RUTGERS, THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW JERSEY

NEW BRUNSWICK

AN INTERVIEW WITH WILLIAM KAHANE

FOR THE

RUTGERS ORAL HISTORY ARCHIVES

WORLD WAR II * KOREAN WAR * VIETNAM WAR * COLD WAR

INTERVIEW CONDUCTED BY

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NEW BRUNSWICK, NEW JERSEY
MARCH 5, 2007

TRANSCRIPT BY

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Gino Namur: This begins an interview with William Kahane on Monday, March 5, 2007, in New Brunswick, New Jersey, with Gino Namur ...

Shaun Illingworth: ... Shaun Illingworth ...

Sandra Stewart Holyoak: ... and Sandra Stewart Holyoak. To begin, Mr. Kahane, we would like to thank you very much for making the trip up to see us today.

William Kahane: Sure, my pleasure.

GN: Mr. Kahane, you said that you were born in Ukraine.

WK: Yes.

GN: Can you tell me a little bit about the town that you are from?

WK: I was born in a town which had a few different names, as many places do over there, because of the different cultures. The Polish name is Gryzmalow, but the Jews, who were a sizable population before the war, called it Rimalev [Rimalov, alternate spelling] and my family was there in that town since at least 1648. I don't know [about] prior to that, but the reason I know that date is because there was a huge *pogrom* in 1648, [instigated] by a leader, a Ukrainian leader, called [Bohdan Zenobi] Chmielnicki. ... Chmielnicki led nationalist Ukrainian forces to rid Ukraine of Jews, or not to totally rid them, but it was a *pogrom*, meaning, basically, "controlled riot." Ethnic cleansing, if you will, is the modern term. ... My great-uncle, my father's uncle, told me that he saw a tombstone in the cemetery of the earliest ancestor that we can trace back, who died in that year, not ... directly from the *pogrom*, but he died of a plague that was, coincidentally, at the same time as the *pogrom*. So, he was treating young children. He was sort of a healer-type person and, in the tradition at the time, the Jewish tradition, if a child died before the age of one year it did not get a tombstone. So, there was a large area ... where very young children, who were particularly affected by this plague, this disease, were buried and, as a tribute to him, for healing, for ministering to these children, medically, he was buried among them, so, his was the only tombstone in that area and his date was 1648. My, ... I believe it was great-grandfather, but I'm not sure how long before I was born, had built the house that I was born in, and I was born September 7, 1945, which was just after World War II. The Russians had come into our area in 1944 to liberate us from the Nazis. Ukraine had been sort of an ally of Germany during the war. There were Ukrainian divisions in the German Army, so, there was a lot of bad blood between the Russians and the Ukrainians. So, when the Russians came in, that liberated us, and then, my parents found each other. My father was able to have one small room in his house, it had been taken over by the locals, but he was very sick and he was being treated by an older Ukrainian woman and he managed to pull through. ... My mother and her brother needed a place to stay and they somehow found their way to his little room, to have a place to live, and that's how they met and got married. ... Then, we only lived there for a very short time, about three months, and then, we left as part of a large migratory movement known as the *Bricha*. [The] *Bricha* was, the surviving Jews of Europe left Eastern Europe. It was not an organized movement, but it happened almost spontaneously when people realized that they had no further place in Europe, in Eastern Europe. ... The Jews understood that they could no longer

re-establish their life as it was before the war in Eastern Europe and they needed to leave. ... [There were] a few places in the world they could go to, one was Palestine and one was the United States, and then, some people went to South America, but, mainly, the United States and Palestine, and so, we left ... with some false papers that my father's uncle gave him, saying that we were Greeks, because we had to pass through some borders and we had to have some sort of papers. ... So, they carried me, you know, I was a baby, and it seems like I was told that my mother kept on worrying that they were, perhaps, suffocating me, because I was very quiet most of the time. I was sleeping in warm blankets and she kept on having this concern. Years later, I found out, when I spoke to one of the people that she hid [with]; throughout the war, she hid in the forest with a group of Jewish families, about fifty people. [I] found out by talking to the woman, ... she and her husband were the leaders of this family group, that she had actually smothered her own infant to prevent detection of a group of Jews who were hiding together. ... I kind of put those two together, many years later. I didn't know that at the time that I first heard this story. It was told to me as kind of a humorous story, "Oh, she kept on worrying that, you know, you were smothered." ... At the borders, I kept waking up and screaming and crying, at every border, it seems, but it turned out that that wasn't such a bad thing, because the border police would take pity on us and would let her go into the little hut that they had and nurse me. ... So, they treated us maybe a little more kindly than they might have and we finally made our way to Germany, to Bavaria, southern Germany, to the American Zone, and we were able to live in what was called a DP camp, displaced persons. We were considered displaced persons. We didn't have a country. We didn't have citizenship anymore. ... This was a town called (Furstinsal?). I also found out, years later, speaking to a young German woman from Germany, [she] told me that, in (Furstinsal?), many of the higher echelon Nazi Party members were hidden [and], after the war, were living anonymously there and had found a place ... of refuge there, because it was very pro-Nazi. So, our DP camp was in that place [laughter] and we were there for, let's see, from '46; actually we didn't get to the United States until 1949, so, we were there for a few years. Eventually, we were able to move out of the DP camp and into the town. My father found a small apartment for us. He dealt in meat in the black market to support our family and we wanted to go to either Israel or the United States; well, at that time, Palestine or the United States. In order to get to the United States, you needed to have someone sponsor you. My father remembered that he had an uncle who, many years before, had left Rimalev and had gone to America and all he knew was that his name was Samuel (Kahn?). ... He had changed it from Kahane to (Kahn?), to make it, I guess, easier to spell or something, and he lived in New York, somewhere in New York. So, he wrote a letter to him and he addressed it, "Sam (Kahn?), New York, United States," and it, amazingly, got to him. ... So, it got to my father's uncle, he got the letter, and he sponsored us to come over to America and he got my father a job. ... He had a parking garage and he got my father a job there. ... He gave us his old apartment, because he was moving into a new apartment, so, we had a place to live. It was called the Amalgamated Building in the Bronx. It was a union-sponsored building. Almost everyone there was a member of the Amalgamated Union, Unions, [Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America], and it was a wonderful place for me. I loved it. Oh, to back up, one little thing; ... we came over on a boat, US troopship. This boat ... was empty coming back. It would carry troops there, to Europe, but, coming back, it brought immigrants, like us, and everyone was sick onboard the boat, except for me, a four-year old, and another little girl about my age. The two of us had the run of the ship. We ran all over the boat. ... We had a great time. We didn't feel sick at all. We couldn't understand why the adults were all down below, you know, throwing up and being seasick. ...

Sometimes, you remember tastes vividly, [they] strike a memory, and I had never seen an orange before and I was given an orange and I was told, "It's food. You know, you eat it." So, I took a bite out of it and it was, you know, very bitter, as you can imagine, the peel, and so, I remember that now. ... When we got to America, I also remember that first sailing into New York Harbor. It was September 6, 1949, the day before my birthday, and it was a wonderful, clear, autumn day, with blue skies and the water looked blue, reflecting the sky, and a sunny day. ... All of a sudden, everyone ran to one side of the boat and I had no idea why, but I was a kid and I ran over, too, and it was to see the Statue of Liberty. The Statue of Liberty was on that side and everyone was [looking], you know. ... It was a great moment, and, when we got to the dock, my father's uncle was there, with his daughter, and they took us to our new apartment. I don't remember going through, you know, the customs and all of that, immigration and stuff. I'm sure there was something that we had to do to go through it, but I don't really remember that part, and then, we lived in the Bronx for one year. My father did not like living in the city. He was used to small town, rural life. His family had always been involved in horses, and so, he was used to more of a rural existence. ... Somehow, I think through the grapevine, [he] found out about Vineland, New Jersey. Apparently, Vineland, New Jersey, at one time, had the largest number of Holocaust survivors in the country and it was ... sort of, like, the network, you know, one survivor told another one, "Vineland, New Jersey. You can go to Vineland and you can get into farming there and make a living raising chickens and producing eggs," and so, at one time, Vineland was, like, the egg basket of the, at least the state, maybe the country. So, he did that. We actually bought a farm, together with another family, and we shared the house with them. There were two families in our house. The farm next-door to us had four refugee Holocaust survivor families living in the same house. So, we were kind of, you know, upscale, [laughter] but it didn't work out very well, ... for a couple of reasons. Well, I don't think two women sharing a kitchen ever works that great anyway, but, culturally, even though we were Jews and they were Jews, they were from Lithuania, we were from Ukraine. Culturally, Lithuanian Jews were called *Litvaks* and Ukrainian/Polish Jews were called *Galitzianers*, or, "from Galicia." That area of Europe was called Galicia. Also, ... we had very different cultures, different accents; sometimes, [it was] difficult to understand the same Yiddish language in those two accents. It'd be like someone from Maine and someone from Georgia, you know. ... The cooking, the foods were different, because they were influenced by the areas, you know. ... My mother's brother and ... one of the two daughters of this family became acquainted and they fell in love and they got married, so, we had what we ... jokingly call a "mixed marriage," [laughter] and so, we lived there ... with this other family for about a year, until the two families decided that it was time to split up and get their own place. ... We moved to another farm, and they stayed on that farm, and we lived there until I graduated Vineland High School in 1963. ...

SI: Can we go back and ask questions leading up to your life in Vineland?

WK: Yes.

SI: Did your family ever tell you stories about their lives before World War II, about where they grew up and what their lives were like in those towns?

WK: Yes, yes. My mother was from a very wealthy, I would say upper middle-class family. They had a mill and they would grind flour for the local peasants, [who] would bring their grains

[in] and they would grind the flour, powered by water. ... My mother's father was [well-off], you know. They were very prosperous. They had land. They had a large farm. ... He was considered ... as an important person. ... They had a lot of respect for him. He was very honest and a very upstanding businessman. So, everyone liked them and I think this helped my mother and her brother survive, although it didn't help her parents. They had servants, you know, that sort of thing.

SH: How far away did they live from each other before the war?

WK: It was fairly close, yes. I've never visited my mother's home, but I did visit my father's, but they were within, I would say, probably, ... twenty, thirty miles, although they didn't know each other before the war. ... My father's family, they, as I said, dealt with horses. They had a large garden in the back, maybe an acre, where they raised their own vegetables and they were not as wealthy, but my father told me that his parents, you know, were already more modern. They weren't like the Orthodox Jews, you know, who had long sideburns and dressed in a particular way that you might see in Brooklyn, now, today. They were more modern. They dressed modern, the way people would dress in the early 1900s in Europe. ... He said, in the house, there was, like, a lectern, where the Bible, what we call the Old Testament, would be set up on this lectern and, when they came home after work, they would study standing up, because it would be too easy, if you were ... tired from working all day, to fall asleep sitting down. So, when they would come home, they would do their studies, their biblical studies, and they were literate. I mean, ... everyone there ... probably knew more than a modern-day rabbi knows today in the United States. They were very well-schooled. My father, in fact, when I went to visit Israel with him, on the first time, in 1979, I was surprised to see that he spoke Hebrew, which he had learned as a young boy in the Hebrew school in the town. ... He survived because he was away when the *Einsatzgruppen* came into our town on July 8th of 1941. He survived because he was away at school. He wanted to be a veterinarian and he was studying and, when he came back, he found no family left, everyone dead. Everyone had been executed, murdered, ... either shot in the river or into a mass grave pit. There were about two thousand Jews in my father's town and most of them [were] killed. There were a few left who were being kept in a slave labor area, and he actually was briefly captured and put into that slave labor area, but my father's a very stubborn guy and very individualistic. ... He managed to escape and spent the rest of the war on the run, by himself, alone, running from place to place.

SH: Amazing.

WK: Yes.

SH: How much younger was your mother's brother who was hiding in the forest with her?

WK: He was thirteen and she was about seventeen. ... My mother had studied to be a teacher, and she wanted to be a teacher, and there was a brief period, before 1941; between 1939 and 1941. In 1939, as you know, Hitler invaded Poland. There was the pact between Stalin and Hitler, that they would divide up Poland between them. [Editor's Note: Mr. Kahane is referring to the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, also known as the German-Soviet Non-Aggression Pact, of August 1939]. So, Russia got the eastern half and Germany got the western half. We were

actually in the eastern half of what was then Poland. ... There was no independent Ukraine. It was part of Poland. So, we became under the Russians from '39 to '41. Well, the Russians, the Communist government, dictated that everyone must have a job. If you didn't have a job, you were considered a parasite of the state. So, my mother needed to find a teaching job and, being young and never having taught, ... it was difficult for her to find something. She found out, or her family found out, that there was a teaching job available in a very, very small town called Ostra Magilla. It was in the middle of the woods. It was, you know, not that far from her home, but it was very remote and it was in a huge forest, ten houses only in this little, tiny town. ... I believe they were Polish people, not Ukrainian people, and so, she was offered a job, without pay. In fact, her father had to pay for her room and board in one of the houses, but at least it was a job, and so, she would be considered as productive, as being employed, and so, she went and she taught there, to the kids of this little village. ... That really saved her life and her brother, because they liked her and they offered to keep her. ... When the Germans came in, in '41, they said, ... "We'll hide you and your family, if you want us to," and so, she went back and told her parents. Her parents sent her and her brother. They said that they had made other arrangements with the chief of police, but it turned out the chief of police didn't keep his bargain. ... Before the war, they tried to go to Canada. Her father tried to get papers to leave Europe and go to Canada, but the doors were shut. There wasn't any place to go and [it was] very difficult to get into Canada or the United States, or anywhere else. So, they were killed in Belzec, [a death camp in Poland]. They were taken, first, to the ghetto in Skalat, ... which was the larger town ... in the area, and then, to Belzec, which was a death camp. I think maybe one person, out of the ... six to eight hundred thousand people who were murdered in Belzec, I think one survived and got away. It was a really bad place and most of the Galician Jews ended up there, in that camp. Recently, a memorial has been built there, a museum, but nothing survived, nothing remained of Belzec. The Nazis completely leveled it and it looked like there was nothing ever there.

SI: Do you remember any stories that your mother told you about life in this forest hideaway?

WK: Yes. The forest group was called; excuse me, just a minute.

[TAPE PAUSED]

WK: The forest group was called Herschel's (*Banda*?), which means "Herschel's Band." Herschel was a Jewish peasant farmer who was pretty savvy, street-smart. He knew all the peasants. ... He had a lot of contacts. He was a guy who knew how to get things done, I mean, even certain things that may not be quite legal, like, you know, ... there were rumors that he had been a pick-pocket. He knew how to open locks that nobody, you know, a normal person, wouldn't be able to open. He was a very, you know, charismatic and very savvy guy, and he was the leader of this family group. ... What they did was, they dug bunkers under the ground and they hid in these bunkers and they disguised them on the top with leaves, ... so that, you know, you wouldn't know anything was under there, and they dug them in various places in the forest. This forest was, I think my mother's brother, my uncle, told me that it was, oh, about a hundred miles long and maybe ten, fifteen miles wide, a pretty large forest. ... Gradually, as time went along, more and more people joined them. They started out with maybe twenty and I think they ended up with about fifty and, at one point, the Russian Partisans found them. A few Russian Partisan soldiers found them and offered to take the men to join the Partisans and the men said,

"We'll gladly join you, but we won't leave the women and children. We all have to go together," and the Partisans did not want women and children, so, they didn't join forces. ... They survived by going out at night and stealing potatoes from the farmers, maybe a chicken, you know, some eggs, ... whatever they could find in the forest, berries in the summertime, and, in the winter, they'd go and they'd try to, you know, maybe take some food out of the animals' trough, that sort of thing, and, you know, really subsistence, really. The reason that my mother ended up in the forest and left the home [in] the little village of Ostra Magilla, with her brother, is because her property was very valuable. ... The local people had taken over the farm and everything, had taken over everything, and they really didn't want the two (Bonder?) children to come back. They knew that the parents were dead and they knew they had been deported, but they also knew that my mother had been teaching in that little village. ... One day, a Ukrainian policeman and a German officer showed up ... in the village and it so happened that my mother and her brother were off in the distance. ... There was a farmer plowing the field and they were too far to hear what was going on, but they could see them and they found out later, through a little girl who was standing there, [who] told them what the conversation was, the Ukrainian policeman and the [German] officer came up to the headman of the village, sort of a mayor, and they said, "We understand there are Jewish children being hidden in this village." ... He said, "No, no. Why do you think that? There's nobody here like that," and he, the German or the Ukrainian, one of them, actually pointed to my mother and her brother off in the distance and they said, "What about those two kids? Who are they?" and he said, "Oh, they belong to that farmer who's plowing over there. They're his kids," and he was convincing enough, so that they didn't question it and they left. ... When they found out the conversation from this little girl, they realized that they had to leave, and my mother's brother, the thirteen-year-old boy, he was kind of a curious kid and he had been out in the woods before this, wandering around, and he had actually run into one of the Jews from this group. ... So, he knew that there was a Jewish group out there, and so, they set out to find them and they eventually did find them and they joined up with them.

SH: They just struck out to look for them.

WK: Yes.

SH: Unbelievable.

SI: They were able to remain hidden until after Germany had been driven out of Ukraine.

WK: ... My mother and her brother stayed in the forest with Herschel's (*Banda*?) until the end of the war, until the Russians came in, in '44, and they actually saw Russians coming, coming toward them.

SH: Were they worried about how the Russians would treat them?

WK: The Russians were actually, most of them, ... pretty good to the Jews when they came in, because they knew that they were on the same side, and they knew that the Ukrainians were on the opposite side and the Germans were on the opposite side. ...

GN: What was your father's experience during the Holocaust?

WK: My father was, as I said, solo. He was an only child, so, he was used to being alone and, when he found out that his father, and I think his father had six or seven brothers, [that] they were all taken; ... when the Germans first came in, the Ukrainians took the opportunity to kill as many Jews in the town as they could. ... There was a seventeen-year-old neighbor boy who came over. He had a gun and he said, "I'm here to take you to work, to the Germans." ... So, my grandfather, my father's father, and all of his brothers went outside. ... My [grand]father's mother, my [great]-grandmother, was also with them, but he didn't take her and she came out and she was, you know, begging him not to take them and he immediately just shot all of them, right on the spot, and left the wife, my [great]-grandmother, alive. ... The reason I know this is because she wrote a letter to her one surviving son, my great-uncle, who ended up surviving the war, and that's a whole other story. ... He got the letter and he shared it with me when I was visiting him in Israel and he said that his mother had written to him and told him what happened and said, "Why did God let me live so long, to see my children shot in front of me?" She was very, you know, just destroyed by that. ... Then, later, she was also deported, so, she did not survive. ... By the time my father came home, there was no one of his family left. Before the war, this town of Rimalev had fifty families, all with my last name. So, there was a large extended family there. They were all gone. ... We had a Ukrainian neighbor across the street with a young son who was my father's age and they had been boyhood playmates and my father asked him if he could hide in their barn. ... So, he went to his father and he said, you know, "Murray's here and he wants to know if he can hide in our barn," and the father said, "All right, he can hide in the barn, but, when your brother comes home," the older brother, "he has to leave," because the older brother was in the Ukrainian *SS*. ... So, whenever the brother came home, my father had to go find another place to hide, and he hid. He didn't stay in one place too long. ... He would go out in a field, in an attic, in a barn, wherever he could go and find something to eat. ... Certain farmers would help him with food, like this fellow, (Mike?), did, and that's how he survived the war, just like that.

SH: Was the older brother that your grandmother wrote to also at school, like your father?

