

JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY
ORAL HISTORY COLLECTION
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Joshua Einhorn-Martinez

Interviewed by Jennifer Kinniff

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Johns Hopkins University
Oral History Collection

Interviewee: Joshua Einhorn-Martinez (JE)

Interviewer: Jennifer Kinniff (JK)

Subject: Life of Joshua Einhorn-Martinez

Date: May 20, 2018

JK: Today is Sunday, May 20 and I'm here today with Dr. Joshua Einhorn-Martinez to do an oral history interview. Thanks for being here with me today.

JE: Thank you. Going to Johns Hopkins was one of the best experiences of my life and my Hopkins friends remain my closest friends to this day. And we're in daily contact.

JK: That's great. Let's start with your early life. Can you tell me where you're from and a little bit about your family?

JE: Well, we're sitting here in Chatsworth, California. I grew up in Woodland Hills, California. I was born in Chicago but we moved here when I was four. My dad's a television director and that's it. I went to high school. I've never even heard of Johns Hopkins, but we had a college counselor and he said I think you'd be good at Johns Hopkins. And I'm like, okay. What's Johns Hopkins? And only because of him did I apply and then got in and as I said it was a wonderful experience.

JK: What were you looking for in a college that –

JE: Well, I went to a very elite high school. It's probably the top five in the country. And it's called Harvard School. Now it's called Harvard Westlake. But it was incredibly rigorous and it's incredibly competitive to get in. The only reason I'm telling you all that is I'm very much a bookworm academic type. And so when I was in eighth grade I heard about this place and I said, oh my god I want to go there type thing because I'm so into learning and bookish. And my parents are like, okay. Anyway, so I was very used to very small class sizes and very intense learning. And so I wanted that. So I basically only applied to small sort of liberal arts

schools and then the size of Johns Hopkins was very appealing to me. It was perfect.

JK: So visited before you –

JE: I'd visited and I guess, I don't know. I guess part of an oral history is amusing little anecdotes. I had applied at Cornell and Wesleyan and all these other places and that was part of my college tour. And when I got to Johns Hopkins they were very good where they said you can actually have an overnight in the freshman dorms to really give you that experience. I'm like, yeah. If you're there to check out the school. Anyway, so I went and then the person that they housed me with said I hate it here and I'm transferring to Stanford. And I'm like uh, okay. Anyway.

JK: Like, why did you pick you first?

JE: No, what happened was the person who had signed up was his roommate and then his roommate went out of town for the weekend. So I was left. So it's okay I ended up going there and had a wonderful experience. And I'm sure that guy was much happier at Stanford. That's just an amusing anecdote, but it's true.

JK: I think a lot of times people think of Hopkins as a pre-med or a science and engineering school. Did you have that interest?

JE: Okay, yeah. I applied as pre-med and got in as pre-med and instantly I realized, oh my god, I don't want to do pre-med. I was in intro chemistry and now it's coming back to me, Dr. Aranow, Ruth Aranow was my professor. And at Hopkins they give you the pass/fail option.

JK: They used to. They don't anymore. They just ended it recently.

JE: It's a very good thing because all these people are hyper competitive and they don't need – they're intrinsically motivated. It was a very good thing. Where I'm going with my story is I ended up getting a D, which is not like me at all, in intro chem, which is a pass. And more to the point I just looked at my classmates, we're all excited about science and then I reflected back on my experience volunteering at a hospital, which I really hated. I didn't like the fluorescent lights and the sterile atmosphere. Anyway, so it was just ironic that I instantly changed out of being pre-med after having applied as a pre-med. So that was all.

JK: And did you get a sense of kind of the culture of Hopkins, of the campus and the students from that overnight visit?

JE: Well, like I said that was an anomaly in the sense that it was a skewed thing. But I certainly got it when I went there. While it was highly competitive in the sense that everyone wanted to get A's and this sort of thing, it wasn't like I'm not going to help you because it's going to impact the curve. It wasn't like that level at all. And also I found that all my friends were in different majors.

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It really wasn't like, I'm trying to think. I was in some classes with some people, but instantly when I was there, it was just like my type of people. Sarcastic, highly educated people and that's who my people are.

JK: So what do you remember from those first days when you arrived as a freshman?

JE: Well, they did another good thing, which was they had a week-long orientation, which was literally one fun thing after another. So we had a pie-eating contest and then we went to the Inner Harbor. And I was a huge John Waters fan so instantly I was doing all of John Waters things like going to Fells Point and Edie the Egg Lady, a thrift store there.

JK: Very cool.

JE: Anything related to – and then also Edgar Allan Poe has his house there. Have you been there?

JK: I have not been to it.

JE: It's very cool. So Edgar Allan Poe's house and where he's buried. So just I'm really making instant friends who literally I'm in daily contact with to this day. Not just one, like five or six from that first week.

JK: That's amazing.

JE: Yeah, that's what I'm saying. I love it.

JK: So you were there, you started out as pre-med, you realized you didn't like it, and then you switched into –

JE: I'll just give a very short version. But I went to my advisor and I said I think I want to go into business. In my mind, I don't know, I was very influenced with my parents. My mom was a nurse anesthetist, so I thought I'll go that route and then that went away. My dad was from Chicago, was really into pizza. I thought okay, maybe I'll open a pizza restaurant. I don't know. It was random. So they said we don't have a business major here. So the advisor said, why don't you go to London, to the London School of Economics for your junior year? And same thing, I'm like okay. And I did.

And anyway, so then did that and I was always taking rigorous mixed courses and things but I had no focus. I was all over the place. And so then when senior year came I'm like, what's my major? And they said well, with all your credits you can graduate as a social and behavioral area science major and you can graduate with three and a half years. So I said, sounds good to me. So it saved my dad \$4,700.00. Now it would be a lot more. Then I just did some internships in Baltimore. I stayed in Baltimore for another – I lived with my friends for that year. I'm sorry, semester, spring semester. That was 1986. Then I still was unfocused. Then I lived in Baltimore for another year. I moved down to Mount Vernon and then I moved to New York City.

