

CHELSEA STUDIOS
"HOLOCAUST DOCUMENTARY"
INTERVIEW WITH LOLA W-12
PRODUCER: ZUCKER

VIDEO #4

(OFF-MIC CONVERSATION)

(QUESTION NOT TRANSCRIBED)

LOLA:

11:05:11

I was born on the four-- 12th of April, 1930.

In the-- little town of Zalastucky (PH), in Poland on the Romanian border. It's in the south-- southern part of Poland.

(QUESTION NOT TRANSCRIBED)

LOLA:

11:05:34

My father-- was a beer distributor. He got the beer from the-- capital of (UNINTEL) and distributed to restaurants, taverns, and so forth. And my mother was-- mainly a housewife, but she helped him a lot in his business, and especially to collect the-- money that various-- restaurateurs owed him, because he wasn't very good at that.

11:06:12 My mother's family, all of whom were killed during the Holocaust, lived in the capital of Galishalindburg (PH). And we were very very- - I was very close to my aunts who used to come to us during the summer because Zalastucky was a very very important resort in Poland, where many fruits were exported all over Poland, even to other parts of Europe.

11:06:34 And-- my father's family lived in Skalat (PH) which is where we moved to-- just before the Holocaust started. And-- I have a brother who's 2 1/2 years older than I am-- who survived as well as my parents did with me.

(QUESTION NOT TRANSCRIBED)

LOLA:

11:07:03 I was-- I lived there 'til I was-- ten.

(QUESTION NOT TRANSCRIBED)

LOLA:

11:07:11 It was a town of-- I'm not sure what the
 population was, perhaps 15-- or 20,000 or so,
 inhabitants. It-- there was a-- substantial
 Jewish population, which mostly lived sort
11:07:30 of-- segregated in a ghetto of their own.
 But some people, including us, lived outside
 of that re-- sort of self-restricted area.
 And-- we lived in the-- area which was-- both
 gentile and Jewish. And that's where I went
 to school.

11:07:49 Many of my school friends were Polish. Some
 were Jewish, but actually more of them were
 Polish. And-- unfortunately the very very--
 deep-rooted anti-Semitism in Poland caused
 some very-- great distress in my childhood
 because-- even though I was a very good
 student, I was never able to obtain a higher
 grade than a B, even though I deserved an A.

And not only because I thought so, but because other people thought so.

11:08:28

And-- that was because the teachers were very anti-Semitic. So that caused a great deal of anxiety. And I remember-- coming home and crying for hours-- on end because I wasn't able to obtain the grades that I thought I deserved-- I knew I deserved.

11:08:49

And-- another manifestation of anti-Semitism, there were many of course, but the one that stands out in my mind most was a-- event that happened when I was returning from-- I think second grade one day with a Polish friend, who was my closest friend.

11:09:11

And just as we were walking home, she stopped all of a sudden, drew the cross of Christ on the sidewalk and said, "You killed him." So-

- that gives you an idea of what my childhood was like. It was actually a very happy childhood because we had this-- my mother's-- sisters, my father's sisters would come and-- and go to the beach with me. And-- I loved the beach. And-- but there were these horrible underlying-- very very stressful events that-- ran throughout my-- you know-- undercurrents throughout my childhood.

(QUESTION NOT TRANSCRIBED)

LOLA:

11:10:02

No-- well they were not that close. My father's family was not close, that close, my mother's family was not that close in terms of distance of that time and a means of transportation. So during most of the holidays-- we were as a family unit alone. I was born on the first satyr night of Passover, as a matter of fact. So we were just the four of us most of the time.

(QUESTION NOT TRANSCRIBED)

LOLA:

11:10:38

Yes, my father was very busy with his business, and he also had the-- multiple ventures growing-- buying orchards and losing money on them and all that. But-- on-- Sunday, which was the only day he had off because Sabbath he wouldn't do anything except go to pray, he was an orthodox Jew. Sunday and maybe I-- perhaps a couple of evenings-- in the summer I remember he would-- we would go to the beach.

11:11:09

And they had a band, and they had a very nice dancing floor right on the-- beach. And my father loved to dance, and my mother didn't. So I was my father's partner. And I loved that. He used to dance with me. And that's what I remember most.

11:11:25

I also remember, of course, his-- teachings of-- Jewish tradition and-- and-- the Bible, and he would tell us-- he was a very learned man. He-- he actually-- knew exactly-- and understood exactly what he was praying, very many Jews do not. And so he would tell us stories-- from the Bible-- at-- on Saturday after lunch or after dinner. And that-- those were really very wonderful times.

(QUESTION NOT TRANSCRIBED)

LOLA:

11:12:02

Oh, I spent the-- most of the time with my mother. My mother was-- very very dedicated and self-sacrificing. But she's also-- overprotective. So-- so it caused somewhat of a friction-- because I was shy and she wanted to meet-- for me to meet-- children and her friends. And she sort of pushed me.

- 11:12:28 But-- she gave me all the values I had-- to this very day. She-- she was the-- foundation of my-- I mean-- as a geneticist, I guess you're born with some of the personality traits, we believe now.
- 11:12:45 But as far as having value systems, my mother was-- responsible for all the values which I have, which-- one of the-- most important things for her was honesty and integrity and truthfulness. And the second most important aspect of her-- emphasis on-- on values, was education. And needless to say, I followed in those footsteps.
- 11:13:15 Her-- her-- ideas about education were-- I think originated way back when she was a younger woman, before she was married. Because she had a very brilliant fa-- brother, my uncle-- whom I adored, and who

adored me. And he was very exceptional. He was admitted to a university in Poland which had a very strict quota system, and became a chemical engineer. And so she wanted her children to be like him. And so-- that's my value system came from her.

(QUESTION NOT TRANSCRIBED)

LOLA:

11:14:00

Oh, absolutely. My mother would always make special dinner for Friday like candles and-- very strictly observed-- orthodox-- I mean-- kosher home, and she would never cook on Saturday. Because my-- our father would have been, obviously, against it. And-- yes, it was a very strict observance. My father went to the synagogue. She did not, she-- she went to the synagogue mainly on the holidays, she was not nearly as orthodox as my father. But we observed all the holidays, yes.

(QUESTION NOT TRANSCRIBED)

LOLA:

11:14:42

Yes, well he lived in Lindsborg, which was the capital of Golish, which was not that close to us. But-- he came to us occasionally-- he was very busy with his profession, and he had a family. And I went to visit my grandparents and him to Lindsborg a number of times. And those were extremely special times. I didn't see him as often as I would have liked, but he would take me everywhere. And he-- he-- would just spend whole days with me when I was there. And I remember one particular-- time that-- that sort of relates to him.

11:15:18

He was very-- good in mathematics, obviously, being a chemical engineer. And-- when I was maybe-- I remember-- still, I was probably three-- three year-- three and a half years old. And I was in my grandparents' home.

And they had this very-- old fashioned stove, wooden-- you know-- wooden stove, and it was tiled, it had tiles all around it-- to prevent carbon monoxide I suppose from-- escaping and so forth.

11:15:49

And not just decorative, but it just-- it was also the-- the reason as far as the heat-- retention was concerned. And what I loved to do was sit on the floor and count the tiles.

And so they immediately thought that I was gonna be a mathematician like he, so that's what I remember.

(QUESTION NOT TRANSCRIBED)

LOLA:

11:16:10

I think I was too young at that point to be sparked. I-- I-- I think-- no, I don't think at that time, that it-- maybe it was later that it had some effect on me. But-- the

11:16:26

science-- emphasis came actually-- in the

United States. The advisor of my high school-- looking at my grades in science and math felt that this was probably what I should do. I-- must say that at that point-- until that point, I was not decided on what I was going to become.

(QUESTION NOT TRANSCRIBED)

LOLA:

11:16:57

Well-- I-- I love music now, I love classical music, and jazz-- I-- in my childhood, there were-- yes. My father used to love Jewish songs. Famous Jewish songs about, remember the mama and this and that. And-- we didn't have-- we-- we had a-- this old fashioned gramophone, you know.

11:17:20

But I think, unfortunately, there wasn't enough time spent on that. And the only Jewish songs I remember in some hi-- holidays and-- those that I heard when there was

chanting in the synagogue, because I was always in the synagogue during the holidays.

So I wish music would have been a greater part of my life actually at that time.

(QUESTION NOT TRANSCRIBED)

LOLA:

11:17:45

(LAUGHS) I-- I was-- I always loved sports, that's true. And I-- I used to want to always-- learn how to skate and how to swim.

And-- as a child, be-- I didn't have an opportunity to do either. My mother, as I said, was overprotective, did not realize that-- I was less-- less likely to drown if I knew how to swim.

11:18:10

She had-- had some experience or heard about children drowning, and we had this huge river that the-- the-- the beach I was referring to you-- was on the river Nyst (PH), which was the largest river in Poland. It was a

gorgeous beach. And I remember actually drowning as a child. And they caught me because I didn't know how to swim.

11:18:35

And my mother refused to-- to have me learn how to swim. And she had promised me skating, and she was gonna buy me skates when the war broke out, and then I had never had a chance. I always wanted to play ball, and I always-- wanted to play with my brother and his friends. But, of course, he was old and they didn't want any part of me as far as ball playing. So I was frustrated about that. But-- yes, I always liked sports.

(QUESTION NOT TRANSCRIBED)

LOLA:

11:19:01

Reading, loved to read. Always loved to read. And-- I loved to-- I-- I loved to climb trees. We-- we lived in a-- and gather fruit and vegetables. We-- we had an

orchard, very-- just around the corner from our house-- and-- vegetables were planted, and this town was full of wonderful fruit.

11:19:29

And-- so I used to love to climb trees and pick the fresh fruit o-- right off the trees and eat it. And I loved to play with dolls. My mother always thought that I was gonna be playing with dolls until I got married. (LAUGHS) So-- I loved the beach, as I said-- always reading was one of my favorite things to do.

(QUESTION NOT TRANSCRIBED)

LOLA:

11:20:02

Yes.

(QUESTION NOT TRANSCRIBED)

LOLA:

11:20:05

Yes.

(QUESTION NOT TRANSCRIBED)

LOLA:

11:20:12 It was-- well, it was-- the-- the war broke out-- of course it was like two weeks later that the Russians inva-- invaded Poland. I cannot tell you exactly where I was. I think I was home because-- there were air raids continuously. And just before the Russians came-- there was a false e-- air raid to allow the Polish government to escape through our bridge to Romania.

