

Abstract:

In this interview, retired Cook County Circuit Court Judge Michael Stephen Jordan (b. 1942) discusses the early life experiences that led up to his decision to enter law and eventually become a judge. He focuses primarily on his education, his exposure to politics and subsequent work with the political organization of Alderman Claude Holman, and his first job at the office of the Corporation Counsel in Chicago.

Jordan begins by describing growing up in the Hyde Park and South Shore neighborhoods, where he attended public schools and was an active member of B'nai B'rith. After graduating from South Shore High School in 1959, he spent a summer in Arkansas with his sister and brother-in-law, Chief Surgical Resident at the University of Arkansas, exploring medicine as a possible career. Jordan applied and was accepted to the pre-med program at the University of Wisconsin in Madison. While at the University of Wisconsin, he joined the AEII (Alpha Epsilon Pi) fraternity. He explains that he chose the fraternity based on its religious affiliation (Jewish) and its large size, which he believed would enable him to make greater useful contacts. A serious and committed student, he found fraternity life a spur to his studies but also enriching socially. Jordan was also exposed to politics for the first time at the University during the 1960 national presidential campaign.

Jordan discusses his decision to abandon medicine as a career and his subsequent rejection by Northwestern University Dental School. He eventually graduated from the University of Wisconsin in 1963 with a major in psychology. His father, a lawyer himself, convinced Jordan to study law since it would provide a foundation in reasoning and thinking that could be useful in any future career. Since he had enjoyed his experience at the University of Wisconsin, Jordan applied and was accepted to their law school. Although he found his classes stimulating, after the first year he transferred to DePaul University in Chicago because it would afford him the opportunity to make contacts that would be useful in his career. While at DePaul, Jordan met his future wife, Maureen. They were married in 1968.

Inspired by a University of Wisconsin campus visit of independent alderman Leon DePres, Jordan became involved in ward politics after moving to Chicago. He describes conversations he had with Aldermen Leon DePres and Marshall Korshak before volunteering for the 4th ward organization of Alderman Claude Holman, the leader of a predominately African American constituency. Jordan wrote for Holman's ward newspaper, the *News Clarion* and was eventually appointed president of the ward organization. Jordan discusses the reasons for his support of Alderman Holman, a Daley supporter, and he explains the reason for his membership in the Democratic Party. Jordan also recounts an episode in which race became an issue, when his wife volunteered for an Advisory Committee for a new Health Center in the 4th Ward.

Through Holman, Jordan gained his first job in Chicago's Corporation Counsel's office. Jordan describes his experiences as a clerk in Traffic Court, where he learned an early lesson in judicial ethics and his transfer to the General Counsel Division, where he gained trial experience and was involved in a wide variety of cases, including a case involving changes to the Fair Housing Ordinance to ban discrimination based on sexual orientation. Jordan acknowledges that the contacts he made through his work with Holman and at the Corporation Counsel's office were instrumental in his ascent to an Associate Judgeship in 1974.

The interview ends with a description of a visit to the office of Mayor Daley after Holman's death. As president of the ward office, Jordan has the responsibility to recommend a new committeeman. He chooses Tim Evans and meets with Daley to offer his selection.

Index: Interview of Judge Michael S. Jordan

-A-

Aaron, Harry: 22
 Advisory Committee: 19
 Advocate Corps: 17
 Alderman: 13, 16
 Alpha Epsilon Pi: 4, 5,8,11
 Alumni: 9
 Appellate Court: 12, 22
 Appellate Judge: 22
 Arkansas, governor of: 17
 Army: 17
 Associate Judge: 24, 25

-B-

Back of the Yards: 19
 Badgers, University of Wisconsin: 8
Bar and Journal: 25
 Bar Association: 25
 Bar Exam: 8, 17,19,21
 B'nai B'rith: 2, 4
 Barney Ross: 2
 Bed Sheet Ballot: 20
 Board of Health, Cook County: 22
 Bonner, Elise: 20
 Boy's Court: 24
 Bradwell Elementary School: 1, 2
 Bridge (Card Game): 8
 Bronx, NY: 6
 Brooklyn, NY: 6
 Bryn Mawr School: 1
 Bulls (Chicago): 3
 Bush, President (George W.): 18

-C-

Camp Randall: 11
 Certificate of Professional Accounting (CPA) Exam: 18
 Character and Fitness Committee: 21
 Chicago, IL: 1, 2,3,4,6,9,10,11,12,13,21,22,23,24,25
Chicago Daily News: 24
 Chicago Committee on Human Relations: 22
 Chicago-Kent College of Law: 12
 Chicago Title and Trust: 23
 Chicago Vocational School: 1
 City Clerk: 22
 City Council, Chicago: 22, 24,26
 Circuit Judge: 22
 Civil rights: 17,20,24
 Civil Service Committee: 22
 Clerk: 21

Cohn, Irwin: 20
 Coles Elementary School: 1
 Committeemen: 16, 25
 Commonwealth Edison: 23
 Condemnation: 18
 Connell, Francis X.: 21
 Constitutional: 22
 Cook County: 17
 Cook County Bar Association: 26
 Cook County Oral History Project: 1
 Corporation Counsel: 18, 20,26
 Criminal Division: 12
 Curry, Richard L.: 26

-D-

Daley, Richard J.: 14, 15,25,26; Professor: 13
 Democrat(s): 18
 Democratic Organization: 14
 Democratic Party: 8, 17,19
 Dental school: 3
 Department of Investigation: 26
 DePaul University: 12, 13,14,18
 Depres, Leon: 13, 14,15,17,24
 District Commander: 15
 District Superintendants: 15
 Drexel Avenue: 1, 14,15

-E-

Editor: 16
 Eisenhower: 20
 Erasmus Hall High School: 6
 Ethics: 21, 25
 Evans, Tim: 25, 26
 Executive Committee: 16

-F-

Face the Nation: 24
 Fair Housing Ordinance: 24
 Faubus, governor of Arkansas: 17
 Federal Court: 23, 24
 Fifth Ward: 13
 Fourth Ward: 13, 15,16,17,19,20,26
 Fraternity: 3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10,11
 Football: 8
 Forseman Elementary School: 1

-G-

General Council Division: 22
 George Williams College: 1
 Germ Free Laboratories: 11
 Gould and Ratner: 1

Government: 8, 13,14,17,21
 Grade Point Average (GPA): 7
 Graduate School: 8, 18
 Grammar school: 18
 Grant, Frederick: 15
 Grant, Kenneth: 15
 "Great White Hope, The": 16
 Goldstein, Irving: 23

-H-

Hamline School: 19
 Hartman, Allen: 22, 23
 Hearts (Card Game): 8
 Hebrew School: 5
 Henrotin Hospital: 1
 High school: 2, 18
 Holman, Claude: 14, 15,17,18,19,20,21,22,25,26
 Human Relations Committee: 25
 Hyde Park: 1,12,13,14,15,18,19

-I-

Illinois, State of: 17
Illinois Bar Journal: 16
 Illinois Central Railroad: 12
 Illinois State Bar Association: 23
 Indianapolis, IN: 9
 Indian Village: 19

-J-

Jewish: 2, 6,12,14
 John Marshall Law School: 12, 18,22
 Johson, Evelyn: 16, 25
 Johnson, Glen: 26
 Johnson, (President) Lyndon B.: 17
 Jordan, Maureen (Perleman): 18, 19,20,24
 Jordan, Michael S.: 1, 16,19,23,24,26

-K-

KAM Temple, Chicago IL: 1, 12
 Kennedy, (President) John F.: 17, 24
 Kilgallon, Brian: 23
 Korshak, Marshall: 14
 Kosminski Grammar School: 1
 Kutski, Ken: 22

-L-

Lake Mendota, WI: 4
 Lane, Fred: 23
 Law Department of the City of Chicago: 18, 21
 Law School Admission Council (LSAT): 10
 Law school: 10, 12,14,15,17,18,19,21,22

Legislative Boundaries: 13
 Lewis, Jerry: 2
 Lipton, Al: 4, 5,6,12
 Lisagor, Jack: 24
 Lisagor, Peter: 24, 25
 Little Rock, AK: 2, 17
 Little Rock University: 17
 Liquor: 22
 Long Island, NY: 6
 Loop: 12
 Loyola University Chicago: 1, 12

-M-

Madison, WI: 3, 4,5,6,7,8,9,10,11,12,13
 Mann, Bob: 18
 Manning, Christopher: 1, 10
 Mayor: 22, 24
 Medicine: 2, 3
Meet the Press: 24
 Mellos, Nick: 15, 16,21,25,26
 Miami, FA: 11
 Mikva, Abner: 18
 Military: 18
 Milwaukee, WI: 9
 Minority Districts: 18
 Missouri, State of: 8
 Mock United Nations: 8

-N-

National Guard: 18
 Neurology: 10
 New Jersey: 6
News Clarion, The: 16
 Newspaper: 16
 New York, NY: 6
 Northbrook, IL: 9
 Northwestern University: 3, 12
 Novasakki, Ben: 24

-O-

O'Hara, Barret: 17
 Operation Push: 1
 Orthodox: 12

-P-

Park District: 16
 Penitentiary: 21
 Perleman, Simon: 18
 Personal injury: 24
 Peters Elementary School: 1
 Philip Sheridan Elementary School: 1

Phi Sig: 4,5
 Physics: 3
 Pi Lambda: 4
 Pizer, Howie: 3
 Playboy Club: 20
 Police Board: 22, 23,25
 Politics: 8, 13,14,16,20
 Princeton, WV: 25
 Precinct Captain: 15
 Professional School: 8
 Prosecutor: 20, 21
 Psychology: 9

-Q-

-R-

Ravid, Phil: 11
 Remitti, Phillip: 12
 Republican(s): 18, 21,24
 Republican Party: 17,18
 Roosevelt University: 3
 Rosenstein, Carlton: 20
 Rush: 4
 Russian history: 8, 9

-S-

Saint Lawrence: 19
 Sanitary District: 14, 15
 Schmegler: 3
 Sexual Orientation: 24
 Sheep's Head (Card Game): 8
 Simon, Raymond: 20, 22
 Snicks, Sy: 5
 Socratic Methods: 11
 South Chicago: 1,2
 Southerland Hotel: 14, 15
 South Shore Drive: 1, 12
 South Shore High School: 1 ,2
 South Ward: 24
 Sperling, Jack: 24
 Springfield, IL: 21
 Stagg School: 19
Stars and Stripes: 24
 States Attorney: 20
 State Court: 23
 State representative: 20
 Stevenson: 20
 Student deferment: 18
 Suburbs: 6
 Sunday School: 1
 Supreme Court: 21, 25

Swain, Theodore: 1 13,15,16,19,21
Synagogue: 12

-T-

Teamsters: 23
Traffic Court: 18, 21
Traffic Division: 20
Treasurer: 22
Trial technique: 18, 22
Tort Division: 23

-U-

United States of America: 6
University of Arkansas: 2, 11
University of Chicago: 12
University of Pennsylvania, Hershey: 10
University of Wisconsin, Madison: 2, 3,4,5,7,8,9,10,11,12,13,18

-V-

Vietnam (War): 17

-W-

Washington Bureau Chief: 24
White Sox (Chicago): 3
Whittom, Nathan: 1
Winterbaum, Mike: 6
Workmen's Compensation: 18
Wright, Frank Loyd: 4

-X-

-Y-

-Z-

Zedek, Rodfei: 14
Zeta Tau Alpha: 4
Zoning: 22, 24

The following interview was conducted with Judge Michael Jordan on behalf of the Loyola University Library for the Cook County Court Oral History Project. It took place on November 11, 2004 at the law firm of Gould and Ratner in Chicago, Illinois. The interviewer is Nathan Whitton. [Judge Swain and Dr. Christopher Manning were also present]

Whitton: So, Judge Jordan, would you just like to start with your general background. Just tell us about where you were born and so forth.

Jordan: I was born in Chicago at Henrotin Hospital, April 7, 1942, the second of two children of my parents. I have an older sister, who now introduces herself ... uh er, introduces me to other people as her older brother but I am a younger. And, I was raised on the south side of Chicago. My family lived at I think 52... 5210 Drexell when I was born. And shortly thereafter we moved to, a building in Hyde Park, not too far away at, ... we were at 917 East 50th Street, which is across the street from a place where I went to Sunday School and later, it was KAM Temple. Later it became Operation Push. So I get to see it from time to time in news pictures, and I lived at that location until I was about nine, and then we moved ...uh...my parents, my sister, and myself to South Shore at, 75th and Essex and that's where I lived until moving back to Hyde Park.

I went to Kosminski Grammar School, which I attended from kindergarten through fourth grade and I remember having a lot of nice experiences living in Hyde Park and, also, I found right across the street from Kosminski was a college, George Williams, and later when I went to day camp, the camp would take us to George Williams on rainy days so I got to finally see the inside of the building, got to go into their pool, be in the gym, and so it was a nice place. When we moved to South Shore, I went to Bradwell Elementary School – both Kosminski and Bradwell are public schools – I've, [inaudible] graduating in eighth grade and at the time in Chicago there were semesters, rather than years of classes so I was... I just made a deadline, being born in April, so I was in a February class. But the February classes were much smaller than the June graduating classes, so since some of my friends skipped ahead and we all wanted to be together, the rest of us who didn't skip ahead went to summer school.

So, the end of seventh grade, I went to Phil Sheridan Elementary School in South Chicago and we would either be lucky to get a ride or take about three buses to get there. And it was a long trip and we were with people from all over the South Side. Some of whom were like us – getting ahead – but some were making up because they had flunked so there were two different types of tracks of kids in the class and the class there was filled but we felt a sense of connection because one of the teachers from our elementary school, Bradwell, was there and so we saw him, even though he wasn't our teacher. And then coming back at the end of the summer – we were there for eighth grade, for one year – and that's why when I think of my graduating class from elementary school, I was only with them for one year. But, yet still have friends from that class to the present day.

Then we went to South Shore High School – some of the class from Bradwell went to South Shore, some went to CVS – Chicago Vocational, but the more academically, college-directed students went to South Shore. And that's where we then met even more kids from the South Side, who had gone to Peter's Schools, Forseman, Bryn Mawr, and some from Coles. And so

had the opportunity to make new friendships – more friends, and at that time on the South Side, there were, different social organizations that were active, that attracted *my* attention. On the one hand there were – I'm Jewish – there were Jewish organizations sponsored by B'nai B'rith, for boys, for girls, so for boys B'nai B'rith organization, which I joined, and the one I joined was called Barney Ross. It was named after a fighter whose nephew I later met working in the law department of the city, he told me his mother's brother was Barney Ross so I said, "Well, I was in his [inaudible] named.

Also, there were social clubs that they referred to as fraternities and they were, uhm, there were about ten or twelve of them and they did many things. In the spring they played baseball -- competing with each other; in the fall, football – competing with each other. They also took turns with sororities putting on dances, the beginning of the year and the end – an opener and a closer. And it wasn't just social; it was raising funds for charity. So I remember being actively involved raising money for Jerry Lewis's charity muscular... [NW: dystrophy]... muscular dystrophy. And, I would go back to an area that I had then become familiar with in South Chicago – 95th and -- 91st and Exchange with a can and found very generous people out in that neighborhood who would contribute, and that was used for the charities that, for the charities we were supporting.

We also had parties, and since you can't drive still today until your licensed at the earliest at age sixteen, the older boys would be the drivers for the younger ones. We'd have dates and go to parties. So, this way there was a mixing of the years and I learned to cooperate. The benefits I got from the older boys taking me where I needed to go when I was younger and then when I got older, I did the same for the younger ones when I was older so it was a good learning piece as well. And also, leadership was taught in these groups as well – do altruistic things, do... be sportsmanlike, and so I thought that the experience was real good. And I still have relationships and friendships from those memberships and associations.

When I ...let's see I graduated South Shore High School – I graduated Bradwell in 55 and South Shore in 59, 1959, and my sister and brother-in-law had moved after my sister got married in 1958. They were in Little Rock, Arkansas. So I spent spring vacation of my senior year in high school visiting with them and spent a summer there as well.

Now since my brother-in-law was in medicine – he was the chief surgical resident at the University of Arkansas – and I had *some* interest in becoming a doctor, I went on rounds with him and went into surgeries with him. So, my first surgical procedure was a radical neck dissection. But after a while I was bored with that so I walked from the surgical table – obviously, I had no real responsibility so the patient didn't suffer by me leaving the operating arena, and I saw a hysterectomy and I saw some other things. And saw that maybe, you know, medicine would be okay but surgery wouldn't necessarily be something attracting me. I don't like blood and even though they draped the surgical areas – so it was just a small piece – that's visible – it just didn't seem good for me and also, it's a long time standing.

So, I don't know, but I was still pursuing medicine and that's why when I went to the University of Wisconsin in Madison, which is where I applied and was accepted, I declared I was a pre-med and I took every science course necessary to get into medical school. I was taking the last one I needed – comparative anatomy – when trying to learn the names of all the bones, I said, "this is

not for me.” I could not – it was just too much of an effort to try and learn the details. I realized I’m more of the bigger picture – abstract – rather than the spec... real specific. Although I’d taken every science course that I needed, including going to summer school a couple times in Chicago at Roosevelt University, and I took physics there and abnormal psyc, and some other things but took more sciences than I realized I really needed to take but for that it was essential.

So, I... I said, “If I’m not doing that, what can I do? So, maybe dentistry. That’s close and maybe I don’t have to know all the bones. So, I found out that Northwestern University had a dental school – a very good one – and I made an appointment to speak to them and I spoke to the dean of the dental school. They’ve since closed the dental school – that had nothing to do with me but, I was told that I needed to take a written test and I also needed to take a practical test – chalk... chalk-carding. So I set up both. And they said, “Practice on some chalk, unless you are real good with widowing with wood. And I didn’t even know what that was [laughter], but anyway, I did some practicing, and every time I would work on the chalk it would break. So, I went through a whole lot of chalk and meantime, I took the written test and then I figured, no harm, I’m going to take this chalk test. Which I did – and the thing broke during the test. So, I was called in to have my test results explained to me and the dean said, “You know, you ... you did beautifully on the written test. You would know just what to do as a dentist. You got 95% of the answers correct but on the other hand, your implementation would leave something lacking. You got about 5% before you destroyed the model... [laughter] and therefore, I really suggest you find some other avenue to pursue other than dentistry.

So, that’s when I was at a loss for a while but I figured, well, there’s some courses that... I was still at the University of Wisconsin when I was doing all this. So I decided to take some business courses and some other types of courses. So my last year, I sort of really blossomed out into a lot of different areas with all the credits I had open to me to take in different areas. And since I had gone to summer school for a couple of summers, I ultimately graduated with about 140 credits instead of 120 and therefore I had what I needed for a uh, the uh, the uh major in psychology but I also had enough for history, and I, all the science, and I found that more liberal arts education is I think for everybody an advantage cause the more you know, the more you can understand. And I would tell myself later in life, as I’m hearing different sorts of cases, and even now, “Perhaps I understand this because I did study this or I studied that – or read this or that. That if I had been very narrowly focused on something, perhaps I wouldn’t have understood as well.” So I never regret that I switched courses and took a bunch of different things.

In going to the University of Wisconsin I found a few people I knew and liked from the south side – one from the fraternity I was in, one from high school – my class, as well as a few others who were also gonna be going up to Madison, and so I first approached somebody who I thought I might want to room with, and we went up to Madison to look at the campus and to look around and see what places might be suitable to live in. I suppose I could mention names [inaudible interjection]... causes he’s sorta – the first person I considered cause he was in my high school fraternity and the name of the fraternity – I’ll give you two – it’s a funny name to many, it’s Schmegler’s and in any event, the person was Howie Pizer. He’s since since moved up where he’s the vice-president of the White Sox and also with the Bulls. And, so anyway, after awhile, we were talking, he said, “You’re going into medicine.” That’s what I thought at the time, and he

was gonna go into business. He said, “So maybe we should each be with somebody who’s gonna be in our area.” And so we decided not to room with each other.

So the other person I was considering is the person who I actually did room with – roomed with him for my freshman year – somebody from high school who we didn’t know what we would become later. But he became a lawyer and I see him regularly. His name was Al Lipton. He’s with a law firm in Chicago. He was the managing partner. Now he’s starting to wind [inaudible]. We both decided – and we were... picked a rooming house that to live in that had been... that particular room had been occupied by two other boys from the south side the year before. And so that’s how we knew of the place. He knew them more than I did through his AZA, that he was in, a B’nai B’rith sponsored organization he was in Manner AZA with them – and they were a year ahead.

So they suggested this place, 618 Dayton and so that’s where we moved in and then we had to make the decision, because the University of Wisconsin has ‘rush’ for fraternities like the first – actually, it starts before school starts – a few days before. Did we want to go through ‘rush’? And we both said, “Yeah, why not? It’s a good way to start meeting people even if we don’t join, if we like it we can join.” We each decided that even though neither of us were – how should I put it? Overly observant in our religion, that we were interested in being with those like ourselves who were gonna be concentrating on one of the four Jewish fraternities. The rules of the Interfraternity Council are though: that everybody going through ‘rush’ must look at, go to at least six houses. So, we knew we were gonna look around – you know, we had to look around at least six and we’d see if there were more or less depending upon the time. And it’s also, after the first round or two of rush, going to the houses, school was started so we don’t have *all* that much time.

