Interview with Mary Ackos Calof
And Evelyn Ackos Ettinger
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HOLOCAUST ORAL HISTORY TAPING PROJECT

Q: This is Rhoda Lewin. I've just interviewed Sam Ackos and now I'm going to be talking with his sisters, Evelyn Ettinger and Mary Calof, about their memories of the period during World War II when first the Italians, and then the Germans, came into Greece, and what their experiences were. Who would like to begin? When were you born? Start with that.

E: I was born February 21, '37. So I was seven when my father was taken, 14 when we emigrated here. So I have definite memories, and they do differ from Sam's. I remember during the war when my father was gone, the memory I have of this tall, good-looking man returning. I don't remember the period at all, if we were in hiding with Mrs. Sayianou. I have no recollection of that at all. I only remember the day that my mother came from the synagogue and the word had gotten out that they were taking them, something terrible was taking place, and that my Aunt Tula and my Aunt Esther came and they took the children and they said they would go wherever her husband was going, she was going with them. And my mother had said – whether it was verbally later, or I remember it that day, I don't know – she said that she went down to the synagogue and saw my dad being put on the trucks, and he said to her, "Go away. Don't come with me. Take the children and go to Mrs. Sayianou. I don't know what's happening here." And he made her go back. And I remember her coming that day and taking us, and literally leaving everything behind, and going to the suburb of Athens in which the woman had a beautiful villa. And she hid us in the room downstairs, and the only person that was there that knew we were Jewish was – I don't know if she was a maid, or someone else that tended the gardens – I don't know who she was. I remember her name. It was Agapi, which means love. And she liked all of us and gave us names. I remember that. And the recollection I have of those years there was, I don't remember going to school. I remember eating the same thing for two years, which was green peas, the same food every day. I remember my father having visited the villa at some point in time before, and he had left a cigarette burn on the billiard table, and she told me that was my dad that had done it. She was a beautiful woman of very aristocratic background. Her children lived in Johannesburg, and her husband had been, I believe an ambassador to somewhere for Greece, one of the eastern countries. She was affluent, but the money, I don't know where it came from. And I remember that I had to pretend to be a Christian, and the only thing I had to do was go to a church one Sunday,

with my mom, and pretend to cross myself. I had to do it, my mother said, in order, I suppose, to prove to the neighbors that we were indeed Christian.

Q: How did you know this woman?

E: The relationship was what Sam accounted for. That is what I remember, and I think he's correct, in that my aunt was a widow of the Albanian War, and so was Mrs. Sayianou. And she liked my Aunt Esther, and when things were becoming very evident that something was going to happen to us as Jews, and what was happening in the war, she had told Aunt Esther that if ever you need help, you and your sister and her children, or your family, will be protected by me. So she is the one, indeed, one of those Christians that put her life on the line, to save us. But I also remember that in that area of Nea Smirni where we were hiding in that villa with Mrs. Sayianou, I knew, because there must have been conversations at home, that there were many Jewish families that were being hidden at the same time within that area, even though we were two blocks away from a German camp.

Q: A camp? Or the S.S.?

E: I don't know if they were S.S. or what they were, but it was the Germans that were two blocks away from us, within the vicinity, very close. I remember that. After five years of graduating high school, graduating business school, and working for the "Jewish World," I saved my money and after I became a citizen I wanted to go back. The pull back to my native land was very strong, and it remains as strong today, but I have accepted it that I can't be there. And I'm not my own person to say. "I'm going to do this.' I have other responsibilities to meet. So I went back in '56 and one of the first things I did was go back and visit Mrs. Sayianou, who was at the time still alive, and I went back to the villa. I took the bus and I knew exactly where to get off to go to her home, and I had a nice visit with her. Then when I went back in 1970 with my husband, she was gone. But I was a 19-year-old at the time and not, of course, having the maturity, although I'd like to think some wisdom and understanding of what took place in Greece and in the world and in my life. I would like to have seen her in these years, these older, more mature years, and talked to her, because she must have been one of those special people. She had to be.

