

NOTICE

Materials in our digital Oral History collections are the products of research projects by several individuals. USF Libraries assume no responsibility for the views expressed by interviewers or interviewees. Some interviews include material that may be viewed as offensive or objectionable. Parents of minors are encouraged to supervise use of USF Libraries Oral Histories and Digital Collections. Additional oral histories may be available in Special Collections for use in the reading room. See individual collection descriptions for more information.

This oral history is provided for research and education within the bounds of U.S. Copyright Law (Title 17, U.S.C.). Copyright over Oral Histories hosted by the USF Libraries rests with the interviewee unless transferred to the interviewer in the course of the project. Interviewee views and information may also be protected by privacy and publicity laws. All patrons making use of it and other library content are individually accountable for their responsible and legal use of copyrighted material.

Holocaust Survivors Oral History Project
Oral History Program
Florida Studies Center
University of South Florida, Tampa Library

Digital Object Identifier: F60-00011
Interviewees: Kitty Scharf Zuchovicki (KZ), Saverio Zuchovicki (SZ)
Interviewer: Tori Lockler (TL)
Interview dates: October 16, 2009
Interview location: St. Petersburg, Florida
Transcribed by: Tori Lockler
Transcription date: December 15, 2009
Audit Edit by: Kimberly Nordon
Audit Edit date: January 6, 2010 to January 11, 2010
Final Edit by: James Scholz
Final Edit date: January 19, 2010 to January 20, 2010

[Transcriber's note: The following oral history interview contains mature content.
Researcher discretion is advised.]

Tori Lockler: The date is October 16, 2009. I am here with Kitty Scharf Zuchovicki. My name is Tori Lockler. We are in St. Petersburg, Florida, in the United States. The interview will be done in English, and our videographer is Jane Duncan.

Could you please tell us your name?

Kitty Scharf Zuchovicki: My name is Kitty Scharf Zuchovicki.

TL: Okay. And can you please tell us your date of birth?

KZ: It's June 30, 1930.

TL: And where were you born?

KZ: Well, I was born under circumstances in Budapest, Hungary. My grandfather was a Ph.D. doctor, and he was dying. My mother, who lived with my father in Vienna, Austria, decided to see for the last time her father—my grandfather—and he died the following day. And my mother went into labor because of the stress and everything. So, I'm a seven months' baby and only was in Budapest five days, and then we went to Vienna. But the interesting part is that my nationality is Austrian—was Austrian—because in Europe, you

have the nationality of your parents. You don't have the nationality of the place of birth, because everything is very near so it is very easy that you can be born anywhere. So—

TL: Okay. So, in Vienna, this is where you grew up when you were little?

KZ: Yes, until—Hitler came and everything changed.

TL: So, before that, what was life like?

KZ: Life was wonderful. I have memories—flashes, of course, because I was eight-years-old when I left. But before the last days of Vienna, which were traumatic for me, I had a wonderful childhood because my parents were lively people who had good friends. We went on the weekends always to different places, the woods. In the middle of the woods, we collected mushrooms and nuts from the trees, you know. It was—I have wonderful memories in there. And we had a family life, because we were very family oriented.

And suddenly, everything changed from one day to another, which I didn't understand because in that time, many parents tried to avoid to talk about politics to children, especially not to scare them, to worry them, and to give them a kind of complex, because what was the situation? The situation was that when Hitler annexed Austria, well, the law was that you should not buy anything from people who were Jewish people. You should not even talk to them. And I didn't know about these rules, but I was brought up that authorities do their best, they do the right thing.

And then one day, you find out that you are a nobody, because that is what I felt. I was a nobody because my friends, my school friends who lived—the school was very near where we live, in walking distance. They stopped talking to me, and they ignored me. So, if they put you on the ice, it is a feeling that you are guilty of something. You don't know what it is, and you go to one group of children and they turn; you go to another part, they stop talking and they go away. And after school, we always met in the park. We lived in a little apartment that was in front of a beautiful park, and all the friends, we meet there. That day, none, none, none of the children that I was with wanted to have anything to do with me. That's (inaudible) you know, outside.

These are very, very painful memories, which gave me a feeling for many years that I am not deserving the same rights what other children are able to deserve. It must be a good reason, what Hitler wanted. And I just—the only thing I could think, why am I a Jew? I don't want to be a Jew, because it is a nightmare to be a Jew. I was angry and I was sad, and I was scared because I didn't know what was happening. So, when I told my parents what happened in the park, they said, “Just—well, tomorrow, go with a book and [go] to

jump or do something yourself. Don't pay attention to the children. It will pass, don't worry." So, it was no comfort at all.

So, then, I did what my parents told me, but then I had another experience. I saw that there was the Gestapo. They were all dressed in black with the swastika cross on their arm and they were just watching how a group of children, children that belonged to the Hitler-Jugend, which is the Youth of Hitler, and they were beating up some Orthodox Jews who were dressed different. It was horrible to see how elderly people and children were beaten up under the control and the approval of these grown-up people that you expect that they know better and they will not do such a thing.

So, I ran away. I came back home and I mentioned to my parents when they came from working what has happened, and they just said, "Don't go back to the park anymore. It was good that you came." And that was all what they say to me. So, that was—I felt inside myself something scary, and that I—even I felt that I was dirty, that something was not right with me. I could not understand and I was very, very unhappy.

It was funny thing. I was unhappy that I was a Jew, because it was considered that Jewish people are different. And even sometimes, I hear people saying the German, the Nazis, the Nazis in that time, they considered Jews like—to make a comparison about humanity, a non-Jew person is like a squirrel with a nice tail, and you feel a good feeling and you want to feed the squirrel; but when you take away the tail, it's not more a squirrel, it is just a rat. So, the Nazi considered the human race as just like compared with rats and squirrel. The squirrel, you have a right to live, and the rats should die—and even if there are little ones, because then they will grow to be adults.

All those kinds of stories that happened to other people, and they were told to my parents, upset me very much, because I just considered I have no right to live, I have no dignity, and if somebody talks to me, I should be thankful, grateful, because I'm a nobody. But it helped me to realize also—I became very observant that most people in this world know what is the meaning of discrimination, because you can be discriminated by the color of your skin, you can belong into an ethnic group, you can be discriminated if you are too tall, if you are too short, if you are too plump, too skinny: all that gives you [the feeling] that you are different. And when people are nasty, they just let you know that you are not able to get a decent job because you don't look nice according that is a pleasure to look at you for any reason. And sometimes, one is very nervous and one can be not nice to an employee, to a student, and that's so many discrimination.

