

Interviewee:	<u>TEITELBAUM, Deborah</u>	Date:	October 15, 1983
Interviewer:	Rochelle Chasan		
Audio tapes:	3 English	Transcript:	1 vol. (unpaged) English
Restrictions:	None		

## SUMMARY

Deborah Teitelbaum, nee Berger, was born on December 21, 1922 in Vilna, Poland. Before the war her family was financially well off; her father was a businessman owning a newspaper agency and a Jewish theater. Deborah describes the growing antisemitism in 1937-8, Jews being shunned at university and anti-Jewish demonstrations in the streets, her father was beaten up by local thugs. She describes the German Occupation of Vilna, the growing fear and terrible conditions in the ghetto. She describes life in the Vilna Ghetto in detail and mentions the Vilna underground and the partisans.

In October 1943 she was sent to Kaiserwald concentration camp (in Riga, Latvia), she describes their arrival, being searched for valuables, *Appells*, the food and the barracks. She details her deportation to and conditions in several smaller labor camps: Dundanga and Kurbe. In 1944 she was marched to Stutthof (Poland). She describes the brutality of the *Kapos* in contrast with the other camps and also gives testimony about seeing people led to the ovens. Deborah describes her assignment for two months on a farm to cut sugar cane and the improvement in the conditions there and access to more food. When they returned to Stutthof, she succumbed to the typhoid epidemic. From Stutthof she and others were led on a death march (in winter) day and night for over a month towards the Baltic Sea. She describes the lice, starvation, typhoid, beatings, shootings and people being buried alive. She recounts the kindness of a young Ukrainian who got her shoes when she was about to be left behind and killed.

The very next day, March 9, 1945 they arrived at a small village, Chinow, and were liberated by the Russians. Of the thousands sent on the death march, only 84 survived. Deborah was liberated with her mother, aunt and cousin and several other women from her hometown. She spent two months recuperating in a hospital. After liberation they decided to seek complete freedom by fleeing from Russia. They lived six months in Lodz then went to Czechoslovakia and Germany. Deborah and her mother went to Feldafing Displaced Persons camp, where Deborah met her husband and gave birth to a son. In 1949, they emigrated to the United States. She and her mother found no other surviving relatives of their immediate family. One brother was killed in Ponary when the Germans entered Vilna (1941) and her other brother was assumed killed in either the Baltic Sea near Konigsburg or in Buchenwald; her father was killed in a camp in Estonia.

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## SUBJECT HEADINGS

Holocaust Jewish, 1939-1945, Poland  
Holocaust Jewish, (1939-1945), Personal narratives Jewish  
World War 1939 – 1945 Deportation from Poland  
Poland - History - German occupation, (1939-1945)  
World War (1939 - 1945) Concentration camps  
Ponary Forest  
Vilna Ghetto - Poland  
Slave labor  
Atrocities  
Slave labor camp - Dundanga  
Slave labor camp - Kurbe  
Concentration camp - Kaiserwald  
Concentration camp - Stutthof  
Death march - from Stutthof  
Refugee camp - post war – Feldafing