

CHELSEA PICTURES, INC.

"HOLOCAUST DOCUMENTARY"

LOLA AT MAMARONECK

CORRESPONDENT: (NOT IDENTIFIED)

PRODUCER: ZUCKER

W6, TAPE #1

TRANSCRIBER'S NOTE: SPEAKER IS A BIT MUFFLED; BEST EFFORT.

10:10:17;26

(IRRELEVANT MATERIAL OMITTED)

LOLA:

10:10:27;25

Thanks for inviting me. And I-- really hope that I will help you to imagine, although it's in-- inconceivable to imagine the time that I went through. But I hope I-- I'll-- I'll be able to do it.

10:10:46;09

I'm here for a number of reasons. It's not just to tell you-- what happened and-- prevent it from happening again. But-- to make you realize that the only way to really re-- make sure that it doesn't happen is for you to be a very vigilant and active participant in this world.

10:11:12;19

And-- and I'll give you (UNINTEL) an example of why-- this was-- this is so important. Very often, people ask me-- how does-- has this-- experience impacted on you. And-- it has had two-- different effects. One, of course, is the desire to (UNINTEL) all that has happened and-- and forget it, although it's very difficult to do.

10:11:44;14

And the other, to-- say, well, something has to be done. And I've gotta do it. So ever since I came to this country-- which was 1947, and I was 16 years old-- I've-- pretty much done what I had hoped to do, which is to be active, to be very-- concerned, to watch for signs of-- possible-- abuse of power, of-- of-- of life, of everything.

10:12:29;15

And so-- I've been an activist-- in various causes throughout the years-- such as

(UNINTEL) policy committee, trying to impress upon people-- the sciences (SIC). You cannot escape-- the disasters or the effects of nuclear-- power. And-- building shelters like Rockefeller wanted to do was a completely nonsensical, unrealistic idea. And then I got involved in-- opposition to the war in Vietnam. And I've been active in-- local politics for years.

10:13:08;24

And I'm still-- active on a number of the (UNINTEL) democratic club. And not-- want to change your ideology or your-- party affiliations, but-- I've-- been working in every way that I could in spite of my profession, which is highly demanding, and my family. I have one son. (CLEARS THROAT)

10:13:33;18

But-- what I want to impress upon immediately is the importance of realizing that things can happen before it happens. In other

words-- being able to see that we are vol--
vulnerable, that we should be on the lookout,
and not wait 'til there's nothing to be done
about it.

10:13:57;15

So in 1939, when the war broke out, we were
living in a little town in Poland on the
lower border, which had the-- in fact, the
tallest bridge in-- Poland-- to which the
Polish government, upon leaving the war
within a few short time of a few weeks,
escaped (UNINTEL). And then-- function and
is still a seat of government in-- in
England.

10:14:26;06

Well, we could have just gone across that
bridge, and I would not have-- be here as a
Holocaust survivor, which I would have rather
not gone through it. But no. We didn't
realize. People didn't want to face reality.

10:14:41;29 They-- my-- my parents said, "Look, I'm gonna leave this furniture?" I mean, who cares about furniture? But I can't go. I'm not-- where am I gonna go? It was the inability to realize that something horrible was about to happen.

10:14:58;02 Now, that was in 1939. We were not occupied by the Germans at that point. Poland was (UNINTEL)-- part that I was in, which is called the Garneshia (PH), was occupied by Russians. The so-called famous-- pact between Hitler and-- Molotov (PH) and Russia, which is called the Non-Aggression Pact; it only lasted two years.

10:15:23;19 But again-- two years later, when we saw that the Russia occupation was over and the Russians were retreating, and the Blitzkrieg (PH) which would means-- I suppose, you know, a very fast-- advancing front where they had

no-- mean-- no-- no way-- they couldn't mount any-- any defense; they were just running, retreating back, into Russia. The Germans were coming-- in masses.

10:15:59;22

We could have, at that point, jumped on the Rus-- on the truck, many trucks and tanks were retreating. Jumped on that truck and gone into Russia and-- I remember, and I'll never forget this, I was standing on the outskirts of this town where we were living with my father, to whom this (UNINTEL), by the way, is dedicated. 'Cause he learned that-- that was one mistake he made. After that, he saved us.

10:16:31;26

And I'm saying-- I'm looking and I'm seeing a friend of mine, my school friend-- I was in third grade at that point. And that's when a-- my education started for five years. And I see her with her family, and I'm saying to

my dad, "Why aren't we on this truck? Why aren't we truck a-- away? Hitler's coming."

10:16:53;21

Now, this was a few months after we turned on the radio illegally and listened to the (UNINTEL). And as young as I was, I was ten years old, 11 years old at that point-- I remember Hitler's words distinctly. "There's not gonna be one Jew left, okay?" Which means udefry (PH). Have you heard this word? Udefry?

10:17:19;04

My father turned on the radio against the law; the Russians said no radio. And we listened to that. Now, here, the Germans are coming, and I'm standing there. And we could have gone deep into Russia. But my father said, "Oh, no. I'm not running away with these Russians, with these-- Russian soldiers."

10:17:41;19

He-- there was a fear of communism. Nobody-- none of the Jews realized-- well, it wasn't just communism. It was the fact that some of the pogroms (PH)-- you heard about the word pogrom?-- were-- were carried out by-- these-- various groups of Russian-- (UNINTEL) before the first war-- world war and after. And so there was this fear by Jews that there were anti-semitics (SIC)-- some of these people.

10:18:09;12

And so my father, still not able to realize it, what's coming was much worse than what he had ever (UNINTEL) before. Inability to realize what could happen to us. It's like the September 11th. We-- we-- we were shocked. We-- we couldn't believe why we weren't ready. We were--

10:18:29;14

So he said he's not going, and of course we didn't. And that's another reason why I'm

here. Now, the girl I saw on that truck not only survived but came to the United States, and I attended her wedding in 1948.

10:18:42;02

Now, some people did not make it through, but many more made it than not. That's compared to where I was. Where we were. Okay. So that's running away in the last minute when you have no alternative. But what is really essential is prevention. Now, don't wait 'til you have to run; do something before it. Prevent it from happening.

10:19:05;09

The (UNINTEL) when the only spokesman of a (UNINTEL) that was being listened-- not listened to, but had later, of course, won the war, it was-- it was Churchill who realized that-- that Hitler was the threat to humanity. Nobody else did. Peace pacts were filed (SIC) which were obliterated. Nobody wanted to realize what was gonna happen.