Q: Oh, yes, because you think, here she had brought into her house a woman and five small children, and she couldn't conceal it all. I mean, everybody in the other villas around must have known.

E: Not that we were Jewish. It was a time of war. Everybody's lives were…

Q: There were a lot of refugees.

E: That's right. Nothing was really normal, in that sense. So people could accept the fact that we came from a northern village, and whatever story you could give

them. Most people would take it for what it was that you were saying. But also, I think, like Sam, that the level of anti-Semitism was never to the height that it was in Poland or in Russia or in any of the eastern countries. I think anti-Semitism is everywhere, and it was in Greece, but not on the level of those countries. I think you found more humane people in the Greeks.

Q: I know so many people said Polish people could "smell" a Jew. They always "knew" who was Jewish. And I don't get that feeling here, although Sam said on the other tape that he didn't "look" Jewish. When the Germans came to take the men from the synagogue, they kicked him out.

E: Well, I didn't look Jewish at all.

A: Okay, Mary. You would like to add something else?

M: Yes. I want to add about the anti-Semitism part. I've always grown up with the opposite feeling, and that's maybe because my memories are more after the war, and I think maybe the anti-Semitism in Greece came out much stronger after the war, because they both failed to tell you that when we went into hiding, that we put all our belongings in storage with neighbors. When we came back they would not give it back to us. That's number one story. Just an example. I always had a very strong feeling of being scared that people knew I was Jewish in Greece after the war. And the other example which they forgot to tell you is – it's like a Turkish-Israeli law – people don't own homes that much in Greece, and especially at that time. But the longer you lived in an apartment, a house, the more it was as though you owned it. You had certain rights. When my mother came back after the war, and tried to claim back her home, the court people or the policeman or whoever she went to get her home back, said, "Why do you Jews make trouble? They should've killed you all." Instead of feeling sorry for this woman.

E: I don't remember that.

M: You hadn't ever heard that story?

E: No. This is the first.

Q: Now, when were you born, Mary?

M: '39. And I do remember a lot of name-calling and a lot of feelings. Maybe by then we were becoming – what is the word – neurotic about it, paranoid. Maybe we were, and maybe I was.

E: Oh, I remember the name-calling in the neighborhood.

M: So it wasn't just kids. It was adults, and it was the feeling, so I have always grown up with the feeling – my favorite expression, which I told you today, "mixed blessing"—that there were very good Greek people, but Greeks are really, I feel, very anti-Semitic. I don't know if they are or not, but I grew up with that feeling. Now I'm trying to change that, because when we got here the Greek community was very supportive of my mother. Yet we had no Greek friends. So I can't account for why we don't have Greek friends here, none. And it's always because they don't really accept us, because we're not Orthodox.

Q: They're Greek Orthodox. And you're Jews.

M: We are Jewish. So I did want to speak on that anti-Semitism.

E: Well, it's a mixed thing. What I was saying, on the total scale, when you're looking at the kind of anti-Semitism that took place in Poland and Russia and Germany, the Greek story is not the same. The Greek level of anti-Semitism never reached that kind. But anti-Semitism, yes. Anti-Semitism is everywhere. And will always be everywhere. It's the level that we are able to control that makes the difference.

Q: You say Aunt Tula and Aunt Esther took the children. They were your aunts?

E: They were my mother's sisters. They went to the synagogue.

Q: How old were the children?

E: I have a picture of the young one. They're beautiful babies. Less than a year old. Beautiful blonde little children. And then my mother came back and we went into hiding. And also, another memory I have that Sam doesn't talk about, is that during the war, when my dad was back, he was doing so well that I remember the people on the corner across the street, because of the lack of food, they had become very blown up. It was edema. The lack of nutrition was causing that. And I remember going down to the basement – and to this day I can still see it, the staples, the food that was there, the potatoes, wheat, whatever. And I remember dad giving it to these people

M: But at what point of the war are you talking about?