But we found out that at the University of Wisconsin – and I don’t know how specific I should be getting now [interjection] but, there was AEII¹, Pi Lambda, and Phi Sig, and ZBT² – if I remember my Greek [laughter]. And, so we went to those. Also, we found out that Frank Lloyd Wright had a beautiful house that was Phi – oh, what was it? – it’s Greek to me [laughter]. I can’t remember the name but it was right next door to the AEII house, er, near it. And so we decided to go to that and it was a real nice experience. You look in the front, it looks real small but it goes all the way down, and that’s the way he designed it, on the hill going over Lake Mendota and it was beautiful. So we went in there. We had a nice tour and everybody was very friendly.

And I don’t remember the other house I went to – where they were very friendly too – and they saw, I suppose, our collection. You’d k... get cards from the other houses. So they said, “Are you trying to find a sixth? In other words, you’re really going to one of these four. But you know, they said you’re very welcome here and we’ll, you know, of course, give you so you have -- what you need. So I don’t know if they really knew they would never accept us if we would apply so I... since I was focused on where I knew I would be wanted and accepted, I don’t really know if there was any discrimination or not and therefore I had a very positive attitude about the

¹ Alpha Epsilon Pi

² Zeta Tau Alpha

entire university experience. Never feeling I might have been rejected because of something other than just me. And, so I always had good views about everybody at school.

I did find that for me each of the four fraternities were different. Two of them seemed more compatible with my personality. One was more for the... the jocks. Those who athletics was there sole interest really and they were just in school to facilitate that, and some people would also say they were the animals. Now, I'm sure... I met a lot of people since and they're gentlemen. They're nice but that was the image for one house. Another was that they were very ... more, how can I say... geared to monetary accomplishments and material things were very important.

The other two houses that I focused on, AEII and Phi Sig – with both places I felt a nurturing, warm feeling and then it was the question between them. One was much bigger than the other – in size, number of members. And I figured the more the merrier. The more people, I'd have a chance to find back at home or wherever I went. So that was the motivating factor for me, if I would be accepted by them. And, fortunately, both of those two accepted me so I could make the choice. And the same with my roommate Al, he received the same two bids and had the same considerations I did.

And we knew one of the people in the smaller house from the south side. In fact, I went to Hebrew School with him. He may have been a semester or two ahead of me. But he said, "Here, we know each other; we'll be friends." And likewise, the other house, AEII had somebody I knew from Hebrew School as well who was a year ahead. And he said, "You know, here I am." And so I felt I had some connection with both and so we went... we went strictly by the numbers. And, and I found later that in the big numbers... the numbers... one was about 30 of the biggest, the other was about 100 at the most. That even in AEII, it's not like every person I found there became my best friend. And, and I found too there were some people I could have just as well done without. But I think it was a good choice because I had this opportunity to find enough people I felt good about being with.

For me, the fraternity was a very good experience, good opportunity. It was a --- like a cocoon in a huge environment. The University of Wisconsin -- the number 17,000 stands out. I don't know if that's Letters and Sciences then, or the whole campus. But it was, it's a big place. Some towns and villages around here aren't that big. And so it compartmentalized life in a way that I felt I had a niche and I felt a comfort level.

As far as studies, there were people, you know, the sophomores, juniors, and seniors who had had courses who could say, "This is a teacher who is very good but very hard" or "This one is easy but you don't learn anything" or you know, and then you make informed choices as to who is best. And also they would have an exam file. And not that I, you know, exams would be changed year to year but you'd get an opportunity to test yourself and... and learn. So there was that and then the opportunity that there would be people in the fraternity house in all of my classes or most of 'em. So a lot of pre-med students, and, and then there were the business students and everybody who was together would then help each other. And I found on a couple of occasions I was helping others and I remember Syk Snicks class. I was taking where somebody else was helping me and it worked out in the long run, that there was mutual benefit.

And I'm sure this happens in dorms and everywhere else you go to, but it worked and so I was happy about the choice.

After the first semester, Al and I were given the opportunity – that's Al Lipton – to move into the fraternity house because there's always every semester somebody's moving out and so we did. And we roomed with somebody from New York and we were in a triple, and it was my first real close exposure to somebody that I considered different than me cause I still believe New Yorkers are different than the rest of [inaudible] and then learning as I learned – his name was Mike Winterbaum, he was from the Bronx – that in meeting others, and there was a group who pledged the following semester -- still my year but they just went through pledging a semester... through rush a semester later, were their some from in that class one that I later roomed with from – he was from Brooklyn, went to Erasmus Hall High, which is one of the biggest high schools in the United States. And then he had moved, his family moved to New Jersey. Another in the class was from Long Island, another from upstate New York, so... besides a couple from Chicago.

But my point is that I began to realize that just because somebody's from the east they're not all alike. There's differences between somebody from the city versus the suburbs there, and then borough to borough and so part of it was an educational process for me to distinguish between what others might assume is the same or similar. Here we were all college kids in a fraternity -- all Jewish boys, but yet with many differences between us. And so I could see the similarities and the differences, which has been another learning point for me in dealing... in addressing people I meet now to see that they may appear one way, but it doesn't mean they're like everybody else who may appear that way. They can – they have their own individuality.

So, in the fraternity – I stayed in the fraternity house through my junior year. And my senior year, I moved out and lived with a roommate, one of the roommates I had in the house and we moved into an apartment building. It had no kitchen so it still go... I would go back to the fraternity house, which was backtracking the way classes were but I'd go back a block and a half for breakfast, lunch and supper and then, it was quieter for study than the house was although the rooms.... The room I had at the fraternity house, my junior year was on the first floor. There were only two student rooms with two students in each room so four of us with the house mother and we had real thick doors and thick walls, so we could hear nothing from any noise that was being made whereas upstairs. There was one semester in particular where I had a room next to a bath room where I don't think I ever slept. It seemed like somebody was always coming and going and I think, since I'm a light sleeper, my grades were affected by the location of the rooms I was in.

And I had at college, I think it was.. it was five or six.. I'd have to... different roommates and each one with their own unique personality was another opportunity for me to learn how to live or coexist or be enriched by different personality types and this one roommate, in fact I just saw him a few weeks ago at a wedding we were both invited to, where he said to me, and I've said that to him too, we're speaking more now than we did when we were roommates. His sleep schedule was so weird, he would be up all night and then sleep during the day when he wasn't in class. So it was as though I had no roommate. I mean I knew I did, cause his stuff was there [laughter] and so I was basically friendlier with others who were closer and why he had the

schedule, I have no idea. But, again, it was a part of me growing and adapting to what the circumstance was and reaching out to others because I didn't want to just be by myself.

Usually during college a bunch of us – and it was mostly those in my year in the same classes would go up to different buildings to study in. Sometimes we went to the library but the library was usually a place of a lot of people getting up and getting down, and visiting, and it wasn't as conducive for study as five or six of us going to some building and just uh, uh, finding an empty classroom and just sitting at a desk and studying. We were quiet and all motivated. Most of those became – five or six of us... well four became doctors, I think three of 'em left after three years so they had to get really good grades to get into medical school early. So the people we studied with were all very highly motivated. Fraternity...

[End of Tape 1, Side 1]

[Start of Tape 1, Side 2]

Jordan: Okay, where did I leave off?

Whittom: You were talking about how your study group was motivated. And how four of them went to be doctors and then you were talking about fraternity life at that time.

Jordan: Right. That at that time, fraternities had much higher academic achievement than the campus population at large. And fraternities' grade point averages were compared to other fraternities' grade point average. It was part of the thing in 'rush' – when you're going through. Our grade point average is third on campus or whatever it is. So it was another selling point and there was therefore a focus of a c... of an academic accomplishment and achievement, unlike other campuses at that time or maybe for all I know, the fraternities at the University of Wisconsin today. I just don't know where they may or may not have that... that push for achievement but it was there than so it was a good time for me to have been there and be in a fraternity, because I had this discipline that was created my first year.

There was also...

Whittom: Is that because of – sorry to interrupt you. Is that because of the way that you were expected as a fraternity member to maintain the GPA?

Jordan: Yes

Whittom: Was it like self... Was it peer-to-peer, you know, self-governing sort-of that you guys would push each other to...

Jordan: It was all of the above that.... The House had the motivation to be competitive with others. It was also those who were in the fraternity had goals to become doctors or whatever they were going to be where they needed that high grade point average. And theref... and it was also, if all your friends are doing this, that's what you do. Now, I came to realize later that when all of us right after supper would rush off to go study, there were some who stayed behind. And it may have been the one guy I roomed with later who was just goofing off and then he'd have to be

studying all through the night. Some would be playing Bridge or Hearts or other... I think there's a game from Wisconsin – Sheep's Head card game – and they would disappear -- flunk out or just be on probation or not do well. And it was not a lot of 'em but a few. And some of them, it's because they didn't have the motivation. Maybe their parents pushed 'em to college and it may be that some knew as I believe with one, he had the family business to go to. And college – what did he need it? Because he had this sure thing. So but for those who had a goal of going on to another school – to graduate school, professional school – there was that motivation which was common for most – the greatest number. So that was the key.

So I developed that study ethic and on the other hand, it's probably consistent with my personality to over prepare for things never knowing what's enough. Which is what I found – I studied and studied for the bar exam and was fortunate to pass it the first time and everything, all the issues sort of stood out for me, and I was thinking, well, I really didn't need to study as much but yet, what could I have not studied and still have passed? Ah, you know, I would never want to take the risk. So, the fraternity and university life was good in that for me to be like everybody else, I went to parties, I went to the football games, I, you know, did things that perhaps if I was just living in a... an apartment or a dorm by myself, I would have felt I had to study all the time and really would have missed all of the enrichment opportunities that are, were available. And so I know all the songs, you know – “If you want to be a Badger, come along with me” –you know, all those things -- the fraternity songs -- and I wasn't just dragged along, I enjoyed all those things. I uh... I was the song chairman so when we'd go with somebody to get pinned or engaged or something, we'd go and serenade somebody I would lead that. Not that my voice was any better than anybody's but I was willing to stand in front. And, so maybe that was an opportunity I had to learn that I didn't have to be blended into the crowd. I could stand up in front. And that helped to be a lawyer later, or a judge, or some of the other things I've... leading seminars and so that's another advantage I had. I also became an officer – a vice-president – and so there were leadership opportunities that somebody couldn't really take advantage of if you're just living in a room by yourself.

There were things on campus I was advised about... told about certain fraternity members were interested in. Politics was one thing. In 19... I was there in college in Madison for... as an undergraduate from 1959 to '63 so the 1960 presidential election was during that time. The fraternities and some of the dorms became involved in...in the process, and so we, AEII, agreed to be representing or taking the position as the State of Missouri, and so at the Dem... and we opted to be the Democratic Party, so I had no choice in that but it was comfortable with me. So, we were the Democratic state of Missouri and Symington was our candidate (I think he may have been the favorite son) and so, here I was becoming aware at some level greater than I'd ever been aware of government and politics, even though it was not a part of any of the courses I was taking and uh... and that was another real good experience.

Another was a mock UN that they had – that the house participated in – fraternity house participated in. There were various lectures that were on campus but also, through the fraternity we could invite professors to the house to... for dinner and then to speak. And so, the speech would be fifteen, twenty minutes and then everybody would go off to study but it was a very enriching program. And I remember... uh, uh... I think once or twice I had the opportunity of inviting somebody. One was a history professor. His name was Mossey. He taught Russian

history that I took and I got... I get the alumni magazine from Wisconsin and realized he just passed away a couple years ago. And he was very interesting because he was using devices in teaching in 1960, '61 with audio-visual aids and things that were not that common at that time. We were having that class in the education building where they were trying these teaching devices out.

And also, I'd taken a course in psychology. Actually, it may have been my ssss... statistics class from a man who was also the Associate Dean of Letters and Sciences. His name was Rutacelli and he came to the house as a speaker too. And these speakers, as well as others that others would invite, were really interesting. And it also gave me a feeling of connection to the... the university itself. And at my own graduation in June of '63 when I went up to get my diploma, one of the three people up there handing them out -- cause you know, with thousands going up there -- one of them was Dean Rutacelli, who I knew personally cause I was in his class and had invited him. It was really nice when he said, you know, "Congratulations" -- not just the pro-forma that he did to everybody else, but to somebody he knew. And I'm sure I wasn't the only one but it's again, an opportunity that was created where there was that connection -- even in a big institution. So, I learned too, that no matter how big a place is, it's only as big as somebody gives it the perception to be. You can make things small and fit for yourself.

Whittom: Do you still keep in contact with your fraternity today? Do you ... are you still involved with them?

Jordan: Not.. I'm not involved with the fraternity per se, but with a lot of the people who were in it, I have occasion to see. In fact, there was two people -- one in my year... graduating year and one a semester ahead--both from Chicago--organized a reunion that was held in Northbrook, a northern suburb of Chicago about six months ago. And so there we got to see about forty-some people who were in the general area, and that was real nice to catch up with people -- some of whom I see from time to time; some I hadn't seen, and one or two I didn't recognize until they gave their name. People change over time. Not me but everybody else. And [interjection] and then there was a reunion in Madison maybe ten years ago where we were there for a whole weekend, with spouses and went to a football game, and had a dinner. And that was real good. People came from all over. You know, even those... the easterners and others. A lot of... not everybody and they had it for, I think, three years before and about three years after me so it was great. I was right in the center where I knew most everybody there, that I could remember. And I did. And, so, yeah, I do have a connection with some of the people. Some I run into from time to time and then some I don't see.

Now that there's... In my work now, I travel to several cities. One is Milwaukee, where there's a fraternity brother and I want to get together with him but he... he's a federal magistrate, and so he can take off lunch time but when I'm there it's for labor arbitration where it sometimes runs till one or two. So by the time I'm through, he's busy again and it doesn't work. And likewise, there's another fraternity brother from the east who moved to Indianapolis. He married his college sweetheart, who he met his freshman year and moved to her town and when I go to Indianapolis, the same thing. After a hearing, I've got to catch a flight and get back and so, it's very frustrating. In fact, I told him I was there and I was gonna call him. I think it would have

been better not to tell him I was so close to him cause he was upset. But we got to sit next to each other at this dinner-reunion we had recently. So yeah, I do stay in touch.

And one person who uhm, pledged the semester behind me but in my year and he became a doctor --actually, he's the head of neurology at the University of Pennsylvania in Hershey, Pennsylvania -- went to Chicago for a medical meeting maybe ten years ago and I took him out to dinner and then, that was the only time since college -- maybe it's fifteen years ago -- and then I had no occasion to speak to him until a few months ago. My daughter was in a very serious accident where a truck hit the car she was driving and she had severe neurological damage. And we were trying to find out what exactly to do and not do at a certain point, and somebody reminded me that this fraternity brother is a neurologist and so I called him and he has been giving us -- my daughter, my wife and myself -- information and help. And it was as though not a day had gone by since I saw him last here for the day or since college where he's given, you know, his expertise and his time and with my belief of his total care and concern. So, yeah, it's uh... the connections are still there. And [inaudible] look forward to seeing him again soon. And then somebody else I spoke to -- I wasn't sure what his specialty is but he said he's an eye doctor so he went into the wrong area as far as, you know, helping with my daughter [laughter]. But at least he said, "Call Rick 'cause that's his field."

[Inaudible] loved the University of Wisconsin so much that I decided to apply and go to the University of Wisconsin law school. The law school that year was, or shortly before it was torn down -- or part of it.... They... they had built a library next to the real old building so then they tore down the old part of the building and all they had was the library and some offices. So the... the first year of law school, I was at the University of Wisconsin law school, our classes were on campus just like it had been for me for four years before -- a little in this building, a little in that building. So it was as though I had a fifth year of college, even though it was law school.

Swain: How did you happen to get into law at that point?

Jordan: Oh, how did I get to law? Well, here we had ruled out medicine [laughter], dentistry, and I was getting, you know, open to different areas but I didn't really have a focus -- what would I do when I grow up? What would I really pursue? I knew four years of college was nice but it wouldn't really be good enough so I was thinking, "What is gonna be afterwards?" And my parents were very instrumental in saying that, "Well, consider law." My father was a lawyer and they said, you know, whether you practice it or not, it's a good background in learning how to think and reason, and for any business that you could go into or work for and... and then maybe you'll have more time to decide because you're young. And by that they meant, not that I'm just immature -- which I was, but since I had just made a deadline and went to summer school, I was basically a year ahead of myself compared to everybody else in my class and so therefore, they said, "You know, it's not like you have to be forced to... to find something. So go into something like law that uh...." And I had no better ideas so it seemed ok. So that's what prompted me.

I took the exams, I don't remember -- LSAT or whatever it's called -- and did well with my academic grades. I was admitted. I don't remember if I even applied other than the University of Wisconsin because I really loved it there. Now I did anticipate that since most of the people I

knew would be gone because they will have graduated and moved on, I might not have... I could feel very isolated at that point, but my roommate – his name was Phil Ravid, my senior year, who I had roomed with in the fraternity house for a semester before – he was... had studied business and decided he wanted to get a Master's in Business Administration and he wanted to do it at Madison. So I knew for the first year, that that's what it would take. His program would be about a year. That my first year of law school I would have somebody I knew I was compatible with and would feel comfortable with and then, you know, law school, I was hoping I'd meeting somebody thereafter once he's gone.

So we decided to room with each other. And actually, he wanted to go up on a particular weekend to find a place for us to stay and I remember, I could not come up with him then. I think I was on a sales trip for my brother-in-law. After my brother-in-law was... I left you last with him at the University of Arkansas as the Chief Medical Resident. He moved to... later to Miami with my sister, after having a couple kids there – the third one in Miami – but he developed a company, Germ Free Laboratories that created and manufactured equipment for medical research. And, so I was on a selling trip for them going around the country to different universities. And that was a real experience where I had to know enough to tell full professors who were in charge of the buying of this equipment, all the specs and the reasons they should. So it convinced me, I can master anything [laughter] and convince people, you know, with a little preparation.

So, that's what I was doing so I couldn't go up that weekend but my parents said that they had my oldest nephew and he... they wanted to take him somewhere so they went and my roommate found a place so they looked and they said it was okay. And I was just hoping well, if my roommate says its okay, it's probably okay and if my parents agree there wasn't something that they saw that was too dirty or something. So when I moved in it was brand... you know... I just went in and had never seen it before. It has since been torn down. It's now the site of the new Union Hall at the University of Wisconsin at the end of the campus near Camp Randall. So, it's the opposite end from where the AEPi House was so there's no way, even though I'm sure I could have made arrangements to eat there, it... it would have been a trek.

So, we had a little kitchen and we'd cook. He cooked more than I did. I'd grab some of my meals out. I was always afraid I wasn't studying enough because in the classes there were five or six people I believed must be geniuses, and they must be phenomenal with the law because they knew the answer to every questions and the Socratic methods that were used in this first year of law school. They were always ready, always engaged, and I felt I was so below or beneath these four, five, or six that I had to study constantly and I just didn't have time to cook and clean so I'd go to a fast food place all the time. It turned out at the end of the year that I did very well. But I didn't know this and I didn't know the competition and who everybody else was. So, for all I know I was number six, you know, after the first five but I... I don't even know but I realized in the class that it wasn't just finding somebody I'd live with next year – with Phil going back to Chicago to find his first job which he got -- that the entire class... well, I shouldn't say the entire class... most of the law school class was Wisconsin residents and there were only a very few number from outside of Wisconsin. In my year, to my knowledge, I was the only one from the Chicago area. So, I came to the conclusion that I would not be coming back to Chicago with any

connection, any contact, anybody I could consult with or talk with, or have, you know, something to do with.

So I decided, 1) because I really hadn't found anybody, whether they were from Wisconsin or not that I really got that close with that I wanted to live with and 2) because I was concerned for the future, that I decided to go to law school in Chicago. And I never considered, "Oh, what if I don't get accepted" or "is there going to be a [inaudible] This is what I'm going to do so I'll do it. And I'm probably very much like my father, who would do things out of convenience rather than for the more, oh, esoteric reasons like, wherever we'd live we'd go to the religious institution – Jewish place – closest. So when we were in Hyde Park, across the street was KAM. That was reform Judaism. That's where we went. When we lived in South Shore, across the alley and down the block was a conservative synagogue but that was close. That's where we went. And I... I... I'm sure if it was Orthodox, he would have, you know, whatever was convenient. It was... that's the way.

So, my conversation with him was "Well, if I go to Northwestern that from Hyde Park or so then its South Shore, it would take a couple transfers and stuff. Whereas if I went to DePaul I could go right down on the IC – the Illinois Central – and it... like wise with Kent or Marshall. They were downtown and the University of Chicago – that may be south but that's very theoretical which is the point that I raised. If you go into academics, was my view or... that's where.... And there to transfer might have been impossible or difficult maybe. And that's where Al Lipton, my friend, he went to the University of Chicago. And so I figured uh, I didn't know if I wanted to really go there. So, I was thinking, well... and Loyola was at the north end of the Loop. So that's more of a travel. And so it was those considerations. So, I figured Northwestern and Chicago were the best in reputation. After that it was Loyola and DePaul were equal. At the lower were Kent and Marshall. Now whether that's changed since... . It probably has, but that was my perception at the time. So, I therefore picked DePaul over Loyola because of geography and over Marshall and Kent because of status, in my view.

So I went there and I met with the dean of the law school who was then Phillip Remiti, who later went on to become a judge in the criminal division and the Appellate Court. The first thing he says to me, he said "Now, in the privacy of my office, tell me the truth. Why would you want to come to DePaul instead of Wisconsin, an excellent school compared to here." Does he know more than I do? This is a dump? [laughter] And he said "You're... you're at one of the premier schools in the... the nation and your grades are really good. So it's not like you're getting forced out or something. And the way I see it, this next year – and we'll take you here, don't even worry. That's not what I'm talking about. We'll take you. You don't even have to take all the courses because you had more your first year than our students get." And so, I felt like he was acknowledging me as a good student and a person who has a foundation and everything would be fine. But then I was having... like what is it that I'm getting into then? Is it going to be good enough? And well, I found out my classes had some bright people, but no one like those five or six who spoke out all the time at Madison. So on the one hand, I felt that I was no longer intimidated but yet those brilliant ideas weren't coming out that everybody was enriched by so I knew I was missing something there.

