

**Shelby White and Leon Levy Archives Center
Institute for Advanced Study**

**Oral History Project
Interview Transcript**

**Glen Bowersock
Interviewed by Linda Arntzenius
April 22, 2009**

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**Institute for Advanced Study
The Shelby White and Leon Levy Archives Center**

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Date: 6 November 2009.

- Linda Arntzenius: It is Wednesday, the 22nd of April, and I'm at the Institute for Advanced Study with Glen Bowersock¹ to record an interview for the Oral History Project for the Institute Archives. Have you thought about where your archives would go?
- Glen Bowersock: I haven't, no. Morty White² is giving his to Harvard, I know.
- Linda Arntzenius: Yes.
- Glen Bowersock: Have you interviewed him?
- Linda Arntzenius: I'm going to. He has agreed. We just have to find the time.
- Glen Bowersock: He's written a book of memoirs.
- Linda Arntzenius: I read his Philosopher's Story.
- Glen Bowersock: I think that's the one. Isn't that the autobiographical one?
- Linda Arntzenius: That's the one; yes it is. He has quite a lot to say about the Institute there. In fact, it was very funny. He said that his upbringing across from Tammany Hall was a great preparation for his time at the Institute.
- Glen Bowersock: Oh, dear, no! His time at the Institute was turbulent.
- Linda Arntzenius: Yes it was.
- Glen Bowersock: And in part because he contributed to the turbulence.
- Linda Arntzenius: Well, I'm hoping to get the skinny on that, as they say.
- Glen Bowersock: Yes.
- Linda Arntzenius: Well, I want to start with my first question, if I may.
- Glen Bowersock: Okay.
- Linda Arntzenius: And thank you for referring me to the papers that were written on your retirement.
- Glen Bowersock: Well, it was nothing in particular to read, but that actually took me by surprise in that it was so – I thought – so perceptive. I mean it was, as these things are, always rather eulogistic and obituary-like, but on the other hand it was more perceptive than I had expected.
- Linda Arntzenius: Creative curiosity is one of the hallmarks of the Institute, going way back to the founders. And Aldo Schiavone³ [in East & West] describes your intellectual curiosity as "insatiable and multifarious." Looking back, I

¹ Glen W. Bowersock (1936-), Visitor in the School of Historical Studies, 1975; Professor, 1980-2006; Emeritus Professor, 2006- .

² Morton White (1917-2016), Member in the School of Historical Studies, 1953-1954, 1962-1963, 1968; Professor, 1970-1987; Emeritus Professor, 1987-2016.

³ Aldo Schiavone (1944-), Member in the School of Historical Studies, 1998.

wonder if it seems to you almost inevitable that you were drawn to the Institute?

Glen Bowersock: Oh, there's no doubt that when the opportunity came along, when the Institute faculty first approached me, it was precisely the lack of pigeon-holing, the lack of disciplinary boxes, that appealed to me, because I always have cherished wandering far afield and having many interests that were outside my own particular research interest at any given time. And they have changed as well. So yes, I mean I hadn't thought about coming here until they approached me because I was a very happy professor at Harvard – it's a good place to be, Harvard, and I liked it.

I did a lot for Harvard; I was not only a professor but chairman of my department for five years, and dean, and I had a stake in it. So it hadn't occurred to me to come here until the Institute approached me.

Linda Arntzenius: Unlike many faculty you hadn't been a member here.

Glen Bowersock: I'd never been a member here, no. They first approached me in 1975 when Carl Kaysen⁴ was the director, and I thought that was going nowhere because Kaysen – as you may know, a controversial character – took me into his office when I was here and said – we'd known each other because he'd been at Harvard too, "I just want to let you know, I'm not going to appoint any classicists here." So I thought, "Well, that's fine," and I was very young – I mean at that stage I was 39, so I just said, "Let's forget it." And then of course he was thrown out, as you probably know, and things changed, and eventually in 1980 they came to me again.

And obviously the then-director, Harry Woolf,⁵ was prepared to consider a classicist, and so it all worked out. It was a wrench, because I was devoted to Harvard, but on the other hand, I had a department. I had two departments at Harvard, but Harvard – like all universities – is a place with disciplinary boxes, and though I did my best to reach across – I was interested in the Near East and I was interested in archeology and art history. I was interested in all kinds of things. The chance to come here was very attractive.

Plus the fact it's near New York, which has always been important in my cultural life.

Linda Arntzenius: For the opera?

Glen Bowersock: For the opera, yes. And so that was an attraction too, but the real thing was the fact that there were no departmental barriers; that really appealed to me. And though I love teaching – everybody asked did I miss teaching, because I really did love it – but I didn't miss it for the simple

⁴ Carl Kaysen (1920-2010), IAS Director, 1966-1976.

⁵ Harry Woolf (1923-2003), IAS Director, 1976-1987; Professor-At-Large, 1987-1994; Emeritus Professor, 1994-2003.

reason that dealing with the members here is like dealing with the very best students. As long as you don't need admiring eyes looking up at you from the front row; it's a matter of intellectual exchange, the members here are like the best possible seminar.

So I never did miss the teaching. So yes, the matter of curiosity and varieties of disciplines and areas of interest were a tremendous attraction. I think that is one of the great things about the Institute.

Linda Arntzenius: Do you agree with Flexner⁶ that that sort of – well, he was really speaking about pure speculative research, but he really felt that it needed a special environment. Do you feel that that's true for the sort of work that you do?

Glen Bowersock: Well, I mean I have never been sympathetic to people who say that they have to get a sabbatical year off in order to do their research. I think if you can't do your research when you're very busy, you can't do your research when you're not very busy, so I don't myself believe that you have to have an environment like this in order to do the work. What I did at Harvard was perhaps less abundant, but of the same nature as what I was doing here, and so I think that this fosters that kind of speculative research but I don't think it's the only kind of place in which you can do it.

Linda Arntzenius: Aldo Schiavone also describes the development of American studies in ancient history over the last 50 years as "unprecedented," which period coincides with your work in the field. And I wanted to ask you whether there was more than coincidence there, and what role the Institute played in that.

Glen Bowersock: Well, the Institute played a very important role, actually, because my field – ancient studies, ancient history, classics – was here almost from the beginning. If memory serves – it's either '34 or '35 that Benjamin Meritt⁷ came, and that was the beginning of the ancient field here. And there is a story about that – I don't know whether it's true or not, or whether you've run across it, that somebody said to Flexner, "We're very anxious to have people here who are clearly first class, clearly very good, where you don't have opinions saying that this person is good and other people saying this person isn't."

