

This is a continuation of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum interview with Trudy Schoenberger. This is track number two.

And you just finished talking about your brother. So let's get back to your story. You're in high school now?

I'm in high school in New Jersey. It's a breeze. I loved it.

And now I'm graduating. And I'm graduating with honors. And I was very happy about that. Now what do I do?

Did you tell all your friends about your experience? They knew?

Well, they knew, you know, I had an accent and how come. And I did tell them some. I didn't tell them all the-- you know? But they knew. And they learned some from teachers. But not enough, it wasn't taught enough. [INAUDIBLE].

How were your parents' English?

Not too great.

[LAUGHS]

We had more fun with that.

So you continued to speak German at home?

Yes.

Yes. My father's English was better than my mother's oral English. My mother, her writing English was better than my father's.

So they'd always have a repartee, you see? I can do better than you. And so it was funny.

And he said to her one day, you know, Irene, they have your favorite pie downstairs in the bakery. I can't think of the name. But you know what your favorite pie is.

And she said, oh, why didn't you bring me one? I didn't have money with me. Go down. You can get it.

She goes down. Comes back, no pie. What happened?

They said they never heard of it. My father said, what do you mean they'd never heard of it? What did you ask him for?

She said, I asked them for a merchant marine pie. And they'd never heard of it. What it was was lemon meringue. But it was war time and she got confused.

That's wonderful. Wonderful.

[LAUGHTER]

That's the English.

So now you're graduating?

I'm graduating. Now what do I do? My parents working in a factory, we just about made it to pay the rent and live. Now what?

And I always wanted to do something in medicine. And maybe the influence of the physician who brought us over. Because he was a wonderful person and a wonderful doctor. So I suppose he had this influence of what I wanted to be.

Could we get his name?

Leo Lefkowitz.

Oh, OK. Mhm.

And he was in the war, too. Oh, God. That's another story, I tell you.

Anyway, that was what could I possibly be? So Papa said, you know what? Maybe you can just find a job for the summertime and we'll discuss it and see what you can do.

You know, you should really be a typist. I said I don't want to be a typist. Yes, that's good for a girl. You know?

I don't want to be a typist. I hate typing. And I hate paperwork. Get a job in the summer, whatever.

What happened was friends of my parents were neighbors of a couple who had two children. And they needed a babysitter living in for the summer. Do you want to do this?

I said, I like kids. She said, I will call them. Maybe they'll have you for an interview. I went for the interview. I got the job.

She had to go for surgery. And she needed somebody to be with the two little ones. And as she is recovering, he said to me, his name was Dr. Dan Moore, he said you and I haven't talked about you at all.

He said to me, what do you want to do now? The job is almost over here with us. I said, I don't know.

What are you interested in? I said, oh, I don't know. Something in medicine, I don't want to be a nurse. And he said to me, do you know what I do? And I said no, not really.

He said I'm a biophysicist. And I have a laboratory in Columbia University right across the bridge. They lived in Leonia, New Jersey, which i-- you heard of Fort Lee recently-- next door.

He said, would you like to see my laboratory? And I said, oh, yes. So he said to his wife, I'm going to take Trudy, and I'm just going to show her around. And she was lovely. And she said, whatever. So he took me.

This is what? '43, '44?

This is '45.

'45.

I graduated. Yeah, '45.

So the war is over?

War is just about over, I think. [INAUDIBLE] when did it end? '40--

Well, in Europe, it was in the spring. And Japan was in the summer.

Yeah. OK. So Japan was still going?

OK. So he shows me his laboratory. It was at Columbia College of Physicians and Surgeons. And I was so impressed with this whole thing. And go into a big laboratory.

He said, I do some research in an area called for electrophoresis. And he said, of course, you don't know what it is because it's so new to all of us. And it is the separation of proteins in the blood, to study proteins. 'Cause there wasn't too much known.

And I thought, well, OK. You know? Then he said to me, how would you like to work for me? He said, I cannot pay you. But I'd like you to learn.

And I almost fell over. I said Dr. Moore, I do have to speak to my parents about this. I'm 18 years old. And I don't want to make-- this is just too much to comprehend.

Then I went back home and I called my parents. And I said I've got to talk to you, Papa. What is it? I have to come home. I got to talk to you.