And so, it came a moment when I felt I want to be a good human being, to get something from a bad thing, to make it good and even to question myself. Well, let's think that if my parents and I, we were not Jews, would we be able to help people? Or would we be scared and afraid that something will happen to us? Who knows in the situation that other

people are what one is going to do? So that gave me a kind of feeling that one, when it came to the point that it was considered what has happened should not be forgotten. It is maybe the first time that something like that has happened, not to forget because it has happened in history so many times, the discrimination. We have had the Inquisition that most people know about. That's history, and that is a dark part of history. And genocide still exists because you go to Darfur or all parts of Africa.

And then, also, some people who are blessed to have a good life consider sometimes that they deserve better than other who are in a different situation. That is one thing that I love so much about America, because in America, you have not the feeling that anybody is more than you are. It is really—people are considered for their values and not for the money. Some—that doesn't mean that all Americans are that way, there are always also humankind that are different; but on the whole, that is the only country what I remember that I have been living [in] where the possibility to be a somebody, to have rights, and that you can have a wonderful life compared to other countries.

For me, it is a blessing that I am here with my husband, and we were sponsored to come here from our children. So, I count my blessing in life, even that I am still the wandering Jew, because we are only here so far—we come in the year 2002, so that is seven years. But I am very happy, and wherever I went in my life, I made good friends. In America, I was before also six years that my husband got a working contract in Buffalo, New York, and we made wonderful friends there, too. And it was—it was different, like in my life that I was in Austria, I was in France, I was in Morocco, I was in Argentina, and Mexico. But I felt immediately I want not to be a foreigner; I want to be part of the melting pot.

So, living in Buffalo, New York, I said to a neighbor friend, a very dear friend, "Please, would you tell me when I am doing something wrong? I want to behave like an American does it." And so, the next thing was that she was screaming from her home to my home—that was quite a distance—"Kitty, in America, you don't rake the leaves with high heels; put your sneakers on." (laughs) That was sweet. And then another neighbor said to me, "Don't pay attention to Rudy, do your job." It was wonderful, you know.

I have to mention that, my love to America—and all my children and grandchildren live here; they are really doing very well and working hard—and the American way. And that's my blessing.

TL: Now, do you have any siblings?

KZ: No, I was an only child. And my parents knew already that things were not going well. What happened in Germany was in the early thirties [1930s]. So, they just decided

not to have more children than me, and maybe that also had helped us to save our lives for all the time we went through.

TL: Can you tell me what your father did, what his occupation was?

KZ: Well, he was a businessman in electrical appliance. He was selling, and my mother was also working. She had a little kiosk in the movie theater. So, they were both working, but we had a good life and there was a lot of love. My parents loved each other very much, and that gave me also a good background to become a good wife and to treasure my husband, who is a wonderful human being also. For better or worse, we are almost fifty years together, and that is wonderful.

TL: Yeah.

KZ: So, to come back from the last experience that I had, a bad experience in Vienna was at school. I went to school like every day, and suddenly the door opened and there was a few Gestapo people. They came in with a paper where they were reading about four or five names. My name was included, because these were all the Jewish children who they wanted to leave, to have no more right according to the law. No Jewish child should access the school anymore. But they came in, and they just yelled and said in German, I remember, in a very, very loud voice, “*Raus!*” meaning, “Out!” “*Raus, Jüde!*”

So, again, it was like that, the feeling, and all the children, the neighbor children and other children, started to “boo,” and to make fun, and to be really nasty. They were also saying that, “We don’t want the Jew here, go out! What are you doing? You take our places!” I was petrified, so I didn’t take my belongings. And so the Gestapo—one of the Gestapo men got them, and threw it over my head. And it was a terrible feeling that I kept for many, many years, because I was bleeding from the corner of a book that hit me hard on the forehead, and all the children were laughing and the teacher was just crossing their arms and completely indifferent. And I was crying.

When we arrived home, that was—enough was enough, and my father decided we have to leave immediately, so just leaving everything there. My mother decided just to take the belongings what we had, and—but she was aware. My parents were not religious at all. So, always they had friends who were not Jewish people. It was not an issue. You are not—it seems that there was a time when people were not asking, “Are you Jew?” because it is still happening now that people ask, “Are you Jew?” I never hear anybody asking, “Are you Christian?” There is something that is disturbing. I cannot express it properly, but it’s a reality. Why is it always to say, “Are you a Jew?” and not the other way around? “Are you a Catholic? Are you a Protestant or Lutheran?” No, it’s not happening, that.

So my mother, she—the only thing was she was very in tradition, but only for the high holidays and Passover. And that was, for me, fine always because I always had friends who are non-Jewish, and the Passover is something that goes also in a way with the Christian people, and later I heard from the Muslims, also. So, I always felt there should be something like an energy that we are all together, and it doesn't matter how you believe. It is just like the languages: you speak different languages and it means the same. You feel like praying to a God. It doesn't matter how you call him; it is God, whatever it is.

And there are the Ten Commandments, which existed in most religion, and there is one, the Golden Rule, that you can see in the Vatican. I've been—I was lucky that I went. In the Vatican—it is written in every language and in every religion, “Don't do to anybody else what you don't want to be done to you.” That is a Golden Rule in every religion. So, it should be much more that one has to come together when one has different belief, not to make separation, and not to make in the name of God to fight and to be enemies. No, we can be just really brothers and sisters and live in a peaceful world if we just want it, really. In order to—you have to have a beginning, and the beginning is, “Don't let anybody pick on you.” Talk it over.

So, I am a speaker at the Holocaust Museum here in St. Petersburg. I got lovely cards from students who come with the teachers from school to hear about the history and to know what has happened. And so, I have a bonding. Because when they realize first that they have been victims also by being picked on them, they can understand better what it was that area when the government is telling you, “You don't belong! You have no”—I don't know if people can realize how it feels when suddenly your accounts, your bank accounts, are closed. You cannot get anything out. Your home is confiscated. So, you have no home and you have no passport, because they don't give you—you cannot have a visa to go. So, my father under those circumstances—the only passport he had was, of course, the German passport with the swastika cross and the J that says that he is a Jew. So, with that, that was enough to say he is a nobody.

So, nevertheless, he decided when that happened at school, and when he heard that things were growing worse and worse, to see where can he go, in which to go to another country. The nearest country was Switzerland. So, he took—he decided we should all go take the plane without the visa and to go to—to fly to Zurich; that is the German part of Switzerland, because there are French and Italian reside also. When we arrived, of course, the authority was very organized always; they couldn't believe that, how people come without a visa. So, they were not nice to my parents, and they had to pay a fine. And again, I felt just like that they were Nazis or something. So, the people, the authority, saw that I was frightened, so they turned to me and smiled immediately and said, “Don't worry. You are not—your parents did something wrong, but you're not, so you have not to pay a fine.” And they gave me a chocolate to eat. I saw they were not like the Nazis, the experience I had the day before at school.