There was also.... Some of the professors were really dedicated and they were great but there were some that weren't. And there was one in particular that was so bad – and he may have improved later, it was his first year teaching -- that the students heckled 'em. He broke down and was crying and a Professor Daley came into the class -- a more seasoned, excellent professor. I had him for labor law and I thought he was excellent. He said, "Guys..." -- guys, and I say guys because in our section – there were two sections – ours were all men, boys, and the other section may have had one or two females. He said "He's doing his best. He's brand new. Give 'em a break and together you'll learn something but you can't do this. And he was just appealing to everybody's better instincts. Unfortunately, there were a few in the class who appeared to me, not to have better instincts. [laughter] And... he uh... we got through it, but there was at the end of my time at DePaul, a feeling that the education I would have had at Wisconsin was and would continue to be at a higher level. But yet, I learned what I needed to know.

I passed the bar. I never felt inadequate in anything I did thereafter in the practice of law. So, I got all the essentials and probably more. It's just that I'm comparing sufficient and enough to maybe tremendous enrichment and uh... and so... it just, you know, there's balances. That's another thing I learned – that you may get something but you give up something, so it's what was more important. So for me, it's worked out because those connections I made in my class or the opportunity while I was living at home to do other things – become involved in the political process in Chicago and meet people in that way (such as Ted Swain, who's here) and... and others -- it wouldn't have been if I had remained in Madison during those two years or more. Maybe, it would have been later but not then.

I should say too that when I was at the University of Wisconsin, besides the things I mentioned... well, I did mention there were outside lectures. One of the outside lecturers, you referred to him particularly before, Leon Depres – had come up to Madison to speak about politics and independent politics, because his big goal in life, as I learned as a student, was to be not associated and connected with anybody or any institution but to distinguish himself from, and to show how different he was from the established way of doing something. And I found it interesting but I couldn't really identify with it, but he motivated me to learn more about government and politics. And so when I came back to Chicago, and my parents had moved to Hyde Park by then, I didn't know ward boundaries or legislative boundaries. I just knew Hyde Park. I knew that Depres's name was always on television or radio being an alderman from Hyde Park. I didn't know fifth ward, fourth ward. So I went to his office and said I'm interested in politics and government. I'm in law school and wanted to know if there's ... [End of Tape One, Side Two]

Whittom: So, I think you were at his office.

Jordan: Yeah, so I was asking Leon Depres... asking Leon Depres if I could join his organization. Now, the Democrat – he’s a Democrat – but the Democrat’s organization is called the Regular Democratic Organization. So even the word ‘organization’ to him is a negative. It’s too much like the establishment’s titled group. He said, “I had no organization. I’m by myself. I act independently and I would suggest... I would say you go... the person in this ward, the fifth ward, is Marshall Korshak. He is the Democratic organization in the fifth ward but you live on the other side of the border.” I was south of Hyde Park Boulevard, which at the time was where reapportionment previously had divided the fourth ward and the fifth ward. He said, “So you would have to go to Alderman Holman, but he’s gonna have nothing to do with you because you’re white and he is going to turn you away with a cold shoulder, and you probably won’t even get to meet him. You will see his lackeys who will turn you away.”

So that was the message I got from him, and here I’m thinking he’s this idealistic person who only tells truths [laughter] and so I figured, okay, well, I’ll go to Korshak. That sounds like a Jewish name. I can identify with him. [laughter] And so, I went to Marshall Korshak and I met him and I ... from that point until he died, I always felt he was in my corner. Even though there was nothing I ever did for him, he was just a really nice person. And he said to me, “You know, you’re always welcome to come to whatever meetings we have. You may find you enjoy it; you don’t enjoy it. You can help in our precinct here to do what you wish to do. “You’re telling me you’re not looking for any job.” Because I wasn’t. I was in law school and until I knew how I was doing at DePaul, even though I perceived it would be easier, I didn’t want to commit myself to doing something.

So he said, “So you’re not asking for something. So you’re welcome any time.” He said, “However, don’t...” You know, I told him the conversation with Depres. He said, “Don’t take what he said at face value. He sees himself and Holman as enemies. Holman is not an enemy. He’s not a bad person. He’s always real nice. And he’s nice to me. So go in. It doesn’t hurt you, you live in his ward, go in and introduce yourself and tell him what you told me – that you’re interested in government and politics. You’re not even looking for a job. You just want to be part of the process.” And so I did that.

I had... I would see Marshall Korshak from time to time -- whether from the synagogue that was the one he belonged to at 52nd and Hyde Park Boulevard, Rodfei Zedek, which later when I got married, my wife and I affiliated there and... and then through Jewish causes, whether its for charitable groups or others, he was involved in so many different things that I would see him. He would usually be the honoree or the chairman. I would just be the one of many in attendance, but he really gave a whole lot to the community and when things needed cleaning up in government, I saw Mayor Daley would put him in whether it was at the Sanitary District, where he was I think, the treasurer, or the... well, he was a county or city treasurer for awhile. City, I think. But something at the Sanitary District where they put him to clean things up. He had a good image – a clean image.

And... but anyway, he said to go and... what I did to Claude Holman. And so his office, as I recall at the time, was at the Southerland Hotel at 47th and Drexell. Now, to me that was a

familiar place. Maybe to another young, white person my age that would be a scary place. They'd see it as a black, dangerous area. But I grew up at 50th and Drexell. My... because 917 E. 50th is around the corner from Drexell and well, my lemonade stand when I was a kid was at Hyde Park Boulevard and Drexell. I was pushed in the buggy on Drexell. The barber I walked to was at 47th and Drexell. I had cousins in between. So I mean it was... actually there was a den mother when we went to Boy Scout at 46th and Drexell. Another one at... on the other side of ... on the block between Drexell and Cottage. So for me, it was my area that I was going to so it was nothing foreign.

And so I went in. And I thought it was strange but he had two secretaries at the time, both men, named Grant – I think, Fred Grant – Frederick Grant and Kenneth Grant and I was, you know, asked... I asked if I could meet him and I basically gave the history how I got there, and they said he's not in now and they said, "By-the way, do you know who your precinct captain is?" And I said, "I have no idea" and that we just moved there recently and I just came, probably, you know, from school, shortly before. He said, "Well, you should know who Ted Swain is, and you also know who Nick Mellos is." I said, "No, I have no idea." And I felt like I was flunking some tests already. [chuckles] Yeah. "And so anyway, they said, "Well, there's going to be a meeting. I think it was the following Saturday or week from Saturday. Why don't you come to that meeting?" And I don't know if they gave me Ted's number or Nick's number or just said to meet them there. And I remember meeting them and many other people and I think it was then in the basement of the Southerland.

And then I was introduced, I think by Nick Mellos, who at the time was the Sanitary District trustee, so an officeholder out of the fourth ward, who later became president of the Sanitary District and I think had a distinguished career there. He introduced me to Alderman Holman, who said to me basically, "You're welcome here to be with us so long as you're really not here on somebody else's behalf to do dirt or damage. All I want is loyalty." And he would say all the time to everybody, "I will do nothing illegal for you and I expect you" – all the people he talked to – "to do nothing illegal or inappropriate for me." And so whatever Depres had been talking about, nothing resonated as being something to be wary about.

Now, I would watch with greater interest, now knowing the personalities and see how on television from the city council Depres and Holman would interact like oil and water all the time. 'Cause, especially when it would come to racial matters, Depres would take a stand against Daley and Holman would defend him. And therefore there would be many people who would accuse Holman of being an Uncle Tom. And yet, the more I would come to know Holman and really learn the process would realize that the more he showed loyalty to Daley publicly, the more he actually accomplished in moving Daley or the other forces that be to open up the system, because he was conscious of the fact that there were certain foc... focal points in government that were important to have sensitive people in, whether it would be the District Commander of a police district; whether it would be the person who picks up and drops off the garbage, the ward superintendent, others as well and the District Superintendents for education as well as the principals, and of course, the teachers. So he was always pushing to get more and more in the areas that he thought were important.

He... he also urged me from the start. Maybe it was because it was consistent with... more people would come to him to join his organization really to get a job, and I really wasn't focused on that. So he said, "Well, while you're in law school, there's some jobs where you could still study. Do you want to be a...a ... something... taking... getting the tickets at the Park District, or lots, or you want to be at a toll booth?" And I said, "No, I'm really not interested in [laughter] and he... he would always... so, I said, "My interests are a little different than that right now. Maybe, you know, I'll think of something later, but not now."

And so through him – he was a very imaginative individual – very fair and open in my view – and besides being a lawyer – and he always sort of demeaned himself when people would introduce him with all of his titles – alderman, committeeman, lawyer. He'd say "You forgot I'm a notary public." You know, take the most mundane to focus on to show it's something anybody could really be. He was also a newspaper publisher. He had a paper, *The News Clarion* and he invited me to write any time I wanted. His law partner Evelyn Johnson, who later became a judge and has since passed away, she helped him edit it. She was the editor. So I wrote a regular column and I don't remember if the *News Clarion* came out weekly or otherwise, but as often as it did. It was like a political commentary.

Sometimes, he was very protective of me. He said, "You sort of... you're gonna offend somebody with this maybe particular person." So he would give me the name 'Keen-Eyed Pete' instead of Michael Jordan or Mike Jordan which was my name, my by-line. And so ...

Swain: What name did he give you?

Jordan: Keen-Eyed Pete. So when there were things that were very political. He... nobody would know it's really me. But he and I knew.

Also, as a newspaper publisher, even though his newspaper really went just in the fourth ward basically, he was given tickets to different opening nights for plays and things and the expectation his newspaper would review them. And so he invited me to use the tickets and review. So I remember one was "The Great White Hope" that was downtown in Chicago and I knew nothing about fighting but I wrote a review and something else. So here, I was writing and improving my writing skills. I was... and later, I became editor-in-chief of the *Illinois Bar Journal* for a couple of years – now whether there was any connection but I felt, sure, I can handle it. So I did the writing. I did reviewing.

And to my surprise after a few years, I... you know, I don't know why Ted wasn't picked or somebody else but he made me president of his ward organization and you know I could see he wanted to show a balance. The ward was probably 90% plus black, and 10% less white at that time. Maybe I'm off by some percentages. To show that it wasn't just one thing. It was a mix. And ... and then also, I suppose that it... I was nobody who was going to challenge him, so it's not like putting in a number two person. And then he had different positions cause Nick Mellos was chairman of his Executive Committee. And so you could say any one of several people were... had some position. But he gave recognition to people – to as many people as he felt he could.

I remember, well, when I was in Little Rock, Arkansas visiting my sister and brother-in-law the summer after high school before going to college, I took a course at Little Rock University. And the only course available that I could take before actually starting college was a course in speech and so I was practicing my speeches all day but it didn't take that much time and I was also auditing a course in literature. So in my free time in Little Rock – at that time the governor of Arkansas was Faubus, who was making sure as best he could that minorities could not enter the public school system – in the same buildings, schools where white kids were going. So I went to the demonstrations – always from a distance. My fear was I... I didn't want to get beaten up and hurt and it's before civil rights workers were being murdered but I maybe anticipated that sort of thing.

So I saw the brutality that government can exercise and how people who have bigotry can really impose nasty things on others, cause they have the power to do so. So, on the one hand I had all this in my head and coming into a fourth ward organization with Claude Holman, I came to believe that the biggest difference between the Democratic Party, that I was now part of versus anything else – basically the Republican Party – was that the Democratic Party was the pre-eminent, pragmatic, practical civil rights organization – the way to get things done. I was convinced of that after Kennedy was elected and assassinated and Johnson came in to implement so much of what is now taken for granted. And how he campaigned you know, for... here I became involved about 1964, so from that point on, and so it was shortly thereafter with Johnson. And seeing that the organization that I was in was a small cog led by Claude Holman of a bigger picture and that Depres may be correct in a lot of the things he says, but yet he's missing the bigger picture. And that if you look as sausage is being made, you will never eat a sausage, but if you look at the presentation on a plate you may say, "This is beautiful." And so if you look at the end results, the country and the citizens have benefited by the efforts of the Democratic Party that I was part of in those days.

And that's not to say that there were elements within the Democratic Party in Cook County, in Illinois, and elsewhere that were the most reactionary, racist or repressive forces as well. And... but yet where I was, I felt in spite of whatever was being said against Claude Holman, he was an honorable person.

It was through his organization that we got to meet some people that I still maintain contacts with. And then, at the point at which I was trying to find direction – what should I do? As I'm saying law school is coming to an end or it's going to and the bar exam and I'll be finished with that. Vietnam had become bigger and bigger every year and I knew I did not want to fight. First of all, it's not that I'm a pacifist. I think the government of the country needs an army; we need to do things at times. Just... maybe it's me. I'm a coward or something. [laughter] So I figured, what can I do to stay within the law and not find myself in jeopardy. So I figured well, here I'm in law school – perhaps the judge advocate corps. Now, Claude Holman had campaigned for our congressman Barret O'Hara, who was the oldest man in Congress at the time -- he was in his eighties -- who I met at a rally. And Claude Holman always made a point of introducing me to people and people to me so that I developed relationships with many people. Now, I don't think O'Hara at that age would remember me. He wasn't as sharp as maybe he was – as I'm sure he was, twenty or thirty years before but it's through his office that I sought and obtained help to... in applying for the advocate corps.

They said they could get me in if I committed to three years. I was willing to give two but not three. Four was a certainty that I committed to and I said, "I thank you very much but I don't want to make that commitment." So I signed up for all the National Guard units, on their lists and the lists were growing. I figured, I still have a student deferment and I will continue this way rather than go in and come back in a body bag which was becoming more and more the thing or maimed soldiers coming back. Hopefully the National Guard, as our President Bush probably felt too, was the safer way. Now, he can make it sound like "oh, it's the honorable thing." I knew it was an escape from the very hard-core service in the military and I don't deny that to this day.

So by the time I graduated law school, being ahead of myself, I was not yet twenty-six, which was the safety age where a young man would not be taken. So I decided to pursue my studies another year and I went to the graduate program at John Marshall School, cause they had that. And I was finding in these classes I signed up for people I knew from grammar school, from high school, from college, and all over because they had found the same way. [inaudible] was state representative in Hyde Park. Republicans were in the minority districts, so the Republicans got one and the Democrats had two – Abner Mikva and Bob Mann. And he ran the law school. It must have been a huge profit center that year or two, because of all of the students. And as students turned twenty-six, they disappeared [chuckles] and me being younger, I was there through the entire year. Now, not enough to get a Master's because it would have taken more than the one year. But I took some courses in condemnation, in workmen's comp., in trial technique, which I also took in law school, and I don't remember what else.

But again, there was enrichment for myself while I was now working and Claude Holman got me a job in the Corporation Counsels' office, the law department of the city. It was my first experience. I went to traffic court. [inaudible] we'll get you just where you're starting. And then I went to the General Counsel division where I got really substantive, good experience. But, during this year, it was one where I was maintaining my student deferment. That was my goal. I was life-saving – in my view at that time because the body count kept going up. It was 1966 to 1967. And I think the height of things were about 1960.. well, a little after 1968 because Johnson was re-elected... or was elected in a landslide in '68. So it was bad but it wasn't horrendous where there was what happened later where he couldn't even run again. And uh... oh no, he was elected in '64. It was... am I mixing it up? [Let's see...] He was elected in '64. [Yes. Inaudible] '64. In '68, he could not. It was during this time. Right. Because things were building up and that's why I knew I did not want to come back in a body bag and so that's why my student deferment was essential and the day job was less important.

And so if I needed to get... I had to get only C's I think to stay in it or I'd flunk out, so I was doing that and I was dating now. I was also focused on... I'm growing up. I'm out of school. I'm... even though I'm going to school, I'm gonna be getting a... you know, I have a job that's gonna develop into something more so I can start looking to date for the purpose of marriage, not just for parties. And so, I had a well-rounded.... You know, I was dating different people until I found my wife and that was related... If I hadn't switched from Wisconsin, University of Wisconsin law school to DePaul, perhaps I wouldn't have met her because one of my classmates at DePaul law school had taken the C.P.A. exam. He had studied business. His name is Simon Perleman. They call him Sy. And he invited me to bring a date to a party his parents were giving

to celebrate his passing the bar exam while we were in law school. That was ... so it [inaudible] so I took a date and at the party I saw this girl across the crowded room.

Somehow I knew that she would be the one. So anyway, the following Monday, back at school, sitting next to him in a class and I say, "Do you remember at your party, there was some girl and she was wearing..." and I describe what she was wearing and I said... he said, "Yeah, why?" I said, "Well, I wondered is she married?" "No." "Is she dating anybody special?" He said, "Why do you want to know?" I said, "Well, I'm interested in calling on her to date her." He said, "You're kidding. That's my sister." [laughter] So, I said, "Yeah." So he gave me her number. I called her and as Maureen, my wife, said that he told her, "Well, Mike Jordan always dates once or twice a girl. Doesn't call her back. So don't be surprised if he never calls you back. And so, I met her then dated her. We dated about a year, were engaged, and then got married about a year later. And we were married the end of '68.

And I told Maureen that we can live anywhere we want so long as it's in the fourth ward, because I wanted to be supportive of Alderman Holman. She said, "Well, what does that mean?" I said, "Well, basically it's 39th Street to 51st Street, the Lake to King. And... or maybe it was Saint ... Saint Lawrence then – different, different reapportionments when we moved. So we ended up living in Indian Village in my precinct that I took over from Ted Swain. He was the precinct captain. Then I became the precinct captain. And the... the geographic limits of my precinct were only a few buildings. And... cause they were high rises and Maureen had... she wasn't allowed to marry me until she graduated college so we wanted to get married in the summer before we actually got married in December cause she was finishing in December. So she finished and then we got married and moved into Indian Village – 1606 East 50th Place.

And she had gotten a degree in teaching – in education. So she got a job teaching not too far away. Not in Hyde Park, but somewhere south. And I... she... she was assigned to several schools at different times – Back of the Yards and I think one was Hamline School, another in Englewood -- Stagg School and that was the best assignment she could have had. It was with audio-visual arts, but she was told her services would no longer be needed and then she found out from a friend that the State Representative's daughter got that job. So we saw how the system was working.

Now, she would attend with me many of the political events – dinners, that were sponsored for the fourth ward by our county Democratic Party and she enjoyed them too. She enjoyed meeting people. And she had met Alderman Holman and when a health care center was created and built on the South Side, there was an advisory committee that was to be in place for the citizens and he asked her if she would serve on the Advisory Committee for this health center. And she agreed. So I went with her to meetings and I saw some of the people I knew but there were some other people that I didn't know at all. Now, whether they were from other wards or just from community organizations that put their representatives on, but we saw.... And you know I introduced her to the people I knew and some she had met already.

At one of the first, if not the first meeting maybe the second, there was somebody who said, "We don't want outsiders here." Now, Maureen was the only white person on this board, and it became clear and obvious to me this guy is saying, "We don't want her. She's white." Maureen

is basically color-blind and didn't even suspect that it's about her and so she... she spoke up and said, "Yes, I agree. We should not." Now, she didn't know she's talking on the same issue and somebody also, who I knew from the fourth ward... I'm trying to remember... was it Bonn or Bonner or is it Elsie Bonner was there and she knew it was a racist attack and she said, "I don't care if you see people as outsiders or not. This person is gonna stay." And Maureen's [inaudible], "What's she mean 'this person?'" Of course, I'm saying, "It's you." [laughter] And so we, you know, had a sense that not everybody is as open... you know, some people fight for civil rights but really, they're racists themselves. And so, it's another learning piece that even in a struggle, you have to overcome some of your own people to achieve things. And later that health center was named for Claude Holman.

So it was a partnership, you know, with... with Maureen. It wasn't like "Oh, you're going off and doing your thing." I remember when in one election there was a failure to reapportion the state for state representatives and we had a bed sheet ballot and each party put up a name – Stevenson and Eisenhower who became the leaders and vote getters on both sides but it took forever counting the ballots. So I remember Maureen agreed to serve as a judge in that election. It was almost impossible finding people cause they knew that it's gonna be a task that's gonna take...

[End of Tape 2, Side 1]

[Tape 2, Side 2]

Jordan: So anyway, Maureen has been a partner with me in life and part... part of it's the political, extra-curricular activities and then part of it, just being a sounding board for some of the ideas I've always had. Sometimes it's in giving opening statements when I would, you know, try cases. She'd be my guinea pig to hear things and then I learned I could just talk to a tape recorder and play it back and didn't need to impose on her. But... so, those were some of the earlier experiences before actually getting into my first job or on the first job.

Now the first job, as I said was as a lawyer, was in the Corporation Counsels' office and there I was assigned to the traffic division for a while. The man who was in charge of the law department for traffic was somebody I had met before at an event that Alderman Holman had had and of all places, it was at the Playboy Club. And the person -- in fact I was assigned to sit at or next to this man, his name was Carlton Rosenstein -- he said he was the... when he introduced himself he was the chief prosecutor. And I'm thinking, it's a States Attorney. That's not him. The chief city attorney, that's not him. I had no idea but I wasn't gonna refute him. And then I find I'm reporting to him after....

