

**Interview with Shelly Rothschild-Sherwin
March 15, 2001**

Beginning Tape One, Side A

Question: **United States** Holocaust Memorial Museum, **Jeff** and **Toby Herr** collection, this is an interview with **Shelly Sherwin**, conducted by **Regina Baier** on March 15th, 2001, in Mrs. **Sherwin's** home in **Santa Monica, California**. Mrs. **Sherwin** is the daughter of **Blanka Rothschild**, a Holocaust survivor who has been interviewed for the **United States** Holocaust Memorial Museum's oral history collection. This interview is part of the **USHMM's** post Holocaust interviews -- post Holocaust interview project. The **US** Holocaust Memorial Museum gratefully acknowledges **Jeff** and **Toby Herr** for making this interview possible. This is tape number one, side **A**. The first question is please give us your full name.

Answer: Formally, it's **Rochelle Ann Rothschild Sherwin**. In college -- where I work, it's **Shelly Rothschild Sherwin**.

Q: And when were you born and where?

A: I was born March third, 1951, in **New York City**.

Q: Were you named after somebody who died or was murdered during the war?

A: Yes. **Rose** was my father's sister who died, and **Ann**, my middle name, was for my mother's mother.

Q: Were you told anything about them? What do -- what -- what does it mean to you to be named after somebody? Is there any particular significance?

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A: Well, a-aside from it being Jewish tradition to be named after a dead relative, I hope that I live up to what I -- the stories that I've heard about them.

Q: Give us an example.

A: My mother's mother was a woman of great breeding and taste and refinement and culture, very family oriented. Very much in love with life and society and busy with philanthropic interests and family affairs.

Q: I know, of course, that memory goes only back so far, but it would be nice if we could go back into your earlier childhood and gets a sense of what -- what family life was, what -- what do you remember about your parents. So my first question would be, give our listeners who don't know your parents a sense of who they were. Your father -- who did you see o-of -- ho-how did you see your father when you were younger, and how did you see your mother?

A: Well, my mother stayed at home, so I saw a lot more of her than my father, who worked very hard. My father, I always knew had family. I never met anyone of my mother's family until I was eight years old and we met an aunt through marriage in **Germany**. I know that my mother took me abroad when I was, I believe one year old, but of course I don't remember having met her then. But I never knew family from my mother's side, which was a tremendous loss th-that I felt as a child. I knew that there was a huge, huge part of childhood experience, having grandparents and

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aunts and uncles and cousins missing from my life. I was very keenly, keenly aware of it.

Q: Did you -- let's -- be-before -- well, let's -- let's follow up on this then, before I ask you again a little bit more about the personas of the -- the persons that your parents were. Ho-How did -- how -- did you -- how did you ask them about it? Did you ask your mother, how come I don't have grandparents? How -- how did this evolve?

A: My father came before the war, so his experience was growing up in **America** from late teenage-hood on, here, as his brothers and sisters, who had been farmed out from **Germany** before the war. And they all had international experiences, some went to **South America**, some went to **Palestine**, some -- I mean, every brother and sister was sent to a different relative around the world. His parents both died before I got to know them, his mother outlived his father, and was alive when I was born, but also died when I was quite young. My mother's side of the family only came through me -- to me verbally, because there were no -- no pictorial histories or scrapbooks, or mementos handed down. So it was only her stories and my imagination that gave them any kind of reality.

Q: How would she talk about them?

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A: She talked about holidays that she remembered when she was growing up, what her family life was like. The talents of the various people. The intellectual capabilities, the accomplishments. Her family was very accomplished in many different fields. Sh -- and I think that's why she had great hopes that I would be a pianist like one of her cousins who was world renowned. That didn't do t -- I didn't do too well there. Maybe a dancer. The Russian -- the Russian ballet instructor told my mother, save your money. So th -- so -- so there were -- there were quite a few talents that I did not pick up from her fa -- family side, but reading and education were certainly something that she impressed upon me and I developed my own curiosity in pursuing.

Q: Do you remember the circumstance of when you sort of first became aware of your mother's experience during the war, when you realized she was a Holocaust survivor, although at that time you would not have thought about it in those terms, probably.

A: No, the dawning was gradual, but the visual indicator was always there. My mother was always physically very different than other mothers. Her physical disabilities worsened as I grew up, and it was because her condition was becoming much more visible and apparent to the outside world that then I came to understand

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that she had been born perfectly normal, but because of the beatings that she received in the camp, it was the cause of these physical abnormalities worsening.

Q: How did -- how did you learn about that, though? Did you ask her questions, or did she under certain condi -- circumstances talk about that? Ho-How did you learn about it?

A: There was never a special day that I remember, that was set aside to say this is what happened to me. It was, I think, always part of my consciousness. I think -- I remember one thing, one day I remembered seeing one of my friend's parents who had a number on their arm, and I asked my mother why she didn't have a number on her arm. So I knew that there was a commonality of experience that my friend's parents had been in camps, and my mother had been in camp, but there was a difference. And I think that started the storytelling a bit more.

Q: Did you have -- you just mentioned your friends. Did you have Jewish friends and non-Jewish friends, or pretty much Jewish friends and were there si -- children of -- of survivors, other children of survivors among them too?

A: The area that I grew up in in the **Bronx** was a terrific mix of Jewish, Italian, Irish and in high school, black. But for th -- my earliest school experiences, I would say 95 percent of my classmates -- at that time **New York** used to place you in a class of your ability, so the classes were numbered one, two, three, four, so if you were in

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the first grade in the first class, that means that you were the most academically superior. So always being in that first class, it seemed that the make-up was 95 percent Jewish at that time.

Q: Did you talk -- did you have close friends, like really very close friends?

A: I still have them to this day.

Q: Oh, you do?

A: Yeah.

Q: Did -- did you talk to them -- were they children of Holocaust survivors too, by any chance?

A: The three friends that I have from when I was 10 years old were all American born and their parents were American born, so no, they -- they didn't experience the particular childhood that I did. But I had other friends in the second circle of my -- of my associates that had Holocaust survivor parents.

Q: And did you talk to your friends about it, and to your best friends about -- about that in some way, did you feel that you wanted to? Did they ask? They probably got -- came home --

A: Sometimes I remember there were discussions at -- at -- at lunch about parents having nightmares and we would only discuss it amongst ourselves. My mother wasn't one of those, but -- but I had a friend, **Mary Chewbowski** who used to tell

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me about her mother's nightmares, and we were very protective of each other. It was almost a different circle of friends, the immigrant kids, then the other Jewish kids who really didn't have any way of relating to what it was like to have to be a nurturing support to your elder parent. It was -- it was a role reversal even at a younger age that some of my friends had. My mother at that point was stronger than some of my friend's parents, who were much more emotionally crippled at that stage, at that stage. My mother was stronger, but the years have taken their toll.

