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PRINCETONIANIA COMMITTEE

ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

Interviewee: Stan Katz
Date: January 14, 2013
Place: Princeton, NJ
Interviewer: W. Bruce Leslie '66

BRUCE LESLIE: This is Bruce Leslie and it is January 14, 2013, and I am interviewing Professor Stan Katz. Stan, could you tell us a bit about your path to Princeton?

STANLEY KATZ: Well, this is the short version -- there is a longer version on my web site, the talk I gave at the conference held in my honor in 2007.

I was born and raised in Chicago, Illinois, and actually, when I was in high school, my dream was to come to Princeton as an undergraduate.

The reason I was interested in Princeton was that the coaxial cable had just come through -- television was just beginning in Chicago -- and they showed, for some reason, the Princeton promotional film. I don't know when such films started, but this may have been near the beginning.

Actually, Dan Linke found a copy of that very film. It looked just wonderful to me, with the Gothic architecture and guys wearing tweed jackets with elbow patches, and mustaches and pipes. It was my vision of what college should be like. But when I started to actually look at colleges, I got turned off because it wasn't clear to me that it was the right place for a Jewish student to be an undergraduate.

So, I decided to go to Harvard. Probably mainly on the basis that I was likely to be more comfortable as a Midwesterner, as a Jew, at Harvard. I don't know what my reaction would have been had I come here, but Harvard was a great choice for me. I simply loved my undergraduate education which was superb. I loved the "House" system. That's something Princeton's just catching up to now with the residential colleges. It was also a unique moment in higher education because a lot of my teachers were graduate students who really were superannuated because they were World War II vets, so they got going late on their education. They hadn't gotten married yet, they were still living in the houses. It was a unique moment, from that point of view.

So, the people I hung out with were particularly political scientists -- Sam Huntington, Zbigniew Brzezinski, Stanley Hoffmann -- it was a really interesting period at Harvard, and I'll always be grateful for having had that opportunity.

I majored in a wonderful combined field there "History and Literature." It was a selective field, and I was interested in the emergence of modernity in Europe, and so I studied England in the 17th century. I was primarily interested in literature and philosophy, and could put together my own program. It was terrific. I wrote an honors thesis on the political theorist James Harrington, a 17th century materialist thinker, very interesting. I just had a wonderful experience.

By the time I was a sophomore, I realized that the only thing I wanted to do in life was to be a teacher. I think it was simply that I admired my own teachers so much. I had wonderful teachers, and I loved what I was doing, and the thought came to me: I could just keep doing this. I came from a very business-oriented family in Chicago, and there was not a single academic in my background at all. Indeed, most of my relatives had not been to college. But the collegiate experience for me was overwhelming and it seemed clear that I wanted to be a professor.

So, I went on to Harvard graduate school, and I applied to study Tudor and Stuart history with Wilbur Jordan, who taught the field at the time, but when I got to graduate school in the fall, Gordon Wood, who was a contemporary graduate student, and I discovered there was this really smart, young guy who was just starting to teach American history named Bernard Bailyn. So, he switched away from 20th century history, I switched away from Tudor-Stuart history, and we both studied with Bailyn. It happened that I was Bailyn's first Ph.D. student in the History Department. He had trained Ted Sizer in the Ed School. I believe I was the first in the History Department.

So, I studied early American history, and the reason I did that was that that was as close as I could come to staying in the English field; really, in my view I was still in English history. But I was lucky because the field at Harvard was a wonderful cohort. As it happened, Bailyn attracted, in those years, what turned out to be, I think, the most interesting and most talented group of early American historians in the country. So, I grew up intellectually, in a fortunate environment because early American history in the late-'50s or late-'60s was the hot field in American history. It attracted some of the very

best talent. So, again, that was just a lucky shot. My whole career, as you remember from the talk in 2007, was, in my view, lucky.

When I started graduate school, there were no academic jobs. My tutor, when I was a senior, had pleaded with me not to go into academics. "You'll never get a job." There weren't any jobs. He himself never did get a teaching job; I don't know what became of him. But after I had been in graduate school just a couple of years, Sputnik went up. Of course, that was a decisive change: all of a sudden, higher education was the hot growth area. Any idiot could get a job, and I was probably better than that. The result was that over all these years -- and I've taught at many places now -- I've never applied for a job because I was in that cohort where supply was much less than demand. It was a good period to have entered the field. So, I did a Ph.D..

I had, very deliberately, done intellectual history as an undergraduate. I felt that I needed more discipline than I would get in intellectual history; I felt that too much was subjective and up for grabs in intellectual history. I thought if I did a dissertation in political history, that would impose a certain amount of discipline on me. Since evidence mattered more in political history -

- or so I thought. So, I did, and I wrote my dissertation on the development of politics in New York in the middle of the 18th century. I was particularly interested in the connection between English and American politics because I had retained my interest in English history. So, the dissertation was called "Newcastle's New York: Anglo-American Politics in the Middle of the 18th Century."

Again, it was a fortunate topic, for people were becoming interested in the connection between England and America, beginning to understand they constituted a single political system; it wasn't a separate colonial political system. So, that was a good topic. When I completed the doctorate, I stayed on at Harvard. The way it worked at Harvard in those days, your first post-doctoral appointment was as an instructor, and that was a three-year appointment. They appointed a flock of Instructors; I think there were ten or twelve in American history when I started. Then, at the end of that third year, there was a radical cut. I was one of two or three people who were promoted to Assistant Professor. But that first group of instructors was a terrific bunch, lots of very well-known people. Larry Veysey was an Instructor at that time. Most of those people are names you would recognize today. It was a really strong, solid crew.