The sort of thing that happens all the time, for example, in literary studies; English literature or comparative literature, you have people who say, "This is a genius!" and people who say, "That's an idiot!" We want something in historical studies where you can be very clear about the quality, and, allegedly, he was told that the field where this can happen is Greek epigraphy – the study of Greek inscriptions. At any rate, the first person appointed was a specialist in Greek inscriptions, Benjamin Meritt.

⁶ Abraham Flexner (1866-1959), IAS Director, 1930-1939.

⁷ Benjamin Dean Merritt (1899-1989), Professor in the School of Historical Studies, 1935-1969; Emeritus Professor, 1969-1989.

I think it's true you can't fudge in the study of Greek epigraphy; you can't have one person say, "This is good" and another person disagree – I mean it's either right or it's wrong, on the whole. And so there was some truth to that, but it is a narrow field, though a very important one, and it's been here from that time to this, and we have a very, very great tradition. But as time went by with the arrival of Panofsky⁸ who was interested in ancient art as well as all other kinds of art and with Homer Thompson⁹ in archeology and Harold Cherniss¹⁰ who came in Greek Philosophy and Alföldi¹¹ who came in Roman history it was really a kind of tsunami of classical studies here.

Which contributed a lot to bringing people from all over the world to work here, and there's no doubt that that contributed to the growth of the discipline in North America. But there is another reason that the discipline grew in this country, and it partially underlies what Aldo was saying, and that is the exodus from Europe during the war [World War II], which, of course, has a lot to do with the history of the Institute. We, too, profited here from people who were expelled or had to leave Europe – Germany in particular. Panofsky is a case in point.

The Institute had very close ties with the committee in New York that was trying to place refugees, and all of this meant a kind of European classical scholarship that arrived in North America as a result of the war. I encountered this as a student at Harvard in the '50s with Herbert Bloch who was a marvelous scholar, and died very recently; with Werner Jaeger, a great classical scholar who came –wasn't Jewish, but his wife was. And so this fed into the growth of classical studies in this country.

Some other important developments came from people who voluntarily immigrated to America, like Arthur Darby Nock, the great specialist in ancient religion, who came here in his late 20s from Cambridge, came to America and taught at Harvard his entire life, but brought something very, very new to the study of religious history. And there were others who came; you'll notice that Schiavone mentions Ernst Badian¹² in the group

⁸ Erwin Panofsky (1892-1968), Professor in the School of Historical Studies, 1935-1962; Emeritus Professor, 1962-1968.

⁹ Homer Armstrong Thompson (1906-2000), Professor in the School of Historical Studies, 1947-1977; Emeritus Professor, 1977-2000.

¹⁰ Harold Fredrik Cherniss (1904-1987), Professor in the School of Historical Studies, 1948-1974; Emeritus Professor, 1974-1987.

¹¹ Andreas (Andrew) Alföldi (1895-1981), Professor in the School of Historical Studies, 1955-1965; Emeritus Professor, 1965-1981.

¹² Ernst Badian (1925-2011), Member in the School of Historical Studies, 1980-1981, 1992-1993; Visitor, 1996.

at the start of his piece – Ernst Badian was a Viennese Jew who grew up in New Zealand and first studied in Oxford.

And then from the '50s – I would say late '50s, early '60s, perhaps a little later, perhaps middle '60s – came to this country and taught. So that was another example of the importation of what I would call the European traditions of classical scholarship in this country. Aldo also mentions Peter Brown, who has made most of his career in this country, but is Irish and began in Oxford. Erich Gruen¹³ he names as well, which is an interesting case because he is American, but he was born in Vienna, grew up in Washington.

I am born American, but took my most important degrees – a second B.A. and a Doctorate – in Oxford. So what Aldo is describing has very, very deep roots in European scholarship, either from the generation that came here or from those of us, like myself, who went there. And this has occasionally been noticed, that at Harvard, the Institute, various places there does seem to be either a preponderance of people who either are from other countries or were trained in other countries. And I think to some extent that's true, but that is what has caused the kind of change that [Aldo Schiavone mentions].

Linda Arntzenius: And is that something that itself is changing, because Aldo also mentions that the current trend in American historiography is rather isolationist.

Glen Bowersock: Well, not among the people we've been talking about, including myself. But there is, there has been – and Aldo actually ran a very interesting conference on this whole subject about ten years ago – there has been a sort of backlash, particularly as jobs became scarce now, saying, "Why do we get all these people who were trained in other countries and not hire our own?" And I think that that has led to a certain isolationism in the discipline nationally. I think the people who are most visible, the people who publish the most, are not like that.

But Aldo's quite right that if you go to the annual meetings of ancient historians or classical scholars, you will see a lot of people who are trying to "buy American." And I deplore that, because my whole life, my whole orientation is totally international, and that's one of the things that I treasure in the Institute that more than half our members – at least the ones that I know about in historical studies – are from other countries – more than half. And as you may or may not know, we got into a lot of trouble in the awful days when Lynne Cheney – Dick Cheney's wife – was the head of the National Endowment for the Humanities.

And she questioned having so many foreigners. And when they sent visiting teams to come and see whether their money was being well spent, they asked our members, the American members who held NEH fellowships, whether they were unhappy or felt intimidated by having so

¹³ Erich Gruen (1935-), Member in the School of Historical Studies, 1973-1974.

many foreigners around. I was outraged, and so were my colleagues, and for a number of years we stopped taking money from the NEH.

Linda Arntzenius: When was this period?

Glen Bowersock: I would say – well, you can easily check when she was head of the NEH, but my guess is it's the early '90s.¹⁴ But she was head of it for three, four years – awful woman.

Linda Arntzenius: Oh dear.

Glen Bowersock: Well, he's even worse; but at any rate, that was, I think, a very visible manifestation of this isolationism that Aldo was talking about. My feeling is that all these scholarly traditions mutually reinforce each other and help; that there isn't a sort of national way of doing ancient history, certainly – or most kinds of history. And to this day we are still very, very international. In historical studies at this moment, of the professors who are still in harness, there'd be none who was American other than Caroline Bynum.¹⁵ Of the emeriti, Morty and I may be the only ones; I'd want to think that through, but Peter Paret¹⁶ isn't, Oleg¹⁷ isn't –

Linda Arntzenius: Giles Constable?¹⁸

Glen Bowersock: Giles isn't, though he's been here since he was very young. Irving¹⁹ is; Irving is another one. But it's curious – there are very, very few native – I shouldn't say Native Americans, because that is a special term – but many people who were born in America in the Institute faculty. And I think that's good.

