

THE HOLOCAUST IN HUNGARY – A CHILD’S PERSPECTIVE

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I was born in 1938 – just in time for the Second World War. If I live to an old age, I may be among the last of the Jewish survivors of the holocaust. But a succession of medical problems in my mid-60s has reminded me of my mortality. So, in 2006 while on sabbatical from my job as Director of the Law Library on the Davis campus of the University of California, I decided to write this essay about the first seven years of my life and my understanding of the history of that time.

I must confess at the outset that I am not entirely comfortable writing as a holocaust survivor. For one thing, my story is not representative. I had a number of unusual lucky breaks. Each time my life was in danger, one of those breaks came along and saved me. I was never deported to one of the Nazi concentration camps.

For another thing, I was very young – so young that there is not much I can write based on my own recollections. I do have some memories – including some rather vivid ones – but for the most part, what I think I know of those times is based on what I learned from my elders – including my mother who also survived – and what I learned from the literature.

And I make no claim to having read very widely. I have read only things that happened to come to my notice. I have done no systematic research.

But one thing I have read is the work that I believe is the definitive study of the Hungarian Jewish holocaust – a work by Randolph Braham titled *The Politics of Genocide*, subtitled *The Holocaust in Hungary* – two hefty volumes published by Columbia University Press in 1981 (with an updated edition in 1994 and a one-volume condensed edition in 2000).

When *The Politics of Genocide* was written and published, Braham was on the faculty of The City University of New York. He was still in that position when I once spoke with him by phone. That was in the early 1990s.

It is an embarrassment to scholars in Hungary that the definitive work on the Hungarian holocaust was done in the United States. Imre Kertész, recipient of the Nobel Prize in literature in 2002 – also a Hungarian Jewish holocaust survivor – has been quoted as saying that Hungarians never came to terms with their role in the holocaust. And the fact that the major work of scholarship on the subject was done outside of Hungary may be an indication that Kertész is right.

But in Braham's work, Hungarians do not come off all that badly. There were plenty of horrors, plenty of black marks. But there were also some remarkable acts of resistance by Christian Hungarians and by the Hungarian government itself as long as that government had a degree of independence giving it some flexibility, some room to maneuver.

Before I get into all that, I should reveal that, even though I am writing about Hungary, I was not born there. I was born across Hungary's northern border in the small town of Poltár in what is now Slovakia. It was Czechoslovakia in May of 1938 when I was born. My timing was terrible. I was less than three months old when the Munich Pact was signed making Czechoslovakia the first victim of German expansionism (not counting the *anschluss* with Austria which was largely voluntary).

Although Britain's Prime Minister Chamberlain has become history's most notorious wimp for that act of appeasement, I cannot blame him for Munich. Had the Pact not been agreed to, the war simply would have started a year earlier, perhaps to Germany's long-term advantage. As it was, Czechoslovaks knew they could not resist Germany without help, so Germany took over without having to fire a shot.

Germany carved up Czechoslovakia into four pieces. The westernmost slice, the Sudetenland, occupied largely by ethnic Germans, was annexed to Germany; the Czech portion was placed under German administration as a "protectorate;" the Slovak portion was humored by being declared an independent nation (but, of course, with German puppets in charge); and a fourth slice, occupied largely by ethnic Hungarians, was carved off and given to Hungary to attract Hungary into an alliance.

Our town, Poltár, was not in the slice given to Hungary. That is not how we got to Hungary. We remained in Slovakia where Germany's puppet governors were anxious to show how grateful they were for "independence," and one way they had of exhibiting their gratitude (while serving their own predilections as well) was to follow Germany's example in persecuting Jews.

For us, the persecutions began with my father being taken away with other Jewish men for forced labor. But at this point, the labor camps were just that – labor camps. They had not yet decided to kill us all. In fact, the labor camps were lax enough that my father managed to escape. He made it all the way home where he picked up my mother and me, and the three of us headed south across the border into Hungary. (My father's mother, with whom we were living, stayed behind and eventually died in Auschwitz.)

Of course, we were not alone. Many Jews from the former Czechoslovakia were seeking refuge in Hungary, and after September 1, 1939 – Germany’s invasion of Poland and the start of World War II – so were many Polish Jews.

Whenever Hungarians apprehended these undocumented aliens, they were returned to their homelands into the hands of their German overlords. This was one black mark on Hungary.

