

Today is the 10th of November, 1992. I'm Sandra Bendayan, and I'm here interviewing Lore Gilbert in part 3 of her interview. Our producer is John Grant and this is an interview for the San Francisco oral history project. Lore, you were just saying that today was a very appropriate day to be doing this.

Yes, because it's the anniversary of the Kristallnacht in 1938, and November 10th is very important Holocaust remembrance, day of remembrance.

Yes. Yes, you're right. Well, I believe we stopped part 2 of your interview at the point in which you and your family were ready to come to the United States. You were also going to elaborate on your grandparents staying in France. And you said you had remembered the name of the town.

The name of the town where my grandparents lived from 1941 until my grandfather died in October of 1944, and my grandmother survived and came to the United States. They were saved by the Catholic church and French Catholic church probably through the underground who did a lot for young children and older people.

My grandfather was fortunate enough considering the times to die a natural death. He had, I believe, a massive stroke. He had had a number of small strokes. And my grandmother was by his side when he died, and he had a beautiful Jewish funeral and is buried there somewhere. We have been trying to-- my sister has been trying to find out exactly where he's buried.

But we haven't been able to find it. In fact, my sister has written several times-- first in English and then also follow ups in French-- to the town of Roma and mainly to thank them for saving our grandparent's lives and those others whom they sheltered at the time and never received an answer from them which we just talked about again a couple of days ago.

And she is very surprised and puzzled that she couldn't get an answer. In fact, the last time she was in Europe, she had intended to go to Roma and see for herself what situation was. Turned out that the traveling was so exhausting for her, she couldn't handle it. But she hasn't given up on it yet. She's still determined to get to the bottom of it and can't understand why she hasn't gotten any responses.

How was it that - that he had a Jewish funeral in 1944?

I don't know. Obviously, there was this small group of Jewish old people within the hospice. And maybe he's just buried in the Catholic cemetery or maybe they allowed that at the time. I really don't know. But I do have a copy of the eulogy that was given by one of the other German Jewish people that were with him at the time. And it's absolutely beautiful.

So I think that's very unusual story that that happened in those days. And like it always happens with the second and third generation, now I'm sorry that I never asked my grandmother more detailed questions. In those days, we really didn't talk about the war. We just wanted to forget it all. We never asked my grandmother too many questions, what was life for her over there, or what was it like.

And she didn't talk about it herself?

I don't remember that she talked about it all that much. She probably wanted to be asked. And whether my mother and my uncle her, her son and daughter, discussed much with her or not, I don't know. We probably knew all the major things. She lived with my uncle and aunt. And then later on, she lived with my parents until she died. And she was almost 90 years old. She was 89 when she died. Lived long enough to meet two of her great grandchildren.

I was asking how are her spirits during those years?

Well, my grandmother was a very, very, very strong woman and very typically German in the sense that she was very stoic and never really let on too much what was going on for her. She was hard of hearing. So it was always difficult for her. Even though she wore a hearing aid, she always felt a little bit removed and outside of everything else.

And since we young people spoke English and we just went on about our life, so we kind of, in a way, ignored the older person sitting there in the corner. I think that's the way it was in those days. She was well and she helped my aunt and then later on my mother is as much in the house. She didn't like to go out. She never went out by herself mainly because of her hearing. And she was old.

In 1949, we celebrated her 80th birthday with a big, big celebration, inviting all of her old friends and everybody in the family.

Did she have social life at all after she got here?

Well, there was an old cousin who came to visit her and other older cousins and relatives or friends that came to visit her occasionally. But she didn't go out unless she went out for a walk with my aunt or with my mother. My mother stayed with her. We did not leave her alone ever. But she was too frail to-- and then later on, she broke her hip twice, as a matter of fact, when she was in my mother's house. So she was very well sheltered and cared for with a lot of love in the family. But she didn't take any initiative on her own anymore at that point in her life.

But when she was younger, she was a very active woman. I understand in her younger years, she worked with my grandfather and in their wine merch. He was a wine merchant. She helped him in his business. And she was very strict and maybe a little bit on the severe side, although she was tiny. She was even smaller than my daughter, and my daughter is under 5 foot. I think by the time I was 12 or 13, I was probably about her size, and I'm not tall.

Did she practice Judaism in any way?

Oh, yes. Yes. More as a-- I don't know whether she herself had a lot of inner religious feelings. She never did anything like lighting candles. But she went to synagogue every Friday night with my grandfather. I don't know whether she herself was active in the synagogue. In the sisterhood, she may have been. But my grandfather was very, very active. And she probably took the back seat, just staying home like the traditional wife, Jewish wife and mother.

My grandfather was busy on the synagogue council, I believe. But he also sang at the high holidays. He sang solo, and he sang in the choir. And he was also a very active member of the chevra kadisha. I remember very well hearing him talk about it as a young child being very much involved with the chevra kadisha. And he also like to pinch at lady's behinds. [LAUGHS] And he had a wonderful sense of humor. He was great. He was my big love in my life.

Did she keep up her practice at all after she came to the United States?

Within the family circle, I don't know whether she went out to services on the high holidays. As a matter of fact, our family hardly observed any religious-- we observed the holidays by getting together as a family and having dinner and so on. Didn't go to services very much. And the saying in the family was mainly, it's not like the synagogue in Worms. It doesn't look like it, doesn't sound like it, and didn't give them the same feeling. So they rather wouldn't go.

Can I presume they didn't keep kosher household.

No, no, no.

So it was more social?

Yeah. The synagogue-- as I had mentioned to you before, the synagogue in Worms was so special because of its age and the community having been so old. In fact, when I was in Israel just now, they have a model of it at the Diaspora museum that they just felt it's not the same. They had such warm feelings for the building and the community itself and the way the services were. They just didn't like the services. They didn't like the music. They didn't like the way that they were singing, and so on. So they didn't go.

You said so warmly that your grandfather was so special to you. Do you have some memories you'd like to talk about

that you haven't yet?

I think I have already talked about that at my first interview. I don't think that I have anything to add to that.

OK, well, now what about you and your perspective coming to the United States. You were going to come with your sister.

My sister and I came in March of 1946 and our parents stayed behind in SosÃ³a in the Dominican Republic. I remember that when our visas arrived, I jumped about this high. I think it was the only time I ever jumped that high in my life. I was so happy. And I could care less that I left my parents behind. I mean, it was after the war, so I was just going for my life's big adventure. Everything was exciting. And I came to New York with a lot of chutzpah. But I thought I would, like everybody else, that I would just conquer New York.