So, I began teaching at Harvard, but instructors mainly did tutorials, what at Princeton we would call "precepts," small sections in larger courses, and very little teaching of their own courses. And yet I loved being there; it was a great environment and lots of bright people to work with. During that time, I also got interested in administration. In 1963 I became the Senior Tutor of Leverett House, one of the residential colleges. In our precept system at Princeton that would correspond to sort of a combination of the Director of Studies and the Dean of one of the residential colleges.

There were a bunch of interesting young faculty members, mainly assistant professors, who served as Senior Tutors. Typically, you did it for five years. For instance, later future Princeton faculty, Dick Ullman was the Senior Tutor of Lowell House and Paul Sigmund was the Senior Tutor of Quincy House. The Dean of the College, by the way, was a wonderful man named John U. Monroe, whose biography has just appeared. I started to read it last night. So, that was a great experience and it gave me an insight into higher education administration, and gave me a commitment to

administration which I've maintained all of these years. It was an important moment for me.

Then, I became an Assistant Professor: it was a fortunate situation for me because Harvard was a rough place for a junior faculty member; in those days, almost nobody was getting tenure. I knew I wouldn't get tenure because during the time I was an Instructor, Bud Bailyn was promoted to tenure, so there was no way they needed somebody else in our field. From my point of view, that was wonderful, because I didn't go through what so many of my colleagues -- many of them here, now -- went through. Ted Rabb or Dick Ullman would be examples of people who didn't get tenure at Harvard and came to Princeton.

So, I knew I would have to leave, but I didn't want to stay at Harvard in any case because I was slightly embarrassed to have left the Midwest for the East, and I had always thought I should go to a public institution. So, toward the end of my first year as an Assistant Professor, when I got a call from the University of Wisconsin asking me to be an Assistant Professor there, I more or less accepted over the telephone. Wisconsin was the place I had always wanted to go because I thought of it as the greatest of the Midwestern universities and the most

democratic of the great universities: "sifting and winnowing" and all that good stuff. So, we moved to Wisconsin, which was completely different from the Ivy League. It was a huge department, with 23 American historians, 100 new graduate students in American history every year. That's a long story in itself.

Also, I went to Wisconsin in 1965, during the Vietnam War, and it was an incredibly turbulent but very exciting time to be teaching there. The first week I was there, I taught in a teach-in. It was a different kind of experience to be sure, but while we were there, a man named Robert Fassnacht, who was a graduate student in, I think, physics, was killed in a bombing. It wasn't fun. It was a very difficult time for both students and faculty. Nevertheless, I enjoyed it enormously. But I took off two years while I was there, for my first two sabbatical fellowship years. I've only had three in my entire career, by the way: '67, '69, and '82. That's it.

In 1967, in my first year, I had a wonderful opportunity to be part of the inaugural year of the Charles Warren Center for American History at Harvard, where I finished up my book manuscript. Well, my first book was actually the book on John Peter Zenger, and so I did that before I published the dissertation. Then, I worked on the

dissertation. There were wonderful people at the Warren Center, that year. It's where I met Barry Karl, who became my long-time collaborator; William R. Hutchinson, a historian of religion, was there; Gordon Wood was there; Kitty Pryor was there. A great bunch of people, almost all of whom became lifelong friends.

I came back to Wisconsin for only a year, actually, then went back to Cambridge because I got a fellowship to go to Law School at Harvard. They called me up and they said that they'd like me to come to Law School for a year. Why? They said, "We think you're a pretty good legal historian, but if you actually learned some law, you'd be a lot better." That made sense to me, so I went back, and spent a wonderful year in Law School. My mentor in law had always been Mark DeWolfe Howe, and it was a chance to go back and work with him. Unfortunately, he died halfway through that year, which was tough. But again, it turned out to be a great year for me. As it happened, I was at the Law School when Bill Nelson, who is now one of the leading legal historians, was spending a year there beginning his dissertation, and also Morty Horowitz had been brought back to convert himself into a legal historian.

So, the three of us really got going on legal history at the same time, and we held a national conference on American legal history later that spring. It was really the starting moment for what might be called the new American legal history. Then, when I returned to Wisconsin, although I had never anticipated it, I got a call from Law School at Chicago, asking me to join the faculty there. It was kind of hard to leave Wisconsin although -- it's a long story -- people were leaving because it was an overworked, underpaid faculty, and now all sorts of opportunities were opening up everywhere.

So, it was also a chance to go back to Chicago. I had a lot of family and my parents were still alive at that point. So, we went to Chicago, and I became more or less a full-time law teacher. After a couple of years, I joined the History Department because I learned that was the only way I could get fellowships for my graduate and Ph.D. students in History. But basically, I was full-time in law, and I also went back to administration. I became the Associate Dean of the Law School. I enjoyed it a lot, and I realized that I had something of a calling and gift for administration. Chicago had a wonderful Law School faculty -- I learned an amazing amount about law. Also, , I'm an

old-fashioned Midwestern liberal, and being at the University of Chicago a deeply conservative place at that time, was a really good intellectual experience. I learned something about another way of thinking. I spent a lot of time with people like George Shultz and the economist Milton Friedman, and others. Dick Posner was a leading member of our faculty.

While it certainly didn't change my political views, I think Chicago deepened my understanding of politics and political thought in a way that was really quite important. We lived in a wonderful African-American neighborhood. We lived almost next door to Jesse Jackson. We lived down the street from Gale Sayers.

That brings me to Princeton and now I'll tell you, an interesting story. Because I was the Associate Dean of the University of Chicago Law School, I was in charge of faculty recruitment, and my committee had voted to make an offer to Robert Bork, who was then finishing as the Solicitor General in Washington. It was pretty clear, I thought, that he was going to go back to Yale, but he was a Chicago JD, so my faculty thought, well, maybe there was a chance he would return to Chicago and he seemed to fit at Chicago politically.

