignment given to all of us was to plan an hour-long lesson to be given on Friday at the end of our first week of summer school.

When I met with my master teacher a few days before summer school was to begin, she informed me that she was a third-grade teacher. She could not understand why she had been assigned to fifth-grade for summer school. She said she didn't know any more about teaching fifth-graders than I did. She also said that since neither one of us knew what we were doing, we might as well just split the responsibility for the class. That way, we each would only have to figure out how to teach one subject to our fifth-graders. She would figure out how to teach math and

I could figure out teaching reading. That seemed fair to me, so I agreed. This meant there was no need for me to plan an hour's lesson for that first Friday. I would already be teaching full-time, at least for reading, from the first day of summer school.

Once summer school began, we Interns met with our supervisors back on campus for several hours each afternoon after our morning summer school sessions. It immediately became known by my fellow Interns that I had assumed the role of a regular classroom teacher starting on day-one. To put it mildly, if not very modestly, all the other Interns were stressing out over their upcoming Friday one-hour lesson, which is why ALL of them were so impressed that I had already started teaching on day-one and was not having any problems doing it.

Because Mary and I were at the same school and were also both fifth-grade teachers, she asked me to come and watch her Friday lesson. She said she felt I might give her a more honest assessment than her master teacher. I think it was because we were both beginners, and beginners could relate better to other beginners than an already experienced teacher might. So, Mary arranged for her lesson to be when my co-teacher would be teaching math to our class.

### **Mary's Disastrous Lesson**

I was in the room before Mary brought the class in from recess, so I had a ring side seat for the whole show. The master teacher joined me. She said she wanted Mary to do everything by herself so we two would pretend we weren't even there.

The class came in, in its usual manner, some noise, but heading for their seats at their desks. Mary came in with half the class still behind her and half the class in various stages of getting seated. She said in a voice I could barely hear, and speaking to those children nearest her, "All right, let's form a circle in front of the room with our chairs."

Those that heard, obediently got their chairs and began pushing their way through the children who were still coming in. The children coming in could see some students walking with their chairs and some sitting down. They asked their classmates what they were to do and, depending on the person asked, got a different answer. Those who were sitting down thought this was the order of the day and passed on that news. Those who were up with their chairs told a different story.

Mary was standing in the midst of this growing confusion looking very nervous. She had an adult audience of two judging her every move, enough to make even the most seasoned performer cringe, and Mary was not yet seasoned.

Lacking further instructions and seeing so many people still seated at their desks, some of the children who had not received direct word from Mary about the circle but who had gone there anyway, lost heart and decided to return to the security of their own desks. This created a two-way flow of chair-traffic, and the resulting collisions raised the noise level considerably. Mary then said in a voice losing strength, "Everybody form a circle in the front of the room." With this those remaining seated got up to move their chairs and those who had been returning, re-route themselves, either by their own volition or by shouts of people coming the other way, "Teacher says to form a circle."

There were thirty children in the class so there would be thirty people gathered in that circle. At one row only, the circle would have taken up most of the room, but it was one row that was being formed. In addition, Mary, who as it turns out only wanted a semi-circle but had assumed everybody knew what she meant by "circle" was taking people from one half of the embryonic circumference and sending them to the other side. Well-meaning children bent upon forming the circle kept filling in the spaces as fast as Mary emptied them and had nearly finished the forming of a gigantic circle when Mary threw up her hands in exasperation bordering on anger and with tremor in her voice, for her master teacher and I were still observing closely her teaching talents, began taking each child in turn and placing him or her exactly where he or she was to go with orders not to move from that spot on fear of extinction.

When the class was finally seated, there were three concentric semi-circles seating ten each to the curve. One might wonder what thoughts would pass through the mind of a child who has been trying to form a circle and ends up in a choir row, especially when the teacher had as a final admonition scolded them with "Can't you even form a circle?" Nevertheless, the class was quiet and attentive, and it had only taken about ten minutes to get into position.

Mary was going to read a story to the children, which was by the way, why they had gathered in this position in the first place. The story could just as well have been read as the children sat at their own desks, but then, in retrospect, it's always easy to see what might have been.

Unfortunately for Mary the only two boys who had been rough housing at all as the class had come in from recess had, in the random placement of chairs, been seated right next to each other. Their desire to hear the story was not as great as their desire to hit each other, so before Mary had finished page-one, the boys had begun poking one another, mostly in fun, but at an increasing level of hardness that would soon have produced a fight.

Mary stopped her reading and had one of the culprits sit alongside and slightly behind her to stop further contact. She was facing the entire class, and now so was her prisoner. The temptation for him was too great. As Mary again started to read, he made faces, first at his original adversary, and when this drew mild laughter from others, at the whole of the class.

The audience for the story was being very rude and Mary, not too pleased at all, asked them if they wanted to hear the story. They did, oh yes, they did! Mary began again and the class tried to contain themselves while the prisoner expanded upon his earlier successes as an attention-getter. His talents were greater than the classes' collective ability to resist them, and again they laughed at the wrong place in the story.

Mary stood up, banged the book down and said, "If you aren't going to listen, then I won't read to you!" As far as the class was concerned it was more important to hear the story than to watch some silly boy make faces, so an obliging member of the group promptly gave full credit for all the disruption to the boy responsible. Mary placed him in a very back row all his own and with very few additional interruptions finished the story and the lesson for the day.

When class was over and the children had left, Mary could be found leaning dejectedly, head bowed against the wall. Her words to me were, "I'll never make a teacher! I'm going to quit!" I told her it really was not nearly as bad as she thought. I got her to agree to meet me at the Cal Education Library that evening after our intern class. I told her I would go over with her what had gone wrong and how to make it right.

### **The Library Meeting**

Mary and I walked over to the Education Department's library right after our intern class that Friday. Mary was feeling quite down about herself after that day's disastrous lesson. My telling her what had gone wrong and how to make it right was not by itself a confidence builder. If it was so easy for me to see what was wrong and how to fix it, then why couldn't she have seen it? She had already been turned down when she first applied to the Teacher Intern Program. Now she had just finished doing a terrible job in her very first lesson. Her feeling now was that she was just not cut out to be a teacher.

I told Mary it was easy for me to see those things because I had years of experience working with children of all ages. If I hadn't had all my many past experiences, then I would not have felt so comfortable splitting the teaching responsibilities in my fifth-grade class with my third-grade master teacher. I also told Mary that before she made any other presentations in her summer school class, she and I would go over her

proposed lesson together. The mistakes she had made that day could easily have been corrected in advance, and her lesson run smoothly, if only she had had the opportunity to share what she was planning to do with someone with a bit more experience.