E: It had to be before he was taken. It had to be before '44 between the time '40 and '44.

M: Maybe when the Italians were there?

E: I don't know. I don't remember all that, but I remember the food. I can see it to this day, the buckets of food that were in the basement, and they were giving it to these people because we had so much, and they didn't. But he was a very clever

man, and I am convinced, to this day, as many Jews that survived the war, that came back, that there in the same kind of role making a living, that they became very successful. I'm convinced my dad would have been one of those people, because he was a go-getter. I mean, he had so many things going at once. He had the jewelry stand, which I remember. And to this day, we have some beautiful pieces jewelry because of the stand that he had. My mother was not a jewelry person, she only kept them for value, not because she liked them. And I remember the stand that my dad had. I had gone back to the square where the transactions took place in Athens, and I remember that little square. He had enough money to buy jewelry from people, and when he did, and he saw something, he would say to my mom, "Do you want this?" And that's how we ended up with some nice pieces. I also remember going in my mother's room and seeing on top of the dresser a stack of money that he would leave for her. So he did well. How he did it, I don't know, but he did well. The difficult times came after he was taken. And I remember the holidays. I remember them opening the whole house and making a long table with white tablecloths for Passover. And then after the war, my mom would not celebrate Passover any more.

M: She wouldn't celebrate any holidays. We used to go to the synagogue without her and come home, and she'd be waiting.

E: She denied. I went to Temple on my own. I would take the bus and go to Temple on my own. We always had a feeling for our Judaism. We went to a parochial school, that's what Sam meant, like a Talmud Torah, we had in Athens. All the Jewish kids went, and it was part of the public education. That was the grade school years. You got your Hebrew education along with your secular education. We had the Hebrew teacher. I remember him hitting my knuckles because I made fun of him. I was a devil. And I have pictures of doing Hanukah, and dressing up as Queen Esther. We had a <u>wonderful</u> Hebrew school. We had Hebrew, I think, one hour a day, classes every day.

Q: Were the teachers Jewish in the school?

E: No, not all of them. I remember the teacher, she was not Jewish. But the Jewish teacher, the man, the one that taught us the Hebrew was Jewish.

Q: Do you remember, were all the children going to their own various parochial schools? Is that how the public school were set up? There were some schools for Jews, some schools for Greek Orthodox, some schools for Catholics?

E&M: No, everybody else <u>was</u> Greek Orthodox!

E: The only minority would have been the Catholics. But the majority of the people were Greek Orthodox. Whether they were observant or not, that's what they were

Q: Now, did all the Jews live in one part of town? Do you remember that?

E: Well, in the area that we lived in, it was predominately Jewish, like you would say the West Side, or Highland Park. Not everybody on our street was, but maybe ten families out of the whole block were Jewish.

M: I think the area was Jewish, because the synagogue was walking distance from our house. And it was the only synagogue in Athens, ever. And to this day it is.

Q: Did you keep a kosher home?

M: No.

E: I don't remember that. The only thing I do remember distinctly is that Ma had kosher chickens for Yom Kippur and Rosh Hashanah.

M: How did she get them, if they were kosher?

E: I don't know.

M: I remember here that she got kosher chickens from the butcher, Rabbi Melzer on Broadway. She used to go to the market and get them and have them killed and feathered and the whole thing.

E: But she only did it on holidays. It was not a daily practice. And I don't remember anyone in the neighborhood observing that. And when you ask about the Yiddish, what we speak, what the southern Europeans speak is Ladino. And that's Spanish and Hebrew. But we, in our family, did not speak it. But if you went down to the synagogue, you would hear a lot of people speak Ladino.

M: Do you know that for a fact?

E: Yes. And I think today, if you go to Greece before me, you could check it out. Who knows when I'll get there? Four years from now, when they all graduate! (Laughter)

Q: How many times have you traveled back to Greece?

E: Just twice.

M: Four.

Q: Four times. Do you go together?