So they let me off for a few hours. I went home. And I said, this is what's happening? What do you think?

And he said, I don't have to think. Take it. He said, it's like going to school. Doesn't cost you anything.

OK. You won't make any money. But we'll figure it out. We'll give you money for the subway and the bus and we'll feed you. And see what happens.

That's how I got the job. And about six months or so later, he said, I can pay you a little bit. So he started paying me \$50 a month. I thought, oh, just fantastic. But there is a hang up here. Uh oh. I think you should go to school.

Oy. I don't have any money. He said, I'm going to give you a day off a week. And you can go downtown and start taking courses at Columbia. He gave me a day a week.

And I started taking physics, of all things. I thought, I must be crazy. Because he was a biophysicist, he wanted-- so I took physics. And as time went on, chemistry, and more and more stuff.

And he started to pay me more and more. And then, in 1947, I got married. And they came to my wedding. And I learned a lot.

So I thought I was the luckiest girl in the world. At any rate, the job ended because I married and we moved to Montana.

OK. We'll get to that in a minute. During the war years, when you were here with your parents, did they have any communication with family back in Europe? Did they know what was happening? What was their state of mind? You know, I'm talking about--

They were all dead by then.

So once you got here, your folks had no communication with--

Well, when Eric enlisted, he was in the Battle of the Bulge.

Oh.

Do you want to hear a little aside? You might like this story.

Mhm.

He was a sergeant. And he was in charge of a platoon. And you know about the Battle of the Bulge, how horrible?

Yes.

And they were stuck in the ice and the snow. And Eric was. And he's trying to get a Jeep out of I don't know what when a voice came above him and said, what the hell are you doing, Sergeant? And Eric didn't even look up. He said, what the hell do you think I'm doing?

And the voice said, look at me, Sergeant. And Eric looks up. He said, oh, my God. It's General Patton himself.

[LAUGHING]

So anyway, they made it through. And where were we?

Well, I was asking if your parents had any knowledge of what was happening to their extended family.

Because of Eric, who stayed after the war to try to find what was going on.

No. But I meant during--

During? No. No.

No? No knowledge?

No.

Do you remember your parents talking about--

Oh, yes.

[INAUDIBLE] during the war?

Yes. Oh, yes. Oh, yes.

They would have been terribly upset.

Then we all-- I was, of course, already of a more mature age that I could participate.

Did they try to contact anybody in Europe?

The only ones that we were able--

During the war. During the war.

During the war was a cousin who made it, a cousin of my father who made it to Bolivia.

Oh, OK.

But that's another story. Her husband-- she was my father's cousin and her husband was my mother's cousin. So that's a little-- [? Kristall ?] Night-- his name was Richard. And he was taken away and sent to Dachau. And she was left alone with her baby in Vienna.

And the Nazis said to her, if you can get yourself out of here, I'll let him out and he can go with you. Let's get him out. And so she starts going from one embassy to another embassy, ends up at the Bolivian embassy, gets permission. And

they really let him out.

Wonderful.

It's now a few days before departure. And the kid gets scarlet fever. And they can't go. So now you start this whole thing again.

But she was smart. She said, I might as well go to the Bolivian embassy and tell them what has happened. Maybe they'll-- and they did.

But it took time. You know, everything takes time. In the meantime, the Nazis come and take this. Finally, they are able to go by ship to Cochabamba, which is the second largest city in Bolivia.

They get there. I don't know how long it took. Heintz, the little boy who's now 76, still living in Vienna, whom I saw a few years ago.

So they're on that ship and they're getting to Cochabamba. And it's on a weekend. And Richard says, I do not feel well.

And all the immigrants are in that camp. That's where the refugees had to go, to an immigration center. And they said, oh, that happens all the time. Because the altitude is very difficult for people.

You'll be OK. Richard wasn't OK. He got worse. But there was no doctor available on the weekend.

He had to wait till Monday. And he's getting a fever and a lot of pain. Finally, Monday comes. Richard can't talk anymore. He's in so much pain.

The doctor says, you have a burst appendix. We gotta go quick! They get him to the hospital, put him on the table, and he died.

So she can't get out with the little boy. She didn't know what to do. And that's where my father's communication began, at least to somebody. She had no idea what happened to any of the family until much later when we found out. Eric found out.