Mary, of course, agreed. And from that day forward we began working and, of course, playing together. Mary made it clear from the start of our spending time together that we would have to remain in the “friends” bracket. She was semi-engaged to her boyfriend of five years who was currently in med school in Colorado. Staying in the “friends” category was fine with me. As a “friend” I could just relax and be myself and never have to worry about making any kind of first move that would eventually be expected in a classical dating relationship. My “first-move” problem was described in the [College - Sophomore Year - Clinical Depression](#) section of [Chapter 2](#).

Mary and I began planning our lessons together. We would also take in movies, go out to dinner, hang out with our young Intern friends, as well as friends of hers from her near-by alma mater Holy Names College, and enjoy Berkeley life together. As friends, we really did enjoy each other’s company. And, by the way, Mary had no more disastrous lessons.

### **Getting to Know You**

“Getting to know you, getting to know all about you” is a line in a song from the 1956 film *The King and I*. Mary’s and my first meeting was in 1966, ten years later, but the song’s line captures what our time together was like. The basic requirements for applying to the Intern Program were extensive travel outside the country (to expose us to a wide variety of other cultures) and no previous educational training (to free us from preconceived notions about teaching). Mary definitely met those criteria.

Mary’s father and mother were from Chicago. However, as a career Army Officer, Mary’s father first served in General Patton’s Seventh Army in Germany during World War II. After the war ended, he remained in the Army and was stationed new places throughout the United States and the world every two years or so. Mary had been born in Many, Louisiana, gone to kindergarten in Germany and had been in Phoenix, Arizona for high school because that was her father’s last duty station before retiring. Mary had spent her Freshman year at Arizona State University in Tempe about ten miles from her home.

Once Mary’s father retired, he and Mary’s mother moved to Sylmar, California where he became a math teacher at a local middle school. Once her family was no longer in Phoenix, Mary had transferred to the College of Holy Names in Oakland as a Sophomore to be with her boyfriend. They had been together since their Senior year in high school

and were still together now that she was an Intern. Mary's college Major was English, with a focus on notable English authors. Her interest in becoming a librarian was because it would allow her to spend time learning more about authors of all kinds while she was at work. Her interest in teaching was because her father was now a teacher.

Mary was quite fond of her father. Less so of her mother, but more about that later. Mary had taken Russian in college to impress her father. She also liked joining her father in working on the family car. Mary even offered to change my oil for me if I ever needed it changed. Mary had applied to the Intern Program to follow her father's career choice. Even more specifically because it would permit her to become a teacher even though the only undergraduate class she had taken even remotely related to education was a child development course she took in Freshman year at Arizona State.

Mary had already begun the process of become a librarian when she received the call from our Intern Supervisors about the opening. She first checked with her friend Peggy, who was already in the Program, about housing in Berkeley. Since Mary could share a house and its rent with Peggy, she switched her career plan from librarian to teacher. Mary needed some form of employment to keep her occupied while her boyfriend was in med school, and the Intern Program had the advantage of paying its Interns while they were undergoing training.

### **Team Teacher**



Full pictures of the children in our classrooms were rare. The market for such pictures would be the parents of the children in the photo. In low-income neighborhoods, groceries are a higher priority than a class



picture. The picture of Mary and her students was taken for a police-community interaction article for a local paper. Mary is the teacher closest to the police officer. His patrol car is behind all the children. Although Mary wanted to teach fifth-grade, the Intern teacher she was brought in to replace was assigned to a second-grade classroom. So, Mary would have to start her teaching career at second-grade and switch to fifth-grade later.

To reward Mary for not giving up on teaching, I had a bouquet of flowers delivered to her at school on her first day of teaching. Mary told me later that she while she really appreciated the flowers, she was disappointed that they had not been sent by her boyfriend.

Mary liked the “start-from-scratch” approach to curriculum that I was using in my classroom. However, Mary and her team partner were not trying to come up with any new curriculum. They were simply using the district-provided teaching materials. Mary herself had been a Girl Scout. So, Mary decided to create a Brownies Troop for the girls in her class. Brownies are Girl Scouts in the second- and third-grades.

I don’t know if her troop ever had actual Brownies uniforms. However, in addition to their weekly after-school meetings, Mary did get the local Girl Scout chapter to lend her enough sleeping bags and tents for an over-night camp-out at a local park. I went along for the camp-out as the male chaperone.

### **The Kiss and Christmas Vacation**

On Veterans Day, Friday November 11<sup>th</sup>, I took Mary to dinner at Spenger’s Fresh Fish Grotto, our favorite restaurant in Berkeley. Sitting with Mary in my car after dinner, I told her that this was to be the last time we would be able to do things together.

As I said earlier, Mary made it clear from the start that we would have to remain in the “friends” bracket because she already had a boyfriend. That had been fine with me. But it was not fine any longer. I had grown to like Mary way too much to just be her friend. We would have to stop doing things together, because it was now too hard for me to just be a friend. Mary’s response was to lean over and kiss me. It was NOT a good-bye kiss. It was an “okay, let’s not be friends” kiss. Let’s just keep doing everything together and see what the future might hold for us.

Mary spent Christmas vacation with her parents in Sylmar. Her boyfriend joined her there. The day Mary returned from Sylmar, she called me and said we had to stop seeing each other. The whole time her boyfriend was in Sylmar, she kept calling him “Bob.” Mary had never once called me by his name. After about an hour, Mary called back and

told me to forget what she had said about not seeing each other. She then came right over to deliver the Christmas present she had bought me. I keep Mary's Little Santa present on the shelf at the head of my bed, alongside the little hand painted souvenir I purchased when I was in Russian, to commemorate Mary's having learned to speak Russian.



### **A Master's Degree Surprise**

Our Fall Quarter classes ended on December 10<sup>th</sup>. Before the Winter Quarter classes began on January 5<sup>th</sup>, we received our Fall Quarter transcripts. Mary and I were comparing our transcripts just to see if we had received the same grades. We were both surprised to see that our transcripts showed that we were not even taking the same courses. We were both Interns and we had always received the same lectures and same homework assignments from the same instructors. Then how could we be taking different courses?

While we were trying to figure this out, I learned that Mary was earning her master's degree and Mary learned that I was not. It didn't take much to figure out that the Interns in the team-teaching program were the ones earning their master's degrees and the rest of us were not. At our first Intern class on Friday, January 6<sup>th</sup>, I asked our Intern Supervisors why some of us were in a master's degree program and most of us were not. This was the first time the other Interns in the program who were not master's degree candidates learned that we had all been excluded. As you can imagine, this news was not well received.

