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**Oral History Project  
Interview Transcript**

**History Working Group:  
Ian Jauslin  
Interviewed by Linda Arntzenius  
July 6, 2018**

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*Linda Arntzenius:* I'll just say for the sake of the recorder that it is Friday, July 6, 2018, and I'm here at the Institute for Advanced Study with, uh, shall I call you Professor Ian Jauslin?<sup>1</sup>

*Ian Jauslin:* Doctor, I think would be more appropriate.

*Linda Arntzenius:* Doctor Ian Jauslin, yes, a Member in the School of Mathematics. We're here to talk about your year at the Institute and also your participation in the History Working Group. Before we get to the Institute, though, could you just give me a little bit of your bio, where you grew up, what your family did for a living, and how you came to be a mathematician?

*Ian Jauslin:* Yes, absolutely. I grew up in France, in a town called Dijon, which is about 300 kilometers southeast of Paris. It's in wine country. It's a lovely area – a beautiful town. My parents, neither of them are French. They got jobs there because they're both scientists. My father's a theoretical physicist and my mother's a mathematician. And, when they were going through post-docs, the usual thing, they were searching for jobs pretty much everywhere, and they wanted jobs in the same university.

*Linda Arntzenius:* That's always a challenge.

*Ian Jauslin:* It's a challenge.

*Linda Arntzenius:* Where were they from?

*Ian Jauslin:* My father is Swiss and grew up in Spain, and my mother is American.

*Linda Arntzenius:* Okay. So, you're a real multicultural person.

*Ian Jauslin:* Right. Yes. So, they looked for jobs in Switzerland, they looked for jobs in the US, they got post-docs in both these places. In the end, France was hiring. This was in the early-'90s. France was hiring, they had lots of jobs, and they found two jobs in the same university in Dijon, so it took them there. This was a fairly random event that, uh, brought me to France. And I grew up there, went through, um, you know, all of my school years, elementary school through university. Then I moved to Italy for my PhD, so I did my PhD in Rome.

*Linda Arntzenius:* When did you choose to become a mathematician? How did that happen?

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<sup>1</sup> Ian Jauslin, Member in the School of Mathematics, 2016-2018.

*Ian Jauslin:* Yeah, that was a rocky road. It took me a little while to decide that that's what I wanted to do for a living. I always loved math and I always really loved physics. I always loved history too. But I also knew that I was no good at history, so I knew that I couldn't go down that road. Math, when I was a kid in elementary school, my mother would teach me about certain, you know, simple calculus problems and I would have fun with them. I've always had fun with math. I've always really enjoyed it. And I knew that that's what I wanted to study.

So, when I had to go to university – in France in high school, you have to decide whether you want to go to scientific high school or literary high school or, there are other fields as well. I decided to go to scientific high school, which is actually the default. Most people end up doing that. I actually wanted to do the science. And then when it – when time came to decide what I wanted to do for university, I decided to study math and physics. At the time, though, my plan was to get a degree in math and physics and then go into something related to film for some reason or another.

*Linda Arntzenius:* Film.

*Ian Jauslin:* Yes, I – yes.

*Linda Arntzenius:* So, you're thinking *Star Wars*. [Laughs] You're thinking that kind of movie, science fiction, that sort of film?

*Ian Jauslin:* That's how it started out, so *Star Wars*, *Lord of the Rings*, that [was] the sort of cinema then. I had a transition at the end of my first year of university when I discovered the director Werner Herzog, who changed my life completely.

*Linda Arntzenius:* *Fitzcarraldo*.

*Ian Jauslin:* Oh, *Fitzcarraldo*. It's one of my favorite movies. It's really incredible and – and, uh, I think he's the first artist who really gave me this perspective that – that with art, you can do something that is more than what a *Star Wars* movie can do. And that really got me interested in that side of life. So you know, I was studying science, though, and I was putting my heart into it, and I just realized that this was really what I wanted to do, that the artistic side – I loved it, I still do, but it was more of a hobby on the side, something that I –

*Linda Arntzenius:* An appreciation, something you appreciated, yes.

*Ian Jauslin:* Exactly. That what I was really meant to do and what I really wanted to do in the end, uh, was more scientific. And I knew it would be physics. I knew that I wanted to study physics. And the thing that I loved the most about physics, about what I was learning in university was mathematical aspect of it. I loved the problems. I didn't really like the intuitive half – half-rigorous reasonings. I liked it when you could find a physical problem, start with the postulates in the beginning and then, you know, find a logical stream of thought and end up at a conclusion that follows from the premise. That really resonated with me.

*Linda Arntzenius:* Do you have any siblings?

*Ian Jauslin:* I do. I have an older brother and a younger sister.

*Linda Arntzenius:* And what do they do?

*Ian Jauslin:* My older brother is currently a consultant with McKinsey [& Company, Switzerland] in Geneva. He studied to be an engineer. He studied at an aeronautics engineering school in Toulouse in France, was an aeronautical engineer for a while and has recently moved to this new job. And my sister is working on a PhD in experimental biology. In Geneva as well.

