

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum

**Interview with Estelle Klipp
July 16, 1999
RG-50.549.02*0059**

PREFACE

The following oral history testimony is the result of an audio taped interview with Estelle Klipp, conducted by Regina Baier on July 16, 1999 on behalf of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. The interview is part of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum's collection of oral testimonies. Rights to the interview are held by the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum.

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Beginning Tape One, Side A

Question: United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, Jeff and Toby Herr collection.

This is an interview with Estelle Klipp, conducted by Regina Baier, on July 16th, 1999, in Mrs. Klipp's home. This is a follow up interview to a USHMM videotaped interview conducted with Estelle Klipp, on July second, 1995. The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum gratefully acknowledges Jeff and Toby Herr for making this interview possible. This is tape number one, side A. So I did mention your name already, but it would be nice if you could give us one more time, your full name, and also say when you were born, and where.

Answer: I'm Estelle Klipp, born Estella Guitla Feingarten, in Lodz, Poland, in 1922. So I actually am, if you want to know, I am 77 and a half years young.

Q: And we are both sitting on the floor here. That's nice. So, I should say that you survived the ghetto in Lodz. You were transported to Auschwitz, where you stayed for just a little while.

A: Correct.

Q: Then you went to a camp -- a working ca -- a concentration working camp in --

A: First --

Q: -- in Germany?

A: Yes.

Q: And what was it called again?

A: First I was in Hamburg, and then I was in Zazel.

Q: Oh, Hamburg, and then Zazel, Germany for awhile.

A: Yeah.

Q: And then you went to Bergen-Belsen death camp, in Germany?

A: That's correct.

Q: And I would like to ask you, around the time -- and you were liberated from -- from Bergen-Belsen?

A: Correct.

Q: Speak a little bit about the time just before liberation. What was it like for you, what state of mind were you in? What was your -- your health at that time? Where were you?

And then, when liberation happened, what was that like?

A: Mm-hm. Actually, when the liberation happened, I didn't feel any elation, because I was still in Bergen-Belsen. I was still lying on the floor of something which looked like a very big barn. There were still mountains of skeletons around me, and the skeletons were actually people, who were once human being. And then, also, you could see people with diarrhea, with typhus, running aimlessly to the latrine and back. So, nothing changed, in a way, and so what I did, I was lying on this floor. Somehow I got pencil and paper, and I did writing, and writing, and writing. I wish I kept those papers, but I didn't. Anyhow, we would --

Q: How did it -- how did it happen though? You were in a barrack?

A: Yeah, it was -- it -- I was in a barrack, and they were saying that the English army is approaching, and they -- we should not go to the gate too early, because we might be shot. So we -- but -- and they opened the gates, and -- and came in. Probably, when you have been incarcerated for such a long time, you cannot switch. Anyhow, in my case, besides that -- at that moment, actually -- maybe not exactly that moment, I realized that I'll never see my parents again, because there was no way for them to survive these horrors. So, in a way, I started thinking about my family, and I started thinking about all these people who perished, and this writing probably was a way to put my feelings into papers. Now, I was, all this time, in the -- actually, the ghetto too, but we didn't have much of a -- we didn't see each other quite often, but I was with my cousin, René Berlinska. We met at the place where we were supposed to board the trains for Auschwitz, and we stayed -- we were in Auschwitz together, and we were in the camps together. And we survived together. So I actually, when they took us and -- from Zazel, I had a feeling that we are going to a camp where we won't come out alive, so I jumped out of the train, but fortunately they did -- they picked me up, and I was expecting afterwards that I will be punished, but I wasn't. Probably, among this Nazi girls, there was already awareness that the war is being lost. So, that -- not always stopped them, and I'll tell you later, for instance, with my husband, who was -- who was liberated in Aren, close to Hanover, the SS loaded them on a truck, and brought them someplace where they

asked the Wehrmarkt to shoot them. However, the Wehrmarkt say, "We are soldiers, we don't shoot people." And this way, 19 people were saved. Now we -- so we were moved to some quarters which -- my cousin believes they were army barracks, in Bergen-Belsen, and the -- we had a room, with eight other girls, and they were wonderful girls. We are -- we always have been friends with them. Now, I --

Q: Was that after -- was that already liberation, or was that still before liberation

[indecipherable]

A: No, all what I'm saying now, they -- the Germans wouldn't have moved us. They -- I mean, they wanted to finish us off, you know. But after the liberation, we have been transferred, so probably the very sick ones were, I assume, transferred to some ar -- to some -- something which was a hospital -- maybe a makeshift hospital, but a hospital.

Unfortunately, in their goodness, the soldiers gave us food like chocolate, which we were not able to digest. I probably -- I don't know why -- they did not consume any of this, and they -- so it didn't affect me, but as tragic as it is, some people who already had problems, got very, very sick.

Q: Who liberated you though? We haven't said that yet.

A: Yeah, woo -- I was liberated by the English army. And the -- so, I mean, as I said again, they wanted to -- they knew that we are starving. Now, they realized it pretty fast, that the food which we'll be able to digest is a different food than -- then they fed us the right food. Now, when I was in this room with the girls, which -- it's amazing when I

think about it, it seems that they were actually very comfortable quarters, because in comparison what was before, but my energy was coming back, and so I decided to go and get clothes, and I found out that there is some distribution point in Hamburg. So I went to Hamburg, and when I came back, I had a beautiful blue outfit, and I had also a hat, and I also brought some clothes for the girls with whom I was living.

Q: How did you -- how did -- how were you able to go to -- to get to Hamburg?

A: I think it was a train. You know, I tried to -- I tried to think about it, and in fact, when I came back, I was -- it was so impressive to some people, they -- there was a younger man who wanted to marry me right away, and the -- my resourcefulness was coming back to me. So I didn't -- I f -- I was fortunate in a way that one day when I looked out, I saw somebody approaching, and who was it? It was the venerable Mr. Klipp, and I shouted out, "Panya Klipp, Panya Klipp,"

Panya is mister in Polish, and here he was. He used to be the -- the boss of the food supply in the ghetto. He was very respected, and he -- he was not only the head of the office, but also the head of other departments, and -- however, I remember one thing, which we -- I shouldn't maybe say, that I had diarrhea. So I went to him, and wanted some rice. And he somehow refused to give it to me. And what was happening, he was an -- he was an unusual person with in -- impeccable integrity, and so he was allowed to have additional rations of food. He didn't accept that til his -- til his wife's sister -- no, it was his own sister, his own sister, was sick. So, of course, I was very happy to see him,

it's just like seeing somebody from the previous life, and he was -- he was liberated from Camp Arlen, as I mentioned before, and he was living in Hanover. I actually was hoping that my brother Hershlite Feingarten, whom we called Lolec, survived. He was only one and a half year older than I, and he was extremely capable, and if he would have survived, he would have been a famous engineer, because as a child, he took apart our grandfather's clock, and put it together, and since he was missing a part, he used a string, and that fa -- gar -- grandfather's clock was working. Now, I also was hoping that Aroush, our adopted cousin, when he -- he was in the ghetto with his parents -- now, first his father was departed, then his mother was deported, and then we did adopt him, and my mother [indecipherable] from a skin disease, and my father got the skin disease, I must have mentioned it on my other tape.

Q: That was in the ghetto, I think.

A: That was in the ghetto, right. Anyhow, he was, unfortunately -- okay, I never found my brother, and I never found Aroush, but I found out that my brother was in Buchenwald, and people actually saw him very shortly before the liberation. However, I looked for him, and I couldn't find him. Neither did I find Aroush. And Aroush -- I remember when Aroush was born, the joy, and the festivities were absolutely wonderful. We were celebrating for a whole week, and the -- the whole family was just elated. Now we -- I mentioned that Dave was in Hamburg when I was in my quest to look for Lolec and Aroush, I went to Hanover. In Hanover, I worked afterwards in a -- in a dep -- in a

place where a -- there was a representation of UNRRA, U-N-N-R -- I think they said W-A, which means United Nations relief, and we were distributing food. So I worked there for a time, and there I had the honor to meet Mayor LaGuardia. He was working for UNRRA, and he was visiting the distribution centers, so I have a picture of him, and -- and when we were talking to him, you could see in his expression the horror, and the unbelief in his face. He just stopped for awhile, and just looked really very, very unpleasantly impressed.

Q: So, he had only limited information of what -- what had happened?

A: Probably, because the -- I will show you the pictures, and you can see from his face that he just couldn't believe it. I guess, judging from the words of Eisenhower, he says he has to document it, because nobody, but nobody would believe it, what they did to so many people. And the -- so, it is really very difficult to comprehend. Now, as the time passes by, to tell you the truth, it's much more for me to comprehend how all this was possible, and the -- in fact, it -- fortunately, I am very busy, but the pictures, let's say, of Auschwitz, they are always -- anyhow, quite frequently, very vividly in my mind. And now, when I was making that tape, I didn't mention that a person whom I approach to ask for my mother, going on my side of the line, which meant work, I didn't realize then that it meant life, it was Mengele, and the -- in my husband's ta -- tape, it's mentioned that it was Mengele. Now, we are in Hanover.

Q: Wh-Why was it -- why was it that you went in your search for your family to Hanover, because there are -- were more resources to find -- wa --

A: No, at that time -- at that time, we did not have a registry yet. You know, it was just by talking to people, which I did, so I was told that they saw him, so my hopes were really up, but it -- all the search which I made, was in vain.

Q: What -- what time was that now?

A: That was still 1945, because we were liberated in -- I believe it was April. It was still 19 fa -- it was very shortly after, I just started the search right -- right after. Now, in Hanover, Dave, shortly after, I don't know the exact date, Dave realized that the refugees are just lost, and h-he contacted the German authorities to -- to organize some facilities where we can get food rations, where they -- we can get housing, when the -- when we can get directions. And he was quite successful, thanks to his mastery of the German language, he was -- til the last minish he was able to write a letter in German, really beautifully, and without mistakes, I was always very impressed with it. And he also had a businessman's background. So, he organized that, and it functioned for quite awhile, and it was an enormous help. So, I was living -- you know, it was much nicer living in Hanover. There were also many refugees there, many survivors, and they -- of course there was Dave, who was only 17 years older than I was. However, with his energy, and his equanimity, and his wonderful attitude towards people, chronologically there was a difference, but in energy level, and in zest of life, we -- actually was none. So, we did get

married, and we got married on March 16, 1946. Most of the survivors in Hanover were -
- I would say, were at the wedding, and who officiated over that ceremony was an elderly
man who was from German origin, and -- and he was really qualified to -- to conduct the
ceremony. And the -- I have, of course, pictures. I have the pictures of the other survivors
who attended the wedding. Now what -- of course, we wanted to -- to leave Germany,
and the destination was very easy for us to decide, because Dave's -- Dave knew that he
has a sister in New York, but Dave was liberated by the Americans, and one of the
American army personnel promised him to get in touch with his sister, which he did, and
we started even receiving letters from her, and of course our destination, because of that,
was to go and join his sister, her husband, and they had a -- a son who was going to
college, studying accounting.