But Hungary was not alone. Other nations – including the U.S. – were denying asylum to Jewish refugees. And being next door to the action, had Hungary opened its borders, it would have been overwhelmed. Hungary would also have angered the Germans – which did not seem like a good idea.

At the time, Hungary was playing a delicate diplomatic game. Hungarians have a reputation as clever diplomats. As a small nation wedged between a sea of Slavs on one side and sea of Germanic peoples on the other, Hungarians have had to rely on their wits to preserve their unique culture and their unique language. That is why there is the old joke that a Hungarian can go in a revolving door behind you and come out ahead of you.

Hungarians were clever enough to look at a map of Europe and figure out that after Czechoslovakia and Poland, Hungary was next. German domination was inevitable. In one of the most moving acts of resistance in all of Europe, Hungary’s Prime Minister, Pál Teleki, committed suicide rather than cooperate with the Germans. But his successors accepted Germany’s overtures to join in an alliance. In return, Hungary got Germany to agree to two considerations.

First, like Germany, Hungary was aggrieved by the terms imposed by the victors of the First World War. As Austria-Hungary was carved up in 1919, large pieces of territory occupied by ethnic Hungarians were awarded to Romania and to the new nations of Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia. As German allies, Hungary asked for – and got – these territories when Germany took control of the entire region. Historical atlases show a swollen Hungary between 1941 and 1945 when, of course, Hungary had to give these territories back.

The second consideration was that Germany did not occupy Hungary. German troops passed through Hungary on their way to Yugoslavia, Greece, and other points south, but they did not stay. This allowed Hungary a certain amount of independence.

In my opinion, it is to the eternal credit of Hungary that it used its independence to protect its Jews. Time after time, Germany pressured Hungary to round up and deport its Jews – as was being done in German-occupied parts of Europe and even in unoccupied Vichy France – but each time Hungary managed to resist the pressure. Only Jewish refugees from other nations were handed over to the Germans.

My parents and I avoided being returned to Slovakia because of our first lucky break – the fact that my mother was Hungarian. She was not merely a member of the Hungarian minority in Slovakia, but a Hungarian from Hungary proper. She was visiting the Czechoslovak branch of her family when she and my father met (they were cousins). Somehow they overcame the language barrier well enough to court and get married – and have me. (Actually, my mother learned Slovak very well. My father never became very proficient in Hungarian.)

So, unlike most other refugees, when we entered Hungary, we had somewhere to go – to my mother's parents (Gabor and Julia Halász) in the town of Mezőtúr. There they had a small hotel – one of those family-run places next to the railroad station that can still be found in provincial Europe – a small restaurant up front, a few rooms in the rear. There we stayed for nearly four years, from the fall of 1940 to the summer of 1944.

These are my earliest memories. I recall the years we spent in Mezőtúr as perhaps the happiest of my life (at least until I married). I had my dotting grandparents. I was their only grandchild. Besides my mother, they had two other daughters – one younger than my mother (Magda) and one older (Bogya). The younger one was unmarried and living at home (so I also had a dotting aunt); the older one was married (to a Christian) and living in Budapest where no one but her husband knew she was Jewish (near the end of the war, she provided one of our other lucky breaks). Through those nearly four years, while war raged throughout Europe, we lived peacefully in Mezőtúr – with one interruption.

My father was picked up when someone noticed his poor Hungarian and reported him. He was returned to Slovakia, but he escaped again and rejoined us. After that he kept quiet in public. (I, too, had to be kept out of sight until I learned Hungarian well enough to pass for a native and forgot Slovak. My mother said that only took a matter of weeks. After that, I was allowed out to play with the kids in the neighborhood.)

For my grandparents, business was as usual. No one scrawled anti-Semitic graffiti on our walls or threw bricks through our windows. There was no *Kristallnacht* in Hungary.

That is not to say that there was no anti-Semitism. Anti-Semitism was *de-jure* as well as *de-facto*. Laws passed between the 1920s and early 1940s limited Jewish enrollments in universities and Jewish membership in law, medicine and other professions. Jewish-Christian marriages were outlawed – as were Jewish-Christian sexual contacts. Some of the laws were silly and counter-productive, such as a law prohibiting Jews from hiring Christians as servants.

And there were other black marks. Jewish men were conscripted into labor brigades under Christian officers. Some of the officers were decent. But some treated their Jewish charges brutally.