WK: ... He was older than my dad and that was Uncle David. Uncle David later wrote the *Lvov Ghetto Diary*. He was the only rabbi to survive [in] the city of Lvov, a large city, we're talking, before the war, 135,000 Jews in Lvov. Something like, I believe, only about a few hundred survived; maybe three hundred survived the war. He managed to survive because he was eventually hidden by the Ukrainian Archbishop of Lvov, [Andrei] Sheptytsky. ... There is, even now, up to today, I recently met, at [Richard] Stockton [University], ... the new head of the Righteous Gentile Program at *Yad Vashem*, from Israel, and she spoke about this controversy, of Sheptytsky being recognized as a Righteous Gentile. My uncle, ... he ended up being the head rabbi of the Israeli Air Force, so, he had a high position in the Israeli government. ... He tried to get Sheptytsky recognized as a Righteous Gentile, for saving not only him, but a number of other Jews, including the son of the chief rabbi of Lvov, a fellow who now lives in New York, and about, over a hundred Jewish children, including his young daughter. Ruth was hidden in the orphanage at three years old and told not to tell anyone she was Jewish and she was among a number of Jewish children in the orphanage. ... Sheptytsky was really a righteous man, but the reason [for] the controversy is because, ... at the time that the Germans first came in, he was also

a Ukrainian nationalist. He wanted independence for Ukraine and he believed that Germany would give Ukraine independence, and so, he said, to the Ukrainian people to, "Cooperate with the Germans, because they would give us independence." He didn't know, I mean, nobody really knew, what the Germans were going to do when they came in. We didn't know in Rimalev. The older people thought the Germans would be fine, because they were fine in World War I. So, there was no television, you know, there's no communication system like we have now. ... When he realized what was happening and he saw the horrible things that were going on, he actually even made a statement that, if anyone participates in genocide, that they would not be given Communion. They would be ostracized. It was called the Uniate Church. The Uniate [Church] is in-between Catholic and Eastern Orthodox. Their priests marry ... and they believe in the Pope, but they look like Eastern Orthodox [in their style] and they're Slavic, you know, their language is Slavonic. So, anyway, that's, you know, my father's story.

SI: Your father was at school. Where was the veterinary school?

WK: I'm not sure. I think it might have been in Ternopil. Ternopil was a larger town, the largest town in that region. After that, further away, was Lvov, as it's now called Lviv, in Ukrainian. Lvov is the Polish name. Lemberg is the German name. These cities had many names, depending on who was there at the time, who was in control.

SI: Did your father leave the school because he figured it was time to go?

WK: You know, he never told me exactly why he came home, but I assume it's because of the German occupation. ... In Poland, ... this was Poland, I do know, historically, that Jews were ordered out of the universities in the late '30s. They pretty much didn't have a place anymore in universities. Actually, that's how my Uncle David met Sheptytsky in the first place. They were both on a panel to examine potential Jewish university students. There was ... what's called *numerus clausus*. It's a quota and there were very few Jews allowed into the university and any of them that were allowed had to pass through an examining panel, and he and Sheptytsky were both on that panel.

SI: Before the war, had either side of your family been involved in, or at least interested in, the Zionist movement?

WK: Not really, no, not that I know of. I mean, it was only in the late '30s that my mother's family was trying to get out of Europe, and they were trying to get to Canada, ... and my father's family, you know, they were part of the community. They didn't see themselves leaving. This was their home.

GN: After the war, they settled in Vineland.

WK: Vineland, yes.

GN: Was that a fresh start for them ...

WK: Oh, yes.

GN: ... or did they feel like they had left their home?

WK: You know, ... it was amazing, the resilience of my parents. ... You know, they used to talk about how wonderful it used to be before the war and they would say things like, "Oh, potatoes don't taste the way here the way they did back home," you know, things like that. They'd always make those comments, but, you know, they were very happy to be in America. I mean, it was, to them, a great opportunity, a new start, a new life. ... My brother and I, I had one younger brother and he was born in the Bronx, before we came to Vineland, ... they considered this new nuclear family [to be it]. ... There's nobody else, although, what happened was, people who were barely even related to me became known as "uncles" and "aunts," because, you know, there wasn't an extended family, so, ... they combined families in a way, almost, to create a family.

SH: Before they left the displaced persons camp in southern Germany, did they already know the fate of most of their family?

WK: Oh, yes.

SH: We have heard stories of survivors trying to find out who was left.

WK: Well, they knew at the end, when the Russians came in, in '44. ... You know, people would gather, and about eighty people gathered in Rimalev, in three houses that they were able to get back, who were survivors of not only Rimalev, but the whole region, including my mother's town and everything, and they would all tell each other as much as they knew about what happened to everyone. ... Pretty much, if you didn't come back to Rimalev ... between '44 and '45, you know, then, you weren't left alive.

SI: Do you know if the whole experience changed the way your parents viewed their religion, if they, for example, became less involved or more involved?

WK: Well, my father's family was, as he said, modern, which meant that they were not ultra-Orthodox anymore, even in Europe. Things had changed before the war, even in Europe, and religion was becoming more secular. People were becoming more secular, even in Poland, and that continued until, in Vineland, we would go to synagogue once a year, on the High Holy Days, but we walked, ... it must have been five miles at least, to a little synagogue on Main Road that was pretty much all survivors. ... It was built by them, a little block building, and so, he sent me to Hebrew school. After school, I would go to Hebrew school. I would take a bus from public school and go to Hebrew school, like, about three days a week, I think it was, and so, I would learn a certain amount. I didn't learn that much. It wasn't like the *cheder*, what they called *cheder*, which was a Hebrew school, a religious school, in Europe, where my father actually spoke Hebrew. He knew as much as any rabbi does today, just from his religious training as a boy. My religious training was on a much, much less degree, ... but I did learn enough to have a *bar mitzvah* when I was thirteen in Vineland. ... You know, my father also was a little cynical about those who were ultra-Orthodox. He felt that they were somehow hypocritical. That was his attitude.

SI: Do you have any personal memories of (Furstinsal?), either in the camp or the apartment?

WK: ... Well, I have a lot of pictures from (Furstinsal?), because, what happened was, we were living next to an aspiring photographer who wanted to build up a portfolio of pictures, and so, he used me as his model. [laughter] ... He posed me in all sorts of very odd places and costumes and, I mean, I have one picture of myself wearing a cone-shaped hat made of leaves against a hedge of leaves. [laughter] It was very weird, some very odd pictures, [laughter] but my main memory was, I had playmates, a brother and sister who were German kids, and this was after we left the DP camp. We were already living in an apartment in town and there was a big hill behind our apartment. ... This memory is [prominent] because, again, it was shocking. ... We were playing and they started throwing stones at me, and so, I started throwing stones back and, you know, I was, like, maybe, almost four years old, really small children. ... I somehow hit the boy in the head with the rock and he started crying and screaming and there may have been some blood involved. I don't remember, but ... I remember getting really shook up by that and that's the main memory that I have of that place.

SH: Had these German children been living there or were they also from the displaced persons camp?

WK: I don't know. I assume they were townspeople.

SI: You settled in Vineland. I believe there was already a Jewish community there that had been built up through the Baron [Maurice] de Hirsch Foundation.

WK: Baron de Hirsch, yes. ... That community was more in Norma, a little town of Alliance. That was an old Jewish settler community of farmers ... from the Baron de Hirsch time, which was, like, in the 1880s. Vineland was more new. Vineland was almost all World War II refugees, but, nearby, in Norma, that had been that Alliance area, had been the older [community]. ... I went to Rutgers on a Baron de Hirsch Scholarship, specifically for sons of Jewish immigrant farmers. That's what the scholarship was for. Not only me, but I think there were about thirteen of us from Vineland High.

----------END OF TAPE ONE, SIDE ONE----------

GN: Side two, tape one.

WK: So, not only I went to Rutgers on a Baron de Hirsch Scholarship. It seems to me it was like four hundred dollars a year, which covered my tuition, [laughter] and the same thing with the other boys. The scholarship was for sons of Jewish immigrant farmers and I think there were about thirteen of us who went to Rutgers that year from Vineland, who were all on the Baron de Hirsch Scholarship and all children of Holocaust survivors.

SH: Did you have to go to Cook College or could you go to Rutgers College? Did what you wanted to study matter?

WK: No, I went to Rutgers College. It didn't matter what you were studying, yes.

SI: This community of Holocaust survivors emerges in Vineland after the war. How did the people who had lived in Vineland before the war react to this influx of survivors?

WK: Well, the people who owned land, that were selling to these immigrant farmers, were thrilled, because, all of a sudden, there was a market for their properties, where there hadn't been before, really. ... Prices were actually going up because of the demand for farms, and so, they were very happy to see us. Vineland was maybe a bit unusual, because ... there were a lot of vegetable farms. Also, Vineland, as you know, is the largest city, in area, in New Jersey. It's one hundred square miles. So, there were a lot of vegetable farmers and large sweet potato farms, and all of those farms were Italian people. So, when I went to school, you were either Italian or Jewish, you know, from Holocaust survivors. ... There were a few American Jews whose families had been in Vineland for a long time and were merchants in town and they would have, like, stores, you know, retail shops, and that was pretty much the three groups, and there were a few WASPs thrown in, but not too many. [laughter]

SH: Was it pretty cohesive or was it very separated?

WK: It was pretty separated, pretty much. I remember, my group of friends, the Jewish kids whose parents were survivors, we were a pretty tight-knit group, ... yes.

SI: Can you tell us about growing up on a farm? Did you have to do chores?

WK: Yes, I did, a lot of chores. In fact, my non-farm friends in school couldn't believe how much work I did, ... because I remember, once, the teacher asking us to tell the class, you know, everybody told the class what you did at home after school, and most kids were, like, "Oh, I, you know, came home and played," ... and then, I would say, "Well, I'd have to give water to the cow and collect the eggs from the chickens and give them feed and I'd have to pack eggs into crates and..." You know, it was hours of work, you know. I tried to get out of it a lot by telling my parents that I had more homework than I really had, [laughter] but, you know, it was a lot of work and I had a lot of responsibility and my father was kind of a "Noah's Ark" kind of farmer. He had everything. ... We had sheep and ducks and pigeons and cows and steers and just one of everything, you know. My father loved animals. You know, he wanted to be a vet, so, he had a real love of animals and he wanted everything on our farm, and we became sort of self-sufficient on our farm, ... more so than most of my friends. Most of my friends, their parents went into the farm as a business of [the] egg business and that's all they had, were chickens, and they sold the eggs, ... but my father, I think he had the idea that he wanted to be self-sufficient. In fact, it might have been not something he consciously thought of, but it ended up that way. We had our own milk, our own butter, our own cheese, we made our own wine, we had a grapevine, we had fruit trees, we had our own poultry, ducks. ... Once a year, we would have the ritual slaughterer come and slaughter a steer for us, ... because they were *kosher*, and so, we would put the meat in our freezer and we'd have food, ... you know, meat, for the year, from one steer, and so, it became [self-sufficient]. ... Even though ... we didn't have much money, but we ate very well, ... we had everything we needed. I never really felt poor, even though we had very little money.

SH: Did your father finally get a horse?

WK: Yes, he did. [laughter]

SH: You said he was into horses.

WK: He did finally get a horse. It was a disaster. He found a horse that was a beautiful animal, but it had been banished from a children's place in Delaware. It had, at one time, been a sulky, you know, racehorse, and then, ... after an accident, they put it in this children's place, where they give rides to kids, but it was way too wild for that. ... Then, it was sold at auction and my father saw it at the auction, he bought it, brought it home. This animal could barely be ridden. It was just a very high-strung horse. So, occasionally, I would get to ride it, but, most of the time, it would try to kill me or try to kill my father. [laughter] So, eventually, he got rid of it, but, yes, ... the horse, it was a beautiful animal, though. ... My father and I often would stand, at the end of the day, when we were done working, and I remember those moments, very satisfying moments, when our work was done, and we'd stand there and look at our livestock and admire how beautiful they were. ... It was a very satisfying life, but hard, a lot of work.

SH: Did your father use the Rutgers Extension Service at all? Do you remember?

WK: Yes. My father did. I remember him calling that Rutgers Extension Service fellow to our farm, and he was there for many years. I can't remember the man's name, but he was in that position for about twenty years, as I recall, and, occasionally, whenever my father would have a question about [something], any agricultural question at all, he would call on him. ... I remember him coming to our farm a few times.

SH: Did that have anything to do with your desire to come to Rutgers?

WK: No, [not] Rutgers, you know, because I wasn't really interested in becoming a farmer, but I knew that Rutgers was the only school that I could afford that was a good school, and so, there was no question in my mind that I was going to Rutgers. In fact, I only applied to Rutgers and, you know, I told my parents that I wasn't interested in going to, what was ... then known as Glassboro State Teacher's College, which is now Rowan. It's a much better school now than it was then, and I told my parents that, that was my other option, I wasn't interested in doing that and that I would go to Rutgers or I wouldn't go to college at all. ... My mom was a little upset by that statement, but I got into Rutgers without a problem. ...

SI: Was your farm so large that it would take you a while to visit a neighbor's place? Were you isolated?

WK: ... Oh, well, neighbors, yes. ... Our farm was twelve acres, but, no, we had a neighbor on either side. On one side were the (Aufsesers?), who were German Jewish refugees, Holocaust survivors. On the other side was a family, the last name (Lauerman?), who, unfortunately, were Nazi sympathizers, Germans, and we, unfortunately, moved into [the farm next-door]. You know, you don't always get to have good neighbors. ... Mr. (Lauerman?), we were told by the other neighbors, everyone was afraid of him, ... we were told that he had been saving scrap metal during the war, not for the American side, but for the German side, so that when they would

come victoriously to the United States, he would provide them with the scrap metal that he had saved. ... Once, we had a cow that broke through the fence between us and Mr. (Lauerman's?) land. He had about the same acreage as we did, and so, he was very upset about it. We managed to get the cow back, but he came over to [the property line] and he was on his side of the fence and he started screaming anti-Semitic stuff to my dad, you know, and I was really upset. ... It was very upsetting to me, and then, ... we had a dog who once crossed over onto his property and he actually shot the dog and barely missed. It grazed the dog's head, didn't kill it. ... All the kids were also afraid of him. We'd walk on the other side of the street near his house, ... difficult neighbor.

GN: Did you have any other jobs, besides working on the farm, while growing up?

WK: Well, my first paying job was, my mother worked in a clothing factory, because we couldn't make enough money from the farm, and my father worked in the cotton mill in Millville, [New Jersey]. He worked ... [on] the three to eleven shift. So, he worked on the farm in the morning and [in] the cotton mill ... at night. My mother worked in a clothing factory, also, ... where she sewed the linings in men's sports jackets, in the town in Vineland. You know, we lived in the outskirts and she would work, like, three days a week, because she worked piecework, so that she was paid by the number of jackets that she completed. So, she could go in whenever she wanted to, and the other ladies there, ... she actually learned some Italian, because she worked with Italian ladies and they would save up their jackets for her, and then, she would come in and she would sew them. ... So, my first job, paying job, actually, was to sweep the floor of the clothing factory. ... I don't think it was the same factory she worked in, because there were a number of clothing factories at the time in Vineland, and I would do that after school and, you know, make a few dollars, but my dad never paid me for working on the farm. ... I guess I kind of carried that through to my children, too. My wife and I had five sons. I never paid them for working for me. I said, "You know, we are a family unit and what's yours is mine, what's mine is yours. We all work together, and so, when you're doing chores around the house, that's part of your contribution, you know." So, that's how my father explained it to me. "This is your contribution and, if you need money, you ask for it and, if we think it's, you know, valid, then, we'll give you the money, if we have it." So, that's the way it worked. I didn't have an allowance, either.

SH: Do you feel that your education in the public schools in Vineland prepared you well for college? Was there someone who was a mentor, who helped you decided what to study?

WK: I decided to study English, sort of by default. There weren't a lot of choices back then. You know, it's not like today. Rutgers has got a lot of choices, a lot of different areas you could study [in]. So, I was best [in English]. My English was always my best subject and I managed to learn English very quickly. It wasn't my first language. German and Yiddish were my first languages, but I learned English in about a week, ... when I was here, and when I started kindergarten, the teachers couldn't believe that I wasn't born in the United States. I had no accent at all, and so, languages ... always came pretty easy to me. So, I studied English and, back then, it was British literature, which I wasn't too interested in or happy with. I mean, you know, American literature was much more interesting to me, but the Rutgers department, the English Department, was pretty much strictly British lit back then.

SI: You mentioned that the children of survivors formed a tight-knit group. When you were growing up, was the Holocaust ever discussed or was it something that was under the surface?

WK: Not among the second-generation people, but, in my home, I was privy to hearing a lot of discussions, because my house, for whatever reason, I guess my parents were very hospitable and their friends came to their house, to our house, almost every night, during the week even, even weekdays. They would come after dinner and my mother would put out cake and coffee and tea, mostly tea, tea and cake, and they would talk about their experiences, and a lot of the experiences had to do with the war and horrible things that happened to them and to their families. I mean, I heard really horrific things, but my parents ... didn't say, "You have to leave the room," but I knew, as a child, that when parents, when adults, talk, children don't talk, children listen. So, I was allowed to sit in the room and listen, ... and I did, I did very often, and it was very disturbing, in a way, to hear these things. ... I think, maybe, I became almost obsessed with the subject and I ended up, many years later, just a few years ago, I went to Stockton State College and got a Master's in Holocaust and Genocide Studies there, because all of those stories had haunted me so much ... and I had so many questions about, "How could this horrible stuff happen?" and I wanted to know, from an academic point of view, how this stuff happened, not just from an anecdotal point of view. ... That's why I went back to school, and I had that opportunity and I took it.

SH: Have you written out or somehow recorded any of the stories that you heard?

WK: ... No, no. My mother's brother was recorded by the Spielberg Foundation. My father, unfortunately, I never did record while he was alive, and he was killed in a car accident in 1979. So, that was really before a lot of this stuff was being made public and coming out. They talked about it among themselves, but they didn't really talk about it to other people in the community, even American Jews, because, when they first came, they realized, very quickly, that nobody wanted to hear that stuff. It was like, "Okay, you're in a new country, you know, that's in the past. Forget about it. Now, you have a new life," and, really, nobody wanted to hear it, but they did talk among themselves about it, very openly.

SI: Do you recall if there were any Holocaust education programs in your schools?

WK: No, there was nothing like that, no, no. Harry Furman, who was not a classmate of mine, he was younger, a few years younger, in Vineland High, he started the first Holocaust education program in Vineland High School, and then, that spread to the state, but, in a way, he's kind of the father of Holocaust education in New Jersey. ... He married Vickie (Ackerman?), who was distantly related to me, and we were friends, good friends, with her parents and her family.

SI: As you look back, do you now see ways in which growing up as the child of two Holocaust survivors impacted your life?

WK: Oh, tremendously, yes. It did impact my life, totally. My whole worldview, you know, my action in the world, as far as any community service type things, are all geared toward human rights and stopping genocide. I mean, I'm very active in the Darfur, you know, effort and, yes,

it's had a huge impact on me. [Editor's Note: Mr. Kahane is referring to the genocide (since 2003) in the Darfur region of Sudan.]

SI: Is there anything that you did not think of at the time, but that you now realize had something to do with what your parents had gone through? For example, they were both very resourceful in, basically, saving their own lives in Europe. Did that play out in your life on the farm in any way?

WK: Well, I think it did color my actions, in that I always felt that I could affect my own future and take my future in my own hands. ... For an example, I took ROTC here at Rutgers and the reason I did that was because I felt that if I didn't; the Vietnam War was very active and I was here from '63 to '67. People were actually getting drafted right out of college. Certainly, if you failed out freshman year, you went right to the war, and a number of my classmates did. So, I took ROTC as a preemptive measure, so that if I did go into the military, I would have some control and say-so over my own destiny. I would be an officer and I felt that, as an officer, I would have more say-so, and I did and it did work that way.

SH: You went on to Advanced ROTC here at Rutgers.

WK: Yes.

SH: Did you discuss it with your father, in light of the escalating Vietnam War and the draft?

WK: Well, he was proud that I was going to be an officer in the military. He didn't want me to be in a war. It was very hard on them when I left at Fort Dix to go to Vietnam. That was very tough, ... [however], American citizenship was very important to me. Some of my friends were going to Canada, some were figuring out other ways to avoid the draft, but I felt that, even though, ... intellectually, I felt that the war was a mistake and I didn't want to die for a mistake, on the other hand, I didn't want to give up my American citizenship and go to Canada. That was the other option, really. So, I decided I would take my chances ... and control my destiny as much as I could, within the system, and go, and that was pretty much what my parents understood, that ... my choices were limited.

SH: Had your brother already started college at that point?

WK: No. He's younger than I am.

SH: He is that much younger.

WK: Yes.