Q: Can I ask you two -- two -- two question? What was -- what were the conditions in
Germany at that time, in -- in Hanover?

A: In the beginning -- now, we -- we actually did not expect much, considering our past.
Now we were giving food through the UNRRA, then, of course, is a -- many people were
living on Oberstrasser. Oberstrasser was the seat of -- before the war, that was the
Yiddish geminda, which means like stat the council -- the council of the -- and, so --

Q: The consulate?

A: No, n-not the consulate, the council. Stat --

Q: The council, right.

A: The council.

Q: Yeah.

A: And the -- so it was the Yiddish geminda, and the -- well, these quarters were available to the refugees. And then once these facilities were establish, which my husband was happy to establish, then we also were able to get housing with some German families. And we also were able to get food rations, and the -- so life became more livable.

Q: Was it difficult though, to live with German people, so shortly after --

A: See, that is a very interesting question. We didn't want to stay in Germany, because we didn't know who, of the people in Germany, was instrumental in this horrors.

However, the German people have a way of being very hospitable. And you would never believe that this people were able to do what they did, or being bystanders, and not react - - react. So i --

Q: So, they were quite nice to you then?

A: Oh, some, some. But we never knew when we spoke to them, or have been with them, what their background is. So, of course, most of the people -- for instance there was Pater Dana, who was a German, and became a great friend of my husband's, and he -- and there were other people who became friends of my husband. I mean, he -- David Klipp had a fantastic personality, and just -- people just loved him. Everybody who -- whom he touched, loved him and respected him. So, there were some German people who -- who

even used to come later on, when we had a better living he -- headquarters that they are -- actually came to our house. Now to -- to answer your question, that's -- that's why never occurred to ask to stay in Germany. And in -- where are we actually? We are -- okay, so Dave is -- was working, he was very busy in the place, and --

Q: What did you -- what did you do?

A: I was also busy, I was working from yo -- in the other place, and also in the -- our first child, Philip Klipp was born in 19 four -- wait a second, we bus -- he was born in 1947, oh yeah, that's right, 1947, June eight. And that was absolutely the greatest joy, because it was, in a way, a miracle, because we were suspecting that we were getting something in the food which will prevent us from being able to bear children.

Q: In Auschwitz?

A: Yeah, is -- i-in the Auschwitz, or maybe -- probably it would have been in Auschwitz. S-So we -- now, about the -- we wanted to, of course, emigrate. Now, I used to have in the ghetto, I had pleurisy, which is water -- water on the lungs, and when I went to Auschwitz, actually, I had still water on the lungs, I had swollen legs, and I had a blood infection. And, believe it or not, that after we spent the first night in Auschwitz on the ground, I awoke and I didn't have the blood infection. I still have the -- had the swollen legs, which was a big handicap when we were in Hamburg, and I had to climb up on the wagon which took us to work. The girls had to help me, and the pleurisy also lasted awhile. Now, what actually helped -- I moved, did I disturb anything?

Q: That's fine, don't worry about it.

A: From Auschwitz, we went to Hamburg, it's in my tapes, and then from Hamburg, we went to Zazel. Zazel was not far from Hamburg, but it was located in woods. Somehow, being able to breathe the good air, to which I am very, very sensitive, helped me to get over the pleurisy, and also my swelling of my legs disappeared. Now, I have to add, which is also in my tape, that I was fortunate, I spoke to the doctor who was taking care of the health problem of the so-called -- of the people in the camp. She was from Czechoslovakia if I am not mistaken, and I mentioned to her my qualifications, and that I finished high school, and had my graduation papers, and what my background is, that I could be helpful to her, and she accepted that, and for awhile I was working there, and I was, of course, cleaning and washing the floor from the wrong end. And when the people coming from the camp, I was interviewing either -- interviewing them, helping the doctor, and keeping the books. Eventually I did -- I did go to work outside, and we were building -- we were digging foundations for -- for some buildings. Now, maybe here I will inject something why I survived. Now, if anybody in my family would have been asked who is the least likely to survive, I would be the first candidate. But --

Q: Why?

A: Why? I used to be -- I used to be -- I -- I didn't eat. I actually didn't eat. I was giving my -- my lunch to a beggar, I had my own beggar. I didn't eat any breakfast. I had some dinner, and my mother was very concerned. She used to come to school sometimes when I was a

s-smaller, and -- to feed me. That could have also helped me to survive, because I wasn't as hungry, and my body did not demand as much food as other -- I -- was demanding from other people, who had a good diet. Also, I -- it is -- it was a face, it was the spirit. I believed that we will survive. And on this way going back to -- to this camp in Zazel, where we were once marching back from work to -- to the camp, we saw houses, lit, with people living their normal life. Usually they kept us away from the population, and my cousin asked me, "Will we ever live like that?" And I said, "Rania, I am sure we will."

Q: I'm -- I'm sorry. We have to change the cassette.

A: Okay.

Q: This is the end of tape one, side A, interview with Estelle Klipp. But we will pick up on that.

A: Okay.

End of Tape One, Side A

Beginning Tape One, Side B

Q: This is a continuation -- well, this was a car coming by, but this is a continuation of a United States Holocaust Memorial Museum interview with Estelle Klipp. This is tape number one, side B. And we have been just interrupted in speaking about why you think you have survived, that had in part to do with not needing as much food as -- as -- as others, but also with a certain kind of spirit, probably.

A: Somehow, even in the ghetto, the mother of Aroush, which I mentioned before, we were not really doing a lot of visiting, there was no time for that, and there was -- it wasn't an atmosphere where you just go visiting. But whenever I came to her house, she was so happy, because I was full of hope. When I went to the kripko -- it's kriminalpoisi, where many people didn't come out alive, I went in, I remember. My mother was there already, my father was there already, and my brother was there already. But when I walked in and there was Souter, who was the head of the ghetto -- of the kriminalpoisi, sorry -- I left. I was laughing. And he says, "Das laken vilderkil hafher गया." And I really did. However, there was something about it -- also, when in the -- still in Lodz, after the nateez -- Nazis came to Lodz, which they named Litzmanshtadt afterwards, we were supposed to wear a yellow star, and I had a girlfriend, Gernia Finkelstein from school, and she didn't want to go out. I said, "Gernia, look. We have nothing to be ashamed of. Let the people who do it to us, let them be ashamed of it." I somehow -- I was also praying. I usually pray in my own words, and as a child, I used to get up in bed - - well, I figured that I shouldn't do it in lying position, and I prayed. And I remember in Hamburg, where we were in that camp in Hamburg, we had to get up very early, the stars were still on the firmament, and I looked at the stars. We had to line up so that we were chosen to go to work, and where to go to work, and I was standing there, and looking at the heavens, and I was praying for myself, for my mother, my father, and my whole family. And now, it's likely that prayer is very powerful, and it influences the body. So

that was -- my spirituality was also a reason, probably, which helped me to survive. Also, once, when I was in Camp Zazel, I brought some food from the place where we were working, and when I came back, I was being punished. And the punishment was that I was supposed to clean the latrines. And somehow, as -- in my recollection, I didn't mind it a bit. Probably I was happy that I didn't get a much, much more severe punishment. So, i-it -- it was the spirit, also I never, during the whole ordeal, felt inferior. I always felt that they are doing it to us, but that we are not inferior. I -- maybe should we talk now a little bit about anti-Semitism, or that's not -- I'm actually very tolerant. I feel that different expressions of religion, art, language -- are actually very beneficial to the culture of a country. And teeb -- you f -- you sometimes find people saying that Jews cause anti-Semitism. I -- but even among Jews you sometimes hear such a statement. It's the -- in my mind, it is definitely, but definitely not the truth. Anti-Semitism is caused by other people. Now, it is in the human nature that it's easy to blame somebody, and it makes it easier to handle certain things, and sometimes even governments, in order to put the blame, either for some economical disasters or shortcomings, or other shortcomings, needed somebody to blame, and someone who is not protected, or whose rights can be taken away at will, is a -- is a scapegoat. Because, when we look actually at what the Jewish people contribute to the countries where they were living, they s -- I would say that there is a reason to be anti-Semitic. Also, which is quite interesting, there is now anti-Semitism in countries where there are no Jews. In Poland, there are actually no Jews

to be talked about, and they are very anti-Semitic, in spite of Pol -- of the Pope's power -- efforts to change it. So, you -- we talk about the state of Israel, which historically, and when you look at the archaeology, and when you read the history, it is as -- it is the land of the Jews. And only having a place where we will be protected, and there will be an action if there is anti-Semitism in whatever form, which has been before, like pogroms, like Auschwitz, then there is somebody, we are not unprotected. And by the same token, we might not be so -- such easy targets. And besides that, there's the only place in the world where there is a law of return, and people can actually, if they are Jewish -- some who are not Jewish also, can come in, whether it is from Ethiopia, which used to be Abyssinia. Whether it is from Iran, whether it is from any country where -- where the conditions are fertile for anti-Semitism, there is a place to go. A-Also, I mean, of course, it's not only si -- some people wish to go there for other reasons, of course the gates are also open.

Q: Let's -- let's talk about that a little bit later. I would like to go back to Hanover one more time before we [indecipherable]

A: Yes?

Q: And there are two sort of private questions, if you will. Was it helpful -- was it easier for you to have a survivor as a partner at that time?

A: Definitely. Def -- I mean, the question is whether it was easier for me to have a partner, a survivor. There are two things. Definitely, because people have so much in

common. I mean, we were -- our make-up was not exactly the same. He was very much a extrovert. I am partially extrovert, but partially a introvert. However, having the background, we could understand what's happening in our life. We could understand how we think. And actually, many, many -- I would say, the majority of survivors married either survivors, or people who were in Russia, and came back, and I have one friend who married a survivor, but unfortunately he passed away, Simaja, and afterwards, she married American man, a teacher. Now everything is working out fine, so it might have worked -- and I know some other people who married not a survivor and it is working out alright, but I feel -- I feel so much con -- so much more connected. And then I remembered Mr. Klipp from the ghetto, he was my boss there, and when I was in -- and when my mother was in Kripko, he one time was helpful that we got a little bit more food. And besides that, he was a wonderful man, a man of integrity, a man of energy, a man of -- unusual man who, as I mentioned before, anybody whom he touched, or who touched him, loved him and respected. So he actually -- when I think about -- about my accomplishments, one of the -- I feel the greatest accomplishment was to keep him healthy. So, he was not -- he -- you couldn't call him a man who is of poor health, however, he was very sick in Germany, he had appendectomy. Later he had the phlebitis, and then he had the emboli. But he survived. Then, in the United States -- maybe I'll come to that later.

Q: Yeah, let's wait a little bit, because I have a -- another question with regard to your family. What kind of hopes and -- and wishes, and plans did you have for your children?

You wanted children, you -- you had a boy.

A: Two, two.

Q: In -- in -- in '47, you had one.

A: Yes.