My cousins, they were all in Theresienstadt, most of them. And Eric found her. This is my Aunt Elsa, the one who met me at the train station and said you don't have to-- her daughter was in Theresienstadt, survived. But she was deathly ill.

And Eric found her, found her in Vienna after and saw how sick she was. She had TB. She had kidney disease. She had-- you name it.

And he arranged for her to go to a sanatorium in Switzerland until she got well. So he was able to save her and her husband whom she met in Theresienstadt. He was a roofer. His name was Alexander [? Barnard. ?]

He was in Theresienstadt. And he saw Anna scrounging around for some food. And they got a little bit. So he tried to help her.

He was a roofer in Vienna. He did most of the roofs of the big-- like St. Stephen's. And he was-- and so the Nazis used him to fix the roof here and there.

They didn't care if the water dripped down on the inmates. But they wanted their roofs to be free from rainwater and all that. So he did that. So he had a little access to more things.

And then the rumor came that the war is coming to an end. And Americans or British farmers are going to bomb. So the inmates said, so now we survived this, now we're going to get killed by-- he climbed up on the roof of the barracks with red paint. And he painted red crosses on the roofs. If he had been caught, he would have been dead.

Yeah.

But the thing was that some of these roofs leaked. And the red paint dripped on some of the prisoners. They had no way to get rid of it. And some of the Nazis saw them and they thought they had some kind of terrible disease and they ran.

[LAUGHS]

Let's now get back to you. And you said you met your husband. How did you meet your husband?

I met him at a dance, at a synagogue dance during the war. He had been discharged. He had been hit by-- grazed by a bullet. And he started to get migraines. So they discharged him, you know?

He was American.

Yeah.

He was American. And you got married in what year?

'47.

'47. And so you then moved to Montana, you said?

Mhm. He was a teacher, music teacher. And they paid better in Montana than they did in New Jersey. And he had a friend from the army who said, hey, why don't you come to Montana? See how the West lives, instead of in that crowded East Coast.

So I can't think of your husband's name.

Seymour.

Seymour.

Schoenberger.

Schoenberger. So where in Montana did you--

Oh. A small little town called Harlem. But originally, they spelled Haarlem with two A's, like the Dutch. But they changed it then to H-A-R.

And it was also a little town. And the people were wonderful. And you know, it was just--

Was there a Jewish population there?

Oh, no. Not in Harlem. There was one family who lived about 40 miles away. And they took us to services, to Yom Kippur, to North Dakota. And Susan was born in Montana.

Your first child?

Yeah. And I thought, oh, my God. What did I do? This is ridiculous. I'm here in wild country.

It was the best care I ever had, such care. When she was due, already I'm in labor. And called the hospital, and they said come on in. I get there, no doctor.

Where's the doctor? Oh, he went hunting. He's out in the Rockies. We have to send a posse.

So how long did you stay in Montana?

Two years.

Two years.

Then we came back. I wanted to come. My parents were alone. Eric was-- where was he at that time? Still getting his doctorate, maybe. And it was time to come back.

So you came back to New York? New Jersey?

Well, to New Jersey, for a time and then my husband got a job in Connecticut, New London, and we moved there. And I didn't work.

You stayed home. Did you have any other children?

I had a son, born in New London. Then we moved to East Hampton, Connecticut. And from East Hampton, where did we go? I moved near New Haven.

And my husband got a beautiful job as director of music at a regional school system called Amity, one of the best in the country, well-known for its curriculum. And he was lucky enough to get-- he was lucky. I wasn't so lucky.

He hired a choral teacher. And that choral teacher had never been married. And she kind of flirted with him. And he fell for her.

And they had an affair. And it broke up my marriage. Kaput.

So he always said, I'm coming back. And it's over. And I fell for this whole shtick. Had two children, I didn't-- I was terrified.

And he got a principalship in Enfield, Connecticut, away from her now, this woman. And he said, I promise it's over. And we'll start over again. And Susan was going to college now at this time, just starting. Steve was last year of high school.

Stupidly enough, I said OK. And we sold the house, moved to Southfield, where we lived. And the affair had not ended. It kept on going and going.

And then, finally, it was time to say goodbye. You know, I can't take this anymore. He married her and got Parkinson's disease and he died.