So, it was my job to go after him and see if I could convince him. Meanwhile, the Class of 1921 had endowed what became the Class of 1921 Bicentennial Professorship of the History of American Law and Liberty. The class had, I believe, indicated to President Bowen that they hoped Bob Bork would be offered the job. The way things work at a great university, they couldn't be promised that. But the university did, in fact, formally offer it to Bob, but I also knew that Princeton was going to offer the job to me if Bob turned it down. So, Bob and I had elliptical conversations, and both of us knowing exactly what the situation was, and he decided, as I had assumed, that he would go back to Yale. Princeton then offered me the job, which I decided to take.

Leaving Chicago was tough for me; my parents were getting older, we really liked being there, and I loved the University of Chicago. But I'm basically an undergraduate teacher, and this was a chance to come to one of the great undergraduate institutions in the country, and to come to what I thought was the greatest History Department in the country. The clincher for me was that when we came for a visit to look at housing, Ted and Tamar Rabb invited us over for dinner, and the other guests were Lawrence Stone

and Tom Kuhn. I thought, that any department that could provide Ted Rabb, Tom Kuhn, and Lawrence Stone for dinner had to be a place I needed to be. So, we decided to come here. That was '78, so that brings me to Princeton.

(laughter) It's funny, if you think about it, because I intended to come in the first place -- that didn't work, I think, probably for me, correctly -- and then I followed this circuitous path around the Midwest and back. So, now I've been here, 30-odd, 34 years.

It's been a terrific run for me. Princeton has proved to be a wonderful place. The short story here, by the way, is that I've had a chair in the History Department, and loved the History Department, but one of the things I had realized in working at Chicago and working in law was that one of my real intellectual passions was in public policy. Legal history is the study of public policy, from a particular point of view. I had always been interested in public policy, and that's what I studied in early American history, really. But, contemporary public policy began to attract my attention because I was teaching law. I taught Constitutional law, I taught torts, I taught sex discrimination law, I taught the law of sports. I taught a lot of things that had to do with contemporary problems,

and I realized I was just as interested in contemporary problems and policy problems as I was in the past.

When I was at Chicago, I was one of the founders of what was then called the Committee on Public Policy Studies, which is now the Harris School of Public Policy. I ran that program in the first years. I was the second head of that program, so I had a track record in public policy schools. Then, after a couple of years here, Don Stokes approached me and asked whether I wouldn't be interested in having a joint appointment in the Woodrow Wilson School. So, I think it was 1981, that's three years after I came here, that I took a joint appointment and moved my office to the room we're sitting in, 428, what we now call Robertson Hall, simply called the Woodrow Wilson School, then. So, then, throughout the time I was full-time here, I had a joint appointment, although my office was here in the Woodrow Wilson School.

By the way, when I came here, I didn't want to give up law teaching, so I arranged, at the invitation of Jim Freedman, who was then the Dean of the Law School at Penn, to teach part-time there. Well, unbeknownst to me, he listed me as a faculty member. I was in the books at Penn as a member of the Penn Law faculty, but I only taught one

course a semester. I had to teach one course a semester. I went one day a week down to Philadelphia, where my wife was working at the museum, in any case. So, , from '78 to '86, I taught at both places. I loved teaching at Penn -- great Law faculty, Jim was a great dean, later the President of the University of Iowa and then the President of Dartmouth, who died, unfortunately, much too young.

In 1986, I was recruited to be the President of the American Council of Learned Societies, and agreed to do that. That's a long story in itself. I had that job from 1986 to 1997, when I retired from ACLS. But Princeton was wonderful to me because I actually resigned my tenured appointment here at Princeton, because I didn't think it was fair to ACLS to go on leave and do that, and thought it was a place that needed some work. My predecessor had committed suicide; the place really needed long-term attention. Amusingly, Bill Bowen said to me, when I did, "Don't worry about it, it's the right thing to do," to resign, "but when you're ready to come back, we'll give you tenure back again." Well, of course, by the time I was ready to come back, he was long gone. (laughter) So, I did that. It was a great move for me and I loved doing it.

It was a difficult experience, which we could talk about separately. The university was great because I was allowed to keep my office here, and for the eleven years I was at the ACLS, its office, I taught one course a semester. I had four or five seniors doing theses each year. I was, in fact, teaching what at the Woodrow Wilson School was close to a full-time load. It enabled me to feel as though I had never left Princeton, and emotionally, I think that was very important to me, although I loved the job in New York. We never moved; I commuted into New York. I taught on Wednesdays, so it split up the week. I would never have to commute more than two days at a time, but I traveled so much I was seldom in New York that much anyway.

Then, when I was ready to step down from ACLS, I came back here. I wasn't given tenure when I came back. I've got a long-term appointment as lecturer -- they had different names, but I'm now called a Lecturer with the rank of Professor, whatever that is. I was first a Senior Fellow of the Woodrow Wilson School, and there were three - - Bill Bowen, Bob Goheen, and me. I thought that was good company, I liked that. (laughter) This is also good company, Nan Keohane has the same title. I came back to full-time teaching, but I came back to the School, not to

the department, because the department appropriately had filled the chair with Hendrik Hartog, who's terrific and a very close friend. That's been a great thing for me because we work together now, and I work with some of his graduate students, which I enjoy.

Mainly, I teach public policy. So, I haven't really taught history in years -- I don't know when the last history class I taught was, but it was probably in one of my first years at ACLS, so maybe '88, something like that? So, it's a long time since I've taught any history. I've taught a variety of things at the Woodrow Wilson School. Currently, I teach an undergraduate course on civil society and public policy, which is my favorite course. I teach a graduate course on not-for-profits, NGOs and philanthropy. I'm teaching a freshman seminar on philanthropy. I have taught a great many junior seminars, which is something we call a policy task force, in the School, on a wide variety of topics, both domestic and international. By the way, one of the things that happened to me at the ACLS was my interests became international and my approach became comparative.

