

NATIONAL COUNCIL OF JEWISH WOMEN, CLEVELAND SECTION

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HOLOCAUST ARCHIVE PROJECT

Name of Interviewee	URSULA ROSOW		
Name of Interviewer	Donna Yanowitz	Date	11/8/84
Name of Abstractor	Ruth Rubin	Date	1/8/87
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NARRATIVE SUMMARY

Ursula Rosow was born Ursula Braatz in Berlin in 1919. She came from a middle-class, gentile family and her parents were active socialists. Her father, who was part Hungarian, was a laboratory technician. Her mother was part Polish.

When the Nazis came to power in 1931 street fights began all over Berlin. It was not long until this escalated to shootings. In 1934 the SS shot at Ursula's father for making anti-Nazi comments in a local pub. The same year he was imprisoned for distributing anti-Nazi propaganda.

Ursula's family belonged to an organization which helped Jews escape Germany with false identity papers. Ursula also helped obtain ration cards for Jews in hiding, and at one point she hid a Jewish dancer.

When the Allies began to bomb Berlin, Ursula and her mother left the city. Ursula went to Wurzburg and her mother went to Bad Kissingen.

After the war, Ursula married a Jewish American soldier. In 1948 she came to the U.S. with him. They eventually settled in Cleveland Heights, Ohio, where Ursula now resides. She is divorced and has two children - a 36-year-old daughter and a son, 28.

ABSTRACT

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PRESENT LIFE

Lives in Cleveland Heights, Ohio. Divorced, two children - daughter, 36, and son, 28, who lives in L. A. Worked in theater in 1960's, with costumes and scenery.

CHILDHOOD IN BERLIN AND FAMILY LIFE

Maiden name was Braatz. Family was gentile. Born in Berlin in 1919. Father was a laboratory technician, did mural photography. He was part Hungarian. Mother was part Polish. Family liked camping. Ursula had no siblings. An aunt and two cousins lived with them.

SCHOOL YEARS

Boys and girls attended separate classes. Everyone took religion classes. Ursula stopped taking religion class so she did not receive high school stipend.

URSULA'S PARENTS ARE ACTIVE SOCIALISTS

All her relatives were free-thinkers.

NAZIS COME TO POWER, EARLY 1930'S. THERE IS TROUBLE IN THE STREETS

Many street fights involving Nazis. In 1932 people shot in the streets.

SS SHOTS AT URSULA'S FATHER WHEN HE MAKES ANTI-NAZI REMARKS IN A PUB

PARENTS AND AUNT ARE IMPRISONED, 1934

Jailed for transporting anti-Nazi propaganda.

URSULA ATTENDS ART SCHOOL

She befriended a social worker, who made it possible for her to enroll. She attended for six years.

URSULA'S FAMILY HELPS JEWS ESCAPE GERMANY

Had several Jewish friends, which was very dangerous. Belonged to underground organization which produced false passports.

URSULA OBTAINS RATION CARDS FOR JEWS IN HIDING

Collected them from left-wing students.

URSULA HIDES JEWISH DANCER, HELPS HER LEAVE GERMANY

AFTER 1939 IT IS NOT SAFE FOR ANTI-FASCISTS

URSULA'S FATHER AND COUSIN ARE DRAFTED

Cousin sent to army. Father worked in military lab, developing pictures. Saw photos of shootings in Poland. A girl cousin is sent to a children's camp in Silesia when bombing starts in 1943.

GERMANS KNOW ABOUT EXISTENCE OF CONCENTRATION CAMPS

PEOPLE BEGIN TO DISAPPEAR

Friends died of mysterious, unknown diseases. People rounded up at night. Wealthy Jews emigrated, poor ones were deported.

URSULA AND MOTHER GO TO THE SAAR, MARCH 1944

Father had to stay and work for Nazis. Ursula lived in Wurzburg, mother lived outside Bad Kissingen.

PSYCHOLOGICAL EFFECT OF WAR ON URSULA

Sometimes feels she doesn't belong anywhere. Shares no common experience with anyone.

URSULA MEETS HER FUTURE HUSBAND

Was American Jewish soldier.

SHE COMES TO AMERICA WITH HUSBAND, 1948

EARLY YEARS IN AMERICA

Lived in Cambridge, Mass. while husband earned a Ph.D. in sociology. Lived in England for three years, son was born there. Lived in Lafayette, Ind., then came to Cleveland when husband was hired by Case Western Reserve University.

REFLECTIONS ON HER EXPERIENCE

Does not share her experiences often. As she gets older, her past is more troubling to her.

HER DECISION TO BE INTERVIEWED

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Wants to dispel belief that Holocaust was a hoax. Wants to verify existence of Nazis.

SHE SURVIVED THROUGH LUCK

Father could have been denounced, but never was.

MEMORIES OF JEWS IN HIDING

URSULA IS GLAD WHEN AMERICANS BOMB BERLIN