JK: And did you identify as gay coming into Hopkins or tell me about your identity and where you were with that.

JE: So I already told you I went to London School of Economics. This sounds unbelievable, but it's true. I realized on the plane ride over to London, I know it sounds unbelievable, but what happened was an out of the closet gay person was seated next to me and he was a student in the same student program I was. And then he was an out homosexual, which you can look at it like today, people really weren't that out. I mean, as a matter of fact the vast majority were in, especially at that age. In other words, if you're 17 in 1983, and I don't know what it was about that experience. It wasn't even like anything happened other than we just talked. But I just realized that I was gay and that's what happened.

JK: That's really interesting. Wow.

JE: Yeah, I know it doesn't make sense but it is what happened.

JK: No, it makes sense. because I was looking at sort of the evolution of when the group started at Hopkins that you and David Horowitz started, which seems like happened in your senior year, is that right that you started in your formal organization?

JE: So yeah. We'll get into that. And then also, I'm sorry I forgot to mention since you're asking about my personal life, I had a girlfriend all sophomore year. So I'm just saying that it was like, you know. Johns Hopkins definitely had an undergraduate student club.

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Here, it was called the Gay and Lesbian Alliance Gala, and it was just a normal club like basket weaving or a hundred other clubs. And I didn't do it but someone petitioned to have the club and we met in the basement of Levering and it was just a normal club. And it was kind of smallish. Mind you, at that time I don't know what it's like now but there were 600 students per year. So there was 2,400 students at Hopkins. I can't give an exact number, but if I had to guess in the gay and lesbian undergraduate student club at Homewood campus I'm talking about, I would say out of the 2,400 there was like 20 at the most in this club.

Like five or six would show up at each of the weekly or however often it met. So that's what went down. When I came back I said my senior year then I was out and so I started going to these things. So that's where I met David. And then I'll sort of just jump to what happened was, and Hopkins was very limited socially. I mean just part of it was just the numbers. There aren't that many students. So if you want to have a party, you would invite girls from Goucher.

I know Goucher we now bought but at the time it was separate and it was all girls. I say girls, but, you know, women. Whatever. They were 17. I don't know. I still call them girls. And same thing. We interacted with the other campuses. So for instance the gay group from the medical school, if we did something we would invite them. because why not?

JK: Just because there were a lot of small groups all over.

JE: Small groups and really if you think about it, I was a senior and if someone was in medical school they're only one year older than I am. So it's not like a huge thing. Then there was Peabody. So they were – and this was way before social media and everything but it wasn't that complicated. We were just all friendly. So it was definitely Peabody, the medical school, us. Then there was SAIS, but that was in DC so we weren't really art of them. And then – wait, I wrote this down. I think those were all the campuses at the time.

JK: Yeah, that sounds right.

JE: So what happened was I moved to New York City like I said, and all of us are saying oh my god, we missed all that camaraderie and we were all fledgling. It doesn't matter if I was from the Peabody and trying to get into an orchestra, if I was in med school in a residency program. David was actually in the PhD program at Johns Hopkins.

JK: Right, in public health.

JE: Right. And then I was working at the mailroom in New York City. But David and I were saying god, we really miss the group and we kinda want to keep this connection going. So I don't know how we came up with it, but we said we should start a gay and lesbian alumni association. So same thing, you really can't look at it as 2018. You have to go back to now it's 1987. In the sense that AIDS had just happened. In other words, in 1987 AIDS literally came to be or in that area, in that whole little thing. And you weren't sure if you got it from a toilet seat or _____ someone or kissing someone.

And forgetting about Johns Hopkins, there were a lot of homophobia. If you were gay you were ashamed. Like if I say hey, I'm gay, then people think I have AIDS. Even though I did a lot of volunteer work for AIDS communities and things like that, it's kind of a double stigma. I don't know, that's just the way it is. Also if you've just come out, and I was just sharing with Hector the week I came out to my parents, which was when I was 21, which was my senior year, in other words I got back from London, I came out to them Thanksgiving weekend. So November of 1985. So I said to my parents hey, I'm gay. And it was not well received.

It was a lot of tears. And my mom, she said, does this mean you're going to be hanging out in bath houses? And I'm like, I don't even know what a bath house is or been to one. And then that week on People Magazine, literally the cover of People Magazine the week I came out was, "Your worst nightmare, your son tells you he's gay and has AIDS."

JK: Oh my gosh.

JE: And back then there weren't that many magazines – you would see that everywhere at every newsstand, at every supermart checkout. So I'd just told my parents and then that was what was the message that they were seeing and having to.

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So, I guess where I'm going with it is, when David and I decided to do it, then I said okay, let me reach out and see if Johns Hopkins will help. And I'll cut to the punchline. Well, I'll tell you just the backdrop and then I'll get to the punchline, but we weren't that surprised when they didn't help us, you know? I'm trying to tell you the atmosphere. The other thing is Johns Hopkins has always been conservative. I had said something in my notes, which now my friend corrected me. I said there were no Vietnam War protests, but he said no, no, there were. But I guess compared to other schools –

JK: Not in the same way.

JE: Exactly. I mean it might have been whatever, but it wasn't like buildings were burning and sit-ins and whatever. Actually, you would know. You're the oral historian.

JK: Yeah, I mean they did protest but a lot of it was more related to military recruitment on campus and things like that and the sort of defense contracts that Hopkins had.

JE: Exactly. Which they still have.

JK: It was almost more like a brainy way of protesting. It wasn't about the violence and people being drafted per se. It was almost like a step removed from that.

JE: So what I do know about is during my tenure at Hopkins South Africa was a very big deal with Apartheid and people were protesting. So that protest took the form of people making shantytowns like mock shantytowns. They were really sort of just tents because they had shantytowns in Africa. And Johns Hopkins immediately came and said the fire department says these are fire hazards and we're taking them down. Everyone's impression was that if this was UC Berkeley they would have let the tents stay and let the students protest. But since it was Johns Hopkins and they gave the excuse that it's a fire hazard, which –

JK: Well, and then the student really did set one of them on fire, right?