Our supervisors had written their grant request for the funding of their team-teaching experiment as a two-year master's degree program. Those in our group who were in the team-teaching program were here for two

years. The rest of us would be gone at the end of year-one. By the end of that class session, our supervisors agreed to arrange for all of us to be enrolled as master's degree candidates. Our transcripts would all be revised to show the same courses the team-teachers had on their transcripts. So, just like that, I was now a master's degree candidate and my time at Cal was to be two years and not just one.

### **A Kindergarten Teacher**

Teachers gain tenure by working three years in the same school district. A tenured teacher cannot be fired unless he or she does something seriously wrong. Tenure is a guarantee of steady employment. Of the twenty-five or so full-time teachers at Mary's school only two or three were tenured. That meant the teachers were not staying there for more than a year or two. Even a teacher quitting mid-year was not unusual.

Shortly after Christmas break, one of the kindergarten teachers at Mary's school quit. The Principal, knowing Mary was in a team-teaching situation, asked her if she would like to take over the kindergarten teacher position. Mary wanted her own classroom, so she said she would like to, but she would have to ask her Intern Supervisors. They said "NO!" Mary was a part of their team-teaching study, and they needed her to stay in it.

Mary asked me if I would talk to our supervisors for her. Mary had chastised me earlier because she said I was too good at manipulating people. So, I asked her if she wanted me to "manipulate" them? She said "Yes!" What Mary chose to call manipulation is really more a matter of how you frame the question. Mary had told our supervisors that she wanted her own classroom. What she had done was state what she wanted. If you want your request to be granted, you need to say, not why it is important to you, but why it is important to the people from whom you are asking the favor. What's in it for them is more important than what's in it for you.

I approached it from the Principal's position. He was now without a teacher in the middle of the school year. At that point in California, kindergarten teachers taught two full classes, one in the morning and one in the afternoon. That meant the Principal now had two kindergarten classes that needed a teacher. The Principal had done the Teacher Intern Program a favor by allowing two Intern Teachers, who had absolutely no prior teaching experience to become full-time teachers on his staff. By doing this, the Principal had taken complete responsibility for any problems that might arise if either of the Interns turned out to be disasters as teachers. He had helped the Intern Program. Now, all he was asking for was a little help in return.

Our supervisors allowed themselves to be “manipulated” by me, and Mary became a kindergarten teacher. From fifth-grade to second-grade and now to kindergarten. Mary’s fifth-grade summer-school class had used a traditional approach to teaching. Her second-grade class was also just using the materials provided by the district. Now, as a Kindergarten teacher, she would be continuing whatever teaching approach was already in place. Mary still wanted to try a “start from scratch” approach like mine, but that did not seem possible in the middle of the school year.

What she could do was make school as fun as possible for her students. One thing she did that my class and I were actively involved in was to arrange to take both of her kindergarten classes to a play meant for children on a Saturday. My entire fifth-grade class went along as chaperones, with each of my students taking charge of and holding the hands of two of Mary’s students as our massive group of kids walked to and from the event. Three adults (our friend Peggy joined us) and about ninety kids. My fifth-graders made it all quite manageable.

### **Easter Vacation and a New Living Arrangement**

Easter break at our elementary schools coincided with the end of Winter Quarter and the beginning of Spring Quarter at Cal. At the beginning of Spring break, Mary flew to Colorado to visit her boyfriend. She did not tell me the purpose of the visit, but it was obvious to both of us. We had even gone shopping to buy her a new outfit for the journey. She would now be visiting her boyfriend wearing an outfit we picked out together. Mary was there on Saturday and back on Sunday. She had officially broken up with her now ex-boyfriend.

I had dropped Mary off at the airport. When she returned, I picked her up and brought her to my home in Atherton where I was staying. The picture below is the one I took of Mary that first evening as she was resting her arm on my bureau.



After spending one night as a guest in my home, Mary and I returned to Berkeley for the remainder of our Easter break. Mary immediately moved into my studio apartment with me. Shacking up was frowned upon at that point in time and two of Mary's three roommates stopped talking to her because of it. The one roommate not bothered by our new arrangement was Mary's and now my friend Peggy, our fellow intern.

I am including the fact that Mary and I started living together during our Easter break because it ended up being directly responsible for so many of the IFs in both Mary's and my lives. But first, a little background.

### **The Three Names of Significance**

In the [High School - Senior Year – The Best Year](#) section of [Chapter 2 - My Path to Becoming a Teacher](#), I listed three names of people that I met at the Olympic Club, each of whom was to have a profound effect on my life years later.

The first, Jim Gaughran, became both Stanford's and the Olympic Club's water polo coach. Jim was, among other things, the reason I ended up serving on the USS Midway. He is also the person who got me the age-group swimming coach position that switched my career from being a lawyer to being a teacher.

The second, Art Lambert, was the reason I switched from being a field player in water polo to being a goalie. That switch in positions was to have an unexpectedly profound impact on both Mary's and my lives.

The third name on that list was Boyd Mickley. The reason I am just now mentioning Boyd's roll in Mary's and my lives is because his decision affecting my life only became significant when Mary and I began living together that Spring.

### **The Summer of 1963**

In the [First In-Between Year](#) section of [Chapter 2](#), I mentioned that I switched from being a field player to becoming a goalie in the Summer of 1962. That switch meant I stopped playing for the Olympic Club A team and became the goalie for the Stanford Hills team, which was composed of high school players.

From January 14th through May 17<sup>th</sup> of 1963, I was at Naval Officers Candidate School in New Port, Rhode Island. The fact that I was a water polo player with 1964 Olympics aspirations was why my roommate and I were allowed to swap orders. My orders to report to the USS Oriskany CV-34, based in San Diego, were swapped with his orders to report to the USS Midway CVA-41 based in Alameda.

I reported to the USS Midway CVA-41 on June 5<sup>th</sup>. I had already reconnected with Jim Gaughran and my Olympic Club water polo team before reporting to the Midway. I was able to supplement my weekly trips to Stanford for team practices by working out most days at the Officer's Club swimming pool at the Naval Air Station in Alameda

The National AAU Men's Senior Outdoor Water Polo Championship were to take place at Foothill College in Los Altos Hills from Thursday, July 25<sup>th</sup> through Sunday, July 28<sup>th</sup>. My Stanford Hills team had now become the Olympic Club C Team. Even though my old team was participating in the tournament, Jim assigned me as the goalie for the Olympic Club B Team, instead.