So, both as a legal and constitutional historian, I tend now to do comparative history. My interest there has become really comparative paths to democratization and

following 1989, all around the world. A lot of my teaching has been about that. But in philanthropy and in civil society, I also do comparative studies of the function and the emergence of civil society, again, in the context of democratization. So, my teaching has changed completely: I'm incapable of teaching anything from other than a historical perspective, but they're not strictly speaking history courses.

LESLIE: Do you miss that?

KATZ: No. That is to say, I loved it when I did it, but I love what I'm doing now. I think my deepest commitment, I would say, at the moment is to thinking and teaching about public policy from a historical point of view. I think that's enormously important, and it's become a whole field within history now. It's the history of public policy, most people would call it, but for instance, there are younger colleagues - such as Julian Zelizer, here now - who do exactly the same thing; they hired him to do that. But it wasn't a field when I came along. Now, I would say, it's a field -- there are journals.

So, I don't think it's been that big a change, really. I've always, I think, been very instrumental in the study of history. That is to say, I've always thought there was a use, there was a purpose to studying history, and the

purpose of studying history is to understand the world in which you live. I understand not all historians feel that way, but there's not anything of the antiquarian -- and antiquarian is not a put down, I admire the study of the past for its own sake, but that's never been my interest in the field. So, that's the short version. (laughter)

LESLIE: How do you feel about how the curriculum, the teaching pattern and precepts at Princeton have changed in the years that you've observed them?

KATZ: Well, things have changed in some ways quite a lot and in other ways, regrettably not very much at all. What has changed, I think, in American higher education is the ramping up of research expectations for the faculty. Which has meant, inexorably, since it's a zero-sum game, that both the value placed on teaching and the support for teaching has declined dramatically. This has been true everywhere, certainly everywhere in the research university field. It's even hitting the best of the liberal arts colleges. I think it's regrettable. I think we put too high a premium on research and we put too low a premium on teaching. So, Princeton has been no better than other institutions, in that regard, and no worse.

But it has been worse in the sense that we were perhaps not uniquely but unusually a research university that valued undergraduate teaching, and I don't think we do anymore. We certainly don't, to be fair, to the same extent. I could go into that at great length, but I think that's clear in any number of ways. One example would be the precept. So, when I first came here, I taught a big course in American legal history, which is what the Class of 1921 had wanted, and I loved doing it. I think it got up to 350-odd students; at one point, we had to divide it into two sections. Doug Greenberg taught the other section. I loved doing that.

When I was doing that, my preceptors were entirely tenure-track members of the History Department, such as Jim McPherson, Dan Rogers, and Sean Wilentz. I precepted for Bill Jordan in his English constitutional history course and loved doing that. I could be wrong, but I don't think a single tenure-track member of the History Department anymore teaches a precept for anybody other than himself, and very frequently, we don't teach precepts in our own courses. So, I would say that's a very dramatic kind of change. I still normally supervise four or five senior theses. I think that must be pretty near the top of the

market. I think very few of my colleagues in the School do more than one or two. It depends on the department.

Teaching loads have gone down. The average teaching load in the economics department now, would you like to guess? One. One course a year! Not a semester. When I started here, the full load with the Wilson School, which was the jealousy of everybody else, was three courses a year. I think we say it's two courses now, but not everybody teaches as many as two courses. This is happening, not to that extent, but the 2-2 certainly is becoming the norm, 2-1 is the norm we're pushing toward. So, teaching has declined. There's much more teaching by graduate students, precepts taught predominantly by graduate students, and a huge explosion of post-docs, and a great deal of the teaching at Princeton University is now done by post-docs.

So, I would say the off-loading of teaching to graduate students and post-docs is the biggest change that I have seen. Also, we create what a lawyer would call "attractive nuisances" -- that is to say, we have bought in so much to the market competition for faculty that in order to attract, not only we pay, I think, too much, we demand too little by way of teaching, but many faculty demand research centers. That means that you buy up your teaching

time with the resources in those centers, you bring in graduate students and post-docs: that's what I mean by an "attractive nuisance". So, it takes away from the teaching mission of the university. It's made it a bigger, less focused place, so that's the second change, I would say. The place is just bigger: there are more students, there are more undergraduate students, there are more graduate students, more faculty, more post-docs...

We have moved from being what I used to think of as an admirably "boutique" university. We prided ourselves on the notion that we didn't attempt to do everything. We weren't like other R-1 universities, and that was a good thing. So, for instance, in terms of international programs, we specialized in East Asia and the Middle East. Not that we didn't pay any attention to other parts of the world, but we only had major programs in those two areas. Now, we're trying to ramp up to do South Asia, Latin America, almost every other area you can mention. Most recently, of course, we have ramped up in the sciences: a huge investment in the sciences, in terms of building, terms of faculty, terms of resources.

So, I would say we have lost the cachet that we had as a small, boutique institution, and I worry a lot about whether we can maintain quality, as a community, as a

learning community, teaching and learning community, that we had. That's my rap.

LESLIE: It's clearly not the official line that we hear, especially as alumni. What happens when you voice this critique?

KATZ: Well, that's another thing I would say: my experience, personally, but I tend to be outspoken, I try never to be *ad hominem* when I speak about issues, but I care a lot about the policies, and I would say one of the defects of Princeton as a community is that it doesn't have a concept of the loyal opposition. So, I think there is resentment of the faculty who criticize university policy. It's certainly been my experience, going all the way back, and this goes back, I think it soured my relationship with Bill Bowen. I don't know what Shirley Tilghman would say, but I think she has, from time to time, been unhappy with what I've said, but I would never criticize either of them personally and I admire both of them personally, and as administrators.

