

Patrick E. Merlevede, M.Sc.

The Story of David

If it was so, it might be; and if it were so, it would be; but as it is isn't it ain't. That's logic.

Through the Looking Glass, and What Alice Saw There — Lewis Carroll

LONG AGO, a science-oriented student came to the University of California at Santa Cruz with a clear plan. As a small boy he had become curious about animal behavior. Why do animals do what they do? What will you find in their deepest inside? In pursuing the answer, he became the first person at UCSC to seek a degree in ethology. Ethology is the science of studying animals in their natural habitat, with Konrad Lorenz as its most famous exemplar. Our bright student wanted to join Lorenz in this research and dreamt about maybe even working with him one day. In fact, ethology was not a field you could major in at the university. But the liberal education system at Santa Cruz made it possible to create your own major and our student convinced them that his newly designed curriculum would be very valuable. But then he found out that life had other plans for him . . .

The first for David was that, in his second year, the university decided to create a BSc in psychobiology, the study of the biological basis of behavior in animals. The university decided that this new major was close enough to the major David had in mind, and so they obliged him to enroll in that program. The university's decision was quite a disappointment for him, even though he was intensely curious about everything and science is a rich and endless source of things to be curious about.

This interview with David Gordon is the third in Patrick Merlevede's series, 'Reframing the Roots of NLP'. Interviews with Robert Dilts and John Grinder appeared in *NLP World* in 1998 and 1999 respectively.