10:19:29;15

And then many people stood by as the Holocaust was occurring all over Europe. There was acts of collaboration and there was passive collaboration. Because if you don't do anything, there's still collaboration. So then if you don't do anything, it's gonna happen. The worst thing's gonna happen.

10:19:51;05

So this is my-- my lesson-- that I have learned. And-- what I'm gonna tell you is really the attempt. The attempt, the very successful, the systematic, planned extermination of a whole people, the Jewish people, whether they wanna call it-- religion or-- or the minority, anything, by a-- sophisticated apparatus organized by Hitler. But without the collaboration of a lot of other people it would not have been done.

10:20:33;27

So it was not just Hitler. It was a lot, a

lot of other people that had to be doing exactly what he wanted. It was a highly organized machinery.

10:20:47;10

And the other important thing for you that I want to communicate to you, 'cause you might-- may have been hearing this and may come across this in your reading-- is that some-- there's a lot of misunderstanding in thinking that we could have resisted this. And-- and people know about the war from (UNINTEL), of course. So that you were (UNINTEL) many times.

10:21:12;05

And when I'm asked that-- I-- I go like this. I shudder, and I'm about to-- do something drastic. Because they say, "Well, why don't you do something? Why couldn't you-- why don't you resist?" Well, with what? With how? With where? There was no way we could have resisted. That's our town multiplied by

thousands of other little towns and bigger towns in Poland. We were just victimized. We were frittered (SIC) away to death.

10:21:40;12

There was no way. There was nothing we could do. We had no weapons. We had no-- no organization. We had nothing. We had absolutely nothing to resist (UNINTEL). And even there was an uprising, it was just like a self-sacrifice. It wasn't a-- I mean, (CLEARS THROAT) most people died, of course. And it-- there was nothing more you could do about the situation.

10:22:04;05

So that's what I want you to realize before I tell you about my personal story. And-- basically what I'm gonna talk to you about is two aspects of this-- Holocaust, which is how people died and how they survived-- if they did survive, which, of course, very few did, as you know.

10:22:23;16 And you've heard a lot about-- death camps and crematoria and all that. But so this was first the most sophisticated and the most dreadful mechanism of killing people. But there were many other ways in which people, they were killed.

10:22:42;27 And killing is bad, no matter how-- which was it occurs. And so of course there were-- many people died in labor camps. And one of the labor camps was, in fact, in our town. And my father almost died there. They died of starvation, of disease, of infection, of torture, of-- of-- of cold and so forth.

10:23:04;00 And-- the other major way of-- killing Jews was-- into-- in-- in what's called town (SIC) graves. And that's, again, according to my story, a lot-- a number of my family members die-- died that way. And many of them died--

I don't know how, because I simply never saw them after the war. My own-- my mother's whole family, which-- lived in-- in the capitol of Garneshia called (UNINTEL)-- was-- exterminated. That's-- nine members; never saw them again. I don't know how they died.

10:23:42;11

But I know how some others died. And-- town graves were-- Jews were taken to the outskirts of the town, dug their own graves, and shot. And some of them were buried alive and not even dead when they were-- when they went into the graves. (UNINTEL PHRASE).

10:24:02;11

Babies were thrown into the air and killed. So there were numerous brutal-- brutal ways of looking people-- none of which were-- any better than-- you know, any others. But-- I just want you to realize death camps was-- wasn't-- was not the only way.

10:24:21;28

And how did people survive? A number of these-- in fact, all of the ways that I'll tell you, a person from my family, my mother-- my father's family-- my mother's family never made it anywhere. So-- and to-- to-- to me, okay?

10:24:40;06

So one way was to-- find a-- a-- a foster parent for a child and send the child for adoption. And-- the child would be going to a church and-- so forth, and grow up as a-- as the Christians would. And-- my cousin, who's now in Israel-- there'll be a bi-- a very important story about her as I tell you about my survival-- she survived that way. She made it. Her parents-- her mother died, and her father did survive. She survived-- that way.

10:25:21;09

Another way was to-- simply go-- run to the woods and hopefully mix with some of these

(UNINTEL). These were groups that were sort of engineering opposition to the-- to the Hitler regime. And-- hide in the woods, maybe build some-- some-- what they had to do was dig a hole in the ground and build a shelter. And then-- try and survive that way.

10:25:48;04

And-- some made it. And-- I have cousins, two cousins, who survived that way in the woods. And-- one cousin, a girl of about my age, a year older, froze to death that way. Simply walked in the woods with very little clothes. Didn't have the right clothing. Was of course no food, no-- just froze to death right there. So that was another way.
Okay.

10:26:17;08

Thir-- another way was-- to-- jump out-- out of a train being taken to the death camps. Now, it's no fun jumping out of a train. And

I have-- my closest friend today, a girl that I met after the war-- when I met her, she-- appeared and I said, "My god, what's wrong with her?" She was standing like a question mark, this way. Her spine water totally deformed, and she jumped out of a concentration-- camp-- freight train leaving, taking groups to a concentration camp not once but twice.

10:27:01;29

That took courage. That took unbe-- of course, I mean, train was moving, you jump out, and you're lucky to survive. She survived that way. Okay.

10:27:10;21

Another way was to go and look-- and say, "Okay-- I have false papers made, papers that-- will say I am not so-and-so, but I am a gentile, not a Jew, and I (UNINTEL)-- was born somewhere, and I'm going to go to the (UNINTEL) and camouflage myself-- as if I

were-- as if I were never brought into the Jewish faith. And maybe I'll survive that way."

10:27:42;11

So you take some money, buy some false pass-- you know, you have passports. And-- this is what happened to-- two of my aunts, my father's two sisters. And-- a cousin of mine. And, in fact, the mother of the girl that did survive who was adopted.

10:27:59;03

They went to the (UNINTEL), had the false papers. A-- I don't know exactly when-- I can't tell you how many months they stayed there, but pretty short time. And they were recognized by a Pole or a Ukrainian; I don't know which. But-- so because we were-- we somehow found out; I don't know how we found out. But somehow we found out that they were recognized by somebody, given away to the Germans, slaughtered, killed. That was

another way. Not very successful.

10:28:31;11

Okay, another way was to-- run to a village or one village to another, and-- and somehow-- and, again, say, "Oh, no papers, nothing. I'm an orphan. I'm a-- I'm an orphan. I'm--" not say that you're Jewish, obviously. Speak the native language, which in this case-- was Ukrainian. And-- say, "I need some work. I need to support myself, because I lost my parents. I've nothing else to help me survive."