So then, the time we were in Switzerland, I think it was a few months. It was wonderful for me because people were very, very nice. Whenever we went to the markets, my mother bought butter and they gave me piece of cheese to eat. If they want bread, they will give you a cookie or a chocolate. Always people give something, and I have really wonderful time the months that we stayed there. But the problem is in Switzerland, you cannot get a working permit, ever. So my parents decided we to have to move on, to go somewhere else, and they decided to go to France.

So, we took a train, and by train we went to Paris. And in Paris, I was not as happy at the beginning as I was in Switzerland because my parents both—they left me much time in what they called a *garconnière*; it's an apartment with only one room, bathroom and a little kitchenette. I was frightened if there was a little moth flying. I didn't feel happy being left alone. But then I went to school and they liked me very much, and they gave medals like the people from the army when you have worked there the whole week. So I got several medals, and I felt I was very important. I was very happy with that.

But then one day, my parents sent me to a vacation camp and there really was very unhappy because it was a beautiful place, and it was a private place where people from rich families sent their children. The owner was the president of the Red Cross in that time; her name was Madame Wallerstein. And she was very concerned about all the refugees that came from Germany, from Austria, wherever Hitler already took charge. So, she invited quite an amount of children from refugees, and I was one of them, to be there. But most children, they went just for the vacation, sometimes just for a week or a month. But she just decided that we can stay there as long as necessary; it is for the convenience of the parents.

And my parents never showed up, so I was very miserable because I felt abandoned, in a way. It was not happy there, and the children sometimes are very sweet and sometimes they are very cruel. And when the family came, their family brought them presents and chocolates and candies and all that. They enjoyed just torturing me by eating them and not offering any of the refugees' children anything.

TL: And the camp was in France?

KZ: It was in France, it was near Biarritz in a place called Arcachon. That was the place. It was between Biarritz and Bayonne, which is a port. So, I didn't know what has happened to my parents. I found it out later on that my father was taken to a working camp where there were most Jewish people and also politics, people against the regime that existed, so he was there. But he had a very light and friendly personality, so he became friend with the employees of the camp and doctors there.

They knew very well that is a camp: that for a short time, he will be there, and then he will be transported to Germany or to Poland, to one of the extermination camps. They wanted to help my father, and they offered him to take some medicines. So, he got poisoned, but they explained him he should not tell about his pains, only what had to do with the heart, because in that time, they didn't want to have anybody that is dying in these camps in France, because they don't want that they would say, "Oh, in France, they are killing people." (coughs)

So, I did not know what was happening and that he was there. Yes, it worked perfectly. He was discharged, but it seems that his personality was so frightened, and it took him so much time to recover—he was really between life and death—that his personality has unfortunately changed completely forever and ever. And he became a bitter person. He did a lot of things which a nice person is not doing. So, in fact, I suffered a lot about how my father has changed, because of the circumstances.

So, anyway, once he felt better, they decided that we have to do something to leave France because the things were getting worse and worse. So they had to fight with Madame Wallerstein, because she didn't want to let me go. She said, "You adults, you can do much better without the children, and then after the war—I am responsible for the life of these children, and then you come after the war is over." But my parents said no, they don't want to leave without me, so that was good.

But they were not anymore in Paris, they were in Bordeaux; it's the Gironde [department], where the good wine comes in from France. And there were the bombs falling and we had to go to shelters. And yes, and then it started that the people, the Jewish people, started to be together because when the problem arise and everybody has the same problem, you live in the community that go through the bad situation.

There, again, I went to school and it happened, the same situation that happened in Austria. One day came the French Nazi authority. They didn't yell and scream, but they just said, "Stand up all, the Jewish children who are here, who are Jews." Of course everybody who was Jewish stood up, and they said, "Well, you are not belonging anymore to the school and that's the end of it, so take your stuff and you leave." I knew what it meant, so I did it immediately, but I felt a lot of comfort because none of the children were saying one word. They were all petrified and the teacher was crying. So, I felt it was—I loved France. I consider that really French people are special. Other people say that there were a lot of anti-Jewish people in France, and I never wanted to hear anything about that because I was so grateful how they behaved in that school when I had to leave.

And the following day, my father decided that we have to leave. We have to go to a port and to find a ship that will take us, which was crazy because we had a German passport, even it had the J. Because in that time, all the ships from Norway, Denmark, England, they were all leaving, taking their own people, but there was no one who was interested in taking any Jews from any places, and there were Jews from all over. Because also from Spain there were lot of Jewish because of Franco already, and Italy, also. It was a chaos, already written everywhere that it is a race that should disappear from the earth forever and ever.

What I always questioned myself, “Is it your race? Is it a culture? What is it?” because you see in all color. You see white Jews, you see black Jews, you see brown Jews, you see red hair, blond, blue eyes, dark eyes, everything. So, what is it? But maybe it has to do something with tradition. In a way you follow-up certain tradition, and you can be religious or not religious but just if you are doing it, that is the way to consider one is a Jew or not a Jew. I don’t know. Let’s find that out in history. One day, they will find out what it is. I am hoping for the best.

And so, we arrived in—no, my father hired a taxi to take us to Bayonne, where the port was, and he said, “Well, you can take two suitcases.” So, my mother organized that, and when he came, there was another couple in the taxi. So, he said, “Well, I’m sorry, you have to squeeze in and then no more two suitcases, only one.” As I mentioned before, my mother believed in tradition, and she had the candles in one of the suitcases, the candlesticks from the family; at that time, that was over 200 years old in the family, from one generation to the other it went to. So, she said, “No, I’ll take the candlestick; the rest is of no importance.”

So, she took that suitcase and the guy brought us into the suburbs of Bayonne, because the city was completely overcrowd from all over the country of people who wanted to escape too. Anybody can imagine a room that is filled with people that can maybe hundred people in this room where we are now, one standing next to another. But the city is overcrowd, and there is no place that people are sitting or sleeping all over, and no hotel room available, nothing.

So, the taxi left us in the outskirt because the police didn’t let them—they made a barricade and said, “Nobody can pass that.” The suburb was about half an hour, maybe, from Bayonne the city, in the middle of fields. And he left to get other people, because that was his business then at this time. It was wintertime; it was pouring, raining and bitter cold. Then a woman, a peasant, saw us, two couple and me, the little child, and she felt sorry, so she said to come into her *auberge*, which is like a bed and breakfast, that was filled with people. But nevertheless, she let my parents and the other couple use the dining room tables to sleep, and she put me in the bed of her grandchild. I think I never had such a good time, before nor after. I had a feeling that I was so cold and shivering all over, and then this warm bed; that was like heaven for me.

