

Interviewee:	<u>SCHNEIDER</u> , Sylvia	Date:	August 8, 1989
Interviewer:	Eva Abraham		
Audio tapes:	3 English	Transcript:	1 vol. (unpaged) English
Restrictions:	None	Libr. Catlg. #:	D 810.J4 G7 no. 159

### SUMMARY

Sylvia Schneider, née Balbierer, was born in Cologne, Germany on May 4, 1928 to an Orthodox Jewish family. Her father, a language teacher was born in Belgium of Russian ancestry. Her mother was from Krakow, Poland. A happy childhood ended for Sylvia in 1935-36, when her sister Ruth was beaten by Hitler youth. Years later, while studying nursing in England, Ruth died in 1943 of a brain aneurysm presumably caused by that injury.

On October 28, 1938, the Gestapo deported Sylvia, Ruth and their mother, along with many others with Polish passports to Zbaszyn. She described freezing living conditions in 1938-39 in the no man's land between the German and Polish borders. In May 1939 her family joined an aunt in Krakow and then went to Otwock, near Warsaw for the girls to await a Kindertransport ship to England. They were parted from their mother and experienced unhappy stays in private homes and a children's hostel, but Sylvia names several caring women who befriended her. In 1947, she immigrated to the United States, where she married and had a daughter. She gave up her Orthodox religious faith when she learned that her mother was gassed at Auschwitz and her father died in another camp, but she continued to identify herself as a traditional Jew.

Interviewee: SCHNEIDER, Sylvia

Date: August 8, 1989

### SUBJECT HEADINGS

Faith (Judaism)  
Hiding places--Poland.  
Holocaust survivors.  
Holocaust, Jewish (1939-1945)--Personal narratives.  
Jewish refugees--England.  
Jewish refugees--Poland.  
Jews--Germany--Cologne.  
Jews--Identity.  
Jews--Legal status, laws, etc.--Germany.  
Jews--Persecutions--Germany.  
Kindertransports (Rescue operations)  
*Kristallnacht*  
Sisters.  
World War, 1939-1945--Deportations from Germany.  
World War, 1939-1945--Jews--England.  
Women--Personal narratives.

Cologne (Germany)  
England.  
Krakow (Poland)  
Otwock (Poland)  
United States--Emigration and immigration.