So you came with your sister?

Yes. And was she excited too?

I don't think she was quite as excited as I was. She had a boyfriend in the Dominican Republic that she left behind. So she was a little bit torn about that, I believe. And my sister three years later had a nervous breakdown. And all of that was already brewing and building up in her. So she was rather more on the depressed side. It was difficult for her to, I think, to show a lot of enthusiasm in those days.

She worked very hard and sacrificed a number of her years as a young independent person, being able to go out and meet people because she worked in order for us to save money to bring our parents to the United States. She worked as a baby nurse and would live with families with new infants. So she would have her room and board, and she was fairly well paid in those days in 1946. I think \$75 a week was good money. So she could save all of that and put it aside for to bring our parents over.

And I was feeling very guilty because I earned much less money. I lived with my uncle and aunt, and I paid for my room and board and saved everything else. But in comparison to what my sister was able to put away to bring our parents over, I felt I wasn't contributing as much.

But by October of 1946, we were able to bring them over, and we were able to rent a little apartment from distant relatives who moved to another-- I mean, they moved to another apartment. We were able to take over their apartment.

Were your parents able to earn any money in the Dominican Republic?

No, it was for my parents like for everybody else. We got our sort of a pocket-- well, it was more than pocket money for my parents. I think it was a certain amount of money a month that we would get in lieu of-- since we were a family, we didn't eat in the community kitchen. So we were given a certain amount of money for our food. And both of my parents worked, and they received a small stipend for that-- maybe \$10, \$15 a month.

Whereas I, as a child, I think I was given pocket money of \$3 a month. And that's what we paid our muchacha, the girl that helped us in the household. So \$3 could go quite far in those days and in a Caribbean country. No, we paid her \$3 a week, I'm sorry. Not \$3 a month. And the children were given \$3 a month. It cost me \$0.15 to go to the movies. So I had enough money to go to the movies, and that was all I needed.

Who paid your ticket to New York?

We had to borrow the money. So actually, when we had to do both, we had to repay the money we borrowed, and we had to save money for our parents.

Did you borrow from relatives?

Yeah.

And what was the name of the aunt and uncle you were staying with?

My mother's maiden name was Care and her brothers-- they were Henry and Carey Care. Then my cousin came back from the army shortly after we came to New York. So it was a great family reunion. One of my father's sisters also lived. So eventually, my grandmother, my aunt Betty, and myself were all living with my uncle and aunt and cousin. They were really a haven for the whole family. They had left in 1937.

It turned out that my mother's brother Henry married my father's niece, Carey, my father's oldest sister's daughter. So there was a double relation-- we were related on both sides of the family. So that's how my Aunt Betty, who was my aunt from my father's side and also my aunt on her mother's side, also stayed with them. And they were very, very kind to us. And they were struggling themselves.

And then my cousin Walter came back from the army, and he was just-- we had always been very good friends as young children. And he just took me along and introduced me to his group of friends that he had from before the war and that he was going to school with. So I immediately had a ready-made circle of friends and it was very nice.

In fact, two of Walters' friends from school came right away to see us and say hello that even though we-- Walter was still in the army, and they were already out of the army. And they had heard that Walter's cousins came. And so they came to say hello, and they started taking us out on dates. And it was very-- everybody did as much as they could and were really nice.

So how was your adjustment in general when you got to New York?

Well, I didn't have an opportunity to really have a profession at trade. So I worked in-- I always had wanted to become an artist. So I looked in the newspaper, and there were ads for hand painting little chachkas. [LAUGHS] And I went there, I applied, and I got some work. It was far from artistic, but it was piecework. I was very, very hard work. But I like the atmosphere, and I like the people I've worked with. I was earning half a penny apiece. And I had to work very hard to make \$10 a day.

Yet, \$10 a day was what [INAUDIBLE]?

1,000 pieces.

1,000 pieces.

Yeah. And each piece, I had to handle several times.

So that part was difficult and it remained difficult.

Wait a minute. A 1,000 pieces is 1 penny a piece.

That's right.

You'd need 2,000 pieces.

Yeah, you're right. You're right. And some people-- some women that were much older-- I mean, women married that were my mother's age-- they made as much as \$12, \$14 a day. They worked like demons. They didn't even break for lunch. And I just couldn't. I always wanted to do better and I couldn't. And I think the most they could ever do was \$10 a day.

Still, 2,000 pieces.

I think I used to end up anywhere between \$25 and \$45 a week.

So how long were you in New York before your parents came?

About six months.

So you and your sister were able to save up all that much money in a pretty short time.

Right. The problem with that piecework was that the employers, our employers, would have contracts. And when that contract was finished, we would be laid off, and we would get unemployment and all of that stuff until we found another job in a related. But it was kind of-- you met the same kind of people in other jobs again. They went from place to place.

And then, when after I married Sam, I said, no, I don't want to do that anymore. And I took some courses in accounting, and I did bookkeeping. But then my son was born, and then I didn't work anymore until after my children were bigger. Were you able to be in close touch with your sister in that period? She was living in someone else's home.

Well, she would be staying with my uncle and aunt between jobs. So yes, we were always in close touch and--

In what form--

And I used to visit her or talk with her on the phone. So we were always in touch.

Sounds like her life might have been kind of lonely though.

I'm sure it was that she never did have an easy life.

What are you meaning by that?

Well, she had the-- the don't think it's appropriate for me to talk about this. She ended up with a bad marriage and her husband leaving her with her child. So she was a single mother until she remarried. And she had two break downs. But I don't think it's right for me to talk about her life since this is something that goes into--

That's OK. So were your parents glad to get to New York or was it hard for them to leave?

My parents-- my mother wanted to come to New York. My father originally wanted to go back to Germany. And my mother-- and we -- we children said we're not going. If you want to go to Germany, you're going without us. So I don't think he ever would even consider that. But my father was afraid. He was about 60 years old at the time, and he was afraid of how is he going to support himself in a new country. And in Germany, he knew the language, he'd still figured-- he would have known the people, and he thought he had a lot of pieces that he could pick up there.

But in fact, my parents never went back to Germany where other people in the restitution business made many trips to go to the authorities over there to get things moving. They never did. But my father never learned English. He had decided that he was incapable of learning English. So he never did. So he was really very much afraid of what was he going to do.