SH: You said that you were about four when you came to the US, and then, he was born.

WK: Yes. So, he's, like, five years younger than I am.

SH: Did your parents expect you to go to college? Was this something that they wanted for you very much?

WK: Yes, absolutely, yes. They expected me to go to college, and so did all the other Holocaust survivor families expect their children to go to college. It was not a question.

SH: There was no idea that, "You are able to work now; help the family."

WK: Not at all, no, no.

SH: That is very labor-intensive work.

WK: It is, but their goal was that their children succeed, and all of those kids became professionals. They became lawyers, doctors, business people, some of them, social workers, but all had some kind of a profession that led them [to where they] needed an education, whether it was four years or beyond.

SH: How involved was your father in the life of the town in Vineland? Was he involved in any organizations, agricultural based or politically based?

WK: No. There was really no time for any of that. He was totally occupied with trying to just eke out a living. ... I remember him being very angry at one point at the Republican Party, because the ... Secretary of Agriculture at the time was a guy by the name of Dulles, [Ezra Taft Benson], under the Eisenhower Administration, and he was making a speech on television and he said something about, "Well, if the small farmer can't make a living, he should go visit his city cousin and go join him." ... My father became outraged at that comment, ... because, during the Eisenhower Administration, the grain farmers were being subsidized, but the poultry farmers were not subsidized. So, we were paying more for the grain, the feed for the chickens, than we could get for the eggs. We were losing money on every dozen eggs that we produced and it was a really tough time for a small farmer. ... I also remember some of the vegetable farmers even plowing under their vegetables, our neighbors, plowing their vegetables under, because it would cost more to buy the boxes and [for] the labor to pick them than they would get for their produce. ... It was a very tough time to be a small farmer, back in the '60s, '50s and '60s.

SH: Did your father stay on the farm?

WK: Well, eventually, what happened was, we had to close down the farm and when I left for college in '63, I think, was the last year that he farmed, was the year before that, and then, he got rid of the chickens. We had this large coop, three-hundred-foot long building, that he had built, actually. Well, he ... didn't build it by his own hands, but he had it built, and what to do with this building? ... Well, first, he sold eggs and vegetables door-to-door in Wilmington, Delaware. He had a little panel truck that he would drive there a few days a week, but, then, he decided; oh, he ran into someone on his route who was selling hamburger patties to, you know, restaurants and small businesses. ... He said, "If he can make hamburger patties and sell them, then, why can't I?" and that was my father's attitude. He was always trying something new. He never let anything defeat him. ... When he left the egg business, we owed a lot of money to the feed

company, because we couldn't keep up with the feed costs, and some people were going into bankruptcy and declaring bankruptcy, because they just owed too much. My father went to Mr. (Rubinof?), the head of the feed company, and he said, "Look, Mr. (Rubinof?), I don't want to go into bankruptcy, but I can't pay my debt to you and I want to settle with you," and I think they came to terms at, like, something like ten cents on the dollar, and my father worked for a few years to pay off that debt, ... free and clear. ... He didn't have to declare bankruptcy and he could go on, and so, he started this hamburger-making business in the chicken coop, former chicken coop. ... I guess we had about six large rooms in that building and he took two of them and he converted it into a meat processing plant and he bought all kinds of, you know, second-hand equipment and he would cut up steaks. ... He started selling meat to restaurants, making hamburgers and steaks and other cuts, and then, it turned out that, at Rutgers, I had a roommate, freshman year; not a roommate, no, I met a young fellow. He wasn't my roommate, but ... he was from Wildwood, New Jersey, another South Jersey boy, and that's how I met him. ... He offered me a job in his father's restaurant in Wildwood for the summer. So, I went there that freshman year, that summer, and worked for him and I realized that there were many more restaurants in Wildwood than there were in Vineland, and so, I said to my dad, "You know, Dad, you could probably sell a lot of meat to these restaurants here in Wildwood, if you wanted to, for the summer," and so, he started coming with his truck to Wildwood, and I think his first customer was the father of my friend. ... He started selling hamburgers there, and then, ... eventually, he bought a little property there in Wildwood and he moved his meat plant to it. It had been a vegetable produce place before and he converted it, and he did that for a number of years, but ... it became a health issue. ... I told you he was captured for a short time [and forced] into that labor camp in Rimalev and they were forced to stand in the river, in December, and dig the bottom, and so, ... he had damage to his legs and he couldn't stand being in the cold, in the freezer, for very long. ... We had big walk-in freezers and the doctor told him he had to get out of the business, because he couldn't stand that cold weather, cold temperatures, and so, he did, eventually, and then, he bought an Army-Navy store in Rio Grande, which is near Wildwood, a small, little town. ... It was an elderly Jewish couple who was retiring from that business and he bought their business and they rented the store, but, you know, ran the Army-Navy store out of a small shopping center, and he did that until he died and my mom did it until she retired.

SI: In high school or even earlier, in junior high school, did you have time for anything like extracurricular activities or hobbies?

WK: No. It was very hard for most of us kids who lived out on the farms to do anything after school, because ... our parents couldn't drive us anywhere. They were too busy working on the farm or other jobs; so, no. I had to take the school bus home. I remember going out for tennis in junior high school, but it didn't work out. I had no background in tennis ... and I wasn't really that oriented toward sports, anyway. I was more of an academic kid than sports [kid].

GN: What did you do for fun? Did you go to Landis Theater?

WK: Occasionally, we would go to the movie theater and, in the summertime, a big treat was to go to Ocean City for a day, and then, later on, we ended up, while I was ... a young kid, my mother would take a week off every summer and we would rent an apartment ... in a rooming house in Wildwood. ... My father would come during the day, a few times during the week, but

he couldn't stay there, because he had to take care of the animals and he couldn't leave the farm. ... My brother and I went with my mom for a week's vacation in Wildwood. For a few years, we did that and that was great, and then, the rest of the time, there was a beach called Alliance Beach in Alliance, that area where the Jews had settled early, and that became, like, the Jewish beach. ... Mostly survivor families would go there and it was like a river, a wide place in the river, and it was a beach and there was a little building that had a hotdog stand and there was a jukebox, where the teenagers would dance, in there and that was a great place. It was a wonderful place. It's closed down now. There's nothing there. I went there a few years ago. It's just deserted, but, back then, it was a wonderful place.

SH: Did you ever take any trips into New York or Philadelphia?

WK: Well, yes. We had my mother's brother, who married the daughter of the *Litvak* family; ... they stayed in New York. We left the Bronx, but they stayed and they lived in an apartment building. ... The building was entirely family. They were all related in some way or other in this whole building and ... they were from Vilna, Lithuania, Vilnius, now called Vilnius, but, then, called Vilna. Vilna was a huge Jewish community. It was called the Jerusalem of Eastern Europe at one time and all of these people were all Vilna survivors, and so, they lived in that building and my mother and father, when I got a little older, would send me there for a week in the summer and it was my summer vacation. ... I loved it, because this place was filled with kids my age and they would show me around the Bronx and they would go to Orchard Beach. ... It was a whole new world for me. So, New York, actually, was more [important]. We had more close connection to New York than we did to Philadelphia. We never went to Philadelphia. We knew nothing about Philadelphia.

SI: In Vineland, did you have much contact with the growing popular teenage culture of the 1950s and early 1960s or were you isolated from that?

WK: The '50s culture affected me, but not greatly. I don't think so. ... I'm trying to think back, but, you know, I wasn't interested in fashion. I didn't get interested in popular music until, really, you know, college, but we did have dances. I belonged to an organization called *B'Nai B'rith* Boys and that was a very popular organization and we had dances with that organization, and so, there was some socializing that way and, again, it was in the synagogue. It was all related to the synagogue and it was all Jewish kids and, most of them, survivor kids.

SI: When you came to Rutgers, would you say that there was any culture shock or had you had some familiarity with youth culture there?

WK: Well, some. ...

SI: You were here at a very interesting time, too.

WK: Yes, oh, yes, it was. I remember, [my] first time coming to Rutgers and in front of that cafeteria, [Brower Commons], there were people standing on boxes and shouting, and people around them. ... It was all war, anti-war, mostly, stuff and Rutgers became known as the

"Berkeley of the East" back then. It was interesting to be in ROTC, also, [laughter] because all of my friends were on the other side, [anti-war], you know, most of them.

SH: The first time you came to Rutgers was in your freshman year.

WK: Yes.

SH: You had not visited the campus prior to that.

WK: No, freshman orientation, and I remember sitting in the gym and the Dean, or whoever it was, said, "Look to your left, look to your right; one of those people won't be here after freshman year." I went with my son to his freshman orientation, in the same gym, three years ago, and the Dean got up and said, ... "Look to the person on the right of you and look to the person on left of you," and, when he said that, I thought to myself, "Well, here comes the same speech," but, instead, he said, "One of them might become your friend," [laughter] and I thought, "Wow, Rutgers has really changed." [laughter]

SH: Can you tell us about the freshman orientation? Rutgers was still just men.

WK: Yes, it was all men, yes.

SH: It was not co-ed at this point.

WK: No. It didn't get co-ed until, I think, '68, maybe, the year after I graduated.

SH: Were you intimidated? Were you excited? How did you feel?

WK: Oh, I was very excited, very, and it was just a wonderful opportunity, you know, and I liked the fact that it was all men, because it was kind of an elite feeling, you know, and Rutgers did have that Ivy League, elite feeling back then. You felt like you were kind of a poor man's Princeton, you know. [laughter] ... I remember sewing the Rutgers patch on my ski jacket, you know, and, my mom did that, and when my parents dropped me off, ... they were very proud that I was here at Rutgers. It was a great feeling.

GN: Were you mostly academically focused or did you involve yourself in fraternities or clubs?

WK: No, I was pretty much anti-fraternity. ... They seemed too exclusive to me. I never thought of the idea of joining them, although I had a lot of friends in AE Pi [Alpha Epsilon Pi], particularly, but, unfortunately, I wasn't really [prepared]. I didn't have the study habits. I never had to study very much in high school. You had asked me, "Was I prepared?" and I wasn't really prepared for Rutgers at all, and so, I didn't really know how to study. I didn't know. ... I almost flunked out freshman year, I came very close, and I got put on academic probation, and so, in all my four years, I think I didn't get as much as I could have from my time here at Rutgers. ... If I had been better prepared or if I had known more about how to be in an academic environment, [I could have], but I did get a lot out of the experience just by [living it]. You know, there were long sessions of talking late into the night with other students and I got exposed to a lot of

different people that I'd never been exposed to before. ... I came out of ... just being in that environment of only children of Holocaust survivors and, now, I was exposed to all kinds of people and it was a big broadening influence to me. My freshman year, I got put in with two guys that I didn't get along with that well, but, then, I met my future roommate, who became a lifelong friend, until he passed away, Bob Petersen. ... He was a School of Agriculture [student] and he became the world's foremost authority on an insect, the freshwater stream insect. He became a freshwater stream biologist and he traveled the world doing that work, but we were roommates here at Rutgers and he was of a totally different background. He was, you know, white, Anglo-Saxon, Protestant, but we were very close friends. ... The whole experience was very broadening.

SH: Where were you housed in your freshman year?

WK: In the Quad, one of those [dorms]. I can't remember which one. I could point it out to you, but I don't know the name of it.

SH: Where did you move to in your sophomore year?

WK: Then, I went, sophomore year, to one of the river dorms, [three dorms along the Raritan River on the Rutgers College Avenue Campus]. I think it was Frelinghuysen, where Bob and I roomed together, and, after that, Bob became a preceptor, so, we couldn't continue rooming together. So, I needed to find another situation and I had ... three friends who were from Vineland, Holocaust survivor kids, and they had an apartment. ... They needed a fourth and they asked me to join them and I did. ... I still had many friends who were outside of that circle, but, then, I sort of went back into that little environment at the apartment.

SH: Was the apartment near the campus?

WK: 45 Bartlett Street, next to (Paddy's?) Bar.

SH: Nice location.

WK: Yes.

SH: In the early 1960s, how were Rutgers students introduced to the Douglass women? Was there a mixer?

WK: Yes. Douglass, most of the women that we met were not from Douglass. They were local high school girls who came to Rutgers, at least initially, in the freshman and sophomore year. Some of the guys then, eventually, met Douglass women, ... like Bob, my roommate, his high school sweetheart, was a Douglass girl and they continued and they ended up getting married. ... It was our impression that Douglass women weren't interested in Rutgers men, they were interested in Princeton men [laughter] and Columbia men, and that they really spent their weekends away, for the most part. [laughter]

SI: Since you lived so far south, did you spend most of your weekends at Rutgers?

WK: Yes, rarely went home. None of my friends really went home much and I don't know about the North Jersey kids, but my impression was that most of them stayed on campus on [the] weekends.

SI: As a college student, did you find that you had a lot more time on your hands?

WK: Yes. Well, unfortunately, I had a lot of time on my hands that I should have been using for studying and I wasn't, [laughter] but, yes, that was the problem. I had all this freedom and I didn't have the discipline to really handle it well.

SH: Did you think about getting a job while you were here in your freshman year?

WK: No. I had been really diligent about saving every penny that was given to me on birthdays. My father always said, "Any money you get, you have to put away for college," and I had a bank account, savings account, and ... every dollar that I got went into my college fund. ... Finally, after my senior year in high school, that summer, I did work for my father's cousin in New York, who was a window cleaner, and he gave me a job working for him on his window cleaning route and I lived in their apartment. ... I made some money that way, and then, every summer in college, I also worked. ... [At] Rutgers, I had a National Student Defense Act loan, I had my money that I had saved, plus, I had the money from the Baron de Hirsch Scholarship, and that was enough to pay for my expenses and my school and everything, and so, I didn't really have to work during college at all, except for the summers.

SH: When did you decide to become an English major?

WK: Well, when I first came to Rutgers and I had to pick a major, ... you know, I never liked history that much, ... at least I didn't think I did. [laughter] I didn't know. I mean, I really did like history, I just didn't know it. So, I became ... an English major, just because of default.

SH: Can you tell us about being in the ROTC at Rutgers? In the first two years, it was mandatory, because of Rutgers' land grant college status.

WK: I'm not sure that it was mandatory. Are you sure about that? Was it mandatory for everyone?

[TAPE PAUSED]

SI: While the tape was paused, we were discussing the impact of historical events, in this case, the Holocaust, on the second and third generations and it triggered a memory for you.

WK: Yes. You know, as I said, both of my parents were basically in hiding during the war. In Vineland, ... when we first came to Vineland, I was [in] first grade. So, I went to the South Vineland Elementary School, which was the closest school to us, and we walked to school from our farm and, as a first grader, I was kind of a timid kid and, I remember, there was a boy, his name was, can I say his name? ... (Howie Robinson?), and I was afraid of him. I thought of him

[as threatening], not that he ever really threatened me, but he was somehow very intimidating to me and I got the impression that (Howie Robinson?) would beat me up the first chance he could get, and so, I took to hiding. ... [At] lunch hour, we would eat our lunches at our desks, and then, as soon as we were done eating, we would go out and we would play for the rest of the lunch hour. I was afraid to go out in the play yard to play during lunch hour, because it was kind of unsupervised play. It wasn't like recess, when the teacher was there, and I was afraid of (Howie Robinson?). So, I took the tactic, first, of eating very, very slowly, but, then, even after that, there was still time left over and I actually found a hiding place and it was a closet where they kept the athletic equipment, the balls and things, and I would go into that closet for the rest of the lunch hour and hide in that. ... It was a dark closet. I would hide there and I did that for almost a whole year and nobody really knew that I wasn't out in the play yard, because they didn't take, you know, account of who was there and who wasn't. ... That was my strategy for avoiding [danger] and I wonder, sometimes, [if it was related]. ...

----------END OF TAPE ONE, SIDE TWO----------

GN: This continues an interview with Mr. William Kahane on Monday, March 5, 2007, in New Brunswick, New Jersey. I am Gino Namur.

SI: I am Shaun Illingworth.

SH: ... and Sandra Stewart Holyoak. Please, continue.

WK: ... I was talking about hiding as a strategy for coping and I think, maybe, it might have had something to do with my parents' experience of hiding during the war and, as a small child, I might have internalized that and used it as a strategy.

SI: This could be an off-the-wall question, but I will just ask it. You grew up in the 1950s, when images of nuclear war and a new, nuclear form of Holocaust were prevalent in popular culture. Do you think that in any way affected your parents? Were they distressed by the fact that they had just escaped this enormous event, and then, the shadow of a new threat hung over them?

WK: You know, it seemed to me, that I have talked to other kids [regarding this], and I think maybe ... in more of a suburban setting, it was more [of] a powerful influence, but, in Vineland, it was a rural area. It didn't seem to really affect the thinking of anybody I knew. My parents, or the other adults that I came in contact with, never really talked about, you know, nuclear war as a real possibility. Maybe it's because they also knew the Russians. They weren't afraid of Russia. ... To them, the Russians were not the Communist menace that Americans thought of, you know. They knew the Russians as being very corrupt, very bribable, very inefficient. You know, my mom would tell me stories about how, you know, the only people who really were productive were the people who had their own little plots of land and farms, but the collective farms, that she was familiar with it, they called it a *kolkhoz* in Russia, those collective farms were very inefficient. ... They were backward. They just didn't ... work, and Communism, they knew Communism didn't work. So, I don't think they ever really took it as a real serious threat. In school, my little one-room or two-room schoolhouse that I went to, in first, ... South Vineland School, and then, I went to the Butler Avenue School, they were small, little schoolhouses, one

or two rooms, ... two rooms, I think, I don't even remember having the drills, where, you know, ... much later on, I've seen documentaries of the kids hiding under their desks and all that. I do think I remember, a couple of times, we went down into the basement for some kind of drill, but it wasn't frightening, particularly. ... It didn't really have a major effect on us. So, to answer your question, I don't think that nuclear threat was really something that we thought about very much.

SI: They did not have a bomb shelter.

WK: We did in the Butler Avenue School, in the basement.

SI: You did not have one on your parents' farm.

WK: Oh, no, nothing like that, no, no. My parents really [would not do that], you know, and, politically, they weren't [active]. I only became really politically aware upon coming to Rutgers. Before that, I wasn't very much. All I knew was that my father was a Democrat and, you know, I was going to be a Democrat, but, you know, that's about it, really. [laughter]

SH: Earlier, you spoke about how you choose ROTC as a form of, again, having control over your own future. Can you talk a little bit about being in the ROTC, both your initial impressions and from your four years of training?

WK: ... Yes. Well, I'm pretty sure it was not mandatory. That was a choice and I made the choice to go into ROTC, along with one of my friends, Sam Krantz, who happened to be the first person that I knew when I moved to Vineland, ... my oldest Vineland friend, because he was [a member of] one of the four families who lived in the house next-door, in that farm next-door. His family was one of them and they had, I think, three brothers in that family. Well, Sam and I, ... he was one year older than I, but he had been in a school in New York that was not a secular school, like mine, it was an all-Jewish school, and so, he only spoke Yiddish. He didn't speak any English. He had no need to learn it and I became his interpreter in the first grade. [laughter] So, although he should have been in second grade, he was put into first grade, with me, ... because I could speak for him, and he learned English through the course of first grade ... and he ended up being in my class at Rutgers. We came to Rutgers together and he and I both went to ROTC. [Of] most of my other friends from Vineland, I think we were the only two who decided to go into ROTC. Some of them, ... our thinking was, at that time, grad school and law school and medical school were all automatic deferments from the military. So, you were not going to get drafted if you stayed in school in 1963 and I didn't really plan on going to graduate school. Sam actually did end up going to law school and becoming a lawyer. ... So, he dropped out after two years, but I never really intended to go to graduate school, because I wasn't that academic in college. I found it [to be] not my, you know, ... *forte*. So, I decided to stay in ROTC, and so, I ended up being, like, the only one of my friends from Vineland who stayed the four years of ROTC. ... My thinking was that, ... after college, I was going to be available for the draft and everybody I knew ... was getting drafted after they got out of the school, unless they continued. So, yes, I decided stay in ROTC.

GN: You mentioned the anti-war sentiment on campus.

