

-TITLE-HILLA KIRSCHNER
-I_DATE-MAY 1, 1990
-SOURCE-SAN FRANCISCO HOLOCAUST ORAL HISTORY PROJECT
-RESTRICTIONS-
-SOUND_QUALITY-EXCELLENT
-IMAGE_QUALITY-EXCELLENT
-DURATION-
-LANGUAGES-ENGLISH
-KEY_SEGMENT-
-GEOGRAPHIC_NAME-
-PERSONAL_NAME-
-CORPORATE_NAME-
-KEY_WORDS-
-NOTES-
-CONTENTS-

1:02:00 Hilla was born Dec. 6, 1918 in Frankfurt, Germany. She has one brother. Her mother was a housewife. Her father died in 1933 from cancer but they lived a happy life.

1:05:30 Describes life within the family concerning personal characteristics. Tells how father's first wife was Catholic but had no children. Hilla had very little religious training but the family did go to temple every now and then. Hilla went to high school and began college, desiring to be a nurse so she could move to Palestine. She speaks briefly about a Zionist-group that she was a member of.

1:06:45 In 1939 her mother made her leave Germany and go to London. She was reluctant to leave but her mother ultimately forced her to go.

1:09:00 In England, where she claims she was stuck due to the war. She immediately began to look for a job and obtained one at a hospital for incurable which she left. She ultimately found a job working as a counselor for school children due to her nursing abilities. She mentions that she also worked for two years at Anna Freud's clinic.

1:12:00 First Hilla speaks of her playing with the children at her job and then skips to relating her emigration to America in July of 1946. She then relates her experiences of the bombing of London, remembering keeping patients away from the windows. She remembers being very frightened.

1:14:10 Hilla felt bitter originally going to London. She didn't go to temple while she was there and didn't really see anyone until her brother came to visit her as an American soldier. They decided to look for their mother who they spoke to only through the limited medium of the Red Cross.

1:16:50 A chaplain tells Hilla and her brother that there is a Anna Munser at a displaced persons camp at Dreizendorf(ph), their mother. The brother couldn't get permission so he went A.W.O.L. and went and met his mother which an extremely emotional reunion.

Together, the mother and brother went to Rutgers University where he was getting a Ph.d in languages.

1:18:15 Hilla then speaks how she went to New York's lower east side and worked at a day-care center. While there she ran into a friend on 34th street from Frankfurt.

1:21:00 Hilla relates a party she went to where she met a whole group of old friends who told her that she could still get a hold of Frank Krischner, her future husband. He called her and visited her and 1948 they got married.

1:24:00 Hilla moved from New York to Alton Illinois which she disliked because she is a self-confessed "city-slicker". She began a nursery school and had three children. She eventually moved to California with her family after her brother and her mother moved there, ultimately adding another member to the family.

1:27:00 Interviewer asks if Hilla remembers anti-Semitism in Frankfurt but she only recalls some of her school mates not speaking to her any more. When asked about Nazi propaganda in posters and newspapers she says she ignored it as much as possible.

1:30:20 She talks very briefly how Jewish doctors and professionals were allowed to work with Jews only but since her father was gone she was not too aware of the situation on a professional level and really not at all. Her brother won a large scholarship and left the family in 1935 and since he was the core of the family, things were very different.

1:31:40 Hilla responds to a question concerning her zionist group but simply says it was a group of idealist children wanting to go to Palestine.

1:34:40 Hilla remembers being in Berlin on Kristallnacht at her hospital where "they" came and took random patients away to an unknown destination. Unfortunately, she doesn't remember any details.

1:36:40 She claims she knew very little or nothing about the concentration camps and felt far more German at the time than Jewish. In response to interviewer's question about the city the next day she says she cannot remember.

1:38:40 Hilla discusses her conversation with her mother when her mother wanted to send her away. Says her mother was too old to leave.

1:41:50 Hilla tells the story of how her mother escapes a possible deportation to Auschwitz when she stepped out of line and went to the bathroom although she may have been shot for this action.

1:44:30 The interviewer asks if she remembers anything about the

culture in Germany 1933, but Hilla does not. She goes on to discuss her life in London with the family she lived with.

1:47:30 Hilla describes her life in London some more and says she can't remember the details of the war.

1:50:50 Hilla states that the war had very little effect on the course her life took. She says her husband however, was at Buchenwald.

1:52:15 Hilla says that she wants her grandchildren to be Jewish although her children are not practicing Jews.

1:54:30 When asked if she thinks the Holocaust could happen again she says yes and talks about her return to Germany where she experienced a deep anger at the older generations.

1:57:15 Hilla expresses that the war had little effect on her and she tries not to think about it. Talks about some of her friends became prostitutes upon coming over to the U.S.

1:61:00 Hilla describes her life at the present saying that she has no extended family in Germany.

1:64:00 Interviewers ask her one-word factual questions.

1:66:00 Ask her about her brother's scholarship.

1:69:00 Ask her questions about her London family which she describes again.

1:74:00 Ask her about Anna Freud's hospital but Hilla only remembers being paid well there.

1:77:00 Hilla describes the Red Cross writing procedures when she wrote to her mother.

1:79:10 When asked how the experience was Hilla speaks of the epistemology of digging up the past.

1:84:30 Hilla describes her own interview and suggests they get her husband in there for an interview.
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