Q: So what was -- what was that like? What --

A: Okay. To answer your question what I s -- want for my children. In the Jewish tradition, anyhow the tradition in Poland before the war, which I remember, the most important things was education. You could hear us saying, they can take everything away from you, but they cannot take away your education. And this really became true, because even in my case, whatever I learned, I could keep, all else was taken away. So of course, I guess the tradition is quite a long tradition, because even before children in the r -- I mean, many years ago, when there were no public schools for -- available, a child who was three years old, a Jewish child, was going to hadahadel, and he had to learn Hebrew letters, and -- s-so there was education even at the times when other schools were not available. And [indecipherable] really like to learn more about the Torah, about the Mishnah, about the other books, because there must be a certain wisdom in it, because there was one survivor, he survived in Italy, a Dr. Noyhaus, who told us that when he was in the -- he was on Aryan papers, that when he s -- when he went to the university, what

he learned from these books was very helpful, even the medical aspects of that knowledge were very helpful. So we -- the question which I am answering now, is?

Q: Oh, what -- what plans and hopes you had for [indecipherable]

A: Yeah, so the -- the -- the most important, the priority was that they should be educated, and my sons, both sons, are well educated. They have Masters degree. Philip was a very good student in college. In Fairfax High a very -- a -- a -- high school was very famous [indecipherable] camp is one of them. And he was so bright, that in the last year of col -- of high school, he was chosen to attend UCLA. So he attended each simultaneously. He was also very interested in linguistic, so he switched to computers later on, and he got him Masters in the Boise University. Now, my younger son, Charles Klipp, who was born in 1951, on my birthday, he was also -- we were very lucky, he was also very bright, and a very good student, and learning came to him [indecipherable] extremely easy, which he was very much envied by other students who had to study hard. He also got his Masters in business administration. And so they both have very good education. They also had violin lessons, and Charlie was playing as a -- in junior high he was playing in the Madame Bloom Orchestra. And we had the good fortune that this orchestra and Charlie playing the violin, was playing at the opening of the music center in Los Angeles a day before Christmas, and of course, all our friends, and our family, went to listen to it. I was very much interested, and I was with anticipation looking to opening of the music center there in Los Angeles.

Q: So we are already in America now, but let's [indecipherable]

A: But we have to go back.

Q: -- we have to -- we have to -- we have to go back --

A: We have to --

Q: -- to come here again. So when your s -- your second son was born already in America, 1951.

A: Yes.

Q: So when did it finally happen, when could you go to America, and how did you go?

A: Okay. What -- now, in order to get to America, we had to go to a medical examination, and they were especially concerned that we should not have tuberculosis, which I can understand, and since I had pleurisy in ghetto, and later also in the camp, there is a scar, which mimics actually a scar of the tuberculosis. So it took many, many exam -- medical examination t -- til they decided that it's not anything which should prevent me of getting a permit to go to the United States. And this happened i -- the permit we received in 1950. And we went to New York with the ship, Captain Macrae, and --

Q: [indecipherable]

A: I moved, sorry.

Q: Oh, you have a picture, you have a photograph.

A: I have a picture what I wanted to show to Regina. Also, my husband, sh -- who was very organized, wrote that we left Bremenhaven on April the 12th, and we arrived in Halifax on April the 21st, and then we arrived in New York, on April 24th. We also wrote who of the survivors were on our ship, but I don't know whether I should mention that. Should I mention?

Q: If you want to, yes. [indecipherable] be nice.

A: Yeah, there was -- you know, down, it was Mr. Berstin -- Sander Berstin, Abram Hoover, Aaron Dunst, D-u-n-s-t, Samuel Showser, Shlama Zife, and Mort Kazai. This time, they didn't seem to have been married, or maybe he just mentioned the men, I don't know. And we arrived in New York, and the -- our brother-in-law Simon was waiting for us, and he fell in love with Philip. Philip had beautiful, blonde, curly hair. And the -- they brought us to their house, and they were very, very hospitable. They gave us their ba -- be -- bedroom, and all the family, mostly of course, the family of Simon, because Helen's -- Helen, who was the sister of my husband, lost all her family in Europe during the Holocaust. And so Simon's family came over, and they're very friendly, and made us feel good, and I heard some comments that, "How is it that Dave has such a beautiful, young wife?" Of course, if they would know Dave better, they would not be so surprised. And now, New York has the advantage that we have family there, however, since Dave was so sick, which I mentioned, in Germany, the climate affected his health, and he wasn't feeling well. In the meantime, we received letters from Los Angeles, from people who

survived, and telling us about the wonderful climate, and the wonderful possibilities.

Now, the decision wasn't easy, but we hoped that Helen and her family will follow us.

So, remember, it wasn't a easy decision, as I mentioned before, but we decided to go.

Now Helen was afraid of planes, so we took the train, and on our -- on our way to arrive in the unite -- to arrive in Los Angeles. Now, I learned some English in Germany, which was very fortunate, and I thought I knew more than I really knew, but it was really helpful to get through on the train, and arrived here. I --

Q: Okay. I would like to stop for just one second.

A: Sure.

Q: Okay, we are going again. I just wanted to ask you whether, at this point, there was anything that you had noticed about America, or that you had seen on the train, for instance, that was different, and -- or interesting, or even disturbing. Did you --

A: No, I actually -- I enjoyed the train ride. I enjoyed being alive. I really enjoy. As much as the moment I was liberated, I didn't feel any elation, later on, I was -- I had some elation. I was happy that I am alive. And I remember that once, walking someplace, and I said -- and looking at the sky, and seeing all the beauty of nature, I was really happy to be alive. S -- and the -- some people felt guilty -- that -- I heard that saying, I never met somebody who really -- from whom I heard it. They felt -- they felt guilty that they survived. But, because we survive, we bear witness. Because we survive, there is a continuation of -- of the people who lost their lives. Because we survive, we have

children, we have grandchildren, we have a second generation who already is a little bit active in trying to remember what happens. And the memory is important for two reasons. Once, we owe it to the people who perished, and then, it is quite a lesson for history, which hopefully, hopefully, will be taken in consideration. What can happen -- what actually can happen when the rights are being taken away, and how important democratic governments are, and how important that people can have their say. That there is a difference of opinion that's fine, and hopefully -- so, that's why it's good that a -- we survive. If we wouldn't survive, it -- if it would happen, what Hitler planned, the Final Solution, they would have murdered us all. And even today there are the deniers of the Holocaust, which seem to -- they be -- are becoming a little bit quieter. Imagine if we wouldn't survive.

Q: So, when you arrived in Los Angeles, what was that --

A: Okay, so I -- I -- oh, we arrived in Los Angeles, and the weather was good, and the -- our family was expecting us. So, it was really -- it was different, it was different. Now, we didn't have a place to live, really. I mean, we li -- we were living with our -- were -- my sister-in-law, and we got along splendidly, and also with my brother-in-law.

However, because they didn't feel good, we thought not to start our life in New York, since it affected his health, that we should go to Los Angeles, and it was a good idea. We only regret that Helen and Simon, and their son Arnold did not follow us, though they did come to visit, and they liked Los Angeles very much. And so we are --

Q: So how -- how did you establish a life then? So you -- you lived with your sister-in-law?

A: Yeah.

Q: For awhile? And then what -- did you follow education, did you --

A: No, we were not there very long, we were only three weeks. All -- all we were there was three weeks.

Q: Okay.

A: So -- because we had to make the decision fast la -- because you know, you have to make a living. You have to make a living. So we came to Los Angeles. And we were picked up at the station, and then we stayed by cousin René, whom I mentioned before, was here living already with her husband, and she was going to school to learn accounting, and we stayed with them for awhile, and also there was that Siteling family who -- who were very hospitable to us, and everybody, of course, adored Phil. And then we started looking for a place to live, and we found it, we found the right place in of course, in Bull Heights, where most of the survivors lived, and we found a lovely place, and the school was across the street, and the semi-free medical facilities were down the street, it was Breed Street. And the elementary school was across the street. So -- and -- and I could see the sky, which I -- I wa -- we -- I was ela -- elated, and it was a very good move. Now, Dave, before the war, in about '32, he started a business, and he was very successful, that was in Lodz. And then he was -- then the war broke out, of course, and

they took everything away, and he was also ready [indecipherable] it in a way, very respected in -- even in Germany. And all the survivors didn't called him by his first name, they usually said, Panya Klipp. And -- because they respected him so much. And we came here, and he worked in the warehouse, and on the weekend he was selling shoes. And he never, but never complained. And s -- now, we lived there, and we had -- we were very fortunate, we had Mexican-American neighbors on one side, and the children were watching television there, we didn't have a tel -- TV, and they was really helpful. One time, the father of this couple, who didn't speak -- I don't know how we communicated. Anyhow, he took me with the car -- I didn't drive, I didn't have a car. And he took me to see the doctor, which was living on f -- which was -- had his office moved to Fairfax approximately. And it was so natural to do it, but people in this doctor's office were really surprised. And then, on the other --

Q: Why were they surprised?

A: They were surprised that he would take me all the way, and wait for me, and take me back. They were really surprised. I mean, we were so used to, because our friends, you know, who were also survivors, we were always ready to help one another. So then the -- on the other side, the family moved in, also with children, the Gailses, and they were survive -- they were actually sur-survivors, but they survived in England. And -- so our -- we also became friends, and exchanged babysitting. And they -- this girls were appro -- this girls and our boys played together, and then we become very friendly with the Lazar

family, whose daughters were also the same age as Philip and Charlie, and this was really our extended family, and we used to visit one another on a weekend, and when Sofie had surgery, the girls stayed with us, and we loved it, and they were so thankful for it, but it was really a privilege of ours.

Q: Okay. I think this would be a good time to stop again. This is the end of tape one, side B, interview with Estelle Klipp.

A: Okay.

End of Tape One, Side B

Beginning Tape Two, Side A

Q: This is a continuation of a United States Holocaust Memorial Museum interview with Estelle Klipp. This is tape number two, side A. So, you had a -- a nice support system of - - of friends here in the city, and your husband had work, and you were bringing up children. Did -- di-did you speak to -- to non-Jewish Americans about your experience at all? Did they want to know, or was there not a sensitivity to it, or is it something that you didn't talk about?

A: Okay. Now, I failed to mention that in Bull Heights, we lived together in the same little house with Basha and Max Birnbaum, other survivors. It was really nice, because when they went to school in the evening, and we prepared something, and they came back, and they had refreshments, and it was so -- Max couldn't stand much noise, however, we got along splendidly, and it was lovely. And I remember when I -- Basha was sitting on the stairs, on the day I -- I was supposed to go to the hospital because I had Caesarian with Charlie, first I took Philip to this medical facility for a check-up. And she said -- and she just was so -- s -- she was really very surprised that I could do that, and then go to the hospital. And the -- who took me to the hospital was Jerry Sitelin, who lives in Los Angeles, and whose family was instrumental in convincing us to come to Los Angeles, and he was going to drive me. He was also a survivor from the same camp as my -- as my husband. And here his father's -- he and his father were in the camp, and he

was young, he was one of the youngest one. So he was to -- going to the army, and he brought me to the hospital to give birth to Charles.