10:29:07;22

And-- my schoolmates from the third grade of that time when we were occupied by-- by Russians and then by Germany-- did that. Her father was in a labor camp in town. She-- ran and she was there with him for-- she-- she-- kids were not allowed to be there. She was only ten years old. (CLEARS THROAT)

10:29:30;24

She escaped through the wires of the camp, went into town and said, "Okay-- I-- I'm an orphan. I'm a Ukrainian orphan. I need work." This woman hired her to take care of her child. She was in a one pa-- one-- a parent-- one-- a single parent. And-- she survived that way. And it turns out that the woman knew she was Jewish but never gave her away. So she made it.

10:29:59;27

And-- then the-- the last thing-- the last way that I'm gonna tell you is the way I survived. And that is to be hidden underground in what we call a bunker, a-- hole in the ground, which I actually call a-- a grave. And-- and stay there until the liberation.

10:30:22;08

And that's what-- the way I survived-- in the end. I-- I went through torture before that, but we were underground in a hole in the

ground for nine months without seeing daylight, without food or-- or official (SIC) food, barely enough to survive without anything. Okay.

10:30:42;00

So given this introduction-- I'll just tell you a-- a few highlights of how I survived. Well, in the same town we were living in-- 2,000 (SIC) Jews-- as the Germans marched in, it was Blitzkrieg, as I told you. So now I'm just going to detail the things that I outlined.

10:31:11;02

They marched in. And the first day, which-- which was-- it happened a Saturday, they rounded up-- not they, but the local people, because they didn't know where the Jews were.

They didn't know who was Jewish, who was not. They asked-- and I'm sorry if any of your backgrounds-- are of this origin; I'm sorry. But I have to tell you the truth.

10:31:37;02

There was a tremendous anti-semitism among the-- (UNINTEL) foreign, especially the Ukrainians. And they-- were just very, very happy but-- that the Jews were gonna be killed. So they volunteered to be the intermittent or temporary police force in the town of Scalat (PH), which is where I survived.

10:32:00;19

And the German (UNINTEL) said, "Okay. You serve as the police." And 400 Jews were taken that first day that they marched in, and killed in the town graves. And one of them was my paternal grandfather, my father's father. It was our first family casualty. Just killed (UNINTEL). So that was the beginning of the Holocaust.

10:32:30;00

(IRRELEVANT MATERIAL OMITTED)

(BREAK IN TAPE)

LOLA:

blue, out of-- I mean, we had no idea what was happening.

10:36:34;27

But it seems that what happened was that one of the neighbors, gentile neighbors, reported to the local gestapo that my father was-- had knives in the attic, and he was going to do something-- like sabotage or do whatever something to the Germans with knives. Well, there were knives in the attic; it was our silver, silver that my parents-- were-- were hiding in case they needed some to sell or to-- to trade for food or whatever.

10:36:42;24

Because there was very little that you-- you could do. That was one way of earning a living or making his money obviously. So you had to use like a barter system, so they were hiding the silver.

10:36:53;23

And my-- they went up to the attic, the

Germans; they found the silver. Ah, the knives are there. So my father was immediately taken to jail because of that. And he would have been shot.

10:37:05;22

Now, his sister, the one that died-- trying to-- trying to camouflage herself as a gentile that I just told you about before, there happened to be a very good-looking young woman-- younger woman-- probably at that point in her thirties, early thirties-- went to the-- to the German police and-- tried to-- to get him out. "He didn't do anything. This is all, you know, made up. He didn't do anything. He would have threatened anybody."

10:37:43;23

Of course they were laughing at her. And so she had to give herself away to one of the-- policemen to get her brother out of jail. So that I'll never forget. You know what I'm

saying when I say "give herself away"? Okay.
Alright.

10:38:00;18

Now, that's the-- end of summer of 1941.
And-- beginning of '40-- sting of '42 around
May, we were all rounded up to go to the
ghetto. Now, the ghetto was-- not a
voluntary ghetto. It was a forced ghetto to
ju-- for the purpose of concentrating the
Jews and the very horrible conditions so as
to round them up for systematic
extermination.

10:38:32;28

And it was to have them in a-- confined place
where you can get them whenever you want.
And it's sort of a quota system. You know
what "quota" mean-- means? You-- you're told
(SIC)? Okay, today you need a thou-- 100--
500 Jews for-- for that camp. So this is the
kind of camp.

10:39:43;12

You see, if you-- where that curtain ends over there and the camera's sitting? And you go from there to about the end of the seat? That was the room. About 2/3 of the room of this size with four families. So about 16, 18 people living there.

10:40:04;04

Very scarce food. And that's not the worst.

'Cause if we-- we-- somehow we-- we were managing to survive as far as food was concerned. But the reason for putting us there was of course the systematic extermination by a-- procedure which is-- was called an action. Action.

10:40:25;29

An action meant that in the middle of the night the Germans would storm in unannounced, of course; never knew when they were coming.

Round up this quota of Jews and take them-- in trucks to the freight train-- heading for death camps. So that was the reason for the

ghetto.

10:40:44;24

So instead of just killing us all in one day, it was a systematic torture which was gonna take basically one year. One year of torture, where your life was hanging on a little thread, and you never knew when you're gonna be the one to be taken. And of course you wanted to be-- to be the last one or-- or ne-- or never be taken. But the chances of that were very, very small, as you can imagine.

10:41:13;28

So I will describe for you the first action, of which there were many. And of course we didn't even know that that's what they planned and that's what they-- they-- they had in mind, which is-- it's-- it's torture.

I mean, we had no idea they were gonna do it that way. We knew we were gonna die, but we didn't know how we were gonna subjected to

this (SIC).

10:41:32;09

So one night, there was this tremendous commotion. Trucks arriving and there were shouts. "Uden (PH), uden, uden." You know what that means. "Jew, Jew, Jew." Shouts, shouts and (UNINTEL).

10:41:47;09

At that point, we were asleep. My father rounded us up, said, "Run into the cellar." The cellar was right outside of that room that I was just referring to. Had a trap door in-- on the floor, which opened up like this.

10:42:03;09

So he shoved us in there and some neighbors. And there were-- like seven of my family-- my father's family members, among whom was this little cousin that was given up for adoption later. She was three years old. We were shoved in there.

10:42:19;20

My father, in order to save us, stayed out of the cellar and threw-- many articles of all kinds-- boxes-- beddings-- things that he just gathered; I don't know how or where he got it. It was a mess. Shoved it on top of that door to camouflage us, and went upstairs to the attic to hide under the staircase, where he obviously would have never survived. Because he was like-- a target there, visible. But that's what he wanted. He wanted to save us, and he-- he thought he would survive that way, which was-- unrealistic. But that's what he did.