And when they first came, my mother worked as a sort of a lady's maid as a companion with an older Jewish lady. She cooked for her and maybe dusted a little bit, but then kept her company, ran her errands or whatever.

Lived in or no?

No, she came home. But she left dinner-- she cooked her dinner and left it there. That woman was living in like a residential hotel. And my father started-- he worked in a chocolate factory in the refrigerator, in the cooling for a while. And he couldn't handle that. And then he got a job as a sort of a nurse's aide porter in an old age home. And what he had to do there was lifting people in beds and so on. And both of these things-- what we didn't know that he was building up

to a heart attack. And of course, both being in the cold and lifting was absolutely the worst things that he could have possibly done. So he did have a heart attack not too long, probably in 1947.

And then my sister got sick.

Was she hospitalized?

Well, she left-- she was manic depressive at the time. And she left for California. And I think that was the lowest point in my father's life because he felt so helpless that he couldn't help her at all. And somehow, he worked his way through that, and he became well again and strong again. He had already all along thought about restitution, by doing work for restitution. And he had an incredible mind, legal mind, even though he had never studied the law. He just understood it somehow, naturally. And he had apparently a very good memory for all the different laws.

And he just buried him so steeped himself completely in the restitutive law and first started working on his own, our own family's things. And he was so good with it that he decided after a while that he wanted to do it for other people as well. And then a lot of acquaintances came to him, and he did started working on their things and would sit there and type with two fingers and get responses.

And more and more people started to come to him. And then he eventually had to get a secretary, and he had to ask people to give him an advance for towards expenses. And I remember it was like \$25 just to cover postage. And this kept snowballing. My parents had a two room apartment. So my mother would make the beds in the morning. And then the secretary would come and sit in the bedroom. And all the folders that were on the beds-- that was the office.

So did not earn money? And did he earn his living [INAUDIBLE]?

At that time in the beginning, he had to start working, and he wasn't going to get any money until people were getting some money and then would pay him a commission. And his commission in those days was 5% what the law gets now for any kind of a case. And he really had it. It was really a mission, his mission in life. And he would have-- we used to say to him, doctors have office hours and you don't because I mean people would make phone calls during dinner and on the weekend. And he'd never, never, never, never said I'm sorry, I'm in the middle of eating my dinner, I can't talk to you now would never have occurred to him or that today is Sunday and my children are visiting, I can't talk to you. It just was never in him. He just didn't do that. He was a workaholic. And that always came first.

But it became a meaningful--

It became a very meaningful thing. And he lived for it. He had very bad heart disease and was sick many, many times and in and out of the hospital often later on. But he lived to be 79 and worked till the end and had his office later in another apartment in the same building. So he would just go upstairs for lunch and then lie down for a little nap and go back to the office. And then he would bring these papers upstairs with him. And he would work from 8 o'clock in the morning until 10, 11 o'clock at night.

And he'd have a problem with his hand, and he would have to go to the hospital, and his secretary would come to the hospital, and he would be dictating to her from his hospital bed. But his biggest joy was when the letter came from Germany that somebody got a pension. And people did get pensions for life then. And they got sums of money for property they lost. And then there was also a loss of life, if people were-- families, parents, or siblings who were killed.

So eventually, he had a very good business. But it really wasn't the money that gave him the satisfaction, although he needed to live like anybody else.

Did he get reparations for himself too?

Yes. Does this includes you at all or just him?

Well, people really only get reparations if they had been old enough to work. What we younger people got was a one

time small amount of money for loss of education that we had to say, well, if we had stayed in Germany, we would have gone to University, we would have had a good profession. And now we don't have a profession at all. And that was like \$1,000. Didn't come up to much.

How are your parents able to get along until he started earning money?

Well, my mother worked. And I worked. So as long as I was home, I turned over everything I earned to my mother for the household. And it was very, very, very tight in the early years, very tight. And when I got married, I was feeling very guilty that I left. And my sister was, at that time, still at home. She didn't continue to work as a baby nurse. She had a job as a dental assistant. And then after a while, she worked as a secretary in a doctor's office.

When was her trip to California in all this?

Actually, that happened later. That happened after Sam and I got married. She was working as a doctor's-- not receptionist, assistant-- as a nurse in a doctor's office. And somehow, my getting married and having been the younger sister by seven years actually is what kicked it off. And I was feeling very, very guilty, very guilty about the whole thing. And yeah, I mean, I tried to help my parents as much as I could and as long as they needed it.

How did your mother get through those crises-- your father has a heart attack, your sister has had a nervous breakdown. Money was tight.

You know, you don't-- when you're in those times, you don't think about it. You do what you have to do. And everybody else is in the same situation. Neither one of my parents got the support, emotional support that they needed in those times. Nobody wanted to hear about other people's problems. Everybody had their own problems to the point where my mother, when my sister got sick, wasn't even allowed to talk to her relatives about it because they didn't want to hear about it. So it was very, very difficult, very, very difficult.

Had she learned English?

My mother-- yes. My mother had learned English in school in Germany as a young girl. And she always kept it up. And she took English and also Spanish classes in Germany before we-- because we realized we were going to leave one way or another. And she did very well. She picked it up right away. And as a matter of fact, my grandmother had gone to gymnasium in Germany a young child. And she spoke French, I think she managed quite well in France with her French. And she spoke a little English. She still remembered a little English from school when she came.

So did you speak English to some degree when she came to the United States too?

I think she could speak a little bit, yeah.

You had mentioned the end of our last interview that at some point along the way, your father also got depressed. Was that in relation to the sickness or anything in particular because--

He was, I mean, not clinically depressed the way my sister was. It was just a very, very low typical-- it was very difficult for him when he came to the United States. He didn't know the language, and he was past middle age. And he had no way of supporting himself and his family.

And he had been used to being in command. He was always very much in command of what was going on of his life. And not only his life-- he was always in command of the entire family. He was always the leader in the family. In his own business, he never worked for anybody else. As a young man he right away had his own business. And he did very well in his business, and he was a very creative thinker as I had mentioned to you. The things that he did in concentration camp-- organizing the special barracks for the older people and taking care of them, helping them get washed, and walking them to the latrines, and these kind of things-- so that when he came to the United States, all of a sudden he was nobody, nothing. And it was a terrible blow to his self-esteem.