JE: Well, see you're the oral historian, so you know more than I do.

JK: But do you remember that? I think you're –

JE: Vaguely now that you're saying it. So maybe it was a fire hazard. I guess what I'm trying to say is that just squelched that thing completely and okay, so now I'll get to what happened. So what happened was my friend used to work at the Alumni Association of the Homewood Campus. There were student jobs and I had a couple of friends. I can't remember exactly, but I contacted the alumni association. So I knew that it existed type thing because my friend had worked there for four years and I'd visit her there, this sort of thing. So when it came time to needing help, I contacted them. I said hey, we're going to start a gay and lesbian alumni association and there was sort of like a pause on the phone.

A normal conversation – today it would be oh my god, great. Can we help you? And this sort of thing. And literally there was sort of like dead air. And so I'm like so do you think you could help us? And they're like, well how? What form of help could you – how could we help you? I'm like well, you could mention it in your newsletter. Or if you're not willing to do that you could give me your mailing list or access to your mailing list and then we could make an announcement to all the alum. And then whoever's interested could contact us. In other words, we had started a P.O. Box.

That's the way you did things then. And they said no, we're not going to help you. And I was like oh, okay. And they said we won't mention it in the newsletter and you can't have access to our mailing list and we don't see how we can help you. So I said okay. And like I'm saying, given the whole context pretty much Johns Hopkins, it's like there's AIDS, there's homophobia, internalized homophobia, my mom basically wasn't kind of speaking to me, she's thinking I'm having out at bath houses. I don't know. You know what I mean? I'm kind of like I wasn't looking for approval. I actually looking for practical –

JK: Assistance.

JE: Assistance. So anyway, so no problem. So I said okay, there's Hopkins Magazine. because they definitely have the undergraduate newspaper. But my thought process was, why do I want an article for the undergraduates? This is an alumni association.

JK: Yeah, you're trying to reach a different set of people.

JE: Different set of people. I'm now, mind you in retrospect I could have said well, I could have been longer-term thinking. The seniors

are going to be alum, but that really wasn't my mind. I had graduated. I talked to the alumni association. So my next thought was, well Hopkins Magazine.

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So in this case, I called the Hopkins Magazine and I asked to speak to the editor, who came on the phone, and I said, I have something really exciting to report. And he goes, what? And I said, I'm founding with my friend, we're going to found the gay and lesbian alumni association and it's going to span all the campuses – the medical school, I included SAIS, because it would. SAIS, Peabody, Homewood and it's the first time in Johns Hopkins' really long history this has ever happened and I think your readers would be really interested in it. And he goes, have you ever read our magazine?

So anyway, so I was sort of taken aback. And actually I hadn't read the magazine. And I said no. And he goes, this is a recollection from 30 years ago, but basically he said, our readers are only interested in research that's emanating from Johns Hopkins. But in my mind I'm thinking okay, four to ten percent of your researchers are gay. Four to ten percent of your readership is gay. They're interested.

JK: Well and, I mean I'm sure they did have articles like that, but there's always that section at the back for alumni updates and things like that.

JE: Okay, but here was my other thing. because also I worked in media. I ended up working in US Magazine, Spin Magazine. I'm very media savvy – my dad's a television director. I'm very media savvy. So anyway, and I said well why not put it in the publisher's note? Every magazine has that. Welcome to – in this issue we're highlighting such and such and so and so. They always have little extraneous little tidbits in there. And so all that I was really wanting was to say, and hey, guess what readers? There's now a gay and lesbian alumni association. If you're interested, here's the P.O Box information. So he goes, no I won't do that for you.

So I was like, but here's – what I think really surprised me is people are just, not only did they give a no, but there was no apology, there was no deliberation, there was no let me contact someone else, it was really like a unilateral, unapologetic, unambiguous, unashamed no from both entities. And it was interesting too because like I'm saying now you looking back, so I

was sharing this last year with my then boss who is the dean of the College of Education at California State University in Northridge, and he goes, why didn't you go to the provost?

I don't even know what a provost was at the time. And also I'm kind of like I've already been rejected by two authority figures. Do I really need to be rejected by a third? It didn't even occur to me to go to the academic side. Why? In retrospect, if I did it today, yeah.

JK: I guess it might have had the weight of that. If then the provost contacted the magazine and said you should run this.

JE: I totally agree.

JK: I don't think it would have occurred to me either as a twenty-something. Yeah.

JE: As an undergraduate? I was a 21-year-old who only had ever been in undergraduate school, I didn't even know what a provost was.

JK: And you know what's funny is that from what I've heard talking to people and looking in the newsletter it was very uneven sort of the levels of support across the administration. David was saying when they founded GALA, the undergraduate association, that the administration was generally supportive. But then when I was looking in the newsletter and they finally applied for funding, I think it was the fall of '86, so after you had graduated, right? Is that right?

Yeah, you graduated in spring of '86, that there were all these letters to the editor in the student newspaper saying I don't want my tuition dollars going towards supporting this group. I don't understand the purpose of this. Things like that. So it was almost like the student body was more conservative than the administrators who approved it in the first place.

JE: That's something, yeah. I'm really glad you mentioned that. The student body couldn't have been more conservative when I was there. I mean, I can't give a percentage but 90 to 95 percent were sort of from well-to-do families. But it was more just like an attitude and also the type of person it attracted type thing. And it wasn't just the money, but the conservative, a lot of people have just grown up with money and they just sort of had what we call now white privilege. That word didn't exist back then.

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And there's a funny anecdote. I know this is about the alumni association, but there's a very funny anecdote from the undergraduate. And I can't speak for the other people, but the fact that the group met in the basement of Levering I really like because at the time, even now I helped raise money to help start the gay and lesbian alumni center at California State University Northridge. And even then it was a big consideration about where you would place it because if it's a real high visibility spot, people who are in the closet or questioning, it's a statement by just going in and out type thing.