10:42:57;22

So we are-- we are sitting there of course quiet like mice. Because we-- if-- if we are heard, we're gonna be obviously discovered. And-- all of a sudden, this little cousin of mine starts crying. She wanted water; we had nothing in that cellar. There was no water.

There was nothing.

10:43:17;10

So a number of these neighbors were saying-- very quietly to her mother-- her father was not there; her mother-- "Shut her up. Shut her up." And they were saying, "Go like this. Choke her." And of course she-- she wasn't gonna do that. She-- she couldn't-- she couldn't choke her own daughter. Her own child.

10:43:39;06

So she-- she thought of an alternative, which-- was to give her some of her urine to drink. So that's-- that she thought would shut her up. She gave her urine to drink. And of course urine doesn't take very good, so the child cried a little louder.

10:43:55;17

At that point, we were all frantic because we knew we would be discovered. Because we are hearing the footsteps of the assessment

running, rampaging (SIC) through the upstairs and-- and shouting, "Uden, uden, where-- now, where are we?" You know, they-- they-- they really wanted to round us up.

10:44:11;19

And then something-- which was-- which I call my father's miracle happened. All of a sudden, instead of them opening up the trap door and taking us, I hear laughter. We hear laughter. Laughter. What on earth is this?

10:44:29;04

Well, that's the miracle. My father, all this in a-- in a-- in a last minute turmoil, had the presence of mind which most people wouldn't have, most people panic and have no idea what to do, left some-- liquor on a number of counters in the kitchen. Liquor which was left from her mother's-- from his father's tavern days. And they drank it, got drunk, and never found us. And-- that was that first action.

10:45:01;29 And after that, my father actually improved that cellar. First, always had some water there, some bread, and made the trap door into a very-- much more secure camouflaging thing. Well-- and-- and many of the actions that followed, we were in that cellar throughout that-- throughout that year. And we survived. Some of us, not-- not all of us.

10:45:29;00 But we, as a family unit, my mother, father and my brother and I survived. And survived for how long? Well, the ghetto was about to be liquidated. In other words, they were gonna keep-- us in this torture chamber for a year and then-- take the last (UNINTEL) of Jews to death camps, and that was it. So we knew that was about to happen.

10:45:56;02 And-- because we saw that the Jews were

disappearing like flies, and-- being-- and there were-- there were a few hundred left at this point. And-- my father decided that he was gonna hide us. He was gonna find a-- a Polish peasant who would-- hide Jews for money. Usually not for altruistic reasons but for money.

10:46:22;11

He found a-- a-- a peasant who came with a wagon to pick us up to hide us. Got into the ghetto I don't know how, and we came here. There a number of Jews already on that wagon. And-- then, my father says to me and my mother, "Go. You go in there." I-- I says, "What do you mean, 'Go.' Where are you-- what about you?" "Well, he has no room for me and your brother. He only has room for you and your mother."

10:46:52;03

And he was always (UNINTEL)-- thinking that the weaker sex-- which I hate to tell you is

not the weaker sex, 'cause I'm pretty strong--
- should be safe first. And the-- the men
will somehow-- he is somehow gonna make it.
And I better escape with my mother.

10:47:06;05

So-- at that point, I'm 12 years old. And I
decide that no way am I gonna allow this to
happen. So I was a pretty determined--
young-- young, well, teenager. And I-- my
way was to start screaming, go into hysteria,
and-- and-- hold onto the door and say, "I'm
not going without you. Either we're all go--
go, or we all die." And I simply refused to
go.

10:47:41;00

Now, in the meantime, the peasant is standing
there, he sees this commotion, and he's
worried that somebody's gonna overhear it.
And he-- he's gonna be discovered. So of
course we have to leave, and-- and my father
says, "You see. This was your chance. You

were-- what was-- why?" I mean, he was so-- he got so mad at me.

10:48:01;04

Next morning, we hear what happened. This-- wagon full of Jews that this person had, without me and my mother on it, he had the money from all of the Jews, took the money, turned the Jews over to the local German police. And they were all slaughtered. They were all killed.

10:48:22;03

So had I been-- had I been on that wagon, that would have been the end of me.
(UNINTEL). So my father of course would not leave it at that. He started looking for another, a peasant. And this time, he found somebody, a (UNINTEL) family who needed some money 'cause they didn't have enough.

10:48:40;22

And-- and-- and they said, "Okay, the one way we can solve it is get somebody else to add a

little money or jewelry." I mean, rings, earrings-- I don't know-- watches. Watches were very, very important. Watches. And-- he arranged with them that we would-- he would hide-- our family with their family in this--

(BREAK IN TAPE)

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CHELSEA PICTURES, INC.

"HOLOCAUST DOCUMENTARY"

LOLA @ MAMARONECK

W6

TAPÉ #2

LOLA:

10:48:30;22

(IN PROGRESS) and peasant, and this time he found somebody. Sure, a family who needed some money, 'cuz they didn't have enough. And-- And-- And they say, okay, the one way

we can solve it is get somebody else who has a little money or jewelry, I mean, rings, ear-rings, I don't know. Watches! Watches were very, very important. Watches.

10:48:54;20

And he arranged with them that we would-- he would hide-- our family with that family in this Polish peasant's house in the woods. So, the cousin of this peasant who was sort of the in-between guy comes to pick us up.

10:49:12;09

(UNINTEL) who do you think? My mother and me. My father's not going. My brother's not going. Same thing again, he didn't have enough room for all of us. So, what do you think I do? I go into hysterical fit again, and I scream and I cry and I says, "I'm not going." And we didn't. And I didn't.

10:49:39;28

The peasant then communicated to this other family-- via a messenger. I don't know how

they did it. Says, "Boy, were they lucky. I was on my way out of the ghetto-- I was intercepted by the-- l-- local police, German police. And they searched my wagon. Had they been there, that would have been the end."

10:50:06;26

So, second time. Now, my father is in the work camp after this, dying of typhoid. Pleading with the-- local-- people in charge of the camp, my mother and I, smuggled ourselves into that camp. Women were not in the camp, only men, because this is a work camp. Neither were children there.

10:50:36;21

Smuggled ourselves in there to try and save his life, because he was dying of typhoid. He needed water. He needed-- He (UNINTEL) had very high fever.

10:50:44;25

Well, we-- we nursed him and nursed him. And

all of a sudden, there's an alarm. An action is taking place on the camp. And-- we run away, and I jump into a room full of bedding of dead-- from dead people who had died. Full of feather beds and pillows. And I jump in there, and hide myself. So I won't be taken in this suburb (SIC).