Q: Let's stay in the earlier years a little bit. What do you remember from your family life? What did -- what did you do? What was the relationship between you and your parents?

A: I was an only child. I was told very early on that my mother had lost all her family, and when the doctors told her that she was not supposed to have a child, that her response was that she didn't survive the war not to have a child. So no matter what the physical cost was going to be -- which put a little guilt on me because I knew that she was taking a risk and did damage her condition further by bearing me, but that she felt that she lived for a purpose and the purpose was to have a family, and that was me, but there was only just me. So I didn't have any brothers and sisters. I didn't have any grandparents or cousins, or people from her side that she could relate to.

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Q: When you look back, what kind of a child do you think you were? How do you see yourself as a -- as a -- as a younger child? I don't want to lead you, just how did you see yourself?

A: My mother will probably say that I was spoiled, and I don't think so. My -- I was -- I was -- I will admit that my parents were extraordinarily generous of their time and the amount of input that they put into my cultural awareness. I grew up in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, I tell everybody that I did. I -- I spent more time going to botanical gardens and zoos and Radio City Music Hall, and shows when I was young. And I turned around and did the same thing for my daughter because my -- my life -- my childhood was so full of extraordinary outings, that I couldn't wait to turn around and do that when I had a child, so I -- my -- my social activities with my parents were extraordinary. Maybe that was to make up for lack of family affairs.

Q: I take it from your -- from what you just said, that you did not experience that necessarily as -- as a pressure, but more as an opportunity, or was it also sometimes a -- a -- a pressure behind this to -- to -- having to fulfill certain expectations?

A: No, I wasn't -- I wasn't exposed to these things necessarily to have them drummed into my psyche that this is what you must know in order to be a cultured person. Everything was on an equal basis. Going to the movies, or seeing the

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Rockettes was on the same level as going to a ballet. So everything was done with a sense of -- of fun and a special occasion, and dressing up and going downtown to **Manhattan**. So it was -- it -- it was never an expectation that I would be able to then recite to impress anybody what I had been exposed to. It was just something that would cu -- just culturally open me up to the rest of the world, outside of **New York**.

Q: When you went to the -- to the homes of your friends, did you perceive differences? Was your upbringing a different one? And if so in what -- in what way?

A: I always believed my parents to be much more strict than my mu -- than my friend's parents who were American born. And we're talking about my Jewish friends. Some of their parent were the -- brought up in the 40's here, very liberal, virtually leaning on the Communist way, so that they were allowed to stay out late and make decisions for themselves when my parents said, we have to know where you are and who you're with and what time you're going to come back, and so I felt that there was much stronger bungee cords on my freedom than my par -- than my - my peers experienced. Now that I'm a parent, I don't know whether it wasn't a good idea, cause I probably mimicked more than I -- than I want to admit. But no, my parents were more strict than my friends. And ma -- and my friends used to

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push me and my parents would explain to my friends why they did what they did.

And ma -- and my friends respected and still respect my parents for doing that.

Q: Are your parents very different from each other? Are they -- how -- do you see them very differently?

A: Entirely differently.

Q: Describe the --

A: Entirely differently. My mother is the intellectual. My father is the very easygoing sense of humor. My mother is very nervous and ferociously protective. My father was strict, but yet, not as verbal about it as my mother was. But I didn't want to cross any lines with my father.

Q: Let's talk about your education a little bit. You -- what kind of schools did you go to in the beginning?

A: I went to public schools, **New York** public schools were wonderful at that time, and then to, as I said, keep broadening my field of reference, my parents would, on a very meager income, sacrifice and send me to Swiss schools for the summertime. I always say that there was a finishing school and th-they finished me off but good. I'm very polished, highly polished, to a g -- a great gloss.

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Q: I detect the irony, of course, but -- but si -- say -- say a little bit more about that.

Was it -- I mean, it was obviously a very different cultural experience

[indecipherable] Europe.

A: Yes, I mean they sent me to -- they sent me to sleep away camps in the **United States** and -- when I was younger. Some of them were Jewish, some of them were not Jewish. My memories of them are that I -- I know that they sent me away from the city so I didn't have to bear the city heat. My -- before I was sent away to camp, we always went away -- my mother and I went to the **Catskills**, and my father would come up weekends, just like the other fathers would come up and visit, so that my summers were very pleasant. But then when I became of an age where there -- they wanted to also have some kind of growing experience, or benefit to be derived from a summer away, that's when they looked into these schools in **Switzerland** for me, and I went to the same one for two summers in a row.

Q: Did you thi -- when you were in -- how old were you when you were in **Switzerland**, roughly?

A: I believe 14 and 15.

Q: Did that subject matter ever come up, being in **Europe**? I mean, **Switzerland** was neutral at the time, but sort of the Holocaust, did that ever come up?

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A: The ho -- interesting, you know, the Holocaust itself did not. There were some Jewish children who came from very **nouveau riche** families in **New York**, and there were Arab children there as well whose -- the younger ones were being trained to hate anyone Jewish. The older ones my own age were a bit more tolerant. This is -- you -- you know where -- this was close to when **Israel** had been founded, so there was some leniency and understanding with the children my own age, but the younger ones were already being disciplined to avoid us, and they called us -- they called me the enemy. I re -- I remember that distinctly, that the younger wa -- younger ones would come up to the table when I was sitting with friends and they would say, how could you sit with the enemy? So it wasn't the Holocaust, but it was being Jewish.

Q: Do you think it was difficult for your mother to let you go?

A: I'm -- I'm sure -- I'm sure fo -- for any mother of a single child, it's difficult to let a child go, but you g -- you get tremendous satisfaction from seeing your child come back glowing with the experience. If they've had an unhappy experience, of course you carry that guilt with you also. But what could be terrible about spending the summer in **Europe**? So I had -- I had fabulous times, and it -- it certainly made a seed germinate that I wanted to study in **Europe** later on, which I did in university.

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Q: Let's stick with being a teenager a little bit. You sort of came of age in a kind of an interesting time. I mean, the 60's were rolling around. What -- what had impact?

I mean, there was so much happening at that time, what -- what -- what had an impact on you? What kind of music did you like? How were you as a teenager?

A: I was a very -- I was a very typical teenager. I was as crazy about the **Beatles** as everybody else in **America**. Some of my American second generation friends were experimenting with drugs, and this is where the strictness factor came in with my parents, they -- they practically used to sniff out the backpacks of my friends when they came in, were very, very protective about what was coming into the house, and -- and what was be -- what activities were being engaged outside of the house. So I was not as brave, or as adventurous as some of my American friends because I didn't want to upset my parents.