The B-Team was the Olympic Club old guard. Excellent older players, who all now had post-college full-time careers, and were no longer able to put in the hours needed to aim for the Olympic Trials the following year. In fact, a good number of the B-Team players were local high school coaches. Bob Gaughran, Jim's younger brother and my youngest brother's high school coach was on the team. Art Lambert, then a high school coach and later to be Jim's replacement as Stanford's water polo coach was also there. And so was Boyd Mickley. Boyd was a salesman for a textbook company. This tournament was our first chance for Boyd and me to get to know one another.

In the Summer of 1962, my very first game as goalie was at the AAU Junior Nationals. I knew then that my first game would be my only game at that tournament, because my high school teammates were no match for the college players we would be facing. So, we would be eliminated right away, and we were. However, I really loved playing goalie and that losing game only reinforced my love for the position. As the goalie for the Olympic Club B Team in that Summer of 1963, I played in far more tournament games than I had in that first Summer.

How could losing that game in 1962 be a motivator for my wanting to keep playing goalie? For a field player to score, the ball must be passed to the scorer from someone else. It takes teamwork. Being a goalie doesn't take teamwork. A goalie is the only self-employed player on the team. When a shot is taken, it is the goalie's sole responsibility to block that shot. It is a contest between the shooter and the goalie. No teamwork involved. You shoot, you score, you win. You shoot, I block your shot, I win. No one else to blame. Simple.

The City of Commerce team at the Foothills College AAU Nationals tournament was comprised mostly of players who had represented the USA at the 1960 Olympics. I made my favorite save as a goalie near the end of our game against the City of Commerce. It is also a good example

of a goalie as being self-employed. There was a point in the game where one of their players ended up with the ball in his hand, completely free in front of me, ready to take his shot. There were no other players from either team anywhere near us. It was just me and the shooter.

The score was 3 - 3 at that point. His goal would be a game winner. In water polo a particular foul can lead to the person fouled being awarded a penalty shot, just like a penalty kick in soccer. The person taking the penalty shot lines up four yards away from the goalie and, when the referee blows his whistle, must shoot the ball without hesitating.

In this case, the player in front of me had taken the four-yard penalty shot position. However, he did not have to take his shot without hesitating. I stuck my arms straight out to my sides as I waited for him to take his shot. One of the advantages I had as a goalie was that I had started out as a field player, and a high scoring one at that. I already knew where he was going to shoot. He faked shooting twice, but I had learned long ago to focus on the ball and not the shooter. Only react when the ball leaves the shooter's hand. As soon as the ball left his hand, I swung my arms up alongside my head. He had tried to put the ball past my ear, as I knew he would. His shot hit one of my arms instead. Shot blocked, I grabbed the ball and threw it out of bounds. The game ended in that 3 - 3 tie. You shoot, I block, I win. Simple.

In the [First In-Between Year](#) section of [Chapter 2](#), I mentioned that I switched to goalie, not because the Olympic Club was looking for a better goalie. There was no better goalie than the Club's George Stransky. I switched to goalie simply because I liked playing goalie. At the end of the Foothill tournament Jim came to me and said that George Stransky and I were by far the tournament's best two goalies. To have my name linked with George's was a great compliment.

### **Summer of 1966**

Although we had all been pointing towards the 1964 Olympic Trials, I had absolutely no chance of making the Olympic Team. I had not been on the Olympic Club A Team since I switched to playing goalie in the Summer of 1962. I was at the Trials as the Stanford Hills goalie.

After the Olympic Club's failure to earn a trip to the Olympics at the 1964 Trials, the players on that team retired from playing water polo and went about their normal lives. My brother Bill, who had just completed college, joined my brother Jack and me on the USS Midway. When his Navy time was up, Bill went to work for IBM. After Jack's Navy time was up, he became a stockbroker. The 1964 Olympic Trials marked the end of their water polo careers.

All my Stanford Hills teammates were still in school. Their water polo playing days were not even close to being over. Because I was their goalie, I hoped my playing days were also not yet over. I had been replaced as the team's goalie for the 1965 Summer water polo season because my ship was deployed off the coast of Vietnam from March through November of that year. What was my 1966 fate to be?

During my absence my Stanford Hills team had become the Olympic Club A Team and Jim Gaughran was no longer the team's coach. I did not know if the new coach would take me back as the Stanford Hills, now Olympic Club team goalie after I had already been replaced. Who was this new coach who now had my water polo fate in his hands? This new coach was impressed enough with my performance as his Olympic Club B Team's goalie at the 1963 AAU Nationals that he made me his Olympic Club A Team's goalie. The coach welcoming me back was Boyd Mickley, the third name on that list, and my teammate at the 1963 Nationals.

I began working out with my team once my ship returned from its Vietnam deployment. My three-year tour of duty as a Naval officer ended in May. In June I became a resident of Berkeley. The studio apartment I rented as my college residence was just one block from Sather Gate, the campus's main entrance. The Cal swimming pool was just a long block away from Sather Gate. In addition to my weekly trips to Stanford for team practices, I worked out at Cal daily after my Intern classes.

Friday through Sunday, August 5<sup>th</sup> through 7<sup>th</sup> of that 1966 Summer the Junior National AAU Championship tournament was held in Visalia. Conveniently, those days in August were the time between the end of our five-weeks of student teaching and the beginning of the school year.

The importance of the Junior Nationals to the Olympic Club team in 1962 was because teams that had not placed in the top three at any past national tournament had to go through qualifying rounds to earn placement in any future tournament. No one on that current team had placed nationally. Placing in the top three at the Junior Nationals would give the team automatic seeding in all future national tournaments. The importance of the 1966 Junior Nationals was the same for the current version of the Olympic Club A Team as it had been for the 1962 team.

There were twenty-four teams entered. Teams that remained in contention played as many as three games a day. There were eight brackets of three teams each. The top two in each bracket were then formed into four new brackets of four teams each. Then the top two in each of the four-bracket formed into two brackets of four teams each. Then the top two in the two brackets formed into a final four team bracket. A very busy three days.



We won every game. None were even close. My brothers Bill and Jack had been Junior Nationals champs back in 1962. I had to wait four years, but I was now a Junior Nationals champ, as well. When the tournament was over, I continued in my role as the team's goalie. Throughout the school year I traveled to team practices once a week. I also continued to work out at the Cal men's swimming pool.

### **Why Was My Playing Goalie Such a Big IF?**

Mary knew I had been traveling to Stanford once a week to attend water polo practices. Now that we were living together, Mary decided she wanted to keep me company on my drives from Berkeley to Stanford and back again. Mary wanted to keep me company on my drive to and from practice, but she didn't want to sit around doing nothing while I was working out with my team.