10:51:14;20

And I hear a sound. And I-- I shuddered. All of a sudden, I see the head of my girlfriend from school, the one who went as a Ukrainian girl, said she was an orphan. That's how she saved herself. Told this story. She's right next to me. She says, "Lola, what are you doing here?" I say, "What are you doing?"

10:51:37;01

Well, day-- day later, she escaped. And I was-- and my mother went back to the ghetto, and my father was barely recovering. So very-- could hardly walk. And-- he had

arranged for this peasant to come for the third time to take us.

10:51:57;14

And this time, my mother said-- "I-- We have to go. We have to go. Y-- No matter how much you scream, I'm going." And she knew, 'cuz she says, "I'm going," I'll-- I'll follow her.

10:52:12;12

So, I followed her, and my cousin and her mother and my grandmother were taken by this peasant in his wagon out of the-- (UNINTEL) town to the woods. My father had no idea where we were going, because they refused to tell him, so that in case he's tortured, he wouldn't give us away. I mean he would have never done it. He would have died, before he ever (UNINTEL). But how do they know?

10:52:35;10

My brother was in camp with him, and we are going. And then my cousin and I remembered

what - She was my age - What happened in the previous wagon situation. That the wagon was intercepted.

10:52:52;09

So, we said, "Okay, this time, we're gonna fool these-- these-- these-- these-- these Germans, we're gonna do-- we're gonna start singing." And we're not gonna be going in a quiet wagon, 'cuz they will suspect that somebody's escaping and-- and search us and of course kill us. We're gonna sing, as if we're coming back from some you know party or something, singing Ukrainian songs. And that's-- that's what we did.

10:53:15;03

We sang throughout the trip until we got into the woods. We were never intercepted. And we come there to this peasant's h-- house. It's a little house, very poor house in the end of the woods.

10:53:29;09

And he says, "Okay, quick. Let's go to the bulka (PH)." "Bulka? What is that?" So he leads us into-- a chicken coop. It's a-- From the outside, it's like a little hut. And inside is all kinds of hay and-- and-- twig you know for chickens to lay eggs (UNINTEL).

10:53:53;25

And we're looking in there, and there's a hole in there. And that's where the bulka lives. It's a-- It's a hole in the ground which they dug out which was about the size full-- from there-- from the end to where I'm standing. Like this. This rectangle.

10:54:13;15

Boards on the-- on the clay and two holes. Two holes dug to the outside for oxygen. And this is like 13 (SIC) feet underground. Where-- Where was the-- the bathroom? For-- Forget it. Well, there's a ladder which is the ladder we came down. And in the middle

of the ladder, there's a-- a-- in back of it, there's a board and a bucket underneath. And that's the bathroom which of course means that you feel the stench all the time. You-- You-- You smell it. There's a-- a sheet hanging (UNINTEL) for some privacy on this.

10:54:57;12

And that's-- that's where we-- we go down, and the other family, there are six members of the other family, and five of us, my m-- grandmother, as I told you, myself, my mother and my aunt and my cousin. Eleven people down there.

10:55:12;24

And every morning, the peasant brings some soup which is like potato soup with a little b-- dark bread. And-- And-- And again, in the evening, that was our-- our meal which in the course of nine months that we spend there got (UNINTEL) so at the end-- At first, there was some-- maybe some beef or something like-

- beans and later, there was nothing, but a few potatoes and-- and-- and water. So, we called "yushka" (SIC). Yushka is like-- like water.

10:55:42;11

And no bread. Towards the end, there was not even bread. But in the meantime, we're there for about one week. The peasant comes down the ladder and says, "I have very bad news for you. The labor camp has been liquidated. There's no-- There are no Jews left."

10:56:03;13

So, my father was there, and my brother was there. And my cousin's father was there. She, with me in this bulka. And we start screaming and lamenting. We've lost our fathers. They're gone.

10:56:18;04

Nothing-- Nothing we could do about it. I mean it was just a horrible thing. My mother-- passed out. And-- about-- three

days later, I think, two or-- maybe two days later, middle of the night, the door opens to this bulka, and my father and my brother come down the stairs. The stair-- Not a staircase, the ladder. The-- The-- The wooden ladder.

10:56:53;06

Well, you can imagine the reunion, but of course, my cousin's father was not there. So she knew right away that he was gone. And then my father told us the story of how he managed to find us and how he survived this disaster.

10:57:10;12

And briefly what happened was-- th-- k-- the Germans came to liquidate the camp. They rounded up all the Jews. Put 'em on a truck. Put 'em in the-- as I told you, the town grave. Told them to dig their graves. And they were standing in front of the graves about to be shot, and all of a sudden, the

S.S. men in charge of this operation says, "Well--" He says, "Is there any tailors or shoemakers or barbers? Just walk to the other side of the road."

10:57:48;06

So, that's like from there to there (UNINTEL). Somehow they decided they were gonna keep this camp going for another few weeks, and they needed ta-- the-- the artisans. Why? Because there were Germans in that camp who wanted to be shaved, who wanted to have wonderful, leather boots made by the Jewish-- shoemakers and so forth. They wanted a few Jews still among the rest-- m-- in the camp.

10:58:14;18

I mean there was nobody else there except the Germans who were waiting for the whole operation to be terminated.

10:58:21;19

My father was neither-- none of these--

vocations, but he raised his hand. He says, "I'm the baker." And he was. He was really the baker in the camp. And before he even hears the reaction of the S.S. man who's running there back and forth trying to finish this operation, he just walked across-- starts walking across the dirt road. Doesn't e-- He's smart. He doesn't even wait for the answer, 'cuz the answer would have been "No, I don't need bakers at this point."

10:58:51;10

And he starts motioning to his-- h-- his brother-in-law, my cousin's father. He's right next to him, a huge man. Very huge for-- for Europe in those days. Big man. Much bigger than my father. "Come with me." Like-- you know, th-- not talking, just--

10:59:06;16

My uncle, his brother-in-law, was like frozen, completely-- you know? He was gonna die-- He was shot the next second. Couldn't

move. Refused to go, because he was just-- not able to move out of fear.

10:59:21;12

And my father walked across the dirt road, saw him shot right in front of his eyes, saw the other Jews shot. Some of them still alive when they went into the grave, and he was taken back to the camp. My brother had been hiding in the camp all this time, didn't know where my father was. When the o-- this operation was over, he emerged and they found each other. And my father said, "Look, we're going to find your mother and-- and-- and your sister."

10:59:50;02

And my brother said-- he-- "What? Are you crazy? How? We don't even know where they are!" He says, "Well, I was smart enough to get a few hints from this peasant. He-- He d-- He-- I outsmarted him. I asked him a few questions which he didn't realize he was

gonna give away, the whereabouts. He didn't really give away."