Now --

Q: Do you know whether it was difficult for him to go to the army? I mean, he just survived a war, and now he had to go to the army, did you talk about that?

A: I talked to him a few days ago, and he was telling me about it. And he took it as a matter of fact. I mean, he did not -- he actually did not complain, or anything. He was fortunate, they sent him to Germany, and he's -- Germany's really good, because he was there for awhile. And he -- a marvelous son. He was such a devoted son, I think his father survives thanks -- thanks to him, and he survives thanks to his father, because he has a goal, to keep his father alive. I think that -- that's also -- was helpful, you -- we have a goal, and then we can take much more.

Q: I did ask you, however, did you speak about your war time experience to -- to non-survivors, to [indecipherable]

A: Okay, at that time, it was not the thing to do. It's very interesting the progression of when talking about the Holocaust became proper. There was here a family o -- which, she was a survivor, and he married Eva, a lovely woman, and she was so nice to us. She took us -- she was an American. She took us out to Knott's Berry Farm, and of course paid for it, and took us places, and invited us to her beautiful house, and -- but I don't think that we really talked about it. It was too grim, it was too -- i-i-it was bel -- beyond belief, and

people were not ready to talk, and people were not even more, ready to listen. They also went through a war where they, you know, where they've lost some loved ones. They were not ready to listen. The change occurred with some -- with some program on television, I think, and slowly it -- people started talking about it.

Q: Do you mean perhaps the NBC series "Holocaust," in 1978, I believe? That was [indecipherable]

A: Possible, possible. Possible.

Q: Don't you think that was -- there was a distinct change [indecipherable]

A: Yeah, there was a d-distinct change was when it was just brought up on television then, and people somehow were ready to talk about it, or to -- or to listen.

Q: Was it difficult for you not to talk about it, or was it --

A: No, I will tell you what, we were just busy living. Making a living, bringing up the children, thinking of the future. So, the 1939 Club, organization of the survivors, mostly from Poland, was organized quite early, which wa -- I was active for awhile there, and I have a picture, I will show it to you, where I'm being given a-award for that work. Now, my husband, I will tell you later, was their treasurer for 17 years, and that was very helpful for the survivors, because in the beginning they were meeting in people's houses. Then, when the financial situation of the survivors was better, we were able to meet in a rented hall, and finally there were many occasions, and we also had orchestra, and for awhile the Jewish Federation in Los Angeles did not actually accept anybody from us as

a member, which ch -- which changed completely right now, and we are very much respected, and they come to our affairs, and the -- that --

Q: What -- why did they not accept anybody as a member?

A: It takes time for people to accept. It takes time, and you have to work for it, you have to show what you can do, you have to show what positions you have. You have to show how educated your children are, and many of us, you know, like Mr. Sam Goetz, became -- you know, was educated and finished USC, and was active there. His wife has a Masters in German, and there are other people who are librarians, and they were quite -- were highly educated.

Q: But just -- just to clarify that, that's -- that's important, I think. So, there was a certain perception of survivors, if I understand you correctly then, even among the -- even with the Jewish Federation?

A: Yes, yes, yes, yes.

Q: So what was -- there was some kind of prejudice, some kind of let's say perception -- what --

A: I remember the saying that we would like to be on the board, and it took a long time, but the switch is absolutely amazing, because we -- now we are -- they are always representative of the Jewish Federation coming to our affairs. We are donating to their causes, and things changed.

Q: But what was the perception?

A: I could not tell. I could not tell. I don't actually blame them. I think -- I think now, the attitude towards the Russian people who came -- of course, they were not in the concentration camps, they were not in Auschwitz, is already different, and they are -- the willingness to -- to help, is also greater, because now, since we are established, and since we are -- most of us anyhow, are doing well, and want to contribute both financially, and with our work, to our -- the Jewish community, and all the others, not Jewish causes, we are respected. You have to earn it, probably.

Q: So tell me a little bit more about this club. Do you roughly know when it was -- and it was sort of in the begin -- it was a social club, o-or a --

A: Oh, there is --

Q: [indecipherable]

A: It started, actually, a social club, and there is a whole book about it, about the 1939 Club. Now, maybe I should tell you now about -- what year was it, let me see. Anyhow, my husband started working for the 1939 Club as a treasurer, when, under the guidance and ideas of Dr. Sam Goetz, the chair of Holocaust studies was established at UCLA. When you are on the UCLA campus, close to Ralbunch building, you will see on a column, a plaque with great names, and among them is the name of David and Estelle Klipp, and others, all, if I'm not mistaken, members of the 1939 Club, who contributed financially and otherwise, to the establishment of this chair. Now, Dr. Sam Goetz is really to be commended very, very highly for his idea, which seemed strange for some people

who could not understand the significance of establishing such a chair. Now -- this chair now, actually from the very beginning, had very good professors, some who came from Israel, and then Professor Friedlander, who was just recently awarded the genius re -- genius award, and who wrote -- who's writing many books, and he was teaching in Switzerland, and after awhile -- that was a great accomplishment that he consented to be head of this chair in Los Angeles. But there were previously, also, very, very famous professors, and the attendance in this classes was absolutely great. One time there were 300 students. And I don't know exact number now, and also now there are graduates from this chair, who teach the Holocaust. And th -- I think, as an -- out of this example, there is now a chair of Holocaust studies at Yale, and many other universities. So my husband realized the importance of it, and he was a very busy man, working, head of a office, a large office, and he consented to be the treasurer, because they needed somebody who can handle it, and my husband had the accounting background, and he -- and he was in this position for 17 years. Each year they had to change the -- the laws, allowing him to become treasurer for another year. And the -- the 1939 Club is -- I think was a very wonderful idea. And there is a book about it, and it's very -- our minutes are being sent to some archives, yes.

Q: So, what -- when -- when, about, was the as -- when was that chair established, that was in the -- in the 70's, or in the 80's, about?

A: Let me see. If -- if we -- my husband was there 17 years. I'll tell you what, I will know, I will think about it. Let's continue right now, but I will think about it. It's quite awhile.

Q: Okay.

A: Because he was -- okay, he was there -- he was 17 years, then when he felt that he cannot do it any more, because of -- I mean, he -- he knew something about himself, which I didn't even noticed. He said he has to -- and that he has to give it up, and the -- because then, the treasurer, who was another man maybe for two years, and three years, so we were five, six years. Six and 17 would be 21, or something like that. Maybe more. I have a book, I could look it up, and tell you exactly.

Q: Did you stay in that neighborhood for a long time?

A: That's a good question. I wish we did, but Philip was -- I mean, the neighborhood was changing, that's for sure. But the most important thing was that the schools, which Philip, my older son, was supposed to enter was much to be desired. An in -- there was -- it was not a school which I would be happy that he goes to, for many reasons. And I am not prejudiced, I really -- I mean, I'm normal, but the -- I respect everybody. Now, so we had to move. So we moved to a four units, and we lived in one. We bought that place, and then I -- I was managing it, Dave was, of course, very busy in his office. I never mentioned about his office, but I will. And I was doing everything there, and it -- I had

many responsibilities, and life was really not easy, but -- but that there was -- it was important.

Q: Let's talk about that a little bit more, about the office, and what the kind of work was that --

A: Dave did?

Q: Yeah, a-a-and --

A: No, th -- not yet, not yet. He's not yet in the office.

Q: Oh, okay, okay.

A: He's not yet in the office. Now there, I decided that I want to become a nutritionist. I have always -- I have always been interested in nutrition. It started actually -- see my -- my father had diabetes, and had a kidney stone, and -- in the -- in the ghetto, he didn't have neither diabetes, nor the kidney stone. And that happened to other people. However, we had pathologic -- these were pathological diseases. The other diseases, of course, are typhus, edema of the legs or the whole body, due to malnutrition, epidemiological diseases were rampant, but these diseases were not. So, after the lib -- not right after the liberation, but approximately -- yeah, I was actually conscious of it even when we lived in Bull Heights, because I wanted Philip to eat vegetables, and if he didn't eat the vegetables, I would awf -- awfully upset. And he -- but he -- while we were living on Kenmore, I decided that I want to go to college, and I went to Los Angeles City College to become a nutritionist, and I actually enjoyed it very much. And Charlie remembers

waiting for me on the campus, and watching the trains turn around. And the -- tho -- we had classes in anatomy, which were very helpful to me, and I -- there were many students from the nursing department, and I was really able sometimes even to help them. However, in 1960, there was a change. Dave had a massive, very serious heart attack, and I gave up college. It was so serious, that the doctors were trying to convince me that he will never survive. But with my optimistic outlook, and knowing Dave, who can overcome a lot, I -- I told them that they don't dare telling me that. And this -- this was the same year as President Eisenhower had his heart attack. And Dr. Griffiths, a famous cardiologist, was also in -- invited to see Dave. When he looked at his file, he was very grim. But when he walked in and saw Dave, he changed his mind, and he told the other doctors there is a 50 - 50 cha -- chance. Now that was very important, because the attitude of the doctors is important. Now, Dave recovered. I -- maybe it is not what is being usually done today when children are concerned, however, I tried to keep up their violin lessons, and I was waiting to tell them, and to bring them to Dave, when Dave was able to wear a robe, and be in the waiting room. My feeling, in my case, the children were young, the father was a big support to them, and I was very much concerned that that will -- it will affect them. So, all the friends knew that they don't dare tell anything. And it worked. Anyhow --

Q: It worked so that Dave got better?

A: Dave recovered. It was the -- what was happening actually, he needed a pacemaker, but the pacemaker wasn't in -- was not yet invented. So, there was a certain medication which just came out, which he was getting, but he was able to work with pulse of 40, and sometimes even 35. I don't know how this guy did it. I used to feed him vitamin E, which our friend, Dr. Horoby gave me permission to do so. Anyhow, when he recovered, he was still working in the same establishment, but now he was the head of the office. He had the mastery of the English language, and knowing -- and he ex -- it was explained to the administration what his background is, and believe me, he was working there for 17 years. He was admired, and he was respected by -- by the see -- the chairman of the board became his friends, and other directors became his friends, and the people who work for him loved him. So he was very demanding, much of himself, and much for others. Now, later on -- first it was a Carr shoe store, then there was HRT, and on top of this duties in the office, he also became the director of imports. And -- but he -- when this possibility of becoming treasurer for the 1939 Club came upon, he gladly accepted it, and he was working long hours, and really enjoyed doing it, because he believed in that good cause. So we are now -- now we have to move again, because Philip has to enter -- I mean, the junior high was fine, it was vigil, and it was alright, and he was doing quite well there, but there was a very good school called Fairfax High School, and we wanted him to go to Fairfax, and we needed to be in the district. So now -- by the way, after Dave's heart attack, I decided that I better have a profession, so I went to a real estate school, passed

the examination and got a real estate license. And I was able to find a place where we are now, a 16 unit, quite nice building, and the down payment was low, and I figured out that if I had to finance -- we finance the four units and -- and I'll be able to buy it. And I remember when Dave asked me, "How will you buy it?" I said, "Dave, I will have the money." And I came here, looked at it, and Dave only had five minutes time. He came from work, and left. Just -- he introduced himself to the previous owner, and I made the decision very quickly, and we bought the building. Now, we -- people were asking me, "Weren't you afraid?" There was -- at times, there were many vacancies. I said, "I'm not afraid of hard work, and I am afraid, however, of having financial problems," but of hard work -- and I worked very, very hard. I -- there are still the -- many kitchens there is linoleum, I put -- I was putting up squares. In many places they still -- they're wallpaper, which I put on. I learned to change washers. I -- even today, I -- when garbage disposal is blocked, I can unblock it very well. And I still do many things, not as many things as I did before. Now, Dave -- I was doing everything, and -- and when I had a vacancy, I didn't even tell Dave. He was just too busy, and I didn't want to bother him. However, he did the paperwork, which was very helpful. Well, when Dave passed -- about half a year before he passed away, I started doing the accounting, the paperwork, and Dave was so impressed that I can do it, and believe me, it was a big relief to him, because he was always worried, how will I be able to do it, and I think that was much easier than to take care of his health. Anyhow --

Q: Estelle, let's put -- let's go back just a little bit, because I do want to ask you, when did you s -- did you ever talk to your children about both your war experiences, and if you did, when did you start?