Q: In terms of social movements, was there anything that kind of had an impact on you, that sort of was important to you?

A: I wanted to belong. As an only child, I always wanted to belong. And when I started university, I thought I would pledge a sorority. And at the same time, at -- literally, simultaneously, at the time that I was going to be sworn in a secret ceremony into the sorority, there was a huge anti-war protest on my campus. And it was one of those lifetime awakening moments, and I said, you know what, what I'm

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doing right now is ridiculous. What's happening outside is much more important, and I walked away from the sorority and I joined the anti-war movement.

Q: What did you do for them, or with them?

A: I -- I joined the student protests. I worked for **Eugene McCarthy**. I worked for **Bobby Kennedy** on -- especially when he was shot, I started my own initiative for gun control and I -- and I took ar-around a petition for signatures and then sent it to **Washington**. That's when I started becoming politically engaged. I was just on the young end of being more radically involved in the anti-war movement. I was, but I certainly wasn't the leader, I was more of a follower. And then as I became a bit more informed, I started working within political movements rather than the more radical ones that were happening on college campuses.

Q: I know of course that things don't always work on that kind of simplistic, linear, logical order, but do you think that the experience of your -- that your awareness of your mother's past and of the Holocaust and so on, and second World War had kind of sensitized you in a different way, or is that no -- is -- is that not -- set apart from it?

A: The -- the **Vietnam** war was affecting my friends, and I didn't see it as a corollary to World War II. I mean, yes, if you want to take war is a bad thing in

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general, but that was really so subliminal. It was -- it was affecting my friends, my friends were having to go through the draft. So it was a close, personal fear.

Q: Okay, let's talk about your education a little bit more. So what did you study, and when -- we have to -- I -- I want to get a few figures in there, so that we don't get totally lost in -- in -- in where we are. You -- you went to college?

A: I went to college and then I went to graduate school as well, and I got my graduate degree in English, I specialized in **Shakespeare**.

Q: When was that?

A: Not very commercial. Not very marketable. Let's see, I graduated very early, I skipped a grade in junior high school, I entered college at 16, which is very early, I graduated when I was 20. That -- that is very young, that is very young. I wouldn't encourage many people to do that.

Q: Why not?

A: There were some things that I missed. I was -- I was rushing through school so much that when I graduated early, I didn't get to attend the graduation ceremonies with my friends because I was already at the next level. So when I graduated high school in January and was in college, I didn't go back in June for my high school graduation. When I graduated college in January, I didn't go back in June for my high school -- so I have no pictures in a cap and gown, even though -- even though

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I'm -- I am s -- I have so many degrees, I don't have one picture in a cap and gown. When I got my Master's in **England**, I alre -- I had already moved to the **States**, so I didn't go -- I don't have a picture of my Master's graduation, either.

Q: You're pictureless.

A: You j -- you just have to take my word for it that I have all these degrees.

Q: So when did you -- okay, I have to -- I just really want to get a few figures in.

When did you graduate? You said **[indecipherable]**

A: '72.

Q: '72. When did you go to **England**? We have talked about **Switzerland**, but not about **England**.

A: I had a -- a political science professor who saw something in me that -- I don't know, one of those little flickering flames, and he encouraged me to go for a summer program to **Imperial** College in **London**, and that's where the passion for **Shakespeare** was ignited. I came back and did my -- because everything was on a half -- because I had come in early, I wasn't on a normal September to June, this is my freshman year, this is my sophomore year. So I did my last half of my freshman year and my sophomore year back at **Hunter** College. I did my junior year at **Leeds** University, thrown in with the English students, with none of the background that they had. American college at that time was extraordinarily different than English

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university where they make you specialize in one field. They will pay for your education in a field that you have demonstrated talent in. When I was in school in the **States**, they make you take two years of every kind of course under the sun, it's like a smorgasbord, so that you become out -- well, more rounded, rather than have a very gr -- huge grasp of one field in particular. And then I did my Master's in **England** at the **Shakespeare** Institute.

Q: Culturally, did you feel that you were -- that you fit in, or did you feel very different, or what was the -- sort of the situation, how did --

A: I'm a hypocrite. I married an Englishman, but the English students in general -- I got out -- I got along with them, and I -- an I -- and I'm an anglophile, I consider myself an anglophile, but they always kept me a little bit at arm's length, they always used to call me Yank. Which to me was distancing. You know, there was always, you know, we'll have the Yank come along. I-It wasn't that -- and I made friends, and I made very good friends, but it was always just that, you know, I was the colonist. They were the -- they were the Royalists and I was the colonist. And it -- and it -- that was all the way through school, it never changed. And then I ended up marrying an Englishman.

Q: Before we get to the Englishman, let me just ask you one question, then we should probably change the -- the tape. What -- huh. Well, since I forgot the

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question, let's change the tape right away. I'll remember it. This is a continuation of the **United States** -- oh, no, this is the end of tape one, side **A**, interview with **Shelly Sherwin**.

End of Tape One, Side A

Beginning Tape One, Side B

Q: This is a continuation of a **United States** Holocaust Memorial Museum interview with **Shelly Sherwin**. This is tape number one, side **B**. So here comes the question I forgot before. Back in school again, in -- in -- in history class, or what did you have, political science or something? Did -- did -- did the Holocaust come up in -- in a way that -- that was comprehensive, profound at that time?

A: It certainly didn't have the emphasis that it has now. I think there's a -- a -- a greater sensitivity to the teaching of the Holocaust. I think we learned more about World War II than the Holocaust, now that I think about it. It wasn't as specifically defined. It was a factor, but it wasn't taught as a major portion of -- it was just one -- another fact that you learned. You know, there were so many camps, there were so many killed. The -- the camps were located here and there, and really, the French came in here, the French gave up this. It really wasn't -- it wasn't emphasized by itself.

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Q: When you talked -- did you ever go to your mother and ask her specific questions, because my -- my -- my guess is that -- that there -- there must have been questions. Did -- did you go and ask her, or was it more of a -- or did she tell you --

A: There -- there -- there were times in -- in -- in the natural flow of conversation when we would be speaking about her family, and I -- I certainly always wanted to know when she was separated from her family, what happened to this part of the family. I-If she talked about say, the concert pianist, what happened to him? But it - - it -- it wasn't that I was asking her for a -- a history course on the Holocaust, it was in -- in th -- in the form of just more nor -- normal conversation.