So I like the fact that it was in the basement of Levering and that wasn't like oh, we're just shunting them there. That was just some random room request. Anyway, so it came time most student groups you have a t-shirt. It's fun. You can identify each other. I don't know. Even our freshmen dorm, we had t-shirts, just something. So what happened was – do you want me to make you some tea?

JK: I'm okay, thanks. I'll just take a –

JE: I think I have some Dayquil. Do you want that?

JK: Yes, okay. We're recording again.

JE: So, what happened was we wanted a t-shirt for our student club and no one wanted anything that said gay and lesbian and really no one was keen on even symbols that denoted gay and lesbian. I don't think anyone was fearful that anyone would beat us up or anything like that. Well, here was the funny part. The funny part was, so someone said, why don't we all wear Geraldine Ferraro t-shirts? And Geraldine Ferraro was the first female on a presidential ticket and it was very big around that time. I don't know, so we just thought we'll wear our Geraldine Ferraro t-shirts.

And then David came up with a picture. I guess they ended up with a pink triangle type thing so they ended up having a t-shirt. That's what the symbol was then, which really I think is a very sad symbol. It's from the Holocaust and I know you can reclaim it, but to me certain things there's no need to reclaim. And I think people have made that determination because now it's the rainbow or whatever. But that actually was a very amusing story.

JK: So you did wear your t-shirts around. They just didn't say, you know.

JE: Well, no. No, we didn't do the Geraldine Ferraro thing. It was just when we were brainstorming this idea that came up. It was funny at the time and to me it's even funnier with age.

JK: Did you, since we're talking about – we'll get back to the alumni group – but I wanted to ask you –

JE: Oh, that's all right.

JK: When you came back from London how your senior year was different once you were out to your friends. Did you end up with a new and different friend group? Did you find that people you were friends with, your relationship changed at all?

JE: So got back from London and then came out to everyone because I literally had no gay friends and didn't know any gay people. The only gay people I knew was Liberace, I'm not kidding, and Jim Nabors. Those are the only two gay people. Even John Waters really wasn't out. I'm sorry. And Andy Warhol. Those were my idols. They did gay themed things and transvestite things, but you never saw them with a boyfriend or kissing someone or talking about their personal lives ever. And both of them were so – you almost thought of them as asexual. Andy Warhol I think is asexual.

So I guess what I'm saying is I had no role models, no anything, so I came out to everyone and it was really a devastating experience because it was traumatic because it just wasn't cool and it wasn't had seen common. That having been said, everyone totally accepted me and I kept 100 percent of my same friends. And then a lot of whom ended up coming out to me later on and were having relationships and all this other stuff but in the closet.

No, no, it was very supportive. It was very supportive and then that's what happened. There's another thing, I'm just looking at my notes. So don't forget, these people when we reached out for help and we didn't get it, hello. We're graduates of the Johns Hopkins Medical School. We're not shrinking violets who can't get things done.

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So we went on without help and it was fine and we never gave it a second thought. The only reason I even mention that is there's a classic photo that I forwarded to you of us in front of I guess it's the capital in DC and that was when DC had their Gay Pride

March, and then we marched. That's how one of our main promotions was we would do a banner and we would march in Gay Pride parades in DC, New York City and Baltimore, and then we would have a booth and then people would come up to us and that was how we promoted it. This was before social media and all that stuff.

And the other key thing, which wasn't in my notes was, I think we had 125 members. And we definitely had a quarterly newsletter and then we had events. But to me the amusing part is we did a homemade banner. because what else is there? In other words, you see what I'm saying? Now, oh my god, if you were marching on behalf of Johns Hopkins, oh my god they would have this fabulous banner –

JK: And they'd be like, you'd have to use this logo and –

JE: Can we approve it? No, can we, we must approve it. And since we didn't have their blessing and we didn't have their assistance, so literally it's like hand painted logo. Everything's hand painted and it's so funny to me. That's amusing to me. But you see we're all smiling, we're having a great time, these are all great friends. And then also there were straight people too. Like I noticed my friend, Paula Sussman. She's on it. She's what we would call now an ally, but there definitely were straight people, allies I guess you'd call them now. So we just went on. So the other thing I do want to include is a couple of really important things I feel.

So I'm promoting it, you never know how something gets promoted. In other words, people have friends of a friend. Bottom line is I got out of the blue, the fees were six dollars a year. That's what it cost to be a member. And that had to do with postage and Xeroxing so it really was a break-even proposition you can imagine. And then I was really surprised to get a \$75.00 check in the mail. And it was a guy from Texas and he said I am a Hopkins alum. I graduated many years ago. I never thought I would see this in my lifetime. I cried when I heard about it. Thank you for founding this and rather than \$6.00, here's \$75.00.

Anyway, and I never talked to him but he was part – and he was in Texas so it wasn't like he took part in our events or anything. But then someone who I did get to know very well was a gentleman in his eighties and he lived in New York City. And then I guess he must have seen us in the parade or something like that and he couldn't believe it. And he went to Johns Hopkins in the 1920s and he and I became very close. And he would take me out to brunch

every Sunday. He lived right in midtown Manhattan, I lived down in the village. Anyway, and we became very close like I said, and he shared with me a lot. And so one of the recollections I definitely want to share, and it's just a tidbit but it's from gay life from 1922 in Johns Hopkins Homewood campus, which I'm sure is not part of the oral history, is he said that in Remsen Hall, that's still there, right? Remsen Hall?

JK: Yes, it is.

JE: So at the end of the hall there was this desolate men's room and guys would get together there to have anonymous sex. And that's what gay life was in Johns Hopkins in 1922. So, and that's not anecdotal. That's from someone who was there. Anyway, I just think that that's an interesting little tidbit.

JK: It's amazing to have any sort of discussion of gay life in 1922.

JE: That's what I'm saying. because even when he told me back in 1987 I was like, what? Really? That's amazing. Only just to hear about it because part of it too with homophobia, an argument that's _____, oh, there weren't gay people back then. Or even if you go to I travel a lot around the world and if you go to a Muslim country there aren't gay people in our country. And it's hard to refute it, but I'm just saying so this is a refutation of that.