*Linda Arntzenius:* So, you had a very intellectual academic kind of upbringing?

*Ian Jauslin:* Well, I think my parents gave us this, academic upbringing by example more than – than forcefully. I never felt like I was pushed into this in any [way]. I mean, I ended up doing mathematical physics, my mom's a mathematician, my dad's a physicist. It almost seems like someone decided to do this, but it really wasn't that way. They were very – very loose about – they never told us what it is that we should do. They always let us find our own way.

*Linda Arntzenius:* So what made you go to Italy to study for your PhD?

*Ian Jauslin:* That's – that's an interesting story too. It all goes through this man named Giovanni Gallavotti.<sup>2</sup> I remember one day I was visiting my parents, and I was talking about, um – I was studying in Paris at the time, and I was talking about physics and what I was learning, and some of the issues that I had with the – the way the material – well, the way I understood the material at the time. And my father told me about this man, Giovanni Gallavotti, who is a mathematical physicist from Rome that my father had met during one of his post-docs. My father did a post-doc in Rutgers, which –

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<sup>2</sup> Giovanni Gallavotti (1941- ), Visitor in the School of Mathematics, 1984; Member, 1985.

*Linda Arntzenius:* Oh. So he knew about the Institute.

*Ian Jauslin:* Uh, presumably knew about the Institute. No, he definitely knew about the Institute. I have other connections.

*Linda Arntzenius:* Okay. We'll get there.

*Ian Jauslin:* We'll get there. Um, so while he was in Rutgers, he met – well, maybe he had met him before, but he certainly interacted heavily with Giovanni, and he told me about his perspective on how to do physics. Giovanni is one of those mathematical physicists [who] is really a physicist at heart, 100 percent a physicist – but has a way of approaching the material that is closer to how a mathematician would do it, and that mixture was something that was very appealing to me, and he [my father] told me about this. He gave me all of his [Gallavotti's] books. And one day, he wrote me an e-mail and said that, Giovanni was giving a series of lectures in Paris, where I was studying, and he said I really should go. I have to admit I forgot – I missed the lecture. And I talked to him on the phone and I got the scolding of a lifetime. Fortunately he came back a couple weeks later and gave another series of lectures, and this time I knew that I –

*Linda Arntzenius:* You were early!

*Ian Jauslin:* I had – I was going to – and it was really – for me, it was – it was, um, a real transition to the – the way that Gallavotti approached the material was something I had never seen before.

*Linda Arntzenius:* Can you tell me, you know, very simply what his methodology is or –

*Ian Jauslin:* The thing that appealed to me is what I was saying earlier. It's this idea that you start with your premise and then you – you just work your way down to the end. You don't insert anything into the middle. And you know, this is the methodology of a mathematical physicist, at least in that sense of the word mathematical physics where, uh, it's real physics. So, the lecture that he was giving was on the KAM Theorem, which is a – it's called a theorem. It's a mathematical theorem. Uh, it has applications in physics that are extremely important, and he was talking about, you know, physical problems. And the way that he would go through the steps was, to me, understandable and clear and complete. All the arguments were there and you could – you know, you could follow it without –

*Linda Arntzenius:* It's like pure logic.

*Ian Jauslin:*

Right, exactly. And I just responded to this way of solving physical problems. And this – so this is not a very – this is not a rare methodology. It's just, at the time, I hadn't seen it before. He was the first person for whom it was clear to me that this was how he was doing it. And I was very, very impressed. There was a series of three or four lectures, and I went to all of them, and it was great, and I talked to him and we had nice conversations and I was very impressed. And, uh, must have been about six months later, I had to do a master's thesis, uh, and one of the rules for the master's thesis was that it had to be outside of France. They wanted us to go out and travel, which I think was a wonderful idea. And so I decided that I would go to Italy to work with this group. Giovanni was on sabbatical that year, so he couldn't take me, but he has a litany of students. He put me in contact with, uh, with a few of them, and I ended up working with, one of his ex-students, Alessandro Giuliani. And did a master's thesis with him.

Those were some – to this day – probably the happiest six months of my life. It was really fabulous. Rome is an incredible city. I remember moving to Rome from Paris. Paris has this structure where you have a center and then outside the city you have outskirts. And the center is richer, it's cleaner, it's more, you know, well-kept. Rome is not that way. Rome is dirty all over. So, when I got to Rome, I was a little lost. I was wondering why in the world I did this. And, uh, then the first day, I was a little worried that I had made the biggest mistake of my life.

The second day, I went to a seminar in the university and after the seminar, I decided to walk back to my apartment, get to know the city, and by walking back, I walked through the ancient center of the city where the Colosseum and the Roman Forum and the Capitoline Hill. And walking through these beautiful ruins, I just knew I was exactly where I was supposed to be. And I had a wonderful time in Rome. It was – I absolutely loved it. The science was wonderful. Alessandro Giuliani was just fabulous and a great teacher and, I made friends there. I didn't learn Italian in those six months, unfortunately, uh, but, you know, being in an academic setting, we spoke a lot of English, and so it was good.