The following day, that woman's husband gave peasant clothes to my father and smuggled him into the city. When he came in the evening he said, "Look, all the ships are just leaving. They only take as passenger the nationality what the flag of the ship is. So, you have to—nobody takes us, but there was a rumor about one captain of a little banana carrier is an extraordinary nice human being, and he is leaving at six o'clock in the morning. So, let's hope that he might take us." But the ship was filled with the bananas already and beside that, maybe a hundred fifty people could be more on that ship. But there came more and more and more people. I had a place in the gazebo, so I was not soaked like my parents and the other children who had no more place to get shelter.

And so, the captain just came at six o'clock in the morning. There was a silence, nobody spoke anything. And he looked and looked, and you felt like that you could cut the air, so much tension it was there. Then, he had his pipe in his hand, and I watched him very carefully because I thought always a captain is somebody with gold and white, and he had just a little captain hat and not even the right way to put it, the beard not well shaved, not trimmed properly, and smoking the pipe and not saying one word. Then he said, "Well, we will wait till everybody comes on the ship. Wait a moment, first we have to get rid of the green bananas because they will not ripe, so what will ripe, we will keep it." These were not his bananas.

So, he did something completely that was not according the law. He gave his bed to an elderly lady. All the crew gave their beds to pregnant women, to old people, sick people. Then he organized with some people, including my father, to organize all this quantity of people to have an order. Well, they gave each of us a can of sardines, that was our first dish, and they said, "Keep the can, because that is going to be your plate as long as you're staying here, because we have no plates to give you."

Well, I don't know how long we were several days sailing, but the ship could hardly move because it was overloaded. We arrived in Lisbon, which is very near, and in normal circumstance you can make it in some hours. You know, it was days until we arrived there. The captain said, "It's a neutral country, so I will put the flag above that we are invading Portugal." So they take you prisoner, and he considered that it was very easy. It was not as easy as that because the people came, they surrounded the ship. When they saw the kind of people that were there, they decided, "No, you stay there, we are not taking you as prisoner; however, you cannot go on shore and you go away." But he could not let the ship with the weight; it was going to sink if he was going. He could not go to the open sea.

There was another ship there. The name was *Grand Didier*. The captain decided to use a boat. He went to the other ship and spoke to the captain trying that he would take charge of all the passengers. But this guy was absolutely anti-Jewish and anti—how can I say?

Anti the enemies of Franco, which were the Republican or the Democrats, will say. So, he said no, he will not take them.

But one of the sailors, who was cleaning the porthole, listened to all this shouting and what was going on, and he told it to the officers. Very soon, somebody knocked at the door and later on, it was told because the two captains were in there together. The officer came in and said, "There is a problem, and the whole crew wants to talk to your captain." So, he said to our captain, "Wait a moment," and he went. The crew said, "You know what? You are going to take these passengers; if you are not going to take them, you will have an accident once we are sailing in the middle of the sea." And the way it was said, it seems that the captain was a little bit scared, so he decided and gave us the permission to.

It was very, very emotional, and I remember that, because we had to go from the one ship to the other ship in the middle of the sea, it was. And suddenly, the people, all these refugees that were there, started, as if it was organized, to say, "*Monsieur le Capitaine! Monsieur le Capitaine!*" They wanted to see for the last time the captain, and the captain came. As soon as they saw him—as if it was organized, as I said—they sang the French anthem to him. They said, "*Au revoir, Berlin,*" because he could not go back because he would be taken in prison for what he did when he left, and then what's about the bananas that were not his bananas, also! So, he was crying, and that was the last thing we knew about the captain.

Then my parents once mentioned that it's so strange that nobody of the passenger know the name of the captain. The ship was *Kilisie*, the name. So, I hope that somebody in that time, before, try to find out, and maybe now with Google you can find out about the ship, I don't know. It would be interesting. (coughs) So, anyway—

TL: Maybe, if it's okay with you, we'll stop here and take a small break, and then we'll pick back up in just a little bit.

KZ: Good. Thanks.

Part 1 ends; part 2 begins

TL: We are starting tape two with our interview with Ms. Kitty Scharf Zuchovicki. Ms. Zuchovicki, I would like you, if you would, to go back just a little for me. You told us the story of your father and his—him being able to escape from the camp, based on the poison that he took, and you talked about how people were sometimes lucky that way that they could escape. Can you tell us a little more about that?

KZ: Yes. Really, in life, you—there's a fact of luck sometimes that every person has it; you have just to grab it when they—that kind of possibility, because if my father would not have had the guts to take that poison and he would not have had the help from these wonderful people who wanted to help him, he would not have made it, because a few weeks later or maybe a month later, all these people in France were in camp. They were sent—about these railways that Eichmann was organizing from all over to take the Jewish to the concentration camp, the extermination camps, where there was no hope anymore.

And so he was in a way lucky, and especially—he was the one who could save the family. But again, speaking about luck, it's very sad to say that my grandmother died. But if she would not have died at the very time when my parents left Austria—my mother would not have left her mother alone, never, and then it would have been too late because it was a matter of days or weeks that nobody could escape anymore. So that is, again, luck.

A third luck that is very relevant is that—when already I was back with my parents in Bordeaux, the law was that all adults had to go once a week to the police station to register themselves and to get order if they are going to stay or if they have—they have to be sent in a camp, what one knows if that then it would be the end may be impossible. And my mother went every week, and the police chief was very angry with her because he cursed at her and said, “Your paper—I cannot find them, and I need to have them in order that I can make any decision.” And my mother should have been—and I, because it's always the women with the children—should have been sent with the first contingent. How you say it? The first—

TL: The first group to move?

KZ: The first people that has to—are going to be sent to one of the extermination camps that were so well organized by Adolf Eichmann. Well, she knew that the man was very angry, but it was not her fault, but she came every week and always was the same story. And then, suddenly there came a law that the Red Cross was able to get—that no women with children under ten years should be put in any camp.

So they were in France, and that very day, my mother had to go again back to the police station, and the police chief tricked her—with her—and says, “I found your paper,” and she knew at this very moment that he really didn't want to send her. We all thought that maybe the reason was because she was so beautiful. She was such a good-looking and very elegant lady, inside the same as her look, so that was—that was luck because if not, if he would have not—I guess he must have had a crush on her. So, if he would not, I would not be here telling the story anymore. But so that was—that was really luck.