Well, I first went and met Raymond F. Simon, Corporation Counsel, and then he sent me over. He said, "You know where traffic court is?" I said, "Not really." He gave me the address. And... and then I went over there and reported to the office and asked for Carlton Rosenstein. He was an older man, not too active, and he was usually behind the desk but I found his first assistant Irwin Cohn was really a dynamo who ran the office. And it was like a lesson to find in every organization. It isn't always the titular head who runs things. It may be something... someone else and you've got to learn who that is and work with that person. And Irv Cohn was a real nice person always to work with. He later became a judge as well.

And I was assigned there. I'd passed the bar. Had not yet been sworn in and therefore I was hired first as a clerk. And then to become a lawyer as soon as I'm sworn in and so I was in the courtrooms just to watch the prosecutor's to know what they do. And I remember there was a judge who said, "Step up because the lawyer's not here yet so we've gotta get going." I said, "I cannot do that." Now, I knew from my history and government politics that this man was the – right before he became a judge – he was the Republican County Chairman, Francis X. Connell, and he said this to me, not to try and get me in trouble but the understanding of ethics and rules wasn't always at the height of somebody's consciousness. Or maybe he wasn't sensitive that I was about to go before the Character and Fitness Committee and how would that comport with me saying, "Have you ever practiced in court?" "Well, only when I was told to do so." [laughter] So I said, "I cannot do that. That's gonna get me in trouble and it's wrong." So, fortunately, the lawyer assigned to that room came in and that was the end of it, but it was like on that day and thereafter I knew ethics would always be something to keep in mind, that I would be tested on. Whether the other person knew they were testing me or didn't know, it was something I had to be aware of. And that is something that kept me safe and sound as I worked in Traffic Court then and thereafter because as history will bear out, there's at least eight or nine of the judges who work there who were sent to the penitentiary for not being ethical. And unfortunately or fortunately, I had to work with and under a number of them. The ... so that was a lesson I... I wanted to become admitted as quickly as I could. It would mean an increase in my pay and so I told this to Alderman Holman and he said that's not a problem. We can ask the Supreme Court to have a setting... a session which they do in Chicago regularly to admit you before you would otherwise have to go to Springfield. Which I think was... would be, like, another month or so later. So it... it meant 1) I wouldn't have to go to Springfield. It would be easy for my parents to witness my swearing in in Chicago. Get money quicker. And this way I said, "Yeah, do whatever... you know, whoever you have to ask. So it was arranged and I was able to invite and have there... I ... I invited you [addressed to Judge Swain]. I believe you were able to come. I invited... so Ted Swain, Nick Mellos, my parents. I don't remember who else I may have had there.

And I wasn't the only one. It wasn't just like a ceremony for me. There were about 30 others. And it turned out, these were people working for the City of Chicago law department, the States Attorney's Office, the Attorney General's Office. So, where everybody was making the same sort of requests so they could be paid as a lawyer rather than some lesser level. Maybe they couldn't even get hired until they were admitted. And... and so I saw a couple of friends because you know, it's like those who went to law school who got jobs in government. And... and then I was billed as a lawyer. I could go into court and began to ... to prosecute traffic cases for a few months until I was brought back to City Hall.

It became, you know, for Chicago's population and those going through Chicago were brought to Traffic Court. There are so many strangers, to me, that it doesn't happen you know that many people but yet, there would be occasions where I would see somebody who looked familiar and then I'd hear the name called, and say, "Yeah, I know of that person. That's so and so's relative or something." And I was thinking, what can I do differently? And really, for minor traffic there was nothing other than just keep... you ask the policeman, "What'd you see?" And they do it and the judge does what he's gonna do. But it was sometimes awkward where people would think I could do something that I couldn't do.

When I was assigned to General Counsel Division – that was Ray Simon told me, “You’re gonna...you... I hear from Claude Holman and I hear from others where you’ve been. So Traffic, I assume Carl Rosenstein but maybe Irv Cohn that he said, “You’re bright. You’re energetic so I think this next assignment is gonna be more up to your speed as to what you’re capable of.” And so he introduced me to Allen Hartman, who was the head of the General Counsel Division. Allen later became a Circuit Judge, and then he became an Appellate Judge, and he’s been on the Appellate Court for many years. He’s still there now.

And Allen was quite a teacher. Now, I mentioned I took trial technique that year at John Marshall. I also took trial technique and that was from a lawyer, Ken Kutski. I may be messing up his name and in law school from Harry Aaron, who later became a judge. And I realized with trial technique, if you learn from one person you learn one style. And you may think that’s the only style and you don’t really adapt your own personality. So by taking two courses, two people, I realized there’s differences in style and I began to see certain things fit me and certain things don’t. There’re certain rules that I’m being taught and I’ve got to follow those but once I got to General Counsel, I realized I would be getting more skills in trial technique because I would be expected to appear in court, to appear before administrative agencies, to write legal opinions and it was on a wide area, unlike now where that division is divided maybe into five sections. We did zoning. We did personnel matters – prosecuting policemen at the Police Boards, civil service employees at the Civil Service Commission, represented agencies such as the Board of Health, the Chicago Commission on Human Relations, prosecuted liquor and license matters. I’m trying to think of more of the things we did and there were many more. Gave advice to the constitutional office holders, not the constitutional office holders but the legal office holders like the mayor, the city clerk and treasurer, the aldermen. And even on occasion, I had to go to a City Council committee to be advising. And so I had to be quick on my feet, had to have legal basis for what I was saying, and skills is in court. And so it was a real good learning experience.

One assignment I had was really an opportunity. Well, I try to make them all as opportunities but I represented the Chicago Commission on Human Relations and the – I think there’s about 14-15 people appointed by the Mayor, confirmed by the City Council to serve on that and then there’s an executive director. The chairman at the time was Peter Fitzpatrick, who had been... he’s also – and he got no pay for this – but he also was a trial lawyer and he heard liquor and license cases for the Mayor. There he would be paid. So it was like he’s getting one job for pay and another one not and it sort of made it fair for him and his family. He was a trial lawyer and here he had given service, which he was continuing to do but as president of the Illinois Bar. I would try cases in front of him that I prosecuted liquor and license matters, and at the end of every day he would critique me as to why I didn’t call this person or did call that one, why I didn’t do it in a different order, why I’d ask this question, why I didn’t and I saw that by taking in what he was giving me, I could continue to improve my skills and here I was getting one on one unlike the two theoretical trial courses I took. And I saw that the education was a continuing process and he was marvelous with me and a real mentor in my career.

At the Human Relations Commission I was to give him and the Commission advice and it was sort of funny, here he’s giving me [laughter] on the one hand and I’m giving... and ... but he was a good guy and he made sure that I interacted well with all the members of the Commission

and they were diverse parts of the city. Some were from management; some were from labor; some were you know, lawyers, some weren't; some... whatever you could think of is the differences they existed. And... and so I made contacts there that later helped me in moving up to become a judge, because they felt I was sincere, conscientious, and capable which is You know, I suppose I was fortunate at the time I was in the law department of the city, there were a number of lawyers there who weren't working full time. They had private practices. They weren't supposed to but it was winked at and allowed. I was devoting full time. And so, I was... they could count on me to do things and I did'em . So that there was never a bad feeling about my work so people were in a position to truthfully support me for things I was seeking. And I also had the opportunity in prosecuting policemen at the Police Board to... at that time the cases weren't heard by hearing examiners. They were heard by members of the Police Board. So again, they were... the Board was composed of leaders of management and labor. So whether it's the head of the Teamsters, the head of the Commonwealth Edison, the head of Chicago Title and Trust – powerful people in the community. And I got to know them. They got to know me on a first name basis. I called them Mr. or Miss, whatever they were. But again, people who'd know me to speak up for me and they all became my allies in moving ahead in my own career. And I was really blessed with the opportunity, not only to meet them, but to have the opportunity to have done such a variety of things with such responsibility.

When I would appear in state court or federal court on a major case, I would have the backing in the office if I needed advice or suggestions but I would be in charge of the case. And I would go in and opposite me would be some sixty-year old man, who I though was very old because I was young. I was my late twenties, early thirties, you know, during this time. And that sixty-year old would be second chaired by a forty-year old, who'd be assisted by somebody my age. And who would just be carrying the stuff. I was not just carrying the stuff. I was in charge. So I, you know, was given that responsibility and opportunity and... and yet, you know, on certain cases it was necessary for two of us and I would invite or be assigned somebody and would learn from them as well.

During this first year in the office, I saw the advantage of learning more trial technique courses so I took a course given by a judge, Irving Goldstein, who was in his last year of teaching this trial technique course and was ... had groomed a former assistant state's attorney, who was becoming a plaintiff's personal injury lawyer, Fred Lane, and thereafter Fred Lane taught this course until the present day. And he's now given all the proprietary rights to the Illinois State Bar Association but I was fortunate to take it the year that they were both there together. Before, you'd only have Goldstein; after you'd only have Lane and either would be a good deal but getting both was fantastic. So I had still another teacher in, in trial technique. Now that was in the evening. During the day, of course, I was learning from Allen Hartman and he is a real stickler for detail – to proofread, to make sure everything is letter-perfect and to dot your i's. He even insisted when I first came in – cause you sign your first opinion. Are you going to be Michael Stephen Jordan? or are you going to be [glitch in tape] Who are you? What is your identity? -- to think, everything is important. You have to think of every little detail, and so with him I got the minutiae, which is important. And when he moved on his successor was another different type of personality, and Brian Kilgallon, who later became the head of the building commission. He was also an engineer. He's passed away since. But he was teaching more of the give and take of negotiation. He had been head of the tort division and was giving that... a freer,

bigger picture and then also assigned as general counsel for awhile was Ben Novasalski, who later became a judge and he taught me more trial tactics. He tried cases in the federal court. And I was learning with every one of 'em.

Ben told me when I was working on a case with him, that there's a young lawyer on the other side who's alone. So, he's gonna get the sympathy of the jury unless I can do something about it so you're gonna see me stutter, you're gonna see me stumble, and you're going to see me do some other things. Don't think I'm in trouble. It's just what we need to do to level the playing field. [chuckles] And so I learned some tricks of the trade. And so, it's like... it made work interesting when I'd do these things. Now there were some zoning cases I'd have or some personal injury cases where I represented the city where I felt unless I went out to the scene, I couldn't visualize what they were talking about so I'd go there. And Maureen would go with and then she laughed, "For the amount you get paid in government, you realize you're going on your time for the weekend. And I said if I don't I'm really not doing what I need to do. So, we'd do that and then we'd go do whatever else we were doing.

I...I... I refer to the fact that we even had to represent or go to committees of the City Council and one of the things I got involved in was a real hot issue where there was a request by way of legislation, and I think it was by Depres, to ban in the Fair Housing Ordinance or another civil rights act of the city, discrimination based on – [inaudible] use that language – sexual orientation and the city's position that I was espousing was that the ordinance was fine the way it was and it didn't need amendment. So all of a sudden I realize when I'm there thinking I'm just giving legal opinions and the opinion of the city is that I became an evil enemy of this Alderman Depres who, I said to myself, "Did he forget I went to him a few years ago?" And here, I'm not... I'm not evil. And so sitting on the other side of me is Alderman Sperling from the 50th Ward, who whispers in my ear. He was Republican, and he said, "Mike, don't worry. Don't take it in what he's saying. He's just a showman all the time. Just... you're doing your job." "And I don't know you. It's very nice you're telling me this." And I didn't say that, "You don't know me and I don't know you." I found later I had a connection to him and maybe he knew it and I just didn't know it. So I did my job and it happened that Maureen was there and she's saying, "You were on the wrong side of this issue." I said, "It doesn't matter. A lawyer takes their clients position and you argue it as long as it's not contrary to law. And here in fact it is the law we're talking about. So... you know, it was... we had many discussions at home because here she felt I was... I should've set different policy. I said, "I'm not the elected alderman. I'm not the mayor. I'm just the lawyer." And so that's what I was there to do.

Now, I found out later – and I don't remember how much later – it was probably when I ran for Associate Judge in 1974, where I was going around to all the circuit judges to solicit their vote and by then Alderman Jack Sperling was Judge Sperling and I was gonna see... he was sitting in Boy's Court and he was just overwhelmed and when I'd go over there he was busy but he left me a message saying, "Don't worry. You don't have... I know who you are and your cousin has called me on your behalf." And he said his name is Jack Lisagor. He's since passed away. Jack's brother Peter was the editor-in-chief of the *Stars and Stripes* newspaper during World War Two, so he had probably more people read his newspaper than any other paper in the history of the world. He was the Washington Bureau Chief later of the *Chicago Daily News* and he was on *Meet the Press* and *Face the Nation* all the time. He was very close with President Kennedy.

He... Peter Lisagor was always a hero of mine. Maybe that's why I wanted to write newspaper articles and later, editor-in-chief of *Bar and Journal* and here it was the connection with Jack Sperling that maybe he knew about me before I knew. Or maybe he was just being nice and didn't know a connection but it reminded... you know, it's good to have heroes to try and emulate. Peter Lisagor was one for me. When I'd see him and then I'd meet him. He grew up in Princeton, West Virginia. That's where he was born -- where my mother was born and he lived with my grandparents -- my mother, and her brother and sister for a while. So, even though he's like a second or third cousin, he had a closer connection. And his family moved to Chicago too. Like my mother and her family did. And so I always felt, speaking of ethics before, knowing that he represented an ethical strain in trying to find the truth in what was going on, that this is something I needed to emulate and so law and the bench, there's always that fact-finding to find the truth and so its' maybe consistent with that.

And associate judge -- it's really not a slating process. You first file an application, as you know, and you have to go through the Bar Association and if you're found or deemed qualified by a panel that interviews you after investigators call your references and others. Then that list of qualified people goes before a committee of the court -- it's all under Supreme Court Rule #39 and the committee interviews these people and ... who're competing. And at the time I ran there were thirteen vacancies so the rule provides they're to select double -- twenty-six of those applying. And these judges who are on the committee are probably bombarded with solicitations, because that's where all of the members of the Police Board, the Human Relations Commission, every friend and family member who knew a friend was trying to get them to -- by letters of recommendation -- get them to get me on the list. Claude Holman at that point had just died and therefore he was no longer there to tell Mayor Daley, "This is a guy I want you to help and tell the judges you know," -- which would have been the key. So he was gone. So, I put more reliance on all these other people to the judges. Now, in the interim when Alderman Holman passed away suddenly -- remember early... middle of the night, I got a call from Evelyn Johnson saying that he just died. And she knew I'd hear it on the news so she wanted me to know before I heard that way. And I was honored to be one of his pallbearers.

I was now, as the president of the ward organization -- people were coming to me immediately saying, "Call a meeting so we can pick a new committeeman," and of course the people saying it all wanted to be committeemen [laughter]. And to this day there's one guy who'll never speak to me again because I didn't call him when he wanted. I don't have to give his name but... So, I needed to figure out, you know, what power or authority really do I have? Who am I? And I have this title but he gave it to me. It's not like I was elected by anybody. And so... what... and then I was figuring, well, who do I want? If it's up to me -- it's not me -- so who do I want? And I was thinking of the qualified people. One name came to mind immediately to me, which was Tim Evans and it was the question 1) Is he willing? Is he interested? I asked him. He said yes. Then I had to figure how did it... how is it to be done? So, knowing I'm president but there's a chairman of the executive committee and he's been around much more than I have.... So I talked to Nick Mellos and he asked me why -- who and why--cause I said "Tim" and gave him reasons and he asked who else I thought might be interested and I told him some of the people already calling me and why I didn't think they might be and that there were some other people who were

behind somebody, but I think it was more because they thought they could control that person – that person wouldn't be an independent thinker, having the savvy to do what's appropriate.

And so Nick was convinced, either on his own or maybe just wanting to hear all the facts. Maybe he knew already but just was reinforcing it. I can't say, but I'd like to have an ego and say I convinced him about it. Put the bug into Tim's ear and he hadn't thought of it. But anyways, so I said to Nick, "What can we do?" And he said, "Well, we've gotta see if there's any objection by the Mayor. If he's gonna be the committeeman, he's gotta be approved by the central committee too, not having been elected and so I said, "Okay, so what's next?" He said, "I'll set up an appointment for us to go in."

I'd never really talked to the Mayor one-on-one and here I'm going in to give him advice, to somebody like replace Alderman Holman, who was then the President Pro-tem of the City Council – major position. He had been chairman of the Health Committee. He was a power and so Nick told me when the appointment is. I said, "Good, it doesn't conflict with a case I'm in court." And so, do I have to tell anybody? I figured, nah, just sort of go over there cause I'm just down the hall on the fifth floor. So I go over and I see Nick and we're waiting in the waiting area before they say go into the Mayor and who should walk out of the Mayor's office but Raymond Simon had quit and at that time, Richard L. Curry was the Corporation Counsel – he later became a judge – and he sees Nick and me out there. He knows Nick and of course he knows me. I work for him. And he said, "Oh, the fourth ward delegation is here regarding succession." [laughter] He knew. It's not like, "What are you doing and why aren't you in the office working?" He.. he he knew that this is... unless the Mayor said, "I'm about to see.... and one of 'em is your assistant. What do you think of Jordan?" Maybe he filled him in on me. I...I...I don't know but in any event, we went in and we expressed our condolences to him and he'd us for the loss of Alderman Holman. And we said that you know at the appropriate time, if you want to check out who we think might be useful but is somebody that you would think is useful and good [inaudible]. Now Tim Evans at the time had been in the law department of the city for a short time. He had gone on to the Department of Investigations as the assistant head and so the Mayor had met him and knew of him. He didn't know him well. And he asked why—reasons – and we each gave them. Mine were that he's a decent person. He's fair. He's open. He listens. He's... he's shown his loyalty to Alderman Holman. He's grateful for the gifts that have been given to him. And I knew that included a scholarship that he got to law school – the Cook County Bar Association. I knew he appreciated his own mentors including Glen Johnson who was the one who was president of the Cook County Bar at the time, who was instrumental in getting him the scholarship – [inaudible] husband, who was Claude Holman's partner. And so I gave reasons that, you know, he was a lawyer. He had a private practice that was allowed consistent with his job at a department state agency [inaudible] real estate closings. He was divorced and his mother died...

[End of Tape 2, Side 2]

Interview with Judge Michael Jordan

NATHAN WIDHAM: This is the second interview with Judge Michael Jordan, on behalf of the Loyola University Library, for the Cook County Court Oral History Project. It took place on November 21, 2004, at the home of Judge Michael Jordan. The interviewer is Nathan [Widham?].

MICHAEL JORDAN: See, I'm trying to remember where we left off. Somewhere around, I was about age 30, I think.

NW: Yeah. I think you were about ready to -- you were discussing about -- about where you were going, and how you decided to, I think, become a judge, perhaps?

MJ: OK, is that where you were?

NW: Yeah.

MJ: Yeah, I can talk a little bit about that. Because I think earlier on, I had indicated that I really didn't have, in growing up, a focus on becoming a lawyer. My focus had been otherwise. And when I ruled out medicine with the last course I was taking in pre-med, then I tried -- I focused on dentistry and messed up on the chalk. So I was taking more diverse courses. And then my parents convinced me to be open to law -- my father was a lawyer -- and that that would be a good general background. So that is what I did. And I continued -- and I think I already indicated --

at the University of Wisconsin, where -- I liked it there, and then I ultimately came to DePaul, where I graduated from law school. And took the Bar in Chicago -- the Illinois Bar, and was fortunate to pass it the first time. And then I received, or attained, my first job. And I talked, too, about how I'd become involved in politics and government, based upon some lectures, even though I wasn't a PoliSci major, the interest that I developed at school, at Wisconsin. And how I became involved with Alderman Claude W.B. Holman. That's his full name with initials. And he had wanted me to get a job ever since we met. And I had put that off, knowing that I needed to focus more on school than on the sort of things he was offering me. So the first job in government was my first job as a lawyer. Actually, right before I was a lawyer, I had passed the Bar, but before I sworn in. So I served as a clerk first, until I actually had the ceremony to be sworn in. So I was employed by the law department of the city of Chicago, first as a clerk, and I think I've already indicated I was first assigned to Traffic Court. And it was at 321 North Clark, which is no longer the place people go with their traffic tickets. And I worked there for just -- well, less than month as a clerk, and then I became a lawyer. And then I was there a few months when I was given the

opportunity to move into City Hall. Into -- that's where all the Law Department offices were except for Traffic Court. And it was there that I was assigned to the General Counsel Division. I'm sort of reiterating, or backtracking, from some of what I said before.

NW: What year is this?