11:00:07;11

But he said something about-- like "Don't worry about them being found by the Germans, because there's just one little house at the end of the woods. I mean who's gonna search that little house?"

11:00:19;29

And a-- all there is is like three houses a little bit further away. There-- There's nothing else there. The Germans are not gonna hopefully find them. Like when was father was arranging for us to escape, he gave him those two-- That's all my father needed, those two hints.

11:00:34;29

And the reason why he didn't need anymore information or, well, he may have been lucky that he found us without being found-- detected, you know, rounded up first by the

roaming p-- police who were probably you know searching the woods was that he had been--

11:00:48;05

In fact the same vodka, the same-- liquor that saved our life, that's the irony, and the first action, remember I told you, also saved him now, because he had been smuggling this liquor during-- when-- when like here there was Prohibition, right? We had a similar thing in Poland.

11:01:09;10

And he had to smuggle the liquor out of-- from the peasants' villages to his mother's tavern in order to-- for her to sell it. I mean, she was allowed to sell it, but she was now allowed to buy it from these villagers. He was all over those woods, buying up this liquor and-- and bring it. So he knew the woods inside/out. Another piece of incredible luck!

11:01:32;08

So, they-- they started walking-- escaped from the camp in the middle of the evening. It was dark and walked-- started walking to the woods. And my father sees these three little houses, and then he sees this-- fourth house at the end of the woods. And he says to my brother, "This is where your mother and your sister are." And my brother thinks he's b-- all of a sudden lost his mind. "Well, how on earth would he knew we are there?"

11:01:59;22

"Well," he says, "we're going in there." So, they march in to that house-- walk in to the house. Not march. He was a-- barely able to walk. He was still not quite well from the typhoid he has. And they say-- my father put it straight (SIC). He sees the peasant; he sees his wife.

11:02:16;02

He says, "Look, I know my wife and my daughter are here. Let me in. Let me and my

son in." Of course, the peasant denied it. He says, "Leave immediately, because you'll be found out. They are searching the woods. They'll come here. Leave for the woods. There are other Jews there." Which is where my cousin (UNINTEL), my other two cousins were hiding on their own. He says, "Just go."

11:02:37;14

My father refuses to go. My brother says at that point-- decided to do something a little more clever. And this is the scene. Okay? Visualize the scene. Now, the-- the peasant's wife is sitting-- a very primitive kitchen. A stove and a little table. And she has a ten year old daughter next to her, and she's washing her hair. And she's removing lice of her-- from her hair. Full of lice, and she's going like this on the table. (UNINTEL) killing the lice.

11:03:14;19

And my fa-- my brother sees this, a devoted mother, you know, cleaning her daughter and-- and obviously-- a very unusual situation. But h-- So he-- he falls on-- in-- to the floor, br-- grabs the-- the woman's knees and says, "Look, imagine you are separated from this daughter that you love so much, and you are about to be united with her, you know where she is, and they won't let you in. How would you feel?"

11:03:47;09

I mean my brother was at that point-- he was 15 years old. Well, he-- th-- that broke her heart. She says to her husband, "Let them in." So, that's when we saw my father and brother descend to the bunker (SIC). And we-- we were-- jubilation and all that. Exuberance and maybe ten, 15, 20 minutes, I can't remember, passes. And we all start choking. Remember I told you there were two holes leading to the outside for oxygen.

11:04:27;07

There simply wasn't enough oxygen for two more people. That was it. Oxygen was depleted and we're choking to death. And we of course bring up the door which we weren't supposed to do. We weren't supposed to open that back door, because we may have been found out.

11:04:41;27

But we rushed-- one of us rushed into the-- into his little house and says, "Look, we're choking. Do something."

11:04:51;03

So, in the middle of the night, they took us to the barn where the cows were, and that was the only time that I saw-- fresh air, I mean, outside-- out of that hole for nine months. I mean that was the first two weeks we were there, two weeks or so. We were sitting there, and the men went to work and dug another part to this bunker, like a rectangle

here and another little rectangle there.

Another hole to the outside.

11:05:17;26

And then we went back, and that's where we were for nine months. Don't ask me how we survived without any-- anything. I mean people ask me, "What did you do during those nine months?" I can't even tell you, except I remember talking about if we ever survive, what would I wanna eat. I remember thinking of that. What books would I wanna read.

11:05:38;20

But of course, we ha-- we had very little hope of surviving, because we knew the Germans were roaming around the woods. We were constantly in danger of being detected, and the peasant himself unfortunately, and that's the sad part, would come and threaten us.

11:05:57;10

If we didn't give him (UNINTEL), didn't give

him more money, he would just let us go. And we didn't have more money. We didn't h-- money was not (UNINTEL)-- watches, as I told you, rings, and there was nothing we had.

11:06:11;07

So, my brother and the daughter of the other family one night actually left, making believe that they were going something-- somewhere to find some connection that would give them more money, but of course, it was all made up, because there was nobody left. There were no Jews left. There was nothing. They just left to-- to-- He was very-- The-- The peasant was not very smart.

11:06:31;14

So, he believed them, that they were gonna do their best to find more money for him or more-- more gold. And of course, they didn't find anything. They came back. But they could have been shot right there as they left.

11:06:41;16

So, it was-- now March of 1944. We've been-- had been there for nine months, and-- my father said when we came in there, he says, "You know what? I'll make a prediction." He knew that the Battle of Stalingrad was lost by the Russians, and he knew that that was the turning point in the war. That from then on it will take time, but the Germans were gonna be finished like Napoleon marching on Russia was finished.

11:07:11;04

It was just a question of time. I mean we didn't know it, but he knew. He said he knew it. And he said, "In nine months, we're gonna come out of that-- of this bunker, I promise you." And he was crazy again. Nine months we are there, and we hear fire, artillery fire, all kinds of-- sh-- sho-- shooting.

11:07:35;00 And the peasant comes down and says, "The (UNINTEL) are-- are fighting." Partisans? My father says, "Partisans? Partisans didn't have artillery. They had guns. They had rifles. They didn't have artillery fire." You know what artillery fire is. It's-- It's like-- big w-- you know, w-- What do you call? Weapons attached to a tank and-- I mean they didn't have that.

11:07:57;19 So, my father of course says, "No, we don't believe you. We are being liberated. This is the Russians that are now coming in. The Germans are retreating, thank goodness. And we're coming out of here."