Linda Arntzenius: What do you think accounted for Kaysen's not wishing to have classicists?

Glen Bowersock: He was fed up with the way they were behaving, because it was the classicists particularly who formed a cabal against him in the creation of the School of Social Science and the dreadful episode over the

¹⁴ From 1986 until 1993.

¹⁵ Caroline Walker Bynum (1941-), Professor in the School of Historical Studies, 2003-2011; Emeritus Professor, 2011- .

¹⁶ Peter Paret (1924-), Member in the School of Historical Studies, 1966-1967; Professor, 1986-1997; Emeritus Professor, 1997 - .

¹⁷ Oleg Grabar (1929-2011), Professor in the School of Historical Studies, 1990-1998; Emeritus Professor, 1998-2011.

¹⁸ Giles Constable (1929-), Professor in the School of Historical Studies, 1985-2003; Emeritus Professor, 2003- .

¹⁹ Irving Lavin (1927-), Professor in the School of Historical Studies, 1973-2001; Emeritus Professor, 2001- .

nomination of Robert Bellah.²⁰ And it was the classicists who were particularly – along with Morty, who isn't a classicist, but an honorary one, I would say, who joined in the cabal against Kaysen. And in my judgment correctly; I would have done it if I'd been here, but I think that there's no doubt that that's why he didn't want any classicists.

Linda Arntzenius: So is the future healthy for those sorts of studies at the Institute?

Glen Bowersock: Ancient studies: Yes, it is; it's healthy enough. I have to admit to a certain nostalgia or elegiac tone, which is purely emotional because I can't justify it rationally, but as Christian Habicht²¹ will tell you – or has told, if he's been interviewed; I don't know whether he has – when he came there were four professors in ancient studies in the School of Historical Studies. Now there are two, and Heinrich²² is going to be replaced in the general field of history of science, not in ancient studies, so there will be only one.

And I think given the great tradition here that I outlined earlier, I think this is sad, but I also think it's understandable, and all the time I've been here I've always expected that one day my colleagues would say, "We have one professor of art history, one professor of medieval history, one professor of modern European history, one professor of Islamic studies, one professor of Chinese studies. Why should we have two or more professors of classical studies?" And there is no answer to that, so I think it's a perfectly reasonable evolution. But on the other hand, you know, I can't help but feel sad that it's – you know.

Linda Arntzenius: That evolutionary aspect of the Institute is one that the founders –

Glen Bowersock: Envisaged.

Linda Arntzenius: Yes. I'd like to quote a little bit from Flexner's wish that the Institute should be "small. Its staff and students should be few. The administration should be inconspicuous, inexpensive, subordinate. The members of the teaching staff, while freed from the waste of time involved in administrative work, should freely participate in decisions involving the character, quality and direction of its activities. That living conditions should represent a marked improvement over contemporary academic conditions in America, and its subjects should be fundamental in character, and that it should develop gradually." What do you think about that?

Glen Bowersock: Well, I think it has developed gradually, but not in the way that Flexner envisaged. (Laughs) I think the inconspicuous character of the

²⁰ Robert N. Bellah (1927-2013), Member in the School of Social Science, 1972-1973.

²¹ Christian Habicht (1926-) Member in the School of Historical Studies, 1972-1973; Professor, 1973-1998; Emeritus Professor, 1998- .

²² Heinrich von Staden (1939-), Professor in the School of Historical Studies, 1998-2010; Emeritus Professor, 2010- .

administration has utterly disappeared, and the administration has become very conspicuous. When I came, the role of the faculty in Institute affairs was extraordinarily significant, and I have to say that coming from Harvard – which as a big university would naturally be very bureaucratic – I was astonished to find here that all kinds of decisions were made by the faculty and not by the administration.

Linda Arntzenius: Such as – would you give me an example?

Glen Bowersock: Well, when I sat at my first school meeting in historical studies and we were discussing allocations for members and for various other things, I said, “What is the school’s budget?” And they said, “We don’t have a budget.” I said, “You don’t have a budget? How do you know what we’ll have to spend?” And they said, “Well, we just ask for what we want, and we get it.” I was amazed! And in the matter of subsidies for publication of books, money was just thrown out whenever it was asked for. Harry Woolf was a very weak director – very, very weak – but I think he was brought in after Kaysen because he was weak.

In a way, Kaysen was a very strong autocratic director, and certainly not in keeping with the vision of Flexner, and so they brought in Harry Woolf, who was a weak administrator and a not terribly bright scholar. And as I said when I came, he clearly brought peace to the institute, but it was the peace of the grave. And I also – since this is long-term oral history –

Linda Arntzenius: For future historians.

Glen Bowersock: When I thought of leaving Harvard, the then-president Derek Bok did everything he could to persuade me to stay, and at one point he said to me, “When you see the director, you look at him and you ask if you want to be at a place that’s run by a man like that.” And I did do that, and I said, “No, I don’t want to be at a place run by a man like that, but he won’t be there all that long, and I will be.”

Linda Arntzenius: Well, let me probe you: what did he mean? It sounds a little bit like snobbery – a class thing – it wasn’t that. What was it?

Glen Bowersock: No, it wasn’t; it wasn’t. Derek Bok was a very close friend of Bill Bowen, who was then the president of Princeton University, and he had a daughter who came to Princeton, so he knew the Princeton scene very well. Harry Woolf was simply inept; he didn’t know how to act – he was frightened of the faculty, as he had reason to be, because it was the faculty that had toppled Kaysen. And so he didn’t dare say “no” to the faculty, and faculty meetings were embarrassing because he would always agree to anything anybody said. And that seemed to me not right.

If you have a director, if you have administration, they should do some of the work of directing and administering. And in the time that I’ve been here, we’ve gone completely from one extreme – I won’t say to the other

extreme, because I have a very high regard for what Peter Goddard²³ is doing in an extremely difficult time – but the turnaround came with Phil Griffiths,²⁴ who slowly and quietly drew more and more power into the director's office. And on the whole I was glad, because I didn't see why a professor should be dealing with the day to day administration of the Institute.

But it's also meant an increase in the bureaucracy of the administration and the director's office, which is something that a person like Morty White would be very eloquent about, and it's just an awful lot of people over there. On the other hand, you know, to run a place like this nowadays you have to have your Friends of the Institute; you have to have your outreach in the neighborhood; you have to have public relations. I mean there's no way around this. I think this is something that Flexner never saw, and so the evolution has not been the way he expected.

