The Abigail Klionsky Senior Thesis Oral History Project

Transcript of a recorded interview with

Dr. Joseph Schein ’37

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the Princeton University Archives

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KLIONSKY: It is October 28, 2013 and I am here with Dr. Joseph Schein, class of 1937, originally '36, at his home in New York. And we will be talking for my thesis about Jewish student life on Princeton’s campus in the 1930s. I'm just going to leave this right there and it will pick it up and it will just run the whole time. So let’s start a little bit with your background. Growing up, what kind of household you grew up in, how long had your family had been in the States and where did you grew up?

Schein: I grew up and went to school in Newark, New Jersey. And my parents were Russian immigrants, here since roughly 1904, '05, something like that. And my father was very learned in secular stuff as in Russia and also in all things Hebrew. My mother was just my mother, and a wonderful one of course.

Q: Was she also from Russia?
A: Yeah.

Q: Did you grow up with any sort of Jewish traditions in your house?
A: Very, very fractured. And basically I never had a bar mitzvah. And the reason is very amusing because at age 11 I was going to Hebrew school and I was practicing my javelin throwing in the school yard and I was sharply criticized for doing this by the senior rabbi. Of course I didn't know that I was not allowed to do it. And I was practicing for the Olympics using a large pole as my javelin. He objected to my doing it and I stopped it immediately, but then he did something beyond that. And I think I was probably one of the best students in the school because I was very proud of my learning there and I was ahead of the game and so on, and he slapped me in the face. At which point I responded, kicked him in the shins and called him a bootlegger. Now, that's very amusing because this was the time of Prohibition and that era, that day or the day before, there had been a
scandal that some rabbis had been found to have wine, sacramental wine, and they were being treated as though they were bootleggers. So it was the worst thing that I could call him. I remember feeling very much ashamed that a rabbi would do such a thing. I was just a child, you know. The worst thing I could call him was a bootlegger. And my parents wouldn’t let me go back, with the idea that their son was slapped. My relationships up to that point had been wonderful. And so my parents were not observant in the real sense of the word. But they were very Jewish in their attitudes and my father was very learned in the history as well as in biblical things in general. He was basically a scholar.

Q: Did your family celebrate the holidays, go to synagogue or temple?
A: No, they didn’t. We celebrated just the high holy days and my father was an enthusiastic connoisseur of cantoral music, and the Metropolitan Opera as well. So that was his hobby. So it was nothing that would deter him from going to a concert once in awhile.

Q: And I guess, jumping a couple of years, what brought you to Princeton? You said you started when you were 17?
A: I don’t know how old I was when I was started. I graduated normal time. I would have been probably 16 or 17, wouldn’t it?

Q: It's a bit later, but I think things were a bit earlier then.
A: Maybe. I don’t remember exactly. No, I became a fencer and I won many championships and I was preceded in Princeton by my then best friend by two or three years whose name is William Pecora who later became the head of the US Geological Survey and then was appointed to be the Undersecretary of the Interior in Nixon’s time and so on. And he and I were the very best of friends. He preceded me to Princeton and
wanted me there. He was a fencer and I was a fencer and we were going great guns and then I got sick in my freshman year to the point that I had to leave school. I had a ruptured appendix. Had to leave school and that's why I came back in class of ’37. So I got a scholarship to Princeton, which was not common in those days for Jews.

Q: Did you get that because of your fencing?
A: I was the top of my class also, you know.

Q: Before you started Princeton had you heard about the Princeton reputation with Jewish students and anti-Semitism?
A: I’d heard, but I wasn't much moved by those things. I became moved about this whole Jewish business after I started hearing. It's very interesting. [phone rings] Excuse me. [break in audio]

Q: So we were talking about when you got moved by the anti-Semitism at Princeton.
A: Oh, yes, I was beginning to tell you that. I happen to have had a rough day and a rough night, so I'm a little slow, and I'm going to be 99 in a couple of months so --

Q: I know. That’s wonderful.
A: So please forgive me for that. What was I going to...?

Q: Anti-Semitism.
A: Yeah, I know.

Q: Just a train of thought.
A: I have to tell you an anecdote first.

Q: Sure.
A: Because I became very, very friendly with the dean whose name was Christian Gauss. Have you heard that name?
Q: Yes.

A: Yeah, so he had been there since 1907, brought there by Wilson, the President. And I had gotten involved with him because I had been in some way inveigled as a practical joke by my friend Bill Pecora into the ROTC. I didn't mind it one bit, but it took me a couple of months to understand that if I stayed in the ROTC with all the afternoon marching around and so forth, that I would never be able to fulfill my minimal requirements for medical school four or five years down the road. So I tried to get out of it, but it was a government contract and you had to be in it for two years or four years and they would not release me. And I didn't know what to do, so in my distress I went to speak to the dean to see if he could help me. And for that reason we got very close. And I was of course honored by his attitude towards me because he became, I believe, fond of me, as I of him. We had many Sunday breakfasts together in the Joseph Henry House which is, you know, the historic house on campus where he lived in those days. So I got to know him because I saw him very, very often in his attempts to get me released, which finally were successful, and I think only because there was a student in my class whose father was a colonel in the Army and the head of the ROTC at Princeton. It was a cavalry unit. So I eventually got out, but we got to know each other a lot and he told me a lot about himself and I told him a lot about myself. And one day out of the blue he said to me -- he called me Joseph always -- he said, “Joseph, don’t you think you should do something for the Jewish students here?” And I said, “I don’t know what you mean but anything you want me to do I certainly will.” In those days chapel requirements were very, very rigid and I think that cutting chapel was much more serious than cutting a class. And if I remember, there were a couple of people in that era who were expelled. And so
I said, “I'll do anything you want me to do.” And what he did was to draw up on a sheet of paper, and in English, some quotations from the bible every week and one sentence in Hebrew at the end, you know, the Shema Yisrael business, and that was it. And then I was entitled to sign a card saying that chapel had been attended. But the remarkable thing was -- unintended obviously -- was that Sabbath was Friday and not Sunday morning, which made everybody able to have a weekend. You see, because they didn't have to be back for 10:00 in the morning and Saturday classes were in the noon hour