WK: Yes. We had drill every Thursday. We would go out on the drill field and I remember one day in particular, when some of my friends, not real close friends, but some people that I knew on campus, who I was friendly with, were on the other side, actually putting flowers into our guns, you know. It was an anti-war protest, but I, you know, pretty much agreed with them, but I was doing what I thought was the best thing that I could do for me, in terms of survival.

SI: Was the war discussed in your classes?

WK: Oh, yes. It became very political. There was a storming of the ROTC building at one point.

SH: Were you inside?

WK: No, no, I wasn't, but there ... were teach-ins. Dr. [Eugene] Genovese ... became the major campaign issue for the Governor of New Jersey [in the 1965 gubernatorial race], because he made a statement, "I would welcome a Viet Cong victory," at one of these teach-ins. ... The issue became academic freedom or not for people like Dr. Genovese. ... I don't remember who the candidates were, [Richard J. Hughes (D) defeated Wayne Dumont (R)]. One was in favor of getting rid of Genovese and the other one said, "Let him give his opinions," because of academic freedom. There were a lot of political [discussions]. ... It was a very tumultuous time, as you know. My freshman year, I was walking back from class and one of my Vineland friends was walking in the other direction, informed me that Kennedy had just been shot and that's how I found out about that happening. ... Kennedy was a big hero to all of us, you know.

SH: What was the reaction on campus?

WK: Oh, it was devastating, because we were all, you know, politically, Democratic leaning, liberal, and Kennedy was a hero to most of us, I think most of the college students, not only my little circle, but in general, the college students in general. ... There were very few Republicans among freshmen at Rutgers in '63.

SH: Was there a gathering of the students, a planned memorial or something spontaneous?

WK: Well, what I remember is just going back to my dorm and everybody listening to the radio and being very quiet and very, you know, subdued. The normal atmosphere just changed completely, you know. ... Professors cancelled classes. I heard, some of my friends told me, ... if they heard about it in class, that professors announced it and were crying when they announced the death of Kennedy, or the assassination. ... There was a lot of arguing about the war. For the most part, though, most people were against it. That was my impression, but there were some people who weren't, and so, it became a big debate, but my attitude was that I had to somehow get through it, survive it, and do whatever I thought was, you know, best.

SH: No one really harassed you for being in the ROTC. The demonstration with the flowers and the guns was about as confrontational as you got.

WK: Yes.

SH: You were not harassed if you were walking by in uniform.

WK: No, not at all, no, no.

SH: In the summer, did you complete a rotation at Plattsburgh? Were you in the Army ROTC?

WK: Army, yes. Well, we did. We had one summer when we had our, it was sort of like boot camp for ROTC candidates, and it was in Indiantown Gap, Pennsylvania, which was a horrible place. [laughter] It was very hot, ... bugs, and, I mean, I remember that I was asked to use a compass and a map to find my way in the woods. ... Even though I was a farm kid, I wasn't really a wilderness kid, you know. I didn't know much about that and, ... besides, I have a terrible sense of direction, I always have, and so, I was just totally lost. ... I said to the Sergeant, "Look, I can't find my way. I'm lost," and he said, "You can't say that. You're an officer and you're going to be in charge of a platoon and you're going to have to lead these men and you can't just say, 'I'm lost.' You've got to find your way," and I said, "Look, I'm sorry, I just can't do it. I don't know how to, you know, ... do this," and so, he just led me back, but it was kind of pathetic. [laughter]

SH: Did you finally master it?

WK: Not really, no, but, fortunately, I got my way into Army Photo in the Army. ... After Rutgers, I decided that I was interested in photography and film and that area of work and I was able to go to some classes at NYU, at night. Rutgers had nothing in that field of study. So, I spent a year going to courses at NYU, at night, after graduating from here, and then, because [of that], I put off going into the military. I actually told the Army that I was going to go to graduate school, but I actually never did. I took that year and I took courses, only courses, at NYU. It wasn't really graduate school. It was continuing education courses, but they allowed me to delay for a year, and I was playing for time, because I knew that the war was going to be over eventually, and the longer I stayed out, the more chance I had of staying alive.

SH: What did you do during the day?

WK: At NYU? I made it my point to see as many Broadway plays as I could, matinees, wander around the Village, get the feeling of New York City, and it was a very exciting place in ... 1967 and '68, rather. I graduated in '67, so, that year, it was an exciting place, just like, you know, all of the area.

SH: Where did you stay?

WK: Oh, I had a friend, one of my Vineland friends, who had an apartment on 21st Street and I slept on his couch, basically. ... It was a wonderful time and, ... in the back of my mind, I was thinking, "Well, after this year, I'll be going into the Army and who knows? Maybe I'll get killed in Vietnam, so, I might as well see as many plays as I can and get as much experience as I can."

That was kind of my thinking then. It was maybe a little weird, but, you know, I thought, "It's a possibility, so, squeeze every drop of ... juice out of life," that I could for that year.

SH: You came through Rutgers as the anti-war movement was growing across the country. When you got to New York, there were demonstrations there as well.

WK: Well, I wasn't really involved in New York demonstrations. There may have been, but I never ...

SH: You were not aware of them.

WK: No, no. When I started getting involved and very aware of the anti-war demonstrations was my first assignment in the Army, which was the US Army Photographic Agency at the Pentagon, and that was after my initial basic training in Fort Gordon, Georgia. The Army then sent me to Fort Monmouth for two months, to learn to be an Army Photo officer, and my first assignment was the Pentagon. Now, all of this was arranged by me, because I shouldn't have gotten those assignments. That was not where I was slated for. Those were all my efforts, individually, to get those assignments, because, like I said, I think one of the biggest influences on me in my life [was] because my parents took their destiny in their hands and, you know, I got that message really loud and clear. It was, "If you want to survive in this world, you've got to make it happen. You've got to, you know, arrange things in such a way that it's going to work for you." So, while I was here, at Rutgers, ... in my senior year, I started getting the notion of photography as a potential [vocation] and I looked into it and I realized that the Army Signal Corps had the photographic responsibility for the military, for the Army, and then, I found out that the Army Signal Corps Photographic School was at Fort Monmouth, New Jersey, which wasn't that far. So, I took a little trip from Rutgers and drove up there and met the people who were in charge of the school, some of the teachers, administrators, and I said, "I want to go to this school when I'm in the Army," and they said, "Well, you know, ask for it." So, ... when I was at Fort Gordon, Georgia, and I went through the basic training of the Signal officer, at the end, we were given our assignments, our orders, and most of us got the same order and it was to go to Fort Sill, Oklahoma, and become a forward observer for the artillery. ... That meant that ... you got a radio, you ... climbed a tree or went up on a high hill or something and called in artillery strikes on the enemy and, as you can imagine, the enemy is not going to take too kindly to forward observers. They want to kill you as quickly as possible. So, the life of a forward observer in battle was very short, and I knew this, and so did my friends, my colleagues who were given the same orders. ... I said, "Look, you know, I don't really want to be a forward observer," and our officers said, "If you don't like your orders, there will be a representative from the Office of Personnel, from Washington, who will be at such-and-such a building at such-and-such a date. You go there and you arrange for a conference and discuss it and maybe you can get other orders." So, like, [at] eight o'clock in the morning, there was a line at this guy's door, [laughter] you know, of guys who did not want to be forward observers. ... We went in one at a time and, basically, the message was, "If you don't want to be a forward observer, you give us extra time in the military," and it's like *Let's Make A Deal*, and I was ready for that, you know. ... I said, "Well, how much more time do you want?" and he said, "We'd like you to sign for voluntary indefinite," and I said, "I will not sign up for voluntary indefinite, but I will sign up for extra time. ... I'll have a life after the military, hopefully, [laughter] and I want to know when I'm

getting out, so [that] I can plan." So, I was all about planning and he said, "Okay. Well, then, you have a two-year commitment from ROTC, we will ask you for an additional two years, a total of four years," and I said, "Great. That's fine with me," and he said, "Now, what would you like, what other assignment?" and I said, "I know exactly what I want. I want to go to Fort Monmouth, New Jersey, to the officers' school, for photo officer." ... Actually, the MOS [military occupational specialty number] was 8500, it was called Motion Picture/TV Director, but it was more of a photo officer. ... I did go through that school, ... oh, and then, he said, "And what assignment would you like after that?" and I said, "What do you have available?" and he said, "Well, for photo officers, I have two, one in Hawaii, one in Washington, DC, at the Pentagon," and I said, "Well, Hawaii sounds great. I'll take Hawaii," but, then, I called, on the phone, ... the people that I was supposed to replace, in Hawaii and in Washington, and I said, "How do you like your job?" and the guy in Hawaii said, "It's beautiful in Hawaii, but the job is totally boring. You know, all I do is paperwork all day," and the guy at the Pentagon said, "Well, it's pretty interesting. I deal with a lot of different aspects of photography. I have a TV studio, I have a photo lab, you know, motion picture department." So, I called him back, in Washington. I called and I said, "Would you mind if I switched my assignment to the other one, in Washington?" He said, "No, it's still available. You can have it," and that's how I got to the Pentagon. ... When I got to the Pentagon, ... really, the anti-war movement was in full blast, and I lived in Arlington, Virginia, about ten minutes away, in an apartment I rented, and took the bus into work every day, to the Pentagon, and passed Arlington Cemetery and watched new graves being dug every day at Arlington. So, this was my, you know, commute to work every day, and so, I was very aware, you know, if I wasn't already. I mean, I was very aware of what was going on. ...

SH: The front lawn is mostly Vietnam casualties.

WK: Yes, and so, we did have a TV studio and one of the things that I did in the TV studio was to tape General [William] Westmoreland's message to the troops in Vietnam. I got to videotape that. ... At one point, there was a massive demonstration, Nixon was President, massive demonstration planned for Washington, DC, and the Pentagon was very nervous about this demonstration. ... We had our TV station, we also had a very advanced system that was not anywhere available, very much, in civilian life, and that was, ... we could broadcast the signal from video cameras to the Pentagon from a distance. ... We had them in helicopters, and so, the Joint Chiefs of Staff had our agency set up a system whereby they were sitting in the Pentagon, we were in our helicopters, flying over the demonstration on the Mall and broadcasting live video feed to them in the Pentagon. They were very concerned that this would turn violent.

GN: What year was this?

WK: ... By the time I was in Washington, it was, like, '69 or ...

SH: 1970?

WK: Yes, it was late '69, I think, ... but I was not in the helicopter. I was given the assignment to go, and it's kind of embarrassing, but I was supposed to pretend that I was one of the protesters and take photographs of people in the crowd, of anybody, no one in particular, just take pictures,

take lots of pictures, ... which I did. I took lots of pictures, ... and I participated enthusiastically in the demonstration. It turned out to be totally peaceful, I mean, you know, the singing, like, *Give Peace a Chance*, stuff like that, you know

SH: Who were some of the leaders there?

WK: Abbie Hoffman was there and he smashed a television set on stage.

SH: Was this in front of the Lincoln Memorial?

WK: It was on the Mall, in that large open area between [the] Lincoln Memorial and the Congress, the Legislature, Capitol Building. It was that whole area. Eventually, though, the Park Police came in on horseback and did tear gas us, and I got tear gassed, along with everybody, at one point, but this was actually more than one demonstration. There were a number of them that I attended.

SH: Were you always the guy in the crowd?

WK: Only once did they ask [me] to photograph it. The other times, for some reason, I didn't have any [orders]. They didn't ask me to do anything.

SI: Did you have any idea what they were going to use the photographs for?

WK: No, no, I didn't. I don't really think they used them for anything. I gave them in and it didn't seem like they went anywhere, but, you know, they had the live feed. ... I guess, because it didn't turn violent, that, you know, the whole thing was kind of moot.

GN: What were some of your other assignments at the Pentagon? What was a typical day like?

WK: Well, one of my assignments, and my brother, five years younger, was in that lottery, was filming the first lottery for the draft, yes, you know, to see who had a high number. If you had a low number, you were, you know, going to be taken for the draft. If you had a high number, you were pretty safe, and he was lucky, he got a high number, but one of my assignments was to do that. ... Mostly, I had [assignments] just inside in the Pentagon. We had a portrait studio, where we took portraits of the senior officers, full colonel and above, generals and so on. ... We had a lab and, you know, just administrative [work] for all those sections of the Army Photo Agency.

SH: Were you making films to encourage people to enlist, anything like that?

WK: No, no. We weren't involved in any of that, and I don't know why, but ... my guess is that they were being done privately, contracted out to, like, ad agencies and people like that. We were more documentarian. ... In Vietnam, we had a group called the 221st Signal Group and they were a company of Army combat photographers and they were taking film and stills of the war. ... We had an archive at the Pentagon where we were archiving all of these photographs and films. There was no videotape, really, it was all sixteen-millimeter film, and that was all being archived there at the Pentagon. So, we also had film crews in other places. In Hawaii, we had

one and I think we had one in Europe. ... It was all documenting the activities of the military, but not in finished film.

SH: You did not produce anything.

WK: We didn't produce anything with it. ...

SH: Nothing for training.

WK: No. These were all documentations that the Army wanted to keep as, you know, ... I guess, just a history of what happened.

SH: Did this include aerial footage of the bombings, Agent Orange, those kinds of things?

WK: No. Our group, [the] 221st, no, they were in helicopters, but that was only to get them from place to place. They were more [focused on] documenting the ground action. I think the Air Force documented the bombings. They had cameras on their bombers, but that was not an Army function.

SH: In other words, the different services kept that separate from each other.

WK: Yes. We didn't have any Air Force footage in our archives. I guess the Air Force had their own [files], probably had their own archives.

SI: Did you work with outside patrons, people outside the military, like news agencies, getting footage to them?

WK: People came to the archives and asked for photographs and footage and they were allowed to do that, yes. We made stuff available to them.

SI: As a photographer, were you kept busy just doing photography or did you have other duties?

WK: I was mostly not a photographer. Unfortunately, I was mostly a supervisor of photographers and people who [worked in the other areas]. ... As an officer, we didn't really do, directly, ... that work. We had enlisted men under us who did the actual photography, for the most part. ...

[TAPE PAUSED]

SH: Please, continue.

WK: Well, I'll just finish briefly on the demonstrations that I remember, some of the things that happened. One thing was that Nixon lined up busses, large busses, all around the White House, and that was because he was afraid that the people in the demonstration would storm the White House, and so, busses were [lined up] front-to-back, with almost no space between them. It was almost like a movable barricade and that was also the time when Nixon, in the middle of the

night, went to the Lincoln Memorial and spoke with one of the students who was there and it was, like, three in the morning. He was very troubled by the whole, you know, anti-Vietnam movement. ... At one point when I was in the Pentagon, there was a group of protestors who spilled animal blood on the steps and it was, you know, symbolic. It was a very tumultuous time then in Washington.

SH: Was there any paranoia within the Pentagon, that you were aware of?

WK: Yes, lots of, kind of, really, disdain for the anti-war movement and, in the military, it was [a situation where], you know, you really didn't want to let people know that you were anti-war. ... There was a real clear-cut divide between the military culture and the youth, anti-war movement.

SH: That was 180 degrees out from your experience here at Rutgers in the ROTC. Here, you were in the military, this was your choice, you volunteered for the ROTC, and your friends were putting flowers in your guns.

WK: Yes, but my friends here, in Rutgers, looked at us as, really, students who were, you know, training, but were playing at it, kind of, you know. ... It was not taken so seriously.

SH: What about the officers, the cadet colonel and so on?

WK: Oh, the officers in the [ROTC], I didn't really know any of them, you know, because I wasn't that *gung ho* ROTC, and so, I didn't get that much involved into the culture. I just went through the program, but there were some people who were [*gung ho*], you know, who, you know, wanted to make the military a career, and some of them got ROTC scholarships. I got some payment the last two years, which was helpful to me, because I was on a, you know, tight budget. I think it was like forty dollars a month, maybe, something like that, that they paid you for the last two years.

SH: There was more of a hardcore group within the ROTC here at Rutgers.

WK: Yes, there was, yes.

SH: Did they look upon the protestors here at Rutgers the same way the Pentagon looked upon the demonstrators in Washington?

WK: Yes.

SH: Is that a fair statement?

WK: Yes, I think so, yes. I mean, you could tell by, you know, certain things, like haircuts and, you know, appearance and attitude, yes, but I wasn't, you know, really in touch with them. ... I didn't sympathize with them, and I guess they knew it.

SH: You can receive your ROTC commission in one of several branches, such as the infantry, the Signal Corps ...

WK: Oh, I chose Signal Corps.

SH: You did.

WK: Yes. We had to choose one combat branch and the Signal Corps was considered a combat branch, and so, ... we weren't guaranteed that you would get your choice of which branch of the Army you chose, but I did. I was lucky that I did get the Signal Corps, because that's what I wanted. I think I might have put it as my first choice.

SI: Did you ever consider the Air Force ROTC?

WK: Not really. I don't know why I didn't. ... I think the Air Force might have been more difficult to get into. ... They were more selective and they didn't take everybody who applied in the Air Force, but, [with] the Army ROTC, you were pretty much guaranteed to get into [the program]. ... My grades were poor, and so, I don't think I would have gotten into the Air Force ROTC anyway.

SH: I wondered if the space program had influenced your decision.

WK: No. I think the idea of the Air Force was that you were much less likely to be involved in direct combat in the Air Force, you know. They didn't have an infantry, and so, it was a safer branch to be in, but it was also more selective.

SI: In your role in the Pentagon, pardon me if I am wrong, it seems like you had something akin to an archivist's job, where you were selecting materials that would go into an archive.

WK: ... No. We had ... civilians who were in charge of the archive. My job was to basically ... be a liaison between the military, which ran all this stuff, but, really, the people who ran it were the civilian employees. So, we had a professional librarian to run the archives. ... For our photo lab, we had people who ran the lab and they were civilians. They were, like, GS-13s. Supposedly, I was their boss, but I really took every opportunity that I could to learn from these people, because they knew their jobs and I was a young lieutenant. I didn't know anything about running a library or running a portrait studio or a photo lab or a TV studio, but I learned from all the civilians who were there and, if you didn't take the attitude that you knew it all, you know, ... some young officers are very cocky, you know, but I took the attitude that, "I can learn from these people, if I maintain my humility and go in and say, 'Look, you know, I know you guys know what you're doing and I really want to learn,'" and they were great. They were really great and I learned a lot from them. ... My job was to be a kind of liaison between them and the captain who was above me, and then, the lieutenant colonel who was above him.

SH: The captain and the lieutenant colonel above you, obviously, they were career military.

WK: The lieutenant colonel was career military. The captain wanted to be career military, yes.

SH: Were they happy to be where they were or were they looking to go to Vietnam?

WK: They were happy to be anywhere. They were happy to be there, or Vietnam, or anywhere that the military would send them, because they looked at it all as part of their career building.

SH: To back up a bit, could you explain your training, after your year in New York, to us in more detail? Can you talk about how they trained you?

WK: Oh, you mean once I went into the military, at Fort Gordon? Well, at Fort Gordon, ... they had a basic Signal officer training program that was two months long and you had classes during the day. They were regularly scheduled classes and you went from building to building ... and some of the training was very broad, because ... it was called Basic Signal Officer's Training. ... We learned things about radio communications and, oh, it was just, also, ... basically, how to be an officer in the military, how to command men, ... interpersonal relationships with your [men], and that's what a lot of ROTC was, also. ROTC had ... a whole series of films that said, "What now, Lieutenant?" and they'd show you this film of a situation that a lieutenant would be in, and then, they would stop the film ... at the point where the lieutenant had to make a decision about what to do. ... It would be, "What now, Lieutenant?" and then, you had to come up with what you would do in that situation. So, it was, you know, kind of intriguing and, at Fort Gordon, ... you know, we went through this basic thing, but we had also a division in Fort Gordon and the division was [between] the ROTC guys and the guys who came out of Officer Candidate School. Officer Candidate School was the other way to become an officer. For enlisted men, if you were a private or a corporal or whatever and you wanted to become an officer and you were not a college graduate and college educated, you could go to Officer Candidate School, which was, I believe, a three-month, or I'm not sure, maybe six-month course and you were commissioned as a second lieutenant. Those guys were much more serious and more *gung ho* than we were from ROTC, because we were, you know, college students. We were much more laid back about our approach to the military. They really took it seriously, because they had been in the military already. ... Well, it was much harder for them to get where they were than it was for us. You know, we had to take some courses, take one summer, a few weeks, in Indiantown Gap, but it wasn't that big a deal. It wasn't that hard, but they had been through, I think it was six months, of really rigorous, tough training. A lot of them didn't make it through that training. So, we had this division about how to behave and, like, they wanted to march to class and we wanted to walk. [laughter] ... We wanted to play football between classes ... and they thought that was really disrespectful and they complained about it ... to the cadre, to the instructors, that we were playing football out on the lawn between classes. So, yes, ... it seemed like there was always that division. It was in society and it was there at our basic Signal officer training, too, and then, it was also in the military, which I'll get into later. In Vietnam, we found that division, too.