But on the other hand, I think by and large it's been inevitable, and in good hands, healthy. The amount of contact with the outside world that has to go on now is enormous, and when I came here – it's rather funny, and consistent with Flexner's vision – my colleagues in historical studies believed that they should never play any role in fundraising. They should never be called upon to talk to donors, or do anything of that kind – that was up to the director to do that. They believed that our members should be kept free of any such complications.

And through the '80s when I was here, whenever the director's office would make a tentative proposal that a member who was particularly famous, or a professor, might wish to give a lecture to a group of prospective donors, we would always refuse. And that has utterly changed now. At that time, I always took the position that some members actually liked to meet these people, and they liked to talk to them; it's not an imposition because it's interesting for them. Others don't, and they should be free to do what they want, but it was a school policy that this was unacceptable. And now when I see members being trotted out all the time, and all of us being trotted out too – I mean this is something that Flexner never saw.

²³ Peter Goddard (1945-), Member in the School of Natural Sciences, 1972-1974; Member in the School of Mathematics, 1988; IAS Director, 2004-2012; Professor in the School of Natural Sciences, 2012-2016; Emeritus Professor, 2016- .

²⁴ Phillip Griffiths (1938-), Member in the School of Mathematics, 1968-1970; Visitor, 1981-1982; IAS Director, 1991-2003; Professor, 2004-2009; Emeritus Professor, 2009- .

Linda Arntzenius: You could see that from the occasion when someone wanted to interview Einstein,²⁵ and Flexner took it upon himself to say he wasn't available.

Glen Bowersock: That's right. No, this was simply not part of the vision. I think in the 21st century it would be antediluvian to say that we could do this. In fact when I came in the '80s there was still a very sharp division between those who believed that scholars should be totally left alone – not engaged in discussion even over lunch, and they would eat their lunch but they should be totally left alone to do it – and those who believed that some interaction, some seminars, some lectures were stimulating and valuable. For example, Homer Thompson was a very gregarious person, and he loved bringing in archeologists to tell about their discoveries and have a little show and tell and so on, and he would give them a glass of sherry and take them to lunch.

not our saying at model of the prevailing completely – not to good kitchen, events

Other people, like Kenneth Setton²⁶ in medieval studies, or Harold Cherniss, were utterly opposed to that kind of thing; they'd say it's business to be hosts, to create seminars, and there should be no interaction; everybody should be on their own. And I remember the time that I described this in shorthand as the monastic Institute versus the motel model. The monastic model was when I came. Now the motel model has taken over say the summer resort model. I mean, good chef, every day –

Linda Arntzenius: And that was Harry Woolf who instigated that, would you say?

Glen Bowersock: He tried a little bit, but he was so weak he didn't do much. But it actually started, I think, as a trickle-down from the scientists, who can't really do what they do without seminars, so I mean they need this, and mathematicians talk to each other all the time. And then it trickled down into the new School of Social Science, where they also like interaction and talking and seminars and so on, and then it trickled into historical studies. So I wouldn't say Harry Woolf deserved much of the credit or blame for that, but it was again an evolution. Homer Thompson was the leader of this in historical studies, and often repudiated for it. People didn't like that. Of course now you've got seminars, lunch tables, going on all the time.

Linda Arntzenius: And you don't find – you never found that was a distraction to your scholarly pursuit, or an intrusion?

Glen Bowersock: Well, yes, it is sometimes a distraction, but on the other hand, I participated in it because I could see the members liked it, and it was

²⁵ Albert Einstein (1879-1955), Professor in the Schools of Mathematics and Natural Sciences, 1933-1946; Emeritus Professor, 1946-1955.

²⁶ Kenneth Setton (1914-1995), Professor in the School of Historical Studies, 1968-1984; Emeritus Professor, 1984-1995.

important for them. And I remember being really quite shaken one day when one of our members was going to seminars here and at the university almost every day, and I said, "This is taking away a lot from your working time." And he said to me, "Look, I come from" – I don't know, some remote place, Oshkosh – "I never see anybody when I'm there. For me, this is part of my experience is to see all these great scholars, to meet all these people, hear what they're doing.

He said, "I'll never have this chance again!" And I thought to myself, "I understand that." So that actually made a great difference to me in understanding this development, but on the other hand, when I tried to run a classics seminar with Christian Habicht when we were both active members of the faculty, we tried to bring together people from the neighborhood, because there were lots of classical scholars in New York, Philly, here, and we thought it's wonderful for everybody to see each other. Homer did that with archeology, but archeology is largely looking at pictures and sort of saying nice things about discoveries.

With ancient history, epigraphy, texts, interpretation of the past, and so on around the seminar table, it's not quite so easy to be civil, because we had really very high-powered seminars with people from New York, from Princeton University, from Philadelphia; sometimes from Yale, sometimes from Baltimore. It was really a very, very high-powered seminar, but it scared the living daylights out of the members who presented the papers because they felt they were on show for their life. And so they would spend months and months making sure they did a paper they wouldn't be embarrassed by.

And so curiously an attempt to do this kind of interaction proved to be a distraction that we never had anticipated; that people were so frightened of misbehaving or doing a bad job that they lost a tremendous amount of time. And we had one Italian here, I remember, about 12-15 years ago, who gave a seminar and was shredded. I mean classicists are quite fierce; I don't know whether you've observed that. When they're among themselves discussing, they can be quite fierce. His paper was absolutely shredded, and he was so humiliated that he disappeared for two weeks; we simply didn't know where he went. He just stayed out of view.

So at that point I thought, "This is wrong! We can't do this." And Christian and I pulled back, and we then tried to have a lunch table with no agenda, which people just sat together and talked, and that worked pretty well for a while. But in the end, the talk was largely about children and movies and opera and other things, and it really was no different from any other lunch table. So finding the balance is very difficult.

Linda Arntzenius:

Well, this speaks to something that I've heard quite often. People have said, "Oh, the Institute! You have your career at Harvard or wherever, and then you go retire at the Institute and you can do whatever you want, as little or as much, and nothing at all if you want." While that sounds like a

sort of educational utopia, in actual fact it is a very stressful position to be put in, because when there are no demands the internal demands to produce, to compete, to – and that's a little of what you were –

Glen Bowersock:

Yes. I wouldn't say it's very stressful. Certainly the opportunities far outweigh the stress. It is a wonderful environment to do one's research, and in fact for me it's always been tremendously exciting to see all these people come every year. It's like traveling around the world all the time, except they come to you, and you pick them, so you make sure that they're the people you like to see. But the suggestions that it is a kind of retirement has some truth, because the moment I left Harvard, where I'd been very busy day after day with teaching, administering, chairing, whatever, I had to find other ways to contribute to my discipline and to contribute to the profession, as well as do my own research, because I felt I had some obligation to do that.

