

1973

# "University and the Community: Playing for High Stakes"

Emmanuel Rose

Follow this and additional works at: <https://pdxscholar.library.pdx.edu/orspeakers>



Part of the [Higher Education Commons](#), and the [Higher Education Administration Commons](#)

Let us know how access to this document benefits you.

---

## Recommended Citation

Rose, Emmanuel, "University and the Community: Playing for High Stakes" (1973). *Special Collections: Oregon Public Speakers*. 188.

<https://pdxscholar.library.pdx.edu/orspeakers/188>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access. It has been accepted for inclusion in Special Collections: Oregon Public Speakers by an authorized administrator of PDXScholar. Please contact us if we can make this document more accessible: [pdxscholar@pdx.edu](mailto:pdxscholar@pdx.edu).

Rabbi Emmanuel Rose

"University and the Community: Playing for High Stakes"

Portland State University

[date unknown], 1973

PSU Library Special Collections and University Archives

Oregon Public Speakers Collection

<http://archives.pdx.edu/ds/psu/11475>

Transcribed by Ruby Bontrager, September 29 - October 6, 2020

Audited by Carolee Harrison, January 2021

*PSU Library Special Collections and University Archives presents these recordings as part of the historical record. They reflect the recollections and opinions of the individual speakers and are not intended to be representative of the views of Portland State University. They may contain language, ideas, or stereotypes that are offensive to others.*

FRED WALLER: *[recording begins mid-sentence]* ...but I think we had better get started. I'm Fred Waller, head of the Department of English at Portland State University. It's a great pleasure for me to have been asked to introduce the guest at this table, and to present the first ladies of the university and the city to you. Patty Lill, president of the Women's Faculty Association of Portland State University, really ought to be doing these honors herself, but I don't think she's even taken the time to eat. *[laughter]* She's making this a real working lunch, but without the lunch. The Women's Faculty Association has sponsored this luncheon, and Kay Corbett has been in charge of the program, and I think we ought to begin by expressing our appreciation to both Patty and Kay. *[applause]* Oh, Patty *is* sitting down. *[laughter]*

I'm asked to make an announcement: inadvertently, one important name was left off the roster of the advisory committee for the dedication of the Littman sculpture, and that is Mrs. Elaine Cogan, who is a member of the Portland Development Commission. So, if you want to make the roster complete, add the name of Mrs. Elaine Cogan, Mrs. Arnold Cogan, that is.

Before I introduce our honored guest, I'd like to pay my own respects to the Women's Faculty Association. Portland State, as you know, is an urban university in a large, multi-faceted city. This is our genius and our strength, but it can also be fragmenting, and the Women's Faculty Association, from its newcomers' program through all its other activities, has helped as much as any other university program to give us and the faculty a strong sense of community. My wife

and I still remember with great gratitude the welcome given to us by Marcie Dart for the Women's Faculty Association when we first came to Portland some 18 years ago.

The association has provided scholarships; it is now undertaking support for the Albertina Care Home; it has given volunteer service at registration at the university and the library; and just this year it has begun to sponsor social gatherings with the academic departments for the foreign students, who are becoming an increasingly significant part of our student body. And with this luncheon, it's building another bridge to the Portland community. The work done by the Women's Faculty Association is wholly volunteer, like Patty Lill's energetic activities this year or Priscilla Blumel's earlier; for as a matter of fact, she made president before her husband did, [*laughter*] of this association. Individual contributions of members of the association have been significant both for the community and to the nation itself. These range from being president of the Portland League of Women Voters to winning a National Book Award. From the holding of Ford National Science Foundation and Guggenheim fellowships to serving on the mayor's staff. From designing an electron microscope to achieving national stature in business education, and to being one of the 12 women on the softball hall of fame. I'd like to mention that that's Margaret Dobson. [*laughter*] If all the men on the faculty fell immediate victim to an affirmative action program gone crazy, or got drafted, or something equally terminal, I'm sure the university could proceed quite nicely under this staff's eye.