11:20:44 So they-- they purposefully had an air raid so people wouldn't see the government escaping. And-- (UNINTEL) the-- President of Poland escaped at that time. So we were-- we-- we were mostly home or in the cellar, which is where we were-- where-- like-- it was like a shelter, we felt, against-- air raids.

11:21:02 And-- I-- I'm pretty sure I was home when

they-- when the Russians came. And-- we-- we had no idea what was happening until they marched in. So-- but actually that's when the air raids stopped and-- we were hoping that somehow we will-- momentarily finish with the-- with the fear of being-- killed by-- by bombs, you know?

(QUESTION NOT TRANSCRIBED)

LOLA:

11:21:35

Oh, sure, sure, I was frightened by-- I-- I can tell you one thing that-- the first air raid alarm occurred when I was in school. And we were so scared that I actually-- peed in my pants. That's what I remember, being all wet, and-- and scared to death. And-- it was nothing like what happened during the Holocaust, but that was my first horrific war experience there, the first air raid alarm, when they rushed us into the school shelter.

(QUESTION NOT TRANSCRIBED)

LOLA:

11:22:19

Oh, yes, we realized what-- that the Russians had come. And-- at that time, I'm not sure that they realized how lucky they were that the-- Hitler did not march in, that the Russians came instead. Because Hitler had occupied-- the western part of Poland, this was the eastern part of Poland. But, you know, it was war, it was-- it meant the complete disruption of life.

11:22:43

And-- it meant-- of course that my father's business was gonna be confiscated, which it was. So-- it was a very unsettling time, needless to say. And-- the only-- the thing that stands out in my mind is that-- I said to my parents, I was nine years old. And I said, "Why didn't we go across the bridge? Why didn't we run away to Romania?" I don't know how I realized that that would have been

a good thing to do.

11:23:21

But I-- maybe because I saw other people running, I don't know. But I still remember the answer my mother gave me, which has been a lifelong lesson, was-- a true answer, but a very poor judgment on their part.

11:23:36

She says, "What would have happened to all this furniture?" She had beautiful furniture which was part of her dowry, and she pointed to these-- beautiful closets, these were like old fashioned big-- huge-- closets for-- in the bedroom, and what-- what would I do-- I mean how-- what would I do without that?

11:23:58

And I-- I don't know if I ever accepted that answer, but I still think-- remember that as being a very-- wrong judgment. But that's-- that was one of the things that's been

bothering me that I've been trying to tell people in this-- since I started talking about the Holocaust to students and to other people as well.

11:24:18

Namely, that one cannot value personal belongings to this extent to where you become a prisoner of those belongings and you lose-- your judgment, which should be reserved for many more important things. I mean, what comes first is-- is-- is obviously the safety of the country, the safety of your-- of your family.

11:24:40

And not belongings, not personal belongings, which are meaningless in the last analysis. So I always try to-- to-- to say that to myself. Never mind these personal things. What counts is really the-- the more-- bigger things in life, and that's what you have to

concentrate on.

11:24:59 And unfortunately-- I don't do that all the time. And I'm just as guilty as many other people. And, you know, getting caught up in these very very material, unimportant things. But I do the-- the other things as well. So maybe that compensates for it.

(QUESTION NOT TRANSCRIBED)

LOLA:

11:25:18 Yes. But-- it was very difficult because the Russians insisted that there be a separation according to religion. And the Jewish-- students had to-- to be-- taught in Jewish, and the rest in Polish. And so I had to start-- had to repeat the second grade, which I was in.

11:25:43 Because-- it would have been impossible to follow, you know, a new grade, the third

grade in a new language. I-- in spite of the fact that my father and mother spoke Jewish, I did not know Jewish. They only spoke Jewish to each other when we-- in order for us not to understand what they were saying.

11:25:59

They spoke only Polish with-- with me and my brother, especially my mother. My mother was-- wanted to assimilate. She-- felt that-- that the only way to escape, which was probably the wrong thinking as well, because Hitler did not pay attention to assimilated or non-assimilated people, he killed all Jews, as well as Mischlings, as you know.

11:26:23

But my mother felt that somehow the solution to the Jewish-- to anti-Semitism was assimilation. And so she insisted that we-- I speak Polish, I don't have a Jewish accent, and so I'm not prejudiced against, because

she realized how much anti-Semitism there was. And so-- so that was-- that was-- the story.

(QUESTION NOT TRANSCRIBED)

LOLA:

11:26:55

Yeah, well-- very quickly, I'm not sure the exact span of time, but-- it must have been maybe a month or two-- or three at most. And-- it's a good question what-- what he-- did is he had the foresight to-- before the war started, to buy a lot of bolts of cloth, which-- he felt if there were a war, obviously people are not gonna have clothing, they're not gonna have the availability of these-- I mean-- you-- in Poland at that time, everything was made to order by a tailor.

11:27:34

You didn't go and buy ready-made clothes. So he bought these bolts of clothes-- and as far

as I know that's what he sold to-- to-- to--
s-- support us during that year before we
moved-- moved to Skalat (PH). And-- after
one year, when we moved to Skalat he bought a
cow, and we lived off the cow. My mother
would make butter and cheese and-- and-- of
course they would sell milk to neighbors, and
that's what we lived off, the cow.

(QUESTION NOT TRANSCRIBED)

LOLA:

11:28:06

Oh, yes, that's a very important reason. My
father-- was considered a bourgeois, and the--
- Russians, of course, did not approve of
capitalism and they did-- at-- various points
during their occupation-- wa-- r-- they--
they took some of the bourgeoisie, both
Polish and Jewish, and-- e-- deported them to
Siberia.

11:28:38

And-- my father was afraid that he would be

deported as well to Siberia. And Siberia of course is a place which is very cold, and not very-- very easy to survive in for many other reasons as well. I mean, so father decided in order to avoid-- being deported-- and also he would move to the town where his family was. And also, he felt he wanted to be closer to his family during this time. He was always very close to his mother. And so for these two reasons, we moved.

(QUESTION NOT TRANSCRIBED)

LOLA:

11:29:18

Well, I felt good about it because I was gonna be close to my cousins, closer to my cousins, whom I didn't know that well, but I did know them, and close to my father's sisters whom I was close to-- my aunts. But of course it was unsettling in terms of education because I would have to move, again, go to a different school-- and meet

different friends, and I was a-- a little shy-- actually quite shy as a child.

11:29:45

So it was somewhat stressful. But I was happy to be-- among the family, my father's family. And then-- once I started school-- there-- actually there another-- a third language was imposed on me, which was Russian. And-- and that town-- and at that point in time, the Russians decided that the main language was gonna be Russian. Now that doesn't mean that you didn't have-- Polish as a language as well. But the main teaching language was Russian. So of course not knowing a word of Russian-- I had to start from scratch again.

11:30:18

And-- so first it was Jewish, then it was Russian, but I did very well. I was-- very, good student. And-- was no problem.

Eventually I conquered that and I made very good friends.

11:30:34

And my best friend-- my cousin was in my class, who survived with me during the Holocaust. And my best friend-- from school is in the United States now, and we are friendly, very friendly, and see each other and-- so-- it-- it turn out to be okay.

(QUESTION NOT TRANSCRIBED)

LOLA:

11:30:55

No. No, no, my grandmother didn't have enough room at that point. Anyway, my mother didn't have the greatest relationship with her mother-in-law, very bad relationship matter of fact. So we lived-- in a rented apartment on the outskirts of the town, which may-- meant that I had to walk quite far to go to school, and there were no buses. I had to walk-- I would say maybe a mile, at least

a mile, maybe more.

11:31:23

And-- it was not-- a very good place to live.

I mean, it was a nice part of town, but we were very-- cramped. We had basically one room, and my mother shared the kitchen with the owner. That was not pleasant. And then we had another little room where my-- where my brother slept.

11:31:38

And I slept in the same room as my parents.

And-- being a teenager, that was not the best thing for that point. Well I was-- I was not a teenager yet, I was-- 11. So-- but, anyway-- is 11 considered teenager? Maybe. Anyway, it was-- but I was-- I was not unhappy there because I had my school, I had my friends. But the living quarters were not very good.

(QUESTION NOT TRANSCRIBED)

LOLA:

11:32:20 School ended-- for me when the Germans came into-- in-- to invade the eastern part of Poland. The Russians began to retreat into Russia, which was the-- summer of-- '41, June '41.

(QUESTION NOT TRANSCRIBED)

LOLA:

11:32:39 Yes.

(QUESTION NOT TRANSCRIBED)

LOLA:

11:32:45 Yes.

(QUESTION NOT TRANSCRIBED)

LOLA:

11:32:47 Definitely. Definitely, they-- they were-- my father-- actually were not allowed to turn on channels-- that were-- re-- transmitting-- news from-- from-- outside of the local-- locality where we lived. We were not supposed to put on-- what they are called

foreign channels. But-- now-- if they would have heard it, they would have penalized us-- I don't know how, but they would have.

11:33:15

Some-- but my father did it illegally anyway.

We had a radio he would put on, and I remember Hi-- hearing Hitler's speeches.

And-- one in particular where he pronounced-- that-- Poland will be Judenfrei, meaning that there will be no Jew left in Poland. And that was-- sometime in the winter of 19-- of-- '40 when the Russians were-- when we were still occupied by Russians.

(QUESTION NOT TRANSCRIBED)

LOLA:

11:34:00

Was the winter of '40, '42. No-- well-- no, you couldn't get out anywhere. You couldn't.

We were under Russian occupation, there was no place to-- we could not get out. I mean, they-- had a very-- strict system of--

registration and, you know, you had to have-- papers and so forth. There was no-- there was no place to get out. We could have gotten out-- when the Russians were retreating in 1941, when the Germans came.

11:34:28

As they were retreating, a number of Jewish families-- availed themselves of that opportunity, went on their trucks, and left for Russia. And-- one of the families I knew very well. I knew-- them because the-- the-- their youngest daughter was my classmate.

11:34:49

And so it so happened that these were families-- whose-- who made a living-- by vocation that was tailors, shoe-- shoemakers, sort of artisans. And my father was under the impression that they were communists because of their particular vocation.