Q: No, go ahead.

A: I have two sons. They're both Princeton graduates and both professors in medicine and so on. This was the Florida son. So that's what I did in Murray Dodge Hall. First I met people in the chapel itself, but that was highly inappropriate and finally we used Murray Dodge Hall. And to make it more interesting, as time went on I enlisted the services of Albert Einstein, whom I'd gotten to know personally as a result of my warm relationship with, let's call him my mentor with quotations around, who was Abraham Flexner, who at that very moment was building the Institute for Advanced Studies. And that's about it. As time went on I would try to get other people in addition to Einstein. I got a Rabbi Lazaron from Baltimore. I was in touch with a Rabbi Stephen Wise here in New York who was a very prominent man and so forth. And this is what I want to tell you, but I have no proof of it at all. There was a time, and this is why I want to share this with what's his name, Morgenthau. Morgenthau was then the Secretary of the Treasury. You know about the Roosevelt business and the sending back of the ships.

Q: Right, yeah.
A: Both of those things. And Morgenthau, this is well known historically, was not too involved in Jewish matters himself and so on, but at a certain moment he changed. I believe I might have received a note from him but I have not been able to find it. And it may well have been that he may have told Abraham Flexner how grateful he was that his son would be involved with Jewish matters. Now, this is a very personal thing and I don’t know that anybody would want this publicized, but I do not remember whether it was told to me by -- at that point I was sitting with Abraham Flexner very, very frequently and we had a very warm relationship and he was in touch with people all the time such as presidents and kings and queens. Really, literally. He was a member of every aristocratic club in Europe and he was very famous. He had been commissioned by Andrew Carnegie to study medical school education and he went to Europe and spent two years there and published a very famous thing called The Flexner Report and which changed medical education forever in this country. He got Mr. Harkness to build up Columbia, he got Mr. Payne Whitney to build up Cornell, New York Hospital, he got Mr. Eastman to build up Rochester. So then medicine changed completely. And so with a distinguished man like that it was very wonderful for me to be, you might say like a bat boy. I was by no means an ethnological speller or anything like that, but I was very close to that whole group of famous physicists that came along. All dead now.

Q: Was that through your course work that you got connected to them?

A: No, through Flexner.

Q: But how did you know Flexner? How did you meet Flexner?

A: That's another story which I'm glad to tell you, but it would not be relevant to this. I did a very important favor emotionally for someone connected to his family and he wanted to
meet me and he met me and he kind of made me his protégé, I have to say. I could tell you the stories but it, again, involves families and things that's really --

Q: Sure. No, just that quick connection is good, just to know that.

A: Yes, and when the time came for me to go to medical school he said, “Joseph, I want you to apply here instead of there” and so of course that's what I did. But his brother, Simon Flexner, was the head of the Rockefeller Institute of Medical Research. It's arguably the most famous institute in the world. Have you ever read *Arrowsmith*?

Q: No.

A: *Arrowsmith* was a Sinclair Lewis book and it's a story, but using different names, of the Rockefeller Institute. And that brother, Simon Flexner, was a great scientist and discovered the polio virus and did all kinds of other things. So it's a very, very famous distinguished family. From the south. I think it was Louisville or Lexington. I think it's Louisville. Let me see, so where am I now? Oh yeah, so the dean suggested that and that's what I did and that's how it started. There were people who were not Jewish that came. I think it was not only to get out of the requirement to be there Sunday morning 10:00, which would ruin every weekend, but also because of the people. Of course when Einstein was there it was really, really crowded. And he was wonderful to me, Einstein. I would pick him up at his house in what was it, Myrtle?

Q: Mercer Street.

A: Mercer Street, yeah, 111 or 112. And I was in Princeton yesterday by coincidence and I went to see if I could find the house. I couldn't find the house. Has it been moved?

Q: No, it's very -- it's unmarked.