MJ: So this is the beginning of 1967. I think I came to the General Counsel Division about March of 1967. And it was there I was assigned to General Counsel. The head of the General Counsel Division was Allen Hartman, who later became a Circuit Court judge, and then an Appellate Court Judge, where he still sits today. And he's from Chicago. He had, under his jurisdiction in the General Counsel Division, it seemed like there were about 18, 20 lawyers, and clerk-- and, in addition, some clerks and secretaries. And so I had the first responsibility to figure out for myself what I would be doing. He was very busy, so he talked to me just a couple of minutes, and then said introduce myself around and he'd get back to me as soon as he could. So I felt adrift at first. But the first person I met -- his name is Dan Pascale, who, by coincidence, I just talked to a couple of days ago. And he was -- well, he impressed me from the start. He said he had been with the office just a short time, and I asked where he went to

law school and undergraduate, and his background was Harvard and the University of Chicago. So I was thinking, "Boy, he's got to have a few brains, or -- you know, that are functioning well." And here he is. So I saw he was a very nice person, and I was impressed from the start with his intelligence. And the next person he introduced me to was somebody that I continued to have a relationship with today. He is somebody, he said, that would be coming in. He was working part time because he was serving as a clerk and he was still in law school, and he had another job as well. So he was pretty busy. And I said, "What's his name?" And he said, "I'll introduce you as soon as he gets here any minute. But his name is Mike Madigan." And so, Mike's responsibility was to read police reports, abstract them, so that those in the division who prosecuted those cases -- little did I know it would be me later -- would have the gist of it without having to read all the minutiae. And so I met him, and he would read it and dictate it and a court reporter would come in. So that was the first time I saw a live court reporter -- a real person -- and got to know her. And she would come regularly, because she understood the manner in which this process was going to unfold. She worked for McCorkle Court Reporters, and her name was [Sunny Katz]. And I'm sitting in, because

so far I have no where else to go, and no -- I don't even have an office. I don't know where I'm going to be. No paperclips, even. So I sit with -- I'm sitting with them while this was going on, and I'm hearing that her son had -- just that weekend before -- had had a bar mitzvah. A Jewish family -- that he had just turned 13, and that's what was the week-- that weekend. And both Dan and Mike had been there. And Dan was joking how Mike, this blue-eyed, light-haired, fair-skinned Irish Catholic was at this bar mitzvah with his yarmulke on, and he was there and nobody would really know who he is, or that was -- or that it was his first that he had ever been to. And I was thinking later, "Well, how would Dan know that much more?" But I realized later -- because the three of us became good friends, where we would go lunch several times a week -- and learned that, while Dan is Italian, he's Protestant, which is a real rarity. And Mike is an Irish Catholic. And me as being Jewish. We each would drain each other of as much information as we could to learn about our own backgrounds, and the differences and similarities. And it was a trait I appreciated from both of them. Because it was never in a negative, demeaning way, but always to be enriched. And Mike later went on -- well, he became -- he took the Bar, he passed his first time too. And he was

shortly thereafter -- because of -- he lived on the southwest side -- and there was a death of a politician there, and he saw that it was his opportunity and he took it. He ran for and became the Democratic committeeman. He was also a member of the Constitutional Convention, and a leader of the Constitutional Convention for Illinois. So he's a father of the state, you could say -- the second or third time around, with different constitutions. And also, he became a state representative. And later, after a number of years, became the speaker of the house, and he continues in that position, where he's been for maybe 15 years now. So the -- I've maintained a close relationship with the first two people I met -- well, after Allen Hartman -- with these people. And each of us has always been supportive of each other, because of the mutual respect and friendship that we've developed. And it's fortunate that, in my view, each of the three of us will supplement and complement each other, and yet each one -- Dan and Mike, on their own -- could stand without any help from anybody else. And each has shown that. Dan went on later to become a judge. Before that, he was the first assistant corporation counsel -- he moved up into that position. He became the administrative director of the Illinois court system. And then he went to work for the

law department -- the corporation. The corporation was absorbed by another company, and so he's had a few positions. But he's done very well, as Mike has, in his private practice as well as in government and politics. And Mike has become the state chairman of the Democratic party, and has been for a few years now. So those were the first two people I met, and the friendship continues. I was ultimately -- when Allen Hartman got back from a few meetings -- assigned to a particular cubicle. The law department of the city had offices that were in areas, clusters, by division. So the people in his division were all clustered near each other, but still there was a lot of space. And some had one in an office, some had two, and there was windows between. So you could basically see what everybody in the division is doing. Or he could. I mean, maybe that was his way to watch that we're all there when we're supposed to be there. Except you can't really do that with a professional lawyer, because we'd have to go do research, be in court, depositions in other lawyers' offices. But some of the people I met were as diverse as could be, because they came from all parts of the city of Chicago. So with my own background, I thought I was pretty open to different types of people. But I was meeting people that seemed very different. And then, on the other

hand, they were very similar. They were all professionals who had had law degrees. So I realized, too, that everybody -- besides being there as a lawyer -- were involved -- because at that time, there was no prohibition about political activity. And, in fact, those were people who were drawn to it. So some of these people were fairly involved and active in the local ward organizations. I'd say ward and township, but this is all the city of Chicago, so it's all ward organizations. Some, I discovered later, were not -- they weren't the committeemen, the elected officials, but they were -- like, when I ultimately became in the Fourth Ward, the president of the ward organization -- there were a couple of those. And some were from families that were very famous, like, at that time, the most powerful alderman was the head of the Finance Committee, Alderman Thomas Keane. His nephew was there -- a superb lawyer. And there may have been others who were related to people or not. My father, when I would tell him who I was working with, he said, "I can't believe that you're in this company. I can't believe you got this position." Because his view was, we -- people like us -- were on the outside, never to be part of such a thing. But I saw that, really, if you include yourself, you'll be included. And so, ultimately, when I beca-- developed the

interest to become a judge, it's a lot of these people who were the help. They directly or through their relatives, friends, or people they knew from their neighborhoods, were the ones that helped. And since the first time -- the first position as a judge as an associate judge, which is appointed by the elected judges, each of the people in my division and the rest of the office that I grew to know and meet and... Those people had friends from their neighborhoods who were the sitting judges. So when I ultimately had to go around campaigning, different lawyers in the office would come and volunteer. "I can take you to see Judge X, Judge Y, and Judge Z." And somebody else would say, "I know him, so I can take him there and somewhere else." And I was inev-- it was rare, when I went in to somebody cold. Somebody would either have called ahead, or brought me in with them, and vouch for my integrity, my ability, and the other things that whoever it was would be interested in. And also the fact that -- as I suppose as Mike Royko in his political columns and books would say -- I wasn't somebody that nobody didn't send. So, I had -- in other words I had a mutual connection to them. That they would feel that there's a relationship, either existing or that could be developed.

NW: Were you the President of the -- (inaudible) you ran for, what is it, president of your council, or in your ward? Were you -- what was -- what was that position?

MJ: I was President -- I was ultimately named by Claude Holman as President of the Fourth Ward Democratic Organization. Right.

NW: Were you that at that time?

MJ: And that's what I was at the time I applied to be -- to seek the position of associate judge. And -- and even though, by the time I applied, Alderman Holman had already died, and, as I had indicated, I had recommended, and finally we got, Tim Evans approved as the successor, who was approved by the Democratic Central Committee, which was Mayor Daley and the other committeemen on his recommendation. And he did that based upon the knowledge that the precinct captains -- the organization of the Fourth Ward -- was supporting him, and that he wanted the position. So Tim Evans kept Alderman Holman's officers in. And so I remained the President of the Fourth Ward, under Tim Evans. And then, as I had indicated before, Tim Evans was then elected, besides committeeman, the next election for -- where the voters participated -- he was elected by the people as the Democratic committeeman in a primary, and then as alderman in the next aldermanic election. And

after serving some time, he became -- well, when Washington -- Harold Washington -- was elected, he became his floor leader, and then he became a candidate for mayor himself, and was defeated. And then ran for judge in one of the many circuits that -- and I can talk about that in a minute. A mini-circuit, as opposed to how I was later elected. And -- and then, has since, after becoming presiding judge, first of the Domestic Relations Division, he became the presiding judge of the Law Division. And now he's the Chief Judge. And he's been, as of about a month or so ago, was reelected unanimously. The first time he ran he had some competition. And we've been close friends for years and years, Tim Evans and I. And it's, you know, interesting that when the fight was going on in the City Council, when Washington was in. Vrdolyak, 29, versus the, I suppose it would be the Harold Washington -- whatever 29 from 50 is. That was his number. Tim Evans was on one side with Washington, and while Mike Madigan was not in the City Council, the Alderman from his ward was on Vrdolyak's side. And I was living out here, so I -- and you know, I'm out of politics -- but the township committeeman here was sort of having no need to be involved. That was Don [Eslick] at the time. He took no position. But skipping ahead, when I ran in '84 as a circuit judge, I had the

support of all elements of the party: The more old-line that was Mike Madigan's; the black minority, which was Tim Evans; the less-affiliated, or independent, like Don Eslick. And with the three groups, I was -- was in a real nice position, where I could go -- some people were afraid to go to certain wards, they'd be perceived wrong. But I really have to speak out and say that Harold Washington, even though he did not slate, select, have influence, or any input whatsoever in who the candidates would be for judge in 1984, he endorsed and supported and campaigned for all of us. And he took a picture with every one of us to use as we saw fit. So he -- and he urged all of those who supported him to support our ticket, and then the party that slated us -- you know, it would be Mike Madigan's group -- was very strong for us. And all of the independents. And it wasn't that Don Eslick wasn't so independent, but whether -- whoever you might perceive at the time. So it was a very unified group that -- and it wasn't that we needed to be too partisan, because it was -- we just don't just run against opponents in a judicial race. And so the next time around when we were up, in '90, as well as in '96 for me, where we need 60% of the vote -- a retention election, where you needed from everybody -- the Republicans were on board for the Democrats, and the

Democrats for Republicans. So I never sensed a real partisan divide, but cooperation and help. Going back a little bit now, to -- I sort of jumped precipitously. In the Corporation Counsel's Office, I was very fortunate to get many different assignments. And first of all, I did get an office later that day. Allen Hartman gave me a cubicle that I shared with a man who looked real good, but I found he was in his 80s. His name was Maurice [Handelman], and he represented -- his prime responsibility was the Board of Health and some other things. And I saw that, and I learned, that he was -- had good health. He had a real good image about himself, and an outlook for tomorrow of optimism always. After sharing the office with him for a number of months, he said, "You know, I think I'm going to retire." And he decided he would retire. We had a party for him. And that night, he died, after his retirement party. And I realized that every person -- he's probably not atypical -- needs something to look forward to the next morning. He had been married and was, I think, divorced years before. So it wasn't like he and a wife were going to be doing things. He had one child who lived in another town, I don't remember where. And so his life had always been filled by the activities during the day that he could think about at night to look forward to for

the next morning. So hearing that, I told myself, never give up anything unless you plan what the next event is going to be. And I've always counseled people the same. Just last week, somebody said, "I'm thinking of retiring." I said, "That sounds good if that's what you want to do. But what are you going to do next?" And that's why -- I'll jump ahead again -- even -- I submitted my resignation as a judge on a Sunday after the governor signed a bill on a Friday. So it just took me 48 hours. But I had been planning ahead thinking I would leave when I'm age 60. And so I moved it up a little with this bill. And so I knew what I was going to be doing. So I just had the opportunity to do it quicker. So I had made up my mind. I was ready for it. And my plans were set. Unlike another close friend -- he was the chief judge in Lake County. He decided to wait another four or five months to get emotionally up to the task, even though he knew he wanted to do what I'm doing, mediation and arbitration. So you have to get ready emotionally and logistically and otherwise. So I learned from Maurice Handelman -- and I think one of my themes, if there were any, last time -- is all along the road of my life, I tried to learn things to use, and I tried to share if it's going to be of some help or benefit to somebody else. And so I try not to do things

too impulsively. And try to be methodical. And maybe it's just consistent with my personality, I don't know of too many people who become judges who are impulsive. You've got to just sit, and listen, and be quiet. And it's just inconsistent with the impulsive type of individual. So I suppose it wasn't a surprise to me that I would take that attitude, or maybe to those who know me. Now, in the Corporation Counsel's office, I felt the most supportive, nurturing environment that I can ever imagine would exist, that a lawyer would have anywhere, whether it's in private practice, in a corporate setting, or wherever else.

Everybody seemed to want to help everybody else, so if somebody wasn't -- was under the weather, and maybe said "I don't know if I can really come in." "Don't worry, tell me where you have to be and I'll take it for you. I can squeeze it in." There was always that. Or, if somebody heard, this is the first time you're doing this. "Let me show you how I would do it." But also know this is how he did it, so you don't have to do it my way. So it was a very nurturing and enriching experience, to learn from people. And everybody would understand everybody else's strengths and weaknesses. And obviously when cases were assigned by the boss, Allen Hartman, or higher, they would come to a person to either develop some skills or because

they had certain skills. I was probably tested at first by given certain things to do where I couldn't do too much harm. And every opinion I rendered to a public official, or to an entity -- and that was part of what we did, we'd give advisory opinions -- would always go through the General Counsel, Allen Hartman, and have to go out under the signature of the Corporation Counsel. So the top lawyer in the office would always review -- would be reviewing -- all of my work. After, of course, the first line of defense would be my supervisor, who would tell me if I'm way off base or something. So I always felt that sense of protection, and it's good for the people getting it. It went through at least three tiers of review. And in the beginning, in an area where I didn't have that expertise, it was really good. Later, I may have developed more expertise than the boss on-- the top, who had to be on top of everything. But it was a good system, and I like the way the office ran. Anytime we would win or lose a case in court, we would have to propose, if the other side appeals or, if we've lost, should we appeal, and give a synopsis of what came out in the facts and the law. Be able to write succinctly, because Corporation Counsel was over so many lawyers with so many matters, that it had -- you couldn't give them a huge book to read. It had to be

concise. So I learned those writing skills out of necessity. And then would sometimes advocate that something I would feel should be appealed. The Appeals Division, those who would actually be filing it, would be reviewing it too. And they may comment and otherwise. Maybe their interest was, they were overloaded at the time, and there was something more pressing than this. And we've have to say, maybe so, but this is still something that's worth pursuing. It shouldn't be dropped. And so, sometimes, in a couple of cases, I would volunteer, even though I'm not in the Appeals Division, to assist or cooperate with that lawyer. And so I got that additional experience. And it wasn't the first time, to write briefs or anything, because sometimes you had to write briefs in the trial court. And especially for some of my federal cases. You know, they make a joke about, let's not make it into a federal case, but there's a lot of paperwork in the Federal Court, and I would have to do that. So, again, it was a whole lot of good, positive experience, which took me in good stead when I'm applying for the next role, which is as a judge. Because at the time I was applying I was 31 years old. It was unheard of. You need to stop for a second?

[BREAK IN AUDIO]

Let's see, what's the last thing I said?

NW: You were talking about how your work environment helps you

--

MJ: Oh, having all these experiences and being just 31 years of age. People said how did I get such a position at such an age. And part of it, by jokingly saying, "I applied early. Some people wait until they're 60 or 70 to apply for the job. I did it early." But, more seriously, I had some prime assignments of significant matters that I handled well, and therefore developed advocates on my behalf who were in a position to influence the thoughts of others. And the cases varied from all sorts of constitutional issues -- defending ordinances that were under attack in Federal or State Court. To administrative agencies, and how they acted -- municipal administrative agencies. Sometimes I had to take, and defend the city in front of state administrative agencies. So there were community groups that were sometimes involved or interested, and while my focus as the lawyer was on the legal issues, I could not ignore how people wanted to be included in what's going on. And so while my client was the city of Chicago, you could say, so it's just the Corporation Counsel, the

Mayor, the elected officials -- on the other hand, it was like three million citizens. And I remember with a zoning matter I had, it was in East Rogers Park, near Loyola. And there was a big question of four plus ones. And a lot of the community there was too many cars in a small area. Too den-- the density wasn't good.

[END OF AUDIO FILE Jordan - 7]

MJ: So I was talking about a zoning case that was in East Rogers Park, that's the 49th Ward. The citizens went to their alderman. The alderman went to Neil Hartigan, who later became Democratic committeeman there, who had been an administrative assistant to the mayor, who I had worked with. And so he told me, bringing in all these people, that they had a definite interest in this litigation to maintain the integrity of the zoning ordinance, and to be sure that the community is protected, and they gave -- we gave the opportunity to the citizens to tell me what their concerns were, so I would be able to articulate this to the other side, and also in court. And so it was another opportunity for me to interact in a slightly different way, to make sure that I really knew what the interests were of the community -- to be compatible with that, and be

compatible with the law, and mesh the two. And speak with some sense of authority when I spoke, and just say it's not me speaking, or the nebulous city. So it was another opportunity, and it's just one sort of case. Some of the cases I had had a lot of consequence, because it involved - - I suppose Chicago is an evolving, dynamic place. And there was a moving population of minorities to certain areas where they'd never been before. So I'm representing the Human Relations Commission. We were talking out loud about these issues, not just whispering. But we had to deal directly on issues of race, racism -- methods to fight those who would panic a community -- the panic peddlers. So on the one hand we were dealing with communities representing organizations of the minority groups, and then the people who were there who were fearing change, who were fighting the panic peddlers. And I felt like I was part of the bridge to the extremes that themselves -- who would hate each other and not want to talk to each other -- but we represented everybody. And in trying to administer the Fair Housing Ordinance, and in doing things like that. Now I'm representing the Human Relations Commission. We had the Fair Housing Ordinance, and I would be the one to prosecute the cases, put on the witnesses. And the ordinance sometimes would just respond to complaints of

citizens. I -- somebody would come in and say, "My wife and I applied, and we were turned down, and we shouldn't have been turned down. We had the money." And sometimes the Commission would be -- a triggering effect. They would send in investigators undercover to pose as people interested. And in any event, I would put on these cases and establish whether a particular real estate agency, brokerage house, whatever, or an individual owner of a place, was discriminating. And, so, these were some very hot and volatile issues. And I found in one case that we pursued -- it was against a major supporter of the mayor, Mayor Daley -- [Wirtz]. Wirtz, at the time -- for all I know he still is -- is the owner of the -- oh, no, it's been torn down -- the Chicago Stadium. Now it's --

NW: United Stadium.

MJ: United. And when the Commission recommended a suspension of his license -- I think it was 30 days, 60 days, I don't remember now -- and everything that we did, you know, the actions take-- taken, and recommended, I always keep this -- my supervisor and the corporation counsel, were in abreast, and the mayor was made aware of it. And the word I got was don't do anything different. You know, it may be his friend, but that's what it's going to be. And so I had a comforting feeling that my legal work wasn't in conflict

with any, you know, political needs to accommodate. And I found that working for the city, I never once felt that I was to compromise my legal professional point of view because of some political consideration that somebody might have wanted me to have. So --

NW: Also it seems to me that you -- in many cases you viewed yourself more as a mediator than as specifically always representing just the city?

MJ: Yeah, I probably didn't even have that --

NW: That title.

MJ: -- that title in my head then. And it's possible --

NW: Is that the whole office was like that, or was it just there are certain lawyers more --

MJ: No, it depended on the task or the assignment. Now, for the Human Relations Commission, you're trying to get people together. There's still a basic line. You can't say, somebody says I'll discriminate less often, or less -- or, you know, you compro-- it's right or wrong. But you try to educate, and you try to indoctrinate, rather than beat them up. So I -- whenever I could, I would do that. In fact, one of the responsibilities I had in the prosecution of liquor and license matters -- that's bars and other places that have licenses from the city. Besides liquor licenses, it could be anything from a beauty parlor or, I don't know

who else has city licenses now, but then it was different. We would bring formal proceedings if something was serious, or they had a history. But sometimes for a new licensee, they're in business a short time, and they wouldn't always know or understand. There'd be a panel -- somebody from the police department, somebody from the city law department, somebody from the mayor's office, and one -- so these three people -- a representative of each -- would have a panel. Later, after a number of years of prosecuting, I was put on the panel for a while. And we would decide, this one goes for a hearing, this one -- let's bring them in informally, and rather than seek a suspension of their license or revocation, we'll just give them a warning. Or, if they, you know, instead of something greater, we'll say if they're willing to take a one or two day suspension, and pick it on a slow day. So - - just so they will learn. So after a while, I was one of those who would be talking to the licensees. They'd come in and I would explain why they were brought in. Usually we'd be sitting in the mayor's office. I mean, I talk about the mayor's office -- you know, his private office, he sits at his seat -- we don't sit there, but there's a lot of rooms and offices in there. And so I, as far as they knew, I wasn't a lawyer for the law department. I was

an assistant to the mayor, in his capacity as the local liquor commissioner, or the license commissioner. And I was told the first time, "Remember the burden you have. You should feel an emotional burden. Because you're representing personally the major now." So I would, you know, tell the people why they were brought in, what they needed to understand by way of their responsibilities, and understand what was expected of them, and then their choices, their rights. And it was usual that most of the people would accede and take the warning, or a couple of days, rather than get something worse. And I had discretion. If we were originally going to go with, say, three days, and I saw they were really contrite and really, you know, I could give it a warning. And if I saw somebody was just trying to give me bad excuses, and they thought I was naïve, I would jack it up a little bit. So I wasn't just somebody's robot, but I had some discretion. So it was the -- probably one of the first places that I was doing something in a judicial capacity, even though I didn't think of it as such. Just like at the Human Relations Commission, it may have been in a mediation capacity at some times. I also learned to deal with the press a little bit, because some of the cases at the Human Relations Commission especially were very noteworthy and

newsworthy at the time. There was one case involving a building -- 209 East Lakeshore Drive -- and I may have referred to this last time, not by the name of the building, but by some of the personalities -- that was accused of discriminating against Jews on the basis that they would reject people from living in the building because of their religion. And the investigation determined that there was more likely than not a quota of ten percent that had been set by the board. That they would allow up to ten percent of the resident units to be occupied by Jews. And, in fact, they had a Jew on the board, and I had referred, I believe last time, to the donor at the University of Chicago, Mr. Regenstein, who was on their board. And he was the gatekeeper -- perceived in our allegations to be the gatekeeper to decide which Jews were worthy of being in the ten percent with him. And the complainant in the case was William -- I think that's his first name -- Sax. He was president at the Exchange National Bank. And they claimed he didn't have enough money. So, I mean, it was an absurdity. But they weren't really acknowledging because he was Jewish. We found some other people. Some were willing to testify, like a judge who was sitting on the bench, Jacob Braude. He was willing to come forward. And then there were some others,