M: No. I was the first one to return. I was the first one of the family to go. I think another point that I would like to make, that Sam made, the fact of marrying your daughters off without the dowry, that certainly was a big factor in her desire to

emigrate. But the other factor was an education. She really believed and wanted us to be educated, and in Greece, secondary education is not free. So she considered that a big factor, and knew that within her means, even though we could sustain ourselves, it was not the kind of income that would allow her to educate five people.

Q: Yes, because now, after the war, when you came back to your room in what had been your house, and your father was gone, what supported you was Sam's cab.

E: Sam didn't drive the cab. It was my mother's cab, and my mother hired it out.

Q: Oh, I thought Sam was driving it part of the time. And your mother was still working as a seamstress?

E: No. I don't recall my mother ever working as a seamstress in Greece. I think she had the talent, and maybe she did it when she was young, but I don't ever recall her…

M: She worked as a seamstress here. She worked here, when we all had to go on our own, and because she had the talent for that, then she did that as her livelihood. But during the years of her marriage she never worked.

Q: Then when you came here you were what age?

E: I was fourteen.

M: Twelve.

Q: Had you learned any English? Had you been studying it?

M&E: No, none of us knew English at all.

Q: What happened when you came? Where did you go to school? How did you learn English?

E: We came in March, and I don't think they put us in school until the following September. I don't remember going to school right away, but I do remember that the first summer I was sent to Herzl camp.

M: And I hated it.

E: She hated it, I loved it. I loved it and I stayed on. And that was a very good source of learning English. And then the following fall they put us in high school. There was no bilingual/ESL program then. They threw you into the sea, and made you swim!

M: Excuse me. I remember now, I think between March and Herzl camp, we went to the International Institute and the American Jewish Service. I have pictures for you, if you want me to find them for you. They're in the closet. The American Jewish Service also gave us English lessons, so I think that must have been the period that we were doing that. Before summer. And then, I was twelve, and I was put into the third grade.

E: Third grade?

M: Third Grade! Don't think it wasn't hard, Evy. I was the tallest, biggest person there was in third grade. And within a year – I didn't belong in third grade, they put me in third grade to start somewhere – within a year I was up to my level, which was up to their level, ninth grade. So the first year I spent going from third to ninth. They kept shifting me every couple of months, and then the following year I went to Mechanic Arts as a ninth grader.

E: And they put me in Mechanic Arts as a tenth grader, cold, because I had finished grade school in Athens, and had finished exams, and had entered the gymnasium in Athens. I had been there for three months when my mother came and asked us, each individually – I remember that – and I remember my answer was "No." And my mom said I was the only one that said no.

M: I don't remember being asked.

E: I want to back up and say…Are you through with the lower years, or are you going to go back?

Q: Whatever you want to talk about.

M: Okay. Emotionally, for me, now, the tears will come.

E: Don't say it if you can't.

M: It's important. Evy said that I hated Herzl. Right after the war, my mother was left with the five kids, and also, what Sam did not touch upon, was my mother's emotional state after the war on finding out that she was alone. And so she had to…I'll get there…(much crying). They had set up an orphanage for people who had lost everybody, or people that needed help, and my mother had the five kids, so she put two of us in the orphanage. And that was me, and her. Evy's a very feisty, knowing person, and so she wouldn't stay. She would keep running away. And I grew up always trying to please everybody, so I was very accepting, but very miserable. And they brought Esther in there with me, and both Esther and I were very, very miserable. I think I was there for at least two years, and I think it's one of the most affected times. And my mother was great. (Still crying). I think she probably had the guilt, very badly. She always used to come, all loaded down with food…Oh, I also had anemia. I forgot that I was very sick.

E: We all did.

M: You weren't in the orphanage at that time. You didn't know that. But I spent three months in the infirmary of the orphanage. So not only was I in an orphanage, but I was isolated from the kids, for three months. And they kept giving me B-12 shots, every day or twice a day, and my mother used to come, all loaded down. She used to bring me raw spleen, and raw eggs. But probably, in reviewing some of this, it hits you, after 45 years, and that that's probably why I hated Herzl camp, because here I was being taken away from her again. It was a miserable, terrible time.