So, I think it's a defect, and it relates to something else. I've now been at four universities, and Princeton has less faculty governance than any institution I've been in. We don't have a faculty senate or anything remotely like

it. I don't think there's even meaningful consultation with the faculty on important educational policy issues. For me, particularly in contrast to Chicago, from which I came to Princeton, it's a huge change. Chicago was a very consultative place. We were informally more consultative under Bill Bowen. Now we're not even informally consulted. It was very easy to get in to speak to Bill or Neil Rudenstine -- it didn't very often get you anywhere, (laughter) but they listened, and that meant a lot to me and I was grateful for that. I don't know that they're listening much anymore.

I'll give you an example of that -- maybe not a very dramatic one. There's now been a lot of discussion all around the country on MOOCs ["massive online courses"]. We joined Coursera. Tony Grafton and I complained to a dean, about this, and we said, "You never consulted the faculty." He said, "We did, we appointed a committee to discuss it." And they did, but of course, a decision had already been made. That committee didn't represent the faculty; it represented people the dean wanted to talk to about it. It didn't include Tony and me, who are probably the two people who've written most about the problem, so you'd have to guess they anticipated what we would say, which wouldn't

have been pleasant. That's not good, so I think that's a real problem, here.

To go back to what you asked, what's changed in the curriculum, there, I would say, not much. Indeed, I think we are a deeply conservative, small "c", institution. I don't like the distribution system, but in all the years I've been here, there's only been one committee to do a review of that. It was under Nancy Malkiel, and it concluded that it was just fine, all we needed was two more requirements and two more credits in the distribution system. I think we suffer badly from not having some sort of core curriculum or general education program here. I can't count on my juniors knowing who St. Thomas Aquinas or Machiavelli was.

LESLIE: At Princeton?

KATZ: At Princeton. Well, they haven't had broad, synthetic general education courses, so I think it's a terrible system, but we never look at it and I don't know that we will look at it, even now. In general, and this is Wilson's legacy, this is a place run by departments. So, while there is no faculty governance in the generic sense, there is strong governance by the department, so almost all

courses in the curriculum are departmental courses. I think that's a disaster.

Knowledge doesn't work that way, and if you consider that Princeton is one of the few universities that doesn't permit, at least outside of the sciences, inter or multidisciplinary departments. We're the only major university that doesn't have a women's studies department or an Afro-American department, or urban studies, you name it. Any one of those, those are all "programs" here: an undergraduate cannot major in them, they don't have their own faculties. I think it's reactionary. I think we'll be forced to change it in order to compete. Indeed, I think that almost no thought goes into the undergraduate core curriculum -- it's a big criticism of a place like this, a place that prides itself on that. I think we're not doing well, we're not doing as well as our competitors, our peers, and we ought to think about that. But I don't see that anybody is worrying about it. There are a handful of us, Tony Grafton has complained about this, I have complained about it, but that's in response to your question, does anybody care? I think the answer is no.

LESLIE: What alumni hear is quite different. I suppose alumni often think we're Swarthmore with Nobel Prize winners.

KATZ: Well, we have a lot. But that's wrong. Mind you, we have very good students, and you can't ruin them. They learn a lot. But that's not the question, the question is could they learn more? For instance, I have advocated for the assessment movement now which is very popular in this country, and I think very important to assess learning outcomes over four years. In fact, I criticized the President for opposing that. I have to say, I've been "dissed". Not by the President, but in general. The President's view is that the senior thesis is a satisfactory four-year outcome measurement. I think it's a good partial measurement of disciplinary knowledge; I don't think that's what liberal education is about -- it's that kind of thing. So, I think there are big problems.

The most recent problem which exemplifies it for me is something you may have followed in *The Prince* here, and that is that the Woodrow Wilson School faculty voted to change our traditional undergraduate program. We had a selective program, it was the only selective program in Princeton. I thought that was the secret to why we were able to maintain a small, high-quality program. The President of the University and others didn't like that and so put pressure on to change that, and two years ago, the faculty voted to change it. So, it was partly that, but it

was partly getting into the disciplinary departments, particularly economics and political science, which felt that our students were not sophisticated enough from the methodological point of view and wanted them to have fewer courses on policy and more courses of methodology. I was in the minority that opposed that. I would say I've lost every curricular battle I've fought here at Princeton, and so we've now changed the School's undergraduate program.

Next year, we'll have our first non-selective class, and the faculty voted for this without figuring out what the curriculum was going to be; it's completely unsatisfactory, from my point of view. Not only that, we were admitting 90 students, 90 juniors, 90 seniors, 180 students, and that was really more than we could handle, out of an applicant pool, the 90, out of 180 to 200 students. Well, the sophomore poll this year is that 180 students are probably going to sign up for the Woodrow Wilson School [165 signed up]. I'm here to tell you we don't know what to do with them. We cannot teach that many students, which is what I said in the faculty meeting. What they'll do is to ramp up the methodological requirements so that not more than 90 students can apply, and then, frankly, I'll stop teaching at the Woodrow Wilson School because we will get students I'm not interested in

teaching. If they want to do those things, they should go into politics or economics.

By the way, almost everybody who voted for the change in the Woodrow Wilson School faculty had never taught an undergraduate course in the School. Over the last 20 years, we've had a harder and harder time getting the regular Woodrow Wilson School faculty to teach undergraduates. So, the talk about the commitment of the faculty to teaching undergraduates is bullshit. Just not true. In the humanities, it's still, I think, true. And I can't speak for the sciences; that's a different world that I don't understand very well. But certainly in the social sciences, it's no longer true. I think it's a problem.

LESLIE: Thank you. It's very refreshing to hear that, having just come from two days of alumni association meetings, which you feel that ...

KATZ: Everything is all perfect.

LESLIE: Yes, absolutely. Is it correct that you were the first Dean or Provost of Mathey College?