I'd like now to introduce the honored guest at this table, and as I do, may I ask that you withhold your welcome until I've completed the introductions. First, Mrs. Connie McCready, city commissioner of public works. She's responsible for the office of the city engineer and for the civic auditorium. Next to her, from the Multnomah County board of commissioners, I am pleased to introduce Commissioner Alice Corbett. She is responsible for board policy in the areas of administrative services and Connie management. And then going down in this direction, Sherry Vaughn, Mrs. Tom Vaughn, who handles the Russian desk for the Oregon Historical Society, and is the author of the recently published *Explorations on Kamchatka*, and she is currently working on publications on Russian America. Then, next to her, Mildred Schwab; an attorney, city commissioner of public affairs, and also the city's parks. Her responsibilities include the arts commission, neighborhood associations, and the city's attorneys, and as you'll note in the Vital Partners program, she is also a concert pianist and will appear at the Portland Composers' Concert tomorrow noon in the City Council chamber. Finally, on her left, also from the Multnomah County board, I should like to present Rina Kuzma, executive assistant to the chairman of the board, with specific responsibilities to liaison with this university. This latter appointment represents, I understand, the first formal link between the county board of commissioners and Portland State University. I'd like to recognize other important persons in the audience; time is going by, but I should like to acknowledge the

presence of Senator Maurine Neuberger, whose husband has given us the name of one of our halls. And it's an honor... [applause] And it's an honor to present two former, honorary presidents of the Women's Faculty Association, the wise, distinguished, and beloved former presidents of this institution. They are Mrs. Mabel Cramer, and Mrs. Theresa Millar. And with Theresa is her daughter, Connie. Now can you give your welcome to everybody?

[applause]

The theme of this weeks' events is "Vital Partners: the University and the City." The whole week's activities are in lieu of the formal inauguration which would otherwise attend the appointment of Joseph Blumel to the presidency of Portland State University, and in these functions he is joined by the mayor of the city of Portland, Mr. Neil Goldschmidt. I hope you won't think I'm merely perpetrating a pun when I say that vital partnership must have particular significance to the two young ladies whom I'm about to introduce, Margie Goldschmidt and Priscilla Blumel, because they are partners to the leaders of this week's conference. With their husbands, their careers have become the city and the university, and these are quite as demanding as any other vocation. Their rewards will be the success with which the city and the university meet their responsibilities, and whether or not the vital roles they play are adequately recognized in the years ahead, we have an opportunity to honor them today.

Mrs. Margie Goldschmidt is a mother of two small children; a boy, Joshua, and a girl, Rebecca, and like her husband, she is a native Oregonian; both she and the mayor grew up in Eugene, my hometown, too. Margie's father was a professor of speech pathology at the... well, one of the other universities in the state system... [laughter] ...of higher education. She's a graduate of the University of Oregon herself, and she earned a teaching certificate at Berkeley. She has taught junior high school English, which is of course a good thing to teach. [laughter] And she's also taught at the Peninsula Elementary School in Portland. She is involved in many civic organizations, she likes to sew and ski, and she used to sing with a group called Tuesday's Edition, and I forgot to ask her what that represents, but maybe I can find out afterward. In addition to hardly any other relation that is apparent to me, Margie and I are both married to former presidents of the student body at the University of Oregon. I daresay we both found it a very satisfying connection. [laughter] So may I present to the university community Mrs. Margie Goldschmidt. [applause]

Our second first lady, Mrs. Joseph Blumel, Priscilla, first came to Portland State as a student from Vancouver where her mother still lives. When Joe was a candidate for the presidency, I asked him what were his impressions of Portland State. It seemed like a good question to put to all the candidates, the others being mostly from New York, even though Joe had only been here

17 years when I asked him. "Well," he said, "it was the sort of school to which he'd like to send his daughters, Tina and Caroline." Priscilla herself has got the family off to a good start. And while we're waiting for her children to matriculate, her niece Rachel Veith is now attending Portland State as an anthropology major. Priscilla majored in political science and continues that interest with the League of Women Voters. She's also interested in all the performing arts: music, dance, opera, and theatre. She is a member of the Raleigh Hills Auxiliary, of the Oregon Symphony, as well as the Portland committee for the Peter Britt Festival in Ashland. As I mentioned earlier, Priscilla is an elected past president of the Women's Faculty Association at Portland State, and now as honorary president, she assumes a no less responsible role in the association's important adjunct to the university's activities. So may I present to the city Mrs. Priscilla Blumel. *[applause]* I don't think Priscilla will mind if I also introduce her mother, Mrs. Richard Bryant, who's seated on this table; her sister, Mrs. Donald Veith, and her niece, Rachel Veith. On Rachel, I daresay, represents the burden of representing the entire Portland State student body today. *[laughter]*