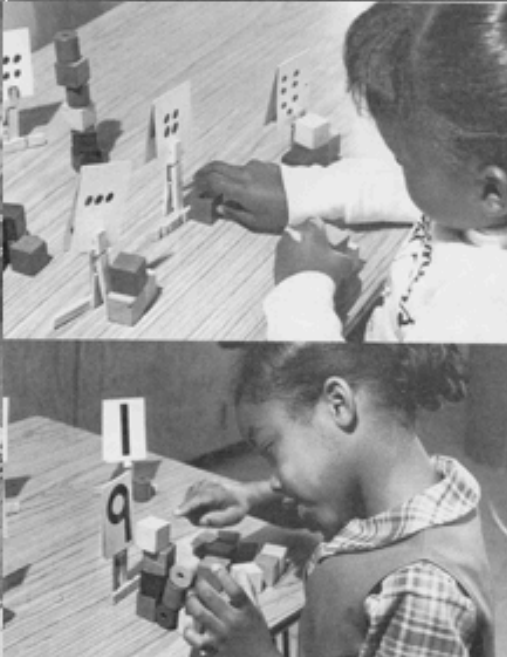
My first workout after Spring break was to be on Thursday, March 30<sup>th</sup>. So, Mary looked through the University Extension Course Catalog to find a Thursday night class being given somewhere near Stanford. The course she found was "Articulating The Educational Curriculum for Early Childhood", taught one night a week from Thursday March 30<sup>th</sup> through Thursday June 1st. The class was being held at Sequoia High School, in Redwood City, just a few miles up the road from Stanford.

Mary chose the course because of the day and the time it was being offered and how close it was to my water polo practice. However, the course itself ended up being a life-changer for both of us.

The class introduced her to the philosophy of Jean Piaget, a Swiss psychologist who had developed a theory of cognitive development for young children. Mary had wanted to be a curriculum creator like I was trying to be, but she had no idea as to how to go about something like that at the kindergarten level. Piaget's theory of cognitive development provided her with ideas for learning materials she could make that would give her students things to do and learn from.

### **Workjobs**

Mary began converting what she learned of Piaget's philosophy into activities that her kindergarten children could use for learning a variety of concepts. Once Mary had made a couple of activities, she took them to her class to show her professor to get his input. To say he was impressed would be an understatement. None of the students he had taught either this year or in previous years had ever taken the Piaget theories he was presenting and turned them into practical classroom activities for use by their students. On the next page are a few examples of the many activities Mary created.



Mary and her children referred to the activities she was creating as their jobs or their work. One student called the activities their work-jobs, and from that point forward, Mary and all her other students also called her creations “Workjobs”.

Mary’s many work-jobs were eventually turned into Mary’s *Workjobs* book. The book itself then led to both Mary and me being selected as instructors for a State-wide math curriculum program with two-thousand hand-picked elementary school teachers selected as participants, a program we would not even have known about if we had not been selected as instructors. That program then led directly to our writing *Mathematics Their Way* and *Mathematics a Way of Thinking*.

The royalties from Workjobs were also what made it possible for us to found the Center for Innovation in Education when we both ended up out of work in the Summer of 1973. (Explained in the [Promises Made - Promises Broken](#) section of [Chapter 9 - The Yearly History of a Change in Plans](#).) Without the book’s royalties, we would have to have found paid work immediately, since we had purchased a new home two years earlier. The royalties allowed two unemployed schoolteachers to spend their time writing math books, and, once the books were complete, set up a Center to provide support to any teachers who wished to implement the curriculum presented in the books in their classrooms.

If I had not switched to playing goalie in the Summer of 1962, I would have ended my water polo playing career as my two brothers had after the Olympic Trials in 1964. I still would have ended up in the Teacher-Intern Program at Cal. Mary and I still would have met and married. But if I had not still been playing water polo when I was in the Intern Program, *Workjobs* never would have been written and all the events in Mary’s and my lives that followed from the book’s existence would never have happened. That is why my switching to goalie was such a big IF.

### **Summer Wedding**

Saturday, June 17<sup>th</sup>, the first day of Summer vacation Mary and I were married at her family home in Sylmar. Mary didn’t believe in fancy wedding dresses or special bridesmaid outfits. She also did not want a church wedding. So, Mary simply added a veil to match the color of one of her favorite dresses and I wore my favorite sport coat.

The wedding was supposed to take place in Mary’s backyard, but it rained during the actual ceremony. Rain in Southern California in the middle of June was not at all common. The effect, though, was to give Mary and me a very private wedding. Mary and I stood in a sheltered area on her back porch with just the priest, and my brother Jack, as Best Man and Mary’s and my fellow intern friend, Peggy as Mary’s Maid

of Honor. Everyone else stayed inside the house and watched the ceremony through the full-length glass window overlooking the patio. The rain conveniently stopped right after our ceremony, and we were all able to have our wedding luncheon at the tables set up outside.



Mary's mother Bea told me shortly before the wedding that she and her husband Joe would prefer that I call them Mr. and Mrs. Baratta and not Joe or Bea. They didn't tell me why, but knowing why was easy to surmise. Their daughter had been going with the same guy for more than five years. She broke up with him at the end of March and two and half months later she is marrying a person who to them was a complete stranger. In their minds, they were most likely presiding over their daughter's shotgun wedding.

Once they visited Mary and me in Berkeley later in the Summer and could see both that Mary was not pregnant and she and I were genuinely happy together, I was given "Joe" and "Bea" permission.

### **Our Berkeley Home**

In advance of our wedding, Mary had gone house shopping and found a home for us to rent for the coming school year. My understanding was that the home belonged to a professor and his family. The professor was

about to take a year's sabbatical that would take him and his family away from Berkeley for the year. Apart from paying rent on time, the only thing he asked us to do was keep all his rose bushes alive during their absence.



We were a married couple now, but it still felt like we were just playing house. My parents and grandparents were the first guests we had over for dinner. Mary, who prided herself on her cooking skills, prepared a large pan of lasagna for the occasion. I stood at the head of the table serving up the portions of lasagna just like my grand-father and father had done at family gatherings my whole life. It was now my turn to play the “head of family” role. It felt to me like I was just pretending to be an adult. But, pretending or not, it sure was fun.

The title of this chapter is: The Twenty-Two IFs of The Interns’ Years. There was a twenty-third IF from those two years. That IF was our rental home in Berkeley. That IF turned out to be as big an IF in Mary’s and my lives as all the IFs that had led to *Workjobs*. Such a big an IF, in fact, that it and all the IFs it led to, get their very own [Chapter 8 - The Arithmetic Mistake and A Year Off From Teaching](#).