including a person who was high up in the Chicago Board of Health, who refused to be identified. And then somebody else in private life who had a whole lot of money who just didn't want to be identified for the purposes of any litigation. And normally, in a case -- and this is where I had to learn to be responsive to the needs of the people involved in a case -- the complainant, the victims. If you go according to the rules, we would have done it in a certain time-limit fashion. We would have done certain things, because the ordinance requires a certain procedure and certain time limits. But Sax told me, through his lawyers -- and throughout, he had private lawyers -- D'Ancona, Pflaum, Riskin, Wyatt -- I'm trying to think of the name. I think they may have merged with another firm by now, anyway. But they said that they have to be sure before he proceeds with the case that nobody's going to say something at the last minute that deals with the ethics, morality, of he and his officers at the bank -- that the rejection has nothing to do with that. And therefore they asked if I would depose all of the board members, and if none of them give anything that's regarding the bank, then they would pursue the co-- the case. So that's how I became involved meeting each of the board members, and learned more about the occupants of the building. And I

concluded that there was a ten percent quota that existed in pursuing this. Ultimately, I -- the Human Relations Commission found the building and its management board guilty, and when it was contested in court, the judge, Edward Egan, did what I believe was the right thing in following the law. He said we passed the jurisdictional point in time to render an adverse decision to them. So that he felt we could not enforce any sanction. And I agree with him, and as I believe Sax and his lawyers agreed as well. But we had accomplished more important things. We put into the public light the fact that there was a quota and discrimination. The goal wasn't to get money against them for the city or for him or anybody else, or to put anybody away, that... You know, it was only certain sanctions that could have been imposed, but they weren't all that important. So really, we accomplished the mission. And at the time, there was a lot of publicity, notoriety. And I had to know what was appropriate to comment on, and what was inappropriate. And I took the position to any reporter who asked, "I think it's inappropriate for me to make statements about a pending case as an advocate. However, it's an open court. Come in, sit down, and listen to what I have to say. And you're going to hear anything I could tell you privately. I'm

going to be saying it in front of the judge, and you'll get my position. And that's how you can get it." Now sometimes, like, a reporter later would say, "When you said this, what did that mean?" And I would explain some terms, because that, I think, is different. It's just helping to educate, to make sure the story isn't distorted. Or if they said, "I couldn't hear that. Somebody was rustling papers." So I'd repeat a few words. But basically, they got in their story what I said publicly in the court, as part of my job. And I learned from that point on that was the way -- the best way -- to handle the media. Never to hide anything from them, but help them find a way. And the story found itself for that particular case in *The New York Times*, as well as the local papers in Chicago. So I realized that whatever I do -- whether it's a small case, or another case -- can find itself somewhere. And so I got a sense of the importance of my words and my actions and what I was involved in. And that was just one case that led me to that belief. Now I mentioned Mike Royko a little while ago, who has written a few books, and he was with the *Tribune* for a while, the *Sun-Times* -- or the *Chicago Daily News*. And he wrote about three or four of the cases I was involved in. And I always thought of his columns as very entertaining. Now when I would know the facts in the cases

that he wrote about, because they were mine, I saw how he took great literary license with the facts, but it made for the st-- it made it into a story that was humorous. So I always took the other stories I read from him in the same vein, even if I had no knowledge about them. And I never got upset. Because I knew that's -- that's the purpose of his -- it's a column. It's not a news column, it's a column. And, quite often, I would find that something was being covered in whatever I would do, and so I would try to educate rather than to distance myself from those covering it. It was just their job, and maybe I had a sensitivity to the work of the -- the needs of the working press. Because -- and I may have mentioned this before -- one of my heroes was a cousin of mine who grew up with my mother -- they were both born in West Virginia. And he became, you know, the editor-in-chief of *The Stars and Stripes*. And then the Washington bureau chief of the *Chicago Daily News*. And he was on "Meet the Press," "Face the Nation," all the time. Peter Lisagor. And I always, in the times I would get to be with him -- he was mostly in Washington, so -- when he wasn't around the world. So I'd only see him a few times, but get the sense of, he had limited time, he hated when people gave him the runaround. And, you know, give him the story, give him whatever there is, and so he can

move on. And so I didn't want to be one of those obstacles that he would talk about, that would stonewall things. So I tried to do that. So that's some of the background and history up to becoming a judge. And then when I applied, I was part of a process that's -- if not identical today, it's almost identical -- for associate judges, which is where I chose to run for. And the reason I decided was, in appearing before many judges I came before, in State and Federal Court, I grew to admire a number of them. I mentioned one -- Edward Egan -- a State Court judge who went on the Appellate Court. And there were others that were of his caliber. And then I saw a bunch that I didn't have the same regard or respect for. And I felt, "I can do as well or better than they're doing." And so it was seeing the good, seeing some others, and saying, "Why not me?" And I, on the one hand, knew it's a position aspired to by many lawyers. And on the other hand, I figured, why should I say to myself I couldn't do this, especially when, according to my father, it was amazing I got a job at City Hall, and had all of this important responsible stuff entrusted to me? So I figured I would give it a shot, and so I did. And I made it. Now, as I alluded to, or indicated, last t-- session we were together, that a lot of the people who I represented or appeared before, in

administrative agencies, like the Human Relations Commission, the Police Board, other entities -- were advocates who would -- who wrote letters or made phone calls on my behalf, first to the bar associations, because there you're supposed to list references. So they were called by the investigators of the bar associations, and I was -- the first big hurdle was to be found qualified. And I was, even though I was only practicing since the end of '66, and it was now 1974 -- so a very short time. And so I made that first, biggest hurdle -- that was the -- if I hadn't made that, then nothing else would occur, because unless you get the approval, then, of the Chicago Bar, you can't go further. And then, to the Executive Committee of the court, made up of people appointed by the chief judge. The chief judge at that time was named John S. Boyle. He was the first chief judge of the Circuit Court of Cook County under the unified court system, when the court system came into effect in 1964, after a judicial reform, or the change in the laws and the constitution. And he had been the state's attorney when I was just in law school, so it was just a name to me. And so, in any event, he had appointed the committee that I had to go in front of, chaired by a judge who was in the Chancery Division. His name was [Cavalli]. And it was composed of Democrats and

Republicans. I remember one of the Republicans was Hunter, who is the presiding judge of the Divorce Division. Another Republican was in the Chancery Division -- Delaney. And -- I'm trying to remember who the other members of the committee were at that time, and I'm drawing a blank. But those members interviewed me together, and that was a scary experience, knowing that if they didn't want me I wouldn't be on the double list. Because it's Supreme Court Rule 39 that provides that this committee, under the auspices of the chief judge, will select two people for every vacancy. And then that list -- and here there were to be 13 vacancies in 1974 -- there were that number -- so 26 names would be certified. And the ballot would be prepared by the administrative office of the Supreme Court, and distributed to every circuit judge to vote on. So, lo and behold, I'm one of the 26. So the people in my office when they see the list tell me I have a tremendous chance, a great chance, of getting it. I said, "Why?" They said, "Well, look at the list. Who else is there?" I said, "I don't know these people." So they were looking at the demographics by race, religion, national ancestry -- that the court and the judges are a balance of all these things. And so there was one other Jewish candidate. That was a state representative Bernard Wolfe. And they said,

"There's going to be some Republicans, and there's a bunch of them here, so that takes away -- there'll probably be two or three -- so that's going to, you know -- so you're counting down how many Democrats. And then there's going to be some Poles, some Irish, some Italian, and some -- you know, it's like a little bit of this and a little bit of that." And they said, "So your chances are excellent." I said, "OK." And then the campaign had to be -- I had to make time to go around to meet a hundred an-- 137 circuit judges were on the roster at that time, in about, I think it was, seven or eight buildings. Besides the Daley Center there were a couple of Traffic Court at 11 State. Juvenile Court, 26th and California. And then each of the presiding judges were circuit judges in the suburbs. So I'd have to go -- and there weren't these suburban courthouses then. So they were all over the place. But I'd have to go to the northern suburbs -- to Skokie -- to see one, the northwest suburbs, the western suburbs, southwest and south. And I'd never been to any of these places, and so in the -- going downtown, it was easy, because I was across the street and I could do that. So as soon as, you know, my father heard what my agenda was, and the tight schedule of just a matter of days to do all this, he said, "Well, you've got me as a driver, so I'll -- you know, tell me where the place is.

I'll figure out how we get there, and I'll take you and wait." You know, because sometimes just to park and go in and out could take forever. This way he could circle and whatever it was. We didn't have cell phones in those days, so it wasn't like, "I'm ready, come around." So -- but he made it so much easier for me. And then, it wasn't anywhere as organize -- I had my card to give them, and that was it. Later, years later, when I was a circuit judge, and associate judge candidates were campaigning, I would be getting mailings from them, hand-outs, in color and pictures and... I can't imagine -- and the cost had to be horrendous. But those were the olden days. It was probably the third or fourth time around under this Supreme Court rule, where they were doing it this way. Because before, the chief judge -- I think until '72 -- the chief judge would just appoint the associate judges. Well, they were called magistrates then. And it was when it switched from magistrate to associate judge and they changed the names in the rolls, that they started this procedure. So there was only a couple -- two or three groups -- before me. And in fact one of the people I went to for some support was a judge in the Federal Court who I had appeared before a number of times on cases. And I knew he had a relationship with the mayor, because he swore in the mayor

every time. Abraham Lincoln Marovitz. And so I had an interest in becoming a judge before I actually did it in '74 -- the year before, maybe six, eight months before. And at that time he said, "Maybe down the road I'll help you. You get a little more seasoned." Because, as he put it, "I'm riding another horse this time." I said, "What do you mean?" He said, "There's another candidate for associate judge that has come to me, I've made a commitment to. And somebody you know as well." What had happened, it was Ben Novoselsky, who later became -- after Allen Hartman - my boss as the general counsel. In fact, at the time he was the general counsel. And then he did become an associate judge, and a circuit judge, presiding judge, head of the Probate Division. And he's been recalled several times by the Supreme Court. And he's still sitting now, even though he's almost 90. In fact, his son was in my law school class. So it was -- you know, I certainly couldn't have any anger for that, and I understood it, because I knew who he was supporting. I knew I respected him. He was one of my teachers. And so -- but he then followed through on his commitment and put in a good word for me a year later -- or whatever that next time was when I ran and made it. So that's another lesson -- that just because somebody no now, doesn't mean they won't say yes as

circumstance change -- circumstances change. And I use that sort of message in mediating cases now as a mediator. You know, somebody will say, "I'm definitely not going to do that." I said, "That's what you're saying right now. Let me see if I can change that position by giving you some facts that will alter your, your point of view." Or maybe if they do something different you will alter tha-- you know, always trying to realize that things shouldn't be seen as carved in stone. That when somebody starts to say, "This is definitely my opinion," then I'll frame it in a way that it's only, "Yeah, of course it is. It's your definite opinion right now, and I can see that right now, right now, right now." You know, stressing that the next moment's another time. So that's why there's no permanent -- it's never like an enemy -- it's somebody with a different interest at a particular time. So I was -- I went through the process, and then eventually I saw all but a handful -- maybe only two or three missing -- there's always somebody at every time who's sick. Maybe somebody's who's taken all their vacation time at once because they're going, like, to Europe or something. And so there were some people I just couldn't get to. And I figured, "Well, OK, you now, I did the best I could." And nobody else, I would hope, could get to them. So we're even. And then I

let it go. And then I had to start catching up on all the work that was getting covered for me by others, that I had put aside. And just -- you know, whether -- even if it's at home, or I wasn't doing the things I would've done, because I was just trying to get whatever I needed to function the next day as to where I was going. So I was catching up. And finally, you know, I'm on my schedule. And my wife tells me that she -- she was working. She had the need to see the dentist, but our daughter -- who was then about almost two -- she was born December of '72, and this is now March of '74, so that's how old she is. My wife said, "What I'm going to do is make my dental appointment lunchtime, so on your lunch break I'll come to you, or I'll meet you with her, and then you can have her in your office. They have seen her before, and you're on your lunch break, so it's no big deal. And then I'll come as soon as I'm through. It should take a half hour for a cleaning, and then, you know, x-rays." So that's what we did. And so, while my daughter is on my lap, I get a phone call. It's the Chicago *Tribune* saying, "Do you have any reaction to being the youngest judge ever in the Circuit Court of Cook County?" I said --

[END OF AUDIO FILE Jordan - 8]

MJ: So I get a telephone call from a person identifying themselves as a reporter in the city news bureau of the *Chicago Tribune*, which means they're on the second floor at City Hall in the press room there. And so that's how I learned, by his asking me the question how I feel about it. And he hears my daughter Elizabeth's cooing or -- because I'm giving her a bottle -- he said, "What's going on?" I said, "Well, I have my daughter here." My wife had just dropped her off. He said, "Will you be there a few minutes?" I said, "Yes." He said, "OK, I want to ask you a few questions." I said, "OK." So I put down the phone, and within less than two minutes -- the time it takes to take the elevator -- two men appear, one with a camera and, I assume, him. And as a result, this picture was taken. And you can see the cubicles, see, between each office there's just glass? And why am I on the phone? It's because at that point, I get another phone call. It's the *Sun-Times* interviewing me. And the *Sun-Times* guy hears them saying, "Look this way while we take the pics." "What's going on there?" You know. (laughter) And I said, "Nothing." So the *Sun-Times* didn't send anybody over, but they each interviewed me. And then I said some things -- because I was paying close attention, because I'm also

focusing on my daughter -- such as, one of the things I was quoted is, that my young age -- they said, "With your vim, and this and that, what can you do?" So I said, "Well, I hope to clean up any backlog," and things, you know. So anyway, the next day after, I get two sorts of messages. First of all, little did I know that this picture is going to appear anywhere. And I don't subs-- I didn't subscribe to the *Tribune* then -- I would read the *Daily News* in the afternoon. So anyway, that, that day -- the next day -- my father-in-law is taking out the garbage, and so he's going -- he lives in an apartment building -- and he's going down the hall and he sees his neighbor across the hall's newspaper -- his -- on the floor -- had been dropped off by the person on the route. And he sees there is this picture on the top, you know -- right, as the newspaper is folded halfway, facing him. You know, and he sees this -- his son-in-law and his granddaughter. And so that -- the phone started ringing all over. And so I got that --- that how lovely it is. And then I got calls from some of the judges, saying, "How could you have made statements? You're supposed to be anonymous. You're not even sworn in and you're trying to be the focus of attention. You're on the front page. How could you do that? How could you show -- you're not even working here?" You know, and they said

something like, "Baby Judge is Baby-Sitting for His Baby." You know, that... And not to say it was -- you know, it was lunchtime, and... But anyway, so we started off with a bang. (laughter) And at the time -- at the -- my swearing in was set for April 1st, which April Fool's Day, 1974. I was to be sworn in with the other 12 -- 13 of us. And all -- one, the State Representative Wolfe, was not sworn in until April 15th, because the legislature was in session, and they wanted him to finish his work and then come on two weeks later. So there were 12 of us. And there were a lot of people who I came to learn that resented me before they even knew me. Because, first of all, the other 13 who lost -- that's natural -- all their friends, their supporters. And anybody who would then be able to say, "Well, he -- the spot that could have been yours is if this young kid had waited ten, 20 years." And, "What did he know?" And, "Here he is getting all this attention, he's just an attention-getter." So even unknown to me I had developed some enemies right upfront, something that had never been the case before. It was a very awkward and difficult time, because here I'm 31, by the swearing in April 1st. My birthday's April 7th, so I'm turning 32. And most of the judges -- associate judge or circuit judge -- were in their 50s, 60s, and 70s. So they could, most of them, be my

grandfathers. And I do it -- there were a few women -- very few at the time -- on the bench at that time. So it was mostly older men. Some took a very paternalistic attitude, but very few. Most of them were saying, "And it took me this long, and, you know, I had to go through all these struggles," and this and that. And in fact, there was one instance where I was with my wife at some social gathering that -- I don't know if it was in the first year or two after -- where some woman came up to her and said, "I hate you." And my wife couldn't imagine who -- you know, she doesn't even know the woman. It turned out that she was the wife of the alderman of the Eighth Ward, named Condon, James Condon, who had always wanted to be a judge, but instead was getting calls at all hours of the day and night: "My sewer's backing up," or "My -- the leaves are blocking the drain in the street." And so, he'd be -- she'd be fielding all those calls. And he'd have to run and have all the night meetings to go to, and was envious and jealous, especially of a 31 year old boy who got the job that her husband, a man who'd put in his dues in politics and government. See, she didn't see it's legal accomplishment. She just thought it's time spent as a politician. And, you know, I can understand her sense of, you know, pain and difficulty and jealousy, because that's

all she knew. She knew she was in a changing area, a changing ward, where he would not be able to even maintain himself there, because that's the ward where John Stroger became the committeeman, and I don't know who was the alderman of the Eighth Ward after Condon. I knew Condon. I had a couple of cases against him when I defended the city in civil rights cases. He represented somebody suing a policeman. It bothered me then. How could he as a city alderman, a public official, be representing somebody against the police officer where the city is defending and indemnifying? But it wasn't for me to look into the ethical considerations in that regard. But that's kind -- I knew him as a person, it wasn't, like, just a name. And I found in my relationships with him, he was a very nice, nice person. It's ironic that years later -- maybe 15 years after this occurred -- when the Condon's son was applying to become an associate judge -- and I think he made it -- he wasn't much older than me. But I'm sure his mother thought it was just fine. So, you know, it's -- everything -- standards and things change. So I know she was just probably very frustrated the time. And I hope that whatever her life was that she wasn't as happy with, had improved, you know, one way or another since. But I learned that there are a lot of jealousies, and that, when

you have a coveted position -- which it is, being a judge, and a powerful position -- there are going to be those who don't see you as maybe your best friends do. I also learned that, in all of the assignments I had from the beginning at Traffic Court, to the end, that there was a potential -- a tendency by some to become my new best friend. Lawyers. So, as I was in Divorce, the lawyers who I may not have seen in a long time before, all of the sudden -- classmates from school and other associations -- would be, you know, finding their way into places where I was. And I would, just, you know -- for socialization. And then they would sort of fade away as I moved out of Divorce, and another group -- whether, when I was in the Collection Courts -- another group would emerge. Or when I was doing something else, another group would emerge. And I'd always have to take that into consideration -- that these are people who don't mean me -- to have anything bad befall me, but they're not my best friends. They have an interest, and they want to cultivate my good will. And so it's really been -- during the 26 years I was on the bench -- a challenge to know, "Am I with a real friend?" So it's the ones from grammar school, high school, college, that -- roommates -- who I would feel safest with. That I knew -- especially if they weren't lawyers, but even those who

weren't lawyers -- that it was for me and not for the position. And so it was always wondering about somebody getting real chummy with me. It it's because they really liked me, or if it's something else. Now there's one friend, and I just saw him on the train going downtown a couple of days ago. We've known each other since I was about nine years old. And he's a lawyer. And so I know -- and our -- his son and my daughter went to high school together, were in different junior high school and elementary districts, even though they're only a few blocks from here. There's three districts that come together right at the corner here, at the end of the block. So he would always, you know, give me commentary and feedback. "I hear you're tough. I hear you're, you know, you expect everybody to be prompt." And they -- you know, and it was good. I would always get that sort of feedback, to have some knowledge about things. And even now he's willing to tell me if I look too frumpy, or if I look -- you know, whatever it is. He's always -- he's never hesitant. So he never sugarcoats anything, which is good. And in fact, when I decided I was quitting, he had a great concern for me that I would go into a deep depression. Because having been a judge so early in my life, and for a long time -- 26 years -- that I would have found myself, or seen myself,

only as a judge, and would -- losing that power, prestige, authority -- would go into a tailspin. And so he would call me, like, every couple of days, "How are you doing? You're sure you're OK? You're sure you're OK?" He's say, you know, "Are you smiling?" I'd say, "Yeah." He'd be like a therapist, checking. And, you know, I'd have to convince him -- maybe now he's already of the belief that I'm happy. That -- and I would tell him how I'd planned ahead, and I made arrangements, and I knew what I was going to be doing. And fortunately I'm doing those things. So there were two types of relationships -- those that developed because of the position, and those I maintained either in spite of it, or just because they were friends of long standing. Being a judge affects not only me, but it affects my family and even extended family. Since I -- since the age of 31, going on 32, I began to have the obligation of filing ethics reports, as to what financial or social or other ties I have. One with the secretary of state's office, to the state. One with the administrative office of the Supreme Court. And as a result, to my sister's dismay, one of the questions said any gift -- and I don't remember if it was over a hundred, over two hundred, whatever the amount was -- it was exceeded by a gift she made to maybe both of my kids, maybe all of us,

whatever. It had -- it exceeded it. So I said I had to list her. She said, "Why is it anybody's business? I'm your sister." I said, "No, the rule is anything from your spouse or kids or members of your household, but not outside the household. So you're -- you're to be covered." She really resented it, and she said, so her name is going to appear where anybody can look? I said, "It's not just everybody. It's just a few people that look. The *Tribune* every year, the *Sun-Times* every year." (laughter) And, you know... So, it affects the family as well. And it also affects the family in another way. Some of the people I invited to my son's bar mitzvah, my daughter's bat mitzvah, are lawyers. Every lawyer has to be reported as to -- by me, as to any gift made. And so anybody who gave them a gift -- it's really, you know -- it's considered to be going to me, by the ethics laws. So a lot of people resented that. You know, first of all, say they give to another friend something -- they don't want the other friend to be able to read what they gave this friend. It's everybody's private business. So it interferes with your friendships, your family, your immediate family. And it's just a fact of life, because -- and it's understandable that the method by which these rules were created was to ensure that people couldn't be influenced. And the best

way is for disclosure. So I understand it, but it's -- and I've lived with it. And that was a great relief come the end of December of '99 when I submitted my resignation. I had filled out my last ethics disclosure form, and I was done with that. And I didn't have to worry who I was treating to lunch, who I was going -- who are all treating ourselves. See, it used to be, when I would go with Mike Madigan and Dan Pascale, two or three times a week, we would rotate where we're going to a few places we liked, and we would take turns treating each other. Well, once you become a judge, you can't say in the long run it works out. Somebody can catch you with a camera and say, "We saw you being treated that day." You can't say, "Well, yeah, I -- he did it this day, but I did last week." Who's going to believe it? So it became very awkward, every time I would be going with friends who are lawyers especially. And maybe some judges aren't adhering to the rule 100%. But I did, because I knew I was a possible target at any time, because people resented me being there. That was early on, and then I formed the habits. Also, when I started in 1974, as the public record bears out, a huge number of judges were corrupt, crooked, taking bribes. And Greylord is the result. And I was into the system, working for and with the most corrupt judges who existed. So when