- 11:35:11 And so when he-- when I told them that they were leaving for Russia, and he saw them escaping on the trucks-- I remember this incident very distinctly. And his reaction. Because I asked him, "Why aren't we going? Why-- why are we waiting here? Why aren't we going? Why aren't we doing what these families are doing?"
- 11:35:40 And I was standing on the outskirts of the town where we were living, and they were passing right through our little-- street-- was-- next to our street. But we were standing, was like a bridge there.
- 11:35:53 And I still remember saying to my father, "Look, they are there, there are the trucks, why aren't we there?" And he says, "What? You want me to go with the Bosekeys (PH)." Now what he meant by Bosekeys is-- means

barefooted.

11:36:06

And the Russians, when they came to-- when they invaded Poland were so poor, the soldiers came without shoes. And father called them Bosekeys. And he said, "No, he's not going." And that was fear of communism, which had been rooted-- you know-- in-- in-- in-- in Poland before the Germans ever came into the picture.

11:36:27

So it was unfortunate that my father, this is the only-- you know-- the second poor judgment. One was not to escape to-- Romania before the whole-- you know-- right after the war started, as I told you. And this was another poor judgment-- but based on his experience and fear from the time of pogroms and so forth where he was-- not able to-- face the reality and thought that it was more

important to avoid going to a Russian--
communist-- communist Russian country than--
than to wait for Hitler, which was,
obviously, a mistake.

11:37:05

Because, again, the-- the-- the lesson to be
learned is one has to face reality and not
think it's not gonna happen to me. And--
obviously Jews-- Jews had-- even though they
listened to these speeches, like my father
did, he did-- I don't think he e-- ever
realized that this would actually happen.

11:37:28

I don't think he ever faced that reality
enough. Obviously he didn't because
otherwise he would have run away. It-- was
inconceivable to realize that Poland could be
left without Jews, and that Hitler was gonna
do what he said he was going to do, but that
was a mistake.

(QUESTION NOT TRANSCRIBED)

LOLA:

11:38:13 Well, th-- the-- the other, we-- we stayed on the bridge, that was when the Russians were retreating. The Germans hadn't come yet. The Germans came-- some-- something like a day later, okay? And-- I-- we were at-- at home because we were scared. I mean, it was-- it was the front was happening.

11:38:34 It was-- I mean, the Russians didn't put up any defense or opposition, but obviously there was a war going on, so we were home. And-- the on-- the-- the only thing that I remember, aside from being obviously stressed out by this whole situation-- was-- this horrible music we heard a few hours-- after it happened.

- 11:39:01 We heard that-- 400 Jews were rounded up by the Ukrainian police that the Germans put into effect when they marched in because they didn't have the organization of their own yet.
- 11:39:17 And the Ukrainians were more than happy to do that because they were very (UNINTEL). And they were very anxious to collaborate. And they knew where the Jews were. The Germans knew where they were. They were, many of them were in a, sort of-- semi-ghetto-- area-- somewhere scattered all over. But many Jews were in a (UNINTEL) post, sort of, ghetto area.
- 11:39:43 And they knew-- many of the Jews-- by their faces. Sometimes the-- exact face. Sometimes just by their noses perhaps, or their anti-Semitic features. And, so, the

Germans asked them to round up 400 Jews. And among them was, unfortunately, my grandfather who was, this was a Saturday, and he was walking back from the Synagogue. And he was rounded up among the first 400 Jews, were taken to the-- outskirts of the town, and slaughtered, all killed.

11:40:15

And su-- that was-- you know, obviously a horrible, traumatic experience when I heard that my grandfather was killed, and for no reason whatsoever. And-- and-- that was the beginning of the Holocaust. So, it w-- it-- it was a disastrous-- day.

(QUESTION NOT TRANSCRIBED)

LOLA:

11:40:36

Fairly close. My grandfather was very religious. He was emphatic you might say. He-- he was a-- a man who-- not only prayed, but-- but-- spent so much time on charity,

and-- and-- and-- and-- his belief in God was-- was just a overwhelm-- you know, just took most of his life.

11:41:01

My mot-- grandmother was the one who ran the business. He was not, he was only interested in-- in praying. And so he wasn't as close to us. He didn't have that much time because he was so busy-- spending his time in the Synagogue. But he was a wonderful man, and I-- I respected him and loved him.

(QUESTION NOT TRANSCRIBED)

LOLA:

11:41:25

I don't remember the exact year-- day-- day. It was--

(QUESTION NOT TRANSCRIBED)

LOLA:

11:41:30

Yeah, the month was beginning of July. But I don't-- remember the exact date. I should really. But I don't know, I don't remember

that (LAUGHTER). I could look it up.

11:41:40

I have a book-- which my friend Luca (PH) was, whom I just mentioned to you before, who was my closest friend in school, and who is in the United States now has edited. And my Holocaust story is in the book-- many of the things that I might tell you-- here. It's called THE DEATH OF ASCHTEDLE (PH). And-- I lost my train of thought.

(IRRELEVANT MATERIAL OMITTED)

(BREAK IN TAPE)

(IRRELEVANT MATERIAL OMITTED)

(QUESTION NOT TRANSCRIBED)

LOLA:

11:44:21

Well, it was the summer of 1941. And-- I did not see them march in because we were, as I told you, in the outskirts of the town. But-- soon after they marched in-- I saw Germans in our area-- looking-- patrolling, and so

forth. And the next-- thing that-- what I, that I remember when I was very close to them, much too close, was when they actually invaded our house.

11:44:55

A few days after they marched in, all of a sudden they bang on the door, come into our house, "Where's the attic?" they're shouting. My mother shows them the attic. They run up to the attic. They search. They find our silverware. And they say, "Ah," in German, "These are the knives that-- that you were getting ready to use, weren't you?" to my father. And he's looking at them like they're crazy. What knives? What-- well, the silver had knives, but-- .

11:45:33

They said that they were told that he was sharpening knives in order to do some damage to the Germans. I got no idea how they

thought he was gonna do that. They didn't really need an excuse to round him up and take him to jail. I don't know what transpired. But they, perhaps, it was part of their terrorist-- you know-- torture, or whatever. So they took him to jail.

11:45:59

And I was desperate crying. My mother was crying. My-- my brother w-- . We were desperate because we knew my father, we may never see my father again. I mean, my grandfather had just been killed, and here's my father being taken to the local jail. And, so, we immediately-- ran and told my-- my-- my-- father's family about it.

11:46:15

And I don't remember how my mother communicated that to them-- because I was like hysterical at that point. When I didn't, I saw my father being taken away, and

I thought that I would never see him again.

11:46:37

But, in any case-- my father's family did find out within a few hours. And my aunt, his younger sister, decided to go to the local-- s-- you know, German police-- and try and rescue her brother. And she was a-- a very-- good looking, young woman in her 30s, early 30s. And-- she said, "I'm gonna try and get him out." So she went there.

11:47:11

And all I know is that we hea-- later on, I don-- don't think I was told that right away, but later on-- I found out that-- in order to get, to save my father, she had to have sex with the-- with one of these-- police-- man. And-- that's what she did, sacrificed herself to get him out. And then we saw him, and-- . But that, I never forget seeing my father when I thought I would never see him.

(QUESTION NOT TRANSCRIBED)

LOLA:

11:48:00

It was-- it was just-- ready living in a state of fear. And-- I-- remember we, because we didn't know when they were gonna come again to perhaps round up my father, or all of us-- my father began to think of how we could run somewhere when we have any inc-- in-- indication that they were coming. Because we were on the outskirts we were fairly close to the fields around this town.

11:48:33

These were-- fields, wheat fields, corn fields-- (CLEAR THROAT). And my father-- hay fields. And my father said, "Look-- when I tell you, you're gonna run. And-- you just follow me." And, so, I remember one time when we thought they were-- gonna come around and maybe round us up-- for no reason again.

We just ran. My father ran, and we ran after him into the fields.

11:49:07

And we stayed there for some hours, I don't remember how many hours, of course, panic stricken. Then we came back hoping that they were gone. I don't remember how many times we did that. But that was the strategy that my father had-- devised at least for the meantime.

(QUESTION NOT TRANSCRIBED)

LOLA:

11:49:37

Well-- yeah, in-- it, the first-- the first few-- mon-- maybe a few, first few weeks, we still had that cow. I'm not sure for how long. So we still were able to-- . But then, of course, that was, they-- they took away the cow. And-- my father resorted again to-- sort of a bartering system. Maybe got a little money for this cloth that I told you

he had saved. And-- maybe-- sold some other things like-- jewelry, or-- in exchange for food.

11:50:18

It was very tough. It was very tough. But we weren't starving at that time. He-- he managed to obtain enough food for us to eat.

There wasn't maybe the best balanced diet, but we weren't starving.

(QUESTION NOT TRANSCRIBED)

LOLA:

11:50:35

Well, I went out-- there was no school, of course-- I went out and-- just in front of our house on our street, and I played with my dolls. And I-- didn't see my friends because they were in the-- in the town itself. So I hardly saw them. I-- I would go occasionally to see my f-- father's family, and occasionally see my friend.

11:50:58

But-- most of the time I was just confined to our house, and our little back yard, and front yard, and the street. And-- just, sort of, not knowing what's gonna happen next, completely unsettled and-- fearful. But not nearly as-- as-- as-- as traumatic as when the ghetto was set up which was a year after the Germans marched in. That-- that was a very bad time.

(QUESTION NOT TRANSCRIBED)

LOLA:

11:51:36

No, no, nothing. There was no, we didn't go anywhere. We just-- were happy that they did not-- come and-- and take us-- and kill us. So, no, I don't remember any public places. I just remember-- occasionally being able to see my father's family, as I said. And most of the time we were just (UNINTEL) by ourselves. It was a rough time. But not as rough as when the ghetto was begun. That was

really bad.

(QUESTION NOT TRANSCRIBED)

LOLA:

- 11:52:15 Well, it was the summer, summer of 19-- 42. Close to a year after the Germans came. And they-- had big notices up everywhere that all Jews had to move into this-- small, restricted area.
- 11:52:33 And they gave us notice that by such and such a time we-- we have to-- leave where we are and move into the ghetto. And-- they didn't tell us where to move. But they gave us the confines of the ghetto. So we moved into my grandmother's-- house where she had-- a tavern. And-- the tavern was-- like a bar-restaurant which, of course, no longer in-- functional.
- 11:53:07 But it was a-- a fairly large room. Maybe, I

don't know, 20 by-- by 40, or something like that, I couldn't tell. But I don't know, I was too young to know how this came about, but we ended up being together with-- three other families in the same room. So-- obviously there was no privacy. All we had is some like sheets hanging from the ceiling to separate-- one family from another in the evening when we went to bed. And otherwise it was all open.