### **Summertime**

Mary’s and my Summer was a pleasant time. We both took courses that would count towards our master’s degree. Mary spent much of her time creating more Workjobs for her future Kindergarten students, while I began the process of creating a mathematics program for my students.

One of the courses I chose to take was called Advanced Study of Curriculum Trends. The purpose of this course was to review the



effectiveness of twenty-one beginning reading programs. There had been a federally funded study of these twenty-one separate first-grade reading programs. We would be analyzing the results of that study. As a fifth-grade teacher, I did not expect to be using any of the programs we would be reviewing in my own classroom. My focus in my first year of teaching had been on making sure everyone in my class left my room as a good reader. I was not entirely successful in reaching that goal. What I wanted was to better understand the ways my students had been taught, or not taught, to read when they were beginners.

While the class was supposed to review the effectiveness of twenty-one different programs, that turned out not to be its purpose at all. The professor for the class was John Downing. Except for the 1967-1968 school year, Dr. Downing was the Director of the Reading Research Unit at the University of London Institute of Education from 1960 through 1969. For this one year, Dr. Downing had chosen to become a visiting professor at the University of California at Berkeley.

Dr. Downing's purpose in offering a course reviewing the Twenty-One First-Grade Studies was not so much to review the studies, but to promote the use of the Initial Teaching Alphabet (ITA). While Dr. Downing had not created ITA, he was definitely a spokesperson for ITA's effectiveness in teaching children to read. ITA was, of course, one of the programs in the Twenty-One First-Grade Study. According to Dr. Downing it was the absolute best of the group.

The ITA expanded the standard 26 letter alphabet to 44 letters. Whereas the letters in the 26-letter alphabet can represent a variety of different sounds in words, each of the 44 letters of ITA represented just a single sound. The English language uses 44 unique sounds to make every word. That means the 44 ITA's letters are all one needs to write or read every word in English.

According to Dr. Downing, ITA made it much easier for children to learn to read. Once the child knew the unique sound associated with each of the 44 letters, reading any word was then possible. What follows is an example taken from [Chapter 13 – The Reading Program](#) of the confusion faced by beginning readers when using only 26 letters with sounds that change depending on the word. The letter “a” represents thirteen different sounds in these thirteen different words: about, arm, bath, bathe, call, chair, Christmas, ear, many, measure, road, sugar, wharf.

I had been looking for a program that would make learning to read easier for my students who were experiencing difficulty. ITA would not have made it easier for them. It would have made it harder. Two examples of the many problems I saw with ITA. First, my problem readers had

difficulty telling letters like b and p and d and q apart. ITA just added more letters to the confusion. Second, once students learned to read an ITA word, then what? They would still have to learn the word in its 26-letter alphabet form. The words formed from the 44 letters did not automatically convert to the 26-letter format.

The course did not review the effectiveness of twenty-one different programs. Instead, we were simply taught that ITA was the answer to how to teach reading to beginning readers. I did not agree with Dr. Downing's assessment of ITA's effectiveness. I did not express my concerns in class. I did, however, express my concerns to Dr. Downing in a one-on-one meeting.

### **Year Two and the KELP Kit**

On the first day of school for Mary's and my second year of teaching I sent Mary flowers. When I had sent Mary flowers on her very first day as a teacher, she was disappointed that they had not come from her boyfriend. This second year, the flowers DID come from her boyfriend. And that new boyfriend continued to send Mary flowers on the first day of school every year of our teaching careers.

For my second year of teaching, I was assigned to teach a class of fifth and sixth-grade students. The reason for this assignment is explained in [Chapter 8 – The Arithmetic Mistake and A Year Off from Teaching](#). Mary was once again teaching kindergarten.

When Mary returned to her class for the start of the school year, she found that the District Coordinator in charge of all the kindergarten classrooms had purchased something called a KELP Kit for every one of the district's kindergarten classes. KELP stood for Kindergarten Evaluation of Learning Potential. Mary thought the Kit was a worthless pile of junk, so she just stuck it on high shelf in her classroom.

When Mary told me of the Kit and what she had done with it, I suggested a different course of action. Since the District Coordinator had decided the kit was so great that every kindergarten class needed to be using it, it was reasonable to assume that the Coordinator would either expect written reports from teachers using it or she would pay visits to all of the kindergarten classes to see the use teachers were making of it.

I told Mary that if she thought the Kit was so bad, she should send it back to the district office and ask the district to give her class the money the district had spent on it instead. Mary did, in fact, return the Kit. I don't think she actually requested cash, though. Mary just wanted the District Coordinator to know how worthless she thought the kit was and that she wasn't going to be using it.

In response to Mary's returning the KELP Kit, the Coordinator decided to pay a visit to her class to see what Mary might be doing that gave her the nerve to reject what the KELP Kit could do for the children in her class. What the Coordinator saw when she visited Mary's class was all of Mary's students using Workjobs. The Coordinator was impressed. The KELP Kit was a measuring tool for determining what children needed to be taught. What Mary's Workjobs were doing made the KELP Kit's assessments irrelevant. Workjobs activities skipped the assessments and were already teaching children what they needed to be taught.

The Coordinator was so impressed, that she asked for Mary's permission to let her send other kindergarten teachers in the district to visit Mary's classroom to see for themselves what Mary was doing. The Coordinator also made Mary's classroom a regular stop for early childhood educators from other school districts who had occasion to visit the Richmond USD.

Visits to Richmond USD by representatives from other school districts were common. In fact, the effect of one such visit to my classroom is responsible for one of the IFs in the [Special Education](#) section of [Chapter 9 – The Yearly History of a Change in Plans](#). Mary's sending the KELP Kit back to the District Office had made what she was quietly doing in her own class known to the world outside her room. And the stream of visitors showed Mary that what she was doing really was something worth sharing with other teachers.

### **Mary's Mother**

My own problem was not a lack of confidence in my ability to be the best at whatever I sent out to do - academics, athletics, coaching, being a naval officer, being a teacher, or whatever. My problem had been that I could not trust people's words when it came to social interactions. With Mary in my life, that problem simply disappeared. From that first kiss on, I never had any doubt about how Mary felt about me. The cliché "actions speak louder than words" is most definitely true. And Mary's actions meant the world to me.

Mary's problem was quite the opposite. She had no confidence in her professional self. When her lesson had gone wrong, her heart-felt response was. "I am a failure I'll never be a teacher." She had already been rejected by the Intern Program and was only there to fill a space that had opened up at the last minute. Her first lesson proved to herself why she had been worthy of that initial rejection. Left on her own, our Intern Supervisors would only have reinforced Mary's negative view of herself. Their final evaluation of her at the end of our Intern year, a copy of which she inadvertently saw, was "Mary will never be a teacher".