A: Behind the --
Q: A family lives there now and, yeah. I don’t think there's even a plaque.
A: No, there's no plaque.
Q: Nothing on it.
A: No.
Q: Did he come to services every week?
A: Not every week but many, many weeks.
Q: Not only when he was speaking or something? He would come more frequently?
A: No, you mean Einstein?
Q: Yeah.
A: No, I would come and bring him and he would help me in saying something. I would just say whatever was written down, that's all, and he would make remarks of one sort or another and people would question him and then he would go home. There were Jews at Princeton who didn't call themselves Jews. I don’t want to identify them.
Q: And would those people go to the--
A: Anybody who wanted to have a weekend would come to my thing. I didn't keep records of who they were.
Q: Were there any Jews who specifically did not want to come to Jewish services?
A: Oh, plenty of them, but I didn't make a list of them. I wasn't in the spy business. It was disgraceful.
Q: Do you know if they went to Christian services instead?
A: It wasn't the service only. The 10:00 chapel was also a place where they talked about cancellation of classes and--
Q: Announcements and things.
A: -- announcements of one sort or another. It was a very low keyed Christian service. It
didn't bother me one bit. But this all came from the dean. It was his idea and that always
impressed me. And not only that but there was an assistant dean there who was a famous
anti-Semite. There are books written about it in which his name is mentioned, but he
couldn't have been nicer to me. And he was involved with trying to get me out of ROTC
as well. His name was Radcliffe Heermanse. Have you heard that name?

Q: Yeah.

A: And I guess you've seen the book called The Chosen?

Q: Yes.

A: He’s in there.

Q: Quite a bit.

A: Quite a bit. And he was just very nice to me.

Q: And did Dean Gauss stay involved in the group?

A: Oh yes. He would ask me how things were all the time.

Q: And is that the model that he drew up for how services are? So English quotes from the
bible and the Shema at the end, is that how it was?

A: Yeah just one sheet of paper. And I was paid also for it. I forget whether it was $15 a
term or $15 a year now. Because obviously they had to do something to make it official.

It was not a real job.

Q: Did you lead it the whole time you were there?

A: Yeah.

Q: And what year? Did you start your freshman year or when you came back?
I'm not sure. Because early on I realized that I couldn't make my prerequisites. I only wanted the most minimal prerequisites because I knew I'd be spending the rest of my life in science and I left Princeton -- but I'm not a rah-rah (inaudible). I loved it for what it was. What it still is I'm not sure. But everybody says that. And I would have stayed there forever if I could. I mean it.

Aside from your experiences with Dean Gauss and Heermance were people talking about the fact that you were Jewish? Did it affect your life as a student?

It must have but I didn't experience it. Because when the time came to joining clubs, eating clubs and so forth, I can show the amazing difference. The Ivy Club was the most aristocratic. This is where the Rockefellers and DuPonts and so forth were and of course there were many, many other clubs that were all noted for being jocks or whatever, whatever, whatever. And I had a contingent who was willing to go with me, so we went to where I went as manager, which meant I brought a contingent of people, and this was a club that was known as the grinds. You know, the --

Hard workers.

Well yes. And it wasn't the glamorous place at all. It was people who were students more than anything else and so on. But my friends were all in another club, the Key and Seal which no longer exists. That was in those days -- many years later my son was in Ivy Club so you can just see how everything changed.

And which club was it that you joined?

Gateway. That no longer exists, I don’t think.
Q: Were there other Jewish students in Gateway?
A: There were a couple, yeah.

Q: And it was a bicker club, not a cooperative club or anything?
A: It was a bicker club, yeah. There were no such things as anything but bicker in those days. But I spent hardly any time there. I was with my Christian friends. I had one Jewish friend in school who came from deep in Pennsylvania. I think that the majority were prep school kids. I came from a high school that was a special high school, so I came with a contingent of my classmates in high school and among them there was one Jewish fellow who stayed on to get his PhD in chemistry and so on.

Q: Just a couple of questions about the services. Did it have a name, a formal name or it was just Jewish services?
A: No, it wasn't formal, but it was formal enough to be recognized so far as the what do you call it, the --

Q: Attendance?
A: Yeah, the fulfillment of the chapel requirements. That was a very important thing in those days. But all that chapel business disappeared, didn't it? What year did it disappear?
Q: The very last remnants disappeared in 1964.
A: That late?

Q: It stayed that late, but in maybe early ‘40s or late ‘30s it was changed to upperclassmen only need to go once a week or something. They kind of modified it a little bit.
A: Modified it then.

Q: Yeah. But were there ever any Jewish social events that happened or bringing Jewish girls from other colleges?
A: There were no colleges, as they are now. No nothing. No Jewish girls.

Q: Or Hanukkah parties or anything?

A: Never. No, no.

Q: So it was purely just the religious attendance and you sign in, you stay, and you leave?

A: That's all, yeah.

Q: Do you know if any of the men who went became friends with each other or met each other there?

A: Who?

Q: Any of the people, the students who went to services, did they make friends with each other or did Jewish students --

A: No, not that I knew of.

Q: So you didn't feel like you had to be friends with the other Jews necessarily?

A: No. There was no compulsion to be friends with anybody. I was not anti-Semitic. I would have been happy to --

Q: But there was no sense of having to stick together?

A: Not at all, no.

Q: Were there ever visiting rabbis or things like that who would lead services or it was you mostly?

A: Me.

Q: It was you?

A: Yeah.

Q: Do you have a sense of how many people would have showed up?
A: I went there yesterday, Murray Dodge. I hadn't been there -- how long ago? I just had my 77th reunion, so you can imagine that I hadn't been in Murray Dodge for 70 something years. I went there yesterday. I went down there because I'm a member of the Friends of the --

Q: For the Woody Allen?

A: The Woody Allen thing. So somebody drove me down there so I went there and so I went to see the Murray Dodge place because I knew of your coming eventually, I wanted to recall things. And I remember we used to fill up. There were two rooms and I think we filled up both of them.