Hungarian troops were also guilty of number of atrocities when fighting alongside their German allies in Yugoslavia, Romania, and on the eastern front – atrocities against Jews and against the local populations. Back home, in Hungary, the civil government tried to control the military and did something unusual for a nation in the midst of a war – some Hungarian officers were court-martialed for atrocities committed in Yugoslavia. The officers were convicted and sentenced to prison. But some managed to escape – with the suspected complicity of their jailers. The escapees turned up in Germany where they were received as heroes. Hungary's exercise of its relative independence was not without cost to its relations with its powerful ally.

The anti-Semitic laws on the books and the anti-Semitism prevalent in the military grew out of an attitude among Christian Hungarians at large that Jews were less than full-fledged, first-class Hungarians. The civil government – which largely represented Hungary's aristocracy and gentry – shared that attitude. But Braham refers to it as “genteel anti-Semitism” – a far cry from what Daniel Goldhagen, in his book on Germans (*Hitler's Willing Executioners*), refers to as “murderous anti-Semitism.”

In Hungary, during the early 1940s, some Jews continued to hold prominent positions and some important businesses remained in Jewish hands – including Hungary's major steelworks. Hungary's counterpart to the Nazi party – the Arrow Cross (*Nyilas*) party – never got more than a few seats in Parliament. The government remained in the hands of relatively mild conservative parties. According to Braham, most Hungarian Jews were convinced that what was happening to Jews elsewhere in Europe could not happen in Hungary.

The period of relative safety came to an end in March of 1944. Earlier that year, Hungary's government got a bit too clever.

By the end of 1943, it was clear that Germany was going to lose the war. German troops and the Hungarians fighting by their side were retreating on the eastern front; the western Allies were advancing in France and Italy; Germans were routed in North Africa. So Hungary sent a secret delegation to Moscow to try to arrange a separate peace. Hitler got wind of the mission and decided that Hungary could no longer be trusted as an ally. He summoned Hungary's head of state, Miklós Horthy, to a meeting. Horthy attended, accompanied by his son, István, head of the Hungarian air force. Horthy was given an ultimatum to accept German occupation, and his son was seized as a hostage. (István Horthy died in a German concentration camp. According to Braham, he had been a leading advocate of resistance to German demands to deport Hungary's Jews.)

Like Czechoslovakia in 1938, Horthy's Hungary realized that it could not prevent a German takeover by force. On March 19, 1944, German troops marched into Hungary without resistance.

I remember that day – or, rather, the day after. My parents and grandparents were very upset reading the newspaper. After they put the paper aside, I took a look, and I remember the photo on the front page. Hungarian soldiers were lined up at attention, and Hungarian officers in their drab grey uniforms accompanied by German officers in their smart black uniforms were reviewing the troops. What was unusual in the photo was that the guns of the soldiers were not on their shoulders but on the ground at their feet.

Soon after the German takeover, Adolf Eichmann was sent to Hungary. After the experience he had gained organizing the “Final Solution” elsewhere in Europe, he organized the most massive and the most efficient round-up and deportation operation of all. With only about a year left in the war, Eichmann's operation resulted in the death of about half of Hungary's approximately one million Jews. (Jews were about ten percent of the population of Hungary.)

Eichmann started with the provinces, leaving Budapest for last. The severest black mark on Hungary's role in the holocaust is that Eichmann had little difficulty finding cooperative Hungarians. The national police were especially compliant. So were many ordinary citizens. Sadly, a number of Jewish leaders went along: providing lists, passing on German orders, and discouraging resistance. In one instance, a group of wealthy Jews bought safe passage to Switzerland by providing a fleet of trucks to the Germans. (After the war, the head of the group was assassinated in Israel by another Hungarian Jew.)

Eichmann's scheme began with a census of Jews in each community. Jews were then required to wear yellow stars. And eventually Jews were ordered into ghettos or otherwise gathered for deportation.

I recall my aunt Magda sewing the yellow star on my jacket. I was pleased – I got to do what grownups were doing – but when I went out to play, my former playmates mocked me and said I would soon be taken away.

Then the order came for the Jews of Mezőtúr to report to the brickyard on the outskirts of town. As in other towns, the brickyard had a spur line of the railroad. Jews could be deported from that point without creating a spectacle at the railway station. Braham relates how in many towns Jews awaiting deportation were shaken down and tortured to turn over money and valuables they may have been trying to take along.

There was one bright spot of resistance. As railroad workers realized that cattle cars filled with Jews and gypsies were being sent out of Hungary, some went on

strike. But the leaders of the strike were quickly arrested, and the shipments resumed.