SH: This was your first trip to the South.

WK: Yes.

SH: What kind of a culture shock was it for a boy from Vineland, New Jersey?

WK: Yes. ... They would serve us grits and the first time I had grits, ... I said, "Gee, can I have some milk with this?" They said, "You want milk with your grits?" ... It certainly was a different, yes, culture, Southern culture. I didn't really fit in very well to it. I realized that I could never live in the South, but ... I took some side trips and, you know, I enjoyed the time there, for the most part.

SH: Also, the Civil Rights Movement was in full swing, especially in the South.

WK: Yes. You know, I don't remember any black officers in training there, at Fort Gordon. We might have had some, but you know what? I have a picture, yes, and I remember, in the picture, there were one or two blacks in that picture, but I didn't really know them. Well, what happened [was], at the end of my training there, I had to wait before I went to Fort Monmouth. We had about a month ... before the school started, and so, they had to put me somewhere. So, they put me and my roommate, I made a friend who was also going to go to that school, ... they put us both as duty officers, which meant that we were in the headquarters at night and [had to] take phone calls and such. ... One of our fellow young lieutenant Signal officers was a fellow from New York and he wanted to be a teacher when he got out and he loved kids. ... This is maybe an illustration of the Southern culture, where we clashed, because Larry, I think his name was Sforza, he was a very nice fellow and he loved children, and so, he was living off base, so was I, in an apartment by then, and, in his ... garden apartment complex, there were many children. ... They started to gravitate to his place and they would come over and he would give them treats and he would let them watch TV, ... sort of young kids, and they were hanging out in his apartment. Well, at one point, one of them found a *Playboy* magazine in his apartment and they told their parents. ... I was on duty that night and we got a phone call that he had been arrested by the police and had been taken before a judge and [it] was, like, a-hundred-thousand-dollar bail put on him and he was in jail. ... This is, like, after midnight and I had to contact my superior officer and tell him and he was pretty angry that he'd been disturbed in the middle of the night and [said], "What's that jerk doing with *Playboy* magazine?" ... Anyway, it was kind of [shocking]. He was from New York. You know, to him; ... I don't know, I guess I probably wouldn't have thought anything [of it].

----------END OF TAPE TWO, SIDE ONE----------

GN: Tape two, side two.

SH: Did you experience any anti-Semitism in the Army, or in the South?

WK: Not really, no, not in Fort Gordon, and I never really experienced much anti-Semitism in the military, not directly, anyway. One nice side benefit [that] was very, very lovely, at Fort Gordon, they had a riding stable there and I was able to ride. I love horses, you know, and I was able to ride there. ... I ended up with two roommates, off-base, at Fort Gordon. One of them was a Jewish guy from Los Angeles, who's kind of a surfer guy, Bob (Swartz?), and the other one was sort of a hippie, he was not Jewish, from [the] San Francisco area, and the three of us had this apartment off-base. ... Jack (Strassberg?) was the man's name, a young guy who was ... very anti-, not so much anti-military, but anti-regimentation. He couldn't stand any authority or regimentation and, at the end of our Signal officer basic school, he told me that he had a plan to

insult the General, because we had a reception, a dinner, which was a formal dinner. We were to wear our dress blue uniforms and we would go through a receiving line and we would be greeted by the senior officers and the General of the Signal Corps. I think the whole entire Signal Corps was there, because they did that for every graduating class, and Jack said he was going to insult the General. ... I said, "Well, you know, you'd better be careful, because they can get you." ... When we went through the receiving line to shake hands, Jack put an ice cube in his hand and left the ice cube in the hand of the General. So, Jack's orders, ... he had very good orders, he was going to Okinawa after our basic course, ... his orders were immediately changed ... to go to Vietnam, and he said to me, "It's outrageous. They're discriminating against me." I said, "Jack, what do you expect, you know?" and so, he went to Vietnam, but I heard, later on, that he was asked to leave the service in Vietnam, for the good of the service. ... I don't know what he did, but I can imagine that he did something similar, that the military just got fed up with him and they asked him to leave the Army, [laughter] but (Swartz?) did go to Vietnam and I met ... him, later on, there in Vietnam. ... He, at one point, hid out with me in my barracks, because he had turned in one of his men who was on heroin and the guy ... wanted to kill him, and so, he was hiding out with me for awhile. Lieutenants ... were at risk in Vietnam from their own men, for a number of things, like turning people in for drugs or being too *gung ho*, and, if you were in [trouble], you know, you would end up with a grenade in your room at night, blowing up. So, you know, [you] had to be real careful.

GN: What was your basic training at Fort Gordon like? Was there any part of it that was particularly harsh?

WK: No, no, none of it was harsh, no. We had some rifle training, but it was all almost entirely in the classroom. I mean, we had calisthenics in the morning, that sort of thing. ...

SH: You were allowed to live off-base and not in BOQs [bachelor officers' quarters] from the very beginning.

WK: No. ... Let me see, at what point was I off-base? I'm not sure if it was during the course or maybe it was when it was over. ... No, it was during the course, actually. ... Every week, new candidates would come in to start the course and there was only so much housing on base, and so, Schwartz had gotten an apartment off-base with Jack and, you know, we ... became friendly and he said, "Why don't you join us in our apartment?" I said, "I can't. I'm in the bachelor officers' quarters that they have me in," and he said, "Oh, we'll get you out of that." So, we ... went to an office where there was a young sergeant or corporal who was in charge of housing and Schwartz kind of played up to his vanity. ... He said, "Look, I know you're very powerful in this office. You can do anything you want. Why don't you get Kahane out of the BOQ and put some other new guy in there? ... You know, we have an apartment and he can live with us," and, if you lived off-base, you got a housing allowance, also. So, that paid for your rent and the three of us, together, could pay for that apartment. So, we stayed there and it was nice, off-base, you know, little, very cheap, apartment, but it was fine.

SH: When did you get your first car?

WK: My first car? When I was ready to go to Fort Gordon, Georgia, my father said, "I'm going to buy you a car," and we went to a used car dealer in Bridgeton, New Jersey, who ... he knew, and there was a used, beautiful, red convertible, with white interior, a Mercury Park Lane convertible, ... huge, eight-cylinder engine, monster car, and my dad said, "This is the car for an officer." ... I said, "Wow, Dad, that's a great car," ... and it was, like, about four thousand dollars, a lot of money, but he bought it for me and I loved that car. It eventually died when I was away in Vietnam. My mother was afraid to drive it, it was too big, and it sat there for seven months and [the] engine was ruined, because they lived near the ocean, but I loved that car. It was a wonderful car.

SH: Usually, young officers, at some point, acquire the dream car.

WK: Oh, yes, I did, yes.

SH: You had a month before Fort Gordon and reporting to Monmouth.

WK: Between Fort Gordon and Monmouth, yes.

SH: Did you have some time to get home before you went to Monmouth?

WK: Yes. On my way to Fort Monmouth, we drove, and I had to actually tow Jack (Strassberg's?) motorcycle, because he had bought a motorcycle and, now, he had to sell it, because he was going to Vietnam. He asked me to sell it for him and I couldn't. So, I towed it to Fort Monmouth and he was there and I gave it to him, back to him, but we stopped at my house, and Bob and I were both going together. ... My parents were still on the farm then. ... They still had the farmhouse. We stayed there overnight, and then, went to Fort Monmouth. Fort Monmouth was also a great experience, ... learned lots of stuff there, hands-on stuff about photography and filming, and that was a great experience. ...

SH: What were you taking photographs of?

WK: Just on the base, you know, anything. We would get assignments. I mean, we had one assignment to go to the beach and take pictures. I mean, you know, it was just about the practical [experience] and they gave us a four-by-five, monster camera, big negatives, you know. Nobody uses those any more. Even then, people weren't using the four-by-fives. That was a World War II camera, but they had them left over from World War II and there was a lot of value in learning how to shoot with a camera like that, you know, and the sixteen-millimeter, we learned to shoot sixteen-millimeter film and ... develop our own stuff. It was a great learning experience. I mean, from the point of view of a guy who couldn't afford, like, USC or something like that, this was great training that the military offered, and it was free. I mean, you know, ... well, sort of free, I mean, lots of strings attached. ...

SH: Where were you housed at Monmouth?

WK: Well, they didn't have much housing at Monmouth, very little housing, so, we ended up getting a motel room. Bob Schwartz and I got a motel room on the beach, right off the beach, and we stayed there for the two months.

SH: Do you remember when you reported to Monmouth?

WK: I don't remember. ... No, I'm not very good with months and dates, unfortunately, but it was probably in '69 ... or '68. ... It was before the Pentagon. So, I went in the Army in '68, so, it was probably late in '68, and then, I went to the Pentagon for a year-and-a-half. I was there for a year-and-a-half. What happened, also, fortunately, I had not signed up for voluntary indefinite, because, one day, I noticed a piece of paper on my sergeant's desk, and I'm pretty sure he wasn't going to show it to me, but I noticed it. ... I [was] just walking by and it said something about "early out" and that caught my attention. ... I read it and it said that all military personnel who had "out dates," ... who were assigned or who were scheduled to be out of the military between such-and-such a date, would be let go, I think it was a year-and-a-half early, because, by then, we were starting to wind down already. This was toward the end of my service. In fact, ... if I went by the date that I was supposed to get out, I only had seven months left to do in the military and here I was, in Washington, and they didn't send people to Vietnam with less than a year. So, all my friends at the Army Photo Agency said, "Hey, you've got it knocked. You don't even have to go to Vietnam now." I was thrilled, and then, like, about a few days later, I got orders to go to Vietnam, with seven months left. So, you know, of course, I went, but ... I think my recollection is, and I'm not sure of this, that you needed to notify the military or apply for the early out. It wasn't, like, automatic. So, if I hadn't seen that paper, I would have done, probably, the entire four years, maybe. Maybe I wouldn't have gotten out early. I don't know.

SH: You applied for the early out and they still sent you to Vietnam.

WK: Yes, knowing that I had only seven months left. I think they just wanted me to do my tour of duty over there. So, I got ready to go and, you know, it was very difficult, leaving my parents at Fort Dix. You know, they had a hard time with that. ... I made arrangements to stop and visit my college roommate, Bob Petersen, who I mentioned was my roommate here, at Frelinghuysen, and who was an agriculture major and ended up being a stream biologist. He was, at the time, at [the] University of Michigan, near Kalamazoo, Michigan, a graduate program there, and I made arrangements to stop there and visit him on my way to Vietnam, because I was going to leave from San Francisco. So, I stopped there, ... for about three or four days, maybe, visiting with him and his young wife, Paula, had a very nice visit with him. ... Then, he took me to the Kalamazoo Airport, a small airport, where I was going to catch my plane to San Francisco. As it happened, there was a big snowstorm and I got snowed in and you'll never guess who the other person was in the airport, snowed in with me on my way to Vietnam, the foremost anti-war protestor in the United States at the time; no, Jane Fonda. [laughter] Jane had apparently been speaking at the university there, at some anti-war rally, or something like that, and was probably headed back to California, and we both were stranded in the airport together, [laughter] I on my way to Vietnam and her, you know, in her anti-war activities. ... She also had some, what I assumed were, like, Black Panther-type bodyguards with her. ...

SH: You were in uniform.

WK: And I was in uniform, because I could get a discount flying in uniform. So, you know, I didn't really have much contact with her, but, you know, I explained to her I wasn't in favor of the war and that, you know, I was stuck. So, you know, she was very nice about it. ... Then, I got to San Francisco. ...

SH: What I would say is, the Kalamazoo Airport is just about two waiting rooms large.

WK: Yes. It's a small, little airport. ...

SH: You could not have gotten away.

WK: No, no.

SH: Even if you wanted to.

WK: Right, yes, and then, ... arrived in San Francisco. I visited Berkeley and people were great to me in Berkeley, and I was very ...

SH: In uniform?

WK: In uniform. No, I wasn't in uniform in Berkeley. I was walking around in civilian clothes and I was walking around, in fact, it was November, it was Thanksgiving, and I was walking around the streets and somebody came up to me and said, "Do you have a place to go for Thanksgiving dinner?" I don't know why they asked me that, but I said, "No, I don't. I'm not from here and I have no place to go for Thanksgiving dinner." He said, "Well, we're having a dinner in our church and would you come? ... You're welcome to come and have dinner with us." So, I did and most of the people there were great to me. ... Of course, we got into what I was doing and I was on my way to Vietnam. One young woman, when she found out, when I told her that I was going to Vietnam, was very turned off and just turned around and walked off, but most of the people were real nice about it and real nice to me. ... [Then], I flew over on a charter airplane, with a charter company ... by the name of Tiger Airways, which I found out, many years later, was owned by a group of people, among which was Lady Bird Johnson, [who] was a principal in the ownership of Tiger Airways, flying our soldiers over to Vietnam, which I thought was kind of a conflict of interest, when I found out about it, [laughter] but that was way after the war that I found out about that. ... I was pretty nervous going over. I was scared. I didn't know what was going to happen to me, especially; oh, I read Erich Fromm, *The Art of Loving*, on the way. ... I mean, you know, we were sort of from the hippie culture, in a way, and I wanted to get my head in a different place than Vietnam, so, ... when we were landing, that's when I really got nervous. ...

SH: Was it a straight shot?

WK: No. We stopped in; I'm glad you asked me that. We stopped in Iceland or Greenland, one of those two. I think it might have been Reykjavik, I think. We stopped there and I don't know what they did, refuel and whatever, and then, we continued on. It turned out that the plane after

us that landed in Reykjavik, on their way to Vietnam, crashed while taking off, because of ice build-up and stuff. It was like an ice storm or something and they crashed and a lot of the guys on the flight were killed. Now, my mother, back home, when she heard the news of this plane crashing on their way to Vietnam, she was, you know, sure it was me, or afraid it was me, and she was in touch with the Pentagon to find out if I was on that flight. ... I don't think she could really find out anything. ... Eventually, you know, I found out about it. Also, when I got to Vietnam, that the plane behind us had crashed and a bunch of guys had been killed. ... In fact, the guys who survived that crash were given the choice of assignment of anywhere in the world they wanted to go. They didn't have to go to Vietnam at that point, [the] survivors, yes.

SH: Really?

WK: And so, we landed in the airport in Vietnam and we were put into this barracks-type place, with lots of bunk beds, and there was, like, a transient point, waiting for our orders in Vietnam, what we were going to do. I didn't know where I was going to go and my orders came through, after a few days, to be ... a company commander of a telephone linemen company, guys who were out stringing phone lines, you know, in the countryside in Vietnam. ... First of all, I didn't know anything about that. Second of all, I didn't really want to be out in the bush, you know, [laughter] with a bunch of guys, stringing telephone wire, you know. We'd probably get shot at out there, I figured, you know, and I thought, "Well, if I'm going to get shot at, at least let me be with a company of photographers and we'll be out in the bush shooting, you know, and that'll be exciting and it'll be something that I'm really into." So, I called the commander of the 221st, which was our unit in Vietnam, that was a combat photographer unit, and I asked him if he could transfer me into his unit, and he said, "Well, I'll try." I said, "Look, I was trained. I've got a year-and-a-half experience in the Army Photo Agency at the Pentagon. I went through the course at Fort Monmouth. You know, I'm trained to do this," and he said, "I'll try my best to see if I can get you in our unit," and he said, "Hang out there for a few more days," and I did and he got back to me and he said, "Look, I'm sorry, I can't. ... We don't have a slot right now, but I can put you in the battalion that we're part of," and so, I was put into a battalion on the base, at Long Binh Army Base, which was the largest Army base in Vietnam, about an hour north of Saigon. ... I was given various jobs that were kind of, you know, administrative jobs, waiting for my spot in the 221st, which never really came up, and so, I spent the rest of the time there. I was given the job of supplying a top secret base that we had in Cambodia, called Site 96, that nobody was supposed to know about, because we weren't supposed to be in Cambodia. ... My job was to give them communications equipment and any other equipment that they needed, because they were supplying communications for, we did have, I think, an ambassador or something like that in Phnom Penh at the time. We had some kind of presence there and these people were civilians who were providing communications for our government representatives in Phnom Penh, but they were constantly being attacked and the Khmer Rouge would try to overrun them. ... It was really a bad place to be, but there were no military [personnel] there. All of the people that I had contact with were civilian people there.

SH: Were they CIA?

WK: I don't know. The guy I was talking to was from the Philippines. ... I got the feeling that he was, like, a civilian being paid by the military to be there. You know, it was purely, like, a contract.

SH: When you first entered Vietnam, did you go in to Saigon? Were you there before they sent you up to Long Binh?

WK: No. It was not Saigon. It was Bien Hoa, Bien Hoa Air Force Base, which was right outside of Long Binh. Saigon was an hour south. We were north of Saigon, an hour. ...

SH: However, you were on the coast in Long Binh.

WK: No. It was more in[land], not on the coast, no. We were actually an hour from the coast. We were in the, I guess, maybe, center and, at Bien Hoa, they had this transient post set up for guys coming in and going out, barracks. ... When you were leaving, you had to stay for a few days, so that they could drug test you, because you couldn't leave if you had any ... drugs coming up in your urine test. ... They had to sort of isolate you there for a while. Coming in, that was just [the area where] you just waited for your assignment.

SH: Was it what you thought it would be? Having worked in the Pentagon and being very aware of what was going on, through the newspapers in this country, what was your perception of what it would be like?

WK: Well, I was relieved that I was in the rear echelon and I was in a large base, which did not get attacked, except, I think, they took some mortar fire at the Tet Offensive, before I got there, but not very much. It was a huge base and we had a lot of Vietnamese working on base and they would commute. Every day, they would come on base and do various jobs. ... It was fairly safe, although I foolishly volunteered, you know, it was really more dangerous than I realized, ... to take the men out ... for a day of rest and recuperation, they called it, to Vang Tau. Vang Tau was a seaside resort on the South China Sea in Vietnam and we were allowed [to go there]. It was the only in-country R&R location. Most R&Rs were out of Vietnam, but this was an in-country R&R, and it was not only for the Americans. It turned out that Vang Tau was kind of a *laissez faire* spot ... that the war didn't touch, because the Viet Cong went there to vacation and the North Vietnamese went there and the Australians, the Americans; everyone went to Vang Tau for a little respite from the war. The problem was that, in order to get to Vang Tau from Long Binh, we had to go through VC held territory, and there were lots of rubber plantations left over from the French along the way and there were lots of ambushes from the rubber plantations on that road. In fact, that road was closed at night to traffic, by barricades, and so, I constantly volunteered to take guys there, because I really liked the beach. [laughter] I liked being there and it was a great place and, once, we did break down, coming back from Vang Tau, and we broke down, like, about ten, fifteen miles out and our bus, ... we got it running, and it was going, like, ten miles an hour. ... We limped back to Vang Tau, but we almost got stuck on that road, which would have been really bad, but, other than that, ... we never got hit or anything. So, it's a good thing, because we didn't have any weapons on the bus. I don't know why they let us do that. ...

SH: You had nothing.

WK: We had no weapons, nothing. We just had our bathing suits. ...

SH: No jeep escort, nothing.

WK: No, no, and I don't know why they let us do that at all.

SH: Through VC country.

WK: Yes, yes, but the military; I don't know, ... and I was stupid to do it. ...

SH: What shape were the soldiers that you were taking there for R&R in?

WK: Oh, they were fine. These were guys from Long Binh. These were all rear echelon guys.

SH: They had put in enough time to go for R&R.