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The other thing I did want to mention, which has totally nothing to do with Johns Hopkins but it relates to him was so in 1922 so now it's in the 1960s. He's living in New York City, he's working as a fundraiser, a very high level for Jewish charities raising a lot of money and doing great work. And he went to a concert in the park, and he was okay looking. It relates to the story. I mean this is even him telling it to me. And then this extremely good looking, young guy is hitting on him while he's just trying to walk out of Central Park after having seen the concert.

And it was just weird because it's like the guy's sort of out of his league type thing and the guy was being really persistent. And he could just tell just energetically there's just something not right about this situation. So he's trying to avoid the guy, get away from him. With no, what do you call it? Forewarning the guy says you're under arrest and handcuffs him, and he said you propositioned me even though he hadn't and you're going to jail.

So they threw him in jail and then all of a sudden he's in jail and someone comes up to him and says, you give us \$5,000.00 and part will go to the judge, part will go to the jailer and then part will go to the police officer. Otherwise we're going to publish in the newspaper that you're a homosexual and you're in jail. So my recollection is that he gave the \$5,000.00, which is a lot of money back in the 1960s. Not to mention the fact that that's criminal what happened to him.

JK: Of course, I know. That's a crazy trajectory to go from thinking about his life in the '20s to the '60s to –

JE: To the '80s.

JK: To the '80s. because you said he was openly gay by then, right?

JE: He was openly gay. He was very happy to be proud of the alumni association. He had fond memories of Johns Hopkins. So I guess what I'm trying to say, in other words, because he was saying oh, are we going to get there in time? I'm like, they've waited 30 years for the story. They can wait ten minutes more. Where I'm going with it is, about a year and a half ago I thought in my own mind, apropos nothing, this is an important story that should be a part of Johns Hopkins history.

And like I said, I come to it with love of Johns Hopkins. But I really feel that students today, especially gay students that have no idea, they just think – and in a world of discrimination and horribleness this isn't so bad. Like I'm saying, we just moved on. But I do think it was interesting. So the genesis was now I reached out to the newsletter, because now it doesn't matter about the alumni or anything like that.

JK: This is like 2015, something like that.

JE: Exactly. And I said I think this is an important story that needs to be told. And it took them about a year by the time they finally pulled it together and interviewed me. But then once they did hear the story, they put it on the cover and it was very interesting. Then the next thing I get was from David because he's always into things. But there was a diversity report that they had done and then our pictures were in it and all of a sudden our story is part of their diversity report. And then you contacted me, the oral historian. So I feel oh my god, the story has been told but in a good way.

I do feel it's good and then also I really like the way the newsletter spun it, and they said, I'm paraphrasing, the _____ starts on the way to civil rights, which is fine. And I think what I'm trying to get at in sharing the story is, I don't have an analysis of what was going on. I know what was going on in terms of gay and lesbian centers and student life in the – wait. Like in 2005, only because I was raising money for that center so I really got a good feel. And like anything else the advocate even ranked the schools on their gay and lesbian student life. And one of the things, do they have a center? Do they have a dorm? Do they have a dorm? Do they have this, that and the other? So going back to 1987 I don't know.

[0:39:59]

I can't compare it to other universities but I'm sure there were ones that either had alumni association or would have accepted and helped the gay alumni.

JK: And I think David might have said in some ways you guys were copying Yale and Princeton and places that you knew already had alumni associations, right?

JE: Yeah. David is a highly intelligent person who's highly connected. So I'm just saying, whatever he said is true. It was true. Case in point, other universities – so I'm sure we were somewhere on the spectrum. But I guess what I'm saying is by us reaching out to them and then being rebuffed, they could have either been, like I said, part of the problem, homophobia, or part of the solution. They could have been an early adopter, a late adopter, they could have been avant-garde progressive or they could have been stick-in-the mud, sick-in-the-head conservative, and they opted for the latter in each of those cases.

So that's why I feel is if it's a really good story to be told, and then I feel validated, not that I need to be validated, but by the diversity report, by the article in the newsletter, and now by this oral history, forget about being validated. I feel the story is now part of the school history. And it doesn't really reflect poorly on the school. I mean because you have to look at it in the context too of the time. They didn't say no way, faggot, and hang up the phone. I'm sure if I was down South and said it I might have gotten that reaction. And if I was at Harvard they might have said okay. Okay, they were somewhere in the middle. Hold on.

JK: I think so. And the reason I wanted to do the oral history, the reason I came to know of you and David was from the newsletter

articles. I'm grateful that they wanted to write about it. I saw the article and it was really good, but it's like four or five paragraphs and it's like I know there's more to the story.

JE: there's more to the story.

JK: Thank you can fit in a news article.

JE: I think there's just two other points that I definitely want to touch on. Actually there's a few. So these are all sort of non-sequiturs but you're okay?

JK: Yes.

JE: Well, this definitely isn't about me and has nothing to do with my ego. But I did want to say one thing, which is David and I did take on the onus of doing this, which took on a lot of work. And I guess what I'm saying is at any stage in life, a person has the ability to do the right thing and it's not always easy to do the right thing. And when you do it, or I'll speak for myself when I do it, I'm doing it because it's the right thing. So I just want to give other examples of things I've done in my life that are highly relevant so you get a feel that this is just one thing. Not trying to trumpet myself, but I'm really about the gay civil rights movement so it has a lot more to do with that.

That's why I'm sharing this. So for instance, when I lived in New York City, my then partner who was my domestic partner, now we ended up adopting a kid together and even though we were together 16 years, anyway he was Irish, but I mean really Irish. He had moved from Ireland when he was 26. We met three months later and then we were together for 16 years. He wanted to be part of the Irish – what do you call it? St. Patrick's Day Parade in New York City. And that is run by the Ancient Order of the Hibernians, which made it a private parade and then they have the right to exclude people.