Q: Was the orphanage near your house?

E: It was like St. Louis Park, from here.

M: But you have to remember the times too. The transportation was not good, so it was like going to the country.

Q: Who supported this orphanage?

E: It was the Jewish community.

M: The United Jewish Appeal.

E: I can't see it being from the Jewish community of Athens, because nobody had anything. These were people who were trying to help themselves.

M: Does anybody want to hear a funny thing? Why it disbanded?

Q: Why?

M: Because the director was sexually abusing the girls! Can you believe that?

Q: Right after World War II. How many children were there?

M: I don't know numbers, but I have a picture. You want a picture?

Q: Oh, yes. I would like to see your pictures. And possibly borrow some of them.

M: It must have been 25-35 kids. There were quite a few.

Q: It was boys and girls?

M: Yes, it was for both. And it was a place that was supposed to give parents a chance to put their homes and lives together, with not as much responsibility. But I didn't stay.

Q: Maybe instead of calling it an orphanage, you'd almost call it a boarding school? Did you go home on weekends?

E: No. The parents came to visit. And I think some of those kids – I don't remember, because I didn't stay. I don't know how long I lasted, but I kept on running away all the time. And I made such a ruckus that she had no choice but to take me home. They couldn't handle me any more. I was not going to stay, and I didn't. And you know, in retrospect, when I think back about how we all handled the war, and what we did as children at the time, I see how we act today, and how we face life today. I tend to think that so much of what we are is genetic. Why was I that strong, and not her? Why was she so accepting? We went through the experiences of losing, and whatever, the same, right? And I find that fascinating. Today, we tend to deal with life the same way.

Q: You got interrupted back there. You were talking about the orphanage, and how much you hated it. And you were there for two years. Then how did you happen to leave?

M: I told you, it was disbanded because of the scandal. It was a terrible scandal. You know when Sam told you why we didn't go to Israel? The girls' virginity was so protected and important at that time, and just the idea that this was going on, really, all the mothers, they never would…

E: Also, mother heard a lot of feedback coming back from Israel. What she also heard was the difficulty, the Spartan life in Israel, which indeed it was, and she didn't want that. She said, "I'm not going to subject my family to that." America sounded more promising to her, and easier. She wasn't a Zionist in the sense that she would choose Israel above America. She was looking for what was best for us. And for her, she never really made the transition. She was forever looking for Greece, I think, the climate, anyway. She was forever moving to Florida. We were forever leaving Minnesota and the cold weather of Minnesota.

M: Well it was very hard on her. Do you know what her "welcome home" to America was? We came in April…

E: March.

M: March? Well, whatever, it was very near Pesach, and they had sent us to Mount Zion for the Seders. Well, we did not speak a word of English, and we had a good time, I remember, but I really found it odd; I don't recall anyone taking us there, being our hostess.

E: How did we get there?

M: I don't know. But that's my point. Coming home from Mount Zion temple, she fell, and she broke all her teeth on the ice. I don't know if she broke all of them, or being that we were on the Jewish Family Service help, it was cheaper for them to pull all her teeth, and that's what they did. She had dentures from the time we came, which was too early for a young person. But that was her welcome to America. She was a real, real, real special lady. I think she put in her mourning and bitterness in the beginning of the war in Greece, but here, she never, ever complained. She knew her purpose in life, which was to make sure that we all (crying again).

Q: Married, did well, had homes and children. I think that's what our mothers have always wanted for us, and what we want for our children.

E: Well, I think she was special in the fact that I don't ever recall complaining, and "Why did I come here?" and any of that stuff. Never! She never complained, and she was happy.

M: I don't think she was happy.

E: Oh, yes, I think she was in the end.

M: Well, she was happy the day I got married! On those days she was very happy! (Laughter)

E: She was, and I think the saddest of all, for her life, was – and I don't know how these things work – that she would become ill, and die, before…(crying).