So I accepted a few more sort of committee obligations and editorial obligations and such things. But it is true – it's a little like restructuring your life in retirement, and in fact when I did retire two years ago – three years ago – I said to people, "I feel as though I'm retiring for a second time," because the same issues arose. I mean my life doesn't change much, except that I don't have to elect members and professors any more. But it is the same question of restructuring – how can you most effectively contribute to your profession as well as to continue your research? So there is some truth to that. But the stress aspect I think shouldn't be overplayed; I will tell you why I think this.

When I was at Harvard, when I was chair of my department, I had three colleagues in a relatively small department who were clinically alcoholic, and this sort of incidence of alcoholism was not unusual at Harvard. And I think because Harvard is a very stressful place, everywhere you look somebody's at least as distinguished as you are or more distinguished; publishing more than you were, more famous. And the students are fantastically good; often much brighter than their professors. It's a very, very stressful – it's a wonderful environment, but very stressful.

And I remember discussing this with the dean, who was a friend of mine, in the late '70s. And he said, "I would estimate that approximately a third of Harvard professors in arts and sciences are alcoholic because of this." And I have to say when I came here one of the things that struck me is that there is no alcoholism – none. And I've occasionally mentioned this to people with long memories, and say, "No, there hasn't been any since Kitty Oppenheimer." And that, I think, tells you a lot.

Linda Arntzenius:

That is extraordinary.

Glen Bowersock:

It is extraordinary. So that's why I think there is some element of stress, but I think to some extent Flexner's vision of an ideal environment has materialized, because we can all work without the kinds of stress that drives you to drink. It's really true. I mean as of now, I am not conscious

of anybody, professor or member, who suffers from alcoholism at the Institute for Advanced Study.

Linda Arntzenius: That's quite remarkable.

Glen Bowersock: And that's certainly not true at the University.

Linda Arntzenius: Of course, they may have turned to other –

Glen Bowersock: Well, they might – I mean, I'm so old that I'm – but I'm not aware of other. At one stage I mean at Harvard it played out in alcoholism. In the students it played out to some extent with drugs. It also played out in sex, and I remember just as I was leaving one of my older colleagues at Harvard said, "Well, you seem to have got rid of the problem with alcoholism, but now everybody's switching wives." (Laughs) And it was true – there was this tremendous sort of round-robin of wife-switching, which I think, again, is explicable in the same terms.

Obviously anybody who is able, has a sense of pride, will feel some stress. But I think to some extent the ideal conditions that Flexner wanted have been maintained. Peter Goddard every year tells the incoming members that – I think it was Oppenheimer who said this is the place where we take away all the excuses – you doubtless heard that. My fear is that we may be putting back the excuses with so many events, so many seminars, so many things to go to. But on the other hand, as I told you earlier, there are members for whom it is very important. So I think it's like everything in life a question of finding balance.

Linda Arntzenius: When you came the Institute – let's see – it was 50 years old, and now it's almost 80. So you've known it for a considerable part of its lifetime.

Glen Bowersock: 30 years.

Linda Arntzenius: What controversies were there during your period? I mean we all know the earlier ones, but what were the topics for the '80s and '90s?

Glen Bowersock: Well, I think the first decade I was here the school was still working its way out of the poisonous legacy of the '70s. Hostility toward the director and the administration was rampant when I came, and that was all left over. People didn't want to see the director, didn't want to talk to the director, didn't want to have anything to do with the director. The secretaries here hated the secretaries in the director's office. There was a real divide, and the administration – even the board of trustees was viewed with great suspicion. And since the faculty has always been very distinguished, the trustees were intimidated also.

And that's a very interesting phenomenon. I mean basically the trustees got rid of Kaysen because the faculty pushed them, and so the trustees were always very, very cautious about doing anything to rouse the faculty, and in the '70s of course the faculty resorted to the press as well, and some terrible publicity went on. So I would say my first decade here was

really trying to get out of that. For example, I very much appreciated Cliff Geertz²⁷ when I came here; I liked talking to him, and I would occasionally – there would be little gatherings at his house from time to time to discuss things.

And he invited everybody, and I sometimes went; John Elliot²⁸ went. But Morty – I said to Morty once – a very interesting discussion about Cliff Geertz. He said, “I don’t speak to him.” It was just like that: “I don’t speak to him,” and that was that. And I found this very distressing, and in the late ‘80s our relatively new chairman of the board, Jim Wolfensohn, had a daughter at Princeton University, and he was coming down over Easter weekend to see his daughter. And he wanted to meet with the school to discuss school affairs, and the school told him, “We won’t meet with you over the weekend. We only meet on weekdays. We don’t meet on weekends.”

He’s never got over it. So that kind of us-and-them attitude was really very distressing. It began to disappear in the late ‘80s. I must say I worked hard to stop this; John Elliott was very keen to stop this; Irving Lavin also was very anxious to reach out. And historical studies wouldn’t have anything to do with the School of Social Science, and when I came–

Linda Arntzenius: This is when Marvin Goldberger –

Glen Bowersock: Marvin Goldberger came in, Murph came in at the end.

Linda Arntzenius: Did that make a difference?

Glen Bowersock: No. I’ll tell you why in a minute, but it was an evolution in process. I don’t think he had anything to do with it, but it was the fact that many of us were trying to restore relations. But people in my school wouldn’t even not only communicate with the School of Social Science, they wouldn’t name it. It was called “the fourth school.”

Linda Arntzenius: Oh dear.

Glen Bowersock: No, Murph was miscast in the role of director. He came from Cal Tech; he was used to being a big administrator with a large staff, and this is a little place, and so he was always delegating when things didn’t need to be delegated. One of the really wonderful things about Peter Goddard is that he’s used to being in a relatively small place, and one of the things that was in our due diligence mentioned as a possible problem with Peter Goddard is that he’s too hands-on. He is hands-on, but here, it’s a good thing.

²⁷ Clifford Geertz (1926-2006), Professor in the School of Social Science, 1970-2000; Emeritus Professor, 2000-2006.

²⁸ John Huxtable Elliott (1930-), Professor in the School of Historical Studies, 1973-1990.

Murph was the opposite; Murph was hands-off, and so he was out of here in four or five years, I think. And then Phillip [Griffiths] came, and Phillip was very astute; he'd been a provost at Duke, and he'd been coached in administration by my friend Henry Rosovsky at Harvard. Phillip was a very, very good mathematician, and so he was respected. Part of the problem with Harry was that nobody respected him. Murph was respected, but he just couldn't handle the job. But Phillip was a good administrator and was respected, and that was the time when it began to turn around.