*Linda Arntzenius:* What brought you to the Institute? Bring me up to date.

*Ian Jauslin:*

Okay. Let's see. We have to step up into the future a little bit. I did my PhD in Rome. Now what happened? I met – all right. So, my first contact with the US – with the US academic world was in 2014. Yes, I went to Rutgers for six weeks in the fall with Giovanni Gallavotti.

Giovanni had a joint appointment. He would spend the fall semester in Rutgers and the rest of the year in Rome. I went with Giovanni to Rutgers in 2014, and there I worked with him and I worked with Joel Lebowitz,<sup>3</sup> who is a professor there, who became one of my closest collaborators. I really responded well to the American academic world. It was very appealing to me.

*Linda Arntzenius:* What in particular?

*Ian Jauslin:* I'm not quite sure. I mean, the group in Rutgers is particular. They have more mathematical physicists than in, uh, I'll say normal institutions. They have quite a large group. And some of them are vocal, so when you go to lunch you have the time of your life. And I liked living in the US. I liked – there's this sense of freedom that comes from not having to worry about things closing at 9:00 PM.

Which I liked. And I don't know, I have a lot of family here too. My entire, um, the side of my family that is on my mother's side is – they're all – essentially all in New York now, a few out west. Uh, so I was very close to them, and that was very nice too. And I had a great time. Then later on in Rome, I met Elliott Lieb,<sup>4</sup> my other main collaborator here. He's a professor in Princeton. We started working together, and he invited me over to Princeton. So we were working on this project and we wanted to make some progress and so he invited me for a couple weeks. This must have been August of 2015, I think. And, um, I knew about the Institute, I'd heard about the Institute, uh, and not in mathematical physics. Tom Spencer<sup>5</sup> is a rather prominent figure, and so we knew about him and – and the fact that he was at the Institute. And of course, Princeton's also very big in mathematical physics.

And, uh, I actually stayed – I was housed at the Institute for those two weeks in August. And so I got a feel of what this was. They took me to the dining hall. It was August so it was closed, so we only had sandwiches, but I was still pretty impressed. And that was my first contact with the Institute. And, I decided there that I really wanted to come to Princeton and, this area was an area I really liked and the people around, so I've been working with Joel Lebowitz and Elliott Lieb. They're both right here. So, when I was

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<sup>3</sup> Joel Lebowitz (1930- ), Member in the School of Natural Sciences, 1980-1981; Member in the School of Mathematics, 2001-2002, 2006, 2013-2014.

<sup>4</sup> Elliott H. Lieb (1932- ), Member in the School of Mathematics, 1982, 1989; Visitor in the School of Natural Sciences, 2018-2019.

<sup>5</sup> Thomas Spencer (1946- ), Member in the School of Mathematics, 1984-1985; Professor, 1986-2017; Emeritus Professor, 2017- .



applying for post-docs at the end of my PhD, which was a few months later –uh, I severely underapplied. Severely. Uh, I applied to three different programs, and Princeton and a post-doc program in Rutgers, and that's it.

*Linda Arntzenius:* And the Institute. That was one of the three.

*Ian Jauslin:* Right, so I applied to the Institute, to the University and to, um, this Princeton Center of Theoretical Science, which is inside the university. I got lucky. That was a dumb thing to do [applying to just three places]. That was really a dumb thing to do. I got into the Institute. I remember the moment it happened. I didn't actually believe that it was truly until I saw my name on that office. I was convinced that they were going to realize they made a mistake. I mean, The Institute. I didn't – when I applied, I didn't really believe that this was in the cards.

*Linda Arntzenius:* Well, you must have got very good references –

*Ian Jauslin:* I guess – I don't know. It was definitely the best of the options.

*Linda Arntzenius:* So, it was a no-brainer for you to come here.

*Ian Jauslin:* Absolutely. No question.

*Linda Arntzenius:* Did you find anything that surprised you when you got here?

*Ian Jauslin:* Yes.

*Linda Arntzenius:* Oh, do tell. *[Laughs]*

*Ian Jauslin:* I didn't know how one lived at the Institute before coming here. I thought it was, you know, a research institution like any other. I didn't expect it to be so easy to do everything, I mean, the housing is easy. There was this one thing. I don't know why it surprised me because it's a small thing, but it surprised me. You come into the house, you open the door, and there's a basket with food in there. It's such a small gesture, sure, but it's just very telling. And that's how it is at the Institute. You have food baskets. Everything is taken care of. I didn't expect this. I didn't know I would have my own office either. That was a nice surprise.

*Linda Arntzenius:* So of the other research institutes you mentioned, can you specify which ones you had experience of?

*Ian Jauslin:* Well, not that much. By then I had – so I did my PhD in Rome, had been to Rutgers for those six weeks. I'd spent six months in Zurich

between Rome and here. I got my PhD in January and I was starting here in September. I could have taken eight months off, gone to the Bahamas or something [laughs] but that didn't work out, so I was in Zurich for that period.