And then, a few days later—well, came that no—what I said, before that you have to be—if you are under ten years. So, I saved the life of my mother in that very moment. She saved me, I saved her, my grandmother saved all of us, and my father, the same. And it is—so, that is the part of luck that one has sometimes, and that counts a lot. But help yourself and God helps you, so you have to do something. You cannot be passive, because if you are passive, no. Then things can be different. It's always something that you have to work on it and to have faith that you can do, you can achieve something.

I remember my mother always tried to keep her dignity as much as possible. When we lived in Bordeaux, we lived in a little apartment, and there we had no furniture. So, my father, with little broken bricks, he made a kind of library; and then, taking some wooden boxes, he made it a table so that we can have something to—like a living [room] table and sitting room. My mother once asked me to bring a glass of water for a friend of hers, and I brought the glass of water with a little saucer underneath, a little plate, and my mother's friend started to laugh and said, "What is that? You have this cardboard table; that is nothing." And my mother said to her, "Well, I hope that my daughter will not finish her life on this kind of tables, and if she's not learning now that you have to have a little plate or coaster, she will not know how to do it later on."

So, she always kept the—a kind of—what would we say? Aesthetic, you know, the good taste. I remember she plucked these some geranium flowers and then she put them to write "Happy Birthday" for me, so that was my present on the table, you know. Things like that to make it more—in a way that I felt good and that it was my day, so little things that might give you happiness. It's not the big things that gives you the happiness, the small things, and that was fine.

So, anyway, so that's what I wanted to tell you also. And then, I think you—about Morocco—

TL: Right.

KZ: When the ship arrived, nobody knew where the ship was going. It was not told to us, anything; we were not treated really too well. Then suddenly, somebody said, "We are in Morocco," and people—there were all kinds of people. Some were very primitive, and I said, "Oh, they are going to be the cannibals. They're going to eat us. They're the African people." But I had no idea, and they were crying. So, now we are going to die anyway and what was it worth, what we did? There was a chaos there, and when we arrived there, they of course—we were about, as I said, a thousand people. So, they put us in a camp, in a camp, but just like—what's it—like the Ellis Island, you know, where you concentrate people together who have not the papers really, and you don't know what to do with them. There were far too many people.

So, I remember that there was a lot of promiscuous situation that made especially my mother very unhappy because people—lost completely control of behavior, you know. A little boy was urinating on the luggage. My mother said to his mother, “Look what he’s—take care of your little child. I know he’s a small child, but he should not do that,” and her reaction was to yell at my mother, saying, “I have lost more important things than your silly suitcase,” and all very aggressive. So, it was hard.

Then they were not giving food—the minimum of it. Maybe they didn’t have enough, I don’t know. But anyway, it was the first time that we felt really that hunger, what is the feeling that nobody knows until you really have it because you may not eat a day because you’re fasting, but you can be hungry. But it’s not hunger. Hunger is—it gives you a pain in the stomach. That’s a very special, unpleasant feeling. And I was—being an only child, I was not really very social myself, so I was walking a lot on my own.

I arrived just at the gate of the entrance of the camp, so I walked through that gate and there I saw, of course, all the Arabs, who were the soldiers to—were to take care of the gate that nobody should escape from it. It was very, very hot, and they—and I saw that they were eating watermelon, and I just felt like I was swallowing my saliva because imagine how sweet, how tasty, how cold, how watery, everything that was? And one of the Arabs saw me and looked at me and said, “Would you like to eat?” and I said, “Sure,” so he came with his sword—it’s just a low sword—and he brought it—I think it was at least twenty pounds, the watermelon, and I cut it in—then he cut it in many pieces. And, well, for me it was heaven. I ate it all.

Can you imagine what happened to me? I got so sick, so sick that I ended in hospital. I had dysentery, and I was almost between life and death. But before I was taken to the hospital, I was just sleeping on the hay, what they gave us, hay, and my mother considered that hay sacred because if I make that dirty, where are we going to sleep? Who knows if we get more of that? So she put all the clothes, whatever we had in our one suitcase, underneath myself, because I had no control and I had diarrhea completely that was killing me, almost.

And then they—I was taken to the hospital, and my mother was just in the middle of washing all these clothes that protected the hay from getting dirty. In that moment, a lady came because it happened that the—somehow, all the—they were not prepared yet [for] what was going on in Europe. Even the government belonged already to the Vichy Government, which was pro-Nazi, because France gave in without fighting. So, when the population, the community, heard that there were so many Jews in this camp and so they wanted to get them out and the authorities—well, they wanted to get rid of the people. They didn’t know what to do and how to do it, so they came to a conclusion saying, “Well, it is okay.” If the community wants to help them out, for each family that wants to have a family, they can have it, but with the condition that they adopt them for the time of

the whole war is something that the whole war is over, because they cannot be a problem for the country because they are so many.

And it is amazing because these people were like heroes, because I always ask the children at the Holocaust Museum, “Did you have some guest at your home, family or whoever, who stayed too long and you finish not being so happy with them?” and all of them are laughing and said, “Oh, yes.” I said, “Well, so how much is it? What is long? A week? A month? Not more.” But here it was, it was the year forty-two [1942]—forty-one [1941]; it was forty-one [1941]—and the war ended in forty-five [1945]. So, imagine all these years to live daily with strange people with different customs, with different education. These are heroes, also, because to do such a thing and to be willing and to sign, yes, I take the responsibility—that’s not easy.

So, we were very lucky that, as I said, my—a lady that was then—she was called the Rothschilds from Morocco, because they were really the most—the richest people this community and they were expecting. Well, they have just—they have to invite us, we all do, someone. And Mrs. Laredo was, well, very concerned about who and how, and so she was going through the camp and really, it was—it looked everything pathetic because people were not combing themselves, were not washing themselves, and there was very little water. But my mother, didn’t matter if she has—little water she had, some of the water had to be used for cleaning and for looking.

So, when she saw my mother, she says, “The family of that person,” and so they had only to find out if I was contagious for any problem, which I was not. But anyway, my parents left the place with her to show where it was and then to bring me over, and a doctor had to see me to say that I had nothing contagious. But again, there was a nurse who was very mean. She had just fun, like little children pick on their siblings many times. She was just telling me that my parents left and I am going to be there forever and who knows what my future will be?

So, I was absolutely desperate and unhappy and I lost every hope that my parents will come back. And my parents, until everything was settled—I think there were three days and nights they were outside the camp living at that place, but they never came to tell me, “We are going. Don’t worry.” But nowadays, all children can be so happy, because most of the parents are doing that. There is much more communication as it used to be before. We are much more obedient and parents knew better. That was considered general way, which is not necessarily always the truth, but that was how it worked. So—

TL: What was the family like that you stayed with in Morocco?