And the only crisis – major crisis – in Phillip's tenure was the attempt to get rid of Piet Hut,²⁹ which was a very, very painful and difficult episode. The School of Natural Sciences wanted him out, even though John Bahcall,³⁰ who had in the '80s advocated this appointment, was leaning on Phillip saying, "We can't do our business with this man here. We have to get him out." And the trustees authorized Phillip to set up a process for removing him on the grounds of, and this led to a national outcry that you can't break tenure, and it was very, very painful. That was I would say the only really serious crisis.

Linda Arntzenius: How has that resolved itself? Is it just not thought about any more?

Glen Bowersock: Well, eventually, it was. Nobody wanted to go to court for six months every day. It resolved itself by what you see now. I mean he was marginalized; he was taken out of natural science and given a program of his own called a program in interdisciplinary studies, and he has one or two members. That means he has bits of members; you look in the list and there's a fair number, but they're all three weeks, four weeks, six weeks. So basically he was given a sort of one man show to keep him out of the way. It was very, very humiliating for him.

On the other hand, he really didn't want to give up a good high-paying job, and so he engaged a lawyer and they fought back, and that was the crisis of the '90s, and we live with it today. People like Caroline Bynum, who are really wonderful in seeing the good in everybody, has actually run some joint seminars with him because she saw the good in Piet and thought he had something to contribute. And she reached out to him, and they did something together, and that was wonderful for him and, of course, showed what she was made of. She's a tremendous person with the members.

She – I don't like the word mentoring, but Caroline has an unusual talent for mentoring, and that's something that had never arisen here before. None of us felt any obligation to mentor anybody. I mean we were there

²⁹ Piet Hut (1952-), Member in the School of Natural Sciences, 1981-1984;), Professor in the School of Natural Sciences, 1985-2002; Professor in the Program in Interdisciplinary Studies, 2002- .

³⁰ John Norris Bahcall (1934-2005), Member in the School of Natural Sciences, 1969-1970; Professor, 1971-2005.

to help, read a paper, give advice, whatever, but the idea that you actually do more than that – but for Caroline it was –

Linda Arntzenius: So what does mentoring mean now –

Glen Bowersock: Well, it's a word, again, I think we tried not to use, but with people like Caroline and I think to some extent other people who were here, they really tried to be helpful to people in sorting out their career plans and their scholarly objectives; putting them in touch with people who might be helpful to them.

Linda Arntzenius: This could be related to the economy that we're in, too.

Glen Bowersock: It could be, yes. And it also has a lot to do with the fact we have – at least in my school – many, many more younger people than we used to, and these people need help – kind of academic parental help. When I came, most of the members were immensely distinguished senior scholars.

Linda Arntzenius: Why do you think there's been a change?

Glen Bowersock: I think the change is really on two grounds. One is that we can't afford to pay for these senior people, because if they're at Harvard earning \$200,000.00 a year, they're not going to come here for \$60,000.00.

Linda Arntzenius: Not even during their sabbatical?

Glen Bowersock: Well, they've got another half of their sabbatical, but \$60,000.00 is still not going to make up half. So many of them – and we actually had explicit statements that said, "You know I'm not going to take this much of a loss in order to come there." One or two of our trustees – Mrs. Delmas, who was very generous to us – always said, "I can't see why people wouldn't just be glad to be here!" And some people were; some people did come. But I think that contributed to the diminution in very senior, very eminent members.

Of course since professors are very well paid that never affected recruitment to the professorships, and people who didn't come here as professor it was usually not on compensation grounds. But the other is that there was a sense in the middle '80s that we should have more younger people to sort of have a mix of young people and older people. And we got Mellon money to support one or two younger people – at that stage it was for two-year grants, they were coming here for two years – and I always thought that was money well spent. People who were in the early stage of their career would actually have two solid years of nonstop research and could produce some important work, and their careers would take off.

I can think of several examples of that. But more and more younger people applied for regular memberships, not just the Mellon junior ones, and since fewer and fewer of the older people were interested in coming, there was a sort of tilt towards these younger ones. So now I would say

we have a rather large number of people, and these people are the ones who are coming up for tenure or looking for jobs or marking time. There has been a slight – well, more than a slight – a visible tendency toward putting in the category of post-doc in humanistic studies. Humanistic studies never had post-docs when I – I mean we went from a PhD to an assistant professorship.

In the sciences and mathematics it was quite normal to go off for a post-doc for some years; work in somebody's lab, or work with some famous mathematician. And the post-doc concept has not – we don't call it post-doc, but it's effectively that; people who have not yet got a job, or who are between jobs, or who are sort of in limbo – it's an increasingly large number – try to be here. And those people do need help, they do need mentoring; and I think the attitude of the generation I came with was that you just don't have anything to do with the members – they're left to their own – would be cruel to these younger people who are coming in now.

Linda Arntzenius: Aldo [Schiavone] described you as “the genius loci at the Institute.” What do you think of that?

Glen Bowersock: Well, he's not the first to have said that. I mean I don't think that's necessarily true now, but there was a period in which I think I was involved in an awful lot of things, and classics was important here. And since I am interested in lots more than classics and played a role in other fields like art history, going to modern art when Irving Lavin retired; I was very active in making sure we didn't get another Renaissance art historian. So genii loci, I mean you can have a number of genii loci, I mean the people who – but I did have my finger in quite a lot of pies, and from the late '80s I had been very active in the music program here.

And it was I who suggested to Phillip that we have an artist in residence; it was I who went to Bill Scheide and got the money to start it, with I think Taffy [Griffiths]. We sent Taffy with me because we knew Bill Scheide liked her. And so all these little things – because I cared about the environment that we live in and what the life was like, and I always felt music was something that would bind the schools together, since this has been a constant problem. The trustees are always saying, “Why don't the mathematicians and the scientists talk to the historians?” and so on. Well, I mean the reason is obvious in some sense – they don't have much in common. But music they do have in common.

The other thing they have in common sometimes is the language – if you have a French mathematician and a French historian you'll find that they get on like a house on fire, because they can speak French together and talk about France. And I think these are things that could be exploited to bring the community together.

Linda Arntzenius: That's something that's been talked about for so many years – creating community. Why does it matter? I mean why does it?