A: This is a very good question, and it's easier now to answer it, because I talked to Philip just recently, and I told him certain things from the camps, and he says, "Do you know you never talked to me about it?" And -- But Dave did. I think maybe he talked to -
- I -- I'm not sure. But, it depends -- the reaction of children is different. Now, Philip knew already everything from Dave, and he --

Q: By what age, sort of --

A: Young.

Q: Young.

A: He was -- he was fairly young. They used to take walks, they had a marvelous relationship. Both boys had very good relationship with Dave. And the -- so, he knew everything, and -- and he was angry about it. And he -- it influenced him, definitely.

Q: Why -- why angry?

A: That it happened, and also that God permitted it to happen. See, I never blamed God. Somehow I never blamed God. Maybe my philosophy about God is different. Maybe I really believe that we get a certain energy, or we get influence, or we get guidance, but in my philosophy about God was -- is such, probably, that I never blamed God for what happened. But anyhow -- but was -- Charlie was different. Charlie figured that if we

could survive it, he can survive everything. So, he depends on the personality. Now, I might have talked to Charlie more. I have to check it with him, but he -- not really -- I was so busy about that they eat right, and that they do their homework, and that of course, was the [indecipherable]. It wasn't the lack of time. I would have found the time to talk to them, but probably I didn't feel like talking, and since my husband did all the talking, then -- then I -- I was surprised when my -- when Philip just recently told me that I -- when I talked to him about it, that I never talked to him about it. So --

Q: Did you -- did you ever go back to Poland?

A: No, I didn't. I -- I couldn't, I couldn't see what happened in Poland. I was going to a school where all national holidays were celebrated, and the -- but we knew about an -- anti-Semitism, specially in the -- in the year before the outbreak of the war, it was also the influence of that folksdeutschen. I mean the German who were living in Poland, and cus --

Q: Ethnic Germans.

A: Ethnic Germans. And the -- but that -- that -- that would not be the -- th-that wouldn't have influenced me so much. I speak Polish very well, and I finish high school in Poland, and I loved hearing music of Chopin, and the -- we were good citizen, I'm sure we were good citizen. Now, what influenced me? When the Germans -- it's unbelievable -- when the Nazis came into Poland, and the Nazis were actually the -- the invaders, the Nazis could not really differentiate on a street, who is Jewish, and who is not. But there were

Polish children, and Polish youngsters, who are pointing out to their invaders who is a Jew. Now, this is something which I really -- which is very bothersome to me. And you know there was -- there was one occurrence that when survivors came back, they were killed by the Poles. I would still be tolerant of them, because we all make mistakes, however, there is anti-Semitism now in Poland. Now, of course, we left everything. I have property in Poland, and some is actually I think in -- in -- in my name now, but people who tried to -- to become owners of their property have big difficulties, big difficulty. And -- okay, we left them everything. We left them the family jewel, we left them -- the store was taken away by the Germans. One day, they came to my father, we had like a department store, not as big --

Q: Estelle, I'm sorry. I think we should probably stop here. This is the end of tape two, side A, interview with Estelle Klipp. I'll just switch it over.

A: Okay.

End of Tape Two, Side A

Beginning Tape Two, Side B

Q: This is a continuation of a United States Holocaust Memorial Museum interview with Estelle Klipp. This is tape number two, side B. So we were just talking about why you did not want to go back to Poland, and maybe you can say a little bit more about that, but also then say how you feel about Polish people in Poland today.

A: Okay. Believe it or not, that I actually like when I have opportunity to speak Polish. And recently I needed to write a letter to someone, and it was amazing, I wrote it very well, and the trick is actually to think in Polish, not to think English, and really I was amazed how well I did, autographically, and otherwise. Now, I don't have any hate in my heart, amazing as it is, and I wish that Polish people well. I wish that they develop a good economy, that they have a democratic government. However, I just wish very, very much, that they understand that being anti-Semitic actually doesn't make sense, and that there is no reason to hate us. And it is not helpful to them at all. Now, I wish they followed the teaching of the present Pope, Pole, who went to the synagogue in Rome, and who claims, rightly so, that actually the Jews contributed a lot to Christianity. That they gave Jesus, who was, of course, Jewish, to -- to the Christians. Now, let's be optimistic again, and let's hope that the time will come, that maybe if their economic situation improves, that they will start thinking in these terms, so the tradition of anti-Semitism is so long, and so much imbedded in their -- a-actually even the fathers in chur -- in the churches, that it will take some great influence to change their minds, but hopefully -- hopefully they will, and I really wish them well.

Q: So, you don't have hate in your heart.

A: No, I don't have hate.

Q: But it would have been too difficult for you psychologically, and emotionally, to go back?

A: It would be like taking a wound, and opening it, and maybe even putting -- putting acid over it. I mean, I just always see the pictures, especially the picture where we arrived -- arrived in Auschwitz. We were lucky there was -- my whole family was there. I -- I see other pictures. I know what happened. I just hope -- which I mentioned in my tape, that the deaths of my parents wasn't pa -- was not painful. I -- I just couldn't go there, I just could not go there. And ti -- unless, of course, let's say my children would insist, I might have changed my mind. But for myself, it will be devastating, and I really need my health. I needed my health to take care of my husband, I needed the health to -- to be the manager here, I need my health for myself. And it won't be really constructive, because if I would know that I am achieving something, then it might influence me. But I would not achieve absolutely anything. The property which we have there, I will try to do something about it, but the likelihood is not very great that I would be compensated in any way.

Q: Did you ever go to Israel?

A: Oh, that's a good question. We -- I am very much concerned about Israel. I -- we have the Jerusalem Post, and I -- when I get the Jerusalem Post, I read it from the first page to the last. So sometimes they were already in the paper, which I'm getting every day, the Los Angeles Times, there are also some information. I am -- I'm very concerned about Israel, and the -- very, very concerned, and -- however, and sometimes really I wish, specially now, to be able to visit, but I have now -- now somebody who does it for me,

and it is my granddaughter Rachel, and she's -- right now she is hiking in the desert, saw Angetti, saw the Wailing Wall, and when she saw the Wailing Wall, the girl started crying, from emotions. So, when she will come back, she will give me some impression of her own. Both my sons were in Israel, and visited it, and --

Q: Was there a special reason why you didn't go? Why you never went, the two of you?

A: That's a very good question. Dave was really very concerned about Israel, and -- however, Dave, when the pa -- first pacemaker came out, Dr. Griffiths made the decision that it's time for Dave to have it, because his heart was very large, and the first surgery was actually open heart surgery, and thanks to my vigilance, I notice after a few months, quite a short time, that he's not well. And I -- I had a very hard time impressing it about -- upon the people who had -- in the hospital, which was Dr. Kaper from the surgery, and it was the Saint Vincent Hospital, Dr. Kay was away, there was remodeling going on. And finally, when I told them that if Dr. Kay comes back, how will they be able to face him if they don't check on Dave? Finally they did. So I and Charlie went with Dave there, and the minute they saw him, they took him to the operating room, and at this time, they inserted a -- the pacemakers which are -- which are being inserted now, which don't -- don't require open heart surgery, but it's done through the arm. Now, Dave had the misfortune that anything which can go wrong with the pacemaker, including a runaway pacemaker, where the pulse was over 200, happened to him. Now, he had about 10 surgeries to change the pacemaker, so I have to compliment the medical profession

because the last 12 years, the pacemaker lasts like eight years or more. Anyhow, considered all of this, I felt that it's not safe for us to go on a journey. First, we were always afraid the pacemaker will fail, and that's why we did not go to see Israel, so I really wish, for my husband, and also for myself, but where I am concerned, there is always possibilit -- a possibility that I still can do it.

Q: Did you, either one of you, ever testify in front of turbunal -- tribunal?

A: Yes, Dave. It is in his tape. He was testi -- his testimony was there -- they took the testimony here, and yeah, he testified. And he did -- testimony was taken here and sent to Germany.

Q: But you nev -- you were never asked?

A: No, I was never asked to testify. He -- you know, when he testified, they ask him whether he's a lawyer, the way he testified, yeah.

Q: Would you have done it?

A: Of course.

Q: Had you -- had you ever been asked?

A: If I -- what -- see, he had a tremendous memory, Dave. Of course, if I would s -- if I would know of some people whom I know what crimes have penetrated, and if I would have, I definitely would testify, this my duty. Just as I feel about this interview, that it is my duty to bear witness.

Q: I only ask -- I only ask that because I bil -- I seem to remember from your videotape that you said that you would have had butterflies doing it, and especially testifying about the ghetto, and I just meant to ask you what that meant.

A: I am very so -- you know, that's interesting. I am -- you know, I am following a lot of alternative medicine. So I really am grateful, and I appreciate the regular medicine because -- and I want to maybe here have the opportunity to say thanks to Dr. Horlumbu, who was our friend and doctor, and helped Dave enormously. And to Dr. Griffiths, and to Dr. Shakman, who helped Dave really to live a long life. However, I also added, to this medical approach, a -- the alternative medicine approach, like homeopathy, and herbs, and also a certain treatment by a chiropractor, which was very helpful -- which was very helpful to David, and also to me. Now, Regina told me that I mentioned in my tape that I would have butterflies in my stomach, probably, if I would have to testify. Now, I became stronger through this treatment, and I just wanted to mention here that I realize -- and I also go to a regular doctor, and I realize their contribution to medicine. It's only a-at -- a -- addition to my regular -- to my regular medical treatment. So, fortunately, I am pretty good health. Now, this treatment which I am receiving, made me stronger emotionally. And if this question would have been asked from me today, I would have said I would gladly face them, and I would gladly testify. It is my duty to do so. So, we grow. We never stop growing.