11:08:10;23 And so the thirteen of us walked out, even at that point he didn't say anything. He knew my father was not gonna stop. Thirteen of us marched out of-- marched out. My-- My mother could not walk. She was forty-four years

old, and she was-- she weighed maybe 75 pounds, so we carried her. My grandmother couldn't walk.

11:08:32;11

And we came out. We didn't have any winter clothes. It was snow in Poland. March, there's still snow on the ground. Th-- We came out with our summ-- we came there in the summer. Summer clothes. No-- No clothing. And when you came out into the bright, sunny skies which I'll never forget, and where do we go? We don't know where to go. But we're hearing shots, so we're gonna go to where the shots are. Even though they can kill us.

11:08:54;29

Imagine the irony of surviving Hitler and now being shot by-- by the artillery-- you know, by-- by Front (SIC) fire. But we walked towards the Front, and I remember running and bullets shooting all around me. And I-- jumped into a trench which is where the

Russian soldiers were.

11:09:19;25

And another thing I'll never forget is, as I--
- as I'm in that trench, I see they're eating
American food cans. American c-- ca-- food.

That's what we were supplying in-- you know.

We had a very important role in that-- war,
not-- n-- Americans weren't fighting on that
Eastern Front, as you know. We were on the
Western Front, of course, invading Brittany,
all that.

11:09:44;08

But that our munitions, they had our food.

And the Russian soldiers did something that
they weren't supposed to do. They were
unbelievable. They left the trenches.

(UNINTEL) supposed to do-- They weren't
supposed to leave the-- the-- the trench, and
they shoved onto us a trunk that was going--
retreating-- taking something to the Back
Front.

11:10:05;05 Shoved us on there after looking at my m-- my mother-- my mother and seeing that if she-- if they didn't do that, she would die right there, because she looked like a ghost. Shoved us on that truck, and we went into Russia. Ukrainian part of Russia which is where-- we were for a few months after going back to Poland, and then eventually to the States. Thank you.

(OFF-MIKE CONVERSATION)

MALE VOICE:

11:11:01;10 Have you finished or are you--

LOLA:

11:11:01;04 Yeah.

FEMALE VOICE:

11:11:03;05 Oh, I didn't know that.

LOLA:

11:11:02;20 I said thank you. (APPLAUSE)

FEMALE VOICE:

CHELSEA PICTURES, INC.

"HOLOCAUST DOCUMENTARY"

LOLA @ MAMARONECK - W6

INTERVIEWER: NOT IDENTIFIED

PRODUCER: ZUCKER

TAPE #3

TRANSCRIBER'S NOTE MOST SPEAKERS ARE OFF-MIC. BEST EFFORT.

11:14:34;22

(OFF-MIC CONVERSATION)

FEMALE VOICE:

11:14:39;05

My actually now late great grandfather survived the Holocaust. And he also survived the (UNINTEL) in Russia. And he never really wanted to talk about what happened. And so I just wanna thank you for (UNINTEL PHRASE) know what he went through. And I guess I understand him more.

LOLA:

11:14:56;01

Thank you.

FEMALE VOICE:

11:14:59;08 Okay. Anybody else?

11:15:02;20 (OFF-MIC CONVERSATION)

FEMALE VOICE:

11:15:12;07 I just-- (UNINTEL PHRASE) the Holocaust for a long time, about a month or so. And we've got a lot of footage about-- you know-- in the concentration camps. But it didn't seem as real until we heard you talk. And not only-- you know-- you had the power (UNINTEL PHRASE).

LOLA:

11:15:31;09 Thank you.

FEMALE VOICE:

11:15:35;02 Yes. Anything else?

11:15:45;08 (OFF-MIC CONVERSATION)

MALE VOICE:

11:15:46;14 I-- I was wondering what were you-- what were you thinking while you were down there? What kept you going? What kept you-- I mean, to-- to keep going on through what you were going

through?

LOLA:

11:15:57;03

When-- it-- during the-- the-- in the
(UNINTEL)? Those (UNINTEL), yeah. I'll be
honest with you. I cannot to this very day
imagine how we were able to survive such--
such confinement like being in this grave for
nine months and not having any resources to--
I mean, I remember-- I think we had a deck of
cards.

11:16:20;00

And we played cards. We had-- I don't
remember any other resources we had. We
talked to each other-- endlessly. But it
only proves what-- power-- you know-- the
instinct of survival is so strong that-- that
we were able to survive-- under these
conditions without going absolutely insane
is-- is miraculous.

11:16:49;18

But on the other hand, as a biologist, and I

am a biologist-- a geneticist, I think that evolution has done that. Somehow has provided-- human beings with this tremendous survival ability under these impossible conditions. And-- you know-- people-- other people have been faced with horrible-- conditions and they're able to survive. And it-- it's just-- incredible. But I-- it was-- it was horrible but we-- we made it.

11:17:18;29

I mean-- it's-- actually, the physical, mental aspects of it are-- are amazing because how we did not die of disease and starvation under these conditions is-- is-- I develop TB later. And-- actually in the States and it's-- there was a lesion detected in my lung actually when I was-- when I was coming to the States. And may-- it was probably a lesion that started then and was reactivated here-- for whatever-- you know-- the certain circumstances.

11:17:55;14 I was trying to do too much at the time. I had a child. I went to school at night and did crazy things. So-- but whatever it is, it's amazing that we didn't die of-- of these (UNINTEL). That's a good question. I-- evolution, I guess, is the answer.

11:18:12;04 (OFF-MIC CONVERSATION)

FEMALE VOICE:

11:18:21;20 Anybody else raise your hand (UNINTEL PHRASE).

11:18:26;16 (OFF-MIC CONVERSATION)

FEMALE VOICE:

11:18:59;10 I know there's (UNINTEL) you talk about the Holocaust. But when did you start speaking (UNINTEL) everyone else in your family-- did anyone else in your family (UNINTEL) a Holocaust (UNINTEL PHRASE) to do that.

LOLA:

11:19:16;19 Okay. The answer is-- to the first question-- I was-- I started-- about-- four years ago

after I retired. I-- I just did not have the time as a professional-- you know-- as a scientist to do that. Although, I always wanted to. And I actually-- was contacting organizations before that.

11:19:38;10

But somehow the (UNINTEL) Holocaust Commission was not yet set up to have a speakers' bureau so I-- I did contact them immediately after I retired which was six years. And I-- but I started about four years ago. And the sec-- the answer to the second question is-- no one else in my family-- has done it.

11:19:59;25

My brother will not talk about it. I think he refuses to talk about it even to his children. And-- his daughter, my niece, is much more aware of what happened because of what she heard from other-- members of family, especially my father. My father used

to tell his grandchildren everything.