This is an occasion, first of all, for Margie and Priscilla, but I think it might be appropriate with very strained applause to recognize the presence of their husbands, Mayor Goldschmidt and President Blumel. *[applause]* I'm very sorry to say that our first speaker can't be with us today. She is Judge Mercedes Diaz, who is herself a former Vanport student, and two of her sons have graduated from our school, but she called in just before lunch with the following message: "I am unhappy and feel cheated because of my absolute inability to attend today's luncheon. My docket is incredibly full, and I and my staff will have to work through the lunch hour in order to accommodate all the litigants. Please announce my reason for not attending," and she expressed at the same time her prideful thoughts in having been a student at Portland State. I regret very much that we won't have an opportunity to meet her and to hear her speak.

Our speaker is one who can speak with authority about both the university and the city. He is Rabbi Emmanuel Rose, a spiritual leader of Beth Israel Congregation. He has degrees from the University of Cincinnati and Hebrew Union College, and his very numerous civic affiliations include the Oregon United Nations Association, the Boy Scouts of America, the Jewish Welfare Association, the Rotary Club, and the City Club of Portland. His appearance with us today is sponsored by the Jewish Chautauqua Society, which is dedicated to our better understanding of Judaism. Rabbi Rose's topic is the university and the community playing for high stakes, and how well we all know. It's an honor to introduce Rabbi Emmanuel Rose.

*[applause]*

EMMANUEL ROSE: Mayor and Mrs. Goldschmidt, President and Mrs. Blumel, Ms. Chairman, ladies and gentlemen. I'm a little intimidated having been introduced by a professor of English, because it takes me back to my own university days as an undergraduate. I had a professor in ancient history by the name of Malcolm McGregor who used to grade us; he was so appalled by the lack of knowledge of English on the part of American students that he used to grade us 50 percent on knowledge and 50 percent on English. *[laughter]* But now that I've got my various and assorted degrees I trust that I can take certain liberties that I won't be graded on.  
*[laughter]*

I've tried to figure out why this is the place where I speak during the course of this week, and I decided that all of you women are truly liberated and therefore you are comfortable enough to have a man address you, *[laughter]* so on that basis I will proceed. I'm really grateful for the opportunity of sharing some thoughts with you during this week of symbolic installation... although I'm not at all convinced that formal installation is a ceremony that should be ignored within the academic world. And I would like to dwell on this for a moment because of its relevance to my comments. None of us would disagree with the fact that empty ritual is senseless. As a result of these feelings, this generation, tired of meaningless formalisms, has either done away with or ignored rituals in every area of human experience. Senator Packwood is "Bob," Rabbi Rose is "Manny," Mayor Goldschmidt is "Neil," and the big boy upstairs is God. We're a cozy, informal bunch, we Americans are. But it occurs to me that occasionally we miss the point of some of these formalisms and rituals.

I recall a story told to me by my father about my grandfather who was a great Jewish scholar, and one day he walked into a room which was filled with other scholars, and they all stood up. And my grandfather said, "Please, never stand up for me." And the response was, "Rabbi Rose, we're not standing up for you, we're standing up for the learning that is inside of you." The heads of universities are more than professional contractors. They are, in the words of Max Lerner, "the only quasi-official intellectual leaders America possesses." The importance of this observation rests neither with the ego of the titled individual, nor in the pomp of his or her office, but rather in the symbolism of the position. The university community must have a strong awareness of its own uniquely significant role in the life of this country as well as in the life of this community. I do not know the new president of this university. But I can assure you that it is not important to me to call him by his first name. Perhaps it might be nice over a period of time, if we were to become friends, that that would evolve, but it's not a primary goal. Normally, familiar name-dropping is a means of impressing oneself and others, and is an implied ego association with power. Far more than ego is involved in the high stakes that are involved in the life of a university, especially recognizing the critical experiences which we have been through in this country. Admittedly, in no way to be paralleled with the completed and

continuing intellectual tragedies of other nations, but certainly to be paralleled in the ongoing potential for tragedy within our own nation, always lurking in the shadows.