Q: Was it difficult for you to hear or to ask about specific things that had happened to her? Was it -- I mean, she was your mother, was it difficult to -- to -- to -- to hear specifically what happened in terms of --

A: I never -- it was a very fine line that I felt that I walked. I never wanted to ask her things that would bring back very painful memories. I had a visual reminder every single day of what happened to her. Every time I look at her now, the entire Holocaust experience is encapsulated in when I look at her. So knowing the specifics was not as important as grasping the entire experience. And it happened i- in the smallest things. When I had to go shopping with my mother and nothing ever fit because her deformity is so limiting in what she can and cannot even try on. I

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was aware of it on so many different levels. Her physical limitations, her lack of energy, her -- the pain that she's in, the brace that she has to decide whether to put on or take off. If I have to take it now and -- and wash it, how gentle I am because there are no people left that we can find who can duplicate the making of these type of handmade corsets because now everything is corrected very early on in surgery so people don't have to suffer the type of scoliosis that she has. So when I would ask her, it really was a familial re-memory -- memory that we would talk about rather than the brutal beatings. I -- it was hard enough for me to look at her without having to know exactly how it happened. And -- and -- and it's still very difficult for me to imagine someone doing to my mother what had to have happened to her.

Q: And you couldn't really bear to hear it, right?

A: No, no. I have -- I have a very heightened sensitivity to films, to photographs, because I don't have, as I said earlier, any scrapbooks of family pictures. Every face could be a face of a relative. So there can be -- even though the number of my mother's family is finite, when I see pictures of hundreds, they all become related to me in a sense because anyone of them could have been a true family member. I'll never know which ones were. It -- on rare occasions my mother has found books and she has found not Holocaust photographs, but from before the war, photos of people who were in her family, in very formal, stylized portraits. And I look at them

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almost like I look at a picture of Queen **Victoria**, there's -- it's such a far relation, it's saying my goodness, this is a person who was in my family. It's -- it's extraordinary because there wa -- there was such a stop, there's such an abrupt halt in any kind of family continuity because there are no letters or photographs or visual sightings, or meetings or anything. It's rela -- it's trying to relate something personal to a picture of an entire stranger. So my sensitivity towards Holocaust materials is -- I f -- I find as I'm getting older, it's harder and harder for me to -- to look at the stuff.

Q: How did it make you feel -- how did you feel about the perpetrators? How -- how did you feel at that -- at the earlier time? Did it make you angry, sad? What was sort of the overriding response?

A: To be brutally honest I have tremendous reserves of hate. It's geared towards the older generation. I don't know who is innocent and who is guilty, I just know that guilt by silence is as damning as guilt by participation. In my work on the college campus with the Jewish student group, we have our Holocaust memorial service every year, and the **Martin Niemöller** poem, when it's read every single year, is more and more telling. When they came for the Communists and no one -- and -- and I didn't say anything, and then they came for me. No one said anything for my family, no one hid anyone from my family. My family -- my mother's family was

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not lucky. My mother was the only lucky one, and she doesn't feel lucky in having survived. She feels guilty because there were so many shining, singular individuals in her family and she feels that why her, and -- and why did they perish and why did she survive? So, it's -- it's very difficult for me to try, I -- I try to be as open minded and tolerant as I -- and give the benefit to everyone of a younger generation, but to my mother's generation, I don't want to have anything to do with them. I'm just too suspicious and too angry.

Q: And does your mother feel the same way, do you think? Did you talk, or did she ever talk about that?

A: We talk about it sometimes, and I -- I think -- I think I'm -- my mother really tries to be forgiving, it's -- it's getting harder, because when we talk about it when there is a rise in neo-Nazism in **Germany** now, what has the country learned? Why should we be -- be more fo -- mo -- why should we be more forgiving when the country is opening itself up to this type of hatred again? It's -- it's too threatening to be able to say that the country has learned its lesson and it'll never happen again. It could. I'm not saying -- I'm not saying a Jewish Holocaust will happen again, but that kind of -- of rise of that party is very disturbing.

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Q: We will maybe come back to something [indecipherable] it's kind of awkward now to go back, but I would like to keep the chronology a little bit alive. So you went to the university eventually? You -- you studied [indecipherable]

A: I was here -- here -- here and there. I was in **New York** and then back and forth in **England**.

Q: Okay, and you me -- and you had the idea of becoming what, professionally?

A: Well, if I hadn't met my husband, I was going to continue on and do my **PhD**. in **Shakespeare**. I had a professor whose best friend was **Lawrence Olivier**. So I had my -- my **PhD**. dissertation practically written for me, I was going to do **Olivier** as a Shakespearean interpreter, and have full access to his library and notes and movies and -- and then I fell in love, and married my husband and moved back to **America** and that was the end of that. So that's -- that's one road not taken.

Q: Let's talk about your husband then, a little bit. When did you meet him, what is his name, why did you like him?

A: Let's see, we -- we met and fell in love and became engaged within one week. We just had our 27th anniversary. If my daughter told me that she met somebody and was getting engaged in one week, I think I'd kill her. But -- we didn't announce it until the third week, we thought that sounded very mature at that time. And my mother was on the next plane after I told her that. Talk about protective. We met

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three weeks before our final exams, he was in law school there, I was doing my Master's. We both could have done better on our exams if we had stared at the books instead of into each other's eyes. I don't think either of us have any regrets about either not doing so well on our exams, or -- or getting married, and ge -- or getting engaged, actually tha -- as quickly as we did.

Q: What was the attraction, apart from the eyes?

A: My husband has an extraordinarily keen mind, and a very dry sense of humor. And I knew that as loquacious as I am, that I needed someone who would give me space and listen to me. My mother says, you always married your husband because he gives you center stage. Which is a very acute assessment. My husband is -- is an attorney and only really speaks when he needs to. So we are -- we are very opposite, very, very opposite. I'm very outgoing, he's much quieter. But when he says something it's so incisive, and so intellectually challenging that there are few that I've met that intellectually excite me as much as my husband still does.

Q: Is he -- is he Jewish too?

A: Yes.

Q: What about his fam -- he was -- you met him in **England**?

A: I met him in **England**.

Q: And he is -- he is British?

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A: Yes.

Q: So, how did you negotiate where you would live?

A: I said as long as I was going to get dressed up and be a bride, that I wanted to get married in **New York** and have the few distant relatives that I had grown up with participate in my wedding. And we decided to come to **California** on our honeymoon. And we -- the decision was really very easy, when my husband saw that it didn't rain for three weeks straight, he said, why go back. So -- so he came here before I was finished with my actual dissertation, so we got married and we were separated for three months in our first year of -- of marriage. So he came here and petitioned the **California** bar to be able to take -- take the exam. And I stayed in **England** and finished up my dissertation, and then came back and joined him in **California** and we've been here ever since.

Q: Did you want to have children?