Q: Wow. With the Jewish students and the whoever, whatever non-Jewish students?

A: A lot of people came just for curiosity to see Einstein. I felt like I was an advertisement agency, a publicist or whatever. But of course it wasn't that. I have no documentary evidence of any of this except one. One little sentence in the biography of the Morgenthau panel which I just got out just to show you and I left it -- I wanted to show it to the lady who was here before. Would you like to see it or have you seen it?

Q: I haven't seen it.

A: Let me get it. I had it in my hands just as you were coming and -- excuse me, my balance is a little off now. This is the book that was written by the fellow you're going to see in Washington.

Q: Yeah, I have it checked out from the library but I haven't yet opened it.

A: The patient one who is a Princeton man, class of '32 actually, and related to the Morgenthaus, was reading it when it came out and he saw my name, and so otherwise I
would never have known about it. Put my glasses on, sorry. This is the only document of a whole lifetime. See it there?

Q: Yeah. Wow. That must be where --

A: This was Henry. I think he was class of ’40 or something like that.

Q: Yeah, I think ’39. That must be a woman named Maryann [Sanwa?] wrote an article about the development of Jewish life at Princeton. Oh no, I might have brought the wrong paper. But I can send you a copy.

A: There's been either a myth in my life or a piece of the truth, I cannot at this point distinguish it, but I had the impression that Morgenthau Sr. changed at a certain point because these German Jewish families were the art crowd. You don’t understand that expression, the art crowd. Even Strauss who was class of ’36 who was president of Emmanuel and so forth, he married a Christian. They all were intermarried with Christians, trying to keep away from Jewish stuff. There was no sense of the pride that should exist among Jews. And it's been very important to me because I've been a doctor for so many years and of course a psychiatrist for well over 65 years and so forth and I deal a lot with people who are half Jewish and otherwise and the complications they get in and so forth. Although I was psychoanalytically trained --which is a very special thing in the years of many years ago--I always did non-psychoanalytic things and took steps to see that the children of the mixed marriages were informed. They were unquestionably going to suffer sociological traumas of one sort or another, and they did, I got to be old enough to see that, nowadays I have these children, these mixed children, going to historical lectures even to the point of sometimes using the great -- you know, the series of lectures called the great something? Great teachers, what's it called?
Q: I think it's something like that. I've heard of it.

A: Something like that. And I've been doing that. Just two months ago I started that. And there's also a series on the TV now by Simon Schama -- you know that name?

Q: No.

A: He's a very famous professor now at Columbia. An English Jew who's written a history of Jewish things. I always insist that they not read anything religious because of the possible prejudice that is there, but they read just the history of the Jewish people. Inculcate some sense of who they really are so they can have some sense of being able to withstand the inevitable anti-Semitism which, no matter what they say, will exist. Even from the mothers of these children.

Q: Really?

A: Yeah, and especially the grandparents of these children, you see. So it's a very potent damaging thing that nobody's aware of because what they say is we're liberal or we have Jewish friends and this and that, so forth. And if that were true it wouldn't be so bad, but it's hardly ever true. I've never found it to be true at all. So that has proven to be a very successful maneuver.

Q: I guess I have a couple more specific questions and then I'll ask you if there's anything I might have missed and show you a couple of the things that I brought. Do you remember if there were ever any professors who were involved or faculty members who came to services?

A: None. None that I remember.

Q: Do you know if there were any Jewish faculty members?
A: Oh, I'm sure there were, but I didn't run into any of them. I'm sure there were. Among the mathematicians and physicists there certainly were. Come to think of it I don't think it's true but I had the idea that it was true way, way long ago but the chairman of the physics department was a man by the name of Shen Stone. I made friends with him after I graduated and I went to medical school and so forth. I kept in touch with him. He took me for a ride on the Bay of Fundy one day when I was up there with my wife many years later. And I wondered if he were Jewish, that's all. He was from Toronto. Had a very distinguished career. He was educated in Cambridge and so on. I found nothing Jewish, but I just wondered at that point. The name Shen Stone would have meant something to me as a typical name change. But I never looked and it may well not have been. I kept up with many of my professors to the point where I would have them visit me in New York when I was a doctor or practicing and so on.

Q: What did you study at Princeton?

A: I did my own thing before there was a formal whatchamacallit. But officially it would be modern languages. I was very close to my professors, especially Maurice Coindreaux who is long dead. He was famous because he had translated Faulkner into French and Spanish and so on. I had a love affair with all my professors. And what's interesting is what's happening right now and it has a relevancy -- maybe I can show you. It is happening just now and I'll explain what I mean if I can find it here. It might be in the other room. I'm going to go look in the other room for something, but this is an example of how close -- this man was the head of the Department of the History of Science at Princeton. Do you know the name of Gillespie?

Q: No.
A: Very famous. He retired now and he’s on the board with the Friends of the --

Q: Of the library?

A: But this is a personal note from him. He was my son’s professor. One of my sons majored in the history of science. I haven't found it. It’s just so apropos to what we're talking about. I'm completely (inaudible). Here it is. Recognize the language here?

Q: I do.