My grandparents and aunt Magda reported to the Mezőtúr brickyard and were deported to Auschwitz. Some Mezőtúr Jews survived and told us that my grandfather died on the train. On their arrival at Auschwitz, my grandmother and aunt were sent to separate sides of the platform, but my aunt snuck over to be with her mother, and that group was sent directly to the shower/gas chamber.

My parents and I avoided the brickyard because of another of our lucky breaks. We escaped Slovakia because of the nationality of my mother; we escaped deportation from Mezőtúr because of my father's nationality.

My father, though raised in Poltár, was a citizen of the United States. His parents (Morris Grossmann and Julia Haas) immigrated to America from Austria-Hungary in the early 1900s. They married in New York, and my father was born there in 1908. But while my father was still a baby, his mother left his father and returned to her parents in Poltár, taking my father with her.

My father's connection to the United States did not end there. When he was eighteen, he made a trip to Chicago – where his father then worked in the kitchen of the Palmer House Hotel. Father and son apparently did not hit it off. But my father fell in love with the United States. He stayed, learned English, enrolled in community college, and managed to find work as a waiter even during the depression. In the early 1930s he returned to Poltár to visit his mother – and on that trip, he met my mother. They married in 1935.

According to my mother, my father promised to take her to America, but they kept putting it off. They had a daughter in 1936. She died in infancy. After I came along and Germany took over Czechoslovakia, my father wrote the American embassy in Prague that he wanted to return to the United States with his wife and son. But he had let his passport expire. The embassy replied that he needed to prove that he had not given up his American citizenship. My father sent the embassy a document signed by a Slovak official stating that my father had not assumed Slovak citizenship. The embassy then insisted that my father appear at the embassy in person. My father responded that Jews were not allowed to travel, and he was being taken to a forced labor camp. (I have copies of this correspondence.)

After our escape to Hungary, my father succeeded in getting his passport renewed through the American embassy in Budapest. According to my mother, we could have sailed to New York from Genoa. But we did not have money for the fare, and my grandparents were not wealthy enough to help. We were stuck.

But my father's American citizenship saved us for a time. When the order came for us to report to the Mezőtúr brickyard, my father persuaded the Hungarians in

charge that they would score more points with their superiors by apprehending a family of enemy aliens than merely deporting three more Jews. So, instead of reporting to the brickyard, we were escorted by an armed guard to the railroad station and taken to Budapest.

In Budapest we were placed in a camp on the outskirts of town, near the city amusement park (*Városliget*) where American, British, Canadian, and other Allied civilians were held. The camp was under the control of Hungarians, not Germans, and conditions were quite decent. Families were allowed to stay together; food and medical care were adequate; the Swiss embassy and the Red Cross were allowed to visit. There were even amusements organized by the internees. (My father showed promise as a stand-up comedian.) It was far better to be enemy aliens than Hungarian Jews. But one day tragedy struck from an unexpected source.

By the summer of 1944, Western leaders were aware of what was going on in Auschwitz. When the Hungarian deportations started, American Jewish organizations appealed to President Roosevelt to have the rail lines leading to Auschwitz bombed. Following the advice of his military planners, he refused to divert resources from the war effort to what were considered “rescue activities.” Instead, President Roosevelt sent a stern note to Horthy warning of dire consequences if the deportation of Hungarian Jews was not stopped.

The consequences came in the form of a massive air raid carpet bombing Budapest on July 7, 1944. Why the bombing of a civilian population in one of Europe’s most beautiful capitals was preferred over the bombing of the rail lines leading to Auschwitz remains a mystery. But the bombing did bear temporary results. Horthy ordered a stop to deportations, and deportations were suspended for a time – until the Germans engineered a change of government, leaving Horthy as a powerless figurehead. (Later in the year, Horthy broadcast an order recalling Hungarian troops from the eastern front and ending the alliance with Germany. The order was ignored as the Germans had the *Nyilas* party take over the government, and Horthy became a virtual prisoner of the Germans.)

The bombs of July 7 rained down on our camp as indiscriminately as on the rest of Budapest. They scored a direct hit on the building my parents and I occupied along with about forty others. Out of the forty or so, only five survived – the three of us and two English sisters.

We were all unconscious. I came to first. My father was covered with rubble. I uncovered his face so he could breathe. My mother was not covered, but her leg was pinned down by a wooden beam. As the air raid ended, rescue workers and ambulances appeared, and we were taken to a hospital.