A: Oh yeah, there was never any question. It was only after I had my daughter, and she was a colic, she scared me off having more. But my husband's an only child, and I'm an only child, and I guess we didn't want to feel outnumbered. So we were very -- we -- we both knew our -- our values are so in sync with each other, we knew that we wanted to give her every opportunity in the world, so if it meant study abroad, if it meant all the shows in the world, like I had gone to in my youth -- we

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wanted to not spoil her, but certainly expose her to as rich a childhood as I had had.

So we made the decision just to have one.

Q: So that was a conscious decision?

A: It was a very conscious decision. We wanted -- we had always, from when she was, I think, in her crib, we had always felt that if she was intellectually capable of going to a wonderful university, that no matter how it -- we -- we would have to sacrifice, we would send her to the best one that she got into, and she got into **Duke University**.

Q: What is her name and when was she born?

A: Her name is **Alexis Danielle Rothschild-Sherwin**. **Alexis** is also for **Anna -- Hannah**, my father's mother, and **Sarah**, her -- her -- her -- her Hebrew name is **Hannah Sarah**, which is a blending of from my family and my husband's family deceased relatives. **Alexis** comes from **Abraham**, who is the distant relative who was partly responsible for bringing my mother over after the war. And he was the only grandfatherly figure -- he wasn't a grandfather, obvious, but the only elder figure that I grew up knowing as a loving relative and so when my daughter was born I wanted to honor him because he had taken my mother into his family after the war.

Q: Were you a working mother, or did you -- did you stay home?

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A: I worked very hard at being a mother, and as my child grew and was in school, I worked very hard in her school s -- because of the pub -- the state of public education and the lack of funding for the arts. I always took it upon myself to teach the -- the subjects that they didn't have money for, so in terms of cultural and -- and creative enrichment, I would create programs, get grants and then bring them into the schools. And I did that all through high school.

Q: So education in your family then, is a very important thing too. Education, arts, culture.

A: Nobody had a choice in the matter. Yes, wh-when given the choice, if -- if I -- if -- if I don't ask for jewelry, then I always ask to have tickets for a show. It's -- it's the creation of a memory that's lifelong. O-Other things, cars and clothes and names on handbags, or things like that, never meant anything to me. E-Even now, if I wanted to and could afford it, I -- it -- it wouldn't mean any more to me than anything else. But going to a show with my family and enjoying that experience, that's what we enjoy doing.

Q: So what -- let's talk a little bit about **Alexis** then, and then we sort of mix everything up again and touch on a few other issues. What was her education? You -- she -- did she go to public school, too?

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A: We'd -- we'd -- my husband is a product of English public education, and I was a product of American public education. And even though we live in a very upper class area of **Los Angeles** where many, many children, even more so now, go to private schools from the earliest ages on, we decided that we wanted her in the public school with children from the neighborhood. And that's why I worked so hard to try and make the schools have as well rounded an approach to the education that the funds would allow. And she went through public high sch -- public education all the way through high school. And then when she got into **Duke** University, we said, well that's your dream school. It was her number one school, and she was -- she had an -- an extraordinary experience there.

Q: So describe her a little bit. Are you close to her, first of all, and secondly, what kind of personality -- person is she? What are her interests? Where is she -- where is she going, as far as one can tell at this point?

A: Is -- is -- as -- she was an only child, for the first half of her life she was my husband's personality, very introverted, very shy. I kept on saying, you know, how did she pass through this body and not pick up any of my genetic material whatsoever. And then we did make a -- a choice in terms of high school. She could have gone to the very close, local public high school, or she could go to a brand new high school which was 24 miles away in **Malibu**, also public, but they wanted

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to start a high school out there. And for the very reason because her personality seemed to be -- she was in awe of other kids, and I remember feeling, in my school, that I wasn't the top student, so that the expectations were always that these are the top students, and I know where I belong in the pecking order. I didn't want her to face that same kind of glass ceiling. So we made a choice to send her to this brand new public sc -- high school, where there wouldn't be any expectations and there wouldn't be any reputations that she would have to face or undo. She was allowed to reinvent herself. And she metaphysically changed. She became -- immodestly, she became me. She -- she became political. She became the president of the entire high school. She -- whatever was going on in that school she became involved in. She invented the traditions that are now being passed from class to class. She was allowed to express herself without fear of being pegged as one of the lesser students trying to work their way up. And so she was one of the golden children at this new school. That completely made her so confident of herself and her abilities that there's no stopping her now. It was a very seminal decision. She hated the traveling part of it, because it -- it entailed being on a school bus for an hour each way every single day. She -- she didn't go with her friends from junior high school to the -- some had already siphoned off into the private schools in the area, the others were going to this public school. But we thought that she would get lost in a school that

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large. It was -- it was a high school of almost 3,000 students, and the new public school, she was in a class of 120. And they were the first grade that went year by year through. So she was the first ninth, the first 10th, the first 11th, the first 12th. So it made her who she is now. It absolutely changed her.

Q: Is she close to her grandparents? And to her -- to her grandmother?

A: She's -- she's my best friend, and I really know in my soul that she would say the same of me. We talk daily, if not more -- more than daily, several times a day.

Q: That's all right --

A: Sorry.

Q: -- some--something fell. You want to [indecipherable]

A: Something --

Q: I'll pick it up. Okay. So you talk -- you talk several times during the day sometimes, every day?

A: Yes. Everything from soulful revelations to ethical decision making, to just general, this is what happened to me today. Ever since I had my surgery in August, she has made me feel that I don't miss anything in her life. She is the first one -- my husband is my rock, but if I need to talk to someone, I talk to my daughter.

Q: You also talk to your mother a lot.

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A: I talk to my mother, but what I -- I filter what I tell her now because there's only so much that she can handle.

Q: But you used to talk, I mean sh -- is it true, she told me that for -- for many years now you almost talk every single day, that --

A: Oh, we still do, we still do, we still do. And also sometimes several times a day, too. But I don't tell her quite everything. She can't -- she can't emotionally handle it. If I'm going through something, if my -- if my husband's going through something, and he's diabetic, but thank God, he's very healthy, but -- or my daughter is going through some unhappy romance or something like that, we don't tell her all the details because that's what she feeds off of. And sometimes that kind of negative information will not be good for her.