But before he died, still dealing with this illness, she said, I want a divorce. I'm not taking care of you.

Yep.

So I made it. You have to make it, you make it.

Right.

Then, in 1972, Papa died. And Mutti was alone. They'd managed to buy a little house in East Hampton, Connecticut.

And they loved it, a little garden. But Papa died. And my mother didn't drive in a small town. So she came to live with me.

Right.

And we made it together. She did the cooking. And I let-- and people said what? You're letting her do all that stuff?

And I said, yes. She wants to do it. Whatever she doesn't want to do, she doesn't have to do. And she died about 16 years ago, at the age of 100.

Oh. And--

What else?

Can we now talk about some of your thoughts and feelings about what you went through? Do you feel Austrian at all?

No. I feel completely American, except for the music part in me, which I feel very much, I think, Viennese. Isn't that silly?

No!

You know, all the composers and that, I feel. But when I-- and the beautiful music, I just-- that's in me.

Did you play on that beautiful piano that you had? So you had music. That was one of your interests.

That was my [BOTH TALKING].

Music.

But I wasn't any good. I mean, I had to stop. The teacher couldn't come anymore. My mother was very much interested in music.

OK.

And then the people, the doctor and his wife that I lived with in Woodside, it was all music.

So you were surrounded.

I was surrounded. And they were wonderful. They took me, whether I liked it or not, to Carnegie Hall to hear Sebelius--

[LAUGHING]

--or Shostakovich. Well, I wasn't too thrilled with that at the time. But my cousin Leo, he said, sit down. I'm going to talk to you about this. So you, know you learn.

Right. So you said you feel American now?

Oh, yes. I've been here 70 some years.

And what are your thoughts about Germany today, now?

I was just talking to my neighbor who-- he's a doctor next door here, who's from the South, who has part German in him. And he's very much pro-Israel.

Is he German-Jewish or German German?



No. He's not Jewish. But he's very Jewish-oriented. He's an atheist. And he says to me, you know, finally, I don't believe in any of this religious stuff. It causes all the problems. But if I had to choose, I'd be a Jew.

Regardless, I said to him the other day, I said Germany has grown and is rich in economics. And I said deep down, I hate to say this, I resent it. And I can't help it.

And I know German people. And I'm friendly. But there is this residual feeling.

And it isn't just the Germans. It's the Austrians, too. And the Austrians in many ways were worse. Well, you can't be worse. You can't be worse. But they-- I mean, they welcomed Hitler with open arms.

Did you ever see him?

No. No. I heard him speak.

On the radio?

At the Heldenplatz in Vienna, when he came in to Vienna.

On the radio?

Yeah. I did see-- I think I did see Goering marching in, big guy with his troops. But you know, then it didn't impress me very much. Until later, when you think, oh, I saw that. I wish I could have--

So you were saying you feel American?

Oh, yes. And I think as many problems as we have, it's still the best. If it weren't for America, I would not be talking to you. I'm sure.

What was it like to become a citizen?

It was great.

Do you remember that day?

I had to become a citizen by myself because of the age. When I turned 18, you had to-- first of all, there was a five year span. But if you turn 18, you cannot become a citizen with your parents. You had to apply on your own.

So this was in New York. And I had to have two witnesses. And my boss, this Dr. Moore from Columbia, said I'd be happy to be a witness and an aunt of my husband's. We went. And I was just so proud.

And I don't remember them asking many questions. Who's the President? Oh, Roosevelt, you know? And the judicial system-- but they didn't ask much. OK. I was very happy.

Are you angry that you had to go through what you did, those difficult years in Austria?

Well, if there isn't anger it would be-- how can you just say, oh, no. I'm not angry. And mostly angry at all the people that I lost, such sadness. And how can people do this to anybody?

How can you not be angry? Or what is that feeling? It's not-- I don't even say hatred, but an anger, an anger. That people-- I thought we were civilized in the world now. But I guess we're not.

One more thing that might interest you. When we were divorced, and I hadn't worked since Columbia, a good friend-- we lived right near New Haven, near Yale. And this woman, her husband was a research physician there.

Said, you know, you're going through all this trauma. You really should get a job. And I said to her, Gloria, I haven't worked in 15 years. What can I do? Wash dishes?