11:53:44

And there was one big stove that everybody used. It was-- very-- very cramped-- and very little food around. My parents happened to get a little food here, a little corn flour, so my mother would bake cornbread. And-- there was, it was very difficult to get food. And it was the beginning of the end really.

(QUESTION NOT TRANSCRIBED)

LOLA:

11:54:25 Oh, sure. We knew-- we knew that they were rounding us up-- to this restricted area to-- then, to-- to-- exterminate us. We knew, we just didn't know wh-- how it was going to happen-- until-- the first action occurred which was shortly after we moved in. It was in the early fall of-- 19-- 42.

11:54:52 We were all asleep. And we heard a horrendous noise. Trucks coming into-- our vicinity, shouting-- "Uden (PH), Uden," and-- marching, and running-- obvious-- obviously the assessment. And-- my father, we had no time to dress or anything. It was like-- (UNINTEL) minutes. My father pushed us into a cellar which was right out-- outside of our room, not too far, maybe ten feet, 20 feet.

11:55:36 It was a cellar with a trap door in the-- in

the ground-- on the floor. So it opened up from the floor up. And he shoved us in there. And everybody was panic stricken, so some of the neighbors-- went in there as well. And-- my-- my-- my aunt and her little daughter, three year old daughter, my grandmother, my other aunt, father's sister, and her daughter. And-- we all were shoved in there, ran in there by-- and my father then stayed outside which I didn't know he was gonna do.

11:56:15

And he camouflaged the entrance to that cellar by putting all kinds of articles on it, like feather beds, and boxes, and cartons, and God knows what, brooms, and-- .

And I ge-- I-- I-- I went in there, and I said to my mom, "Where's father?" I had no idea what he was up to. He was going to sacrifice himself 'cause he decided the only way he can to save us is to stay outside and

cover up the trap door, and he would hide somewhere else. God knows where.

11:56:44

Turns out he hid in the attic where he was quite visible under the staircase. And-- I was frantic. My father wasn't there, and my mother was absolutely in despair. And we hear all these noises, and-- the Germans are rampaging through the upstairs. Boots running-- boot, you could hear, like, they always wear war boots. You could hear the noise of their boots. And-- we thought that that was the end, they were gonna discover us.

11:57:23

And to make matters worse, at that point, my little cousin who was three-- three or three and a half-- starts crying. And, so, we were convinced that they're gonna obviously find or hear the noise of crying. And they'll

open the door wi-- and-- and-- and just take us-- to the death camps which is what they were about to do. They were rounding up Jews-- a (UNINTEL) of Jews. A few hundred, whatever they were told by the hierarchy, to take them to-- the freight trains to the concentration camps.

11:57:58

So-- a lot of the people, a number of the people with us-- in that cellar started to panic, and they wanted to actually choke this child. And they begged the mother to-- to close her mouth even though they realized that she might choke if she closes her mouth.

But they wanted to save themselves. People didn't know what, you know, it was a time of such despair, and that they weren't able to control-- their-- their-- their feelings.

All they wanted to do is survive.

11:58:31 So, of course, my aunt refused to-- to do that. And, so, she thought that one way to-- to placate this child would be to give her some urine to drink because she had no water, no-- nothing in that cellar. We were completely unprepared for this. So she gave her her ur-- own urine to drink.

11:58:56 I don't know how she found the little bottle there or something. And the child started crying more because the urine was obviously horrible to taste. So we were convinced that that was the end of us. And we were, we couldn't say anything because we were run-- we were afraid to make a sound that we might be heard.

11:59:08 But then this miraculous thing happened which I call one of the miracles my father engineered. And-- we hear this sound of them

opening the door and getting us to kill us. We hear them laughing. We hear laughter upstairs. And we thought that there was-- I thought dad was going insane. I didn't understand what was happening. But we still heard laughter.

11:59:31

And then everything stopped. They went away. And-- of course-- a few hours later we came out of there. And what we found out my father had done is to-- put a lot of liquor in the, I mean, he just grabbed a few bottles of liquor, the presence of mind that he had was unbelievable, and stuck them in various-- open places-- conspicuous places in the kitchen, and dining room, or whatever, my mother's-- grandmother's house-- which was-- was right above the cellar. And-- and they-- they found it, they drank it, they got drunk, and never found us. So that was the first

action.

12:00:11

And th-- there were many others like it. Well, they occurred every few weeks throughout the winter. The fall and winter of 1942-- two, '43, until the-- ghetto was liquidated. And each time we hid in that cellar. But my father managed to make it much-- safer in the sense that, first of all, you had food, and some bread, and some whatever.

12:00:34

He always made sure there was water there. And he made the door-- camouflaged it much more so that they wouldn't find us. And we-- we, every time there was an action, we-- we survived in our cellar.

12:00:46

But it was a horrendous time. Because between actions we had no idea when the next

action was gonna be. So, you-- you think, "Okay, what's-- what's tomorrow? Tomorrow's another death day. The day after is gonna be a day of death." And-- it was a indescribable-- way to live. From one, always in fear of death, every moment of the day and night, pretty rough.

(QUESTION NOT TRANSCRIBED)

LOLA:

12:01:36

Oh, yes, indeed. My father may-- started to look for a solution to this, I mean, to save our lives. Shortly aft-- I would say it was in the spring of-- early, very early spring of 1943-- 'cause I remember wearing-- lighter clothes, but I can't tell you the exact date at all. We had no calendars at that time (UNINTEL).

12:02:12

But-- the first thing-- I remember is-- he told me-- my mother that-- "A Polish peasant

is gonna come and take us to hide,"--
somewhere in-- in his-- surroundings, house--
woods, whatever it was. He's gonna come with
a wagon, and he's gonna pick us up. And he
said, "Us."

12:02:31

So, we said, "Well, you know, we waiting."
And then he comes, the peasant comes-- knocks
on the door, comes in. And my father says,
"Okay, you going, he's ready for you," and he
points to me and my mother, "and-- get
everything together and-- and-- and-- and go,
go with him."

12:02:52

And I'm saying, "What about you and my--
Michael (PH) my brother?" And he says,
"Well, we-- we-- we're not going now. He'll--
- we'll-- we'll go later." I said, "What do
mean later?" I said, "You're gonna die here.
You want us to be saved, and you're gonna

die?" I said, "I'm gonna die here with you, and I'm not going." So I started to scream and cry, and I-- and I-- and I simply refused to go. I said, "You have to kill me to go. I'm not gonna go without you."

12:03:21

So, I was at that point not even 12-- not even 13, 12, almost-- almost 13. And I said, "I'm not going without my father and my brother." And-- and I didn't. And my father was-- terribly angry. And-- the peasant left in a hurry because he didn't want to be present with all this commotion going on in case somebody's, some German patrolling is gonna hear it. And, so, he left.

12:03:62

And, so-- my father-- was desperate. He said, "Why did you," you know, "I found a place for you to hide. Now you-- you gonna-- ." Ah, but then he, you know, he never-- he

never gave up hope, and he started looking.

12:04:03

But the fortunate thing was that a day later we heard what had happened actually from other Jews. There as a wagon full of Jews on the-- that this peasant was going to hide supposedly. Took the money, (UNINTEL), and instead of hiding them, he took them to the local-- police, to the German-- police, and-- they were all shot. Obviously if you try to escape you're gonna be shot. So, that's how I saved-- my life the first time. And that was really lucky.

12:04:42

But my father didn't get uh-- give up. So he made contact with some of the families that-- were looking for hiding. Everybody was looking. That was just one way to save yourself. There were numerous other ways which I might tell you, but-- . And this

family-- they had a contact, they had a, they knew a peasant that would do it for money. But they didn't have enough money. So they had to, sort of, make a deal with somebody.

12:05:09

And my father-- somehow, I don't know how, got in touch with them. How he found out, he-- he just kept looking. And he said, "Okay, I'll give you X amount of money (UNINTEL) gold, watches, this, that. And I want-- my family saved." So, who's the family who's-- the peasant comes to pick us up.

12:05:33

And he tells again, me and my mother, to go in this wagon. And I refused again. I-- I said, "I'm going without you." I wasn't gonna be, I didn't wanna be alive without my father. And I knew if he stays behind, he's gonna, he's never gonna survived.

12:05:53

So I refused again, and went into a hysterical attack again, and screamed, and cried. And my mother-- said, "Look, you can't take her like this because she's gonna be screaming on the wagon," and the passengers knew that as well. "And then we're gonna be discovered and killed, so you-- you can't take her in this state." So he left without us. And-- he was communicating with these other families that, this other family of six members-- he was in touch with them.

12:06:21

And-- and-- and t-- and they were in the ghetto, and they told my father what happened that night when he left without us. Which was that-- local patrol was-- intercepted his wagon, searched it, didn't find anybody, so he was okay. But had you been, had we been

on that wagon we would have been taken and shot. So there was the second time.

(OFF-MIC CONVERSATION)

(QUESTION NOT TRANSCRIBED)

LOLA:

12:06:56

To what? To a labor-- yeah, yes, my father-- was taken to a labor camp in the town, was (UNINTEL) labor camp. Or many of the men from the ghetto were taken to the labor camp. And from there, they would-- they-- they worked on the railroads-- outside of the town.

12:07:15

And-- what my father had told us when we saw him-- was that he saw how they treated not only-- other Jews-- but the Russian prisoners, which-- completely against the Geneva-- you know-- con-- law of-- treating POWs. They tortured them, they starved them, they beat them.

12:07:41 They-- they were dying of-- of infection, of--
- of torture, of-- of cold-- of-- of
malnutrition. They didn't give them food.
And the same way they treated Jews who were
dying all over the tracks too, I mean,
because of the way they treated them. So--
was-- pretty rough.

12:08:01 The labor camp was not a-- a death camp, but
it was-- death camp-- in another sense.
Because you couldn't survive there very long.
And so-- after a few weeks of being there,
my father-- came down with typhoid, was
death-- deathly ill. And somehow my mother
and I managed to sneak into the camp with the
help of some-- people that were in charge of
the camp, some Jews that were sort of--
managing the camp.

12:08:37 And they let us go in and we-- we-- tried to bring out our father-- my father back to life. We were-- nur-- nursing him, giving him a lot of water and-- and-- and-- trying to save him. And so we got him to the point where he began to walk. And he got over this crisis as it's called. And-- and we left the camp.