Q: I was just reminded, when I talked to your mother in her interview, and I asked her about her family -- not -- not the later family, but her earlier family, she -- she said there was a very close relationship between her and her mother and her grandmother. And it seems to me almost there is now another mother and grandmother and -- and granddaughter situation, which is kind of interesting

[indecipherable]

A: Well, I-I find fascinating the fact that my daughter is able to more objectively talk to my mother about the Holocaust than I am. In the last couple years, I have

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evaded -- I will listen to my mother tell me whatever she wants to tell me, but I don't want to dwell on it to the extent because -- and I have been the one who has been instigating my mother cutting back on her speaking engagements because I know emotionally what it takes out of her. And so I'm taking on the protective mother stance, saying, every time you go to another high school or university and give a talk, the nightmares come back, the memories come back, it takes a physical toll on you, I wish you wouldn't do it. Yes, there is a need for these stories to be told, but I feel that my mother has fulfilled her obligation to her family. And so I'm the one who says no to her. My daughter is the one who does the research on her own. My mother tells my daughter, and we -- we both will sit there and listen, but my -- it's not that my daughter is not unaware of the emotional toll that it takes, but her insistence in knowing overrides sometimes, her pulling back from asking just -- just one more question of my mother, while I will stop.

Q: How old is she **[indecipherable]**

A: She just turned 22.

Q: Maybe it's harder at that age to -- to understand that too, when you yourself are so energetic and used to --

A: In the -- in the last -- I would say in the last two years, she has become more aware of my mother's vulnerability and so in the first couple years when my

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daughter was at **Duke** University though, she was responsible for bringing my mother out as a speaker for the Holocaust, and it was very widely attended. And then my daughter took a Holocaust studies class and had my mother come out and speak specifically to the class as well as the rest of the university. And I think that sometimes her -- the mixture of pride and objective academic curiosity in wanting to know everything for herself is -- is her motivation. And I'm watching my mother get older, and weaker, and so it's much harder for me to go into those areas.

Q: Do you -- do you feel that what's called Holocaust education now, or awareness of the -- of the Holocaust in this country, is going in the right direction, or is it still not -- not presented profound -- deeply enough, well enough, or is it at times overdone, or how -- how do you feel about what -- what's happening --

A: Not having -- not having gone through a formal Holocaust education course, I know bits and pieces from my daughter. The teacher that she had at **Duke** University was a graduate student who was making her life work doing Holocaust studies. And she was very sensitive because **Alexis** was the only one in the class who had a survivor as a grandparent. The other children came to it from an entirely different perspective. And so she would always say, **Alexis**, you know, today is going to be kind of tough, we're going to watch this kind of footage or examine this, you know, are you going to be okay with it. And my daughter, 99 percent of

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the time was able to stick it out. Whether it got to her later on in the day, she was able to stay there for the duration. There was just one or two times where it just became overwhelming and she couldn't stay in the classroom. Sorry.

Q: No, I wasn't -- it sort of in general, just do you think that sort of Holocaust education in this country is going in the right direction? Is there enough of it, too much of it? Is it doing what it should be doing?

A: If it was going in the direc -- in the -- in the direction intended, then I think there would be a lessening of -- of ethnic cleansing and wars. Obviously it's not achieving its ultimate goal, which is what the survivors, I think, who tell their stories, would wish. I think the -- their purpose in telling their stories is not only a testament to their survival, but also as guideposts to the future. So we shouldn't be seeing the pictures on the television that we're watching on a daily basis.

Q: I think this is a good time to stop. This is the end of tape one, side **B**, interview with **Shelly Sherwin**.

End of Tape One, Side B

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Beginning Tape Two, Side A

Q: This is a continuation of a **United States** Holocaust Memorial Museum interview with **Shelly Sherwin**. This is tape number two, side **A**. Let's come to sort of a -- a few issues that are potentially very large, but I would like to leave it up to you how much you want to respond to it. And the first question is, what kind of role does your Jewish identity or faith play in your life?

A: I wouldn't be anything else but Jewish, given a choice. I love being Jewish. I think being culturally Jewish is a tremendous part of my personality. I don't know who I would be, or what I would be like if I wasn't Jewish. I mean, it's that much a part of my psyche. And on the other hand, when it comes to pure religion and observance, I'm more observant than my mother. My husband and I made that determination when we had our daughter, that we wanted religion to be a spiritual backbone. Not strict, not strictly enforced, but certainly the spiritual foundation that it gives someone in terms of an identity. That she would feel as comfortable in her skin being Jewish as I was, but I had the unique experience of growing up in a very Jewish community in **New York City**, so that's why it's also interwoven for me. And my husband grew up in a Jewish area in -- in **London**. But i -- but a -- a **New York** Jew is an entity unto itself. What you see on television is what I g -- is what -- is what my life was growing up. My -- my daughter when she was going through

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school -- it's interesting, in my parent's house they did not speak Yiddish. My mother's family in **Poland** did not speak Yiddish because her mother's side of the family was Sephardic and that was the -- obviously the s -- the Spanish side, it was not -- it was the **Ashkenazic** that spoke Yiddish in the house. And I had a summer job once, working for a doctor in the **Catskills**, and I picked up a tremendous amount of Yiddish, because it was with an elderly Jewish clientele, and I brought up my daughter with these little Yiddish expressions. And she felt so comfortable in her Jewish skin, that she would routinely use them in her compositions in school, and sometimes get comments on the t -- on the papers from the teacher saying, I don't understand this word. So I encouraged her creativity and said, if that's the word that best describes how you're feeling, then just put a footnote at the bottom of the page, which is what she started doing in grade school. If -- if a Yiddish word sufficed, she would use it, and then put a footnote in for those people who didn't understand it. And so even when we converse now, it's not that either of us are fluent Yiddish speakers, but th -- there are certain expressions that we do use routinely. So that's -- that's where I fit in in terms of being culturally how I identify myself, and in terms of personality. I cannot split where my Judaism leaves off and where the rest of me begins. They're -- they're **inextricably** entwined. Religiously is a different story. In -- in following the rituals, when my daughter was going to

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Hebrew school in preparation for her **Bat Mitzvah** and my husband and I started a temple with 18 other couples, it was an extraordinary life changing event to be in on the -- on the formation of a temple. I -- we never worked as hard, we never sat on as many committees, we never had so little free time as we did, and yet we look upon that as the most golden period in our lives because we did something really so constructive. But when it got down to actually being alone with my thoughts with God, it's a love/hate relationship. My mother came out of the camps questioning her faith. She will tell you now that if she was given a choice she wouldn't come back Jewish. My father loves temple and loves being surrounded by things that are familiar with him, he's -- he's -- he's traditional and a little bit old-fashioned in that sense, he doesn't like female cantors. He likes that good old solid, you know, **Jan Pierce** type of voice, that -- that brings him to his spiritual satisfaction. When I was diagnosed with cancer in -- breast cancer in aug -- in July, sorry, in July, I had my surgery in August, I didn't question why it happened to me, and I wasn't as angry at God as I have been about why my mother had to suffer through the Holocaust. I could accept my fate more easily and hopefully with more grace than I've ever been able to accept what happened to my mother and her family. And so when it -- when I think in terms of blind faith, I don't have it. I know that Judaism is built upon equal parts of blind faith and questioning, so that you come to a -- a soulful

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understanding of your relationship in -- in the world, and with God as a Jew. And yet, the Holocaust puts a -- a huge roadblock that sometimes prevents me from attaining more spiritual insight. I'll never be able to get past that. Sometimes I have a very accusatory tone in my thoughts when my mother is suffering the way that she does. I never had a normal mother. I never experienced a mother without pain, without even the unspoken kind of neuroses that the Holocaust caused her to develop in her personality. She is an intellectually brilliant free spirit, and yet the Holocaust harnessed her intelligence and imprisoned her in this failing, tortured body. And so I've been very angry at God for a long time.