She said, no, no, no. You have experience. Go to Yale and apply. I said, you are crazy. I'm not doing that.

And she nudged, like somebody nudged my brother. So I said, all right. I'll go.

I get to the employment office. Gentlemen says, what would you like to do? And I said, well, I thought I could get a job in the lab. But I tried to talk myself out of it. Because I was too--

You did not have a college degree. You were just--

Not yet. I was taking courses.

You had taken courses at Columbia.

Yeah.

Yeah. OK.

But I'd left in the meantime. So--

OK.

So he said, well, what? I said I haven't worked in 15 years. He says did you work in a lab? I said yes.

What did you do? I said electrophoresis. And the man said, what did you just say? I thought he didn't-- I said electrophoresis. He said, don't move.

I said, oh, my God. This has nothing to do with electricity. He said please don't move. I have to make a call.

And he's making this call. And he says, Dr. Herskovic, I have a young lady here who did electrophoresis a long time ago. Oh, really? Oh, OK. I'll tell her. Bye.

Get over there now. He wants to see you. I said, wait a minute. You know, this is a little bit much.

He said, go over there. He has been looking for a technician who knows anything about electrophoresis for a year. So I go over there and there's that sweet little man. And he said, oh, my God, come in. I'm never going to let you go.

And I said, well, I do want to make you aware I haven't held a pipette-- they used to have long pipettes. Are you familiar with any of that stuff that you suck up? I mean, I can't even do that.

He said, I'm going to give you a beaker and a pipette. And I'm going to leave the room. And you practice.

So he gave me-- it was like you just don't forget, you know? And he said to me, he didn't ask me anything. He just said, when can you start? And I said, I don't know. Tomorrow. He said good.

[LAUGHTER]

So you worked in his lab for how long?

Four years. And then he left and went to work in Texas with that heart specialist DeBakey. He wanted me to go with him. But I was married. And so he sent me to the veterans hospital. I worked there for two years.

And then we moved. Then I guess it was Southfield. Then he came my husband, said everything's OK. We moved to Southfield.

And I worked, got a job at Bay State Medical Center in Springfield, Massachusetts. And I was there, I think, 20 years, clinical medicine.

In the lab, you mean?

Yeah. The laboratory.

Yeah, yeah. Wonderful.

Doing all the testing, like, if you need your blood drawn and all that.

So did you ever-- you didn't need a college degree?

Well, then they had a program. Because I didn't have my degree, I could get my license as an official medical technologist if I choose to take a national exam. But it had to be in all fields of medical technology, microbiology, blood banking, hematology, parasitology, chemistry.

Oh, My God. that's like taking a college course. And I said, you know what? I'm going to do it.

And there were a couple of other people like me. We've had all this experience, but not enough-- to go through a degree is the best thing. You should have a degree.

So we thought we'd try it. We got a book that was this thick. We had to study. And finally, the day comes of the exam. And I thought, I think I'd rather be dead.

And we had to take it in Boston. And there were 400 of us taking this exam. And it was a hole half a day.

And the first question in chemistry, that I should be familiar with, I didn't know the answer. I thought, oh, all is lost. But I remember what the counselor had said, you don't know the answer? Just go right to the next. Well, I passed anyway. Then I became an official med tech.

When your children were the age that you were during Kristallnacht, and the difficult times in Vienna, did that bring back those memories? Did it--

Not because of-- no, not particularly when they were that age. No, no. It brings back--

When do you think about it?

I think about it a lot.

And as you've gotten older?

As I've gotten older, I think about it a lot. And I have my grandson, one of my grandsons, lives in California. And they had a little girl. And they called me.

And I said, oh, God. This is fantastic. What's her name? Her name is Elizabeth. But we're going to call her Lily because-- so I have a Lily. She's two years old. She's adorable.

Yeah. Beautiful. Beautiful.

So things like that. And my older grandson, the one, his brother, who lives here, who has Matty, he named Matty Matthew Ian. And I said where's the Ian?

He said that is in honor of my grandmother, your mother, Irene, starting with an "I." Because he admires-- he's not a talker, never talks about things that oh, what a great lady [INAUDIBLE].

But he does things. He acts on it. And I thought that was really in honor of Omi, they called her.