KZ: They were very well educated. They had very good manners, and they were—the couple—I mean, the parents—they had four children. One was almost my age, a girl. But again—I don't know what was the reason; maybe I invaded too much the place, who knows? But I attended after the girl, which I considered as my friend, was not interested to be with me. Whenever I showed up, she was reading a book or doing something, so I was—as I was not part of it. So, that always gives you a guilty feeling. Maybe I said something to her that she didn't like, or I did something and I ran after her, you know, wanting—I wanted to have acceptance, and that is very, very painful. It took me years until I was able to overcome that, because when you are running after somebody, the nature of humankind just does the opposite. You have to be happy with yourself.

So, then was another situation, again luck. They needed for the soldiers to have a clean can to put food, and so the government said, “Well, if among you there are some chemists, we will give you a task to clean these containers, and if you—who is going to be the number one to clean them properly, that's for food, will have a working contract.” So my father said, “Well, I am not a chemist, but I will.” Nobody has paper; nobody can prove what we are because you didn't get anything. Jewish people lost immediately their right to be the profession. All that was just taken away.

So, my father, he started to experiment like an alchemist to make—mixing stuff and all that, and there were all these professors from university, from Germany, from France, from Austria, and they all were trying well to find a formula to do so. And my father, he experimented, put one thing with the other. Once the little place sort of blew up, who knows what he did, but he didn't give up, and he was the number one who found—who was able to clean it, and he got the job. He was very well paid, and thankful for being so well paid.

A cousin of my mother, who lived in Argentina, was able to get a contract for my father. So, we—and during the war; it was the year forty—1942. We arrived in Buenos Aires on the twenty-eighth of January, and there were other ships that were next to ours sailing and they exploded because of the mines. They were completely explosion of it. We passed through.

So we arrived in Buenos Aires, as I said, and my father and I, we both were sick for all that what happened. Then it turned out that we both have tuberculosis, but—my tuberculosis was the worst kind because both lungs were completely like a sewer filled up with the germs under (inaudible) it's called, and I was bleeding. And to make a long story short, it took until the medicine came to cure tuberculosis, the lab—I had to live very, very sick all my time of teenager.

So I started to—we arrived when I was not twelve years old, but they didn't know that I was sick. My mother thought I was very lazy, because the lung has no nerves so you are

only tired and you're coughing, and until I started to bleed from the mouth. Then they found out that I had tuberculosis. And I was confined just to rest, because there was no medicine that helped, and that [was] for about six years.

TL: Wow.

KZ: (coughs) And when the medicine and—the doctors always said to my mother that I'm going to die so that she should not try to educate me, you know, and anything because I will not be as—I will not—just let her be happy whatever she can, to have books to read and all that. Nevertheless, I wanted to do my high school, so I studied on my own and I graduated, and then I was clean with my lungs. I was healthy, but I had no discipline of life and it was very, very hard for me to start and to get adjusted. But I did it, so that was, again, luck.

TL: And so basically from twelve until eighteen, you were sick?

KZ: Yes, very, very sick, bleeding a lot.

TL: So the year that you were—the year that you became healthy was nineteen—?

KZ: Fifty [1950].

TL: Okay. So, what do you remember going on around you after the war ended? I know you were sick, but do you remember anything in your house with your parents from when the war ended?

KZ: Yes. I remember that we went to a place called Plaza Francia. There was a French monument and we went there just to—when the war was over, to be—to listen to the—remembering what happened in the ship and all that, and to sing the *Marseillaise* again, you know, and all these—the happiness that the war was over, and also the happiness that our immediate family was all saved.

Unfortunately, the family from Hungary that belonged to my grandfather, they—none of them survived, because they never believed that something will happen to them. Even my father wrote to them and told them; they didn't pay attention and it was a complete massacre. Just before the war, I met in Hungary.

TL: And the family on your mother's side?

KZ: On my mother's side, and even on my—well, on my—well, it was on my mother's side, but I expressed not properly my thoughts. It was on her father's side, the one that perished in Hungary. On the mother's side—my grandmother, all that—they all survived because they all went to England. They were able to stay on. My father's side, also, they all were saved, so I have now—I am bonding with my cousins very, very much. Well, I have only left one cousin. The other one died some years ago, but I am very, very close to their wives. Both are British and are wonderful human beings. They are not religious, they are not Jewish, but they're great people.

TL: And can you tell me a little bit about what you did after the war?

KZ: Well, again, I had a big problem because I had no discipline in studying. I had to, in a short time—I had to change languages. The first language was German. Then it was French, and then in Argentina, it was Spanish. So, I had always to go again back. Fortunately, I was good in mathematics, and the child learns quicker language. But on the other hand, when I became sick, I had no method of studying whatsoever. I finished by myself high school, but I did it in a long time. It took me twice as much as if I would have gone to school. But as I had all the time in the life, I didn't realize if I do it that way, that will be a big handicap for me later on. And it was, because, again, I was not able to go to college.

I started to study to be a dentist, and I failed in the second year, because I could not finish all these studying books because I didn't know how, what to extract from it and to do it. So, I felt very miserable in that. It made me feel just that all the others are able to do everything and I am not, I am a loser, and that's a very, very bad thing to feel.

And then I went—I said, "Well, maybe I"—I started to learn another language, English; it was the last one, that I started when I was—after I got cured, so it was when I was nineteen or twenty years old. I liked it very, very much, and one of the teachers from the academy, who was in the academy where I studied, she needed to have a help teacher. She said, "Your English is cute; you have an accent, but you will always have that accent. So, why don't—would you like to give me some help, because—" and I said, "Sure, if you tell me what and how and so."

So I started, and then suddenly I was—I felt that I could give classes to help, and I was very good in teaching. I had a natural way of teaching, and I prepared students who failed in English in high school and they all passed, always, so I had a wonderful reputation in that. And then I met my husband.

TL: And what year did you meet him?

KZ: I met him in the year fifty-nine [1959] and we married in the sixty [1960].

TL: So you met in fifty-nine [1960] and married in 1960?

KZ: Yes.

TL: Okay, and what did you do once the two of you married?

KZ: Well, it was funny. He hadn't finished his studies, so I convinced him to do so. And to make a long story short, he graduated, and then he worked in a company who needed somebody in Mexico, and he was considered that he was the right one. So he was sent, and asked me to accompany him, if I liked the idea to be in Mexico. I was thrilled to go, and so there it started, really.