In those days, we were not conscious of people's self-esteem and people's emotional state of emotional and mental health. It was all taken for granted that you cope with it. And you better cope with it, one way or another. And everybody else was in the same situation. So in fact, we had little sympathy for the people who complained. They were complaining us around, and we didn't want to be bothered with those people who complained. They were probably healthier. I don't know. [LAUGHS]

And how did your father get along even in those two jobs he had without speaking English, the chocolate factory and the nursing home?

The Chocolate factory, I'm sure he could speak German. It was a German Jewish company. And I imagine almost everybody else would speak German there too. We lived in Washington Heights. It was also called Frankfurt on the Hudson. And yeah, there's a book out that's called Frankfurt on the Hudson about the German Jewish community in Washington Heights.

So he got along very well just in Washington Heights with German. He could go shopping, he could go to the butcher and speak. And everybody down the street, at once he started his business, they were all his customers. He could go in there and speak German to them. They would never-- as a matter of fact, I don't think anybody in those stores spoke English. It's like having been in some of the other areas in Brooklyn and Brownsville where my husband grew up where everybody spoke Yiddish. It was a little ghetto.

And how about your mother? How's her adjustment in the United States? Sounds like she was more interested in coming.

Yeah. Well, I think women are always more flexible and so was my mother. She spoke English, she had that one job, and then later she became-- she helped my father as much as possible. And then she had my grandmother to take care of, and she always had my father to take care of because his health was very precarious. And so she needed to be there to cater to him. And that was my mother's life. I mean, she always had to be there to at the Beck and call of her husband a mother or children or whatever. That's the way it was. And she never, never expressed any desire of-- never even gave us an inclination of what she would have liked.

Yes. What kinds of things did your parents do for their enjoyment?

My mother liked music. I mean, that was the only thing that was important to her. She liked music, and she would listen to music on the radio. My father, being a workaholic-- and he was in Germany too. They spent really all of their time, if it wasn't with work, with the family. And we can sit and make any difference. They had-- finally after not in the early years, they took no time at all for friends. But once my father made a little money, they took a few days and went to the Catskills or to New Hampshire.

Eventually, they had some friends that had a car. And they went away for a short vacation with them. And that was it. My mother might go to a concert with some of her girlfriends. My mother and some girlfriends still from Germany. And she might meet one of them sometime for an afternoon or so. But especially as long as my grandmother was alive, she always had to stay with my grandmother.

And even when my grandmother lived with my uncle and aunt, they would go away. They had a very active social life and take off on weekends. So my mother stayed with my grandmother to take care of her. So they had very little-- took very little time.

Did your family-- I presume they pursued seeing who might have survived of your larger family or friends.

Of course. That was the first thing everybody did-- to find out if they were organizations and listings and so on. And I don't think it took very long to find out that hardly anybody was left. And the few people that were, as far as I know, they were mostly people that we already knew from before that they were in Canada or in South America or in the United States. My father had some cousins in Canada that he was corresponding with from the Dominican Republic.



I mean, these were people who left Germany very early.

Right. Yeah, people that had left earlier. But from our immediate family that was left behind and even a cousin of my mother's that my mother was very close with, nobody survived.

Some of the people in-- the young people that we were friendly with in the concentration camp in France, most of those survived. Not their parents, but they did because of the underground who saved them in France. And when again did your grandmother leave France and come to New York?

I think it was in May of 1946. May of '46.

It was shortly after my sister and I came.

I see. She was the second one and your parents came around October, you said.

Yeah. Mm-hmm. And my aunt, my father's older sister-- actually, she came during the war because she and her husband had gone to India from Germany. And she stayed with us because she had one son who was in India and one son who was in the United States. And after her husband died in India, she wanted to come to the United States and be with her younger son. And she came from India on a troopship.

I see.

Yeah. So she had already been in New York living with my uncle when my sister and I arrived.

So after your parents got there, you say they were able to get a small apartment. You lived with them.

Yeah, actually, I lived with my uncle and aunt. And there was a struggle, a power struggle where I should be. They all wanted me.

Great.

My uncle and aunt wanted me. My aunt had always wanted a daughter, and she was very happy to have me there. And then, of course, when my parents came, she wanted me to stay. But I couldn't do that. I had to go back. And I had liked it at my uncle and aunt's house because they were more fun, they joked around a lot. And my parents were much more serious. And then my cousin was there. So that was sort of a more lighthearted, fun atmosphere. And in a way, I wanted to stay there.

On the other hand, I was really torn. I had to be loyal to my parents. It was only three or four blocks difference. So it was fine. I could be either in one or the other place. And then my grandmother was with my uncle and aunt in those days. And my grandparents had lived with us in Germany after the Kristallnacht. I had mentioned that to you that they came to live with us because they had nothing left.

So how was it adjusting back living with your parents now that you have this walk of freedom.

Well, it was difficult at first. In the very beginning, we didn't get that little apartment for my parents right away. The first place we had were-- we sub-let to rooms in an apartment with a widower who had a large apartment and let my parents use two of his rooms.

But he was very, very kosher and wouldn't allow my mother to use the kitchen. So my mother had to cook on the floor on a little burner just the way you see nowadays when you-- sometimes, you see in the paper immigrants, Mexican immigrants, Puerto Rican immigrants living in a big apartment and cooking on the floor on a little-- that's just the way we kept house.

And he would not allow us even to use the sink in his kitchen. We had to use the bathroom sink to wash our dishes. And

my mother had this little electric hot plate with two burners. That lasted straw for a short while. And I think at that time, I stayed with my uncle and aunt. I'm not sure if I slept there. But then once we got the other apartment-- and that apartment didn't have a kitchen either. It just had a little kitchenette wall in the living room. And that remained-- that eventually became my father's office. And so my parents lived there for quite a few years until they got a little bigger apartment in the same building.

So were you working-- were you painting at that period when you're with your parents?

Yeah. Yeah. And that's how I met my husband. We were painting neckties.

He was painting neckties? You were too?

Yeah. At that point, I got a job painting neckties. I didn't know how to do it, and he had to show me. [LAUGHS] Was he a worker or he was a manager or--

He's an artist, and he was a worker. Yeah. Yeah, he was one of the other artist working there.

And his name is Sam, you've said. And was he a survivor also?

No.

Was he American born?

American born, yeah.

Jewish?

Yeah.

And how old were you--

That was very important to me, incidentally. I really didn't want to date other refugees. I did belong to a youth organization that was mainly refugees. And I did date them. But I really had my heart set on meeting some Americans. It was very difficult. I didn't necessarily have my heart set on marrying an American. But I wanted to get to know American young people and the circles. I mean, everything was very segregated. Actually, the American Jewish community didn't want any part of us in those days.