Omi. So you told your children about your experience?

Oh. I wrote a book. Not a book, but into a form. It could be published as a book. But I wrote my story.

When they were growing up?

Yes. Oh, yes.

You did.

I did. And I think because of it, my son went to Israel, became an Israeli citizen, and served in their defense forces as a parachutist. So I said, I don't have enough tsuris, you got to do that?

[LAUGHS]

Yeah. Does he still live in Israel?

He lives in New Jersey now. He's a writer. He's written quite a few books.

What are your thoughts on Israel, considering what you went through? I think if Israel had existed, it wouldn't have happened. I mean, I think what they have done with their country is phenomenal.

Why can't people do that? Why? I mean, I say a lot of whys in my head. Why this? But it doesn't-- not too many answers come from the whys. We don't know why anything, do we?

Do you feel you lost a part of your childhood?

Oh, yes.

Did you ever get it back?

No. I don't think so. I had a good childhood.

Before?

Before. But then it was over. It was over. Because of not just what was done to the whole world, almost, but you dwell on the people you love so much who suffered so much. And when I found out exactly what happened to them, you know, everyone had a story of what happened. It just-- no.

I manage to enjoy my life, because I think I have a lot of blessings now. I have my children and grandchildren and great-- and friends here. And you have to enjoy what you can.

The sad part, too, is what happened to my brother. Excuse me. He had two sons, wonderful guys. And the younger one was 19. And he said to Eric, they lived in North Carolina, I have pain in my back. And he was-- athlete, very athletic.

So go to the doctor, x-rays, couldn't find anything. Michael, you got to stop for a while. Don't do any soccer or whatever

he was doing. And it got better.

And then it came back. And it got worse. And it got worse. And it got worse. And they finally discovered cancer of the muscle called rhabdomyosarcoma.

And to amputate it, he went to New York to Sloan Kettering. Amputated his hip, all the way down. And 6 months later, he's dead, 19-years-old.

So my brother has one son left. Thank God. He's in Chicago. But Michael is dead.

So that's when I get angry. And I'm saying, isn't it enough? He had to lose this child?

I went back to school after I took this national exam. I did go back. And I got a degree in liberal arts.

Wonderful. Where did you go?

It was a community college.

Wonderful.

And I thought, that's enough. I don't need that degree--

And then what brought you down to this area?

Susie, my daughter, and my son-in-law.

Live nearby.

I mean, I came here visiting all the time, you know? And then when it was time, after my mother died, they said, it's too much. I had this house, three bedrooms, and dining room, and basement, the living-- oh, too much. All alone? Who needs it?

Have you been back to Austria?

Oh, yes. What are your feelings when you go there?

Well, I love Vienna, the city. But feeling I could not live here. And I met-- they had a reunion for me. Children I went to school with when I was eight years old, we had a reunion.

I didn't recognize any. One I recognized. And she's been corresponding. She's the one who set it up.

But I didn't know the rest except for this young man, who's now 88, who lived across the street from us. And we were always together. We were in school and I always liked him, you know?

And he said we should meet again in Vienna as long as you're here. Well, the very first time, before I was going to the reunion, but he left a message with my cousin, the one my brother rescued, that I should call him. So I called. And he's very, very-- not rigid. But precise, you know, the timing.

I would like to meet you for breakfast tomorrow at 9:00 AM at such and such. You know?

[LAUGHS]

So I said OK. He came with a dozen yellow roses, handsome as can be. And that was the first time I'd seen him. He was an American POW, served in the German army. And told me he had to join the Nazi party because-- they all did, most

of the men and women. But because he desperately wanted a university education.

So he became what is equivalent here to the secretary of our interior. That's what he was in Austria. So I thought, that's nice.

Do you get reparations?

I do.

How do you feel about that?

Nothing they can give us can make up for what was done to any of us. And I feel we deserve it. I have no qualms.

They took away everything. They took away my education that I could have had. They took away my home. They took away life. Not my personal life, but life.

Yeah. And I don't know how other people feel. But I have no qualms about it.

And if they paid me millions of dollars, they would not bring back Lily or Tante Elsa or Tante Olga or any of them. Uncle Ludwig, who was a jolly, jolly man, always had a good sense of humor. Loved kids. Never had any of his own.