*Linda Arntzenius:* Were you daunted at all?

*Ian Jauslin:* Not really. Not really. Um, I mean, people here are so – they're not daunting. You get here, the first thing you hear from the director is you're here to have a good time, and if you have a good time, you'll produce good science. Well, okay then.

*Linda Arntzenius:* That's good. Presumably you had to specify an area or some subject of study. Did you follow through on that? I know there's no obligation for you, but have you or did you get –

*Ian Jauslin:* Don't remember what I said I would do. No – when I came here, there was one project that I was working on that I really wanted to – I wanted to finish this project, and that I did do, yes. I don't remember if I talked about it. Because I think – yes, when I applied, I was not doing that.

*Linda Arntzenius:* Has there been any member of the faculty – any individual member of the faculty who has been helpful to you?

*Ian Jauslin:* Yes. *[said with gusto]* Well, of course Tom Spencer was, uh, he's my faculty contact. He's the member of the faculty who's really in my field and we've interacted quite a bit, and he's great – I mean, he understands. There are a number of subfields in mathematical physics that he just knows through and through, and he was extremely helpful. He knows these, but he's also eager to explain, and explain things well and he – you know, we do things on the blackboard together and – that's the way –

*Linda Arntzenius:* Here in Simonyi Hall?

*Ian Jauslin:* In Simonyi Hall, he has his office downstairs. And so he was extremely helpful. The other members of the faculty were also – perhaps less so on a professional level, but, uh, I've had great times with Helmut Hofer,<sup>6</sup> who's a really a great guy, very welcoming and interesting and fun and – and, you know, I've had interactions with, uh, with Avi Wigderson<sup>7</sup> also.

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<sup>6</sup> Helmut Hofer (1956- ), Member in the School of Mathematics, 1987-1988, 2001, 2005; Professor, 2009- .

<sup>7</sup> Avi Wigderson (1956- ), Member in the School of Mathematics, 1995-1996, 1997; Visitor, 1998; Faculty, 1999- .

*Linda Arntzenius:* Tell me about the History Working Group. And the Town Hall meetings. How were those two things related?

*Ian Jauslin:* The History Working Group and the Town Hall meetings?

*Linda Arntzenius:* Yes.

*Ian Jauslin:* Yes. There were two Town Hall meetings that took place. This was shortly after Trump's inauguration – when Trump announced the first travel ban, which since then has been struck down and replaced by other ones. So, when those happened, uh, we were very concerned.

*Linda Arntzenius:* When you say “we” are you talking about yourself and other Members?

*Ian Jauslin:* Yes. That's right. I don't know exactly how the Town Hall meeting came into being, but it seems like the [IAS] administration picked up on this concern.

*Linda Arntzenius:* So, you were talking about it amongst yourselves?

*Ian Jauslin:* Yes.

*Linda Arntzenius:* What was the concern?

*Ian Jauslin:* Uh, well, as far as I'm concerned, this was the worst that I feared Trump was going to do, uh, restrictions on immigration, uh, from countries in which the people need to immigrate. I think it's – that is an extremely violent act that, uh, at the time – to me – was the epitome of the worst thing that a nationalistic government could do.

*Linda Arntzenius:* Were – I'm trying to capture what the conversations might have been among the Members – was the fear for their own selves or was it fear or concern for others in general?

*Ian Jauslin:* Well, in the case of the travel ban, uh, I have not met anyone who was personally concerned. Uh, last year there was, in the School of Math, we had one Iranian scholar, but he was a dual citizen with Canada, and he wasn't traveling on the day where everything was weird. Because on that day, it wasn't clear whether having dual citizenship would get you out of it. It's true that his parents couldn't come and visit, but it was mostly – you know, it was – so there was also concern that this was going to make it more difficult to get scholars from these areas of the world, some of which are very active in science and the humanities, and/or the humanities. So there was that, but – so at least my point of view and which I may

have projected onto other people was more that this is – that this should not be happening, that the [Trump] administration should not, from a human decency perspective, it should not have the right to do this to these people who really need help.

*Linda Arntzenius:* How did you feel about Robert Dijkgraaf's<sup>8</sup> letter that he wrote in response?

*Ian Jauslin:* I thought it was very good that there was a letter. At that point, it – I think it doesn't matter that much what is in the letter as long as the letter exists. I read the letter when it came out. I don't remember what it said, so I assumed it was fine. But the fact that the letter existed, was [a good thing]. I mean, it's hard to say. This is, you know, that individual letter or even all the letters that were written by academics don't seem to have really done much as far as the travel ban is concerned, so it's hard to say whether it was really a necessary thing to do because it's not clear what it accomplished. But I still think that it was good for us.

*Linda Arntzenius:* Meaning the Members?

*Ian Jauslin:* For the Members and the academic community at large to, you know, feel like we have a voice; [that] we have a say; that we're gonna say it anyways, even if they're not listening. And I think it was good that the [Institute] administration took a position on this issue in such a clear-cut way.