Glen Bowersock: Well, why does it matter – that’s a good question, actually. It does matter to people who come here for the year and feel lonely. It doesn’t matter to me. I have my own life, and I’ve always actually made a point all my life of having many friends who were not academics; who were engaged in theater and music and other things. I mean I’ve felt that you can’t be a good scholar if you think that’s all there is. But for people who come here for a year, don’t know anybody, they can feel – and nothing happens in the evening: There’s nowhere to go. There’s no life on the boulevard.

I think some sense of community is important, and that’s why it isn’t surprising that Caroline was again involved in setting up these after-hours conversations, which provided a couple of nights each week a chance for people to talk and hear what other people are doing in different fields. Again, it’s her outgoing instinct, which I greatly applaud, and her willingness to do the work. That’s, I think, where the nitty-gritty of it would put me off. So it does matter to the members – I don’t think it matters to the professors.

Linda Arntzenius: I wanted to – that brings me to the relationship between the town and the Institute – Princeton. Someone said to me in a previous interview that Princeton had benefitted enormously from the Institute being here, and they cited the time when – way back – well, first of all, Jews coming here. When Einstein was here, he hosted Marian Anderson and he was friends with Paul Robeson – things that had been frowned upon in the town, where there was a supposed ghetto in one area of the town. So I’m thinking in regards to race, and I wondered if this is something – not particularly race being the issue, but something that was important to your life here, ways in which the Institute had changed attitudes.

Glen Bowersock: I think what was said to you is correct, though much of this that you described happened before I came here. But I think that – I mean I have profited enormously from these émigré Jews who came to this country, and whom I met in Oxford, too, when I studied there in the ‘50s. And I mean I came from the Boston area, where the discrimination was against Catholics. It’s very interesting because there’s no doubt Jews were kept out of Harvard until quite late. But being a local boy in the Boston area I was much more conscious of discrimination against Catholics than Jews, because I was being taught by Jews.

I had no problem with Jews, but that was peculiar to me, I think. I think the Institute has been enormously valuable to Princeton, the town, and indeed the University. The University’s always getting credit for the professors who are here – it’s very hard to stop people from saying, “The Institute for Advanced Study at Princeton University.” So they get 27 extra professors without paying a penny. But yes, the Institute has a distinguished record in helping with refugees, of bringing Jews – I mean Panofsky, Einstein, and I know – I mean you can find this out, but there were close links between the institute and this group, the name of which I forget, in New York for helping –

- Linda Arntzenius: Now I was wondering if there were issues where the Institute was an example –a good example – during the latter 20-odd years; not going back, you know, to its early history.
- Glen Bowersock: Not going back to these early days. Well, I think the Institute has figured on the national-international scene very conspicuously, to its credit and to the town's credit, in the case of the Beautiful Mind of John Nash.³¹ Now there's a case where we provided a kind of perch for a totally deranged man, who was brought back from the dead, in a way.
- Linda Arntzenius: How did that come about?
- Glen Bowersock: Well, many of my colleagues in mathematics kept in touch with him, and he came here and was welcomed every day in this awful period. I used to see him here smoking like a chimney and walking around as if he was inside a glass box – he never knew who was around him. But he had, of course, been very distinguished – I mean famous. And I think that with the Sylvia Nasar³² book and the Russell Crowe movie, people sort of woke up to the fact that we had in fact helped this person to come back from the dead.
- Enrico Bombieri,³³ my colleague in mathematics, and Armand Borel,³⁴ now deceased, saw a lot of him in this period because they respected him so much. And since he was so famous – so I would say there's a case where we had a kind of luminosity that's not unlike the Einstein era.
- Linda Arntzenius: Tell me about Kirk Varnedoe.³⁵
- Glen Bowersock: Kirk – well, Kirk, I was very keen to bring Kirk [to the Institute], and as I said that was with the art history replacement for Irving [Lavin], because I thought just having another Renaissance – we had two in a row – we needed to do something different. I vigorously opposed the candidate that Irving wanted to replace him, and those days I had no say in my replacement, but he tried to. And then we agreed to look at Kirk, who was a truly remarkable person - immensely intelligent, immensely charismatic. Alas, God had decided otherwise, and he was afflicted with this terrible cancer, but for the time he was here – which was just a couple of years – he was an incredible colleague.

³¹ John Forbes Nash, Jr. (1928-2015), Member in the School of Mathematics, 1956-1957, 1961-1964.

³² Sylvia Nasar (1947-), Director's Visitor, 1995-1996, 2002-2003.

³³ Enrico Bombieri (1940-), Member in the School of Mathematics, 1974; Professor, 1977-2011; Emeritus Professor, 2011- .

³⁴ Armand Borel (1923-2003), Member in the School of Mathematics, 1952-1954; Professor, 1957-1993; Emeritus Professor, 1993-2003.

³⁵ Kirk Varnedoe (1946-2003), Professor in the School of Historical Studies, 2002-2003.

And he participated actively in all the decisions. He was wonderful with school meetings. And to within a week of his death, he was on the telephone giving his opinions. I mean this is the sort of person I think is and can be so helpful for the Institute; in a sense, that kind of dynamism and outreach Caroline has, too, and immense curiosity about everything. I mean Kirk did modern art, but he would talk to you happily about 18th century architecture. While he was voting he brought in members in Greek art. He was interested in everything, and to me, this is what the Institute is all about, is to reach out in all kinds of areas and don't just say, "I do this," or "I do that."

I've always felt that our appointments should have that kind of open-endedness; people who were not just the best person in the world on Greek inscriptions – or even the next-best person in the world – but people who cared about religion, who cared about China, who cared about music or whatever. And I think – at least in the area that I know best – we have moved in that direction. So Kirk was emblematic; he didn't stay very long, but he was emblematic of an important change. And even our first appointment in Chinese Studies, because while I was here we added Islam and we added China, and I'm very glad we did, because we needed to go into these areas.

We have people who are of extraordinary breadth. Patricia Crone,³⁶ Islam, has a deep interest in ancient philosophy and Greek culture and the Greek legacy to Islam, and she knows all about contemporary Islam. Nicola³⁷ is the same with China. He works in ancient China, he works on inscriptions on bamboo shoots and he works on the Manchu, and that's what we're all about. I presume things have happened like this in other schools. I remember I asked Phillip once, who had been my colleague at Harvard – he was a mathematics professor at Harvard when I was there.