A: So I won’t tell you about this. This comes from my daughter-in-law in Miami who’s a physician. And I was so involved psychologically that at a certain point we moved from a small apartment to a large place which had nothing but windows. It was a top penthouse kind of place and so on. And we had not yet any furniture and I wanted to put in something honoring my teachers. In fact, in my office I never had any diplomas, just the pictures of my teachers on the wall. I've now broken up my office only three months ago or thereabouts and so all of that stuff is now, I have a place in the country and it's all up there and it remains to be unpacked and so on. But somewhere around 1960 or thereabouts I had a very, very talented Japanese lady who was my secretary and had been my secretary at that point for maybe 12 years or whatever. We then had moved into this place and so I wanted my secretary, whose hobby it was to paint and sculpt and so forth and so on, to learn some stained glass techniques because I wanted to make a picture of my teachers. Show you how crazy it was, but it was definitely sincere, to have a picture of my teachers. Because I had their photographs, you see, and put it in stained glass and put it in this particular very special apartment which was at the very top floor. Kind of like a pseudo churchy style, but it was impossible in those years to get stained glass while teaching in New York and so we settled for glass tiles and instead of having large
portraits made by the secretary we settled on small portraits copied from actual photographs. So anyway, it's six and a half feet tall, it's about five feet wide, it's about six inches thick, and it was acrylic and epoxy which had just been developed and so we had a translucent, transparent epoxy. And we cut, my wife and I and my secretary cut little pieces of glass and over three years she was able to do something which had never been accomplished before which was to make a likeness, not a symbolic picture of a king or queen, but it would be ten feet on a chapel ceiling in Ravenna, Italy in a Byzantine order. It was nothing like that but in that small canvas you could recognize the individual people that were my teachers of mythology. And one of them of course was Einstein so he’s immediately recognizable and it includes Dean Gauss as well. It really meant everything to me. And so right now I'm in the process of moving -- I have it up in the country. It weighs about three or 400 pounds and right now we're trying to arrange a way to move it down to South Carolina where my son has a place. Because when I'm gone it's nothing anybody can pick up and take home and see it, so we're in the process of doing that. But I asked my father, who knew of course all my relationships with these people, what would be an appropriate quotation from the bible. And since I knew all these people personally, they all had plenty of weaknesses and healing qualities and so forth, he gave me a quote from Job. You know any Hebrew? It was *hen ani qorasti me homer*. Can you translate that?

Q: No, I'm not good with biblical Hebrew.

A: Even I am made of clay. That was the idea. And unlike the Byzantine portraits, because I bought a book which showed all the Byzantine portraits, they're all in gowns, my secretary looking at those gowns made up her own gowns and so forth. So you have the
heads absolutely perfectly reproduced in a way that's unbelievable when I tell you how she did it, and I had a breastplate which has disappeared. Now that I'm moving it I want to replace it with a new breastplate and I had forgotten the exact order of words in the original quotation. I didn't want to make any mistakes scholarly speaking, you see, so I've been trying to find somebody who would refer me to the exact word order. It turns out there are two different versions of the word order. So my Miami daughter-in-law is involved with teaching Hebrew. All of our grandchildren have been bar mitzvahed and bat mitzvahed and all the rest of it, and so she called up somebody she knows and they just made me that and I'm about to order a breastplate to affix to this. So my connection with things Hebrew was from my birth, but not in the formal observing things and whatever. Do you know modern Hebrew, is that it?

Q: Yeah.
A: I see. Here it is in one version, you see.
Q: [Hebrew phrase]
A: Here it is, ani hen qorasti mehomer.
Q: That's interesting.
A: Yeah, and it's a different word order.
Q: You get your choice.
A: Yeah.
Q: I found the one I was looking for before. The person who wrote this book [phone rings].
A: Excuse me. My hearing is bad so I have a screen here. [takes phone call] I've had an office until just a few months ago now -- I told you this before. I've just held onto a few patients.
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Q: That's wonderful that you're still able to do that.

A: I'm able to do that, but it's not been easy for me because of emotional reasons. See, I married a nice Jewish girl, like you are.

Q: And your children, one lives in Florida and the other in South Carolina?

A: No.

Q: No?

A: My son who went to Princeton and went to Cambridge in England and then went to Hopkins, he interned at Hopkins and became an internist. He became a member of the faculty in the School of Public Health and he went up to Harvard and became an ophthalmologist and he’s up near the top of the ophthalmological surgeons in Hopkins now and he’s done very well. But he married a Catholic girl from a plain family and they've raised their children with all the things that I didn't have and I'm very happy that happened. And my older son was class of ’74 at Princeton married another physician who is Jewish and she’s the one who supplied me all this stuff. So we're Jewish through and through and through. And I can tell you, proud of it. Always have been.

Q: What you showed me from the Morgenthau book, that must be what this woman was citing. There's a woman who put together a book of 250 years of Jewish history in the town of Princeton and there's a small section on the university and your name is in here twice.

A: Really? What does it say?

Q: It says, “In the mid 1930s students, including Joe Schein, class of 1937, and Dan Frisch” -- I think it's David Frisch -- “class of 1939, led informal Friday night Jewish services in the side pews of the chapel or in Murray Dodge.” You were authorized by Dean Gauss to
sign attendance slips and some non-Jewish students attended. And then later it mentions that you brought Einstein to speak in Murray Dodge. So they must have gotten that from the Morgenthau book.