12:08:59 But during that time when I was there nursing him, there was a sudden action, when the Germans came to round up-- labor-- Jews in the labor camp and-- I had to hide myself in one of the rooms surrounded by pillows and bedding where dead people had died. And-- stench and everything. And-- I-- I survived that too. And I went back to the ghetto.

(QUESTION NOT TRANSCRIBED)

LOLA:

12:09:38 How do you cope with that? You-- you-- you

know-- (OFF-MIC CONVERSATION)

(QUESTION NOT TRANSCRIBED)

LOLA:

12:09:58

I just remember being frightened all the time. Death-- that deadly frightened, and-- and-- and the constant, you know, stressed out, hopeless. I remember-- young-- youngsters like us-- my brother and myself and my cousins, some friends of his-- one day standing on the-- in the ghetto and saying, "Well this is it isn't it?"

12:10:29

The ghetto was about to be liquidated, we knew that we wouldn't be-- we wouldn't survive unless a miracle happened. And-- it was just horrible. I just remember my brother saying, "Well what-- maybe we can just live a little before we-- before we're dead."

12:10:51

And-- what he meant by that, maybe have some relationship with a girl or something. Maybe, I don't know what. But I was just standing, like, stupefied there. It's not-- I don't-- I can't describe this feeling of-- of fear and hopelessness. I-- I-- never-- never kne-- never thought we would survive. And-- the instinct of survival is very strong. But I-- I-- was-- I was convinced we were never gonna make it. If not from-- you know--

(QUESTION NOT TRANSCRIBED)

LOLA:

12:11:53

I-- when we were nursing him-- in the-- in the camp he said-- "Look, this (UNINTEL) gonna come again. And this time you have to go. I'm sick, I'm here, and I'm in the camp. Somehow I'll-- I'll survive. But you're-- you-- you just have no other choice. This is-- you know-- I mean--" I don't remember

his words, but-- he made it clear that this time if I didn't go-- I would-- I would be rounded up for the death camps and that would be it and-- that's not gonna help anybody, and whatever it was.

(QUESTION NOT TRANSCRIBED)

LOLA:

12:12:39

Yes. He always kept saying, you-- you know-- I'm a survivor. I'm gonna make it. I'm gonna-- I'm gonna survive, you-- you-- if you go, I promise you, I will survive as well. He-- he kept saying that always. But I didn't believe him that-- those other times. Because I thought he was lying to me, he just wanted to do it-- to save us. And of course I didn't believe him now either.

12:13:19

I don't know what-- you know-- I finally-- I guess I finally realized maybe for my mother's sake I have to do it, because I

wanted her to survive. Maybe I wanted to survive too. I finally realized that-- that I'm not gonna make it any other-- that this was it, this was-- there was no-- there was no other way. Because we knew that was the end.

12:13:30

So-- I finally agreed to go with this (UNINTEL) and-- it was me, my mother, myself, my grand-- my mo-- my father's mother, my grandmother, and his sister and hi-- her daughter, my cousin. Five of us agreed to go.

12:13:49

I mean, went on the-- with this person to be-- into hiding. And-- we knew what had happened. When they came to pick us up the first time, was the same peasant. We didn't know where we-- he was taking us, and neither did my father, because they didn't want to

disclose the-- whereabouts-- were a feeling that if he was tortured, he would tell-- tell them where we are, would tell the Germans where we are.

12:14:19

So-- we-- we-- we went on this-- got on this wagon, and-- at first I was like paralyzed. I had no idea what to do. And then-- I mean the instinct of survival, I guess, starts working and my cousin and I, remembering what had happened if they had intercepted that wagon and-- this was of course in the middle of the evening. Of course was, like, you know, after dinner time. We said, you know, we were just saying, "How can we-- how can we-- sort of-- minimize the chance of being-- intercepted."

12:15:05

And he said, "You know what? The best thing is, let's make some noise." Let's-- let's

not just make them-- search the wagon because there's a quiet wagon passing by, let's start singing. And-- maybe they would say-- feel that there are some-- Ukrainian girls going from some birthday party or something-- going home.

12:15:24

And so we started singing, it was the best idea we ever had. I mean, it's amazing how you think of things. And we started singing Ukrainian songs, not Polish, but Ukrainian because Ukrainians were-- the-- the people that the Germans used to help them kill Jews. So they would not search a Ukrainian wagon.

12:15:43

And so-- we sang this-- we sang and sang until we were in the woods. Until we out-- outside of the town-- limits so to speak. And then of course once we were in the woods,

we were quiet. And we were not intercepted.

(QUESTION NOT TRANSCRIBED)

LOLA:

12:16:13

Yes, yes, we-- we-- we-- we came into this little-- peasant's house, a very primitive, poor-- hu-- a hut at the end of the woods, sort of a clearing. We saw the woods right in back of this house. And then there was some, like, even though it was evening, we saw some pasture on one side and woods on the other side. And came into his-- I don't know-- you think he had only two rooms or-- was a kitchen we came into.

12:16:42

And he said, "Okay-- you're gonna go into this bunker that we--" that was built by him and this other family. And-- I had no idea what that was. And then he told us, you know, we're gonna quietly get outside, quickly get into this bunker. Led us to-- a

chicken coop, it was called. It was a little wooden-- an-- sort of a hut where the chickens were laying eggs. And-- at-- a door opened, you opened the door and-- chickens started flying around all over.

12:17:29

And-- they were scared of us, so they went into the back of this-- coop. And then he opened up a trap door which-- is what they used to excavate-- a hole in the ground about 10 to 13 feet underground, under the chicken coop. There was a-- and he says, "Okay just--
- " Was dark, just-- clay-- clay all around, sort of clay earth, and a ladder. And-- wooden ladder. He says, "Just go down that ladder, and that's where you're gonna be." And we came down, we saw the six other people, this family.

12:18:05

Never-- I actually didn't know them. My

brother knew-- one of the-- brother-- knew one of the sons of that family because of school. But I didn't know any of them. And-- my brother wasn't with me, however. So we went in there.

12:18:24

And so what it was was an excavated-- hole in the ground which could have collapsed, but never did because of the fortunate thing that it was a lot of clay in the ground. I think was not sandy-- soil, but clay soil. Otherwise it would have been-- probably would have collapsed.

12:18:47

And-- it was just this-- the earth all around us, and then a-- the-- some wooden boards-- like whatever it was, pine, whatever, sort of yellowish wooden boards. But first it was just clay, and then some boards in the back where you would-- that just was our common

bed, where everybody would sleep on these boards.

12:19:12

And-- then I-- I started looking around and I-- I saw two holes, which were-- dug to-- to-- allow oxygen to come in. So there were these two holes. I don't know how they never got-- collapsed, or-- and-- he says, "Don't worry, on the top the holes are camouflaged, there are leaves on the top so that the-- when the German patrols come around or they-- anybody-- you know-- partisans, or whoever else, they won't notice them."

12:19:36

But, anyway, that was the oxygen for us. And so I'm looking around for where to go to-- to pee, and to do whatever else we have to do and-- they showed us-- behind this-- ladder, there was a bucket-- tin-- tin-- very large tin-- bucket.

12:20:12 And on top of it-- was a-- piece of wood with a hole. So that was the toilet. And there was a sheet hanging there so when you had to go-- of course there was no-- no privacy really. But-- I mean, there was no way to prevent the stench from reaching you because we were right below that. I mean, this was a little up-- so maybe the stench had more of a tendency to rise-- because warm air rises, but-- it was pretty-- pretty bad. So that's where we-- where we-- spent nine months.

(QUESTION NOT TRANSCRIBED)

LOLA:

12:20:53 No.

(OFF-MIC CONVERSATION)

(QUESTION NOT TRANSCRIBED)

LOLA:

12:30:50 No, there was not-- not enough food by any stretch of the imagination. I'll tell you

what the food was. It was soup twice a day with some peasant bread. And the soup was--

(OFF-MIC CONVERSATION)

(QUESTION NOT TRANSCRIBED)

LOLA:

12:31:14

Well, I remember at first soup-- some kind of-- vegetable soup, but mostly potatoes, but some vegetables, which was good because you-- at least there was something to-- to-- for your nutritional value. And some black-- dark bread, peasant bread. But as the nine months that we spent there continued, that food became more and more meager.

12:31:20

So the vegetables became thinner and thinner, the soup became thinner and thinner until towards the end there was nothing but potatoes. And the potatoes must have a-- a good value-- nutritional value, because I don't-- I don't know how we would have-- s--

survived.

12:31:56

And the black, the dark bread was getting smaller and smaller until that disappeared practically. So the-- the amount of bread we're getting was-- was becoming less and less because the peasant claim he just didn't have the money to do that, to give us more food than that. So towards the end it was-- almost like water, or just potato water with a few potatoes floating around.

(QUESTION NOT TRANSCRIBED)

LOLA:

12:32:23

Twice.

(QUESTION NOT TRANSCRIBED)

LOLA:

12:32:29

But we-- excuse me, we kept some of the bread so we would have a little bit in-between. But anyway, that was-- that was the diet. And-- what I have to tell you about the diet

was, not the diet per se, but what happened to my mother. My mother wanted to-- to make sure that we don't die of disease and starvation. So she wanted to give all the food to me and my brother.

12:33:01

We-- she knew we were younger, we needed food more, and she starved herself to death almost. Now, I didn't take any of the food.

I would not accept it. But my brother was starving so much, he took-- he took food from her. And she became more and more emaciated as time went on. And-- by the time we left the bunker, she was-- not able to walk.

(QUESTION NOT TRANSCRIBED)

LOLA:

12:33:30

I was emaciated, but I was able to walk. I was able to walk. We were all able to walk except my grandmother and my mother.

(QUESTION NOT TRANSCRIBED)

LOLA:

12:33:48 Well, the ghetto was liquidated-- right after we left. But we got news about-- the camp where my father was, and my brother was. My brother and father were in the labor camp. And-- he was-- had been recovering from typhoid, as I told you, and-- we had no idea what was happening to them.

12:34:24 But-- a few weeks after we entered the bunker, peasant came down the ladder one day and gave us this horrible news which was that my father-- and brother-- probably are d-- he didn't say they were dead, we knew they-- that they would have to be, he said the camp was liquidated. There's no one left, all the Jews-- remaining Jews in the camp that were still alive were taken to the town grave and shot.