And I knew he'd been offered a position at the Institute a couple years before I had the final offer. And I said, "Why didn't you go?" And he said, "Because I didn't like the mathematics they were doing." And that was interesting to me. I mean I don't understand it because I don't – and he said, "I don't like the kind of mathematics they were doing." And I said, "You mean they're doing really interesting mathematics now?" And he said, "Yes; that's why I'm back here." So in a sense, I think that must be a mathematical equivalent to what I'm talking about in historical studies, and I mean why people don't come here is an interesting subject.

I know Peter Goddard is very intrigued by this. There've been very, very few turn-downs, and in most cases it's either involved a spousal or a family issue. But in some cases it's involved something like Phillip saying

³⁶ Patricia Crone (1945-2015), Professor in the School of Historical Studies, 1997-2014; Emeritus Professor, 2014-2015.

³⁷ Nicola di Cosmo (1957-), Member in the School of Historical Studies, 1999; Professor, 2003- .

he didn't like the work that was being done here; in some cases it involves money. I had a colleague at Harvard – a great theoretical physicist, Steve Weinberg – and when I came here he congratulated me and said, "It's a wonderful place. They offered me a position there, but you know the salary is good enough for a summer salary, but it won't do for an annual salary." (Laughs)

Well, he likes money, and he had a lot of prizes, he's very famous, and eventually Harvard wouldn't give him what he wanted, so he went to Texas. Well, I don't know what you can do about that; I don't think you can do anything about that. You just can't be held up – particularly when the Institute is very generous anyway.

Linda Arntzenius: I'm going to get silly now. I want to ask you a couple of – well, perhaps this one's not so silly. Of all your honors, which pleases you most, and why?

Glen Bowersock: Oh dear! I don't know what to say. Well, I can tell you one that particularly pleases me for reasons you won't readily understand, and that is the honorary fellowship at Balliol since I owe Balliol a great deal. I was an undergraduate at Harvard, but I really feel I was made into a scholar at Balliol. And I did Greats – I did the second B.A. to do those two years of Greats then did my doctorate there, so that – I must say when they made me an honorary fellow that meant a lot to me. I would also say that the membership in the l'Institut de France, in the Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres, meant a great deal to me because it was connected with one of the two or three scholars that I'd most admired in my life: Louis Robert, who was a fantastic scholar of the ancient world – I learned a great deal from his voluminous writings, and then I got to know him in later years. I had the pleasure of bringing him to Harvard for two weeks when I was chair in my department in 1975, and he was one of the great figures in this French academy. So when I was made a member of that it meant a great deal because it put me close to this person whom I so much admired. And then as it turned out his widow gave all of his papers and squeezes, as we call them, writings of inscriptions, to the Academy and asked me to be in charge of it; so I'm the person who curates this collection now.

But I'm very grateful to anybody who's been kind enough to honor me. That's a hard question to answer, because all these –the Lincei in Italy means a lot – I mean Aldo mentioned something about my devotion to Italy, and so I was very, very moved when they elected me to that. But I'm just grateful to anybody that notices I'm there.

Linda Arntzenius: And tell me – another silly question – about your glasses; your signature glasses. Where do they come from?

Glen Bowersock: They're from the '60s.

Linda Arntzenius: You haven't had the same pair since the 1960s.

- Glen Bowersock: '66.
- Linda Arntzenius: Are they Italian? They're very robust.
- Glen Bowersock: No, I got them in Boston in '66, and curiously, I had my eyes examined a year or two ago and the prescription is the same.
- Linda Arntzenius: So you have not changed the frames, and you have not changed the lenses?
- Glen Bowersock: No – since 1966.
- Linda Arntzenius: Gosh – a whole new world might open up for you!
- Glen Bowersock: I did get another set of glasses with different frames with the same prescription, but I felt so uncomfortable wearing them that I went –
- Linda Arntzenius: Oh no, don't change them; they're fabulous!
- Glen Bowersock: That I went back and put these on, and they're so out of fashion that they've now come into fashion.
- Linda Arntzenius: Absolutely.
- Glen Bowersock: (Laughs) But they feel comfortable, and I'm nearsighted, and so I have to take my glasses off to read. And I remember the eye doctor telling me when I was a boy, he said, "As you get older, you will have a built-in pair of reading glasses," and that's exactly right. And to see you, I wear these, but if I were to read something I'll just take them off. And the funny thing is when I give public lectures now, where I like to have my glasses on because I'm a great believer in eye contact with the audience – I like to look out at everybody. But I also have to look down, and then to take these on and off all the time, so now I've reached the stage where I have the text printed in large print because I like to be able to see it while I'm wearing these glasses. (Laughs) But anyway, that's a silly answer to a silly question.
- Linda Arntzenius: Well, I want to ask you if there's a question that perhaps you expected me to ask you which I haven't asked.
- Glen Bowersock: No, I hadn't given any thought to what you might ask. (Laughs)
- Linda Arntzenius: All right. Well, I think we've come to the conclusion of our interview.
- Glen Bowersock: Okay, good.
- Linda Arntzenius: And I'm very grateful to you for spending time, and hopefully this will be useful to future historians.
- Glen Bowersock: I hope it will be useful to somebody when I won't know it.
- Linda Arntzenius: (Laughs) Thank you so much!

- Glen Bowersock: Thank you for being here! Well, as you can see, the Institute is very important to me. I mean I feel like George Kennan,³⁸ who always said it was the most important decision in his life to come here, and I feel the same.
- Linda Arntzenius: Has it changed you at all, do you think?
- Glen Bowersock: It's allowed me to grow. I wouldn't say it's changed me, but it's allowed me to grow much more widely.
- Linda Arntzenius: Because you do travel a lot.
- Glen Bowersock: Yes.
- Linda Arntzenius: And one wonders how – well, I guess as an academic at Harvard you probably did the same.
- Glen Bowersock: Yes, though it was more difficult because one had teaching obligations. But I think that it's allowed me to grow and develop all kinds of interests and write more widely, and I've certainly done more journalistic writing here than I did – though I started, I did my first piece with Bob Silvers at the New York Review when I was still at Harvard. But I've always believed you should write for the general public – I think –
- Linda Arntzenius: That's probably not an easy thing to do.
- Glen Bowersock: It's much more difficult than writing for your peers, writing for your colleagues, because you have to make yourself understood, whereas you can assume they know what you're talking about.
- Linda Arntzenius: So it's probably a very useful discipline.
- Glen Bowersock: I think it's terribly important, and many people simply can't do it. That's why I always admired the way you wrote –
- Linda Arntzenius: Oh, thank you. Let me stop this.
- [End of Audio]

³⁸ George F. Kennan (1904-2005), Member in the School of Historical Studies, 1950-1955; Professor, 1956-1974; Emeritus Professor, 1974-2005.