Really?

Oh, absolutely.

They felt very-- they at least acted very superior. And they also had a lot of prejudice. They said, oh, you German Jews, you all came with a lot of money. And that was so-- and you're not religious, you all had Christmas trees. And they had such ridiculous pre-- what is it?

Preconceptions.

Yeah, preconceptions. And I really didn't know any Americans, American Jews, until I met Sam. A few in some of the workplaces, but I worked with them. But mainly, as a matter of fact, the type of work that I did and the places that I worked at were mainly also owned by German Jews refugees. And most of the other people that worked there were also refugees. And the two penny, a half a penny apiece places, they were all refugees.

But then the tie painting place was American. And that's how I met Sam.

Was it hurtful or shocking to you that the American Jews felt this way?

It was hurtful, yeah. It was very hurtful. As a matter of fact, I took some evening classes. As I said I wanted to be in the arts, and I took some-- I remember taking some sketch classes and also some photo retouching. And I didn't get to know or get friendly with anybody there. I felt very isolated. And Sam was really the first American that befriended me and accepted me.

So you started going out with him?

Yeah.

And how old were you then?

I was just 20. As a matter of fact, I wasn't-- no, I wasn't even 20 yet. I was still 19. I met Sam in March, and my birthday was in May. But by that time, we were already engaged.

Only two months?

Took about six weeks.

And--

I was very eager. [LAUGHS] My parents were shocked. And especially since we came from a small town and they had no idea-- who is this man? How do you know who he is? And he was 10 years old and was already divorced. So that was--

Did he had children?

No.

So you marry when?

We married right away.

In May?

In June.

In June. And obviously, you moved out of the house by that time.

Yeah.

I guess did your parents come to accept him or they were standoffish or--

They came to accept him very quickly. I mean, once they met him and they and they got to know him, they liked him right away. And then since we didn't waste any time getting engaged, once they met my mother-in-law-- the only thing my parents were concerned of-- they wanted to make sure that I married an honest and decent person and anything else. They really were not-- I'm very proud of them. They didn't give me any other guidelines other than to make sure that I marry an honest, decent man.

As a matter of fact, I remember having a conversation with my parents many, many years later, maybe 20 years later. Couldn't have been 20 years. 49-- my father died in '65. So it had to be maybe 15 years later. I think it was-- my father was still alive when I said you-- at that time, you don't let your children date any non Jews and so on. That was so much of that going on around where we lived in the suburbs when my children were little and young.

And I said to my parents, you never said anything like that to us when we were growing up. You never said you can't go out with somebody that isn't Jewish. And their answer was because it never occurred to them. [LAUGHS] We didn't know anybody else. It never occurred to them. And I said, you wouldn't have said anything if I had brought home a black man or an Indian or whatever? Then they said, don't kid yourself. We wouldn't have liked that at all. It just never even entered our minds that this could happen.

I see. It Absolutely certain.

Right, exactly. But still, you had that feeling--

I had that feeling that I was-- yeah, because that was really when I met Sam. The only thing that they required what does he do or does he have any money. They could have cared less as long as he's a decent man. And once they met Sam's mother and parents who were very typical immigrants from Poland-- and my mother-in-law didn't even know how to read and write-- they saw that these were honest people and decent people. And that's all they were interested in.

Well, I presume that--

Because after the Holocaust, the other stuff really didn't matter anymore to my parents.

His name-- you speak of Polish heritage. Was his name always Gilbert?

Gelbard. It had been Gelbard. And it was changed when my oldest sister-in-law started going to school and the teacher didn't know how to write Gelbard. So she wrote Gilbert. And that's how it eventually became Gilbert.

So you married. Did you get an apartment nearby to your family?

Yeah.

Were you working then yourself?

Yeah.

You continued to work?

Oh, yeah. Yeah, I continued working. He was born-- I married in 1949 and he was born in '53. And what's his name? Daniel, Dan. Dan Gilbert. And then our daughter, Karen, by the time she was born, it was seven years later. And we'd lived in Connecticut, outside New Haven.

Did you move there for business purposes or because--

We moved there because we didn't want to have a family in Manhattan. We didn't want to live in Manhattan. Everybody was moving out to Long Island. And my husband said, I'm not going to commute on the subway. He was never one for being pushed around like a Herring, like a sardine on the subway. And he wanted to leave New York. He didn't like living in New York. So he looked for a job outside of New York. And the first opportunity we had, we moved away. And we're very happy we made that decision. We never went back-- I mean, we went back to New York to visit and always glad to get out again.

Well, in raising your children, did you talk to them about your Holocaust experiences and your points of view?

Yes, of course. I mean, they were weaned on it. Their cousins, their aunts and uncles and grandparents and everybody on that side of the family was a refugee. So they knew that. And I used to take them along to our Sosa's meetings. People from the Dominican Republic, they still do meet to this day. They still meet on a regular basis at least once or twice a year. And many are together practically on a daily basis in Florida.

Do you go to these meetings, by the way?

I haven't since I'm in California, other than the anniversary of the 50th anniversary reunion. But I did as long as I was living on the East Coast. I did regularly when I was living in New York. And once we moved to Connecticut, it became a little more difficult. But I did go whenever I could.

And you were talking to your children about the experience in the camp in France? I mean, because you were saying that people couldn't--

I guess-- no, I guess I didn't. I did. I would say sometimes, I mean, my time in the concentration camp was so short that it was easy to forget, fortunately. But I did say sometimes-- and I never said concentration camp. I used to say the camp or Gurs. But my daughter told me not too long ago-- she said, mom, I always heard you talk about when you were in the camp. And I always thought you went to summer camp like I went with my camp. [LAUGHS]

What a difference.

Yeah.

Then have you ever gone back to Germany as an adult?

No.

No. Why?

I have no desire to go.

You have no desire. Are you repeled to go or--

I don't know that I would be repeled to go today. But as I mentioned to you, this was my first trip to Europe since I'm in the United States. And my first priority was Israel, certainly not Germany. So that's one of the main reasons.

But we had considered-- we had talked about-- I shouldn't say we. I. My husband wasn't interested at all-- should we go to Germany from Israel since I said, let's go somewhere else, let's make another stop. But we decided against it, and we really weren't interested. My sisters come back many times and she-- yeah, to Worms and it pulls her. It doesn't pull me at all.