A: Maybe.

Q: And so would Einstein come often more than once a month?

A: What?

Q: Would Einstein come more than once a month?

A: Oh, more.

Q: More?

A: More. Because he and I -- well, I don’t know how to say this. Because I felt close to him. Did he feel close to me? That’s another question.

Q: Sure. But he went with you.

A: Not only did he go with me, but he gave me books and many years later, many years later, I was in my psychoanalytic training and the memory of his giving me books came up. My psychoanalyst was an old time contemporary of Freud and he knew Einstein, knew the family and so forth, and he wanted to go down and visit him. And I was in doubt. I mean this was a typical neurotic thing. Did he really give it to me or did he just lend it to me and I never gave it back? So he said he would take them down and he took them down and he didn’t bring them back. And we get to think that he used that as a way of reintroducing himself to me (inaudible). But it was one favorite book of Einstein which was called -- do you know any German?

Q: No.
A: I'll translate it. *Geschichte der Juden*, which means history of the Jews by Josef Kastein, the author, Josef Kaistein, Albert Einstein [German phrase] “With great honor dedicated to Albert Einstein.” And that's the book he gave me, I thought he gave me, I believe he gave me. But in my neurotic doubts at that time in my career, in my life, I have held to other books as well. So I don’t even have those any more. And letters of all kinds. Because I moved a lot through the years. I'm sure I'll still finding things I never knew I had. I'm sure after you leave I'll accidentally find --

Q: You'll find the big box of everything.

A: Not everything because I never would have put it in one box. That was just like --

Q: Right, that was on the table.

A: You see things are all over the place.

Q: Just one more question in general about your time at Princeton. What kind of extracurricular activities or organizations or sports teams or anything were you involved in, if any? Well, you were fencing.

A: Fencing day and night.

Q: And I imagine that was a lot of time.

A: Day and night fencing and I don’t remember -- I know I did things. I worked also and I had a scholarship I wanted to maintain. It was hard doing the laboratory sciences and also doing the extra stuff.

Q: And the modern languages --

A: And the modern language course, you know. I also wrote a thesis, as everyone did in those days. Sometimes one spent half of one’s junior year as well as the senior year writing --
Q: Beginning the thesis, yeah. I know that feeling well.

A: I had a very favorite medieval historian, but no one would know him now. He was in the history department. His name was Lynn White Jr. who I helped him do the bibliography on such books as Latin Monasticism in Norman Sicily. You know what that means? I mean in Sicily when it was under the control of the Normans. So I was able to work for him, but he went off. He had come from Harvard and he went off to become the president of Mills College, but he was a famous medievalist but you would never have heard his name. You’re American history.

Q: Yes, which is much more recent. And even 20th century American history.

A: Oh, that's terrible.

Q: Yes.

A: What kind of education can you get?

Q: I know, I know. There are some good professors.

A: Oh, I'm sure they're wonderful professors.

Q: I know. I took a class called History of the United States since 1974 and when I told my mom she just started laughing and she said, “That is not even history.”

A: That's right.

Q: “That's my lifetime.”

A: That's right. But you didn't take anything ancient or...?

Q: I did some. I did a survey course of European history from antiquity to 1600 with Anthony Grafton who was wonderful.

A: Yeah, wonderful. I don’t know him personally but it's certainly --

Q: Yeah, he’s wonderful.
A: High reputation.

Q: Yeah. So I did that. And I'm trying to think if I did any others. I did a great books course, but it was mostly literature focused, not history focused.

A: Who were your favorite authors there?

Q: I've really enjoyed -- I guess we did read some of their books. Mostly professors don’t assign their own books for classes any more. I think they feel a bit shy and students never know in class. They say you write this or the author. But I've enjoyed Julian Zelizer, he was the professor for the modern American history course and he’s been involved in kind of American politics and social politics.

A: What happened to him?

Q: He’s still there. He does a lot of speaking on public radio and public television. So he’s been great. And I've been working on my thesis with Nancy Malkiel who was the dean of the college for many years.

A: Yes. I never met her, but I've seen her name everywhere.

Q: And she’s great because she knows all of the people that I want to talk to.

A: What kind of a name is that?

Q: Malkiel? I don’t know.

A: You don’t know?

Q: I'm not sure.

A: Could it be Arabic?

Q: I don’t think so. At least from what I know of her family I don’t think it is. Her husband’s last name is --

A: It's an unusual name.
Q: It is a very unusual name. I never thought to look up what it is actually.
A: The L at the end, couldn't be Hebrew?
Q: No. She’s definitely not. Her husband’s last name is Weiss, but I don’t think that he’s Jewish either.
A: Weiss is --
Q: Maybe.
A: -- can be either.
Q: Right. So I don’t know. I did also want to show you, and I don’t know if you receive the alumni magazine in the mail.
A: Oh yes, every week.
Q: OK. The July issue, which was about reunions, the second to last and last paragraphs are entirely about you.
A: Yes, I have it.
Q: You did see that?
A: I have that here, yes. Actually this man who was the class of ’35 died so leaves just Scheide and me. You know Scheide?
Q: No.
A: You don’t know Scheide? S-C-H-E-I-D-E
Q: I know the name but I don’t --
A: Part of the library is Scheide Library.
Q: Yeah.
A: He has been a philanthropist. He and I worked together. His name was S-C-H-E-I-D-E and mine is E-I-N. He’s several months older than I. His father was a famous
philanthropist, his grandfather was a famous philanthropist and so on. They have given millions and millions and millions in addition to the library. It's called the Scheide Library and there's another building right next to the chapel called the Scheide --

Q: Caldwell House.