WK: Yes, ... and then, I would go to Saigon, quite often, to take equipment that was requested by this Site 96 and we would take it to the Air Force, to the airport in Saigon, and that would be flown to Cambodia. So, I would go in, very often, to Saigon and I had my own driver assigned to me for this task and I had a jeep, a three-quarter-ton truck and a two-and-a-half-ton tractor-trailer truck at my disposal to take things to this Site 96, which was very important, for some reason. It was very important. It was top secret. We weren't supposed to talk about it and, whenever they requested anything, if I couldn't get it readily, I would just take it from someone else and, if they gave me a hard time, I would call the General and he would call them and tell them to give it to me. So, no matter what ... they wanted, it was my job to get it for them, no matter who I took it from.

SH: Was it sent under military packaging or did it go as embassy or diplomatic shipments?

WK: ... No. As I recall, it was under military, you know; well, yes, because I sent them a three-quarter-ton truck once and, you know, it was an Army truck and, yes, we were sending them military stuff.

SH: It was not part of a "diplomatic pouch" or something like that.

WK: No, no. Oh, they were asking for big things, like, one time, fifty fifty-gallon drums of fuel, I mean, large shipments of stuff. I don't know how many people were there at this site. There must have been a lot of people.

SH: Did you ever figure out, later, what Site 96 in fact was?

WK: No, no. All I was ever told was [that] it was a communications set-up for the military in Phnom Penh. I knew we weren't supposed to be in Phnom Penh; that, I did know. [laughter] ...

SH: What about your security clearance? Before, you were in the Pentagon and, now, you are there.

WK: Yes.

SH: Were they upgraded?

WK: Well, I had a top secret clearance, but, in Vietnam, ... my top secret clearance didn't get me into the communications center on Long Binh. I had guys who worked for me, who were communications specialists; ... well, back then, you know, communications wasn't as good as it is now. So, we had these really very top security buildings that nobody could get in to, unless you had a top, top security clearance and a need to be there, and the guys who worked for me, ... they were, like, basically, ... typists who ... had a high clearance, who worked at these Teletype machines in there. That's what I assume they were like, Teletype machines, and they were secure communications between the Pentagon and Vietnam and Long Binh, and that's how the military communicated between Vietnam and Washington, was through this very, you know, guarded security communications system. They called them the com centers, and I could never get in there.

SH: What kind of briefings were you given in Vietnam? Were there any outrageous ones?

WK: Well, the most outrageous one was the big drug problem, and most of my guys were using heroin. They were using it by smoking it and the Vietnamese were openly selling it. There was also a lot of marijuana use, which I indulged in myself, but the heroin, I stayed away from that. In fact, there were billboards in Vietnam advertising Park Lane Cigarettes. Now, Park Lane Cigarettes were not cigarettes; they were marijuana cigarettes, and they looked just like a Marlboro package, very similar, the same colors and design, except it said, "Park Lane," instead of, "Marlboro." They were wrapped in cellophane in cartons, just like cigarettes come in cartons, and these were very potent cigarettes, with filters. So, you bought them [for], I think it was like five dollars a pack, twenty cigarettes in a package, very cheap, and it was legal for the Vietnamese to sell them to the Americans, but I think it was illegal for the Vietnamese to use them or sell them to other Vietnamese. ... Of course, it was illegal for us as Americans to buy them, but it was advertised on billboards. I mean, it was [in the open]. They obviously must have had a factory somewhere producing these things. So, it was quite out in the open. However, the military cracked down hard on marijuana use, because it was detectable. They could smell it, and so, there were lots of raids and, in a way, it kind of pushed these guys into smoking heroin, which didn't have an odor, and one of my duties was, quite often, in order to take the bus to Vang Tau, I had to do guard duty the night before. That's how I got to take the bus to Vang Tau and it was kind of like a reward for doing guard duty. So, I would offer to do guard duty for a lot of my friends who didn't want to do guard duty, because you have to stay up all night. ... I had guard duty quite often and the most dangerous part of guard duty was that all the guys were high in their bunkers and they had loaded weapons and you didn't know which way they were going to be shooting at, you know. It was very scary, that part. ... I'm not sure where I was going with that, but, anyway; oh, the most outrageous briefing, right. So, the Colonel, at one point, called us all, all of the officers, together and he said, "I want you to stop the men from using drugs and I want you to, you know, enforce the drug rules, stop all marijuana

use, heroin use, etc." So, I had a friend who was a film school graduate from NYU, who was also in ROTC, and I'd met him there in Vietnam and he was in my unit and the two of us became buddies, because we had similar interests, and he was a pretty brash fellow, (Couglin?). ... He said, "Colonel, ... I have an idea. Why don't you go to the generals and tell them ... to stop ... the drug trade coming through the Vietnamese military, because we know that the Vietnamese are dealing all these drugs and we know that the Vietnamese higher-up officers are all involved in it? ... So, you know, why don't you go to your generals and tell them to stop it, instead of talking to us junior officers to try to stop it here on base?" and the Colonel got very upset with him and he ended the briefing at that point. ... Among the officer corps, we had a few junior officers who were involved in the anti-war movement, also, and there was one, (Cory Sutton?), he was, I think, also a Northern guy, New Yorker, he was very much against the war, and he was also very unorthodox. ... He didn't live in the officers' quarters; he lived with the enlisted men, ... in their barracks. The enlisted men had Vietnamese girlfriends living with them in the barracks that they snuck in and they smoked marijuana in their barracks and he smoked with them. He was very much accepted as one of the guys and very much ostracized by the military, hated by the upper officers for doing what he was doing, because he was breaking decorum. You know, officers were not supposed to fraternize with the enlisted men, and certainly not supposed to, you know, he grew his hair long, mustache, you know. He was a hippie, basically, and he started a movement called; well, I don't know if he started it, but he disseminated a movement called Vietnam Soldiers Against the War. ... He started a petition drive and I signed it, you know, and a bunch of guys I knew signed it, because we were against the war. ... We looked at the anti-war movement as our friends. You know, we looked at that as, "Anything that shortens this war is good for us."

SH: You signed this in-country.

WK: Yes, and so, I signed the petition there and I didn't get any repercussions from it, but Lieutenant (Sutton?) did. ... He was put into a unit that consisted of him and a sergeant and no one else and he was removed from the enlisted men environment that he was in. He was basically isolated in the military and this sergeant was there to keep an eye on him and that's what happened. He wasn't put in jail, but he might as well have been. He was basically put under house arrest, if you want to call it that. ...

SH: Was anyone ever sent to the front or out of Long Bin because of that?

WK: No, no. ... That wasn't retaliation, like that, you know. At one point, there was an offensive where we were [making] a big push, a big offensive, and I volunteered to go with the 221st as a combat photographer, officer of a combat photography unit, because I knew that this would be my chance, if I was ever going to be involved with combat photography. ... It was a little, ... you know, foolish, in retrospective. It was foolhardy and risky, but I really wanted to see what that was like and I wanted that experience. So, I volunteered. My captain, that I worked for there, said [that] he didn't really want me to go, because he didn't want to spare me and he'd be shorthanded if I went, and so, my request went up to the Colonel. ... The Captain and I went to the Colonel's office and the Colonel said, "So, you want to volunteer for this offensive?" and I said, "Yes, sir," and he asked the Captain, "Well, can you spare him?" and the

Captain said, "No, I can't, sir." So, he said, "I'm sorry, I can't let you go." ... That was about the closest I got to combat. [laughter]

SH: You mentioned that there were many civilians working on the base.

WK: You mean Vietnamese civilians?

SH: Right.

WK: Yes.

SH: In keeping with the "hearts and minds" campaign, were there any volunteer efforts that you participated in within the local villages around Long Binh?

WK: Oh, well, yes, we had an orphanage. Our unit had a Vietnamese orphanage that we supported and we brought the kids in onto the base once, that I remember, and we, you know, gave them little treats and things like that, but we supported an orphanage.

SH: Supported it financially?

WK: Monetarily, yes, financially, and I actually never went to the orphanage myself, but I just remembered that ... we were doing that. I had a Vietnamese girlfriend. One of the girls who worked on base and I became very friendly and close and she was very outspoken and against the war, you know. We kind of agreed politically on that and she once got into a little bit of trouble, because, ... I think it might have been my colonel, one of the colonels offered them non-potable water to drink, the girls, these secretaries, and she talked back to him. ... She said, you know, "Why don't you drink that water, Colonel?" you know, and so, she got into a bit of trouble, but not much, and she and I ... became boyfriend/girlfriend, really, and I would go visit her in Saigon and bring her food and bring food to the people that she lived with, in very overcrowded conditions. She lived in an apartment that was, like, I couldn't believe how many people were in there. ... I couldn't even count them. They were just packed into this building. Saigon was made for, and I don't remember, exactly, the numbers, but I think there were maybe five times the number of people in Saigon who should have been, you know, could have been housed there, and they were all crammed into that city. ... In fact, there were huts ... I saw that were made out of flat sheets of Coca-Cola cans. In other words, before they stamped Coca-Cola cans, ... they were large sheets of aluminum with the Coca-Cola cans on them, on the outside, and these big sheets [were used as roofs]. It was very kind of ironic to see these huts that these Vietnamese people were living in made of sheets of Coca-Cola. ... You know, that was one of the many ironic things that I would see there.

SH: Where was she from?

WK: She was from Saigon; well, I mean, not originally. I don't know where she was from originally, but she lived in Saigon.

SH: She wound up in Saigon because of the work.

WK: Yes, and, by that time, my friend, Bob (Swartz?), that I had been in the photo school with in Fort Monmouth, by that time, he had already ... finished his tour of duty at the 221st Signal ... Combat Photo Company, and ... he volunteered, as a civilian, to come back to Vietnam as a civilian, because, just like, now, you'd make a lot of money as a civilian in Iraq, back then, you made a lot of money as a civilian in Vietnam, and so, he did it for the money, because they offered him it. He went back to try and find a job in the States and he couldn't really find anything, but they offered him a huge salary, so, he came back and he was living in Saigon at the time, working as a civilian for Pacific Architects and Engineers, PA&E, a large, [the] largest company, civilian company, contractors, in Vietnam and, at one point, he invited me to a party that was being given by the Diplomatic Corps. ... So, I went with, (Kuk?) was her name, my girlfriend, and she was dressed in the traditional Vietnamese *Áo dài* outfit of a long, flowing gown, colorful, and she was the only one there at the party that was dressed like a Vietnamese. Everyone else was dressed Western, including the Vietnamese girls, and so, I was very proud of her for that.

SH: Your security clearance did not keep you from fraternizing with a Vietnamese.

WK: Technically speaking, I probably wasn't allowed to do it, but, ... you know, we didn't get together on base. On base, we had a work relationship, workplace relationship.

SH: Was there any threat to Saigon when you were there? I know there were a lot of incidents.

WK: Yes. One time, I was visiting her in Saigon and I had just brought her a lot of food from the base commissary, you know, where you could buy food on base, and I was going to stay overnight. ... I wanted to go out, to take her to a disco. You know, they had these discos in Saigon where Americans went and, you know, danced and drank, and so on. It was a bar and she didn't want to go. She was tired, and so, we didn't go out and that was the night that the disco was attacked by Viet Cong. ... They threw in a grenade and, when the GIs came running out, those who weren't injured, they started shooting at, you know, they were firing at them from outside. They had set up, like, this whole ambush attack on the disco. So, yes, luckily, I wasn't involved in that, but there were terrorist activities, that's, you know, attacks and guerrilla attacks, ... in Saigon during that time, when I was there.

SH: Did you ever wonder about her being tired that night?

WK: You know, no, I never thought of it. I never thought of that. I really don't think she was VC, but who knows? You know, one of our barbers on base, in Long Binh, turned out to be VC. So, you didn't know who was the enemy and who wasn't the enemy, you know.

SI: What was the general attitude of the men that you served with, and yourself, towards the Vietnamese?

WK: Well, that was very hard for me, because the men; ... most of the people in the Army hated the Vietnamese and they didn't even like the soldiers. ... We used to call the Vietnamese policemen ...

SH: Hold that thought.

----------END OF TAPE TWO, SIDE TWO----------

GN: This continues an interview with Mr. William Kahane on Monday, March 5, 2007, in New Brunswick, New Jersey. I am Gino Namur ...

SI: ... Shaun Illingworth ...

SH: ... and Sandra Stewart Holyoak. Please, continue.

WK: Well, why don't you ask that again?

SI: I wanted to know what the general attitude of the men you served with was towards the Vietnamese. You started talking about what you called the policemen.

WK: The police in Saigon wore white gloves, and so, the soldiers used to call them "the white mice," but that wasn't the worst of it. I mean, most of the guys that I was around, the other American soldiers, they hated the Vietnamese. They called them "gooks," "slopes." There were a lot of derogatory words for the Vietnamese and this was [appalling]. I never, you know, used those words, because I knew about words and I knew about calling people names and I, you know, knew about [it] from experiences in my childhood, that I've had anti-Semitic slurs called to me, and I knew that it was wrong to think of a people in that way and talk of a people in that way. ... There was a lot of, just, hatred and disregard, looking down, contempt, of the Vietnamese who were even our allies, the South Vietnamese Military. I remember, one time, a South Vietnamese officer, I believe he was a captain, [was] talking to my sergeant, ... a sergeant who was under me, and my sergeant treated him as if he were a private and a subordinate, not like he was an officer, not like he would treat me or any other American officer, and it was pretty obvious to me. ... What was especially difficult [was], when I was in Saigon once, and I was with some other officers, ... we went into a hotel, ... into their courtyard, ... a very famous hotel that was from the French period. I think it might have been called the Continental Hotel, I'm not sure, but it was ceiling fans turning, you know, kind of like a *Casablanca* atmosphere, and we were sitting there, having drinks, gin and tonic, whatever, and I thought to myself, "I am like occupation here," you know. "I'm in the American occupation," and I found it very uncomfortable, not only that moment, but the whole time I was there, found it very uncomfortable to be an occupation force of a people, because of my background, you know. I knew about the German occupation in Europe and, you know, what my parents had gone through and I didn't want to be in an occupying army. I knew how the Vietnamese thought about us and ... it was not a place I wanted to be, for a lot of reasons, and that was one of them.

GN: What was morale like for you and the men closest to you during that time?

WK: Well, in Long Binh, it was fine. You know, I mean, we weren't in danger. ... They provided for us, they provided very well for us, in Long Binh. We had the best of food. We had an outdoor movie theater, with, like, bleachers and a screen, and ... they would show a movie

every night, although they showed John Wayne movies way too often, but they showed others. ... They had a swimming pool, above ground, like, about four feet high swimming pool set up, with a deck, for the officers and I could go there at lunch hour and ... go for a swim. Long Binh was huge, the largest base in Vietnam, and it was safe. ... We had an officers' mess hall. For a while, we had a Hungarian cook who made tremendous food and his chicken *paprikash* was fabulous and some of the generals found out about him and took him from our mess hall and he became the chief cook at the generals' mess hall, but we had ... very good conditions. ... We had Vietnamese ladies, these what they called "mama-sans," these, you know, older women who would shine our boots every day, press our uniforms. We'd get a new, pressed uniform every day, shined boots, every day. We lived, really, like royalty there, you know. I called it "The Long Binh Film Festival," because you saw a movie every night. [laughter] ... I mean, you know, I feel bad, in a way, saying this, because I know how hard it was for some of the guys out ... in the jungle and it was a really bad time for them, but, for me, it was a very, very easy experience and ... not a hardship.

GN: Did you have any interaction with the soldiers or Marines that were out in the jungle?

WK: Not very much. One of the units at Long Binh, ... they were assigned to helicopters to spray the jungle for [defoliation], herbicides, you know, and so, those guys, I was real close to, and they sometimes brought in wounded soldiers. I met some nurses who worked at the hospital, who had contact with wounded soldiers, but I didn't really have contact with them, the guys from the bush, very much at all. A couple of guys who had been in the bush who were reassigned to the battalion, a couple of officers, yes, I had contact with them. ... Mainly, their attitude was, "Kill all the Vietnamese. I hate 'em all," you know, and that was my contact with them.

SH: When you went down to Saigon, you said you had a driver and it was just an hour south, were there ever any incidents on that run?

WK: No. That was a superhighway. Between Long Binh and Saigon was a superhighway. It's, like, a ... four or six-lane highway and you did sixty miles an hour, straight through, and, no, there were never any ambushes on that road.

SH: How spit-and-polish was Long Binh, or at least the unit that you were assigned to?

WK: It was pretty much spit-and-polish, you know. ... In fact, some of the officers who did guard duty were insistent that the guys be, you know, all presentable, with polished shoes and everything. I took a different attitude. My attitude was, ... when they were on guard duty, I wanted them to wear their flak vests and their helmets and I didn't care if their shoes were shined or not and their, you know, brass was shined. I wanted them to be as safe as they could be anyway, but, ... stupidly, there was an emphasis placed on that stuff. ...

SH: When you were back in the Pentagon, you had filmed Westmoreland's message. When you were at Long Binh, did you ever get to see any of the luminaries of the Vietnam era? Were there USO shows or visits by dignitaries?

WK: Yes. ... Bob Hope came to the base with his show and, ... you know, a little protest, I refused to go. There were little protests that I did, you know, my own little statements, like, one time, we were supposed to go on a raid of the enlisted men's barracks, because they had girls in there. ... Our superior officers knew that they had girls, so, we were going to go on a raid and catch these girls and arrest them, give them to the MPs, and I said, "No, I'm not going to do that. I'm not going," and they didn't make an issue out of it, but, later on, I talked to some of the girls after the raid. They were taken. It was very degrading, because the girls ran out of the barracks and they went running after them in this field and they caught them. They gave them to the MPs. The MPs took them. The MPs had a party at their barracks with all these girls, and then, the next day, they were back. ... I said, you know, "What went on?" and they said, "Oh, the MPs arrested us and they had a big party." So, it was ridiculous.

SI: You talked about drugs earlier; do you think that they had an impact on the effectiveness of your unit? Do you think it hurt your productivity, so-to-speak?

WK: Most of the officers did not use drugs, not even smoked marijuana. I think I was one of the few, me and my New York film school buddy. The two of us would smoke together ... and there were maybe one or two others. Most of them drank heavily. Alcohol was their drug of choice and it was legal, of course. So, there was a lot of drinking, a lot of alcohol, among the officers, and among the enlisted men, mostly, it was marijuana and heroin. There was a lot of drug use. ... I guess, maybe, part of it was, I don't know, maybe it was because of the culture at the time, even in the United States, ... there was a lot of marijuana use going on and drug use, but I'm sure it cut down on the effectiveness. ... I know we couldn't have defended ourselves. ... If Long Binh had been attacked, we wouldn't have been able to defend ourselves. First of all, ... we didn't trust the enlisted men to give them weapons, so, nobody had any weapons. All the weapons were locked up in the armory, under lock and key of the armorer. I didn't have a weapon unless I was on guard duty and my men didn't have weapons unless they were on guard duty, and the only time they had the weapons was when they were on duty and when they were off, came off duty, they handed in their weapons. So, hardly anybody was armed. I don't see how we would have really defended ourselves very well.

SI: To follow up, did you think that it was more of an issue of the higher-ups wanting to exert control or was there an actual problem there?

SH: Was it something that they were afraid of?

WK: I think that the military didn't really trust the troops very much, because there was a big divide, you know, between the superior ... officers, and even ... my fellow lieutenants, captains, junior grade officers, and the civilian enlisted men. They were mostly draftees, and there was a difference, also, between the sergeants. The sergeants were not marijuana users. They were alcohol users. The draftees, privates, corporals, lower grade sergeants, non-career people, they were, you know, using drugs and they were anti-war, ... for the most part, and the sergeants and the officers were pro-war and there was a big divide in the military there. ... I don't think that the superior officer corps trusted the enlisted men at all, because of the drug use and because of their views on the war.

SH: Because they were draftees

WK: They were draftees, yes.

SH: I do not know if you were there during any holidays, but were there chaplains? What kind of services did you have there?