But when we married and he was studying, my mother wanted—well, she was always very controlling, and as I was sick so many years, so she took—she really want—saw me always a little baby. So she said, “Well, why, you have—so you don't have so many problems to think, where two people can live the same—can live four people, so you pay what you can pay, and we stay together and so at least, we see you every day.” My mother wanted us.

So, our first ten years were just being like the little children of my parents. My mother and my father also loved my husband, so it was okay and we did what they wanted. We could not understand that our friends didn't want to visit us because they said, “We come to see you, but not your parents, and they're always there,” and I said, “Well, they must be jealous,” because we were quite happy to be with the older generation, my parents, because they were fun and they were so—and then I just said, “I don't want to have an only child.” So I decided to have two, and—

TL: So, your first child was your—

KZ: My daughter, Marcella.

TL: Marcella?

KZ: Marcella Andrea is her name.

TL: And what year was she born? What year?

KZ: She was born in sixty-one [1961].

TL: In sixty-one [1961].

KZ: Yes.

TL: And then you decided to have your son?

KZ: The son, yes, and he was born in sixty-four [1964].

TL: And what was his name?

KZ: His name is Mario Ruben.

TL: And they were—so, they were both born in Mexico?

KZ: No, in Argentina.

TL: In Argentina.

KZ: That was in Argentina, yes.

TL: Oh, so—and so you moved to Mexico, you stayed in Mexico for—

KZ: When they were they were small. Twenty-five years, so both got married in Mexico with Mexican spouses. Marcella's marriage didn't last; after ten years, they divorced. And Mario is still, and I hope it will be forever, happy with Laura.

TL: Okay, and do you have grandchildren?

KZ: I have grandchildren, which I don't see much, and I have learned that I have—I should not complain because they are fine, they are doing well, and I'm sure they love us. But they are not educated to have any kind of personal bonding with the grandparents, so we haven't seen them—it will be—next June, it will be two years that we have not seen them. That's a long time when we live in the same country—

TL: Yes.

KZ: But they are very, very busy and studying a lot and having fun and having different kinds of classes. So, I count my blessing that they are healthy, that they are doing well, and so far, the plan is they will, maybe, come to be with us April next year. So, no Thanksgiving, no Christmas, no Hanukkah, no New Year, no birthday.

TL: And so, at what point did you move to the United States? You said in 2002?

KZ: Yes. That was—well, it is the second time that we moved to the United States, because the first time, it was the company where my husband worked in machine tools. He is an electronic engineer. They got dissolved and everybody—because it was the same generation, they retired, and there, we found out that my husband was not in the—how you call it?—in the—

TL: The payroll?

KZ: In the payroll. So, how it was done, and he was—he's very trusting. He considered the big company will never do anything wrong, so he felt confident to that. And, well, it was a mistake. I realized that before, but—well, I had to respect him, because he trusted them more, and then—

But anyway, he was so well known that immediately he got another job, and that is when we were—when they transferred Saverio from Mexico to Buffalo, New York. And what happened there was that we didn't get it, the green card, in time. I mean, we got it, but we found out much later that it was after the company was sold and the new owner didn't want that Saverio has the green card, so he—they said that he is not working anymore there, which was true that he was not working before just two days. If they would have decided two days later, he would have got a green card.

But so, immediately, we decided well, the only thing we have to go back to Argentina, and unfortunately, we went to Argentina back in the worst time of history because at that time, the dollar was one to one and all the changes, the rate—it was the same in dollar what to have in peso. And two years later, that is when we came here—no, one year later. One year later; we were still there whole year. The dollar was one to four, so we lost everything what was in pesos, which was already in pesos. It was four times less, and I was mad, and then I—there was no security whatsoever.

That was when our daughter decided and she said, “You are living far, too far from all of us. Please, I can sponsor you.” And so, that was very sweet. She did so, and then the problem was what are we going with insurance, because we have no green card. But then, again, Saverio was able to get this wonderful job, thanks to a cousin of his whose stepson works in the gallery, and it was great. They had a good time.

TL: And did you work outside of your home, or did you not?

KZ: Well, in Argentina, I have a very good friend and we had a little store, you know, for consignment clothes from people from artist, and we were very—we had good relation with different people. There were a lot of people who need to be well-dressed, but cannot afford to be well-dressed, so we had a good time until we got the promotion to go to Mexico. Then we just gave up the place, and we were able to sell the custom book where it was written who are the clients and who provides us with the clothes, and we got some money for that. And we are still friends, my friend, and she was here this May. She came here to be with me. We had a good time. So, I worked, and it was very successful.

TL: And did you raise the children religious?

KZ: No. I didn't, because I myself, the way that I was brought up and all the—my own thinking so much about the discrimination, with existing justice that exists in this world and that how terrible things happened in the name of religion which should not happen, but is still happening because we're still not free and we cannot have a really good brotherhood, sisterhood as it should be.

I have so many friends from all religions, and we are friends and we respect each other and I send—they send me cards for the Jewish holidays and I send them for the Christian holidays, you know. And I'm to say—really, what I believe is in energy, the good energy that every person has, and we are made to the image of what we call God. And what I mean—not that it's like a phase, but it is just like that we can decide if you want to do

something good, if you want to be indifferent, to be bystander. It's all—we are the master of the universe, and we can do a lot and we do so little.

TL: Have you experienced anti-Semitism as an adult?

KZ: Not in the way that it was during the war. No. I cannot say, but I experimented. I experimented it in a very sad way.

I was involved in the Argentinean Embassy to volunteer when we lived in Mexico, and we did different events and each year, with the money that we rose, we were able to buy one ambulance from Mexico. That was a nice gift to give the Argentinean to the Mexican, so it is just saying thank you for all what we get. So, that we did. And there was one attaché, very well known person, very nice, and he had to wait until the ambassador was—the new ambassador from Argentina was coming.

When he came, he asked—well, now because when there was—there was again the problem with money. You could not get dollars in Mexico, so there started to be what is called the black market. People here has no idea what it is, you know. Do you know what is a black market?

TL: I know what the idea is. Maybe you can explain what it was like there.

KZ: Well, it is just that you—let us say if the dollar is the Mexican money, I remember that it was ten: ten Mexican peso was one dollar. So, if you got to give seven dollars for a Mexican—seven pesos for a Mexican dollar, you got more out of it, so that is the black market and in selling the opposite way. So, he asked the ambassador when he came, because he could pay it in dollars. “I have pesos, please could you change it?” “Yes, but we want to change this with the black market,” said that ambassador, and you know, Latin America is very corrupt.