I came to my first assignment in Traffic Court after April 1st of 1974, I learned later, not only was I uncomfortable because of the age difference between me and those I worked with, but there was a distance besides the resentment I realized because of my age. There was a distance. I would go into the washroom to use it, and it's like Typhoid Mary had entered the washroom. Three or four people would immediately leave. And I realized they weren't -- maybe they were using the washroom, but they were talking, and that conversation could not be in my presence. As it happened later, it was either with police officers with the judges, judges with judges, lawyers sometimes got in there with the judges, making their deals. And in Traffic Court, I noticed that, in the afternoon, a whole of them couldn't walk a straight line. They had been drinking at lunchtime. And, you know, I could, in my own mind, start stereotyping people based upon their ethnic background, but I didn't even think that way. I took them as individuals. And -- because, as the evidence came out in the federal trials, most of them themselves were alcoholics. Some of them were very nice and friendly to me, some never were. Some were friendlier in the morning than the afternoon. So I learned the difference between the friendly drunk and the angry drunk. And I never knew from all of this stuff. One man,

I learned, had to be driven to and from -- he couldn't even get to the courthouse unless he was driven, he was so incapacitated. And it was those people that the presiding judge assigned to the drunk driving rooms. The presiding -- or the supervising judge -- of the Traffic Division was -- well, first when I went there as a lawyer, not as a judge but as a lawyer -- was a very nice man who I believe was an honest man. It was before the corrupt system started. His name was Felix Buoscio. He was from South Chicago. And he seemed to be a very nice man. He didn't get any awards for the court system. He wasn't a real innovator. He wasn't a pusher. He'd just slog through each day, and that's what he did. The next man to succeed him, who was in before I came there as a judge, was Raymond Berg, who was called upon to run for state's attorney, running against the incumbent, Edward Hanrahan, who they -- the party -- felt wouldn't win because of the Black Panther trial. And I'll go back and tell you my participation in the Black Panther matter in a moment. But Berg was the party's candidate after they asked Hanrahan to withdraw and he didn't. And Berg was put back when he lost, as the presiding judge -- or the supervising judge -- of the Traffic Division, until he was replaced by Richard [Lafever], who was the one in place when I was assigned there as a judge. Lafever came

from Oak Park. He had been involved politically. And I learned later -- it wasn't like it was a secret, it was public knowledge -- that Boyle, who had been the state's attorney who became the chief judge -- the first chief judge -- was from Oak Park. I don't know if he was the township committeeman there. He was actively involved. So Lafever was one of his people, that he knew to put in to such a position. So Lafever is the person who gave me my assignments every morning, to go to this room or that room. And after a few months I said, "Well, I'm getting the ropes here. Can I have a bigger room?" There was -- by "bigger room," I don't mean in size. I was hearing in rooms where there were a huge number of cases. I would have 125 -- whatever the biggest calls were, I was getting those rooms. So some would have 60, and some 120 -- it depended on how many the policemen would write on that day. And that room -- and I found wherever the call was heaviest, he put me. He said, "You're young, you can handle it, it's OK." He wasn't that much older than me -- maybe ten years. And he said, "Some of these guys can't do what you can do. You can move the case. We're finding you can really move things along." So I said, "That's a nice compliment, OK." But I'm thinking I'm doing more work than anybody else. And so I would see 500 people in a day -- 125 on four calls

-- over 500 people. And I would be wiped out when I'd get home, just for trying to focus on so many stories, and listen to people, and be a good listener. And I'd get home and I was miserable, because I was just -- I had to lie down, or I had to -- or I had a headache, or I just -- it was not good. And, in any event, I asked for the other rooms. Now, the minor cases -- speeding, and left turns, and U-turns -- those were in the regular rooms where most nice people who make a mistake on the road are invited to go. The other rooms -- three or four of them -- are for the drunk drivers, reckless driving, suspended license that are misdemeanors -- serious things. And that's what I was saying by "bigger room" -- the major rooms, that I said I think I'm ready to get into those. He said, "Down the road, we'll see, we'll see." And as it turns out, those who were in these major-case rooms were the drunks, or the people who were later convicted of -- and sent to the penitentiary for fixing cases. They themselves, in the main, were drinkers. So they thought it wasn't such a big deal if the person in front of them was just like themselves, so what's the big deal? And especially if they're getting a hundred or \$150 to look the other way. It didn't bother them. They never could see these people might be killing people on the road. So -- and it's

amazing to find out that for such the potential to go to the penitentiary, to lose a law license -- these people were taking a hundred or a \$150. And as it turns out, it was not just those cases, but people who would send it cash for parking tickets -- maybe they didn't have checking accounts. So there was no accountability. So the police in the certain unit where the money would come to were taking the cash, sharing it with the presiding judge -- the supervising judge -- and I think that's how the system started to come under investigation. And then they also were investigating the lawyers, by how many appearances they were filing, and then their income tax returns, which showed little-to-no income. And then some of them, when they were caught, said, "OK, I made more money, but I had to pay it in expenses for the bribes to the judges," and then the investigation kept going on. And then they got some undercover people -- a judge from down state, a state's attorney who went undercover -- his name is Hoke -- as just another crooked lawyer. His wife is a state's attorney in Skokie, and she had appeared before me on felony cases for a few years. So that was the system I was first brought into. And I suspected after a short time things were wrong, but I -- you know, since no conversation was in front of me, I didn't hear the evidence in any of

these cases to know what's going on. But I would hear later, like public defenders would say, "My guy was innocent, and he got found guilty." And I would hear this -- these complaints. And why was that? Because if they're letting off all these people paying, they've got to show they find somebody guilty. Who can they find? Somebody who's not paying. They're indigent people, poor people, who have the public defender. And the public defender isn't going to be bribing people. So those are the people found guilty. It -- so I could suspect and guess, but I didn't know. And I knew that they wouldn't always -- you know, that they would disappear and wouldn't talk near me. There was one judge who later committed suicide rather than being indicted and convicted. His name was Allen Rosin. He was sitting -- he had gotten on fairly young too. He had run as -- I think he ran as a Democrat, or as an alderman in the Seventh Ward, south shore, a number of years ago. And became a magistrate, and then as they changed the title, to associate judge. But when I went there to prosecute -- when I first got the job in Traffic Court -- he was there. And when people I knew heard what I'm doing, where I'm working, well, as I said last -- our first session -- right after law school, because of Vietnam, it was in my best interest to maintain a student

deferment, so I was going an extra year for a Master's in law. And I -- it would have been a year and a half, two years. I didn't get it, but I did a year's worth of courses. And so during that year I would -- everybody would -- knew each other, and met each other, "Well, where do you work during the day? What do you do?" And so when people heard that I was in Traffic Court... So one person said, "Can you tell me, find out, because somebody's coming to me and I don't know what I should do -- if they did this, this, and this on the road test, and they're accused with a DUI, is that serious? Could they win? Could they lose?" So I said, "Sure, I'll ask around." So every morning, there were doughnuts that lawyers would bring in, and everybody would congregate in the corporation counsel's office. And so I saw that this judge -- the first judge who was in there that morning -- was Rosin. And I had met him, so I said, "You know, last night at night school, a classmate of mine from law school said he got a case -- a client came to him about a DUI, and he has no idea, should he take the case, should he not take it. Tell me, since I'm not doing these cases, is this something that he -- it's a winnable case, or it's not?" So I started telling him -- he's -- the facts. And he said, "Well, what's he want to pay?" I said, "I don't know. He's -- he just

wants to know academically what it is." So that was my first tip off, and that was -- so that was in '66 -- that something -- somebody was open to something like that. And I didn't know, was he joking with me then or not. But then later when I see he's -- so often -- he's still in Traffic, and he's doing -- you know, if he's doing the major cases, I wasn't surprised. Because he had been there for years, so I'm thinking, "Well, he knows what the law is and everything, so maybe that's why they're not putting me in." But then in the back of my mind about -- is, jumping to that sort of questioning. Rather than, "Well, let me tell you academically, you know, it could be this if he puts on the case right. It could go this way or that way." So, you know, there were -- there were unfortunately many, I think, indicted and convicted. Well --

[END OF AUDIO FILE Jordan - 9]

MJ: So anyway, of the judges who were working there, especially the major cases, almost all of them went to the penitentiary a number of years later. And there were always a couple of judges who would come in. Like, when I was -- my group of 13 -- actually 12 from day one, and then one a few weeks later -- everybody came to traffic court.

I stayed the first time for nine months. Some left -- one as soon as two days, others after a few months. And I found out later that Lafever had specifically asked the presiding judge of the First Municipal District to keep me each time. And he would say I was a hard worker, I could handle the call well, and he knew he always had me for the heavy call -- for the room that had a huge number. That was just what he told the presiding judge, who was Eugene Wachowski. What he would tell others, I heard from the testimony that would come out at trials, was, "You can appear before Jordan and get justice, but do you really want justice for your client who you know is guilty? Or deal with us, and have the results you're looking for?" So I was there to serve his purpose, to be the good cop, bad cop -- the -- in their view, the bad one.

NW: The foil.

MJ: Yeah, the foil. So I had a lonely existence in many ways during that period of time, even though for short periods of time I developed some relationships and friendships. And I think of one judge right offhand. Frank Barth. He came on a few years after me, and I -- I went to Traffic, got out, but I'd be brought back. And I was there an inordinate amount of time compared to others, in my view. And -- but one -- I was mentioning Frank Barth. He later

went on to the County Division, became the presiding judge there. Then he went to the Appellate Court, and he's since retired. But in developing those friendships, I had begun -- see, especially when I was in Traffic, and I saw there's no intellectual challenge hearing the same bad stories over and over, and the law is not that complicated, that I wanted something more to pursue. Now, the first year I was in graduate law school --

NW: (inaudible)

[END OF AUDIO FILE Jordan - 10]

NW: OK, (laughter) sorry.

MJ: You want to introduce the other side of the tape?

NW: Yeah, this is another tape. I think that you were talking about some friendships you were developing...?

MJ: Yeah, and one of the friendships, beginning in Traffic Court -- even though there were many people there who didn't have much inclination to socialize, and in fact distanced themselves from me because they thought I was possibly a spy that they didn't want hearing what they were doing. But one of the many people was Frank Barth, who later became a circuit judge. He moved to the County Division, became presiding judge, and then to the Appellate

Court, and has since retired. And since I had the feeling that there wasn't the intellectual challenge there, after the year I went to law sch-- graduate school, and I was in the first year working in Traffic, on -- well, no, actually now, I'm mixing things up. This is -- when I prosecuted, I was at law sch-- graduate school. But when I was a judge the first time around, to give myself some more intellectual stimulation, what I decided to do was see about teaching. And so I began to teach a number of courses for Roosevelt University in Public Administration. So the courses I taught were Criminal Law and Procedure, Administrative Law, Administration of the Court System. Those, I think, were the three. And I would teach them downtown initially, and even later. And then when we moved out to the suburbs, I taught at Arlington Heights and in Glenview at the naval air base. And I'm trying to think -- somewhere else. And then that was for Roosevelt. And I taught for Harper, a pair of -- a legal course. And these were all challenging -- to develop a course, read the book, master it, and be able to teach it. So I was in a position to recommend that they hire somebody else. So Frank Barth was interested, and he did this as well, for sections I couldn't take. Where if I took a suburb, he'd take it downtown. And then later, I understand, when he decided

that he had enough of it, that his brother took over for him. And I have no idea who's been teaching them ever since, but that's a number of years ago. And I always enjoyed the teaching responsibilities, and feel I still do that. I became involved in legal education programs for the bar association. I was also -- part of the 26 years on the bench I was actively involved with the Judicial Conference, serving on various committees. And the committees would prepare educational seminars for the judges. They would have two judicial conferences a year. Usually it was one for the associate judges, and another for the circuit, appellate, and Supreme Court justices. So when I was an associate judge, I participating in one, and when I was later a circuit judge, in the other. And in both situations I served on various committees. And I was an ethics panel. I was on a civil practice panel, summa-- a summary-judgment-motion panel. Post-collection -- post-judgment collection issues. I'm trying to think of several, because in 26 years I think there were about two or three years, because of funding, where they didn't have judicial conference sessions. But the others, I was pretty much involved at least every other year in being on a committee.

NW: Was that sort of expected of all judges, sort of? To do that sort of service work, or --

MJ: They take those who they believe can -- who can be good teachers, to teach the others. Because the panel of five or so per committee takes topics themselves that they lecture on during a two-, two-and-a-half-hour session, and it's repeated a couple of times at a judicial conference, so that all of the judges can take that. There's usually five or six things offered in a two-and-a-half-day period. And each committee will be assigned a law professor, or us- - sometimes two, from the Chicago law schools -- who will serve as the reporters to help gather the materials and coordinate stuff. But the judges themselves are to put together materials and to teach. So not every judge is a public speaker. Some are not as academically oriented as others. Some don't have the time or the inclination, so they draft people who they believe will. And so, in any event, I got picked once, and then they have evaluations. And I suppose I got picked thereafter, so there must have been some positive feedback, or nobody else wanted it and I was the sucker, I don't know. But anyway, I did that on a regular basis. And that was how I would get to meet a number of other people I would not have otherwise met -- judges from downstate, or the collar counties. And even

judges in Cook County who had assignments in other buildings, or other places. And so it was, for me, an enrich-- an enriching experience, because before the session, the committee would meet three or four times, first deciding what topics would be covered, and then who would cover those topics. And then who would supply what materials, and then get the materials, and review them -- all before we got to the actual session, where those in attendance would be there. And then how interactive did we want it? Were we going to lecture? Were we going to have a discussion group? Are we going to have interaction with the people, or just let them listen and take notes? So it was always different, and it was always a challenge. So I have continuing relationships with people from that sort of a relationship. I may have mentioned already once, Charlie Scott -- Charles Scott, who was the chief judge in Lake County. We served on several of these panels together, and have a relationship to this day that's probably -- while we've never served in courtrooms next to each other, because he was in another county -- Lake, not that it's so far -- it's on the other side of Lake Cook Road, but... So, we still talk, and we got together just a few weeks ago, for lunch. And so I thought that this was all a benefit for me, and I believe that the interaction and

direct involvement in a more active way is more educational than just passively learning something, hearing somebody deliver some remarks. So I think it made me better at what I did than if I hadn't done this. So it was an enriching experience. There were some perks -- that at certain of the conferences, if you're on the presenting committee, you get to stay over at the hotel where it is, as opposed to somebody from, like, in Cook County, if it's in Chicago, where you just go home. So -- but sometimes I would -- even if I was on the committee, I would still go home. So, you know, there were -- it was the opportunity, not the actual taking advantage of something. I'm trying to think of other aspects of the position, like that. But in any event, I finally got out of Traffic Court, after my first assignment of nine months. And my next assignment was still in the First Municipal District, which is Chicago. And the way the court system is divided, there is the county department that contains Criminal, Law Division, Chancery, Domestic Relations, the County -- a number of other divisions, maybe just one or two more. And then the Municipal Department that has First, which is Chicago, and then the suburban areas that are divided into five other municipal districts. So I was still assigned to the First Municipal District, which is the largest division of the

court system, with -- 145 judges are assigned there. And my assignment was to the office of the presiding judge. Now I didn't know what that meant the first day I got that, so I called the office of the presiding judge and they said, well, they said, "Every day somebody is sick. Somebody is on vacation. You will go where we send you, based upon..." And I said, "Well, how will I know? Because we cover Criminal, Civil, every specialized area." They said, "Well, just start brushing up." I said, "On what?" So it was a challenge. And the first time I was told to go to a room, it was -- maybe it was forcible entry and detainer. So I quickly looked in the statutes as to what the law is, and it's only about ten pages or so. And it was an area my father had done some practice -- I asked him and other friends. And then when I went there. I, you know, did what I could, and then I learned more that night, having been there a day -- because it was going to be a week or two. And it was a challenge to get into real specialized areas like that without any previous notice or experience. And then I'd be told go somewhere else, and so I had my first personal-injury jury trials. I had my first contract case. My first Housing-Court violations. My first products liability. And all sorts of different things. One assignment I had was a real, I'll say, three-

ring circus, but it was not like it didn't work well, or it was bad. It was just so much going on. I would hear motions, pre-trials, and trials -- everything. Now it's been divided out where a separate judge hears the motions and does the pre-trials, and then one judge does the trials. And there were 50 cases coming up every day for trial. And so about 45 of those would settle, or need to be continued. But then there would be five that would almost actually be ready. It was my task to settle four of them because I could only go with one. And I had a short time to do that, because I'd have to try that case in one day, because the next day another 50 would come up. It was a real challenge. And we got through it. Occasionally they would tell me if I couldn't settle all f-- all of those that needed to be, then there would be a back-up judge, and somebody who was, like, waiting -- if somebody wasn't sick or on vacation -- that they could then find a room and do it. And later I would do that -- be the back up like that too. And so that was a real learning experience. And the cases there were very interesting. They were all under the jurisdiction, so they weren't in the Law Division -- at that time it wasn't, I think, 50 thousand -- I think it was 30 thousand -- but the dollars were different then too. And yet they weren't the simple

fender benders. That was in another place. So these were libel, slander, contract -- there were a lot of interesting issues. And I had the opportunity to see some -- well, one famous person who was there. She's -- she was sitting with a friend of hers -- I'm not sure if I said this before. She since went on to be in the Seventh -- a just-- a judge in the Seventh Circuit Court of Appeals. At the time -- I first met her when I was in Federal Court trying cases. She was a clerk to Federal Judge Persons. So that was Ilana Rovner. And, you know, I asked her why she was there each day, and she said just to give moral support to her girlfriend whose mother was the litigant. And that's when I had just decided the case, and I said, "Well, why are you here?" And her mother -- this -- her girlfriend's mother was somebody who was well known. She's since passed away. Ann Landers, the -- it was about remodeling her apartment, and the issues in remodeling it. So there were many, you know, times when I would see the rich and the famous and everybody else, and sometimes people would tell me, "Do you know who so-and-so was?" See, if somebody's a celebrity, I don't know the names of actors. I don't know the names of sports figures. So, to me, it didn't matter, and I didn't know. But anyway, this one year of having this rotating assignment was the hardest, but probably the best. Because

I would start rotating back to certain types of assignments, and then I had the skill or the knowledge I had picked up the time before, so I got better. And now, when people ask me as a mediator, "Are you familiar with -- have you done products liability?" "Yes." "Have you done construction?" "Have you done" -- whatever it is. Also, when I would take the back-up cases -- I said, you know, like we're in this one room -- it was 1304 and 1306. One had the even and one had the odd, and I would be in both rooms at different times, as two different judges would be on vacation. And sometimes even when they were there, if they couldn't settle or try everything, then I would take one of their cases. Sometimes I got their dogs -- the cases they didn't want to tr-- you know, there are two cases and one seemed like it would easier to try, they'd keep one and that's the one they'd push out. So it could be more of a challenge, but I got those. And I needed a place to hear it. So there they would let me --

[END OF AUDIO FILE Jordan -11]

MJ: And so sometimes they'd tell me, "Next week, you're going to use Judge so-and-so's chambers." So that Friday afternoon I'd go in and drop my stuff of so it would be

there on the Monday, and the judge would still be there, before his vacation started. So I'd get to meet so many other people in that way. And some would say, "As long as you're here, would you water my plant?" Or, "Make sure you do or don't do..." Or, "Don't let anybody in to touch this or that." And everybody's idiosyncrasies, also, I would learn about. And I found that in going to social events, I would be -- I'd begun to know more and more people, not only with the -- having -- they gave me the high-volume calls, so therefore I was exposed to more lawyers. And in going around in the Daley Center, I was meeting more of the judges, other than just when I came in to campaign for two seconds. So I was having -- I developed newer relationships. One of the things I feel badly about, since I'm so much younger than so many of these people, is as they have been passing away. Once -- as a sitting judge, you get a notice of everybody's death. Once you leave the bench, you get none of the mail anymore, and for me, many of the people are people I know, and then you read it in the newspaper after the event. Or -- I don't read the obituaries every day, so I miss it. And what I -- I'd encourage the chief judge to do, which they're not doing, is -- because there's little cost to the court system -- is have an e-mail list. When somebody dies, just push "send

all," and this way everybody can get it if they choose to. But so far, that hasn't occurred. Now one of the things I promised that I would talk about is, basically, about court security. I was never really conscious of the need for court security until I was assigned to the Domestic Relations Division. And that was in 1982. I was in the Domestic Relations Division from '82 to '87. And there was never enough courtrooms assigned for the number of judges assigned in the Domestic Relations Division. So what would happen is, some of the judges would be assigned a jury-deliberations room as their chambers and courtroom. So in a small space would be you, your -- paperclips, whatever you'd take --

NW: Your stuff on the table.