A: Called Scheide Caldwell. Caldwell was his aunt, I think or his mother’s maiden name. And they have manuscripts that were last in the collection of King George and the Duke of So and So, all the original Gutenberg. Gave it all to Princeton. But they have plenty more there. This is the same thing. Looks like an old geezer all right.

Q: There you go. Yeah, the Scheide Caldwell House is actually the building that houses the Judaic studies program now.

A: Do they? Well, what's her name has become very friendly to me. I got this out to show my children for two years running. Look at what his wife, who runs everything, has made donations in my name.

Q: That's wonderful.

A: Isn't it?

Q: Yeah, wow.

A: He's certainly not Jewish. You see, so...

Q: And if you look at the most recent issue of the alumni magazine, I have a couple of articles in that because I write for them occasionally, so I have --

A: On what? On the Scheides?

Q: No, just for the alumni magazine about kind of things going on on campus in general.

A: I see.
Q: Or student projects that are going on. I don’t know if the next issue, but keep looking, I'll be in there at some point.

A: OK, that's nice.

Q: Yeah. I think that's all the specific questions that I had and that I wanted to talk to you about. I hope I'm not missing something huge.

A: I don’t have anything huge to say other than that simple thing.

Q: I guess one more thing. Did the number of non-Jewish students at services ever outnumber the number of Jewish students, do you know?

A: I didn't count them. But I wouldn't be surprised due to the fact that people wanted to have weekends. And this whole business of having girls enter Princeton, which I was against by the way -- nobody would listen to me. And it was purported to be much more healthy to have females and males each providing their unique views of things and so on and so on. And the whole thing was sold on that basis. And so the infirmary, which I think in my day had maybe four or five doctors, if at all, probably has 60 or 80 now.

Q: Yeah, there's a lot.

A: So it's not more healthy.

Q: Right.

A: And there are suicides and pregnancies and all kinds of depressions of all other kind. So I regret -- don’t write -- oh, you're recording me.

Q: It's OK, this part is not relevant to the thesis.

A: I regret that it has lost that particular -- I wouldn't say monastic air because it was far, far from that. There was plenty of drinking and plenty of dating. The whole idea was it was wrong that a person had to leave the campus to have a date or whatever. Somehow there
was no dearth of people on campus going to all the girls’ schools in New York and even Trenton and Philadelphia. Of course what it did was to remove the best girls from the best girls’ schools, and they suffered. But now I'm very used to it. I think it's the most wonderful place in the world.

Q: I've been taking lots of photos of all of the autumn leaves because I know that next year I won’t be there for it.

A: Where are you going to go next year?

Q: We'll see.

A: What do you intend to do, if anything?

Q: Hopefully something. Not continue -- I don’t plan to go to graduate school right away. I’d like to either continue doing history research in collaboration with someone or teach or something like that.

A: Teach. That's the greatest profession in the world. On my father’s gravestone I have a Hebrew inscription. What is it? Avi Mori?

Q: My father is my teacher.

A: Yeah. So you see I'm not kidding.

Q: No, absolutely.

A: I think that's the greatest profession of all. Although beset with plenty of difficulties and lack of appreciation.

Q: Very true.

A: Do you have siblings?

Q: I do. I have an older brother and two younger sisters.

A: What do they do?
Q: My brother is in the medical software industry. I don’t really know what --
A: The medical what?
Q: Medical software.
A: Computers.
Q: I don’t really know what he does. And my sister, the first sister is a freshman in college in Minnesota and the youngest is a junior in high school.
A: And your parents are both alive and... ?
Q: Yeah.
A: Good. That’s nice.
Q: It's great. I was just home actually this weekend for my father’s 60th birthday.
A: Baby.
Q: Yeah, baby. My sister organized it so that all the kids would be home.
A: You went to high school in Chicago?
Q: I did, yeah. On my mother’s side I'm actually fifth generation Chicago.
A: Oh, that's really something.
Q: So, very long time. And my father’s grandfather was born in upstate New York in 1900. So both sides of the family have been here for quite a long time.
A: My son almost went to Chicago to be head of the department there, but there were certain things that made him back away from it.
Q: Sure.
A: And we knew a lot of Chicago people here in New York. Have you ever heard of the Morries? And the Swifts? They were bankers and of course the meat.
Q: The meat industry, yeah.
A: They had a couple of doctors in the family whom we knew very well.

Q: Chicago my whole life. This is actually the most time I've spent in New York since eighth grade. So I'm learning my way around the subway a little bit. I took my first bus today.

A: You have friends in New York that you stay with?

Q: Yeah, I'm staying with my cousin who lives on the upper west side. But it's easy because the grid system is the same as it is in Chicago. You can figure out based on the numbers where you're going. Very helpful.

A: But don’t talk to strangers.

Q: I don’t talk to strangers. Just people I've spoken with on the phone beforehand.

A: Huh?

Q: Just people I've spoken with beforehand and set up a time to meet.

A: Your parents must worry about you.

Q: Eh. They've got three other kids. That's their theory. There's three more.