12:34:50 And-- my father was there, my brother, my uncle, my cousin's father-- my cousin who was with me in the bunker, her father, and another-- sister-in-law of my-- of my father, his brother's wife was there. His fa-- brother had died before. And we didn't know how many other members of our family were there. We-- we-- we knew that they at least had to be there.

12:35:10 So of course that was a time of lament and torture and-- and-- my mother practically passed out, probably did pass out-- knowing that my father had died, was killed. And-- and I was-- crying for hours and hours. And-- - was just horrible. But-- I'm not sure how many days or maybe a week or two passed-- after that.

12:35:55 I mean, all these memories I've repressed.

Although, that I should have remembered because of what happened, what I'll tell you happened. One evening-- as I said, they might have been no more than two or three weeks after this news was given to us, this horrible news.

12:36:14

The trap door opens up in that chicken coop, and down the ladder comes my father and my brother. Well-- I-- I thought I was seeing things, I mean, I thought it was some miracle, I-- how did you arise from the dead?

I mean, I thought he-- he left the grave, he was buried alive and left the grave, that's what I thought-- for one moment. And-- actually virtually that's what happened. Because what he told us happened was-- I'll tell you how he found us in a moment.

12:36:45

But I said, "How did you make it? The camp

was liquidated, everybody was shot, how are you-- how are you here?" I mean-- so he told us the story and he said-- told us the following story. They were taken to the town-- outskirts of the town, and-- and they were asked to dig their own graves. So there were-- they were digging their graves, and then they were asked to stand in front of these graves and they were about to be shot.

12:37:17

And we had heard before that some people-- in these-- killings would be buried alive because if they weren't shot by the gun they would still fall, and wounded, they would fall into the grave and be buried there. So-- what happened was my father was standing in front of his own grave, and next to him my cousin's father, his father-in-law-- his brother-in-law. And not too far away was his sister-in-law.

- 12:37:47 And this-- S.S. man was running-- across these graves and making sure everybody was rounded up. And then he has an announcement. He made an announcement, and the announcement was that-- all of the Jews who were-- which of course could have been only a few-- tailors, barbers, and shoemakers should step aside and walk across to-- to the other side of the road.
- 12:38:11 So apparently the Germans had decided they were not going to liquidate the camp quite yet, they were gonna do some other things there, I have no idea.
- 12:38:26 Maybe they were gonna put Russian prisoners there, or God knows what. And they wanted some-- some-- the-- artisans around to make more boots for them and shave them and so

forth, make clothing. So my father, being none of these things-- realized that this was opportunity to save himself. And he never lost his cool, he never lost his-- as I said, he was always absolutely-- intent on saving his family and himself, and focused and-- it was unbelievable.

12:39:01

So he-- raises his hand sort of-- and says, "I'm a-- I'm the barber-- I'm sorry, the baker." And he did actually bake bread in the camp. So-- he didn't, however, wait for the assessment to say, "Yes, you can go across or not."

12:39:22

He was smart enough to know that the minute the assessment lea-- whether he says yes or no, he should just walk across. Because the-- he could have been one of the other artisans, how would he know? And he did

exactly that. But before he left the gravesite, he-- started to tug on his brother-in-law's back to say, like, come with me.

12:39:44

Just cross the road with me. And-- his brother-in-law was much taller than he, and quite a heavy man even in those days. But of course not as heavy as he was before, but still big man. And he was like stone to the ground, completely incapable of moving. He was in such a state of fear that he couldn't move to save his life.

12:40:05

And he was-- father went across by himself, and then saw-- saw all the other Jews shot in front of him, and fall into the grave right in front of him. And-- he was taken back to the camp. Then he found my brother who-- when they were rounding up all the Jews to be

taken to the graves, he hid in the camp somewhere in one of these-- rooms that he found, hoping to escape at night. But he saw my father brought in, and he-- he saw the-- the Germans come back, and he was looking-- I guess he saw my father, and he immediately joined him.

12:40:47

Then my father told him that-- they were going to leave either that night or the next night-- try and-- and leave a-- at night underneath the wires, which were not electrified, luckily. And try and find us and-- save ourselves with-- with us. So that's what they did. They-- they left the camp in the-- in the evening, and my brother was astonished because he said, "Where are we going?"

12:41:18

Where-- you don't even know where mother and-

- and Lola are, I mean, you don't know where they are, how are you gonna find them?" He says, "Don't worry, I will find them." And he told them that-- this peasant inadvertently gave him some hints as to where our whereabouts were. And-- somehow he got this information from the peasant, or how he managed to give-- get the peasant to say these things, but he was very clever. And the peasant told him that-- the house we were gonna hide in was just like a little ti-- house, the-- the end of the woods.

12:41:55

And not too far were three cousins of this peasant. And there were-- there were three-- three houses. And-- then there was this-- other little house at the end of the woods. And my brother said to him, "So what? I mean, the woods are very big. How are you gonna find these?" He said, "Look, I-- I've-

- I have been roaming in these woods when I was about-- 20--" He was smuggling liquor for his mother's-- restaurant-- bar. Buying liquor from peasants.

12:42:28

And he had to go through these woods illegally and smug-- and so he knew the woods backwards and forwards. And he said, "I bet you I'll find them." And-- they were marching through the woods, and father comes to this clearing, and then this little house, and he says-- and he looks around and he sees these other three houses not too far. And he says, "Look, this is it, that's where they are." So he-- they walk into the house, this peasant's house.

12:43:01

And my father used the method that he thought would work best which is not to ask him are we there, he just said, "I know my wife and

my daughter are here, I know you're hiding them, let us join them." And the peasant, of course, was denying it. And he was afraid that-- any kind of commotion-- there were always partisans around, there were always patrols, there were also Jews hiding in the woods who would come begging for-- for bread in the middle of the night.

12:43:32

He says-- and he was afraid that if the other Jews came to beg for bread and they saw my father they would know that they-- that he's hiding Jews, and they could blackmail him and say, "Look, if you don't hide us, we'll get--" I mean, he was afraid. And he was right to be afraid. So he wanted to get them out there-- there in the worst way.

12:43:44

And he started to give them bread and says, "Get out, go to the woods, there are other

Jews in the woods. They come here for bread, I'll give you bread, get out and go and join them."

12:43:58

And my father refused. And my brother at that point had this brilliant idea, he was a thinker like my father. And then panic-- fortunately. He saw this-- interesting sight, I mean, unbelievable sight. The peasant's wife, and his little daughter about 10 years old were sitting on the floor, and there was a little table, and she was washing her hair.

12:44:25

And-- and of course they were full of lice, the hair was full of lice, and she was killing these lice, very diligently, and listening to this other-- talk between her husband and my father. And didn't say a word. Did not say one word.

12:44:45

So my brother just fell down, and fell--
kneeled in front of her, and grabbed her--
her legs and said, "Look, this is your
daughter, you love her, imagine you're
separated from her and you want to join her,
and they don't let you, and you would-- if
you don't join her, you would never see her
again."

(BREAK IN TAPE)

LOLA:

12:45:05

(IN PROGRESS) how would you feel about-- how
would you feel if somebody did that to you?
And she looked at him and started crying.
Imagining what it would be like and said to
her husband "let them in." They kn-- you
know, they here, let them in.

12:45:22

And that's when my father and brother joined
us. So obviously it was an incredible--

reunion. But it was short lived and-- for the moment. Because not too long after they walked in, we were crying from joy and-- and then we started choking.

12:45:43

And I'll never forget it because when you feel you're gonna choke to death, it's-- it's-- it's bad as-- as-- as being killed by the Germans. It was just another way of being killed. We were choking. There was not enough oxygen. Two more people joining us in this little cave in the ground and no-- no-- not enough oxygen to breathe.

12:45:55

So we quickly opened up the trap door even though it was dangerous for us to go outside.

And we rushed out into the night and-- of course, one of us-- the-- this other family daughter went in to tell the pheasant that we're choking to death.

12:46:22 And-- what can be done? They have to dig another part of the-- you know, dig up some more ground. Make another hole. And-- s-- and another vent to the outside for oxygen. So that night was the last night I saw-- I-- I was on the-- on the-- on the outside world outside of this-- this hole in the ground, or grave in the ground.

12:46:42 'Cause we were told to go to the barn where the cows were. Sit there until the pheasant and the men of the two families dug up ground-- dug out this other part of the grave. This-- shelter, and-- and made a hole in the ground. And-- then, of course we had to go back there before daylight.

12:47:01 And I don't know how they did it in such a hurry without collapsing the whole-- the

whole thing. It was incredible. And we were
s-- there sitting there-- it was summer time.

And we were shivering from-- from fear in
the dawn. And then we went down. And that's
where we spent the rest of the nine months.

(OFF-MIC CONVERSATION)

(QUESTION NOT TRANSCRIBED)

LOLA:

12:49:07

Just the bunker.

(QUESTION NOT TRANSCRIBED)

LOLA:

12:49:11

Oh, the living grave, the living grave, yes.

(QUESTION NOT TRANSCRIBED)

LOLA:

12:49:19

Yes, well he gave them-- mostly gold--
watches-- rings-- mainly watches, rings,
bracelets-- they-- they didn't have money.
Just gold.

(QUESTION NOT TRANSCRIBED)

LOLA:

12:49:42

Well-- my father's two sisters-- and a-- a niece, in fact this cou-- cousin's sister who was with me in the bunker-- took the root that a number of Jews took. Very few, but that was one of the ways they thought they could survive. Which was to-- to have false papers made that they were Gentiles-- Christians go to bigger town in this case, the capital of Galitia, Wolfe (PH) where they would not be recognized because they didn't live there.

12:50:16

Bigger-- much bigger city, hundreds of thousands of people. And-- they had these papers made and left. For they went to Wolfe, and then-- there was a contact that they had, of course, so a few months after they went, this was not a-- the-- the winter of 42, 43-- before we wen-- before the ghetto

was liquidated. The-- the contact had a contact in our town and we were told the unfortunate news that somebody recognized him.

12:50:53

Some neighbor-- recognized him. It was amazing-- they were walking on the street or something and gave them up to the Gestapo and they were killed. And you don't know how they died. Whether they were taken to a death camp or-- most likely taken to a concentration camp.

12:51:07

And-- the daughter of the-- one of the sisters, the little girl three who cried in the-- in their cellar and almost gave us away. And was given urine to drink before my aunt left to-- to hide-- I mean to pass as a Gentile, she gave this little daughter away for adoption to a foster family-- foster--

Catholic foster family in-- near Warsaw.