So he was very upset and offended because he never expected from the ambassador that he will behave that way and he said that in front of Saverio, you know, my husband, and my husband said, “Don't worry. I can give you the change and how much will you give if I give you the official price, because I have to—I get the money through the bank according to the agreement between Mexico, so it is official,” you know. He was extremely surprised, because he was not expecting to get the official; that is almost to get the twice as much, so he was really making good money. So, it is just a company and I need the money for paying the salaries, and so for me it is the same, because it goes official.

Then, that guy said, “Well, I can only tell you one thing, Saverio: I will never more in my life accept and permit, allow anybody to say anything against Jewish people because my ambassador didn’t help me and you—” I belong to a very selective club in Buenos Aires and where Jewish people are not allowed to because in Buenos Aires, still today there are neighborhoods where Jewish people are not accepted.

TL: Wow!

KZ: I don’t know if that happens here somewhere, but I never have heard.

TL: No, I don’t know. I know anti-Semitism is still strong in some places, but I don’t know in the United States that they are allowed to tell people that they can’t go to certain places because they are Jewish.

KZ: To certain clubs and—

TL: To certain clubs? Oh, maybe. Maybe. One of the other questions I wanted to ask you is, what did your parents tell you about Holocaust survivors when the war was over and as you became an adult?

KZ: They said that we were very lucky and we should not accept the idea, to be a Holocaust survivor, because we have no tattoo and it was never that we were in one of the extermination camps, with the wire with all the people were killing and making soap and recycling from the bodies of people, things, mattresses with the hair and things like that. So that is my parents and I—and—

And it was years after that suddenly I found out because—not that I looked for it; it just happened and it happened here in Florida. I was told, “You are a Holocaust survivor because you are registered as a Holocaust survivor, because you left your country not by choice, or your life would have been completely different if Hitler would not have existed. You might not have even experienced all the changes what you have.” So, I will consider that is a benefit, what happened and all these very sad things, that I have a broadened mind in many ways. I have understanding and I have compassion, and I was able to help many people and that gives me—when you do something for somebody, you do it for yourself. You feel good.

TL: And do you have a message you would like to pass on to the future generations?

KZ: Oh, yes. Oh, yes, very much. I generally—I say it to every group that comes to the Holocaust Museum, that what has happened should never ever be forgotten. You have to move on. You cannot dwell on something that is in the past and where now in a very little way changes have happened and that one can be proud to be a Jew because if one is just really considering—that all what Hitler did—so if he would have succeeded to kill, many inventions would not have been accomplished because there were so many things that have to do with ecology and with—medicine that have been done with wonderful doctors, non-Jewish and Jewish.

So, there is no difference in people, and we should—and the message is don't let anybody be nasty to you. Treat everybody as the same way like you want to be treated. You can forgive, because you don't know what you would have done if you were in the shoes of that other person, what kind of person you would—if you would have helped or you would if you would have, “Well, I don't do anything bad, but leave me alone.” You don't know. You have to be there in order to—but that one should not forget it.

TL: Well, thank you very much. I appreciate you telling us your story.

KZ: Thank you.

Part 2 ends; part 3 begins

TL: This is tape three. We are here with Ms. Kitty Zuchovicki, and now we are joined by her husband. If you will please tell us your name?

Saverio Zuchovicki: Saverio Zuchovicki.

TL: Zuchovicki, okay, and would you please tell us a little about your past before you met your wife?

SZ: Sure. I was born in Argentina in Buenos Aires, a few years ago. My parents came from the old country, actually, from what nowadays is called Belarus. They came to Argentina and they started a new life in there. I was born there and then my brother was born there. Life was very, very poor, because it was during the Depression time. It was very hard. My dad was working in an industrial bakery and it was a very hard life for him. He had to get up early in the morning and late at night. And at that time in Argentina there was not even any social laws; they had to work seven days a week. Eventually, that became different.

I went to school, in elementary school. I went to seven years of elementary school and then I went to high school, which I didn't finish because I had to work as well. I was going to night school every day. And I felt that didn't want to finish school, which I did finish, thanks to this lady, which forced me once we got married. She forced me to finish school and go to college and to study engineering. And we met in Buenos Aires at a friend's party, a birthday party. I saw her immediately. She was wearing a red dress, which drew my attention. I learned later on that she didn't even know that I was there. But I was persistent and I started chasing her until finally she gave up. (laughs)

KZ: I gave in.

SZ: You gave in? No, you gave up; you gave up because you're running away. (both laugh) I was very idealistic. I'm still idealistic, but not as you are normally during the youth years. I believed and I still believe in social forces and that wealth should be distributed more evenly with people, and that they shouldn't be spend so much money in nonsense and should the more money spent in basic things like food for the hungry. And, well, that's where I come from.

TL: Would you tell us a little about how life changed after you met your wife?

SZ: Well, my life changed completely, because when I met her, as I said, I was very idealistic and I felt very lonesome. I was very—maybe though I was depressed, but I felt very lonesome. Being with her changed my life completely. To begin with, she forced me to go back—and I mean literally. She forced me to go back to school in a very sneaky way, in a very sneaky way.

One day I receive a call from the principal of a high school. So, I went to see him. He says, "It's a shame you have abandoned after four years of high school. You should do it because you are intelligent, you are this and that, and then blah-blah-blah." So, finally I did it and finished. But then, I found out that was this lady that went to talk to him and had him do all these story that I did. So, then I entered a university and I studied electronic engineering and working during the day and at night going to school. So my life has really turned around 180 degrees, thanks to Kitty.

TL: Can you tell us some about how you feel about her experiences as a child during the war and then after that?

SZ: She's my hero. Actually, she is the hero to a lot of people, because what I admire of her—when you talked about people about the Holocaust, it's sad, because really it's a

story that tells you that the lack of humanity of some people. So, normally people would see it in a very dark, very shady [way], whereas she looks at it in a very positive way, especially talking to the children which she does at the Holocaust Museum and tells them that it's okay to be sad, it's okay to be, but they should not let people abuse them, they should not be. She talks very positive about the childhood, so it's very admirable what she's doing.

I believe that her experience with what she went through during the running away from Austria should be published, really, especially the story of the banana book—the banana boat. They have to throw the bananas to let people in into the boat. There are stories that are very interesting: the story about the watermelon that she got so sick that she had to go into the hospital because of that.

I mean, so there is sad and there is funny story of her but she's my hero, no question about. And the proof of that, is that when went to get married, we were going to be married in Argentina; [at] that time, there wasn't any divorce law and she insisted that we get married in a place where divorce is available. So, we went and got married in Uruguay, in Montevideo, where they do—they did have a divorce. Later on, they came to Buenos Aires, but at the time I was so sure about what I was doing that here we are almost fifty years after that we have been together, and still loving her very much. Well—

End of interview