*Linda Arntzenius:* Given what you now know about the history of the Institute, do you think that was an unprecedented move on the part of the director?

*Ian Jauslin:* Mm. Good question. What I do know is that – so if you look at what's going on in the '30s, in the very early days of the Institute when they were taking in these refugee scholars, Flexner,<sup>9</sup> who was the director at the time, he was not taking these people in out of political motivations or moral considerations. That was not what he was thinking about. In fact, his moral compass or his – maybe his strategic compass was – was going more the other way – he was worried that if they're taking in so many of these foreign scholars, then they might get in trouble with the young Americans who, you know, this is the 1930s, it's after the 1929 crisis, it's during the Great Depression, there are very few jobs, you didn't want the market to be flooded by foreigners. So, he was certainly not doing this with a political mindset, thinking that this was a message that

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<sup>8</sup> Robbert Dijkgraaf (1960- ), Member in the School of Natural Sciences, 1991-1992; Visitor, 2002; IAS Director and Leon Levy Professor, 2012- .

<sup>9</sup> Abraham Flexner (1866-1959), IAS Director, 1930-1939.

we want to send out to the world. Now, I don't know what the director's position was during McCarthyism and whether he took a stand or not. That I do not know. I know that Einstein<sup>10</sup> was very vocal about it, but I don't know about the director.

*Linda Arntzenius:* Tell me how you got involved with the History Working Group. That would be interesting to know.

*Ian Jauslin:* The History Working Group formed itself after the second Town Hall meeting. The members of the History Working Group at the time, I believe, unless – so if none dropped out before I showed up – would have been Thomas Dodman,<sup>11</sup> Fadi Bardawil,<sup>12</sup> Peter Redfield,<sup>13</sup> Klaus Oschema,<sup>14</sup> and Pascal Marichalar.<sup>15</sup> These are, all of them, historians or social scientists, and, uh, they're very good. We met with them yesterday. I was reminded of how good they are and so, you know, they have a message they want to say and they go into it. They were looking at projects that they wanted to study. The issue that they had was that they were all from the humanities. They didn't have any scientists in their ranks, and they wanted to talk about a mathematician named Emmy Noether,<sup>16</sup> who's a fairly well-known figure. She's quite exceptional. She was thrown out of Gottingen, so she was a brilliant mathematician by all counts. [David] Hilbert said so himself, so there must be something to it. She had a position, a lecturing position in Gottingen and was fired on account of her being Jewish and moved to the US, and she was, you know, a prominent woman mathematician who was thrown out of Germany and taken in in the US to a certain extent.

And they wanted to talk about her. The problem is they didn't know why she was famous. Uh, and I was having dinner at Pascal and Céline's house. At the time, I was playing music with, Céline Bessière,<sup>17</sup> who is now in the History Working Group.

*Linda Arntzenius:* And that's Marichalar's –

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<sup>10</sup> Albert Einstein (1879-1955), Professor in the Schools of Mathematics and Natural Sciences, 1933-1946; Emeritus Professor, 1946-1955.

<sup>11</sup> Thomas Dodman, Member in the School of Historical Studies, 2016-2017; Visitor, 2018.

<sup>12</sup> Fadi A. Bardawil, Member in the School of Social Science, 2016-2017; Visitor, 2018.

<sup>13</sup> Peter Redfield, Member in the School of Social Science, 2016-2017; Visitor, 2018.

<sup>14</sup> Klaus Oschema, Member in the School of Historical Studies, 2016-2017.

<sup>15</sup> Pascal Marichalar, Visitor in the School of Social Science, 2016-2017.

<sup>16</sup> Amalie (Emmy) Noether (1882-1935), Visitor in the School of Mathematics, 1933-1935.

<sup>17</sup> Céline Bessière, Member in the School of Social Science, 2016-2017; Visitor, 2018.

*Ian Jauslin:* And she's Marichalar's partner. And I was having dinner at their house, and we were talking about this, and Pascal was complaining that they didn't have anyone to understand, the math or the physical significance of Noether's work. And somehow – I don't remember if I suggested or if he suggested it – someone suggested that I could do it and that's how I joined. And, um, they were very welcoming. They took me in and I – you know –

*Linda Arntzenius:* Noether seems right up your street. Didn't she sort of bridge mathematics and physics?

*Ian Jauslin:* Yes. Absolutely. Absolutely. I didn't actually know before researching this how influential she was in pure math. To me, Noether was the Noether theorem, which is a seminal result in physics, in classical physics and quantum physics and particle physics – it's an extremely important – it's incredible how important that result was. I had learned about it in classical mechanics about motion of particles. It's extremely important for particle physics for determining what it means to have a symmetry and what happens when you have a symmetry. It was originally developed for general relativity. It was within this debate between, on one side, the Gottingen crowd, Hilbert and [Felix] Klein, and they were debating with Einstein on whether the theory made physical sense. And there was this one sticking point about energy, about what energy means and the theory, and Noether bridged that gap there, so it's just a very important result.