Q: I meant to ask you what impact did the Holocaust have, or your mother's experience, on you. And that, of course, is a major answer already, that you just gave. Is there anything else that you could add to that if you think about, in terms of different perspectives on something. If you think about that experience, your mother's experience on you, on your life, on your outlook on life.

A: I've always tried to be the best daughter that I could so that A, I wouldn't cause my mother any unhappiness or unnecessary disappointment. Of course, you know, I'd be superwoman if I never disappointed my mother. But I've -- I've carried the weight of trying to keep my mother happy because of all the unhappiness in her life. It's a tremendous burden. I feel that I pay for the Holocaust in many ways. Because

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of what happened to my mother, I live my life in a way that is encumbered by it, rather than being free to have experienced a mother who aged gracefully without all these extra layers of mental and physical pain that were artificially -- s-she was subjected to. Unnecessarily objected to -- subjected to. It's -- it's -- it's a -- I feel that -- I can't say it any more strongly, I feel that I am paying for the Holocaust every single day.

Q: Fr-From your perspective, is your mother paying for the Holocaust every single day? Is she, however reluctant a little bit to -- to make too much of that in -- in -- in her public presentations and interviews, maybe? Do you see -- how do you see that?

A: For posterity, I will tell you, and I hope my mother will not hear this because it would bring her pain. My mother will not admit to the world at large -- terrible -- terrible an -- analogy, but what a -- what an overwhelming cross she's had to carry every day, every step, every time she puts on her iron brace in the morning, it's the Holocaust coming back into her life again. Her coping system -- if -- if one of us has a cold, or the flu, or anything normal, it's magnified 10 times because nothing is allowed to happen to her family any more, because everything happened to her family before. So h -- there's no sense of normal perspective or proportion in what goes on in our lives. The joys are -- are tremendous, wonderful, sweet joys. What could be just a minor disappointment, because her life is so limited now by her

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physical limitations becomes magnified 10 times more, because sh -- because she doesn't have the outlets that a physical life would allow her. And she has nothing left but this interior life. Everything is magnified.

Q: How -- how does your father fit into all of this?

A: My father doesn't have the -- the -- there's a -- there's a more **laissez faire** quality to my father's life. Things happen, and he can accept them. And my mother will feel more the injustice, or -- or -- or more protective, or -- I think that she feels that she paid with her family so dearly, that we should be spared. And my father understands that nobody -- in -- in the normal run of life is spared from everything, and yet it -- it become so taxing. I mean, when I was diagnosed with this, I was m -- we -- we carefully orchestrated an entire scenario around telling my mother that I'd been diagnosed with cancer. I was more concerned telling my mother -- even though it was in the earliest stages, that it was entirely curable, that it was not going to affect my quality of life, I was more distraught in having to tell my mother, and that was one of the only times that I broke down. It was up to my husband and my daughter and my doctors, who are friends, who sat and told my mother. I was out of the house. I couldn't physically be in the house because I thought I'm bringing her more pain than she needs. And I felt guilty. The cancer didn't bother me as much as I knew that it was going to hurt my mother.

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Q: Do you want to stop for a moment? We will stop for a moment. So we were just talking about how difficult it is to -- i-it was to -- to let your mother know, and so that she wouldn't worry too much about your health, but is that also very difficult for you, not being able to -- do you have to censor a little bit what -- what -- what you are saying?

A: By nature I'm very spontaneous. My husband is the chess player, my husband is the -- is the bridge player. My mother is an extraordinary bridge player. That all involves strategy. That always know -- those people have a talent for knowing when and where to say and do the right thing. I don't have that particular capacity. So usually something happens to me and it'll come straight through me without a filter or -- or a censor. It's not that I've tried to learn how to strategically tell my mother things. It's just that sometimes now I spare her. And it's not that I don't want to be honest, it's just that I don't want to burden her. It's -- it's very different. There are things that she has to know, that sometimes you just can't sugarcoat. But there are times when I have wanted to be entirely candid at the moment that things were happening, and her responses were such that, oh, but I went through something so much worse. Or but, you know, if you're daughter is unhappy at this age, where do you -- what do you think I felt when I was her age? So I can't be involved in this kind of one-upsmanship and I can't compete, no one can compete with her

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experiences in the Holocaust. And yet it's unfair to hold the Holocaust over my head as preventing me from being entirely open with my mother. So sometimes the easier route is just not to tell her everything. It's not that she's not sympathetic, it's just that, look what -- what -- what I went through, this is not a reason to complain. And yet, everybody -- in everybody's life there are things that happen on an everyday basis which are bothersome or annoying, or distressing. And no, they have no comparison, there is no relevance to the Holocaust. And yet, the Holocaust is used -- I don't want to say as a battering ram, but as this stick that we have to measure our experiences against -- versus hers, and sh -- her -- she tops everything. I mean --

Q: Was there any patience then, with the trivial childhood problems that one tends to have, like with yours? Was -- how did she deal with that, when you were young, and --

A: She was much stronger when I was younger, the Holocaust didn't factor in my -- I went only once to a Second Generation meeting, and I felt that it was one of these group hug type of **California** groups because someone stood up and said, if I came home from school with a grade that was less than stellar, my mother would say, is that what I ho -- survived the Holocaust for? And I never experienced that, my mother never did that to me when I was younger. I mean, if I failed a math test

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it was because I was lazy. It had nothing to -- it had no reverberation, or -- or association to -- you know, you should have done better because of what I went through. And I didn't want to have to live through these other people's nightmares of what they went through with their parents, because I thought it would -- because my childhood had been so happy. My mother was stronger when she was younger. It's now that she's older and becoming more fragile on so many different levels that the Holocaust is becoming a factor in daily life and conversation when we talk about normal experiences. But when I was younger, it just -- it wasn't used as a motivation that some of these people had as their parents. And my mother didn't have, or didn't use me as a buffer in real life when I was younger. Some of these people also say that their parents would wake up with nightmares and they would have to comfort their parents, kind of almost like children of alcoholics that have to parent their -- their parents. And I didn't have that experience. I had wa -- considering what my mother went through, I think I had an extraordinarily normal childhood, and it's just changed in the last couple years.