KATZ: No. I was the first Master of Rockefeller College, and that was a great experience for me because there were going to be five new colleges. Well, Wilson College already existed, but in a different form. In 1982, we were appointed and we had a planning year before the colleges

actually began. Then, they were doing construction. The colleges actually began, I believe, in 1983. It was a great group of initial masters. I worked particularly closely with Nancy Malkiel, then Nancy Weiss, who was the Master of Mathey College, which was physically the sister college of Rockefeller. We shared offices before they built separate offices for the colleges.

John Wilson was the first Master of Forbes and a very close friend. John and I were the only two who had been in residential colleges as undergraduates, and ironically, we were both in Dunster House at Harvard at the same time. He was a year ahead of me in Dunster House. So, that was helpful because we had some residential college experience. I loved doing that. There wasn't a separate residence for the Master at that point, so I wasn't resident in the college. Now, most of the masters are resident. I think it's been a huge improvement in undergraduate education here, and I look forward to a time, although I won't see it, when we have true, four-year colleges.

LESLIE: When you say they're resident now, they ...

KATZ: They have a living place in the college. Almost all, not all. Almost all.

LESLIE: Could you talk a little bit about the Presidents? You have said a bit, but would you characterize them more fully?

KATZ: Well, Princeton has, in my experience, been extremely well-governed, institutionally. I've known and liked all the Presidents I've worked with. Bill Bowen was the President when I came here, he worked hard to recruit me, and I had a good relationship with him, although I said I frequently didn't agree with him. But that didn't bother me at all, and I admired him enormously as the President of the University. I thought at the time and still think that he was one of the great university Presidents during my career in higher education. I think along with Derek Bok, whom I knew pretty well at Harvard, he has emerged as one of the two greatest Presidents of that couple of decades, not only because he was so good at administering this place in a crucial time in the history of the institution, but because he has been such a thoughtful, research-oriented student of higher education. Nobody has written more or better about higher education: everything from, admissions and inclusiveness to athletics, it's just simply staggering, and he's still doing it. I just read the two lectures he gave at Stanford on higher education, which, if you haven't read, you should read.

So, I am a great fan of Bill Bowen's. I think he was a wonderful President for the institution. Harold Shapiro is someone I like enormously and have gotten to know very well. While Bill Bowen was not an undergraduate here, he did his graduate work here. Of course, Harold did, too, but Bill then stayed on as the Provost and he really came to understand what Princeton was all about. But Harold was here, I think, probably for three years, went away. He's a Canadian, to start with, he didn't have American undergraduate education. I think that's a difficulty, and frankly, I think, when he came here, it looked to him like Ann Arbor. His original dream, what became the first student center, was to create the student union at Michigan. I argued with him about that, I said, "What we need is residential colleges, four-year residential colleges..."

So, I think at some level, it was harder for him to integrate himself with the institution, but he's a great figure in higher education. He's one of the leading figures at the national level in thinking about higher education policy. He's got a great mind for public policy, and he's a superb sort of moral exemplar. I think that was very important, we talked about values, we started the Center for Human Values under his leadership. I can't tell

you how I admire him, particularly as a human being. He's someone who's been inspirational for me, and it's not a mistake that he's now mainly interested in bioethics. Morality is what he thinks about although he's an economist. He's a deeply moral person.

Bill Bowen, by the way, was absolutely crucial to establishing the Jewish community on campus. It was under Bill that the university committed itself to building the Center for Jewish Life. I will always be grateful for that; it's made an enormous difference to the Jewish community here. Harold, in a more quiet kind of way because he was Jewish and didn't want to be thought of as a Jewish president, was enormously supportive not only to CJL, he was responsible for getting what we now call Judaic Studies going and supporting that effort and directing money to that. That was a great accomplishment, I think, for him. He was the key person in opening Princeton up to international affairs. We really actively discouraged study abroad before Harold. Harold was committed to it. I think that's something about being a Canadian.

So, I would say that was key for him. I think he was less interested in undergraduate affairs, although he's a fine undergraduate teacher in the college. But I could be wrong. I wasn't here, full time, much of that time.

Then, of course, Shirley Tilghman is a wonderful person. She is deeply committed to the college and to undergraduate teaching. She worked on what's now the "science sequence" when she was a faculty member. Again, like Harold, she's different: she's Canadian, she didn't go to an American college, she got graduate education here at Temple University, been at the place a long time and I think has a good feel for it. But she's a big-league scientist, and that's important. She's the first one we've had, and that has been the major emphasis, I would say, of her presidency, was ramping up big-time science. I think we've gone too far in that direction, but she's done an excellent job of that.

I think that she hasn't been -- I don't want to be misunderstood about this -- as good an administrator, from a strict sort of administration point of view, as either Harold or Bill. She isn't been particularly good at choosing people for management jobs, and many jobs you can think of, had to choose two or three before she arrived at the right person. She finally did, but she didn't have any previous management experience. I think that is a disadvantage; all she had run was a lab before, and that's a tough thing and I think it proved to be tough. But she's a wonderful human being, she's done wonderful things for

women, both, on campus and nationally in higher education. I think that'll turn out to be one of her great achievements. That and science, I would say.

She's been supportive of international efforts. I'm not particularly pleased with how she's approached that problem and that's a different issue. I don't think we do well with international presence at Princeton, but we could talk about that separately. But she certainly has been a distinguished President and kept up this tradition of people, just really wonderful individuals who have been Presidents of the institution.

LESLIE: I suppose as a major research university, the longevity of our Presidents may be fairly unique.

KATZ: It is unique -- well, maybe not unique, but it's unusual, and I think these are long tenures, at least ten years and more, this one will be, what, twelve or thirteen by the time she's done? Harold was about ten, I think. Bill was longer -- I don't remember exactly how many years that was. But Derek Bok was seventeen, -- Rick Levin has just had a quite long tenure at Yale. So, in the Ivies, it's more common than it is in the major publics where the jobs, I think, are probably just too hard.