Q: Before she saw the grandchildren?

E: And some accomplishments in our lives.

Q: Were you involved with the New Americans Club, or any organizations like that?

E: No. We educated ourselves, we worked, we married, and raised our family, and made our place in the Jewish community, on our own.

M: She did make a couple of Greek-Jewish friends here, towards the end. But you know – is the word irony? – I don't know very much about it, but we also missed any help in restitutions, because we were so young, and nobody informed us we had that coming. No one. To this day I can't understand how people can be under a Jewish agency's care and they neglect…

Q: Were there substantial reparations to the Greeks?

M: I think there were. Why not?

E: I don't think so, Mary. When I heard that the money was coming in, from those people like the Levys…

M: Because they were Polish. First of all because they were survivors of the death camps. Now we are survivors, but not of the camps. I don't know why they didn't, but they didn't.

E: Because of the cab in Greece. My conclusion now is that it was not a lower profession, as it is here. And so it was an easy way to get a job. I remember Sam driving a cab very early on. And then, somehow, along the way, he got interested in being a waiter. And he became a very good maitre d'. He worked at the Leamington for a number of years, when the Leamington was at it's height. He worked at Charlie's for a number of years and he was maitre d' at Coleman's in the village, until it burned down.

M: He can't work well with people. He had this difficulty.

E: And then about ten years ago he made a move to New York, and whatever he did in New York, a lot of it was in the restaurant business. When he came back here, he no longer had the stamina to be in the restaurant business, so he went into the cab, which was the next thing he knew.

Q: I assume that in the European tradition, since he was the oldest. And he was the boy, and his father was gone, he felt that he was responsible.

E: Oh, yes. And I think and I hope he never hears of this, but I think in his way, and now again, with teenage kids, it was a lot of pressure for him. And so instead of positive, I think he rebelled negatively. In other words…how do you say it…

M: He didn't deal with it.

E: Yes. It became a negative part of his life. And I think all of us, we made the transition and found, quote-unquote, good lives here, and made good lives. For him, he's the victim of the war, for our family.

M: Oh, I don't know about that, Evy.

E: I think so. Well, emotionally, maybe, we all carry scars. But I think for him, I see him as the victim. Maybe because of his personality, maybe because a boy growing up without the father image, without the father, the responsibility became too heavy. Whatever the circumstances that played into his life, I see him as the victim, more so than the rest of us. We all carry scars and we all will, but we have made adjustments and we have made progress with our lives. We have homes, we educated ourselves, we have children, they're educating themselves.

There's progress and continuity of what's positive, where for him, it's not. And so I do see him as a victim. Psychologically, the toll was heavier for him than for any of the rest of us.

M: We've got to give her (the interviewer) a chance to lead us.

Q: No, I think you're saying some things that give us an insight into what happened to people, things that don't show on the surface. What happened inside.

I was just going to say, "What do you remember of liberation day?"

E: I don't remember anything. The only thing that I remember as a "happening" in Athens is the day that Israel was declared a nation. I remember that day. I was there.

M: Where was I?

E: I don't know where you were, but I was with mom in Constitution Square, and the vivid memory that I have is people everywhere, and happiness.

M: The Greeks were glad we were a state?

E: Maybe it was the end of the war. Maybe I have it mixed up.

M: I can't imagine Greece would have been so happy to have Israel a state.

Q: How many Jews were left in Athens?

E: From what I have read and I have learned on my own, I thought that there were between 65 and 70,000 in Greece. That's the figure that remains in my head. There were only 5,000 remaining in Athens.

M: I know the population. I read the book. I have information for you. It was 5,000 before the war, and it's about 5,000 now. But right after the war..,.

E: (interrupts). They all came to Athens.

M: No. they all died, Evy. It's been built up top 5,000 again. I don't know what was left after the war. Everybody left. Everybody went to Israel or America. There were very few families that stayed on. (Argument continues). But now this is 30 years later, and people have come back, and married, and had children.