Q: Why did you go to Second Generation in the first place, was that -- was there, in spite of the experience afterward, sort of a genuine need to maybe compare experiences, or to even get advice, or to exchange experiences, or were you prompted by somebody, or was it a -- a curiosity thing?

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A: M-My mother had heard about it and she wanted to -- wanted me to go and see what it was all about. Because my background, my childhood was so normal, I mean, you know, there aren't normal childhood groups. Nobody goes and seeks out a normal childhood group, so I -- I didn't think that there was any particular reason driving me to go to a Second Generation group, be -- be -- because I -- and -- and I -- it was borne out, my speculation that these kids didn't have a normal childhood, and so they did need a -- a support group, where they could share what they went through. I probably need it now more than I did years -- then. But I'm more concerned with dealing -- being a mother of a 22 year old, and being a mother to my mother who is 70 plus. So I'm in the middle right now, and don't particularly feel that I have the time or the -- or the emotional energy to go to one of those groups right now. And plus I'm -- plus dealing with the recovery from my surgery is pretty time consuming.

Q: Did you ever want to go to -- did you ever go to **Poland**?

A: No. And it's not that I didn't want to. My husband's a stick in the mud, and we didn't leave the country until our 25th anniversary when we went to visit our daughter in **Italy**. But he's always had this ext -- extraordinarily heavy workload that we just didn't do any international travel and now after this -- this brush with

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the hint of mortality, we've made a promise that we will travel more extensively. So I don't know if **Poland** is my first destination, but who knows?

Q: What is your relationship to **Israel**? Have you ever been there?

A: I -- I was there when I was 19. And I'm -- I'm the one who is responsible for sending, not all of them, but many, many students on an international program that's free for 10 days to **Israel**, that's an extraordinary experience. So I'm reliving the wonder of my ninth -- when I was 19 and went there and -- and having the privilege of sending these young people there. **Israel** was part of that education that my parents gave me when I was younger. I did it in a summer when I went to visit friends who I'd made in high school, from **Switzerland**, and they lived in **Istanbul**. And they said, if you're coming to **Israel**, then you better stop in **Turkey** cause otherwise you never will, and they were right, I'd never -- I never went back and so I got to see **Turkey**, I stayed with them for three weeks and then I went to **Israel** for three weeks.

Q: I seem to recall that your mother said that your daughter has a very special relationship to **Israel**. Has she been there many times? Or do I recall it wrong?

A: No, no, she was there on the very first trip, this exact -- this hello **Israel** birthright trip that I'm talking about, she was selected to go from **Duke** University on their inaugural trip, it was over the millennium. And you do everything from

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archaeological digs to climbing **Masada** at dawn, to camel rides and **Bedouin** dinners, to floating in the **Dead Sea**, to meeting with Palestinian leaders. It's a very cerebral and spiritual experience. There is no emphasis placed on religion itself, it's just that the reasoning behind this trip, there are three multibillionaires who are underwriting the cost of sending 50,000 students internationally to **Israel** free for 10 days. And they just felt that this generation didn't have the bond with **Israel** that my generation and my parent's generation had. So they're trying, in hopes to foster this type of link with **Israel**, and it's working.

Q: What kind of relationship does your husband have to your parents? Or -- and to your mother?

A: Well, my mother wishes that my husband would speak more. But after 27 years of marriage she should know better. The -- if you don't ask my husband something in question form, you're not going to get an answer. But my hu -- I think my husband is a wonderful son-in-law. He cares deeply about my mother's welfare, both mentally and -- and physically, and is very solicitous of her. And for as emotional as an Englishman can be, he tries, he tries really hard. He's -- the greatest thing that my husband ever did was introduce my mother to the computer.

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Q: Oh, I have to talk to her about that. Is there anything else that you would like to say to -- to round this out that I haven't asked, or that -- that came up in the process that you would like to sort of say?

A: I hope a Holocaust never happens again, not only for the people who are directly involved, but for their descendants. There is such a lingering affect of this kind of devastation. It manifests on so many different levels. It affects the way people react to each other. I wish that lessons could be learned from the Holocaust. I wish that people who are in my position could also affect a change, but sometimes you're so busy dealing with the victims, that you don't have time to take care of the rest of the world. I try on a small basis to interact with my peers on an international basis. And yet, I would be less than human and less than my mother's daughter if I didn't say that her experience has shaped my world view. I try -- I try on a daily basis to be a better person. Sometimes I succeed and sometimes I'm not as forgiving as the ideal.

Q: Okay, well, thank you very much for the interview. This is the end of tape two, side A interview with **Shelly Sher -- Sher --** I'm sorry. **Shelly Sherwin**, thank you.

I would like to just follow up one more time, so this was not the end of the interview. I forgot to ask what your profession is right now. You're working at a college, university?

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A: I work at a community college, **Santa Monica** College. I'm the **Hillel** director, which is the Jewish student group, and create a program of activities, everything from virtual bowling to having intellectual, philosophical, ridiculous conversations. Activit -- all kinds of activities. These are college students and they're looking to have fun and they're looking to bond with their peers, and so I've been doing that for 10 years. And --

Q: You like teaching?

A: I like being the boss. And the other thing that keeps me very busy, because I do love writing, I -- and I've -- I've free-lanced on a book, and I just enjoy the process of writing, is that I have a business with a partner for college admissions, we're college counselors. And I work both with high school students and then college graduates on their admission application essays. We help them from the entire creative process of formulating their ideas to the finished product of the essays. So it's a very creative and involving and sometimes nerve-wracking process, waiting for those acceptance letters to come. But it -- it keeps me very involved with students from high school age through graduate school students.

Q: So of course now I have one very last question. What are your hobbies, what do you do for fun when you have time to have fun?

A: Let's see, does -- does eating chocolate count as a hobby?

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Q: Yes, it does.

A: Okay.

Q: No, it doesn't actually, but -- that's a preference, that's a fun thing.

A: Okay, well theater certainly is a priority. Since we had the chance to travel two years ago to **Italy** when my daughter was doing a study abroad, that re-sparked my wanderlust, which I had before I married my husband, and he has promised that he will take off some time and we're going to go back to **Europe** again. Museum trips are still a -- a very constant feature of life here in **Los Angeles**. Reading, I'm a great reader, I always have. Music, I -- I keep a little bit of my youth in my tastes with -- still listening to the **Beatles**, but I find that classical music is more satisfying now as I'm getting older, especially driving in **LA** traffic. And love my dog.

Q: All right. And this is the very end now of tape two, side A, interview with **Shelly Sherwin**.

End of Tape Two, Side A

Conclusion of Interview