LESLIE: I guess especially the President of Ohio State, bouncing...

KATZ: Yeah, but that's an egregious example. (laughter)

LESLIE: Right. It seems that you've taken on the role of public intellectual very much, with *The Chronicle*, working at the Drake Commission, and so on. Can you talk a bit about how you moved into that role?

KATZ: Yeah, I think it's one of those things that happens to you. You discover that people are interested in your opinion, and if you're like me, you like to talk. It goes along with my interest in policy, which I discovered pretty early. Well, my interest both in administration - I'm a higher education junkie, so the reason I loved being a Senior Tutor, the reason I loved being a Dean at a Law School, the reason I loved being the President of ACLS - was that I want to know how the machine works. So, I learned a lot doing that, and then intellectually, I'm interested in questions of policy. So, if you are, then I think it's natural that you want to express opinions.

I feel as though I have a stake in making the machine work better. I'd like it to work better. It's why I have been, I think many people think I'm too critical, but it's why I've always been critical. It's because I have ideas and I think most faculty don't, frankly. Most faculty don't think institutionally. I'm also an institutional person, by the way, and I think I have strong commitments,

I have a strong commitment to Princeton. I think I'm critical because I want to make it better, and I think that I would hope that that's an attitude that's valued.

But it's also true that over the course of my career, it's become easier to be a public intellectual. The difference is when I had a blog for *The Chronicle*, that's like somebody giving you a printing press. I used to write those things, and you'd push a button and it's on the web. (laughter) Well, in the old days, it wasn't so easy -- you had to find someone to interview you, or write an op-ed, or something. That's a more complicated and time-consuming and problematic process. So, it's easier now than it used to be, and there's more media of more different kinds. So, I would say all of that, but it's partly, mainly, I would say, that I care deeply about the development of higher education, and that as an incentive to try to find to express my opinion -- try to engage and try to be sure there is a public debate. That, to me, has been the most frustrating thing about being at Princeton; it's hard to stimulate debate on campus. There aren't very good fora for that.

LESLIE: Is that a result of people not thinking institutionally, or the lack of a faculty senate?

KATZ: Both, but mainly the lack of mechanisms, institutional mechanisms for it. I was a member of the faculty senate at Chicago, was a member of the faculty senate at Wisconsin. Harvard didn't have one, but it had a real faculty meeting, and even as an Instructor and an Assistant Professor, I went to the faculty meeting. Never said a word, I don't think. But those were important moments. So, it's been, for me, a wonderful part of my career. Although, you pay a price -- my wife would tell you that I shoot off my mouth too much, and perhaps she's right. You get punished for that.

I've twice been denied federal appointments because of conservative opposition -- two things that I had said, once under Clinton, once under Obama -- and do I regret that? No. Was it painful? Yes. It's also, when I was at ACLS, it was during the Culture Wars: I thought it was my job to speak out, to represent the humanities faculty, to oppose what I thought was the politicization of intellectual and academic life. But it was a lonely road, and I found it difficult and I found it painful. Taking on Lynne Cheney isn't fun. No kidding, and as it happened, unwittingly, I developed powerful enemies.

An example would be Pat Moynihan, who entered into the Congressional Record a rather long condemnation of Stan

Katz. In those days, *The Wall Street Journal* editorialized against me. This is when I had been nominated to be the Archivist of the United States, and it was Moynihan that defeated that, and Clinton withdrew the nomination. I didn't want to become the Archivist of the United States, but it wasn't a fun experience. So, I think that would be my message to people who aspire to being public intellectuals, but maybe that are smarter and more clever and a more adept person than I could have done the same thing and offended fewer people. But you don't get any training for this. (laughter) It's all on-the-job training.

LESLIE: It's not what they teach you in graduate school, by any means, or they even discourage that kind of thing. Well, you're now on the Drake Commission?

KATZ: Yeah, this was within the last couple of weeks, so I can't tell you much about that. I was just asked by Allen Sack, who's the Chair now of the Commission, if I would join the Advisory Committee.

LESLIE: I see a baseball over there. (laughter)

KATZ: Yeah, well, , I'm a Chicago sports fan, so I'm a Cubs and Bears... This is mainly Cubs stuff, here. I don't know if you have one of my baseball cards, but I'll give you one. (laughter) Someday, that'll be worth something!

LESLIE: Shortstop, yes, I love it!

KATZ: I was, in fact, a second baseman, but that's close.

(laughter)

LESLIE: Right. Leading from that, what is your feeling about the role of athletics at Princeton?

KATZ: I have mixed feelings about it. I taught a course with a friend, a junior seminar in policy taskforce -- on preferential admissions in selective colleges and universities. So, that was one of the things we looked at. I have taught a freshman seminar on higher education and intercollegiate athletics. I'm very critical of the way the system works in large institutions, but it's obviously very different in the Ivies. I am a sports nut, and I go to basketball games, go to football games, I go to some -- I tend to go to teams on which I have students, so I have, for instance, a female hockey player now, so I go to women's hockey. I really enjoy that, and that's what I enjoy most, that's watching my own students play.

Frankly, in the Woodrow Wilson School, very few athletes are competitive enough to come to the Woodrow Wilson School. I haven't had very many students recently. When I was in the History Department, I had a lot of athletes, but not in the Woodrow Wilson School, which is kind of interesting, I think. So, do we recruit too many

athletes? Yeah, I think so. I have the Katz Plan for addressing that problem, and the Katz Plan -- for the Ivy League -- is to give up football. We simply recruit too many football players. Most of them never play, and by and large, I would guess -- it's a guess -- not students we would otherwise bring in. Some small number are, and I recently had a football player in my freshman seminar who certainly was good enough anyway. By the way, he turned out to be a lacrosse player and not a football player.