As I looked back on my life, I could see the causes of my problem. As I came to know Mary, I could see the causes of her problem, as well. Just like my mother did not intend to harm me, Mary's mother did not intend to harm her. But harm was done to both of us anyway.

I don't know what prompted Mary's mother Bea to be the way she was, but Bea began attacking Mary's belief in herself as early as Mary could remember. Mary was born on July 13<sup>th</sup>. Bea told Mary she was born on a Friday the 13<sup>th</sup>, which meant that she was an unlucky child. Once I was in Mary's life and heard that Friday the 13<sup>th</sup> story, I found a calendar for her birth year and showed Mary that she was actually born on a Thursday, not a Friday. Google searched were not available then, but there were libraries.

Bea reminded Mary constantly of every short-coming Mary had, at least in the eyes of her mother, that if not corrected, would lead to Mary's leading a miserable life. Not putting the cap back on the toothpaste meant Mary would never find anyone who wanted to marry her. Leaving her room messy guaranteed that if she were to marry, the marriage would last no longer than five years. And on and on, endlessly.

While we were living together, Mary woke up once crying from a nightmare she just had. I asked her to describe the dream for me. Mary said there was a deer in the forest eating chunks of bloody meat. That seemed like an odd dream to cause a person to wake up crying. So, I asked Mary to tell me more about the bloody chunks of meat. She said they were lying on the ground in what appeared to be a stomach shape. I asked, does your father have an ulcer? Mary's answer, "Yes."

Relying on my experience with therapy and having my own dreams analyzed (see the [College – Sophomore - Clinical Depression](#) section of [Chapter 2 – My Path to Becoming a Teacher](#)) I told Mary what I thought her dream represented. Mary's father always called Bea "Bea, Dear." The deer in the forest represented Mary's mother. The chunks of bloody meat represented Joe's ulcer and, in Mary's mind, Bea's being in some way responsible for it. A professional therapist might disagree with my analysis, but Mary burst into tears again, because what I said was just how she felt.

Mary credited her mother Bea with the creativity Mary was displaying in using everyday items to create her Workjobs. Bea was so into cleaning her house over and over again, that she was always sending Mary outside to play by herself to get her out of the way. Mary's outside playing time had been spent making up new things to do with whatever she could find. Mary felt that experience was reflected in her Workjobs.

Mary told me that she never wanted to have children of her own. The reason Mary gave for her fear of motherhood was that she was afraid she would become a mother just like her mother was. My own view was that Mary would eventually have overcome that fear. Whereas Mary's mother was obsessed with cleanliness, Mary had a sign on the wall in her office at our home that said, "Bless this Mess." I was not Mary's mother.

### **Mary's Confidence**

What Mary did for me was eliminate entirely the sense of social isolation that had led to the clinical depression I experienced in my Sophomore year. My depression was long gone, but I was still me. Before Mary and I became a team, I was still not completely comfortable when it came to social interactions. With Mary in my life, I became as confident socially as I was in every other aspect of my life.

What I did for Mary was give her the confidence she so badly lacked. It is not that she was now as confident as I was in my abilities. Mary was still Mary. She still had doubts about herself. But now she had a person who would always be in her corner. It started with Mary's accepting my help in planning her summer school lessons. It was not because I did any of her planning for her, it was because she now had help in seeing what might go wrong and thinking of ways to make it right ahead of time.

I also shared with Mary my belief that we can learn more from a lesson that goes wrong than we can from a lesson that goes right. When a lesson goes right, we may not always know exactly why it went so well. But when a lesson goes wrong, we can analyze its failure, and correct the mistakes we find. It is not that we want to give bad lessons, but we should not be concerned over lessons gone bad. Each bad lesson presents an excellent opportunity to learn from that lesson's mistakes.

Our supervisors had denied Mary the opportunity to make the switch from second-grade when Mary was presented with the opportunity to become a kindergarten teacher. Before Mary and I began working and playing together, she would simply have accepted our supervisor's decision. After all, she was only in the program because there was an opening for a teacher to be in that second-grade team. But as I said, now Mary had a person in her corner, and she knew it. Now Mary was confident enough in her abilities as a teacher that she wanted her own class. And now she had a friend who she knew could get the job for her.

### **Our First Two Books**

The KELP Kit was an example of Mary's gaining confidence in herself. The Workjobs Mary was creating were now getting district-wide recognition. Mary was quite pleased with that. I was pleased for her, as well.

The philosophy of the Intern Program was, “What is being taught now isn’t working, so try something different.” However, the only one of the twenty-three Interns actually doing “something different” that first year was me. My class was so different that our Intern Supervisors sent a film crew to my classroom to video tape me and my students in action. All the other Interns were then required to watch the video of me and my class. Other educators at the University’s School of Education watched that video, as well. While Mary would also end up doing “something different,” she had only just begun creating her Workjobs in the Spring of our first year.

Mary and I were both pleased with how well our teaching experiences were going. I told Mary that I really wanted to share with other teachers what I had learned about teaching effectively in the inner-city. Mary’s positive experiences that stemmed from her rejection of the KELP Kit and the visitors that rejection ended up bringing to her room, made her open to the idea of sharing with other teachers, as well.

I told Mary that for either of us to be able to share with other teachers, we would first have to write books that described what we were doing in our classrooms. Being the authors of books would give us the credibility we would need to have our ideas on curriculum taken seriously. With or without books, our thoughts on curriculum would be the same. However, to have other teachers take our thoughts more seriously than they would if we were just the teacher in the class next door, we needed “author credibility.”

In our second year of teaching, we were no longer Interns. For year-two, we were now master’s degree candidates. One of the requirements of our master’s program was the submission of a master’s thesis at the end of the school year. Ordinarily, a thesis involves some kind of research study around which the thesis is to be based. I proposed to the professor overseeing our master’s degree program that for our Theses Mary and I write detailed descriptions of our classrooms and the unique curriculum we had developed for use with our inner-city students.

The whole point of the Teacher Intern Program was to come up with different, more effective ways of teaching. It was only reasonable, then, for our theses to reflect the different ways that Mary and I had developed. The professor accepted our rationale. We could bypass any research studies and simply write books about what we were doing in our classrooms. Our two books would be our master’s theses.