E: I only know that when I went back in 1970, we went to a wedding of Jewish friends that we lived with in the same courtyard. They became very successful in Athens. We were invited to the wedding and we went to the synagogue, where my father was taken from, where I grew up, and the same rabbi that taught me

Sunday school was still alive, and was marrying that couple. He is well known, and people that know the history of the Jews in Athens know that was Rabbi Delazar. In 1970 he must have been 80 years old then, and he survived, and was dashing to the same synagogue that the Holocaust took place from.

Q: There's one question here, I didn't ask Sam, and I should ask you. Has your belief or practice in Judaism, or God, a Supreme Being, changed, do you think? Do you think you're more observant than your parents were, perhaps, or less? Was there any question, "Do I want to be part of this Jewish community?" Do you belong to Jewish organizations?

M&E: Yes.

E: Mary's still active. I was very active up until I started working again full-time, which was about five years ago. But we were always members of the Temple of Aaron from Day One, when they gave us free membership until we assumed it on our own. And I am still a member of the Temple of Aaron. So are my children. My son teaches Sunday School, and now my husband has become principal of the Religious School of the Temple of Aaron. I have always found comfort and I found my place, in a way, in the community through my temple. Being Jewish is very important. I'm very proud of being Jewish, and Greek. I think it's a wonderful double heritage. And I don't want to question, because there are no answers, "Why did this happen to me?" Maybe I'm a better person today because of what happened to me. I tend to think that I'm a more humane and caring person.

Q: You understand better, maybe, if you suffered?

E: I tend to think that in order to grow you have to experience pain. It doesn't necessarily have to be the pain of the Holocaust. I could have done better without it, maybe (laughs), but the fact that I had to be taken away from my heritage, my home, had to start all over again, it was a difficult process not only learning and assimilating, but being accepted again as a Jew in a Jewish community, because you forever are different. And to this day I'm still different. When we came, it was not as "in vogue" or as acceptable to be an immigrant. Whether you're in the Jewish community or the gentile community, today the assimilation of the different cultures is more acceptable than it was at the time we came.

Q: I think what we say is, "It's 'in' to be ethnic."

E: It was not "in" to be ethnic 30 years ago, so consequently the acceptance of people was more difficult, and we had to prove ourselves, and we did it in the Jewish community, as my sister Esther did it in the Duluth community. And she has done a beautiful job making a place for herself, working through and for Jewish causes.

Q: Where's your fourth sister?

E: She's in Winnetka, Illinois.

Q: And she's married too?

E: We all married Jewish. She didn't work as hard, but that's for different reasons. She lived in different areas. She lived in Connecticut for a while. She tried, but the Jewish community's more populous, it's a different setting for us to work with, than what she had, as the same thing for Esther in Duluth. But we all made Jewish homes.

Q: Mary, would you like to speak to the question I asked about has your belief changed? Has this made you a different person?

M: My belief in God fluctuates very much. But I think I've always, I basically believe in God. Not necessarily in all the ritual that means Judaism. I'm very, very strong in my belief in the Jewish people, and I'm also very, very strong in my belief in the organizations, like the United Jewish Fund, and the Joint, and Hadassah, and all that, and I feel that without their help – not necessarily each one, for sure the United Jewish Fund, which I think is also the Joint – and I will never forget that it was Joint's help that brought us over, so I always feel that I have to support Israel and anything associated with the Jewish people. I feel a very strong pride in the Jewish people. I used to be almost arrogant in my belief not necessarily outwardly, but inside, in my belief that the Jewish people were better than the rest of the people. I've kind of become a little bit more open-minded about that (laughs) but I still think that I'm very strong in my belief in the Jewish people. That's it. So I feel that I have to support all that I can.

Q: Now, as I have asked Sam, is there anything I didn't think to ask you that I should have, that you would like to talk about?

E: I probably will think of it after I leave.

Q: Okay. You can call me up and say, "Come back with the tape recorder!" I would really like to see your pictures.

E: I was searching for them, but I didn't know where they were.

M: I have some.