MJ: Yeah, basically, at a table like this, I'd be at one end, and everybody else at the other. I'd have a few things here, and maybe there would be a big -- they'd give a little table, to put the telephone in. They'd work a line for telephone, and put on my telephone directory (inaudible) and a few other things. And so I found, when I first came into the Division, they had a room in a separate building, at 32 West Randolph, that they still use for some courts now. It was a large room that had a chambers -- a little office -- and another little office. So I decided

to use it to my advantage. I used one as a conference room, one as my office, and then the courtroom -- the tables would move around. So it was more flexibility than the Daley Center. And so -- because usually, in Domestic Relations, especially if there's a custody issue, you have an attorney for the child, so there's really like three -- in the Daley Center, it's all two tables. Rather than them sharing it, they had a little extra space. And so that was good when it was a courtroom there that I had as a trial room. I was isolated, however, from being the only judge there. Before I -- when I first came into Domestic Relations, I was assigned there. But also I was hearing only post-decree motions. So if other judges had heard a case, and then a year or two later people would want to change something -- because either their kids grew older and they had more expenses, or something else happened -- they needed health insurance changed -- whatever it was. I came to learn by starting at the end of the cases in Divorce that a lot of things could have been avoided if they'd been spelled out initially by the judge and the lawyers in the original decree. Because the original decrees would say "reasonable expenses" or "ordinary expenses-- medical expenses" and "extraordinary," but nobody said what they were. So everybody would say it's something

else. So I'd have to clarify and define what it is. And then what I did, I would clarify. I would say, "Anything over x-number of dollars is ordinary." Or, you know, in some objective way. So after being at that location doing the post-decree for a while, and then it became a trial room, and I still wasn't allowed to get into the Daley Center. Either I was at the bottom of the totem pole -- I didn't have the connection to the presiding judge the Division. At that time it was Richard Jorzak, I thin-- no, first it was Black. He's now back in private practice. And he said he would bring me in as quick as he could. And I appreciate him, because he gave me the best lawyers first -- that he assigned their cases. So I'd learn from them, rather than getting people who didn't know what they were talking about. So I appreciate him. He left within a year to go into private practice, and then it was Jorzak. And so anyway, I was assigned into the Daley Center, into a jury-deliberation room. And -- talking about security -- so I'm in this room, and I have one case where there is a person who is incompetent -- they're represented by the public conservator. So I'm realizing that not everybody going through a divorce has it all together. There's going to be some emotional or psychological problems. I've already seen cases where there's domestic violence issues.

And I'm thinking some people can get riled up, and I have just a little space between me and them, and no security. So I start talking -- and they say, "Well, we know these things. We know these things. Don't worry." And always, "Oh, you'll get a courtroom, you'll get a courtroom." While I'm in that jury-deliberations room one day -- and I had been moving around too, because if one of the courtrooms is available -- if a judge is off -- then they say, "Well, you might as well use that one instead of your jury-deliberations room." So I had been in courtrooms. One of the cases I tried in a courtroom was with a man -- well, it's always a man and a woman for a divorce. But a man who had been an ex-Chicago policeman, who was on disability -- crippled -- who was in a wheelchair every time the case would come up. And he'd have a blanket over him. We found out later he had a loaded gun under the blanket. And I had heard the case numerous times it was up. Rendered my decision. And part of it was that he was to convey his interest in the marital home to his spouse -- ex-spouse -- and if he failed to do that, any judge of the court could do that on his behalf. So I was doing other things, and that particular day that I'm now going to refer to, I was in this jury-deliberation room -- was hearing a case. And I think the two lawyers with me -- one has since

become a judge, Robert Gordon -- and the other lawyer -- Eileen Shapiro, I think was the name of the other lawyer. And we're hearing a commotion outside of our door. So we open the door to see what's going on. Now the people with me were very nice -- the two lawyers, and their two clients. So it's something outside. And we hear from either a clerk or a sheriff that there's been a shooting in the building. And so I said, "See if you can find out what's going on." Next thing we know, "It's a ex-policeman who's crippled in a wheelchair has just shot a post-decree judge -- Henry Gentile -- and shot the lawyer for the wife." We're hearing all this stuff. And I say, "That's got to be -- how many ex-policeman who are in a wheelchair?" So I said, boy, I bet -- and they didn't know that they'd got him, or what's happening. So I said "We'd better lock the door. This guy -- it's my case. And he may be looking to get me." And that was a scary hour or so, until we heard that they caught him. He was apprehended. And then seeing on the news that night the picture of the wife's lawyer -- a young lawyer -- he was probably 26, 27 years old -- his name was James Piszczor -- saying, "Somebody tell-- call my wife, say I'm OK. I'm going to -- they're taking me to the hospital." And then you see that tape, and they're reporting over it he died

before getting to the hospital. And he had, like, a toddler or some kids would never even remember who he is. So I knew the danger where I was. And I knew here -- this guy, from what I heard later -- the public defender who represented him later told me that he had a gun -- a loaded gun -- on me all the time. It's just lucky nothing I said was -- inflamed him. He always thought that, you know, he'll have another chance, another opportunity. And here, when Gentile was actually signing away his deed, that's when it blew his mind and he acted. So the sheriff at the time -- he later became a judge, Richard Elrod -- who I knew from the Corporation Counsel's office. He was head of the Ordinance Enforcement Division when I was in the General Counsel Division. And, so, we're not strangers, and we always had a good relationship. And when I ran in '84, you know, I was -- I raised this issue with him -- and even before -- about we really need better security. The airports -- you know, other places have metal detectors, and we should have it in the court system. He said it's too expensive. I said, "How can we lose -- we lost a judge." And the judges' association, they had a committee on security -- and others were who were raising it. So, he said, "Well, maybe what we can do is put in the metal detectors with some staff until three o'clock, because

after that there's hardly any traffic." And I said, "After three? Somebody puts in a gun in -- when they come in at 3:30, he puts a gun in the toilet -- you know, in the bowl, or wherever they hide it. And then the next morning, they go in and take it out. They have it after they've gone through security. And they shoot the judge, who -- they don't know where he lives, or whatever, and they can't get to him. And that's what they're going to do." So he never really satisfied -- he put in a system, but it was inadequate. Totally inadequate. And it was only his successor -- he was defeated by O'Grady, who ran as a Republican, who I knew also. He had been a police chief for a while, but he had been the district commander where I used to live, in Hyde Park. And I met him there. And he did the right thing as far as security was concerned. So that was -- you know, I'd like to think if I weren't intimately involved in the case, I would still have been as interested in security. But I was constantly connected to it, because the next assignment I was given out of the jury-deliberation room was to sit in Gentile's -- what -- the courtroom that was assigned to him was my room. When I was assigned there, there was still the blood stains right under my seat. There was wood chips on the wall that had not been repaired. And then later -- months later, when I

was still there -- they put up a plaque to commemorate it. So if I could otherwise forget about it, I couldn't. And then in front there were some stains where the lawyer was bleeding out. And so it was a reminder to me. Now then I reflected back on all of the obvious inadequacies in security. As an associate judge -- so, from '74 to '84 -- I was called upon, with every other associate judge, so we'd rotate -- and one week, we'd have assignment for seven nights -- from eight o'clock at night until three in the morning or four in the morning -- to be at 11th and State, for night Bond Court. To take all those arrested who they could process between those hours -- to set bond -- for the whole city. And I realized when I was there the first time, I said, "Here's a list of all the judges through last month, this month, and next month," and that's fine. But their home addresses and telephone numbers. Now I know, just coming in to me as the night bond judge, sometimes narcotics officers would come with their confidential informants -- who are they? -- to get a search warrant. They're drug addicts who are going to testify about the pushers. They're not -- and some of them are smart, and they have good memories. As they walk by, they'd say, "Jordan, on --

MJ: So some of the people who would be brought in for search warrants, I'm sure could easily see this list, and the address of each judge. And then if they shared it with somebody else, it would be a detriment to the safety of any judge who's on there. And I called it to the attention of the administrators, and they said they'd do something, and that they would have it removed. And so I was confident until my next time around, when I'd be there and see it was still there. And I asked other judges, and they -- some just seemed blasé about it. Some were indignant, but figured there's was nothing they could do about it. And it was just a disappointment that there was so many gaps in the system. I also found that I would get Christmas cards and other things from lawyers, and I know they weren't -- and it would come to my house, as opposed to wherever I was assigned. And I realized that the list of judges' home addresses was just given out often to people where it shouldn't have been. And so I saw there's really no -- there was insufficient security. So security was always a concern. When I sat in Divorce especially, my daughter was then old enough to say -- with my wife -- "Don't' have our pictures here in the chambers," because as I'm deciding

who's getting a kid, and then the parent who doesn't get the kid sees my kids, they'd become -- more of a desire to do something with. So at times, I would be on assignments where I'd make things very sparse, because I didn't want to have that sort of -- too much information about myself. And, so, again, my life was affected. You can go to somebody's office, and they have their children and grandchildren's pictures. And some judges are that way. If somebody had only, say, a personal injury assignment, most people aren't going -- the people coming back are the lawyers, and there isn't going to be that sort of attention or danger. So -- but, again, even when I went from place to place, sometimes I wouldn't put up too much stuff, because as soon as I did, I'd get transferred. Or it was just a nuisance to be bringing too much stuff and moving it around. And it was only when I got to Skokie that I figured it would be easy. I could drive stuff over there and take it away. But there too, I would not always have the most personal stuff. What I did do when I was in Skokie -- and that was 13 years -- I brought my bicycle. And so at lunchtime, I would go out on the bike path towards the botanical gardens, and do some things I didn't have the time to do when I was downtown. I saved on the time commuting, so I took advantage of that. And so I

would come much earlier, and do things. Or stay later, and then have time in the middle. And so each assignment, therefore, I could take advantage in a different way. When I was in Skokie, I couldn't do what I did downtown, which was go to more of the meetings of the bar association committees, and learn that way -- make contacts, interact, and be engaged. And so, as a result, after a short time, when I went to Skokie from downtown, I decided to give up my membership in the Chicago Bar Association, because I saw I really wasn't taking advantage of it. And I pursued even further in my involvement with the Illinois State Bar Association, where I became the editor in chief for two years, and been in various section councils that I'd been involved in, and officers of a few. And so just changed the focus a little bit. When I was in Skokie, too, I was involved with the North Suburban Bar Association and I served on their board for a while. And likewise, when I was downtown I couldn't do that as easily. But I was more involved in the Decalogue Society of lawyers on the board. Which -- they had meetings downtown that I couldn't get to when I was not downtown. So I tried to do the most I could with wherever I was, and tried to enrich myself with lectures and other things to attend to. What were some questions?

NW: Well, maybe we can just move into -- if you want to move into your time now, or if you want to talk a little more? Do you have anything else you want to add about your judicial experience as a whole, and the impact you felt that you had on it? Or any general comments on the judic-- on your experience there? And then you can move into some of your work now, and where you feel some improvements to the court systems could be made. (inaudible) I guess those are my three last points.

MJ: OK. Well, one of the committees that I had been appointed to was not quite an educational committee like some of the others for the judicial conference. It was a study committee on high-volume courts. And I was one of five or six, seven people put on that. And perhaps they picked me because I had been stuck in so many of the high-volume courts. So we decided to focus on Traffic, Forcible Entry and Detainer -- that's where evictions are -- Post-Collection, Post-Judgment where it's Collection Court. Housing Court. And -- I'm not thinking if there was another one. But we wrote a report that was, I thought, very well done -- not just because I wrote a part of it, but I thought it was -- dealing with these courts and analyzing what the deficiencies were. How we couldn't change the substance of law regarding them, but the

procedures. So that the litigants -- the people going through them -- could feel that they were getting a fair shake at justice, and to make things move more efficiently. So we talked about certain things like staggered calls, so not everybody is -- you know, is told to come at nine o'clock. Some are told nine o'clock, 10:30, 1:30, or one o'clock, 2:30. And that has been carried out. And that's an advancement that's occurred -- now, it was done in some places, but I think in more places. We talked about referral services, translators, other things that the court system has adapted -- adopted. And to the extent that many of the recommendations were considered and implemented, and that if I had any small part in creating that and pushing for it, then I feel I've had some impact on improvement to the administration of justice. And some of the things were so clear and obvious that, as different administrators got into different positions -- as presiding or supervising judges or chief judges -- they would, on their own, have done some of these things. But at least it put it in writing, where people who were so motivated, could look and say, "Yes, this is it," and even cite it, so it's not like they're doing it on their own initiative. So that's one sort of impact on the system. Now, there were certain assignments I had, where I was truly bothered by what I --

the law required me to do. When I was in the Eviction Court, and people didn't pay their rent, I couldn't just say, "Oh, you're -- you know, I feel bad for you, you'll stay," because the law said evict them. So usually somebody would go from nice housing to lesser housing. But it was those people who were in public housing and being evicted, not because they committed a crime, but because they couldn't pay. That's where I said to myself, "Where do these people go? Are these going to be the homeless?" So I asked the presiding judge, Gene Wachowski, for permission to -- me to consider setting up some programs. And he said, "Well, tell me what they are." So I did. And one was, I said -- I knew from my experience at the city of Chicago, when they would condemn property, and people had to be moved, they had a relocation service. And so I said, "Maybe we can get some of those city -- because these are city of Chicago cases -- relocation people to help them find other places to move to." And that program was started. And so, it eased my conscience, but more important than that, it helped people -- because most of these people would be depressed, and down and out, and not know where to go. So that was something I did. Something else that I did was, when I was sitting in the Collection Court, and I found -- some people were over their head for

no fault of their own. There may have been tremendous illness in the family, and death, and they had hospital and funeral parlor bills. And it's like, you know, nobody can account for such horrendous, huge bills then, and debt you can't account for. But a lot of people were just ignorant as to the use of credit cards, and then went way over their head. And it created problems for not just the credit card companies, but also stores and other merchants. So what I suggested was convening a group of different agencies and people, to figure out a solution. So I convened a meeting involving the head of the regional office of Health, Education, and Welfare. That was Chris Cohen at the time. The Department of Consumer Weights and Measures for the city of Chicago -- that was Jane Byrne, who later became the mayor. The Legal Aid Society -- so the man and number two woman who was running it, Agnes Ryan -- and I can't remember the name of the man. And the Legal Ext-- the Department of Agriculture Legal Extension -- they give different types of consumer advice. I had about eight or ten different entities, and we all met together, and I told them basically this problem. And said, "How do we resolve it and solve it to get people to develop better habits?" Out of the meeting came an entity of consumer counseling, that the city of Chicago sponsored, and continued to for, I

think, 15, 20 years. That counseled thousands of people, so that they wouldn't get into this predicament. So I felt that was probably one of my greatest accomplishments, in bringing many people I never knew, or saw, and never will, and wouldn't know how -- then I would like to think benefited from such a program. By getting the right people and just being a catalyst. So those are probably -- were program-wise things I've done. What I did -- when I was assigned to hear criminal cases, I tried to be innovative. So when I was at 61st and Racine, filling in for -- actually, the judge who was off was -- Howard Miller was his name. He was up for election, I think that must have been in 1978, or '80 -- I'm not sure. He was a real nice man. He didn't want to make waves, as far as upsetting the electorate. There was a man on the radio with the same name -- Howard Miller -- maybe I said this to you the last time, but if I didn't... And he wanted -- he didn't want people in a high-volume, high-visibility sort of case, to be in the news, where they'd see he's black and not white. So he said, "I'm taking off this week, but know that there's this real hot set of cases coming up, that I'd just as soon not be part of." It was the racial riots and conflicts on the southwest side in Marquette Park. And this was in a summer where more would follow. There would

be more demonstrations, from what the news media was saying that they heard. So I called upon my experience having been a lawyer for the Human Relations Commission, and sentenced a lot of those guilty who were really not the main culprits but just, like, going along with it, to a form of supervision where they don't get a criminal record. But to require that they report to the Human Relations Commission whenever the commission deems it's appropriate. And I called in one of the people there who knew me, and I knew, and said, "Whenever there is a protest or a demonstration, you call them into your office so they won't be at that. They will be sitting at a desk in your office." And I think I saved some of them from getting into further trouble, and gave more appropriate step--stiffer penalties to people who were more culpable than those who were just followers. So I used some of the experience before to benefit those people. And I thought of that in terms of when I was in Skokie, hearing some criminal matters for a while -- especially young people on drugs. Seeing that it was more a matter of self-esteem, and other things. So I referred a number of young people, especially age, maybe, 18 to 20 to 30 almost -- mostly males -- to programs to better enhance their self-esteem. Programs like the Men's Room, the Warriors, and other

groups that take a man on a weekend and try to have a transforming experience. And some of those defendants came back to me and said that that was a godsend for them. And so there were maybe 50 or 60 who I sent through these programs, and it was like trying to be more creative than just the ordinary, you know, "Drop urine every so often, and if you get in trouble you go to jail." But to find something that's going to help. So those are some of the programs that I've done that I think have benefited the court system. Let's see -- and then you asked another thing besides. What was that?

NW: Sort of --

MJ: Besides what I'm doing now.

NW: Improvements that you feel can make this court system today --

MJ: OK. Even today there would be, in my view, better opportunity to use computers to allow judges access at home, in doing work, so some -- if they have some inspiration, they can be hooked up at home. Maybe they have this now -- I'm not sure. I just knew that that wasn't there for me. I'd have to go to the office all the time. You know, the state of the art is improving, so it may become possible. And as I said, even for retired judges to be internet connected, to know the events of the

court. Those are really minor things. Security has improved drastically because there is around the clock, you know, surveillance in buildings and check-ins. The system grows and there's always going to be some bad apples, and so they can never ensure that they won't have further episodes of corruption, or somebody doing something they shouldn't. But the monitoring systems are in place. The main recommendation I would have is something I had been working on, when I was chairman of the Bench Bar Section Council -- and I had involvement in that Section Council for about 15 years -- and even now, is to have an intermediary program put in place throughout the state -- especially -- my focus is Cook County. So that if a lawyer has a gripe or a grievance against a particular judge, the lawyer can't go to that judge and make the complaint, because the judge is then going to take offense against the lawyer making it. So that's why you have an intermediary. Somebody else -- and then the lawyer would go to the intermediary who goes to the judge, and says, "I've gotten a number of complaints from different people, or one person, about you always being late. Or chewing gum where they can't understand what you're saying." It's -- it would be regarding non-ethical issues -- nothing of substance about cases, because somebody can appeal if they

think the judge is wrong -- but the sort of things I've just discussed. And this way a judge can be on notice, that these are things that are bothering people. So, by hearing that, the judge can change. Or if the judge chooses not to change, will face the consequence when next up for retention. And many times judges will say they were blindsided when they'd get an unqualified rating from a bar association. If only they knew. So this is a way to let them know, and they can choose to do something or not do something, without hurting the lawyer who's giving the message, because it's coming through a neutral intermediary. And actually, one of the people who's been on the section council, who served the year after me, as chairman of the Bench Bar Section Council, was just last December elected to the Supreme Court. So maybe he will be pushing that as a state-wide mandate, or rule. And another past-chairman of the Bench Bar Section Council is the president of the Chicago Bar next year, who is for this. And the Illinois Bar is already on record. And the chief judge in Cook County said, when the Chicago Bar and the Illinois Bar had the same proposal, then he will consider getting behind it. So I'm hoping in this next year that that's going to happen. And I think that would be very good. There's a mentoring program that I think is

excellent for judges, and also for lawyers, and -- because quite often, mistakes are made because people don't know what to do. And just like I was in a nourishing environment in the law department of the city, some people start off as sole practitioners with nobody to help them. And this mentoring program can augment the absence of what would be existing, that I had but some don't have. So those are the recommendations. As far as me and what I do now, I think I take from all of the experiences I've had, to deal with the substantive areas of the law, and in the means of using mediation or arbitration -- mediation is probably the more exciting, because it really is magic in empowering parties to come together. And doing that, and building a reputation, and developing respect, and trust. To be getting to the stage where, in this seven-day period -- having, last Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday, mediations for different sets of cases, and parties, and lawyers. And then, this Monday, three cases -- how I'm going to that is beyond me, but I'll do my best. And then Tuesday another one. And, you now -- and I knew I'd be starting slowly and building up, but building up where I'm now having more than the average of one a day is overwhelming. But we'll see -- and it just comes in spurts. I know, closer to the holidays later in December, it's going to be slow. And --

but yet, I see that I'll be able to pick and choose -- or just take everything, you know, if the time is there. And, so, I enjoy it. I don't know how many more years I will do this, but I feel like now is my time. I'm just 62. I hope I have all my faculties. Others have to judge that, I can't. And as long as I can get about, and carry all the stuff they send to me to bring to these mediations, then I will do so. And I really do enjoy being with the people, discussing the issues and giving people the support and guidance that they need. So it's fun. I like being the mentor, like some of the mentors who mentored me. And being the guide down a path of resolution -- that's -- it beats litigation, where somebody else is taking your destiny and controlling your life and your future. And here we're helping people find their own way to do that, with people that they think are demons or devils, and getting together with them.

NW: (inaudible) Anything else that's on your mind that you haven't -- (laughter)

MJ: I don't know. We talked quite a bit, so unless there's anything specific? I'm thinking now -- if I should sign the form that just says that -- anytime to release everything. Because --

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