

Interviewee:	<u>FARBER</u> , Zina	Date:	April 22, 1985 ¹
Interviewer:	Martha Benoff		
Audio tapes:	1 English	Transcript:	1 vol. (unpaged) English
Restrictions:	None		

SUMMARY

Zina Farber, nee Bass, one of six children, was born December 6, 1933 in Bialystok, Poland. Her father was a businessman. She shares her very early childhood memories of antisemitism (having been taught to always step off pavements when encountering Gentiles, at the risk of being beaten). She also recounts that the most vivid detail of her early life in Poland is her very warm family.

Having been separated from both parents very early in the war, her eldest brother took care of the family. In 1943, after confinement in Bialystok and Pruzhany Ghettos, she and four brothers were sent to Auschwitz. She describes the round up of Jews in Pruzhany, the deportation in open cattle trucks, arrival, selection, and shaving. She describes the absolute miracle that she was not immediately gassed, being dragged out of her assigned truck and put instead with the group of women assigned to hard labor. She was 10 years old. She attributes this miracle to the fact that she was wearing her mother's coat which made her look older than she was. She explains several times that it is too painful to recount the innumerable stories she could tell about her one and half year experience in Auschwitz. She is able to share descriptions of her constant hunger and fear. She describes fear of punishment – i. e. having her head pushed into a barrel of excrement– and relates the necessity of always wearing her soup bowl on a rope around her neck, even when sleeping. She also describes how the girls took care of each other, reddening cheeks before selections for example. She endured a two-week death march in mid-April 1945 to Ravensbrück and Neustadt-Gleiwitz (possibly Neustadt-Glewe).

Liberated by American soldiers, she travelled to Bialystok, where she was reunited with her father who had survived five years in Siberia. Mrs. Farber was separated several years earlier from her mother, who had been transported to Treblinka. After a failed attempt to emigrate to Palestine from the Landsberg displaced persons camp, Mrs. Farber left for the United States in 1949. Sponsored by an uncle in Philadelphia, she remained there, married and had two sons.

¹Recorded at the 1985 American Gathering of Holocaust Survivors in Philadelphia, PA.