So even though they had Irish dentists and Irish firefighters and Irish basket weavers, when the Irish gays said can we march, they said no. So we took it to court and we protested and it was a multi-year thing. The mayor marched with us, it was a whole thing. And we were arrested for civil disobedience. Like the reviewing stand, all stood up and turned their backs to us and people threw beer at us and it was a whole thing. And at the time I was a New York City public school teacher and it became – I probably got fired

because of it. I was fired that year. In other words, that happened in April and come June I was fired.

And the union person came to me and said I think you're being fired because you're gay. I'm sorry, I was on the 11:00 news because the mayor was with us and it was the lead story of the news, and they said, who will dance a jig with the mayor, because they needed to call B roll. And I said I will, because same thing. I know they need this for their news. Because of that all my students knew. Even though they were only fourth graders and all their parents knew. They came to me the next day.

[0:45:00]

Mr. Einhorn, was that you on the news last night? So it wasn't like I had to guess. Anyway –

JK: Did the union support you in that? Like did they offer to fight for you or –

JE: So what happened was being a novice I had three days' training to become a school teacher and I got my own class and I did it for two years. It's very, very stressful. And after two years and after being fired, I said I'm just going to quit. It's too stressful and forgetting about being gay. But I did reach out to the other teachers. I wrote a letter to every teacher and said the union rep said I was fired because I was gay. Did you hear of anything like this that could support this case? because I wasn't going to come forward with the case if it's just hearsay.

JK: Yeah, if you didn't have evidence.

JE: And so I did get a response from one of the teachers said no, she didn't hear anything and the others didn't respond, which is fine. So I was like, you know what? I'm going to move on. In other words, the kids asked me, was that on the news last night? And I said yes, because I'm an honest person. They said, was it the Gay Parade? I didn't say yes or no because it didn't being in the closet but I'm like, you know what? The news stated it was the Gay Parade and that's enough. I don't need to –

JK: Like have a discussion with them about it.

JE: With these nine-year-old's. So anyway, moving on. This partner and I decided we wanted to adopt and so we looked into adopting domestically and what happened was they said if people are put up

for adoption and family members always have the right to adopt that kid. Any twelfth cousin twice removed. And what happens is the parents obviously say hey, we're going to put this kid up for adoption. And then the extended family says well I can't take it and then they put it up for adoption. Do you see what I'm saying?

JK: Yeah. Like right of first refute?

JE: Right. I'm sure that they make the announcement to their family before doing it. Where I'm going with my story is, then if you adopt and then they tell the parents a gay couple has adopted your kid, then they can go back to your family and said oh my god a gay couple adopted the kid. Then a grandparent who wasn't willing to take it might say I'm not going to let my grandson go to a gay couple. I'll take the kid. Well meanwhile the kid might have been with us for six months or twelve months.

Hello, and we're attached. So we both decided there's no way, because they told us for like a year, I can't remember all the details. So we said forget a domestic. There's no way I'm going to adopt a kid and then have a chance that 12 months later someone's going to take the kid away from us based on homophobia, but even just at a human level. So they said well, there's domestic adoption and they don't have the right to do that.

JK: International.

JE: International domestic adoption. So we said okay, we'll do that. So they said well, there's gay discrimination at the international level. So we're like, okay. So I'd been to China. That was what the impetus and I saw those beautiful little Chinese babies. And I said oh my god, and you hear about all these people adopting Chinese babies. So I said oh my god, let's adopt a Chinese baby. And so then we were in the process of hiring an adoption agency and they said oh my god, we've done so many Chinese adoptions and oh my god, we're the number one.

I said great. We'll pay you. Can I just speak to another gay male couple who's adopted? Oh, you'd be the first. So I'm like, what? And they said yeah, it's never been done before that a gay male couple has adopted. So you would be the first. So I'm like, I don't mind being the first, but I'm like, that means that no one's ever been approved. So basically there's two levels. You need the contact in the home country and then you need the local –

JK: Sort of liaison.

JE: Approval, the social workers locally who do the home inspection. So you need approval of two entities – wherever you're adopting from and then your locality. So the locality, so in other words, I'm working actively with them to get the approved home study. So I said to them, I don't care what color my baby is, because don't forget this is international. So I said I don't care what country, what color, anything. What's the easiest for a gay couple? They said Guatemala.

[0:50:00]

So I'm like okay, then we'll go to Guatemala. So I got my approved home study and then we were denied by the Guatemalan government. And what it is is we had to lie, the home people, even though they were Catholic, said you have to lie on your application. You can't say you're in a gay couple. And the other thing is you can't lie saying there's another male living in your house because we're doing a home study. On the other hand, you don't have to tell them the details about your personal life. So where I'm going with it is, they're not stupid. They can see I'm a single male adopting and there's a male living in my house. Hello. So we were denied. Well we were denied seven times.

JK: From different countries or from –

JE: From the same application. And so meanwhile the kid's getting older so he was assigned to us at age three months and now it's like a year and three months. So I mean and each rejection I was crying. I literally was on the sofa crying, like despondent. So what happened was – do you want me to make you some hot tea?

JK: Okay, we're back.

JE: Okay, so we were rejected seven times and then we worked with a lawyer in Guatemala and they said, can you give us money to bribe the people? It's just so interesting to me because if you ask me if I'm going to bribe someone ever, no. I'm not a briber. But on the other hand, well I have an Indian teacher and he goes, you're allowed to lie if it helps someone and hurts no one. And actually I thought their actions were hurting me. So I gave them money for a bribe, and guess what? My application was accepted. So I'm going to finish with one final thing.

The theme of what I'm trying to get at is, and this is why I do feel it relates is, you have the opportunity to do the right thing at

different stages in your life, not for ego, but just the opportunity to do the right thing. So the last thing is that I became the Hari Krishna of all things and I was raising my son a Hari Krishna. He has a Hindu spiritual name and we were very involved and still are actually. Now it's been 15 years. And at the time I had a partner and we wanted a blessing. And so we advocated and got permission to be the first same-sex union blessed by the Hari Krishna Movement.

JK: Really? Wow.