But we just have to recruit too many students to do it, and while I enjoy the sports, I don't buy into Gary Walters' argument that it's a better preparation for life. So is playing in the orchestra. Some athletes turn out to be wonderfully interesting in person, some of them are excellent students; it depends on the sport. I wonder how many Phi-Bets there are playing men's hockey? I don't know, but my guess would be few to none? Is that a problem? Yeah, I think it is. Now, talk about squash players or tennis players, fencers, I think it's very different. So, it's not just sports, it's a question of how hard it is to find the kids to do the sport. But the tremendous effort, it takes an enormous amount of time.

Just recently, talking to students about term papers, the ones struggling the most are the athletes. I had a

member of the crew, men's crew, in this office yesterday, Sunday. It was Sunday because it was the only time he could find to meet with me. So, I think it's a bit of a problem. But I also think legacies are a problem. If I had to cut out one first, I'd cut out legacies. I think it makes no sense.

LESLIE: And you find legacies often inadequate?

KATZ: Usually I don't know, so how would I know?

Occasionally, I do. I quiz my students. If they come into this office, they don't know it, but they're going to be asked a lot of questions about their background.

(laughter) By and large an instructor doesn't know, so I have no way of knowing. I just don't see the rationale for it, so it's a matter of principle, there. It does take a certain number of admissions spots, and the spots are precious here.

Another category, by the way, something we should talk about, I worry a little bit about international students. I love having international students; I suspect but don't know we're getting full-pay international students, and now, the President, appropriately, is worried about the number of economically disadvantaged students we have. Well, my guess is by taking 13% international students, we're skewing towards the full-pay end of the spectrum.

They may be very good students -- they are sometimes very good students -- but we're doing nothing to democratize the place.

So, these are serious questions. None of them typically get assessed. Now, the President has convened a committee of good people to talk about whether we can expand the number of economically hard-pressed students. I think that's something the faculty as a whole ought to discuss. I'm glad she's appointed that committee; but I doubt she's going to appoint a committee on either athletes or legacies.

LESLIE: It would be a bit late, anyway. I think that's the toughest nut because also, class obviously equates to academic achievement in so many ways.

KATZ: Well, it does, absolutely does. Although the new data are pretty promising: I think the data now show that if you have a good admissions process -- and we have a superb admissions director, the best since I have been here -- I think we can recruit students who are just as good. I think that's what Tony Marx showed at Amherst when they began to skew the place towards that end of the economic spectrum with no loss in academic credentials or academic performance. He began taking transfers from community colleges. I think there are a lot of things we could do.

So, I don't buy that argument. I think the data don't support it.

LESLIE: But there'd be a probably different route to get them.

KATZ: Yes.

LESLIE: Certainly I see students like that at a state college, at a different level, often it takes a long time to mentor them through that.

You've lived in Princeton and you've talked about being an institutional person, so I take it that a community is important to you, a collegiate community?

KATZ: Oh, absolutely. No, I love being here. I'm a city guy, so if I had my choice, I wouldn't live in Princeton, New Jersey. But it's where I work and it's an institution I'm committed to and I love. I like the community, I'm active in the community. I am now the Chair, for instance, of a humanities committee for our public library. I'm on the board of the Foundation for the Princeton Public Library. I do a certain number of things in the community, and probably not enough. I think, by the way, that that's one of my dissatisfactions: I think the university has not been a good citizen of its community, and I think President Tilghman has been a notably poor citizen of this community, but that's perhaps a different issue.

I think that if you live here, you can participate in things like going to dinner with a group of students, I was invited by a group of students who want to talk about gun control on Thursday night. Well, if they lived in the city, I wouldn't be doing that. That sort of thing. Also in the community, by the way, next term, I'm teaching what's known as an Evergreen course -- that's the Princeton Senior Resource Center, which runs adult education courses, and it's going to be a six-week course, every Monday afternoon for six weeks, at the public library, on the 1950s. It'll be a mob scene because I'm using the community room at the public library, which is the large room.

So, I enjoy doing that kind of thing. I frequently speak to church groups or seniors groups. Well, I spend an awful lot of time with students on one thing or another, I work with student organizations, and one of my major interests here is in civic engagement. I've been very active at the PACE Center. I'm on the board of the Princeton Alumni Corps, which is really a national effort but it's based here in Princeton.

So living here makes it much easier and more attractive for me to keep engaged in those ways. I'm very active with the Office of Religious Life here, which I

think is really one of the important social institutions at Princeton. Princeton's got a great tradition of that. In my experience, that begins with Fred Borsch, who brought that into the modern world.

LESLIE: I'm reading his book.

KATZ: Yeah, I haven't had a chance. I read the manuscript; I haven't seen the book yet. So, that's been an important thing for me and we've had a series of wonderful Deans of the Chapel: Alison, the current one, Alison Boden, is just terrific. I work with her very closely. I work with the Head of PACE. So, those things are terribly important to me.

LESLIE: Thank you. Anything you think we haven't covered?

KATZ: Well, there's a lot we haven't covered, but we've covered a lot. I think this is still, for all of my complaints -- and they are complaints, an amazing place and it's a place I love. I think it's a place we could make better. I worry a lot about our losing our soul; we've gotten bigger; we've gotten more distance between the faculty and the students. But there are other good things that are happening; the residential colleges is perhaps the best, from my point of view, but we're strengthening civic engagement on campus, I think that's really very important. I think we need to work hard on strengthening community

relations where I don't think we've done a very good job. So, there's work to be done. We'll have a new President and I rather think it's going to be Chris Eisgruber. I have no inside information, but I hope it will be. I think he would be a wonderful person. He's a humanist himself, and I think that would be good.

LESLIE: Great. Well, perfect place to end!

KATZ: Oh, I enjoyed it, Bruce. Thanks for doing it.

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