*Linda Arntzenius:* So did you actually – did you learn something that you could use in your own research, would you say?

*Ian Jauslin:* Well, there's time.

*Linda Arntzenius:* [Laughs] Good. All right. Peter Goddard,<sup>18</sup> I understand he assisted in the History Working Group.

*Ian Jauslin:* Yes, very much so.

*Linda Arntzenius:* Did he offer any particular guidelines or suggestions?

*Ian Jauslin:* Oh yes, absolutely. He never pushed anything on us, but he was very involved, he was extremely helpful. He read every draft of the articles that we wrote. He gave extremely good suggestions and he was – you know – he was always a partner. We went to talk to him

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<sup>18</sup> 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- .

periodically. I'm constantly amazed by him. He knows so much about this institution and the historical context. He was a fabulous resource. Always eager to help.

*Linda Arntzenius:* Yes. Now, the Group produced a book. *A Refuge for Scholars: Present Challenges in Historical Perspective*. And an exhibition. Why did you feel it was important to take the time? It must have cost you some time to do this. Even though Noether is in your field, still it was a sort of departure from you functioning as a Member on your own research. Why did you feel it was important to participate with this group?

*Ian Jauslin:* Well, there were several things. First – I mean, it wasn't that much time. It was not, you know – this was not a significant effort on my part. I didn't have to sacrifice anything. Uh, but several things. I really like the people in the history group. These were all people that I had known – maybe not all of them, but a number of them were people that I knew beforehand on some level or another and people that I really enjoyed talking to. So I liked being a part of this group and learning from them. I liked the subject too. The subject of immigration is something that I feel rather strongly about. I have several nationalities. I've never had to apply for a visa in my life, and I think that that's how it should be.

*Linda Arntzenius:* You are American and you're French.

*Ian Jauslin:* I'm American and French and Swiss. And I guess it's also part of how I was raised, but I feel very strongly against these controls on immigration, and I thought that, we can't really do anything about it, but we can try. I mean, we can do something.

*Linda Arntzenius:* And, of course, this book brings to attention the Institute's history in terms of immigration, but it also draws parallels, between then and now, the now being post-Trump's immigration policy. Um, how far would you push that – that, uh, comparison?

*Ian Jauslin:* I wouldn't. I would limit the comparison mostly. I think one of the important points that we tried to make in these articles is that, immigration has positive effects. One of the main points in the long article is that, science in America was built off of immigration, and this is not – this is not a unique event. This has happened. The only reason Switzerland has any money is because of immigration. There's – there's no – so, uh, the context at the time, I mean, it was a long time ago. Things were very different. As much as we all have issues with the Trump administration, they're not Nazis.

*Linda Arntzenius:* Right. A lot of resources went into the Institute book, and, um, what did you feel when it came out and when the exhibition went up? How were you feeling about that?

*Ian Jauslin:* I was excited I had something to show my mother.

*Linda Arntzenius:* Did she come? Did she actually come?

*Ian Jauslin:* Yes, she did. She saw the exhibit.

*Linda Arntzenius:* Excellent.

*Ian Jauslin:* Yes. I was very happy that these things were getting out there. So one thing that I think I should mention – the work that's in this book is mostly due to the other members of the History Working Group. I participated, I wrote a little bit in it, but it's really their stuff; they did such a wonderful job. I was very glad that this was getting out there. And it did go out there. We were talking about it yesterday. It was published in the [Institute] newsletter, we had the booklet, the exhibit, they were published online. We got the three articles also published in the notices of the American Mathematical Society, which I think was great. I'm very happy that the AMS picked up on it, that they were enthusiastic about this. And I've had people who actually read those articles in the notices of the AMS, which I think is great. We were talking with Fadi [Bardawil] yesterday that it was picked up on some online blogs and there's some local newspapers that talked about it. I was very happy that this – yes, the Town Topics had a little piece about the exhibit.

*Linda Arntzenius:* So that was satisfying to you.

*Ian Jauslin:* Yes.

*Linda Arntzenius:* Good. And was that the consensus of the group?

*Ian Jauslin:* Yes, I think so – I don't know, maybe – yes, this came up in the meeting yesterday and we were talking about how – I guess what was being said is how important it was that things came out, they went out of the academic world, they reached out to people who don't live in the bubble.

*Linda Arntzenius:* I read this myself, and I think it's very readable. It's not technical in any respect. It's excellent. So yes, not surprised that it was picked up. It was great.

*Ian Jauslin:* The other five scholars involved in this are top notch.



*Linda Arntzenius:* You had a meeting with them yesterday?

*Ian Jauslin:* Yes. The five members of the History Working Group, uh, apart from myself, who had left this year came back for this month of July.

*Linda Arntzenius:* Did you meet with a new batch of History Working Group?

*Ian Jauslin:* Both. So, we have the History Working Group of last year, and this year we had a History Working Group as well, and a lot of them unfortunately couldn't show up because it's July. A lot of them are gone, but we had a few people and we made contact, and we're all eager to work together and there are a number of new projects.