12:51:33

And-- they-- they came for her and she-- she knew she may never see her again. And-- my-- my cousin-- survived. She-- is now in Israel. A number of cousins of mine, three of them specifically-- went-- escaped the ghetto, went to the woods without their having-- they didn't have any money to-- to find a pheasant. They had no contacts.

12:52:02

So a few Jews did that. A number of Jews. I don't know, there were maybe 50? Who just went in the woods, dug their-- their-- their graves there-- th-- like we did in the pheasant's house. They just-- I don't know what they ate. They be-- the food from the pheasant at night? Ate leaves? God knows what they did.

12:52:17 And they-- they were three of them were in the woods-- two-- male cousins and one girl cousin who was a year older than I. And-- the two m-- male cousins one 15 and one 10 surviv-- and one 17 and one 10 survived. And the girl froze to death.

12:52:42 Just froze-- it was winter. And they had very little clothing. And from malnutrition I mean she just froze to death on the road there. So that's what we-- what I can tell you. Now-- my father's brother survived in hiding like we did. The pheasant hid him. And he died in Israel after the war.

12:53:02 And my mother's whole family perished in Lindbergh (PH). None of them, two sisters, two brothers, parents and-- and-- and sister-in-law and-- and-- nephew all perished. And we don't know how they died, but obviously

nothing good could of-- happened. So-- these are some of the ways in which our-- our family members died and survived.

(OFF-MIC CONVERSATION)

(QUESTION NOT TRANSCRIBED)

LOLA:

12:57:07

That was quite incredible actually because one morning-- we hear shooting. And sounded like artillery fire. But I-- I didn't know. My father said artillery fire and I said "what?" And-- that-- shortly after that the pheasant comes down and says the Partisans are fighting with the-- Germans. They discovered them, they're fighting with them.

12:57:32

They were numerous Partisans in the woods and the Germans would patrol the woods. And sometimes they would start a fight. So that would mean-- you know, some rifle sounds. My father said "look-- are you telling me the

truth these are not Partisans. Because this is artillery fire."

12:57:46 "This sou-- looks to me like-- like there's-- there's something much more major going on here. And I think it's the front. I think the Russians are here to liberate us." And he-- he didn't-- he said "no, no." But my father didn't believe him.

12:57:59 And he said to all of us "if we don't leave here, we're gonna be buried alive. Because the bunker's gonna collapse during this artillery fire." I mean how is this-- this bunker going to-- to remain without collapsing? We'll just be buried alive.

12:58:20 And she said "get everything you have on, we're leaving immediately." It was a sunny morning. And we said to the pheasant "we're

not staying." Now he was afraid that he would be-- if-- if the Germans were not quite gone yet. And they were discovered he was hiding Jews, he would be killed. Or certainly put-- in-- in taken to jail.

12:58:41

And so he didn't wanna disclose to us what was really happening. But my father was as always on the alert. He said "we're leaving here." We gathered whatever we had. We carried my mother out of there. And I'll never forget a sunny winter morning with snow on the ground. Crisp under my feet.

12:59:05

I didn't have winter shoes or anything. I had summer shoes. And the light first time in nine months that I saw daylight. Was an incredible thing. And we were looking. And we didn't know where to go. We didn't know what to do.

12:59:20

And my father again-- and some of the other family members said, "We gotta go this way. That's the road and we're gonna head this way. That's the road to the village." So we-- we start moving. We go-- in the meantime my-- grandmother collapsed. And my father had to take her to one of these hous-- tree houses.

12:59:43

That-- these were the cousins of the guy was hiding us. He took her there and said, "Please keep her there until her-- her daughter comes to pick her up." And they knew that the Russians were here and the Germans were gonna leave. But of course that was a very difficult situation because the Germans were constantly in many of these backals (PH).

13:00:04

They were re-- the-- the Russians would retreat, the Germans would come back and kill off any Jew that-- that was alive that-- that thought they were safe. So we knew we couldn't stay in the village. We knew we had to leave. So we started to move-- towards where we heard this-- the shooting. 'Cause we figured that's where the Russians were. And we somehow had to go there in order to survive.

13:00:24

So we-- all of a sudden we are in the middle of the front. And Father said "run, run." And I'm running and there are bullets left and right to me. And I remember thinking, "my God, I survived Hitler. I'm gonna be killed by bullets at this time by a bullet."

Or-- and-- as I'm running-- and I-- we-- we all ended up in the-- middle of the front but in trenches of the Russian soldiers.

- 13:00:53 Lucky we not the German trenches which were probably not far away. And-- I remember looking at these Russian soldiers like they were my saviors. They are-- they saved me. And they did, of course. And I saw-- we were starved. I saw them eating food from American cans and-- and I was going like grab-- trying to grab some food. They gave us a-- a few things to eat.
- 13:01:14 And they said, "You gotta leave. This is the front." So they somehow managed to get a truck that was going to go back with some supplies-- to bring some supplies to them. Got a hold of a truck and told the driver.
- 13:01:34 And they-- they looked at my mother and they said, "Poor babaska (PH)." She looked 90, she was 42-- 42. Born in 1902, so she was

42. And she looked 90. Completely grey, emaciated. She says, "Take them. Take them." They took pity on her. And of course, us, they knew we were Jews who survived.

13:01:54

And-- they took us on this truck in back of the front and then into the-- U-- Ukrainian part of Russia. Where we stayed for about six months. And then went back to-- Poland. So that was liberation.

(QUESTION NOT TRANSCRIBED)

LOLA:

13:02:18

Well I never completed any-- eighth grade. But-- I-- I didn't have formal schooling till I came to the United States. We-- we went from-- Russia where-- Ukrainian part of Russia where we-- survived by my father bartering-- jacket that he got from the Russian soldiers for-- for-- li-- vodka--

that he got from the-- the Russian peasant.
And managed to get some-- food for us from
the pheasant that way.

13:02:52

And-- then we-- finally-- when the Russians
liberated the rest of po-- Poland-- the
eastern part of Poland. And the-- the
capital of Galitia, which was Wolfe. We went
to Wolfe by-- train. And then-- we stayed in
Wolfe-- for-- a few months. Maybe actually a
half-- a half yea-- closer to a half a year,
yes. Alm-- no almost a year.

13:03:24

And then went to-- after the war was-- was
over in 1945 we went to the western part of
Poland to a town called Boyton (PH), which is
where we thought we would get in touch with
our family in the United States and see if we
could get-- finally get out of Poland. And
buy us-- visa from them come to the United

States. Or if he couldn't do that, go to Palestine, go to Israel.

13:03:46

So from-- I remember going to the school in Boyton, and say-- ask them "I need to make up five years of school." Well-- at that point it was-- three years.

13:04:12

But eventually it turned out to be five. I need to make up all these years of schooling. What-- what do I read? What do I do? They gave me some books-- algebra I remember. And Latin I-- I hadn't started either one of those. I was not anywhere near that grade.

13:04:29

I looked at them. I don't know how much of that I could do. Then we moved from there, illegally cross the Czech border and went to Vienna. And in Vienna we stayed for about one year. In Vienna, my mother got a tutor

for me. And he taught me English, math and Latin and Austrian history, which is the four subjects I needed to know in order to pass an oral-- an written exam. Mostly oral. In (UNINTEL) which is the equivalent of the high school.

13:05:07

And-- I was an auditor in the (UNINTEL). I didn't know enough German to be a regular student. But I-- I listened. I sat and listened-- during a period about six months. And then-- he-- arranged for me to take an exam. And so I passed the eighth grade in Austria. Both oral, written.

13:05:32

And so I had this piece of paper that I had finished eighth grade. So when I came to the United States in the-- February of '47 and registered at Yonkers High School in-- in April of 1947, they accepted me into the

freshman year, which was ninth grade. And-- then I graduated in the-- '49, two years later.

(QUESTION NOT TRANSCRIBED)

LOLA:

13:06:05 Yes, it was-- I don't remember the day, but it was-- end of March of 1944.

(QUESTION NOT TRANSCRIBED)

LOLA:

13:06:22 Oh yes, yes. In 1945, May 1945-- I was in our apartment in Lynnbergh (PH). And across from our building where stationed many Russian soldiers. It was a hospital but it was converted to a-- a-- part of it was converted for a-- you know, to a-- a hou-- a station for Russian soldiers. For men-- many number of them. Both women and men. And I all of a sudden, that I will never forget. I hear-- tremendous amount of noise, and cheering and crying and cheering.

13:07:13

And I walk out, we had a little balcony in that apartment. I walk out on the balcony and all the Russian soldiers are running in the streets and raising banners, "The war is over, the war is over." In Russian, but I knew enough Russian of course having been in - the Ukrainian part of Russia for almost a year.

13:07:32

I knew enough of Russian-- I knew Russian very well as a matter of fact. I learned to speak and-- and so forth. And-- it was just incredible. I-- I-- I was-- they were waving to me. I was waving to them. I went downstairs. We were kissing each other and hugging each other. And-- that was-- that was the-- end of the war.

(QUESTION NOT TRANSCRIBED)

LOLA:

13:08:00 Oh, yes in-- February of 1947 it was--
precisely the 25th of February. That date I
do remember. Twenty fifth of February, 1947
we-- landed on American soil. We were told
you're gonna see-- the Statue of Liberty.
And-- I didn't know enough-- American history
to know the significance of it.

13:08:25 But I knew from looking at it what it meant.
And I saw this beautiful Hudson River. And--
- my family, and father's family was there to
greet us. And-- I-- I realize this would be
the beginning of a new life. Of the first--
re-- civilized-- normal life that I would be
leading.

13:08:49 'Cause up to that point, there was no-- there
was schooling, there was no-- I mean in
Vienna our apartment-- we didn't have an
apartment, we had one room. A tiny room for

the four of us. And-- it was just an incredible moment-- it was-- just something I'll never forget.

(QUESTION NOT TRANSCRIBED)

LOLA:

13:09:19 I didn't get an M.A. I went straight PHd. I took some M.A. courses. But in 1963, I enrolled in a PHd program of City University of New York. And the-- there were four campuses, Brooklyn College, Queens-- Hunter and Leihman (PH). And I-- en-- enrolled in-- the-- in the Hunter College-- campus.

13:09:41 And-- that was not an easy thing. I had a son who was six years old-- almost seven, but-- six when I enrolled. And-- I didn't have money. I needed a scholarship. Applied for a national defense-- scholarship. I was the second choice, not the first. Because I was married, I had a child.