Because she feels positive about her trips back.

Well, what my sister did-- she started a very large project in Worms at the synagogue. Synagogue in Worms was rebuilt in the 1960s. And my sister-- going to the cemetery in New York at one point back in around 1978, 1976 maybe-- got the idea a lot of people had little memorials for some of the people that were killed, relatives, at the cemeteries. And she thought, well, the appropriate thing to do really is to have a plaque at the synagogue in Worms where the people came from as a Memorial.

And she started to call people together and really started an organization that is flourishing and started this project of getting to find out exactly who is still alive and where people are and who was actually killed. And we have that Memorial plaque of all the people that were living in Worms with their names inscribed at the synagogue in Worms.

And it was a big project, and she got the cooperation of a lot of the present residents of the town in Worms. The archivist of the city of Worms became very, very much involved and there's another man who became very much involved. And a lot of the young Jewish people that we were going to school with-- a lot of the former Worms became involved in the organization.

And one of the people that became active is a historian, a professor of history at Brooklyn College. He was four or six years old when he left Worms. But he ended up writing a book about the Jewish community in Worms. And he also wrote a book about our teacher. We had a teacher at the Jewish school whose name was Herta Mansbacher. She had been a teacher originally in the regular German school system. And then in 1935, when the Jewish school was opened, she became a teacher there. She was from Worms and had been quite a character, very eccentric character, as we always made fun of her as children.

And she really became a martyr and a heroine through because she refused opportunities to leave Germany, decided to stay behind and stay with the children. And was thus deported with the rest of the children. She also actually tried to stop the hoodlums 54 years ago today towards the synagogue. She physically tried to stop them.

And my sister really was the one who said, we have to do something about that. We have to make sure that this is known because we've had the reputation of not fighting back. And here was this 50 or 55-year-old chubby little schoolteacher who put her body between herself and the synagogue. She didn't succeed, but she tried to actually stop the hoodlums from torching the synagogue. And I think she actually was able to hold them back long enough so that some people could run in and save the Torahs. I'm not entirely sure of that anymore.

But Henry Huttenbach has written a book about her telling her story, her entire life story. The biggest love in her life were the cats. She was always going-- in the morning when we were children came to school, we would hear her, here, pussy, pussy, pussy. And her nickname was pussy because of that calling the cats. And she would take the hard boiled egg off her bread and butter an egg sandwich, take the egg off her sandwich and give it to the cats. And her slip was always showing and her hair was tied together with shoelaces. She was really a character.

But she was very, very devoted to the children and apparently had relatives who wanted to give her affidavits to leave. And she refused because she felt that the children needed to get the education. And even after the schools were no longer permitted, she was still teaching them at home and whatever. She used to hit me in my face. And I remember when I had the sore throat one time and I wanted to-- she was my first and second grade teacher. And I said I wanted to go home because my throat was hurting me. She had this big finger and it was full of chalk and she put it on my tongue and looked down my throat. And I think she was satisfied. It was read enough that I could go.

But it was really due to my sister's initiative that-- and then she put an ad in a number of newspapers who knew Herta Mansbacher and got an enormous amount of responses. And people would write anecdotes about her and also send photos. And then Henry Huttenbach ended up writing this book about her. And as a matter of fact, a few years ago, the current generation of high school students in Worms did a play about her now in German. I have a copy of the German tape of what they did about her.

And yeah, it really started from-- I mean, it snowballed. But Miriam is the originator of the whole thing. So she's been very active. In the 1980, there was a big dedication of the plaque at the synagogue in Worms. And many, many people from Worms went there. And I mean, Jews from all over the world went back for the dedication of the plaque. And they had a week of ceremonies that the city of Worms participated in with candle, lighting, and crawling up all the names.

And a very, very dear friend of mine who was in Auschwitz with her mother and survived Auschwitz from Worms went back and was able to address the Germans and telling them about Auschwitz. And I mean, I would have never been able to do that. You ask me, would I have-- it's incredible how she was able to do that. She's just a great woman.

What Germans was she addressing?

To the Wormsers who were terribly anti-Semitic. I mean, she spoke. But it was a Jewish ceremony, but they were also a lot of Gentile guests. They were many-- she was talking at the ceremony, but then they also had dinners and so on. And she spoke. And that takes a lot of strength, a lot of strength to do that.

And I had always pictured myself, asked myself, how would I act if I were to go back there? And my anger was so bad that I just didn't. I couldn't deal with it. I couldn't-- I didn't want to see anybody and talk to them.

You didn't want to see any German people and talk to them.

Right. I couldn't talk German to German Gentiles until maybe 10, 15 years ago. Now, I can. But I could talk German only with Jews. If I knew somebody who was a German Gentile, I couldn't speak German to them.

That was your anger? And so--

It just wouldn't come out.

And when you were able to, was there some resolution in you about this?

Yeah. I think time takes care of it. But I had to do a lot of healing before I could do that.

Do you feel like it was forgiving, that you were being forgiving?

No. I don't think so. I just finally could internalized the fact that the people that-- the person that I spoke to, I'm speaking to right now really didn't have anything to do with it.

What do you think about Germany today?

I had been very so distrustful of any German Gentile before that I could only think about who are you when I spoke to them. And it just took me all these years before I could get over that.

But what is your thinking and feeling about the current Germany?

From what I hear, the young generation is supposed to be quite wonderful. I'm aware of the lunatic fringe of the skinheads. But for that again, I have to bring out my sister all the time. As part of the project that they have done, they also brought over-- they asked some high school students in Worms to write essays about their feelings about the Holocaust. And I think they said the four best ones would win a trip to New York.

And so my sister had contact with these young people. And she speaks very highly of them. And as a matter of fact, there is the daughter of one of the people who were very much involved in this project that I was telling you about with my sister from Worms who actually admits to the fact that he was in the SS or he was a Nazi, but certainly has done his-- what do you call it-- his penance and regrets. And his daughter studied Judaism, Jewish culture. That's her profession. She's-- whatever you call it, I'm not sure. And she studied at the Yeshiva in New York, and she studied in Jerusalem at the Yad Vashem or-- I'm not sure you know where she studied in Jerusalem. And she speaks Hebrew fluently, I guess. And she's certainly very much involved.

As a matter of fact, I was told recently that she was writing about the current Jewish community in Germany. And have you read-- did you see the movie Nasty Girl? Well, her experience was the flip side of the Nasty Girl moments. She went to the Jewish community in Cologne and wanted to look at their archives since after the war. And they did not give her access.