A: Did you have a Jewish education?

Q: I did. I went to a Jewish day school through eighth grade and then I actually spent a year in Israel after high school before starting at Princeton. And on campus I've been involved in the Center for Jewish Life.

A: I passed it yesterday. It looked like an eating club.

Q: It's actually the house of the old Prospect Club.

A: Prospect Club on Prospect Street?

Q: It's on Washington Road.

A: I passed something like that.
Q: Someone actually pointed out the kind of irony of it being in the old Prospect Club, because in the ‘40s and ‘50s Prospect Club was really the only club that accepted Jews.

A: Yes.

Q: And so now it's the --

A: It didn't even exist in my day.

Q: Right. And so now it's, you know.

A: I was a Jew and not only was I accepted but I was the manager as well. You know what the manager meant?

Q: No.

A: You would get into a club and if you brought a certain number of people in it you were therefore the manager which meant you could have your meals for nothing. You were the manager, not really because there was always a professional manager but on paper you were supposed to help manage the thing. And so it's not true there were no Jews. But the point I'm making about my son is he went to Ivy and there were only a couple of Jews in Ivy in his time and his was not that long ago, at least in my book, ’76.

Q: I know of at least one Jewish student in every club, but there's a couple that only have one or two.

A: You know, I’d be surprised if there's more than one at Ivy now.

Q: Ivy has a lot actually. It’s quite interesting.

A: Is it?

Q: Yeah. It’s become -- the AE Pi Fraternity, a lot of those brothers join Ivy.

A: AE Pi?

Q: Alpha Epsilon Pi. It's the national Jewish fraternity.
A: I didn't know that.

Q: I think there's three or something. So a lot of them join Ivy.

A: How do they get into Ivy? I'm surprised. The fellow next door here, next to me, the apartment, is from Ivy but his name is Gamble. That's the, you know.

Q: Procter and Gamble. No, now it's I think Cloister and Cottage. I don't know if they were around.

A: Yes, they were.

Q: Those are the ones --

A: Cloister was not so great, Cottage was a little bit fancier in those days.

Q: Those are the two that only have one or two Jewish students.

A: Really? But Ivy has many?

Q: A lot.

A: I don’t understand how that happened.

Q: Tower is now -- I don’t know if Tower was around.

A: Yes, it was.

Q: Tower has a lot of Jewish students, as does Terrace which I think came much later.

A: No, Terrace was around.

Q: Oh, Terrace was around. OK, now it's not a bicker club. It's just a sign-in.

A: So what bicker clubs are left? Ivy is.

Q: Ivy is. This is going to be a challenge because I'm actually not in a club. This will be a good test for me. Tower, Ivy, Cottage, Cloister, Tiger Inn --

A: Tiger Inn was all jocks, it all was then.
Q: And Cannon was gone for a while and it just got revived a couple of years ago. So those, I think, are the six bicker clubs. And then I think there are five that are not bicker clubs.

A: This is not relevant to what we're talking about but do you know if anybody’s teaching Persian?

Q: There is.

A: Is there?

Q: Yeah.

A: I don’t mean modern Persian. I mean ancient --

Q: Oh, ancient Persian. That I don’t know. I know someone’s teaching modern Persian.

A: Yeah, that doesn't count.

Q: No, I don’t know.

A: Because we had Greek and Latin and a lot of that. And Persian.

Q: I think that they would provide somebody if there was a student who was interested. I know there was a student a couple of years ago who wanted to study Polish and there was no Polish classes and they organized a professor.

A: In high school you can't even get German any more.

Q: No. My brother took German and then the next year they started phasing it out.

A: But I know all about the Nazis and so forth but how can you blank out a whole civilization, reduce them --

Q: They're bringing in a lot of Chinese and Arabic classes in public schools now.

A: And Russian began to be popular, then it's faded out.

Q: Yeah, that faded.

A: Why is that?
Q: I guess probably when the Cold War ended it was seen as less important. I think that's all the questions that I had for you. If I think of anything I'll definitely give you a call.

A: By all means.

Q: And I will gladly send you a copy of the final version.

A: Oh, I hope you do.

Q: And I can actually, I can send you my junior paper that I wrote for last year. I can mail you a copy of that.

A: Is that in the same...?

Q: It's the same subject, yeah. It covers only until 1946.

A: Do you have a story of Moe Berg in it?

Q: I actually didn't include that but I'm going to add that for my thesis. I was only allowed to write 35 pages.

A: Usually one wrote 300 pages.

Q: I know.

A: You're only allowed?

Q: For the junior paper 35, for the thesis a maximum of 100.

A: You should have Moe Berg.

Q: Yeah, no, he’s definitely going to get added. All of the anecdotes, now I have space to put them in, which is great. Can I just mail it to 860 United Nations Plaza and your building number?

A: Yeah. That’s great.

Q: OK, I'll do that.
A: I have all the computer stuff in there but I don’t work computers. I hardly work cell phones.

Q: No, it's much easier to read on printed paper, much easier.

A: And is there anything I can do for you?

Q: I don’t think so. I think that this has been wonderful.

A: No, I mean can I take care of you or can I send you a birthday present?

Q: No, I'm taken care of. Thank you though, very much. I'm actually going to stop the recorder.

A: This business with --

END OF AUDIO FILE