*Linda Arntzenius:* You have a strategic plan for the coming year?

*Ian Jauslin:* For the year, no. I mean, I won't be here anymore next year, so –

*Linda Arntzenius:* But I guess that's what they're working on. Were you sort of tossing around ideas yesterday?

*Ian Jauslin:* Yes, so we plan on doing something, a positive number of things in July. The best thing that could come out – so there –we were throwing around projects. There seemed to be three projects there that are coming up. We don't know whether we'll be able to finish them by the end of July. The nice thing at least would be to get all the materials we need to get them out there by the end of July.

*Linda Arntzenius:* Do you anticipate a booklet or do you anticipate another exhibit–

*Ian Jauslin:* So far, things are open. The [IAS] administration has been very, very generous with us. They offered another exhibit if the material that we find lends itself to it. Articles in the newsletter presumably. They gave us the impression that they're very willing to support whatever comes out of this.

*Linda Arntzenius:* Excellent. And do you – I wonder if there will be any more Town Hall meetings. Who knows. Who knows what will happen tomorrow?

*Ian Jauslin:* I heard that the last Town Hall meeting before this one was about Crossroads extending its opening time.

*Linda Arntzenius:* Ah yes. All right. *[Laughs]* That's quite a departure. But still it's very important.

*Ian Jauslin:* Yes. It's true that the crisis atmosphere that existed right after Trump's inauguration is no longer very active, which makes sense. We've gotten used to it and he's done things that, uh, you know, there's so many things.

*Linda Arntzenius:* Wasn't there a fall event? Last fall there was an event. Joan Scott? Perhaps that was the second Town Hall meeting I'm thinking of.

*Ian Jauslin:* Yes, I don't remember. There may have been. Maybe I wasn't here.

*Linda Arntzenius:* I wonder if I could go back to the Institute and your year here as a Member. What would you say was the single most important aspect of the Institute for you?

*Ian Jauslin:* All right, yes. Well, I think – okay. The aspect of the Institute that is most unique to the Institute and, uh, I haven't seen that many institutions, but I do think that it's fairly unique is how easy it is to go to all the schools and have fun with all of them.

*Linda Arntzenius:* Is the dining hall a strategic part of that?

*Ian Jauslin:* It should be. It was not for me. That's not how I – the way that I infiltrated the other schools was by going to their seminars. The dining hall is, uh, it's surprising. We're all there, we're all together, and somehow there's very little mixing. It did happen a – I sat at the historians table a couple times. That's how I met Klaus [Oschema], who was one of the Members of the History Working Group. This was before the History Working Group happened. I decided I was gonna sit down at the history table, and I sat down next to this guy who seemed like a nice guy, asked him what he did, and he said that he was a medieval scholar, he studied medieval Burgundy, and I grew up in Burgundy. I was very much into medieval Burgundy, and so we started talking about medieval Burgundy and had a lovely time.

*Linda Arntzenius:* I find that extraordinary how the Institute seems to – things like that happen here, and there's always some point of connection between scholars. It's really remarkable. I was in France last summer in a beautiful place just north of the Auvergne and sat down to breakfast with some people. I mentioned that I was living in Princeton, and immediately someone at the table had a nephew who had been at the Institute, another had someone who had been at the Center of Theological Inquiry, which is right next to the Seminary. It was extraordinary. So there's always connections to be made, and I think that happens in the dining hall too.

*Ian Jauslin:* Yes.

*Linda Arntzenius:* Perhaps it's a little too early for you to answer my next question, but I wanted to ask you about the impact that the Institute might have had on your work, on your research.

*Ian Jauslin:* Well, yes, it's too early to say. But let's see.

*Linda Arntzenius:* Where are you going from here?

*Ian Jauslin:* Princeton University. I worked on mainly two projects last year. I really liked them. I hope that will have an effect on the rest of my career.

*Linda Arntzenius:* [Laughs] Sounds good.

*Ian Jauslin:* The atmosphere that's created here also teaches you how to work.

*Linda Arntzenius:* You mean a certain discipline or –

*Ian Jauslin:* Or lack thereof. Which is important. When I was doing my PhD, the first year of my PhD, I was in the office all the time. *All the time.* And I realized during the second year of my PhD that that's not necessarily the most productive way of going about your business. You sometimes get stuck – you fall down the wrong rabbit hole – and taking a little distance is good. That's something that I had to learn back then and that's something that I've perfected here.

*Linda Arntzenius:* Do you walk in the Institute Woods?

*Ian Jauslin:* I do. I do. I mean, so woods are nice. They're perfectly fine. You walk down the woods, and you end up on the Princeton battlefield. Now, the Princeton battlefield, there's a little house, the Thomas Clark house, it's a museum. It's always closed, but sometimes it's open, and it's just this charming little place. You learn about the Battle of Princeton –which, uh, may have been important to the developments of the [Revolutionary] War and nowadays, you know, it's a battle, [reenactors] shooting at each other for fun. But the guy there, the curator is part of the historical society of the battlefield, he knows everything about that house, he knows everything about the battle. It's heartwarming to see this guy who is so passionate about it. So you have that little surprise. And you take another walk through the woods, you run into a Quaker meeting house. The first time I went there, they were having a service. I unfortunately didn't go. I thought it would be impolite given that I'm no Quaker. This area is full of these little surprises. Now, at this period of the year, you walk out at sunset and you have the spectacle of your life. The

fireflies these days are incredible. I took a bike ride in the evening last week. It was one of the most beautiful things I've done.