Really? What?

Apparently, they have a lot to hide.

The Jewish community in Cologne has a lot to hide? What might they be hiding?

I don't know exactly. I don't know exactly. But I think a lot of the illegal business and the prostitution business and all of that seems to be in Jewish hands now-a-days--

The current prostitution [INAUDIBLE]

Yes. Although prostitution is legal. But I think there maybe some other illegal things that they were involved with that they don't want generally to be known.

They were involved with in the '30s and '40s--

No, no, no.

Oh, she wants the current--

She wanted from post-war. And that's what I'm talking about from 1945 to 1992.

OK. Well, you referred to the young people. I'm maybe assuming that you feel that the older generation has a different point of view. I mean, the older German generation.

I'm sure that varies like anywhere else. I'm sure that many of them learned their lesson and some of them didn't.

Do you think that kind of anti-Semitism or Holocaust could happen again?

I don't know. I don't know. From what we see now, we certainly see a large increase in racial prejudice. But I just heard on the radio yesterday that they had a demonstration of 350 Germans including a lot of government people in solidarity, showing solidarity with foreigners and wanting to prove to the world that that is-- the element doesn't represent the average German.

So that's kind of hopeful.

It's interesting. When I was in Israel just now, I met with my sister's old school friend who was my sister's age and lives in Israel. And she keeps her-- she's listed with an organization in Tel Aviv. They call her when visitors come and they want to see an Israeli home. And she told me, I have lots and lots of American Jewish visitors coming, and they know absolutely nothing about Israel. And the Germans that come are very well educated about Israel. They ask a lot of intelligent questions, and they really want to know. And the Americans just come, and they sit, and they don't even-- they don't know about anything.

So how was it for you to go to Israel? Did you ever entertain the idea of living there?

No, no. Well, we just got to see. It was very exhausting. It was very exciting and very exhausting. I had mentioned to you before. What time is it? It's already 3 o'clock?

Uh-huh.

My God. I just want to tell you that little story that I had wanted to tell you. This goes back to Germany. My father had an acquaintance, a German acquaintance, casual friend. I don't think that I told you that story at the time of my first interview.

Go ahead anyway.

When we moved to Heidelberg, he came to visit us. And he had joined the Nazi party and used to come to our house wearing his little that Nazi pin. And I remember my father saying that he's a very harmless opportunist, this man. And it was very gutsy of him to come to visit us as a Nazi. What are you doing? They're going to-- I mean, the building we lived in was a Jewish building.

Sometimes, he was a hunter. He would go hunting, and he sometimes brought us some meat. If he shot deer, he would bring us some meat, which it was very nice of him. And he brought us piece of a venison just a few days before we were deported to France. And my mother had made it into-- she had pickled it and made it into a pot roast. And when the Gestapo came that morning to deport us, they said to us, take along some food for your trip. You'll need to have



something to eat, which was nice of them. And they were not acting with us the way it's usually shown later, the way you see, the way they acted later in the 1940s, later in the '40s. This was in 1940.

And so my mother took-- she took the venison. And that's what we ate. We went to concentration camp eating venison on the train.

The food of the Nazi.

Isn't that interesting?

Yes. What an irony.

Yeah. So I mean our story is not like the train and the usual that you're hear. Not everybody had a seat. But we did have regular tourists wooden benches. And we sat down and we were able to eat our venison sandwiches. [LAUGHS]

And it was not a big struggle from the other passengers who are deportees really. About food?

No, everybody had, I think-- and if somebody didn't have any, there was enough to share.

You also mentioned that you wanted to talk about your terrible struggle with the prescription drugs.

Yeah, just very briefly. And this is something that-- I mean, I realize now that I was just totally-- my whole being was full of fear. And in retrospect, I realize that that's how I grew up from the time I was born. I was four years old, and I was just terrified of anything outside of me. And I had to have a constant struggle to overcome that, to deal with that.

And when my son was born, I used to wake up shaking with anxiety during the night. And I had no idea what the shaking came from. He had a hernia problem and I had some health problems. I had many health problems.

What were your health problems?

I, later on, got very bad colitis and a few ulcerative colitis. But at that time, after my son was born, I had a very unusual kind of internal hernia that was extremely painful all the time. And we had no money, and I had this baby who had to have surgery, this infant. And I just felt terribly insecure. And I was very young, and I had a responsibility, and it was quite overwhelming. So I woke up with shaking anxiety. But I didn't know what it was. And so eventually, I was given-- in those days, it was called Miltown. And so I took that, and then later, I was given Valium.

At first, I thought, hey, this is great. I have something that helps me. And then after my daughter was born in 1964, I started with very bad ulcerative colitis. And I was hospitalized with it many times. And I still have it even-- once you have it, you don't ever get rid of it. But one of the ways it was treated was also with Valium to keep to the intestines quiet. So I became addicted to it.

And then I never really increased it because as far as I was concerned, it was always a medicine. And I take as prescribed. And so I never abused it in any way. But I took it for over 30 years, almost 35 years. I mean, and then after, then I developed sleeping problems. So I didn't take it three times a day, no. But I took it every night to go to sleep and changed it to Ativan. After Ativan came out, the doctor said, take this, it's better than the Valium.

And eventually, one of my doctors said, no, I'm not going to give you another prescription. And she urged me to go to the hospital and get detoxed, which I did and--

Were you worried about yourself anywhere along the way there?

I was always worried about myself.

I mean, your connection to the drug.

You mean, did I ever consider if I was addicted?

Yeah.

It was very typical that if-- you don't want to look at that. I mean, I learned. I then checked myself into Stanford hospital and was really had an eye opened, got my eyes open to all of that and to the entire-- what do you call it-- of addiction. And yeah, my daughter had bought me the book, I'm Dancing as Fast as I Can. And she kept urging me, mom, read it, read it. And I'm an avid reader, and I never picked up that book. I didn't want to. In fact, I think I gave it to somebody else. I didn't want to read it. I was afraid that I might find myself in there.

But that was never really actually-- I never even thought in those words. It was just instinctive and yes, my husband and my family everybody was saying to me for years, don't take those pills. And I would think, you don't understand. I need this. I need this to live. You just don't understand. But then it was made quite clear to me while I was at Stanford hospital-- they gave me a name, they gave me a diagnosis. And they called it post-traumatic stress. And obviously, this is what I've walked around with all my life.