WK: Oh, yes. ... One Passover, ... when I was in Long Binh, all Jewish personnel were allowed to go to a Passover *seder* in Saigon, and so, I used that opportunity to go to the *seder* and there were quite a few guys there, I remember, and there was a rabbi who conducted the *seder* and I ended up ... spending the night, because it was, you know, hard to get back and forth in one day. So, they let me stay overnight. I had an overnight pass and I think I stayed in (Kuk's?) apartment that night, too. ... It was a great experience to go to a Passover *seder* there in Saigon. That was the only religious experience that I had there.

SH: We talked about the brass, the dignitaries, the congressmen or the senators, did you see any of them?

WK: Oh, those kinds of visits? No, none that I saw.

SH: You never had to shine up for a general inspection or anything.

WK: No, no.

SH: What did the men at your level think of people like Westmoreland? Did your opinion change from the time you were in the Pentagon to when you were actually in-country?

WK: Yes. I think that was one of the things that made me cynical about the war, was the Christmas message to the troops thing, but, just in general, you know, I was informed and I knew what a colossal waste the whole thing was. I heard stories about how our treasure, you know, our military equipment, was all being stolen and being, you know, wasted, and let alone the lives of the men, and it was just very cynical. You know, I was very cynical about the whole thing.

SH: It really did not change from your time at the Pentagon to when you actually got in-country.

WK: No.

SH: Did you become more cynical?

WK: More so, yes, because, then, I saw firsthand what I had been reading about, ... or some of what I had been reading about. ... In my job, scrounging, basically, for stuff, I once went out to a storage depot that was out in the jungle and it was covered by just a roof with no walls and it was packed with stuff, I mean, lots and lots of equipment of every kind. ... There was so much equipment, it couldn't all fit in under the roof and it was out there in the jungle, just rusting away, and I was shocked, I mean, horrified, ... at this waste of money, because I came from a background [of a] small businessman. You know, my father being a small businessman, we

were always very careful about expenditures and expenses and not wasting anything and this was, just from my point of view, from what I could see, a huge waste. ... I said to the officer in charge, ... because we were winding down the war, I said, "What's going to happen to all this stuff? It's not going to get used by the military. What's going to happen to all of it, because we're winding down the war?" He said, "We're going to leave it here," and I'm sure that's what happened. It was just left.

SI: How important was the mail and contact with home, family and friends?

WK: Yes. It was mail; it wasn't e-mail or anything. It was all mail. Yes, that was important. I did get letters from my parents and wrote back to them and some friends. In fact, one of my friends, one of my Rutgers Vineland friends, a guy that I had roomed with in the apartment, Mike (Wolfe?), he was living in New York at the time and he got out of the draft by teaching in a really bad school, you know, like an inner city school. ... If you did that, that was one way to avoid being drafted. So, he was doing that and he sent me a salami from one of the famous delis in New York. It might have been ...

SH: Katz's?

WK: It might have been Katz's or it might have been Zabar's; no, it was Zabar's. I think it was Zabar's, and they still had a program left over from World War II, "Send A Salami To Your Boy In The Army." That was a famous sort of slogan in World War II, and they still had the program and ... he sent me a salami from Zabar's. Well, the first salami he sent me didn't reach me, never got to me. [laughter] Someone, you know ...

SH: Helped themselves to it.

WK: Yes. So, when he wrote me and ... asked me if I got the salami, ... I wrote back and I said, "No." They, Zabar's, sent me another salami at no cost and this second one got to me, but the mail, ... yes, it was a good link to back home. I don't think we could use the telephone to call. I'm not sure about that.

SH: Being in the Signal Corps ...

WK: We might have had limited phone [capabilities]. You know, I think we did. We did have phone use, but, for some reason, I wasn't able to call my parents from there, but we were able to speak to Washington.

SH: Did you have any interaction with the Red Cross?

WK: No.

SH: Did you have to get anyone home for humanitarian leave, anything like that?

WK: No.

GN: Were the letters from your parents usually filled with their fears? Did you have to reassure them that you were okay?

WK: Yes. I had to constantly reassure them that I was fine.

SH: Where was your younger brother in his education while you were over there? What was his draft number like?

WK: No, ... he got a high lottery number. He was in college, but ... he was not in danger of being drafted, because of the good number.

SI: I forgot the name of the resort town

WK: In Vietnam? Vang Tau.

SI: You described it as a *Casablanca* like place where all the combatants mingled.

WK: It was a war-free zone, by gentlemen's agreement. There was no formal agreement to make this place safe, but it was just known by everyone that the war was not going to go into Vang Tau.

SI: What was that like? Did you get to interact with enemy soldiers?

WK: ... You know, I was swimming next to Vietnamese guys and I didn't know who they were. They could have been South Vietnamese, they could have been North Vietnamese, they could have been Viet Cong, but I didn't spend that much time in Vang Tau, only a day. You know, we'd get there, we'd go to the beach, we'd swim, and then, ... in the afternoon, we'd get back on the bus and go back to Long Binh. So, I didn't really get to spend overnight there. ... Once, one of my friends, who was also a lieutenant, but he was Filipino, but he was American and he was in the American Army, ... he knew of a place. Somehow, he knew of this place on the South China Sea, also, near Vang Tau, that was a hotel that was being run by a expatriate American, an American civilian who had rented the hotel from the Vietnamese owners and was operating it as a resort on the beach for American soldiers and for Australian soldiers. ... It was guarded by ... Chinese mercenaries that he had hired and it was behind barbed wire fences. It was well protected and my friend, (Willie Alaria?), told me about this place and he said, "I'm going to take you there." So, I said, "Oh, okay, fine," and he was a pretty wild guy, and so, he took me to this place and ... it was fabulous. ... I mean, it wasn't a luxurious hotel, but they had a rooftop restaurant where they served the local Vietnamese lobster, which is like langostino, you know, small lobsters. They had a beach, private beach. They had volleyball on the beach. They had their own speedboat, with water skiing, and it was, like, you know, amazing. I couldn't believe it and there were Vietnamese girls that you could dance with and, you know, further than that as well. ... He had this whole industry set up there, and then, I found out, while we were there, the owner came over to my friend, the lieutenant, and he said, "The MPs were here, asking about your jeep. They said it was stolen and I told them to get the hell out of here," and he said, "I just wanted you to know that they were, you know, asking about it," and I turned to him and I said,

"Is that a stolen jeep?" and he said, "Well, yes." [laughter] So, he was a pretty wild character, but we had to go through the same VC territory to get to this place. I only went that once.

SH: There were MPs at this place.

WK: No, the MPs were not there. They came over to the hotel; they asked to be admitted. I don't know how they [found us]. I guess they saw the jeep and, somehow, they knew it was a stolen jeep.

SH: You mentioned the Australians; did you talk to other Allied troops?

WK: Well, I did come in contact with a few guys who came in from the jungle who were, you know, pretty, kind of like *Apocalypse Now* type characters, who were there, but, no, that's it. There were just the Australians and us.

SI: How racially diverse was the unit that you served in? Was it integrated?

WK: Oh, I noticed that a lot of the enlisted men who served under us were from the South, and they were either white or black, but a lot of Southerners, and I just attributed that to the fact that they were more subject to the draft than other people, because they were maybe less educated; they didn't go to college as much. ... The blacks who were in our unit had a certain sense of cohesiveness. They had this thing called "the dap." It was a handshake, ... a very intricate handshake, that would last for ten minutes, and, you know, I'm exaggerating, maybe it was three minutes, but it was a long time and it wasn't just shaking hands. It was like finger snapping, you know, all kinds of tapping the hands. ...

SH: Clenched fist, open palm; I am trying to describe what you are doing for the tape.

WK: All kinds of [moves]. It just went on and on and on, and they had it choreographed, so, they obviously knew what they were going to be doing. It wasn't so random. It looked like it was choreographed, ... a whole series of movements, and this used to sometimes anger the white guys, especially if you were in line behind one of these guys at the mess hall, because ... I noticed that once one black guy would start doing it to his buddy, they sort of were obligated to go through it all. [laughter] Even if they didn't want to, it was kind of a symbol of solidarity, and so, you know, maybe you wanted to go through the chow line quicker, but you had to take time, because it was kind of impolite not to do it, and the white guys behind them would get annoyed, but they didn't say anything racial or anything, but you could tell that, "Oh, God, now, we're going [through] the dap again. We have to wait for the dap," you know. [laughter] ... I had one enlisted man, (Lindsay?), who was under me, who was a black kid. He was from an urban area, but I don't remember if it was Jersey or someplace else. ... He was a nice kid, but ... he would get into trouble with drugs, and I told him ... not to associate with this other guy who was trouble and it ended up where he didn't listen to me. He ended up walking into the mess hall and he got a hold of a .45 pistol and he fired it into the air and they arrested him and they put him into what we called "LBJ," which was, ironically, the initials for Long Bin Jail. ... You know, LBJ was the initials of Long Bin Jail and it was also the initials of our president, kind of ironic, but that's

where (Lindsay?) ended up, but I went there and visited him a couple of times, ... but, you know, there was nothing much I could do at that point. He had to serve his time.

SH: Have you seen any movies or read any books that honestly depict, or exaggerate, what you experienced?

WK: I guess *Good Morning, Vietnam* was pretty close to my experience, in a way.

SH: Some men have said that if they knew a movie was about Vietnam, they just would not go.

WK: Oh, no, I have no [problems], because my experience was not severe. It wasn't that kind of a traumatic experience, you know. I think the people who [did], and I've known a number of them, and I belong to ... Vietnam Veterans of America, VVA, I'm a member of that, and I only joined it about a year ago, or even less than a year ago, because I didn't really relate to those people very well, because ... a lot of them had those traumatic experiences and they were suffering from post-traumatic stress. ... You know, they couldn't talk about it and, you know, my experience was so different and, in a way, I feel, you know, guilty, like, I have heard people say to me, of my generation, that they feel guilty they didn't go to Vietnam. So, my guilt is that I went to Vietnam, but I didn't experience the really heavy-duty experience that some of my compatriots experienced. So, I think everybody maybe has a little bit of guilt along the way, but ... the people, mostly, who belong to those organizations, who belong to the organization that I belong to, still have very severe effects of the war. I'm lucky; I didn't have any.

SH: When you knew that your time was getting short, how did you acknowledge that? What was it like to come back to the States? What were your plans? You said that you were very focused on your future plans, did they change at all?

WK: Well, when I came back, it was very odd, because even though I wasn't in a combat situation, I was in a situation, very often, like in Saigon or traveling, where I would be worried about being ambushed or being, you know, shot at or something like that. You know, you had to be cautious and I was armed, ... well, no, my driver was armed, when I went to Saigon. My attitude was that I ... purposely would not take a weapon, because it was sort of the karma idea and the idea that if I wasn't a threat to them, maybe they wouldn't be a threat to me. That's probably ridiculous, but that's what I thought of at the time, but, coming back, I remember driving in New Jersey, or being driven in New Jersey, and thinking, "Gee, there's no chance that anybody's going to be shooting at me," and it was kind of a different experience. ... I felt kind of, you know, elated, ... but I also realized, after being home for a while, that ... almost no one shared my experience of Vietnam, my Vietnam experience. It was outside the culture. I mean, everybody was going along with their lives, going to supermarkets, whatever, working, raising a family, but Vietnam was really not anything directly related to them. So, even though my experience wasn't a heavy-duty experience, it was still a different experience and I couldn't get anyone to relate to even what I went through, or neither could I relate exactly to what was going on here, because it was so odd that everything was so ... separate.

GN: Did that make it difficult to adjust to life back home?

WK: Only for a short while, you know, the brief, transitional period of time. They offered me captain, by the way, if I would stay in Vietnam for another six months, but I refused. I mean, I didn't refuse; I turned it down. ...

SH: Did you think about it for a minute?

WK: No, no, because I would have if I had been thinking of become career military, but ... I couldn't wait to get back to civilian life and start my, you know, ... real life.

GN: You received the Bronze Star.

WK: Everybody did. That was no big deal.

SI: You have brought up the fact that you are very future-oriented several times. Do you think that your mindset affected your whole Vietnam experience, perhaps motivated you?

WK: Well, yes. ... I was making plans in Vietnam. I was writing to my father about what I would do when I got out and he had some ideas about [it]. He was in business, in the meat business, at the time, and he thought that he would like to set me up in a little ice cream stand that he was planning. ... I told him that I would try it, you know, when I got back, and I did try that out for a summer, you know, because I think I got out in June, and so, it worked out real well, where I had the summer, but that business didn't work out too well for me. So, I just went back to Washington and tried to get into the film and photography business and I did work for ten years, in Washington, in that field. ...

SH: What did you do?

WK: I was a filmmaker and a multimedia producer for a company in Washington, and then, [I was] on my own, and I did freelance work. ... I wanted to become a news cameraman. That was my goal, but ... I wasn't ever able to get into the union. The unions were very strong, in that you had to be a union member to get a full-time job at that. So, I ended up freelancing, doing it, you know, sometime. ... I got some interesting work for a time and I did it for a decade and my most interesting experience was, ... I got a job as the cameraman for Hubert Humphrey on his campaign. ... That was the decade of the '70s and that was the campaign when [George] McGovern was running against Humphrey for the Democratic nomination, and then, of course, later on, Watergate happened, when McGovern ran against Nixon. I believe it was Nixon, but I worked for Humphrey and that was an exciting period, but most of my work was not exactly what I wanted to be doing, which was documentary work, and I did more commercial stuff. So, after the decade of the '70s, I decided to go into another career and leave that, especially when my children were born, my first children, my twins were born. I left that and I went into the motel business in New Jersey, in Cape May, and I've done that for the last twenty-five years, up until a year ago, when I sold that and retired from that business.

GN: When did you meet your wife?

WK: I've been married twice. My first wife, I met ... when I was stationed at the Pentagon and, after I came back from Vietnam and after my summer business, I moved back to Washington. I reacquainted myself with her and we got married. That lasted for seven years, and then, we were divorced, with no children, and then, I met my current wife in Washington in the late '70s, after my divorce. About a year after I got divorced, I met her. We married and we had five children.

SH: Had she been involved in the film industry?

WK: ... No, not really. She was a nurse and she was actually a hospice nurse and she had just graduated from nursing school. So, she's younger than I am, ... but, no, she wasn't involved in that.

SI: Are there any stories that you can tell us about the Humphrey campaign?

WK: Well, Humphrey was a very jovial, genial person, probably too nice a person to be President, from what I saw of him. He complained about Johnson being crude and cruel to him, saying, you know, degrading things to him. Johnson was, ... apparently, a very crude guy and he would make comments about Humphrey's manhood. ... [He] really was a crude person, but Hubert was a very likable, very nice guy, ... very sentimental. He would cry in his speeches, from time-to-time, when he talked about his family, and I think he had a son who died of cancer and he would [discuss him], you know. He was very emotional and he was just really, really nice and I don't think he was tough enough to be President. ... Then, when it came time to campaign against McGovern, it was [that] they were campaigning against each other with both of them in an anti-war platform of getting us out of the war. ... McGovern would say, "I'd get us out in six months," and he would say, "I'd get us out in three months," and it was that sort of thing. ... At one point, he did ask me, ... as a younger person, what I thought he could do to get the youth vote, because McGovern had all the youth vote and he was only popular with the old-line Democrats, the unions and people like that, and I said, you know, "I'm sorry to say this to you, Senator, but there really isn't anything you can do, as far as I can tell. I think McGovern has the youth vote. They don't have confidence in you, because of your association with Johnson and the war and, you know, to be honest, I just don't think there's anything you can do to change that," but he did have the solid union support. ... At one point, I went down into a coal mine in West Virginia with him, at the midnight shift change, and I was filming his interacting with the coal miners, you know, and shaking hands with them and there was a bluegrass banjo player. ... You know, it was really a very nice interchange between them and they were solidly supporting him, because he had the blue collar, you know, support, but it wasn't enough to get the [nomination]. In California, we lost California, our money dried up and the camera that I was using was a rented film camera, you know. It was a motion picture camera. It was rented from this rental house that we got in LA and they took the camera back. They said, you know, "We're not getting paid." They just repossessed it, [laughter] and so, I had no more camera left and ... the media director in Washington, I called him and I said, you know, "They took our equipment. They took our sound equipment, our film equipment. What are we supposed to do?" He said, "Well, you know, the campaign's over." He said, "You're at the Beverly Hilton, you've got another five days there, it's paid for; go to Disneyland." So, we used the time and had, you know, a little vacation. My sound guy, by the way, [whom] I hired was Jimmy (Coughlin?), my

friend from Vietnam, the NYU film student. [laughter] So, when I got the job working for Humphrey, I hired him as my sound guy. ...

SI: Were you the only cameraman on the campaign?

WK: Yes. I was the official campaign cinematographer and my job was to not so much document the campaign, they didn't care about that so much, but D. J. Leary, the media director for the campaign, his idea was, see, ... there wasn't video then, so, the smaller stations wouldn't send anybody to cover the campaign stops. ... His idea was, news footage is better than commercials. If you can get on the news, it's worth more than paying for a commercial. So, in order to get on the news on the small stations that didn't have the staff to send their people to cover our little campaign stops in little Podunk towns, I would shoot it, and then, he would have, usually, a union guy [that] would show up and would take the footage from me. I'd put it in the can for him, he'd take it and he'd deliver it to his local TV station in the area, and that's how we got on to local TVs, TV news, and they would edit it any way they wanted. We didn't care how they edited it. We just gave them the footage just to get them on, and that was the strategy. I think it was a good strategy, but, you know, it didn't work and it wasn't good enough.

GN: You must have been on the road a lot.

WK: Yes. I was on the road constantly. ... I mean, there was a campaign plane that I was on and we would go to many locations in a day, you know, many cities in a day, just constantly traveling. [I would] get back to DC [long] enough to do my laundry and get back on the plane.

SI: You had very personal access to the Vice-President.

WK: Well, I did, yes. ... I wasn't like his adviser or anything. He had advisers on the plane. So, I was kind of like a low-level staffer-type person, but I think he knew that I was important to him, because, you know, he would make sure that I would ... get access to the stops and be given access to the platforms where the press was. ... I was basically along with the press on the plane, but I was not press. I was, like, an inside guy.

SH: Was there anyone that he met or had as part of his campaign that you found terribly irritating?

WK: That worked for him?

SH: That he came in contact with, that he had to curry favor from.

WK: Oh, I can't think of anyone like that, except that the press, in general, I found that ... if he made a mistake during the day at one of his stops, they were merciless. They would play it on the plane, over and over and over, out loud and, you know, in his hearing.

SH: Really?

WK: Yes. ... They were just [merciless], you know. Anything they could do to get under his skin, they would do it, as kind of like, I don't know; it was this attitude, like, just a mocking kind of attitude. ... I wondered if they would do something like that to JFK. I don't think they would. I think it was because he was looked upon as, you know, like a joke, in a way, and they maybe didn't take him seriously, ... and they just had a mean streak, I think, some of them, and they would just do that and it was pretty nasty.

SI: Would you say that you were a Humphrey supporter or was it just a job?

WK: It was a job. I was a McGovern supporter.

----------END OF TAPE THREE, SIDE ONE----------

GN: Side two, tape three.

SH: The press corps was on the plane with you as you traveled. You talked about them playing mistakes over and over again within his hearing. Were there journalists who asked good questions?

WK: Yes. I think, for the most part, they seemed to be fair, impartial, kind of, yes. It was just [that] whenever they got the opportunity to do a dig, to jab, they would take it, you know, because candidates are fair game, for the most part, I think.

SH: Did any of your footage wind up on the big networks?

WK: No, no. I wasn't shooting for them at all.

SH: It would not have been passed on to them at all.

WK: No. It was given directly to the TV stations, local stations, and they would keep it. They would use it and I don't know what they would do afterward with it. Whether they archived it or destroyed, I don't really know.

SI: In the brief biographical sketch that you provided to us, you listed a number of other jobs you held and events that you covered during your time as a freelance cameraman and with your production company. Would you like to say anything about them?

WK: ... They were all in the decade of the '70s that I spent in Washington, DC, trying to build a film career or a career in media. ... Well, the other interesting film, I guess, was the Republican women, National Federation of Republican Women. ...

