

Summary of conversation between Karen Kedmey and Jerry Jacobs, on Monday, July 20, 2009, Café Greco, New York City

Jerry Jacobs discusses:

- When and why he started talking about the Holocaust
- His founding of the Interfaith Committee of Remembrance (ICOR)
- How he is able to talk about the Holocaust
- His concentration camp number and how he has incorporated it into his identity
- His trust in the systems human beings create, e.g. democracy, after experiencing how the National Socialists destroyed Germany
- His thoughts about human nature after experiencing the worst of it
- Hopefulness and disbelief in the face of atrocities and how the memories remain
- His love of reading and how the Holocaust severed his formal schooling
- Emigrating to America after WWII and his self-made success
- How he thinks the Holocaust defined or shaped him
- How he lives with memories of the Holocaust; remembering and forgetting
- Optimism
- What happened to his optimism when he was imprisoned in the ghetto and concentration camps; on hope versus optimism
- Continuing on after the Holocaust
- Surviving during the Holocaust, day by day
- Reflecting on how he had the will to run away from the last concentration camp in which he was imprisoned
- Seeking psychological help
- Escaping from the concentration camp and being on the run