*Linda Arntzenius:* Magical.

*Ian Jauslin:* Yes. That really helps center you. Oh, and the music. I didn't mention the music. We have a musical exchange program, which, at the beginning, was how I formed my web of contacts.

*Linda Arntzenius:* So "we," you mean the Institute.

*Ian Jauslin:* The Institute.

*Linda Arntzenius:* Okay, and this is something that Members learn about if you're a musician, you automatically learn about the musical exchange program.

*Ian Jauslin:* There's an e-mail at the beginning of the year. I was talking about this with a friend. There's a little mystery about this. So, there's an e-mail at the beginning of the year, and there are flyers in the dining hall. As soon as I heard about this, I went. I formed a group last year. This year, we kept on playing. The people that I'm playing with now, uh, came on later, and I don't know if they missed the e-mail, I don't know if they didn't see any of the flyers – I don't know why – I don't know how they didn't know about this. So one of them actually actively sought out Linda Cooper, and Linda said that there's this musicians exchange program, and she put us in contact with him. And the other one that I play with on a regular basis, I accosted him at lunch and recruited him.

*Linda Arntzenius:* What's your instrument?

*Ian Jauslin:* I play guitar.

*Linda Arntzenius:* Oh, very good. So what kind of music do you play? Classical music? Folk music?

*Ian Jauslin:* Here at the Institute or in general? Here we do mostly improv, so it's whatever happens. It depends very much on who shows up. The core group has fluctuated a lot. Right now we're more on a rock vibe. We have a drummer and two guitarists, and we improvise on that. Last year was more of a jazz thing. We've played classical music as well. Earlier this year, Wilhelm Schlag<sup>19</sup> was here. He's a fabulous violinist. We played the Paganini duets. Niccolo Paganini was a violinist, a very well-known violinist, and

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<sup>19</sup> Wilhelm Schlag, Member in the School of Mathematics, 1996-1997, 2001; Visiting Professor, 2017-2018.

you say the name Paganini, everyone imagines very difficult music. He was also a guitar player. He was a really good violinist. He was an okay guitar player. So the music he wrote for guitar is really easy. And so you can say "I play Paganini" and people are impressed.

*Linda Arntzenius:* [Laughs] So what do you tell people who ask you about the Institute? How do you describe it to them?

*Ian Jauslin:* Do I wanna be facetious or not? Depends on who I'm talking to. No. It's heaven. I can't imagine a better place to work.

*Linda Arntzenius:* The original founders thought that it was necessary for it to be in a kind of bucolic setting. Do you think that still applies today? You know, sort of removed from the hustle and bustle.

*Ian Jauslin:* Well, I think it's better. You know, I don't know about *necessary*, but I very much appreciate that part of it. I moved from Rome and Zurich. This place is quiet. One of the things – okay, this is a dumb thing, but still one of the things that I love about living here is just the fact that I have a car and I can do whatever I want. I'm not relying on the tram's not running after 2:00 AM or something like that.

*Linda Arntzenius:* Yeah. So you're member now of AMIAS,<sup>20</sup> right.

*Ian Jauslin:* Aren't we all?

*Linda Arntzenius:* I think so. Automatically. Have you gone to a lot of their events?

*Ian Jauslin:* Um, let's see, what did I do? We had a meeting last year related to the History Working Group. We had another meeting this year. Played poker with an AMIAS board member.

*Linda Arntzenius:* Who do you think you'll keep in touch with once you – once you're gone? You'll still be in Princeton, of course, won't you?

*Ian Jauslin:* Yes.

*Linda Arntzenius:* What's your position at PU?

*Ian Jauslin:* It's a post-doc that's funded by the NSF, the National Science Foundation.

*Linda Arntzenius:* Is it three years?

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<sup>20</sup> The Association of Members of the Institute for Advanced Study (AMIAS) counts all accepted, current, and former IAS scholars among its membership.

*Ian Jauslin:* Three years.

*Linda Arntzenius:* Excellent. Congratulations.

*Ian Jauslin:* I will come back for the After Hours Conversations.

*Linda Arntzenius:* Ah, very good.

*Ian Jauslin:* Definitely.

*Linda Arntzenius:* Now, is there a question that, before we sat down to talk, you expected me to ask you that perhaps I haven't asked?

*Ian Jauslin:* I did not think about – I like to be surprised.

*Linda Arntzenius:* You like to be fresh. All right. Thank you so much for giving me your time.

*Ian Jauslin:* Well, thank you so much for taking the time.

*[End of Audio]*