Q: Well, you also just learned Spanish, I heard, so you definitely don't stop --

A: Yes, yes, that's true, you know, where we're talking about the tradition, about learning. I just recently learned Spanish, and I can communicate, and it's a big help to me, and I -- I enjoy and probably I'll still learn another language, in the future.

Q: Estelle, let me ask you something -- well, I'm asking you something all the time, but it's just when you mentioned that your granddaughter had a very special experience, emotional experience in Israel.

A: Yes.

Q: I want to ask you first of all, how many grandchildren you have, their names, when they were born, and then I take it from there.

A: Okay. I'm very fortunate. I -- Philip, my older son, and Ellen, his lovely wife, have a daughter, Roneet, of course Klipp, and she's quite a girl. She just finish -- she just finish, and got her Masters in Tessle, which teaching English to people with other languages. Right now she's in Guatemala to improve her Spanish, and also she was teaching English. I will meet her on July 29th, when she's coming back from there, and she needs to go to Seattle. So, she's quite, quite a girl. Now, her brother, Dan Klipp, I -- is also an amazing guy. First, he just loves books, and he's a vivid reader, just like his father. And he is lost in the bookstore. One time he called me, "Grandma, I'm so sorry I'm so late, but I didn't see the time, because I was reading." Now he's -- he also is graduated from college, Evergreen College. He's -- he masters the language of Spanish, o-of French. He speaks that -- one of the Chinese languages, and he -- he keeps learning, and he loves to

travel. So he was already in Africa, and climbed the Mount Kilimanjaro, not r -- naturally, not from the bottom. He was in Asia, he was teaching English in Korea. He was in Morocco, he was in Spain, and the -- he's still traveling, and -- but he also realizes the importance of education, and he keeps learning, and he -- in many places where he visit, he -- he either teaches English, or finds other ways to -- to pay for his travels. And I -- I have very optimistic -- I'm very optimistic about his -- his future, and of course he wants to have a family, he told me, which -- which I am very happy about. Now there is Rachel, whom I already introduced to you, because she went to Israel. She's a wonderful girl. She takes singing lessons, and she's -- in school she was the stage manager for plays. And she probably, anyhow, from what she shared with me, she would like to go in that direction, and -- when she enters college. There is another guy, wonderful Benjamin, and he's extremely smart, and I have great hopes for his good future, specially since his parents are such absolutely wonderful parents, and he -- her mo -- his mother and my son also, really have a special ability to deal with children, and oh well, we mention my daughter-in-law now, Margo, she also uses alternative medicine, o-o-of course, when necessary, also the medical approach, and she was -- in her search, which she is very good at, she found a doctor who is the MD, but he also uses alternative medicine. So, when we get together, we have much to talk about, and she was actually very helpful in finding some homeopathic doctor in Los Angeles for me. Now, there are all the four, and I don't expect there'll be more. Maybe the next generation.

Q: Let's -- let's talk about -- I don't want to make it a question, I'll just say let's talk -- talk a little bit about your Jewish identity.

A: Okay. I would like to also say something about -- let's say, I don't consider it such a big accomplishment, but this -- what -- I can talk first by -- about my Jewish identity.

Now I, my family was actually Orthodox, so my father was great in mathematics, and he also spoke some French and German. But it was a rather Orthodox house, so I was going to a secular school, a private gymnasium. The gymnasium named after the owner, which was Mrs. Hockstein, and we had only some Hebrew instruction, not too much of it, unfortunately, and all the girls in school were Jewish. Now, my experience with Judaism was very positive. In the -- in our home, I was told -- and I heard it quite frequently that not only it's important to give, but it's important how you give, not to make the other -- the receiver uncomfortable. Every Friday night, from the house of prayer, my husband -- my father -- my father was bringing what was called the *orech*, which means a guest, and the guest was really treated like a guest. And he wasn't asked any questions about his whereabouts, he was just -- there was a lot of hospitality about how we treated him. And a bag with food was prepared at the time when he was leaving. And that was done every single Friday night, and also for holidays. So, I knew about *sedaka*. Also, when there was a family which was less fortunate than we were, I know that they were supported. Then I saw a great respect for my grandparents. My parents respected the grandparents. Also, the brothers of my mother not only respected them, but really, well, just extremely,

extremely generous. So my -- this experience was very positive where Judaism is concerned. Then my father studied on Saturday, he used the time to study the Talmud, and the -- and then other books. And so I heard [indecipherable] many expression, I heard about Rushy, which I would like to know more about right now. Then, in the ghetto, it was very interesting, because, for instance, for a time we were allowed to do some planting in the backyard, it wasn't a big backyard, but everything was helpful. And no one, but no one stole somebody's else's tomatoes, or whatever was growing. Then, when my brother was so sick in the ghetto, I -- I was sometimes spending the night at the neighbors. There was another neighbor who -- who told us about Dr. Yawkish, and she was extremely helpful. So, all my experiences, living among Jews, were very positive. So, also I am -- of course I observe holidays, and for an -- for the high holidays and Yom Kippur, I am in the temple. I pray in my own way, in general, and so I know that the tradition is very important, let's say when my grandchildren come, because that's how, actually, religion is being introduced to children, and it's very, very important. So, not being really observant, I am still very Jewish, and I -- I'm happy that I'm Jewish, in spi -- in spite of what I had to suffer because of the [indecipherable]

Q: Was it different with your husband, or did you -- did you agree on those -- on those --

A: My husband was -- he -- I -- I -- I read Hebrew. For instance, when I am at temple, I can follow. I don't understand most of it, but I can follow. My husband knew prayers by heart. Even when he was very, very sick, and we had Passover in our house, we were all

amazed, he remembered by heart, so many prayers. So he's -- he really -- and he remembered so many melodies, and so many prayers. But he was a man of the -- you know, of the wide world. And him -- I wish, actually -- so, for instance, for easter, which is a prayer for the dead, he was always in the temple, he always was going to the temple. So, actually, we were able, with our -- I-I -- maybe he would have liked even a little more observance, because like, I like havdallah, which is -- which is said at the end of Shabbat, to make a -- a distinction between the beginning of the week, and the ending of Shabbat. So, I guess if I would have asked him very much, he would have done it. But otherwise, we -- we did not have any problems about observance. And it's -- definitely was a Jewish home, when the children were small, there was -- we st -- sta -- stuck to that observance more than I do right now.

Q: It sounds as you have had a good marriage. That you have nice children and grandchildren, everything. And a comfortable living. However, are there still memories that haunted you and your husband? Was it not always that easy?

A: It's still not easy. I just -- see, my husband passed away.

Q: When?

A: August second, 1997. I will go back -- he was 92, and this, I believe that he lived so long, considering that he had this massive heart attack in 1960, and that he was working so hard, and so many hours, which he enjoyed, I feel that I have a certain contri -- that I made a contribution to his health. So, it wasn't so easy in the beginning to convince him,

but after awhile, he admitted to my son that he follows my instructions, especially when food is concerned, he does feel better. So he changed his way of eating. Then, I used herbs, which he -- then I juiced celery and other vegetables, because he would not otherwise eat them. I was very, very -- how can -- inventive in making certain things out of vegetables, which he didn't realize they are vegetables. And also, we were using a chiropractor who was extremely good, and thanks to that, he -- he had water on the lungs for awhile, but thanks to this treatment, he actually did not have it any more. He did not have -- the water subsided. And so he had 10 surgeries for his pacemaker, and he has other surgeries, each time he bounced back, with his iron will, and his equanimity, and went back to work, and -- and was doing a great job, so I, of course, was --

Q: I was -- I was asking about memories.

A: Right.

Q: [inaudible]

A: So, the reason I answer it this way, was that I was so busy doing something which had -- see, he's the father of my children, he is my husband. He is himself. And if I can prolong his wi -- life, and I can keep him healthy, I thought this would be my greatest achievement, and it was really, really the -- the aim of my life. I have a friend, she used to always say, "Okay, David, but where is Estelle?" I just -- just -- even un -- didn't understand what she said. Now, on top of it, I -- I am -- I was taking care of the 16 units. When I had a vacancy, I didn't even tell him. Now, since he passed away, I am the

owner, I am the manager, I clean up a little bit. I do all the paperwork, I prepare the taxes. So, I am actually very busy. And I was even -- I was just as busy before, to a certain degree. And i -- so to tell you the truth, right now, I -- the memories haunt me more than before. Before, I was even busier, probably. I have some memories. Sometimes I dream that why I'm not going to our store, I would be very good at it. And I -- I -- one time I had a very destructive dream, but I don't have them too frequently. This picture of -- of the day in August, where we came out of the trains, and had to leave everything, and suddenly we were separated. So I didn't know for a long time what actually happened. This -- this scene just lives with me. I live with this scene. I -- this -- na -- it -- it really never parts. Also, what haunts me was when they took my father, and specially my mother to the kripko, because I -- it's in my tapes, when she came -- came back, she was just emotionally destroyed, and I was happy when they took me also, so -- not that I was big help, but -- so this -- this was very traumatic. My --

Q: I'm sorry. We have to stop now, and use another tape.

A: Good.

Q: This is the end of tape two, side B, interview with Estelle Klipp.

A: Thank you.

End of Tape Two, Side B

Beginning Tape Three, Side A

Q: This is a continuation of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum interview with Estelle Klipp. This is tape number three, side A. And you were just talking about --

A: No, you don't want to talk to the microphone?

Q: It's -- it's all right, I can -- I'm -- I'm -- I can hear myself, I'm -- I'm fine on tape.

A: Okay.

Q: Now, I just want to say, you just talked about two memories, or two images that -- that haunt you, and I was just wondering whether you had -- whether you want to conclude this with another one.