- 13:10:13 So a younger man who had equally good grades as I had. A man, with no commitments of family got the scholarship. I didn't get it. They wanted to make sure that I get in, so the school arranged for me to get the Sloan-- from Sloane Kettering Foundation-- scholarship that the-- which is the Sloane Kettering now, a full tuition scholarship. And that's how I started the PHd program.
- 13:10:32 And-- I- decided to be-- a-- majoring to be-- to make my major genetics. Because I took a course with my-- what-- the geneticist-- Earlwin Hurschowitz (PH) who was-- who had written books.
- 13:11:02 And was the-- head of the laboratory of a nobel laureate a Herman H. Muller (PH) an internation-- I mean he-- Muller was of

course known-- known throughout the world. And so was my mentor because he had written books and had many articles that were published.

13:11:22

So I took one course with him, fell in love with genetics, and-- became a-- a genetics major. And-- that was-- the basis of my career. I did my-- graduated-- in-- 1968. And-- did my post doctoral research work-- also at Hunter College with-- Richter Runder (PH) who came from-- Columbia University from a very famous lab of Chargov (PH).

13:11:51

Who was a bad chemist who actually-- had the-- some of the most important data that Waltso (PH) and Creig (PH) used for their double Helix discovery. And so-- I-- I did my first post at there. And I did my second post op. with Dr. Charbow (PH) at Columbia University-

- Physicians-- College of Physicians and Surgeon.

13:12:11

And then I-- became a-- went back to Hunter College as a lecturer for one year. And-- then became a full time faculty member at-- Mercy College in Dobbs Ferry where I spent 15 years. And in the mean time, because they had no research facility I affiliated myself with New York Medical College where I did research.

13:12:34

So I had like two jobs. I did research at Medic-- New York Medical College and-- publications from there. And I taught at Mercy College. Eventually I got my own grant from-- in the mean time I had grants from Annastaff (PH) and NIH and then I got-- bigger grant from NIH. And became a full time member of the faculty of New York

Medical College.

13:12:57

My pro-- biology partner in 1989 I retired in 1980-- the end of 95 and I still teach at the Graduate School of Health Science at the Medical College now.

(OFF-MIC CONVERSATION)

(QUESTION NOT TRANSCRIBED)

LOLA:

13:14:06

Well I-- I have 22-- (UNINTEL) publications and many other abstracts from-- attending conferences. But 22 publications that are-- referred and-- I would get a-- I th-- I think one of the more important ones is-- been published in-- JBC the Journal Biological Chemistry. It was researched-- I did it at New York Medical College on-- a-- very well known gene called P53.

13:14:39

Which is a-- gene who's-- which is mutated.

That is when it's not normal and it's mutated it-- causes cancer. So it's present in about 50 percent of all cancers-- sporadic cancers.

There's also hereditary cancer that's due to P53 malfunction.

13:15:02

It's one of the most critical genes in the pathway of can-- of carcinog-- of cancer formation or malignancy. And-- I have another publication-- on that gene as well. But I think that one is-- and the rest of them are mostly in gestopula (PH) genetics. Which is what-- I most of my career was in. And-- of course I started with just (UNINTEL) that was my thesis organism. And I continued with gestopula.

13:15:29

But-- in-- my post doctoral research-- at Hunter College from which I have three publications was in bacterial genetics,

myprobular genetics (PH). And actually I had three-- three pretty good papers from there.

I actually di-- made some-- fairly interesting discovery on a-- gene expression-- in bacterial systems.

13:15:51

And-- rather novel discovery which was later confirmed by other people. So-- my interests was-- my interest in research was on gene regulation and on-- in mutagenesis (PH) which means we are patients of genes.

(QUESTION NOT TRANSCRIBED)

LOLA:

13:16:29

No, no, I never dreamed that. I-- always had a drive to do things, but I-- I never-- never knew that things would turn out this way.

And frankly-- sadly I must tell you that-- I feel that I never really-- accomplished what I could have. And that the war really-- in

my Holocaust experience was responsible for that.

13:17:06

Not-- me indirectly-- I-- I-- it's hard to say how-- I feel that I lost time-- during the war. I could-- I could never make up somehow. But-- you know, I graduated later than every-- than the average student. I was 19, somehow-- well partly was due to my-- the fact that I wanted to marry my husband.

13:17:32

I couldn't have-- regularly-- you know, I had to go to school at night. It took me much longer to graduate the undergraduate school.

And then I was tied down to New York because of his profession as a CPA. And-- I did want a family. So you can't have everything in life I guess.

13:17:53

But-- I don't-- I think one of the problems I

have-- now coping with-- problems, you know-- difficulty pro-- coping with things is because I feel that I suffered so much that I shouldn't be suffering anymore. So for-- a major (CRYING) problem arises, even minor problems, I can't really cope with it very well.

13:18:24

'Cause I feel-- so wounded that I-- I shouldn't be wounded anymore. (UNINTEL) it's so difficult. Just feel that-- I shouldn't be suffering anymore after what I went through. You know? But-- I have to carry on. And next week after we-- for the first time in my life I'm gonna seek therapy.

13:18:56

I-- all these years been told by people go to therapy maybe to help you. My husband has told me many, many times "you need-- you need help." Because I-- I take things so-- just

react to things with such-- such difficulty.

And-- I-- I think finally maybe I'll seek some therapy next week.

(OFF-MIC CONVERSATION)

LOLA:

13:20:31 Yes, we were married-- more than 51 years ago in the 21st of February of 1951. And our son was born in November 6th of '56, 1956. And-- my family-- spent-- you know, my son and his children, my grandchildren are just the most precious things to me.

13:20:58 And-- when I think of suicide or something I always think that I can't leave-- not so much my husband, I find it strangely enough, but my son. I-- I don't ever want him to feel that-- I didn't want to live to see him and his-- and his children grow up.

13:21:20 So-- but-- it's what I'm doing with-- I have

all these other volunteer activities, politics and tutoring mentally ill children and (UNINTEL) and so forth. But it's-- nothing as-- as gratifying as-- as-- this-- what I'm doing for the (UNINTEL) for the Holocaust. Letting people know how-- how-- how-- you know, what the past was and how to make sure it doesn't happen again. How to-- be very-- activist the way I've been all my life. In spite of my problems, I've been fighting, fighting for-- for a better world.

(QUESTION NOT TRANSCRIBED)

LOLA:

13:22:37 My message-- would be that what everyone of us must do--

(OFF-MIC CONVERSATION)

(QUESTION NOT TRANSCRIBED)

LOLA:

13:22:57 I've been saying it to all the schools I've been going to. I think that the only-- the

only thing one has to realize is one can't be just passive and-- apathy-- apathetic or even-- standing by. One has to be-- very, very alert and diligent and active. And make sure-- make sure that-- whatever you can do to-- to-- to avoid any internal, external problems you should do.

13:23:31

You-- you have to be very active participating citizen. You've gotta be-- informed, very well informed. You have to be constantly in touch with your congressman or-- or-- or senators or whatever to do-- everything you can to make sure that your government is functioning properly. And that-- that you do your part in-- in preventing disasters in the future.

13:23:56

Not just-- genocide, but-- every-- every possible disaster. I mean if-- if there's

an unjustified war, like the war in Vietnam, I opposed that. Because that was unnecessary. That was horrible. But you also have to make sure that-- that if there's-- danger in the world, like Saddam Hussein, that something is done about him.

13:24:19

I mean, I'm-- I-- I'm-- I have great conflicts about this because-- at heart I'm a pacifist. I am as a-- as a person very aware of nuclear-- power and-- of course I was a radiation biologist, I-- I'm very much opposed to nu-- to the bombs that were dropped on Japan. We are-- I do-- I think that was wrong.

13:24:36

But on the other hand, I-- I'm told that there would of been tremendous lost of life. But I don't see ever any use of nuclear power, ever. And I think you will have-- we

have to make sure that our government does not proliferate nuclear weapons the way they-- they're training to do now, and disregard treaties and-- w-- with Russia and so forth.

13:25:00

I-- I think we are sometimes our own-- our own worse enemy. Not realize what we can-- what-- what we're getting ourselves into. So to do everything in your power to make sure that the-- that our government is-- is responsible as it should be.

(QUESTION NOT TRANSCRIBED)

LOLA:

13:25:17

Not much. Not very much. I-- I have to hope in order to live. But-- I'm-- I'm very skeptical about-- the future. Really. I-- I-- I-- I just-- it's ironical that-- as a geneticist it makes it even harder for me because I am a great believer, of course I know evolution. And yet I feel that man's--

evolution has been sort of freaky.

13:25:45 That man evolved-- this-- this-- this amazing tool the brain to-- all-- to-- to-- to accomplish all the things that we've seen the progress and technology and science. And yet this other part of man which is the destructive, aggressive part has-- has not vanished.

13:26:09 And so the-- I call it a-- an evolutionary freak. We are sometimes evolutionary-- somehow, not sometimes-- evolutionary freaks in that one-- part of our-- biological system is functioning in an extremely-- amazing way, and the other part is somehow not caught up with it.

13:26:34 And that's the problem. And-- so-- combined with my experiences this knowledge of-- of--

biology is making things even worse for me. Because I can't have much hope. Evolution is a very slow process. I know that. So it's gonna take a long time if ever before our emotional-- self-- somehow evolves into something different.

(QUESTION NOT TRANSCRIBED)

LOLA:

13:27:08

My family. My family. My son and his-- and his accomplishments. My-- my husband, of course, his integrity. He's an accountant who would never do what-- what-- Anderson did in this horrible-- scandal. He is the most ethical person on earth.

13:27:35

And my son who is brilliant and devoted to poor people has helped this poor people all his life. Has fought for immigration rights. First started with mental illness-- def-- striving for-- better conditions for mentally

ill, then immigration. Now he's writing and involved in-- domestic violence.

13:27:58

His wife, my dear-- daughter-in-law is the same. Very accomplished lawyer for disabilities. Has fought for-- improved conditions for mentally-- ill children and disabled children in Florida. And she's continuing that work now. And-- my wonderful granddaughters. Who are-- look like they're gonna be just their parents and that.

(LAUGHING)

(OFF-MIC CONVERSATION)

LOLA:

13:28:41

Yes, I-- I'm most proud of my family and what their accomplishments have been and their values. Their characters and their values.

(OFF-MIC CONVERSATION)

* * *END OF TRANSCRIPT* * *