My book was *What To Do, Teacher?* “What to do, teacher?” was what many of my students would say to me when they had finished one thing and wanted to know what they should work on next. After I wrote my

book, I sent it to a literary agent in New York to carry around to publishers for me. The agent loved the book. However, he couldn't find a publisher for it. The publishers all said it was not believable. They felt that teaching in inner-city schools was not at all like I had described.

Mary's book was *Workjobs*. Mary mailed her *Workjobs* manuscript to every publisher she could find that carried books for teachers and every publisher turned her down. Addison-Wesley, the book's eventual publisher rejected it, too. However, Barbara Beatty's letter rejecting it suggested that Mary make a few changes and then resubmit it for consideration. Mary made the suggested changes and resubmitted her book. Addison-Wesley again declined to publish Mary's book, but offered to include it as a section in a textbook series they were in the process of creating. We rejected that offer. What caused Addison Wesley to finally publish *Workjobs* is an IF to be revealed in [Chapter 8 - The Arithmetic Mistake and A Year Off from Teaching](#).

Mary and I ended our two years at the University of California thankful for the permission and encouragement Cal's Intern Program had given us to create our own curriculum. The two books we had written reflected what we had learned so far. Now, our two years at Cal and as teachers in the Richmond USD were to be followed by a year off from teaching. That year off would end up altering our paths as teachers as much as being part of the Intern Program had.

### **A Summary of the Twenty-Two IFs from The Intern Years**

Each IF is like an individual domino in a line of standing dominoes. Topple the first one and all the other dominoes in the line will in their turn, fall. Removing a domino any place in that line, cancels the falling of all the dominos on the other side. Pick an IF anywhere in this list of twenty-two and see if any of the IFs that follow it would still have happened with that one IF gone.

IF Stanford had not ended the training of elementary school teachers while I was in the Navy,  
Then I would have earned my elementary teaching credential there and become a fifth-grade teacher in the same kind of middle-class schools I had attended as a youth, teaching from the same kinds of textbooks and workbook that I had used. Since I would not have become a curriculum creator, my afternoons and evenings would have been free to permit me to pursue my initial dream of becoming an age-group swimming coach.

IF the University of California's Education Department had not responded to my request that it waive all the prerequisites for admission to its credential program by suggesting that I apply to be a part of its Teacher Intern Program,

Then I would have become the same teacher/age-group swimming coach I would have been if I had earned my credential at Stanford.

IF the woman who has already been accepted as an Intern and assigned as a participant in the Program's team-teaching study had not been forced to leave the program, and  
IF Mary had not been home that day to take the phone call,  
Then Mary and I would never have met, and Mary would most likely have ended up as a librarian somewhere, married to her doctor boyfriend.

IF my student-teacher assignment to a fifth-grade class for the five-week summer school had not paired me with a Master Teacher who was a third-grade teacher with no prior fifth-grade teaching experience, and  
IF that third-grade teacher had not suggested that she and I share the teaching responsibilities as co-equals,  
Then I would not have seemed "God-like" (a slight exaggeration) to my fellow Interns, and it would never have occurred to Mary to ask me to observe her first hour of teaching.

IF Mary's lesson had not been so terrible that she felt like quitting, and  
IF Mary had not agreed after our meeting in the library to let me help her with her future summer-school lessons,  
Then Mary and I would never have begun our friendship. Instead, Mary might have quit the Intern Program and gone back to becoming a librarian. Even if she had stayed in the Program, we would not have ended up doing anything together.

IF Mary had not grown as fond of me as I had grown fond of her,  
Then when I broke up with her after what I thought was our farewell dinner on November 11<sup>th</sup>, she would not have kissed me. Without that kiss and everything it meant to both of us, Mary's and my relationship would have ended that day.

IF Mary and I had not compared our Fall Quarter transcripts in January,  
Then we would not have learned that only eight of the twenty-three Interns were enrolled in a two-year's long master's degree program. Once the news was shared, our supervisors were compelled to enroll all twenty-three of us in the master's program, and my planned one-year stay became two years. Our becoming master's degree candidates lead directly to our becoming aspiring authors of books for teachers.

IF Mary had not asked me to talk our supervisors into letting her leave her second-grade team-teaching to become a kindergarten teacher,  
Then none of the many things that happens as a result of that change of positions would ever have happened. If Mary had finished out her time

as a second-grade teacher, she would then have pursued her original teaching goal which was to be a fifth-grade teacher like me.

IF Boyd Mickley had not accepted me as the Olympic Club goalie in the Summer of 1966 after my year's absence from the team,  
Then I would not have been attending weekly water polo practices at Stanford when Mary and I started living together.

IF Mary and I had not started living together at the end of Spring Break, then Mary would not have thought to keep me company on my drive to and from Stanford for my weekly water polo practices.

IF Mary had not decided to find an extension class that was near my practice, on the day of my practice, and at the time of my practice, and IF the extension class Mary decided to take instead of watching practice, based solely on its day and its location had not taught her about Piaget. Then Mary would never have begun creating her *Workjobs*. No *Workjobs* book would have meant not becoming math instructors for the State of California, not writing *Mathematics Their Way*, not writing *Mathematics a Way of Thinking*, and not founding the Center for Innovation in Education. Mary and I would still have created "start from scratch" curriculum for our classrooms, but without the *Workjobs* book neither Mary nor I would ever have been able to share what we were doing with so many other teachers.

IF the master's degree program had not required me to take classes during the Summer Quarter of 1967, and  
IF John Downing had not picked that particular Summer to come to Cal as a visiting professor to promote ITA, and  
IF I as a fifth-grade teacher had not decided to take a class that was based on the results of studying different first-grade reading programs. Then I would not have learned about the ITA's 44 sounds and the Center's Reading Program would never have existed. While I was critical of the ITA approach and would never have used that program with any of my students, knowledge of ITA and of what I perceived to be its failings, was key to my coming up with the idea for the Center's Reading Program, the one that really can end illiteracy in America.

IF there had not been a KELP Kit in Mary's classroom at the beginning of her second year of kindergarten, and  
IF Mary had not sent the Kit back to the district office instead of simply placing it unused in a closet or on a high shelf in her classroom, Then Mary's *Workjobs* creations would not have become widely known and praised within and outside the Richmond USD. And Mary would not have gained the confidence to share her *Workjobs* in book form with other teachers.

IF Mary and I were not required to write master's degree theses as part of our master's degree program, and  
IF I had not persuaded our master's degree supervisor to let us write our books instead of traditional theses,  
Then it is unlikely that Mary would ever have found the time to turn her Workjobs into a book. Our lives were already quite busy creating materials for our classrooms. However, a thesis was required of both of us as part of our degree program. So, our being master's degree candidates required us to find time for thesis (AKA book) writing.