A: Very often I think -- we had a -- it's mentioned the tape, we had a cellar in our room, and [indecipherable] in the ghetto, and we were hiding there whenever there was deportation, pretty successfully, and very often I think, maybe if we wouldn't have gone to Auschwitz, maybe if we would have been hiding there, but then I think, where would we get food? And of course, we didn't know, because there were actually graves prepared for the people who were designated to clean the ghetto. So, we didn't know that the Russian were -- at -- Russians will enter so soon. Lodz, which was Litzmanshtadt, so even the Rukoski went to Auschwitz. They were so deceiving, the Nazis, that they were able to convince us that we are going to a better place. Anyhow, that haunts me so very often, because I figured maybe -- then maybe we would been able to -- to survive. Then, I often see the picture of my brother. He became rather -- rather religious. And in the

ghetto he used to lay the tefillin, which they something you put on your head, and you wrap your arm, and he was extremely handsome. And, so it's a great pain that he didn't survive. Then, of course, I often think of my mother, she was an exceptional woman, never complained either. And -- and w-which other memories? Course I remember, yeah, there was -- but that is in my tape, this -- when we were walking with this wooden shoes, and the -- it was the -- ice was growing under our shoes, and they did not permit us to stop and clear it, and I also -- also it was very often on my mind, there was one Mrs. Cohen. She was a mother of a girl maybe a little bit younger than me. She was very often whipped and punished, and -- but, going back to the alternative medicine, in connection even with that, and to the yoga, which I practice religiously every day, and I feel that I can stretch better, really, as time progresses. I became stronger, emotionally. So, when these memories come, I still could realize that I cannot allow them to take over, because there is still so much I have to do right now. And the -- for instance, I learned yoga actually, when I was quite young, from Indra Davy, and she was from India. And then for about 20 years, I couldn't do it, because I had a pain in my back, lower back, which didn't nutch -- nothing -- nothing wrong showed up on MRI, but I had this pain. Now, when my chiropractor learned to do -- she used to helped me, but it was coming back. Then she learned a certain method, which is developed by doctor -- Dr. Donald Epstein from New York, which was called networking, which is actually they just touch certain points, and miraculously, it sounds strange, but I'll tell you anyhow about it. One time,

short -- maybe two weeks after she was practicing it with me -- on me, my arm started -- started moving in yoga positions. And the -- since then -- of course, I tried to -- it's getting better, and better, but I do not have the problem with my back now, and I started doing yoga. And actually my yoga is improving as I -- I don't know whether I mentioned it before. And I can do -- I can stretch better as the time progresses, and it gives me awfully good feeling. Besides that, there are seven postures, specially the ones which stretch the neck, which have a big, relaxing influence over the emotions. And I guess also the nutrition which I practice. Now, there is s -- something called he -- hemio -- hemiopathy -- homeopathy. And it was actually discovered in Germany, about more than 200 years ago. And these remedies are also very helpful. Now, in order to know which vitamin is good for us, which is not, or [indecipherable] food, there is a method used by chiropractors, and also other practitioners of alternative medicine, called muscle testing. The people who do it are kinesthiologists. That's how they call themselves. Now, one chiropractor taught me how to do it, and I w -- I'm trying to teach others, but I don't know why, I am not successful. I only was able to teach my grandson. He just was so impressed, because the idea of this muscle testing is such. If we put into our bodies, whether it's a [indecipherable] vitamin or food, which is good for us, it strengthens our muscles. And the opposite if it's not good for us, it weakens our muscles. So, the method is, after the certain, let's say food or vitamin, is put on the body, usually close to the sinus, which is on the chest, and one checks the arm by having the arm extended, and

trying to push it down. If the remedy is not good for the body, the arm will go down. If it's good for the body, it won't go. And the same can be used with the fingers, which I -- which I use, and I'm pretty accurate at it. Now this was helping me very much with my husband, because I was able to determine whether things are good for him or not, and it's a great help to me, because I am able to resist what is not good for me, since I know it. Now, I know of a doctor who used to be a doctor of alter -- of emergency medicine, and he -- he is now doing alternative medicine, and he uses -- he has a machine which he uses, but where I went to him one time, and I show him that I can do muscle testing, he says, "You don't need to come to me any more." And I don't.

Q: So you are still trying to, or you are still growing, all the time? Not just stretching, but --

A: Yes, and so -- that was extremely helpful because it was very important to help my husband in all ways -- I mean, in all possibly ways, so that he could live long. And the -- I -- it just -- I spoke to my cousin, he's in Australia, I mean, actually his son, he says, do you know -- and that was maybe in '85 or so, "Do you remember -- now he's doing so well, and do you remember how it was in -- in 1970 when I talked to you, how worried you were about him?" So I'm very -- so he's not here, but he had a good life, and we kept him healthy, and the -- I don't want to give myself more credit than I deserve, but I hear from all kinds of quarters, friends, doctors and others, that I was quite helpful in

keeping him healthy. Now, what would you like me to a -- what would you like to ask me?

Q: I would -- you could see in my face I have another question.

A: Yes.

Q: Well, something slightly different. We did talk about your Jewish identity.

A: Yes.

Q: Before.

A: Yes.

Q: Do you remember when you began to feel comfortable with an identity as an American? Assuming that -- that --

A: Yes, yes, yes, I feel very --

Q: -- and what -- and what [indecipherable]

A: -- okay, I will tell you what -- I will tell you what. That I first -- I'm really very grateful to the United States for giving me the opportunity, and giving me my citizenship, and I think it's an absolutely great country. I mean, great country. And I am very much interested in politics. When the children were small, and Adlai Stevenson was running for president, I took them to the Roosevelt Hotel, and to the rally, and we were cheering him up. Then, I have a picture, I will show it to you, with Senator Scoop Jackson, and the -- which wa -- it was my husband and myself, and I'm very proud of it, and I'm very, very sorry that he passed away so soon, and so unexpectedly. I wish -- I shouldn't say it, but I

wish I instructed him in healthy living, but I didn't have a chance. And -- and he put -- he put -- on his ice cream, he put cream. Of course, many people do it, and live a long life, but I really wish he lived longer. An absolutely marvelous senator, a marvelous man. I vote all the -- I don't miss any possibility of voting, I always vote. Of course, I follow what's happening with great interest.

Q: Do you -- are more inclined to one party than another? You mentioned Stevenson, so I gather --

A: Yes.

Q: But --

A: Yes. However, I also admired Goldwater -- Goldwasser, because I thought there was a lot of integrity, and there are some Republicans which I really admire, so you never know. It depends who the candidate will be, because I actually would vote according o-of the qualities of the candidate as I see them. And so --

Q: Now you -- so you have said that you're very grateful and proud to be here, and that you do --

A: Yes.

Q: -- feel American.

A: I feel American, I do.

Q: What -- what does that mean? C-Can you say the --

A: What I -- what does it mean? Considering that they opened the gates for us, considering all the laws -- laws. Considering that people -- I mean, I went to Washington, of course, I went to -- I saw the -- the House of Representative. I -- I talked to my senators. We also -- we -- we visited the Pentagon, I mean from the outside, and it was a wonderful experience, I wouldn't miss it for -- not for -- I wouldn't miss it, that's all. And the -- I'm concerned about our elected officials. You just -- I respect the president no matter whether he's a Republican, or whether he's a Democrat, when he's our president, he's our president. I feel comfortable here, but I also realize that -- that -- that Democracy is something which has to be constantly watched. And I remember the time of melcar -- McCarthy's. So I realized at that time that -- that it's a witch hunt. I did realize at that time, and I was very happy when it was over. I worry when there is a war, of course. I worry about the soldiers, I respect the veterans. Oh, it's a great country to live in, and God bless America.

Q: Now it's almost heresy to ask you whether there is something that you find worrisome, or did you see something that you find difficult? You mentioned McCarthy, that was -- the McCarthy era, that was -- you -- you were critical when you saw that. Were there other incidents, or [indecipherable]

A: There is always -- there is always room to improvement. Even to just take care of the family, there are many problems, which you have to overcome. Now, if you have a business, there are many problems. There are different people you have to deal with,

whom you have to instruct, or who do better, or do worse. Now imagine a country of the size of the United States of America. Of course there are problems. Of course, but y -- there being wor-worked at. I am concerned about education. I was -- I wasn't happy when arts have been taken away from schools, and now it's a tendency to put them back into schools, which I am very happy about. I am concerned about the environment. And the -- it's a fine line between business and environment. I am very happy to see what the difference in the -- in the attitude towards tobacco, when in the beginning all the actresses were smoking, and -- to be able, I'll tell you, it's such a great achievement, to be able to come to the point now where there is no advertising on television, and all the advertising used to be for tobacco, for cigarettes. I think that is enormous achievement. There are many enormous achievements. And even in the race relations. So it's not perfect, but the achievements are absolutely great. So I have great hopes that the -- the country will flourish in all respects, and I think the education will also improve, because they are now. And if I can help in any way, I'll be very great to do it.

Q: That's a positive outlook again. Is there -- do you speak often -- do you give interviews or public talks about -- about where you come from often, or is it an -- a rare thing?

A: On the Bar Mitzvah of my granddaughter, I had to get up and thank people for something, and they told me that I am pretty good public speaker. I mean, I didn't have to say too mu -- and I probably, if I have to get up and talk, I would be able to. However, I

didn't do much of it. I have a friend, Celine Drack, who goes to schools, who speaks, and receives many letters, she is very good -- letters. She is very good at it. She also went to prison and talked to the prisoners. And she's also involved in Anti-Defamation League, and in the club, and so on, and I admire her for it, and it's a very worthwhile endeavor. I was never -- there are many -- she also is the head of a teacher's group. She teaches teachers how to teach Holocaust in schools. I have a better opinion about myself now than I used to, I think. And -- and if there would be really a need for me to speak -- I would do some studying, of course, because it's nice to -- you know, it's nice to be able to answer many questions which the students have. But it's a very worthwhile endeavor, because if you meet a survivor, and you hear him talk, it has a good influence.

Q: You know, I was just about to ask you, h-h-how do you think the impact of survivor testimony has been on -- on -- in understanding of the Holocaust, in general? Tell me, do you have any --

A: We are very fortunate, very fortunate, that after the hiatus of time, when people didn't dare -- people didn't want to know, and there were so many deniers of the Holocaust, that after this time, thanks to the TV, and thanks to the movies, we became -- it became public. Not everybody still knows about it, but many people do, and it's a big relief for the survivors. Anyhow, I feel this way, because you know, in our home, was a saying that the worst curse actually in our home was *mishamime visacrone*. And I didn't know what it means. It means erase from memory. So being erased from memory, even you know,

there were no many -- many curses in my ho-home, where -- with my parents, but even about Hitler, they say -- they say he should be erased from memory. So this points how important it is, that the people who perished should be remembered. I mean, it's mindboggling, it's -- because if you say six million, you cannot imagine it, but if you talk about a few, like Anne Frank, or others, then you could realize it. Now, I very grateful for -- for it being now recognized, and taught, that's why I really commend Dr. S-Sam Goetz for establishing this chair of Holocaust studies, and I hope -- and I have a feeling that the deniers of the ho -- of the Holocaust, are quieting down, cause we don't hear so much about them.

Q: I'm just curious [indecipherable] are you following sort, of some of the controversies around Holocaust studies? I mean some people would say that the discussion there has become very, very academic, and is taking away from the -- from the human experience in that way. Or that too much emphasis is being put on -- on -- on -- on the Holocaust, as over against other aspects of Jewish culture. How do you --

A: They say if you forget history, it repeats itself. So, a base of this, it's very important not to forget. I don't think it's too much, I do not think it's too much, because it's -- it's like Wiesel, the -- who got a Nobel prize, says, you have to talk about it. I mean, because otherwise it will repeat itself. It's not only for the Jewish people, it's for -- for the world. In order that something like that can happen. So, it didn't happen overnight, the signs were there. But we have to learn to watch for the signs, and to do ab -- something about it

before it becomes a Holocaust. So, it's not egoistic in any way, to talk about it. And there will be different aspect of the Holocaust, but all aspects should be as -- should be talked about it, because we are dying out. There will be no -- I mean, I can see among our friends, I looked at the telephone book, and it's amazing how many people already passed away. Now, once we passed away, if we don't leave the legacy, because as much as you talk, you don't cover everything. It's impossible. So, for the benefit of mankind, not only of the Jewish people, it's important to study it, and to know what it happen, because I don't think there were prog -- pogroms, other people were persecuted, but the dimension of this persecution, and the planning of the Final Solution, is actually, in a way unique. I wish it isn't -- it wasn't.