It is a truism that the older we become, the less that we believe we can change the world. But it is equally true that maturity helps us to realistically define what our individual and collective role is, and it can be significant. The role of a university is a sacred one. Now I carefully choose the word "sacred" because it has a very special linguistic meaning to me. I am really thinking of its Hebrew equivalent, which comes closer to the meaning, "set apart, unique, special." But it is in a context of something beyond these word meanings. It is in the context of truth that the word appears. With a risk natural to my work of sounding sermonic for just a few minutes of the time allotted to me, I will dare to do so in this setting which is probably more agnostic than religious, because there is a common ground that is vital.

The literary prophets of ancient Israel are misnamed. To most of us, the word *prophet* means a predictor, a crystal ball-gazer. The prophets were not such men. They were analysts. Analysts of the political, social, philosophic trends as well as the religious. They were well-read in history. What to them was ancient history as well as what to them was contemporary history. And they surveyed the scene of their day, and they recalled, and they paralleled, and they posited formulæ: if you do this, such will be the result. They were products of and yet apart from the society of their day. They called a spade a spade. And when challenged they said, "Let future experience be the judge as to whether or not we have spoken truth." Truth, therefore, was the only authority they possessed. And truth was dangerous to the power structure of their day. And the power structure made of these prophets driven men. The well-known Jeremiah, exemplar of stern rebuke and yet model of love, compassion, and sensitivity, had to hide in a cave because the political leaders of his day could not contain his dangerous sentiment: that of truth.

Now, it is a human tragedy that those in search of egotistical power and those in search of the power of truth are so often locked in adversary relationship. For Aristotle, as for Bertrand Russell, there are two faces to the use of power. Power as defined by Russell is the fundamental concept of physics. Normal power energizes, and enables man to act and integrate himself. It is the process in healthy man which enables him to create the same society. But we are confronted with the other variety of power. Egotistic power, which has as its basic vocabulary, "superior to, control over, and subjugation of." This is what dominates society. And because it so dominates society, is it any wonder that periodically it has dramatically reared its ugly head in confrontation with the university system? The supreme example, of course, is when Hitler took control of the German university system. Physics became German physics. Mathematics became German mathematics. Chemistry became

German chemistry. Named Prussian Minister of Education, Science, and Art in 1933, Dr. Rust boasted that overnight he had succeeded in liquidating the school as an institution of intellectual acrobatics. The great scholars of the German universities, skilled in the laborious search for truth, were made inoperative and replaced by those who dogmatically taught Nazi truth. Egotistical power supplanted the power of truth. And the exact same method is utilized within the Soviet system. Now, no direct parallels can be drawn, to be sure. It would be a desecration of the system of higher education in America to do so. But the dynamics are always waiting in the shadows and occasionally operative. For after all, there has always been an anti-intellectualism in America side-by-side with a strong belief in education.

The anti-intellectualism provides a latent but ever-present dangerous reservoir which must be recognized, chuckled at on occasion, and feared all at the same time. Symbolically, it encompasses the rather good-natured epithet of “egghead” to the hateful climate of McCarthy and Jenner and the vindictive, effete snob phrase of one esteemed, now deposed, exemplar of egotistical power. Now students may weave in and out of moods of intense concern with and total indifference to society. But the guardians of the university, the guardians being the faculties, must never forget the relentless hatred held dear by some congressional representatives, some newspapers, for any intellectuals who seem bent on independent intellectual judgements. The guardians of the university must not forget that only a few short years ago, your students and perhaps some of you, meeting in peaceful assembly to protest, were photographed in front of Portland City Hall by internal security agents—not the KGB, but of organizations with other three-letter symbols. And these photographs were taken by a shutter-click by the long arm of a shockingly corrupt and dangerous administration which dubbed lies as truth and truth as lies in its relentless, ruthless thrust for egotistical power.