So yes, I felt I wanted to bring that out. I don't see no reason in this context to go into any detail. That's another side. But I'm sure I'm not the only one. This is what I'm trying to say. It's something that I carried with me all my life and will never get rid of.

So this was another awful legacy of Germany that--

Right.

--was that terrible fear you have.

Absolutely. Yes. I ended up-- I mean, it took-- I had to go through the education that I got at Stanford hospital, which is really recently, to identify that feeling as fear. And I also always kept myself aside. I never really had the feeling that I belonged anywhere. I always felt as an outsider. And I transferred that feeling all the way to the present until the time that I ended up at Stanford hospital.

From the time I was a little Jewish girl in Germany, I always found another excuse in the context of my life to take that place. I was I was too young, I was too old, I was not from New York, I was not from Connecticut, I was not from here, I was not from there, I don't know this, I can't do this. So I had to keep myself somehow separated so that I never felt whole even, to some extent, my own family around me. I had to be separate.

And when did you go to Stanford?

1986. December of 1986. It's only a few years.

And how long were you in the hospital?

And then it's through that that I had enough that I can even talk now because I couldn't do that. I wouldn't have been able to do that before. I was in the hospital for 12 days. But then I went on for a long time with treatment. And it was horrible. It was worse than anything else. I've had a mastectomy two years after that. And that was nothing compared to it. Absolutely nothing. It was easy. It was a breeze compared to what the other stuff was.

How long did it take before the terrible pains of desire for the drug left?

About a year and a half.

What gave you the strength to go through that?

I have a lot of strength.

You had the will to break [INAUDIBLE].

Yes, I don't have physical strength. But I have a lot of-- that's how they tell me. [LAUGHS]

It must be so.

Yeah. You have to, because there are many times when I didn't want to go on. It was awful.

You mean the sense that he wanted to take the drug again or--

No, I never wanted to-- yeah, I wanted to die. I didn't want to take the drug again. I wanted to die.

And you just hung on?

Yeah, thinking about my grandchildren, that's really what made me hang in there.

You had grandchildren by then?

Yeah. Oh, I had one. At that time, I only had one. The second one wasn't born.

And what about that sense of fear and anxiety today?

It's gone.

It's gone.

I mean, not completely. [LAUGHS] But I understand it now, and I can cope with it. I mean, I still have sleeping problems and still have a lot of problems. But I cope with them in a different way now.

Did you have nightmares?

Yes.

Are they nightmares related to your Holocaust experience?

Yes. Yes. I mean, not always, but a lot. Nightmares all my life of always the deportation again and again in one way or another.

Is that your main sleeping problem that you wake with nightmares?

No. My sleeping problem is that I can't go to sleep. And then when you're taking a lot of that stuff, you don't dream all that much. But if I did dream, I had nightmares. I never had any other kind of dreams. And they're not completely gone, but they're much, much better.

Were you maybe afraid to go to sleep for fear of the nightmares?

No, no.

Because you must have been exhausted a lot of the time.

It's the benzodiazepine. The medication kills off the endorphins in your brain. So there is a real physical biological reason why you can't sleep. It takes a long time to heal itself.

--of your own endorphins?

Right. Takes years before that heals itself.

Well, that seems like it was very, very, very brave of you to go through all that.

I really had no choice. I was very glad once somebody else told me that my family never used the word addiction. They just said get off that, stop taking that. But once the doctor said to me, then-- but at first I thought I can handle that myself. Of course, I always had the excuse. You said, did I ever have any doubts? Yeah, in the sense that I always ask the doctor, can I get addicted for years. And they always said, no. And when I had very bad colitis, the doctor said to me, well, which is more important? I mean, I had it very, very bad. So they said this is the lesser. So even if you do get addicted, one doctor said to me, it's not as bad as your colitis.

So you never had trouble getting prescriptions at all?

No.

It was easy?

Yeah. And that wasn't the problem. And as I said, I never abused it. But what happened was that I was sort of in a halfway withdrawal stage because my body really wanted more, and I didn't know. So I was forever feeling sick and awful, and I didn't know why.

Must have been really hard all those years.

Yeah.

And then you said you had a mastectomy. So you must have had a lump.

That was afterwards.

Right, but--

No, I didn't. That's a different story. [LAUGHS] I had Paget's disease.

What's that?

We don't have to do this on the--

No. If you don't want to, we won't. If you don't want to, we can not.

I mean, I'll be glad to tell you, but not on the camera.

OK. But anyway, you had a major health problem obviously in surgery three years later.

Yeah, it's a form of breast cancer. It's just not very common. It's very rare.

Really?

Yeah.

And since then, how is your health been [INAUDIBLE]?

My health has never been very good. I've always had some kind of problems.

And most of your married life, did you work or you didn't?

Not while my children were growing up. But since 1971, I've worked.

Doing what?

So for the last 20 years-- office work. Accounting.

How did you manage with all these health problems and sleep problems?

It was difficult.

I mean, you could get to work and stay awake even?

Oh, yeah. No, that was never a problem. And I only worked-- when my colitis was very bad, I didn't work. That was before. It was in between 1964 and '71. And when it was really, really very bad was when my mother was dying. So that's when it hit me. She went through a very long, very, very slow deterioration of cancer. And that's when my colitis was the worst during those years.

Was she living with you?

For a time, yeah. And then she was in a nursing home near me in New Haven.

That must have been grueling for both of you. You said your father had already died?

Yeah.

Heartbroken, I assume? So now, your children are grown. Are they both-- are they working, married, not?

Yeah, they're both working and married and parents.

How many grandchildren do you have?

I have one little girl on each side.

How old are they?

8 and 1/2 and 4.

Are you talking to them at all about your experience with your history?

To the older one, yeah. The little one is too young. But the older one-- what I've done a few years is talk about-- I thought that the most appropriate thing to do on Passover is to talk about my own exodus to the family rather than-- my husband never wants to do much reading in the Haggadah. And I love Passover. So that's what I've done for a few years.

Are both your children living nearby?

No, my daughter lives in Los Angeles.

And your son lives--

He lives here, yeah, in Mill Valley.

Is that why you came to California?

Mm-hmm.

And do you have any kind of message or anything you would like to say having now reviewed a good part of your life?

A message--

If you wish.

I probably would. I think that our Jewish heritage is very precious, very important, very important to keep our history. And I hope there'll be a world to hope and pray that the--