JE: I guess what I'm saying is to me it's just kind of like you roll with it. And now I feel let these young kids fight the battles. I've fought enough battles. But it's all good. It's all good. And that's what I'm saying. So when I look at Johns Hopkins, is that any different than the Ancient Order of the Hibernians from the St. Patrick's, the adoption agency in Guatemala, or the Hari Krishna's. Do you see what I'm saying?

JK: Mm-hmm.

JE: It's kind of like there's always going to be discrimination and there's always people that are going to stand up to it and that it's not going to be changed with the flip of a switch. Anyway, that's why I like telling the story only because I feel people can read this and either be inspired or know that things happen incrementally.

JK: And do you think – I think I was reading your notes that the undergrad and the grad associations were overwhelmingly male when you started them?

JE: Oh, okay, good. I'm really glad you mentioned that, yeah. So once again you can't look at 2018 and apply it to 1987. The fact that we were doing anything gay and lesbian was earth-shattering. So you're like, what about the bisexuals and the transgender? It wasn't like we were disregarding them or whatever. It's I didn't know of any trans students. They would have totally been welcome. I did know of a trans professor. I know this is totally unrelated. But there was a professor who in 1980s was a physics professor who took a year off. He left and then came back as a woman.

JK: I had not heard of that before.

JE: Oh, that's definitely true.

JK: And what was that like when he came back?

JE: I [inaudible comment] I wouldn't tell this part of the story but here I am telling it.

[0:55:00]

because I don't want come across as holier than though. The reality is, I was totally oh my god, Hector told me not to tell these stories. It's not bad. Okay, I'm just going to bite the bullet and tell them. Back then we called people transvestites and transsexuals. So it's already people are like, what? I love them. I mean I was just like John Waters' movies were full of them and this was my whole reason for being and living. And then when I lived in New York City I went to what was then the transvestite and transsexual community had a bar opposite The New York Times. I used to go there.

It was so fun and people were just so excited about their transition or dressing up or whatever stage they were at. To say I love them, but I'm just saying, I had all the friends. When I worked in Baltimore at the Omni Hotel, there was a transgender individual who was a cashier and became a really close friend. We all did things and all this other stuff. Cut to 1987, so it was a small school and people were not transitioning. I don't know what to say. It was not a commonplace thing. And I had heard, and then I was at the Wawa, which is a stupid convenient store, and there the person walked in.

And I was so surprised only because it was – and then I said to my friend, look, look. There's that physics professor. And then the physics professor could see that I was nudging and pointing. And then he looked and waved at me. That person was a PhD in physics teaching at the, what do you call it, Johns Hopkins. This is a brilliant individual. They don't need to be bullied by some punk undergraduate, you know what I mean? So he handled it perfect – she handled it perfectly by just waving at me. And that was the end of that experience. But I guess what I'm saying is, that was not me being supportive of the transgender community, do you know what I mean?

JK: Yeah.

JE: And that's not a proud moment. In fact, I often look back on that. I'm almost going to start crying now. Okay, hold on.

JK: Take your time.

JE: Okay. I guess in the world of bullying, if it's 0 to 100, that's probably like 1, 100 being the worst. But even that I even did that I'm very upset about.

JK: But I think you're right though. That person had a lot of grace.

JE: She handled it very well. And maybe she's going to be hearing this interview. I don't know.

JK: Maybe. And two, I don't know. I mean, that – I don't know. That sort of being someone who was out like that and having that much courage, you know what I mean? That's an example to people even if they don't internalize it at the time.

JE: Now I'm really glad I shared that story only because A, I don't want to come across as holier than thou. And B, it shows you what it was like to be trans at that time.

JK: Yeah, absolutely.

JE: So that was the trans issue. I definitely wanted to touch on that. So now the gender issue. So this idea about white privilege and all this other stuff, if you look at the freshman record, does that still exist? Do you know what I'm talking about?

JK: Is it the Book of Faces?

JE: Yes. I mean I could go grab it for you. It's almost all white. I mean I'm just saying, when I went to school there. So the fact that our student group, let alone the alumni group, there definitely was an African American male who was totally accepted and part of it. I'm just saying is a great friend of ours. And then it was probably two-thirds male and then one-third female. I don't know. I'm talking about probably the alumni and the student group at the time. And what happened was David and I were very cognizant. We're calling this gay and lesbian alumni association.

We want a lesbian and I think I'm almost 100 percent certain we did get someone to volunteer to be a secretary. But we said to the women, will you cofound this with us? Will you be the president? Will you be the vice president? And no one stepped up to the plate because it was a lot of work. We definitely asked and then no one said it. So in a vacuum, and we wanted to do it, and David and I were a good fit. He did the mailing list, he opened up the bank account and I was working in a mailroom at the time so it was very

easy for me to Xerox and to mail the thing. So it definitely worked. You know?

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So if you're wondering why did two white males found this, we weren't discriminating against anyone. Do you know what I mean? And we actively sought female representation. And my memory is after about two years it got to be a lot and then I said okay, I need to pass this baton on. And I'm almost certain that we did find a woman who then became the president. As I said, I'm sure after a number of years the alumni association formed their own gay and lesbian alumni association. I don't even know but I imagine now that they have a whole entity and –

JK: Yeah, they do.

JE: Yeah, which is wonderful and I'm totally glad for it. Let me see if there's any other points I wanted –

JK: You had a story in your notes about one of your friends taking you to a gay bar in Baltimore. Could you share that story just about learning about the Baltimore gay community?

JE: Okay, this is another story. So now this is, I really want to get the year straight. It had to have been freshman year, so this is 1982. Well, 1982/1983 school year. And what happened was my great friend, her parents are lesbians and she's Leah Rosenberg. It's fine. She wouldn't mind. And her stepmother ended up being president of Harvard University. And her parents were both University of Pennsylvania professors in the history department. And the husband was department chair and then the wife was faculty. The wife totally multi-published, all having to do with women's issues.