Q: Do you think the world is learning from what can be learned from the Holocaust?

A: You know, when I think about Kosovo, this is the first time -- I mean, nothing is perfect, but considering what Milosevitch was doing to these people, he was burying them, he was murdering them. And I -- and it's fortunate that NATO, with the backing of - - backing of the United State, had the guts to do something about it, and I am not qualified to say it, but there is likely a likelihood, that the Holocaust of the -- of the people during World War Two, had some influence of -- of this engagement. So we won't eradicate hatred, but we might work towards eradication of hatred.

Q: You did say just a -- just about two minutes ago, that Holocaust survivors are passing away.

A: Yes.

Q: That's true, but on the phone when we talked before I came here, you also said that you -- you referred to a spirit of the survivors, when you go to gatherings --

A: Oh yes, yes, yes, yes.

Q: Maybe you could --

A: Meanin -- well, the question is why certain people survived. May -- maybe some of the answer is to see them gathered together. We have this 1939 Club, who does a lot of charitable work, but we also gather together, and we combine some worthwhile endeavors with a dance. And I actually -- it boggles my mind to see the e-enthusiasm, and the way these people dance. Everybody dances. People who don't feel good, dance. Everybody dances, and I never saw anything like it, even between much younger people. So there is something special about the spirit of the survivors.

Q: When y-you also said a little earlier that you don't speak publicly, you're not the kind to talk publicly very much. But, you -- you thought it was very important to do this interview.

A: Yes, definitely. I said once that I'm -- I didn't feel guilty that I survive. But I would feel very guilty if I would not make the video when I had a chance. I would feel very guilty if I would not make this interview. So I thought maybe other people have more to say, but even if other people have more to say, what I have to say could be -- it's also history. So, I have the obligation, and I'm going to -- I have some pictures of my family

which were saved by somebody who came from Russia, and I'm going to go to the Holocaust office, which is in Los Angeles. I had it all prepared. And I'm going to get a little bit more involved, too, so that the memory of -- of the people like -- the photos which I have, what I know about it, and maybe I could mention here I appreciate the opportunity about my husband's brother, because that was something which he was so hurt and sad about. He was -- he went to Kovno, his brother Solomon, and -- in the hope to go to the United States. And in Kovno, what was happening, it was under the Russian occupation, and then under -- under German occupation. Finally, when the Nazis won, they just murdered him. I mean, not only him, there was a Mr. Frumkin, who was, I understand, also murdered. And this Solomon had such potentials. He spoke a beautiful English, and there was a English club, and when the speaker didn't come, he spoke. And there was such a pain for David, my husband, his whole life, that his brother didn't survive.

Q: This is the end of tape three, side A, interview with Estelle Klipp.

End of Tape Three, Side A

Beginning Tape Three, Side B

Q: This is a continuation of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum interview with Estelle Klipp. This is tape number three, side B. And I think I would just like you to speak a little bit more about your family. Whatever it is that you would like to add. Your children, your --

A: Now, you also asked me, when I look back at all this years --

Q: That's the -- that's the next question.

A: Ah, can we reverse it?

Q: [indecipherable] you can reverse it. So, the question would be when -- I do what you tell me to.

A: How nice, thank you very much, Regina.

Q: You never wait for [indecipherable]

A: You are a very lovely interpreter -- interviewer.

Q: Okay, well, thank you very much. I-I'm blushing. But let me get -- let me get to the question. So the question would be then, when you look back at your life, of -- of 55 years, of the last 55 years, your life here in America, what -- how would you t -- how would you speak about it? How would you -- how would you describe it?

A: It's a very interesting question, and a few days ago I said, you know, since liberation, there's actually -- it was 1945, so are -- 55 years, right? So there are 55 years. I have to talk about 55 years. And -- but it doesn't seem so lo -- it wasn't easy. It was not easy.

Now, the reason -- one of the reason it wasn't easy was that my husband so -- he was always active, and had a lot of energy. His mind was fantastic, even nearly to the very last minute, so he was at home. And I am very proud and happy about it, that I kept him at home til the last minute. And I was present at his death, and I could tell that there was a -- his body was like a shell, but he still was there. And then, since we lived so long in this

apartment, I just feel his presence, and I told him about this interview, and I -- believe it or not, I still pray for him, that wherever he is, he's -- he's at peace, and that everything is alright. So there was always a feeling, even when I was at home, there was always a feeling of responsibility. And so the life was not easy. However, it helped me -- oh, especially in -- in the later years, it helped me. Yoga, nutrition, homeopathy, herbs, all these helped me to feel healthy, be healthy, and being able to function in spite of the memories, and in spite of whatever difficulties I have to face. However, it wa -- a big aspect -- I was very fortunate with the children. They were good students, they didn't give me any trouble. I don't -- when I didn't have a car, we used to go with the bus, everywhere, and I didn't have any problems. I understand they were fighting very frequently in the house, but that's -- that's normal. Now, for instance, Philip is very bright. I mentioned, I guess before, that he went to UCLA while still at Fairfax High. And he is the avid reader, he always learns. He speaks perfect Hebrew, and perfect Spanish, and he also speaks man -- not speaks, but he knows many computer languages. And he's also very good at composing software. That's something which is very much sought after, and the -- and he happens to be extremely good at it. Now, I was also fortunate in -- he just, this year, he was celebrating his 30th weddings anniversary. He has a very lovely wife. She has teacher's credentials. She's extremely talented. There is a picture here, I will show it to Regina, which she painted. It was a desk at -- at UCLA, dormitory of my son, with all his books, and she printed the Hebrew text, which is -- you can see when

you look at the picture. She also can work with wood, she can do gardening. I don't know whether there is anything this girl cannot do. And then, in nine -- then, I told you about the birth of Charlie in 1951, and ha -- he has very much my husband's personality, and when I -- it was -- I'm really grateful, these two boys is like a great gift to me, and their wives also. And Charlie was celebrating his 20th wedding anniversary, and the -- during the Olympics, he was associated with ABC, and he was the director of systems, and he, with others, devised a system for the payroll, and other things, and his name was on the credits, on television, after the Olym -- when the credits were shown. He -- he also has this personality that people like to work for him, and the people who are working for him -- and it was very strenuous work, told him that whenever he wants to, they will always work for him. His wife has also teacher's credentials, and also, as I mentioned before, she also is interested in alternative medicine. I mentioned that, and she is a wonderful mother, and so I have actually two sons, and two very wonderful girls.

Q: I -- I forgot whether I asked you that before, but in the case I haven't, I just want to know, what about Jewish tradition, and Jewish faith, is that perpetuated in them, in both families?

A: Yes, yes, yes, yes. Charlie, Friday night, there is time to be at home, and there are no other arrangements being made, and there is -- there's Shabbat dinner with the challah, and with candles being lit, and with the prayers, and all the children know the prayers, and they go to the synagogue, they [indecipherable] they live in Sebastapol, in northern

California. They used to live in Los Angeles, but they found there a very good place for the children to go to religious school, and they are practicing -- they are definitely practicing Judaism, and the -- Rachel was very anxious to go to Israel, she went to Israel in a group called Young Judea, which is under the auspices of the Hadassah. And so --

Q: Did you talk to your grandchildren about -- do they know about your experience [indecipherable]

A: Yes, they definitely know. They -- they know, and they -- I have a little tag, it's actually a tin tag with a number, there's two or three -- I'll have to look for the other numbers. And when my granddaughter saw this tag, she says, "Please don't give it to anybody, I want to have it." And what was happening, they had a play of Anne Frank in her school. And that reminds me, I was being asked by Regina whether I ever spoke. I did speak. What happened, I was visiting Sebastopal, and the -- my granddaughter Rachel asked me whether I would talk to the cast. And I s -- I was hesitating, but she says she knows there is another grandfather, but his English is not good, so I said, "Okay, I will speak." You should see the letters I got from that cast. It changed their complete attitude. They -- they was -- it inspired them to play better, or maybe little bit different. I spoke for quite awhile, and I wa --

Q: What did you talk about?

A: About my experiences, and also, you see, I have a uncle in Poland, who perished. He was taken from Amsterdam to Auschwitz, and strangely enough, my mother had at that

time a dream, that she is meeting him in a awful place. And so I told them about my uncle, who came from the same time -- from the same town as Anne Frank. And I kept talking, and they listened, and you know what they did? The program had -- had a line that they are -- that -- in my honor -- the program is in my honor. And then, when I was there, when the play, at the last act, I was called to the stage, and I was given flowers. And I embraced, of course, everyone in the cast. So I did talk, and it was -- it was very, very easy for me to talk, now, because I -- cause I had a wonderful audience, and I could make the connection between -- you know, between Anne Frank, and my -- and my uncle in Amsterdam, and also I told them about, that even the father of Anne Frank, after the war, he married. See, they were young people, you have to give them hope. You cannot -- you cannot devastate them. So I told them that I'm not hating anybody, which is true, I wouldn't have said it otherwise. But I also told them that Anne Frank's father married again, and has a family. So, I think was important for me to tell them that. So -- but this play could have been played on Broadway. It was done so wonderful, and I -- I will show you later, I had letters and letters thanking me for talking to them. Because then they understood what -- what the play is all about.

Q: You had tears in your eyes when you s -- when you talked about it, why?

A: Because it was very touching. It's difficult to talk about it. It's difficult to talk about it, but I see all these young people sitting in front of me, and attentively listening to me. I --

what a gift to me, that -- that I could talk about it, and they were -- they were so impressed, and they were so, so, so grateful. And so, I did talk.

Q: Well, I have asked you pretty much everything that I --

A: Oh, you asked me --

Q: -- wanted for -- what?

A: -- the second question was, when I look back at my life.

Q: Yeah.

A: I'm gra -- I am grateful to be alive. I try always to find something to be grateful for. So, I am grateful that we were able to bring up the boys so well, that we gave them music lessons, that we -- maybe we were fortunate also that they did so well, and are doing so well. And my greatest achievement is that Dave lived to be 95, and quite happy. Happy with what he was doing, happy with his family. And so i-it wasn't an easy life for my, you know, because I remember that when others went to swimming pool -- to the swimming pool, or on a weekend, I was watering the -- the patio, so -- to cool it off. I always had the responsibilities, there were always some kind of a problems which I had to solve, but I really -- so it wasn't easy, but I didn't mind it, because I -- I always felt that I rather work hard, than have problems which I wouldn't be able to solve. So, thank you very much for interviewing me. It was a real gift to me, and a gift to my family who perished. Thank you.

Q: Thank you very much, Estelle.

A: Okay.

Q: It was a privilege to -- to do the interview with you.

A: Well thank you.

Q: Thank you very much. And this concludes the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum interview with Estelle Klipp. This is tape three, side B. Thank you very much.

A: How good that I remembered that.

End of Tape Three, Side B

Conclusion of Interview