SH: That is about 180 degrees out. [laughter]

WK: Yes. Our production company, that I had formed with another guy, we got hired by them to do a promotional film, to promote the organization, basically, to get new members, and so on. ... That was when Reagan was President and the elder Bush was Vice-President and I had

Maureen Reagan as the narrator of the movie. Maureen has [since] passed away. She was not Nancy Reagan's daughter. She was the daughter of his former wife, the actress ...

SI: Jane Wyman?

WK: Was it Wyman? It could be. Anyway, she and Nancy Reagan did not get along. Nancy hated her and she wouldn't even let her stay at the White House when she was there, but Maureen was ... very nice. Unfortunately, she died of cancer some years ago, but she was the narrator of the film and we had one session with Reagan in the White House, where we had a written message that he, you know, read on the teleprompter into the camera. ... We filmed him giving this message, to, you know, join the National Federation of Republican Women, [that] kind of message, you know, and then, we had a similar session with George Bush, Sr., in his office in the Old Executive Office Building, where his office was, and I had to have all kinds of clearances to get in there. ... [For] that film, you know, we did for the Republican women, so, that was an interesting experience. ...

SH: Interesting because there were stories there?

WK: Well, no, just, you know, going to the White House and meeting Reagan and meeting Bush, even though I wasn't a supporter of theirs, and Reagan told some dumb joke that everybody laughed at. ... It was so unfunny and it was so stupid, but we laughed, because he's the President; you have to laugh at his jokes. ... Oh, I was setting him up; I wanted to position him to the side. ... There was a fireplace and there was a fire going and his guy, whoever he was, the handler, insisted on putting him in front, directly ... in front of the fireplace, and I said, "Look, if you do that, fire's going to be all around him. ... It's not going to look good." [laughter] ... He refused to listen to me. He said, "No, this is how we're going to set him up," and we did it his way. ... It was just that experience of going to the White House and meeting those people.

GN: How were you approached to do that film? Was your name out there?

WK: We had done a film for the B'Nai B'rith women, and I don't know if that got us the film, but it was really through a contact of my partner. ... The Republican women contacted us.

SH: Did you interview other Republican women as part of it?

WK: Well, there was the president, at the time, of the Federation of Republican Women. I don't remember her name. She was a political, you know, activist. ... Not related to that film, but just related to other work, I interviewed a number of people, ... like Senator Edward Kennedy and some of the people on the Watergate Commission. I remember interviewing one of those senators for various things in the course of my Washington work, but I didn't do that much political work. It ended up being mostly work for associations who are set up in Washington, because they're lobbying for their industry group. So, I worked for, maybe, the bankers' association or the insurance people or the automobile dealers, just all kinds of industry groups. Everybody has their association in Washington, because they want to lobby the government for favorable treatment. ... It was a whole [learning experience]. Whatever I do, I try to learn

something and I learned a lot, I think. In the campaign, I learned that politics was very shallow and that campaigning is a very shallow process and I, you know, really was disillusioned. If I had any illusions beforehand, they were definitely ... removed during the campaign experience, and then, also, the experience of working for all of these industry associations sort of disillusioned me about the corporate world, because I met a lot of corporate people during that time. I met a lot of CEOs and I felt that there was a real lot of corruption that was going on. I called it corruption; maybe that's too strong a word, but it was this interconnectedness between the corporate world and the political world, that I saw, that I felt was, at heart, at the base of it, unfair, not really correct, in a democratic system, not ideal, you know. So, there was a lot of [disillusionment]. I guess a lot of that experience disillusioned me in a lot of ways, as I got older; if I wouldn't have anyway, then, my experiences did.

GN: Did your work reinforce your long-held beliefs, for example, perhaps that pro-corporate people tend to be Republicans more often?

WK: Yes. I think ... all of that experience, what it did is, it made me kind of go back to my father's idea of being self-sufficient, ... and so, when I left Washington and I went into the motel business, my motel became like my little kingdom, almost. It was, like, my place, where I would greet travelers. I looked upon myself as a kind of an oasis, in a way, kind of like Abraham, in the Bible, who greets the traveler coming to his tent and, you know, takes care of them. ... I was kind of acting that role, in addition to which, I was raising a family, ... first, the twins, and then, after that, three more boys, and ... my wife and I, and we were like this little unit in this motel. We lived at the motel in the summer and we went back to Washington in the winter, ... at the beginning, but, then, later on, we actually moved ... back to South Jersey, but, in the beginning, we only lived there in the summers. ... We created a playground there for our children, which turned out to be the best thing we did, because all of our customers were coming with little children and they were using the playground and our kids were using the playground and they were playing together. ... I remember when my college roommate, Petersen, who was ... my roommate, my best friend, here at Rutgers, ... he came and visited me with his wife and children from Sweden. He had moved to Sweden by then. He'd married a Swedish woman and had kids there and he came and visited me once and he said, "Bill," he used to call me Bill, "you have created a little empire, a little kingdom, here," [laughter] ... and it was true. That's the way I looked at it and [I] raised my family there, twenty-five years, and I sort of went back to my father's idea of creating your own little place. ... What's real to me, what became really real, was my family, my wife and my children and that close unit, and, you know, I became disillusioned with all the rest, the film world, the corporate world, the business world; all of that was not for me. I understood that it was not for me. In fact, the day before my father's automobile accident, the night before he got into the accident, we had a conversation and the last advice he gave to me was that corporations are really not ... responsible, like a small business is responsible. When you have a small business, your name is on the door and corporations are not as trustworthy, they're not as responsible, as a small business, and it's harmful, and they're very often harmful to our country, because nobody's name is on the bottom line. ...

SH: No one is accountable.

WK: Nobody's accountable. He said, "What's really good about this country ... are these small businesses all around the country who really make it work." Maybe he was saying that because he was a small businessman, but ... I think, you know, after my experience in the corporate world, there was some truth to that.

SH: You said that your youngest is now here at Rutgers.

WK: No, he's not the youngest. He's the second to the oldest. My twins, unfortunately, one of them passed away from cancer, the other one is now twenty-five. He's in California and he's a solar energy engineer in California. He just started his first job there and that's Ben, and then, ... Ari passed away when he was seventeen, in high school. Adam is a junior here at Rutgers, psychology major, and then, the next one, Natan, Natan is named after the gravestone from Rimalev in 1648. ... His name is taken from that stone. Natan is a freshman at BU [Boston University] and my youngest, Raffy, Rafael, is a junior in high school and he's the only one we have left at home. Nancy and I are almost empty nesters now.

SH: You said that you moved back to South Jersey. Are you back in Vineland?

WK: No. We live in Northfield, which is Exit 36 on the Parkway, right outside of Atlantic City.

GN: Do any of your sons want to enter the service?

WK: I doubt it. I don't think so. ... My military career was strictly because there was a war going on and there was a draft going on and, you know, I couldn't avoid it.

SH: Have you ever considered politics?

WK: No. [laughter]

GN: Can you talk a little bit about your uncle's book and how you got involved with that?

WK: Oh, yes. My uncle's book has been a big part of my life, because I've been working very hard; so far, ... I've had limited success. My uncle, who was rescued by the Archbishop in Lvov, wrote a book called *The Lvov Ghetto Diary* and, when I was visiting him in Israel one time, Uncle David said to me, "I would really like my book to be translated into English and published in America," and I said I would do that. ... So, we found a translator, through *Yad Vashem* in Israel, and he translated the book and I got him to translate it into English, and then, I took the English translation and went to a number of publishers, mostly university presses, and University of Massachusetts at Amherst was interested in publishing the book, so, I gave it to them to publish. ... Unfortunately, it's out of print now. You can find it on, like, Amazon used books for, like, eighty dollars or something like that, you know. It's very rare, but my real goal was to get it published in Ukrainian, in Ukraine, because I felt that when I went back to my house in 1996, I was met with a lot of anti-Semitic attitude there, and it's still very strong in Ukraine. ... I wanted to have his book published there as, maybe, an antidote to that, because the young people, really, even though they're anti-Semitic, they didn't know why and they didn't know what went on. They didn't have any education about the history of Ukraine, especially during the war. So, I

asked my Uncle David and he said, "You can try it if you want to. I doubt that they'll ever read it," even though he was a member of an organization that was ... called the Israel-Ukrainian Friendship Society and he tried to make bridges between the Ukraine and ... Israel and the Jewish people, and even his daughter, Ruth, her work, today, she lives in Portugal and her work is Jewish-Christian dialogue. She worked, for many years, for the Israeli embassy in Germany. She's the girl who was hidden in the orphanage of the monastery. So, he said, "You can go ahead, but I doubt they'll read it," but, at the time, there was the [John] Demjanjuk trial going on in Jerusalem, [1986-1988]. Demjanjuk, you may recall, was a Ukrainian war criminal who was accused of being ... a guard at Treblinka, "Ivan the Terrible," was accused of being "Ivan the Terrible," who was running the gas chambers at Treblinka, and he had a trial in Jerusalem. ... The trial was ongoing and my uncle said, "If you do want to get it translated into Ukrainian and ... published in Ukraine, I would just ask you to wait until the trial is over. I don't want to unduly influence that trial." So, I did wait and Demjanjuk ... was first found guilty. Then, it was taken to the [Israeli] Supreme Court. The Supreme Court found him [not guilty], insufficient evidence, and they released him. ... As far as I know, he's back in America, lives in America. His excuse was that he was not at Treblinka, he was at Sobibor, a different death camp. Now, you know, then, they couldn't totally prove, beyond a shadow of a doubt, that he was at Treblinka, so, the Supreme Court, I guess to their credit, really, I was amazed that they did release him, but they did. Anyway, I did get it translated into Ukrainian, through an organization called ... the Center for Jewish Education in Kiev, which is a Jewish community group. They translated it for me and I paid for the translation and for the publishing of the book, a small printing. We only have a few thousand copies. It's being used in Kiev, by this organization, to teach teachers from Ukrainian schools who will go to a workshop in the summer and they study the book, and then, they use it in their classroom, hopefully, in some way. My goal is to get massive publication, maybe a hundred thousand or a few hundred thousand books, and get it into the public school system in Ukraine. So, I'm trying to accomplish that, but, so far, I haven't, but, one day, I will.

SI: Good goal.

WK: Yes.

GN: Have you ever considered any film projects about your experiences in Vietnam or with other Vietnam veterans?

WK: No. My interest is more in the Holocaust and my documentaries that I've made most recently have been about the Holocaust.

SH: You are still working

WK: Now that I'm no longer in the motel business, I went back to doing it as a hobby, avocation, you know, kind of, and I have my own equipment at home and, yes, so, I'm doing that as more of any projects that I want to do. ... I don't do anything for money. So, I did a film called *Auschwitz Memories*, through Stockton College, where we went to Auschwitz with one of the teachers, Rabbi Kohn, who is an Auschwitz survivor himself. ... He gave a tour, a walking tour, where ... we had a group of students, ... they're all teachers in the public schools in New Jersey, most of the people who take that course, and so, he took a group of us through the camp

and sort of relived his experiences, is what happened, and so, that's, like, a twenty-five-minute documentary about that experience, and then, there is another documentary that I made during the rest of the trip about some of the death camps that we visited and some of the cities we visited and the people who went on the trip, and that's about fifty minutes. Those are the last two things that I've done, and my interest is, I guess compulsively, Holocaust related.

SH: It is a noble and wonderful effort. Are there any questions that we have not asked? Is there something you would like to leave on tape for us?

WK: Well, you know, I guess maybe I should bring it back to Rutgers. You know, Rutgers, even though it wasn't the perfect place for me, ... it gave me a big window on the world and it gave me a place where I could transition from that very small, limited worldview that I had on the farm and in Vineland. ... It gave me a transitional place, and I think it serves that for many young people, even today, the college experience does, first time away from home, living on your own, but, for me, it's maybe more so, because ... people were so sheltered in the '50s, anyway, and I, coming from that rural kind of background, even though it was a different rural than really rural, you know, it was kind of like rural with an Eastern European culture. You know, it's kind of strange, but Rutgers, to me, was a great opportunity and the place that I could afford, from very limited means, to go and get access to that. So, being supported by the state [was important], otherwise, I never would have been able to go to college at all. So, yes, I'm very grateful.

SH: We thank you tremendously. We really appreciate the stories you shared here.

WK: And my fortieth anniversary [reunion] is coming up in May. I'll be here at Rutgers for the fortieth.

SH: You will see us. Thank you again.

WK: Great.

[TAPE PAUSED]

SH: An addendum, please.

WK: Yes, addendum. [This] was during the '60s period that you brought up, about Rutgers and the ferment that was going on. ... There was a Rutgers graduate by the name of Paul Robeson that you're probably familiar with. When I was at Rutgers, the gymnasium had pictures of all the All-American football players on the wall in the gym. Paul Robeson had been an All-American football player, but his picture was not up ... in the gym along with the others, and our class became very active in that movement. We started a movement that Paul Robeson's picture should be up in the gym. Now, it seems like maybe a small thing, but ... it became a big issue and it was kind of like the University had to back down in order to put his picture up. ... Probably, the reason his picture wasn't up was because he was such a controversial figure. He'd been a communist. He'd lived in Russia. ... You know, even in the early '60s, there was still that Cold War ... going on, and ... even though this was ... after [Joseph] McCarthy, ... there was still

a lot of very strong anti-communist feeling and Paul Robeson was, like, a *persona non grata,* in a way. So, for the institution to recognize him, being that it was quasi-governmental, it was a big thing and we insisted that his picture should go up and, eventually, they did. They relented and they put up his picture, along with the other All-Americans.

SH: This was while you were at Rutgers.

WK: Yes, while I was at Rutgers. ... My Shakespeare teacher, Dr. McGinn, ... who was a wonderful teacher and I owe him, my love of Shakespeare is owed to Dr. McGinn. He was a very old man when I had him and he would actually read Shakespeare to us in the classroom. ... He told us that Paul Robeson was his student and he was the first black man to play Othello on Broadway and, of course, he was a wonderful opera singer and an All-American football player and he was just so, you know, multi, multi-talented.

SH: Did you think McGinn helped this movement to get his picture put up?

WK: Oh, I don't think so. That was more of a Civil Rights thing, issue, and that was an anti-war/Civil Rights group that did that.

SH: How integrated was the campus when you were here?

WK: I remember one fraternity that was integrated, that I knew of. It was the service fraternity. I don't know if the other fraternities were integrated.

SH: Were the dorms?

WK: Yes, the dorms were. My preceptor was an African-American fellow. He was very bright. He was a brilliant guy, can't think of his name, but, as far as general student body make-up, though, I don't remember having a lot of black members of our class. ... I think they were a small minority.

SI: Could you compare the Rutgers that you entered in 1963 with the Rutgers you left in 1967, in terms of things like how the men dressed, social mores, etc.?

WK: Changes? ... I think it's too short a time, because I don't really; oh, well, in '68, the year after I graduated, drugs, marijuana specifically, hit the campus in a big way and it seemed to happen like that, [Editor's Note: Mr. Kahane snaps his fingers] and the reason that I know that is because, before I went to New York, after I graduated, I stayed on campus for a little while and shared an apartment here and I commuted to New York, and then, I ended up moving to my friend's apartment, but, for a while, I had an apartment here in New Brunswick. ... So, I was on campus and I saw the big change in '68. ... The Beatles' *Sgt. Pepper* [*Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band*] album came out and the drug culture really hit, in a matter of, it seemed to me, like weeks. It must have been longer than that, but it just seemed like there was an overnight change in '68.

SI: In the four years that you were here, did the guys go to class in the same type of outfits?

WK: Yes, yes, basically, yes, and it was very informal, because, not having any women in the class, we didn't have to shave, we didn't have to dress up. We could go very sloppily and that was generally the uniform people went [to class in]. Guys, you know, it seemed like since there are no women around, there's no one to impress, ... and that didn't change, because women didn't start coming into the classroom until '68.

SI: Are there any other professors that stand out in your memory, besides McGinn?

WK: My art history professor, Dr. (Rowe?), was my other big influence, I think. Dr. (Rowe?) was someone who showed me and taught me ... the relationship of art to history, to literature. He combined everything in his class, so that I could, as a student, ... see how culture is made up of all of these things all together and they weren't separate subjects, you know. (Rowe?) really ... was the first teacher that ever explained that to me in a way that, you know, I could see the interconnection. He showed us the interconnection from within, you know, how history even was reflected in art and in architecture and in literature; it was all one big thing. It wasn't separate subjects. He was the man who did that for us. Unfortunately, I heard that he didn't stay at this college, because he didn't publish or something like that. I don't know, that was the rumor I heard afterwards, but he was a great influence.

SI: What about Mason Gross? Did you have an opinion of him or any interaction, possibly?

WK: ... He was, like, this white-bearded god on high, you know. [laughter] I never really had any interaction with him. ... He was the president. That's all we know. [laughter] I think I heard him speak once or twice, you know, at some kind of assembly or something like that, but I'm sure, at graduation, he spoke, but, no, nothing.

SH: Do you remember who spoke at your graduation?

WK: No, I don't. ...

SI: You were not involved in anything like Hillel or any Jewish social organizations.

WK: No, no. ... When I finished my *bar mitzvah* at thirteen, I pretty much cut off my basic connection with religion. ... I didn't renew it until I got out of the Army and went to Washington, DC, and found an organization that was giving courses at night that ... I started going to and started getting interested in religion again, in my Jewish faith, but between that period, really, I didn't even go to Hillel, which was a shame, and I missed out on a lot. In fact, one of my best friends during my college career was a fellow by the name of Joel Funk, whose father, Julius Funk, was the rabbi of Hillel for many years, and I was very close to Joel, but never went to Hillel. [laughter]

SI: Did you ever experience any anti-Semitism at Rutgers or observe anything that you thought of as possibly anti-Semitic?

WK: No, not really. I mean, I knew there were fraternity houses that were restrictive and I knew; you know, in fact, I think it was Chi Psi that my roommate, my college roommate, Bob Petersen, who was very WASPy. He was, like, the all-American boy. He was a cheerleader here at Rutgers and the cheerleaders, back then, were all-male and they were great. They were gymnasts. They were fabulous and he was an athlete in college. He was a wrestler and he was asked to join Chi Psi and it was a very WASPy fraternity house. ... So, he went through the pledging process, the whole process, and it was curious to me and I didn't really understand why he was doing it, but it was his decision, you know. ... He was asked to join by ... a senior in that fraternity house who was a very big person on campus. His name was Scharer. His nickname was "Honey Bear" Scharer. Honey Bear was the heavyweight champion wrestler of Rutgers and was renowned. I mean, he was, like, one of the top wrestlers in the country, really, in our division, I guess in the Ivy Leagues, and he was from the same high school as my college roommate, and so, he asked him to come and join the fraternity. So, it was like a big honor. It was like, you know, he had it made. ... He was automatically in and he went through the pledging process, the entire process, but Petersen had this wonderful sense of irony, and so, he went to the dinner, the pledge dinner, where you accept your pin, and then, he rejected them. [laughter] So, I thought, "Gee, that's kind of turning the tables on them, you know, kind of. They're so restrictive," and so, I think he just did it because he had this ironic sense of humor, ... but, to answer your question specifically, I don't remember much anti-Semitism here. Most of the people here were from North Jersey, very used to being around Jews, very integrated with that kind of culture, and [I] probably met much more anti-Semitism growing up in South Jersey than here in North Jersey.

SI: In the forty years since your graduation, have you felt close to the University? Have you maintained ties?

WK: Not for most of the time, no, but I'm beginning now, you know. I guess, ... it's not really an excuse, but I was so involved with my family and my business that I kind of shut out a lot of other things, ... but I guess, beginning, well, when I met you and I went to the reunion, last year's reunion, ... I sort of started to get more involved with Rutgers since then. Actually, I've been to a conference here of second-generation children of Holocaust survivors that they held at Rutgers, in the Heights, [Busch Campus], and I was on the panel there, and so, I've gotten a little more involved with the University since then, and I think it will continue.

SH: That is a wonderful place to end. Thank you again.

----------END OF INTERVIEW----------

Reviewed by Gino Namur 4/14/07
Reviewed by Jake Morano 4/14/07
Reviewed by Dan O'Boyle 4/14/07
Reviewed by Shaun Illingworth 6/19/07
Reviewed by Sandra Stewart Holyoak 6/26/07
Reviewed by William Kahane 7/28/07