Anyway, she ended up becoming a lesbian. In other words, they were heterosexual male/female couple. They gave birth to Leah. Then she became a lesbian, obviously they divorced. She ended up having a long-time partner. Anyway, so Leah had a good friend who was older who said hey, I want to go to a gay bar. And then Leah said, do you want to come with us? And I said okay. So at the time I'm totally straight but open, and whatever. Well, we got to the gay bar and it was in a real seedy part of Baltimore. And it was generic – it was an industrial part of Baltimore. The bar had no façade.

You would have to know that it existed. So we went in and it was all men. And the bartender was dressed as a woman. I'm going to use the word transvestite. I remember I got a grapefruit and vodka. And so I got my drink and then I turn, and then I was staring at all the men dancing. I'd never seen an all-male social setting. I'd never seen men dance together. And literally the drink fell out of my hand – the full drink fell out of my hands and broke into a million pieces on the floor. So you were asking what my reaction was, I was so stunned that I dropped my drink and it broke all over the floor. So that was my experience. Anyway.

JK: So you did have friends that were – actually Leah was not gay, right? She was –

JE: She was definitely gay-friendly but she was dragged and sort of traumatically to Gay Prides throughout her whole childhood in the '70s. She does not have fond memories of that. because she's just trying to live her life and she's not wanting to, whatever. She loves her mom. It's a good thing.

JK: In your senior year, were you sort of making connections in the Baltimore community more or were you still within that Hopkins bubble sort of in terms of who you were making friends with?

JE: Oh, god. Definitely in the Hopkins bubble. The only way I came out there was a group called PFLAG. Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays. And that extended me a little bit. But what really ended up happening was I told my dad the day I graduate I'm going to be self-supporting. because I came from a well-to-do family and I'm like okay, now I'm educated. So he's like okay. So I really looked hard for a job. Remember I graduated early. So he supported me. But I did three internships because I was trying to figure out what I wanted to do. So even with the three internships I couldn't find a job and I wasn't sure what I wanted to do.

[1:04:59]

And then I had a friend who was at Johns Hopkins and he was working as a waiter and he goes, I have a connection at the Omni Hotel. They need a room service waiter. So I went and interviewed and I told him I could start the day after graduation. And he goes, okay you'll earn two dollars and one cent an hour, which is true, and do you want the job? Well, it was the only job I got so I accepted that job. Well, cut to, it was the best thing I ever did. Not only did I support myself for the whole year, I saved enough money to move to New York City.

But more to the point, remember I mentioned the one cashier. There was another cashier who was openly gay who to this day is one of my very best friends of all time, I'm in daily contact with. And he was totally not Johns Hopkins. He lived, he still lives at, what do you call it? Like Gilliford and 31st Street. Charles Village. Let's see. What else? I think that's it for my – I think I'm done unless you have more questions. I'm happy to answer anything.

JK: So it's impressive to me that you have such good friends still from undergrad. Do you think those experiences, I guess a lot of formative experiences happen then, but are those things that you still reflect on in these –

JE: Oh my god, every day. We make jokes about the cafeteria in our, what do you call it, in our freshman dorm, just everything. I don't know what it was. We just made a circle of friends and Facebook really helps out, but also we email back and forth every day. I see other people with their college friends and maybe they have one or two friends or maybe they have no friends 30 years later. And we're like okay, we're very close-knit.

JK: And you said you went back for your reunion too?

JE: Oh yeah. Went back to the reunion. We had so much fun. I mean really, it can't have been more fun.

JK: Did you go to any of the it's called DSAGA now, which stands for Diverse Sexuality and Gender Alliance. That's kind of the group now. Was there anything there that you were drawn to participate in or no?

JE: No, not at all.

JK: I'm just curious because there's a kind of this thread of you were kind of an original cohort and if that maintains or if there's sort of different people are active over time, a different group of people have sort of taken up the mantel I guess.

JE: I hear you. I guess what it was I was just so excited to be with my friends that I wasn't really – there wasn't time to reach out. I hear what you're saying. I'm trying to think. I'm very bad with chronology, but yeah. I didn't reach out. That would have made sense. And I did see that there was something that the gay students were organizing. I know it sounds weird, but this is part of my Eastern philosophy. If you ask me, being gay is out of ten

identities, it's number ten. I'm totally out but I totally don't care. I don't know how to explain it. Here I don't go to gay bars or the gay community. I'm totally gay. I got married. But if you ask me what my life is, it's my son, taking him to rugby games and baseball games and applying for jobs with him and driving him to school and being in the PTA. I don't know. That's what my life is. To me, that's the ultimate gay civil rights is assimilation and acceptance, not that I'm looking for acceptance. But just living your life and –

JK: Yeah, without having to feel like you're –

JE: Being in what I call a gay ghetto. That's what I think when I think like that. But I definitely think, like I'm saying I'm not totally that thought. I did feel I did want to share this, and that is for that next generation type thing.

JK: Is your son starting to think about college? Is he that age yet?

JE: He's that age. He is on his own path doing his own thing. He's very different. That's one thing if you adopt. Not that even a genetic kid could be vastly different, but he's very different. It's been a different experience. If I was the bookworm he is the opposite. He's a fantastic skateboarder, he's into graffiti art and he's into his own thing. He's sort of claiming he wants to work as a chef, so he's sort of going in that direction. So it's all good.

[1:10:00]

JK: Good. Is there anything else you wanted to add that I haven't asked you about?

JE: I guess since this is about gay civil rights, it just seems amazing in my lifetime how far the gay civil rights movement has progressed. For instance, when I came out, I did. I cried for about a year. I'll never get married, I'll never have children, because if you look at the reality of that time, it wasn't possible. And I'm telling you even a little bit later my experience is, it was no bed of roses. So but here I am today in 2018. I'm incredibly happily married to a man legally and I have a son. So it's kind of like the things I was crying about they are non-issues now. So now people don't have to cry.

JK: That's great.

JE: Yeah, it's a good thing. All right.

JK: Thank you so much for talking to me.

JE: You're welcome. This was good.

[1:11:10]

[End of Audio]