There was a shortage of doctors throughout the war years. As a result, Jewish doctors were allowed to practice. (Although Jews were about ten percent of

Hungary's population, a much larger percentage of Hungary's doctors were Jewish.) When the doctors noticed that my father and I were circumcised, we got royal treatment – at least that is how my mother explained the remarkable recovery we made by the end of the summer. My body bears many scars, but none of my wounds caused any long-term impairment. My mother was not quite as lucky; she limped for the rest of her life. I am not sure if my father would have made a full recovery from the bombing; he did not survive to the end of the war.

After we were discharged from the hospital, we were reunited with the other survivors of our camp in an institutional building in the heart of Budapest (on *Festetics Utca*). There, too, we remained under the jurisdiction of Hungarians, and we were well treated.

Our relatively comfortable existence came to a sudden end on New Year's eve as a group of reveling German soldiers overpowered our Hungarian guards and took over our building. The soldiers wore German uniforms but spoke Hungarian haltingly. According to my mother, they were Schwabs, a German ethnic group in Hungary, who enlisted – or were conscripted – into the German army.

The takeover of our building may have been an ironic byproduct of the heroic activities of the Swedish diplomat Raoul Wallenberg. In his attempts to save Hungarian Jews, Wallenberg established a number of "safe houses" where the Swedish emblem protected Jewish inhabitants as if the houses were extensions of the Swedish embassy. The *Nyilas* government at first went along with this charade. Having been installed by the German occupiers rather than the Hungarian electorate, the *Nyilas* government was hoping that recognition by neutral Sweden would lend it a measure of legitimacy. By the end of 1944, as the Soviet forces were closing in on Budapest, international recognition was no longer a concern, and *Nyilas* gangs roamed Budapest, using the remaining days of their rule to kill as many Jews as they could find, including those in Swedish safe houses. Our facility, legitimately under the protection of Hungarian guards and not occupied exclusively by Jews, seemed enough like the Swedish safe houses – at least to drunk Schwab soldiers – that it got caught up in the frenzy.

My most vivid memories are of that New Year's Eve. I recall seeing one of our Hungarian guards gagged and bound to a chair. After the German soldiers took control, they separated the Jews and the Christians. Jews were ordered into a basement room where a platform provided a stage for the Germans. A Christian man who was being punished for some reason stood at a corner of the platform holding up a candle.

A boy in his early teens said something insulting to the Germans. I do not remember the boy's name – he used to play the accordion for us younger kids. The Germans dragged him up to their platform, and one of the Germans held a pistol to the boy's temple. My father put his hand over my eyes, but I heard the shot. When I pulled my father's hand away, the boy was on the ground kicking

and twitching. His mother was screaming. The Germans dragged her up to the platform too and forced her to sit on her son. She went silent and her eyes glazed over.

Others were also crying out. In midst of all the noise, the face of a German officer appeared at an open window up at sidewalk level. The officer yelled something, and a few minutes later he walked into the room. He spoke to us in German. A young girl who knew German replied. He took her on his knee and asked her questions. She replied amid sobs. The officer then took the soldiers aside, spoke to them, and left.

From what followed, we deduced that the officer must have ordered the soldiers not to harm the women and children – but he did not protect the men.

The men were lined up and marched away. That was the last we saw my father. An English woman who had offended the Germans was taken away with the men. After the war, we ran into her on the street. She told us that she and the men were marched to the Danube. The men were lined up on the bank and shot into the river. But the soldiers were obedient to their orders – they just roughed her up and left.

As the men were taken away, the women and children were given some time to go to their quarters and gather some belongings. My mother piled some clothes on a sheet and tied its four corners. We were reassembled, and in the early dawn of New Year's day, 1945, we were marched to the Budapest ghetto.

We stepped inside the wooden gate of the ghetto just as a siren announced another air raid. The Germans left us there. We scrambled around trying to find a building to take cover in. Some of the buildings were bombed out, but my mother and I were admitted to a nearby basement where we stayed for the next few days.

Like the other occupants of the basement, we had next to nothing to eat. My mother traded some clothes for a cup of awful erzats coffee and a small cube of *lekvár* – a fruity substance. That is all we had to eat for days. To avoid starvation, my mother took a gamble – and it turned into another lucky break.