The guardians of the university must not forget the formulation of sensitive files and enemy lists made up in part of people like you, if not you, because you wanted to debate, but they wanted to destroy the enemy. The guardians of the university must not forget the test oaths for teachers, congressional investigators, and faculty purges that have confronted our universities with an unparalleled danger to free inquiry in this country. Know the guardians of the university are not without those among them who are shorn of intellectual integrity by following their own party line, but the oaths and purges did far more damage to our system than the relatively shabby few ever did. Guardians of the university must be aware of the waves of intimidation that flow out of these egotistical power thrusts, and resist the ease with which intimidation can be accomplished.

The role of the university is a sacred one. The guardians of the community, while in a valid way seek specialized expertise in a variety of areas relying upon the university as a source, must

never abuse the rightful role of the essential academic pursuit. Control over the purse strings and the potential pursuit of egotistical power through that control is a cynical and fault-ridden approach to the essential role of the school of higher learning. Now, it may well be an illusion to expect such self-discipline on the part of political leaders, recognizing all of the inner and outer exerted pressures on such political leaders; but surely it is not too much to ask and expect of enlightened political administrations.

We of the community have our prejudices. We may have the political and financial power, but we have not the moral right to impose upon the guardians of the university such prejudices. Intellectual integrity should be our only primary demand. And intellectual integrity must be the essential responsibility of the university. The guardians of the university have a sacred role. We share our children with you. Our most precious life's components. We want them to be exposed to many things through you, from knowledge, particular and broad, to specific utilitarian skills; but above all, we want them to learn the process of how to learn and question and weigh. Now most of us in this room hold doctoral degrees. In the process of our research, we came to have some respect for footnotes, those bothersome and eyestraining references which tie us to the knowledge of others. By mastering them, trusting while questioning them, knowledge and capacity for scholarly work grew. It is the pattern of the novice scholar to refuse to believe that a strange, new thing can be done, then to hope that it can be, and when he or she sees its accomplishment, wonders why this was not done long before. This is the process which we want our children to grasp through you. We want them to grasp the possibility that they have the capacity to dream boldly and to work unceasingly and sensitively to sustain and enlarge the miracle of human civilization.

Martin Buber talks of those who carry on the battle against the anti-human. "In opposition to them," he says, "stand the element that profits from the diversions between the peoples. The contrahuman in men, the subhuman, the enemy of man's will to become a true humanity." The name Satan in Hebrew means "the hinderer." That is the correct designation for the anti-human in individuals and in the human race. Let us not allow this Satanic element in man to hinder us from realizing man. The university has a sacred task: to help man realize man. These are the high stakes that conjoin the university and the community. "Of all the techniques for creating a sense of society," wrote Lerner, "education is the most effective tie for binding men together." I wish that Judge Diaz had called me a week ago and told me that she would not be here because I could have gone on for another half hour. Thank you. *[laughter, applause]*

WALLER: Would you like to say a little more? *[laughter]*

ROSE: If there are any questions, I'm always ready. I think Mayor Goldschmidt... he speaks faster, he'll get done faster. [*laughter*]

WALLER: Well, do you have any questions you'd like to put to Rabbi Rose? ...Well, thank you very, very much Rabbi Rose.

ROSE: See, I spoke truth. [*laughter*]

WALLER: Kay or Patty, do you have any announcements you'd like to make?

[*tape skips; recording resumes mid-sentence*]

SPEAKER 1 [*unidentified*]: ...recognition and that is of Bill Pendleton. He is the guest today, and he's our featured speaker tomorrow night at the lecture at 8 o'clock. He's—I think everyone knows—the director of the Ford Foundation's programs on urban and metropolitan development.

WALLER: Thank you very much. [*applause*]

SPEAKER 2 [*unidentified, in background*] We just want to thank you from all of us for a lovely job, and thank everybody for coming.

WALLER: And with that, I declare these proceedings adjourned.

[*simultaneous voices in background; program ends*]