Was sent to Bachau. Came back a broken man. And one day, he went downstairs. He never left his seat, didn't want to go anywhere, do anything. And his brother, my Uncle Isidore was coming to visit him.

And all of a sudden, he says to his wife, let's go meet him downstairs. And she thought, he's snapping out of it. Oh, yeah. So he says to her, you wait at the front door, and I'll go to the back door. Fine.

Never saw him again. She's standing at the door. He's never come in. They found his coat on the edge on the banks of the Danube.

Now what? Doesn't take a genius to figure out. [INAUDIBLE]. He just couldn't take it. What did they do to him?

So should you not be angry? But you can't live it all the time. You know?

It would make you-- would do something to myself. I wouldn't be a good mother. I wouldn't be a good grandmother. You can't live like that. But I think about it almost every day, about some aspect.

Do you feel that you're like two different people? Somebody on the outside--

Yeah.

--somebody on the inside? Different than the person--

Yeah. Good way to put it. It's difficult. I don't know how other people-- well, Erica, the woman I was telling you about who lives here, who wrote a book? She was sent to Scotland to a convent.

Her parents converted to Catholicism, [INAUDIBLE]. They died. I don't know where. They tried to save her, so I guess-- she didn't know she was Jewish until she came to America 20 years later.

Her aunt, she had a cross on her bedpost. And her aunt came in said, Erica, what is this? She said, Mother Superior gave it to me or whatever.

And she said, but we don't have a cross. And Erica said, why not? She said, because you're Jewish?

And Erica said what? I'm Catholic. She hasn't really been able to deal with it yet.

Are you more comfortable around other survivors, people whose lives were in danger than the people who were born in America?

No. I'm comfortable with everybody. But I understand.

Do you feel a greater connection [INAUDIBLE]?

Yes. You do feel a greater connection, of course. Because you feel that what's your story?

What happened? How did you deal with it? But I haven't felt that until now. Until [INAUDIBLE].

I've met three other people. And we have lunch together. You can't help it, you know? But I feel comfortable with-- well, I feel comfortable with just about anybody. I don't have trouble making friends.

Your civil rights were taken away after Kristallnacht.

Everything.

Yeah. Were you active in the Civil Rights Movement here? Because you had lost, as a child, you lost your civil rights?

Not really active. But I contribute to what I can. I support it wholeheartedly, wholeheartedly.

Has the world learned anything from the Holocaust?

No. No.

Do you think it could happen again?

It could. Maybe not the way we knew it as to the Jews. But it's happening everywhere. It's happening.

Look what they're doing in Iraq and in Syria. And it's happening.

Would you have been a different person today if you hadn't gone through what you did [INAUDIBLE]?

Perhaps. But how would I know? How can you--

Well, did it make you more independent?

I don't know if that-- I was pretty much overprotected, I think, when I was growing up. I think I was more independent, became more independent when I was divorced.

Oh, OK.

I had to--

But not from your childhood and not from your experience.

No.

Were you a very protective mother? Because you--

No. My husband didn't allow that, which was a good thing.

Yeah.

And they're very independent. Look at Steven. Schleps himself to Israel and jumps out of airplanes.

Right.

And Susan opened up her own practice in acupuncture and massage and all that right down the road on 29, right above where Trader Joe is? Right upstairs. They are very independent.

Well, before we end, is there anything you wanted to add to your grandchildren or great-grandchildren? A message to them before we--

Well, the only message is to tell them to live well and to be kind to all people. And I don't think they need to hear that from me. And that I just love them very much. And read my story in case you forget!

[LAUGHTER]

Which one of my grandsons typed out for me.

Wonderful.

So I have no complaints about the family. Thank goodness, you know? So I guess sometimes things turn out in the end. Don't they?

Right. Right.

Anything else I didn't answer?

No. You were wonderful.

Oh.

Thank you for doing--

Take those pictures. See those pictures?

We'll look at them a little later.

That's just a little-- it helps to put it in your head.

Yeah. Yeah. Did you-- well, is there anything in the pictures that you could talk about during the interview?

Well, I just showed there's a picture of my house, my mother and father. There's nothing to talk about it.

OK. Well, thank you very much doing--

Well, thank you.

--the interview. This concludes the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum interview with Trudy Schoenberger.