We went out into the street where some Jewish men wearing armbands were carrying dead bodies on stretchers out through the ghetto gate. As the body of man was carried past us, my mother took my hand, and we began walking alongside the stretcher – as if the man on the stretcher was her husband and she and I had every right to accompany him. When we got to the gate, we walked right through. I don't know whether the guards were distracted and did not notice us, or they were intimidated by my mother's resolute limp, but we got out.

Outside of the ghetto wall, the stretcher carriers were dumping the bodies onto a truck. As we got to the truck, we made a ninety-degree turn and ducked into the doorway of the nearest building. It was a hospital.

My mother spoke to a man wearing a white coat. He shoed us down to a basement room. In a short time, someone brought us a tray of food. That evening a young woman brought us identity papers (I became György Galambos), and she escorted us in the dark across town to the apartment building of my “Christian” aunt Bogya. There we stayed, much of the time in the basement shelter with the rest of the building’s occupants, until the Soviet army liberated Budapest about three months later.

POSTSCRIPT

After the war, we returned to Mezőtúr where I attended first grade in 1945-46. Our hotel was damaged in the last year of the war and could not be restored (it was demolished and is now a public park). My mother was also unable to profit from our property in Poltár.

In the summer of 1946, my mother boarded me with a farming family outside Mezőtúr (the Kazaks) while she tried to make a living by taking foodstuffs from the farms surrounding Mezőtúr to Budapest and bringing clothing back.

At the end of the summer, I was placed in a Jewish children’s institution in Szeged. There I attended second grade. The children from the institution were taken to Israel in 1947. My mother refused to give permission for me to go along.

For third grade, 1947-48, I was moved to an institution in Buda where I could have visits with my mother and my aunt Bogya.

In 1948, my mother married Ferenc Biczó, a taxi driver and veteran of the Hungarian air force. I moved in with my mother and stepfather and attended fourth grade in Pest.

During the 1948-49 school year, we visited the American embassy and learned that I was considered a derivative citizen of the United States, and as such, I was entitled to an American passport. I am not sure whether or not my mother qualified as well – but having remarried to a Hungarian certainly complicated her status. She decided to send me to the U.S. alone.

I received my U.S. passport, but just as in 1944, we had no money for the fare. The U.S. Ambassador (Mr. Chapman) somehow got funding for me and persuaded a Jewish organization operating in Budapest to arrange for my

guardianship once I reached the U.S. The Jewish Community Service became my legal guardian.

My mother learned from the embassy that two adults were to travel from Budapest to New York in September of 1949. She booked the same trip for me. When we went to the railway station, my mother located the two adults and asked them to keep an eye on me. They helped me during a layover in Paris and got me on the right boat in Le Havre. When we reached New York, a social worker from the Jewish Community Service was waiting for me at the dock.

I was first taken to a children's home in Newark, New Jersey, and then moved to a foster home in Kenmore, New York, a suburb of Buffalo. My foster father, Charles Meitner, was actually a cousin of my parents. I graduated from Kenmore High School in January, 1956.

I was good at math (a carry-over from my four grades in Hungary) and got a job as calculating machine operator at Bell Aircraft Corporation while I took evening classes at the University of Buffalo. In 1957, I enrolled full-time in the University of Chicago, graduating on June 11, 1960. I remember the exact date because it is also my anniversary. I graduated in the morning; in the afternoon I married Susanna Herczeg, also a U.C. student and also an immigrant from Hungary. We are still married. We have one child, Zoltán (born 1962), now a Professor at The Evergreen State College in Olympia, Washington.

1960 to 1962, I did a year of graduate study and worked at the American Bar Foundation while Susanna finished college. We then moved to Palo Alto, California, where I worked for a year for the California Law Revision Commission before I enrolled in Stanford Law School, graduating in 1966.

Before I started law school, in December of 1962, my mother joined us in Palo Alto with my half-brother, Gabor (born February of 1950). She had divorced Ferenc Biczo. She remained in Palo Alto until her death in 1983. Gabor lived in Santa Rosa, California until he died in 2010.

In law school, I worked part-time in the law library and decided to become a law librarian. I apprenticed at the Biddle Law Library of the University of Pennsylvania (1966-68) and went on to become Director of the Law Library and Professor of Law at the University of Utah (1968-73), University of Minnesota (1973-79), and Northwestern University (1979-93) before my position at the University of California at Davis.

I retired in 2006, and Susanna and I lived in San Francisco until she died in 2008.