11:20:21;14

But-- my brother will not talk about it.

Friends of mine have gone back to Poland-- to visit-- the-- the town where-- where their dear ones was-- were killed. The girl that I told you, my friend, who survived-- posing as a orphan went back. She lost all her family, her father, mother and sister. Sole survivor. She went back to Poland and-- the-- stress-- brought on-- you know-- immuno suppression of the-- immune system and a chronic fatigue syndrome.

11:20:59;15

Came back and still has chronic fatigue syndrome. And I-- before even that happened to her I decided I'll never go back. It's just-- I couldn't take the-- face that. Even though I didn't lose an immediate member. I survived-- we were one of two families which I forgot to tell you in the whole town that

survived as a unit.

11:21:20;00 The family we were hiding in-- with
(UNINTEL). My father, mother and my brother
and me. But even though-- I-- I-- I wasn't
going to face that. So--

FEMALE VOICE:

11:21:31;21 Yes?

11:21:33;05 (OFF-MIC CONVERSATION)

FEMALE VOICE:

11:21:45;00 When you were talking about like giving your
jewelry away and everything I just (UNINTEL
PHRASE) 'cause I could never picture giving
anything away. 'Cause-- you know-- (UNINTEL)
means so much to me. And it just like really
hit me that (UNINTEL) like giving away
something. And-- but I think silly things
are (UNINTEL) now like just putting on chap
stick or brushing my hair which you don't
actually (UNINTEL).

LOLA:

by that I mean that-- I have to forget it. But, of course, it can't be forgotten so there's a dilemma there. And-- two things have-- have happened.

11:24:11;21

Number one-- for many years I-- and I still have occasionally but not as often as I did-- when I was younger. I had nightmares-- periodic nightmares of-- being-- of-- fear of death. Not fear of death. I mean, more than that. The nightmare was a very specific scenario.

11:24:36;28

There would always be a man because the SS men were men. There were no women in the SS forces. There would always be a man-- trying to get in through a window-- in the-- and I-- I was-- I would be in the bedroom sleeping. And I would start screaming to-- for my husband to help me because somebody was about to kill me.

11:25:00;08

And-- the figure was hovering over me. And-- I could not scream. I wanted to scream for help and I could not scream. And until I-- had to wake up and-- I-- I was not able to even scream. So that was a recurring nightmare. And-- the other thing that-- (UNINTEL) for my life was that in order not to think about it I-- I am very active.

11:25:29;14

I-- I-- I just-- people say-- I'm a bundle of energy. I'm a bundle of desperation energy, I guess. I-- I keep myself so busy. I do so many things. Even after retirement I do a lot of volunteer work. I teach mentally ill children. I (UNINTEL) this. I'm involved in politics. I'm involved-- I do watercolor, I do pottery, I do-- I-- I-- I-- I have to do things because otherwise I keep-- I don't wanna think about anything else.

11:26:02;13

I just have to be extremely involved. That helps me in two ways. First of all, it-- doesn't give me time to think about what's happening in the world now which-- is-- 'cause would be very-- is destructive. I mean, when I think about Israel now and everything else, I have family there.

11:26:22;07

And secondly, it-- gives me a more positive outlook on life. Like-- when I meet people who are nice and-- and-- in conjunction with the work that I do-- and unfortunately, during my professional days there were many people that were not nice. And that-- destroyed me-- was about to destroy me. In fact, I had to retire when I did because of my disappointment-- my inability to cope with-- with the-- with people that-- that were evil.

11:26:57;07

And they-- the realization that-- that people

are evil is-- is very, very difficult for me.

So when I occasionally in conjunction with what I do meet nice people, that gives me some faith in-- in-- in-- in-- and some ability to say, well, maybe what life is worthwhile after all because there are still some nice people in this world. So--

11:27:24;13

(OFF-MIC CONVERSATION)

FEMALE VOICE:

11:27:38;28

Okay, I (UNINTEL) last year I lost my grandfather. And it was really hard for me to like adjust to not having him there because he was a big part of my life. And I just wanna know how'd you deal with-- you have to worry about yourself with being alive. How'd you deal with losing your-- you lost your uncle, right? Or your cousin? (UNINTEL PHRASE).

LOLA:

11:28:01;16

I lost many uncles, many cousins. I lost all of my grand-- three of my four grandparents.

FEMALE VOICE:

11:28:07;17 But how did you deal with that? I mean--

LOLA:

11:28:09;26 During the war or after? Or both?

FEMALE VOICE:

11:28:12;17 Both.

LOLA:

11:28:12;11 Both. Well, you-- you go on because you have-- you want-- as I said-- the-- it was very difficult. But human beings worry about themselves first. The instinct of survival is so strong like I told you, I wasn't gonna save myself without my father and brother.

11:28:36;00 So I-- but-- there was-- it was-- it-- it was horrible to know that-- that all these members, family members died. It was horrible. But you-- you have to go on. You-- you just go on. You don't-- you don't think about it.

11:28:54;11

You just-- you just go on. It's very difficult. It's actually-- actually more difficult after the war. Because during the-- what I was going through you were so busy trying to save yourself and your immediate family that you didn't count the days as much-- on the others. But after the war, my-- when my mother was still hopeful that maybe one of her family members survived but they never communicate to her.

11:29:22;05

You know, people started searching for family members after the war. She went-- she-- she wrote to these-- these towns-- to the-- to the-- to the (UNINTEL). I mean, she contacted the town for this, for records, for this, for that. Is there anybody alive? Nobody was. She was destroyed by that. My mother was because this was-- you know-- two sisters, two brothers, both parents. Was-- she never-- she never got over that.

11:29:49;24 And I-- had-- you know-- had to cope with it--
- not only seeing my mother suffer but also
feeling the loss myself. It's very
difficult. But you go on. You go on. You
have to find things that will make life--
worthwhile. You have to feel that-- life has
to go on.

11:30:16;03

(OFF-MIC CONVERSATION)

FEMALE VOICE:

11:30:40;06

Is there any point when-- where your family
were in the bunker or in the ghetto (UNINTEL)
that you lose hope and you think it was all
(UNINTEL)? Did you want it to end in a
sense? And--

LOLA:

11:30:53;13

Oh-- that's a very good question. I am a
pessimist by nature. So I-- I-- I never had
hope. My father is the only person that
really was hopeful. And my brother, too.
He's a little bit like him. My mother and I

were the-- the pessimists, cynics. And
(UNINTEL) I never thought we would survive.
I never-- I never had hope.

11:31:16;24

That made it must worse because I-- I just--
in a way, what you're saying is right. You
sort of wanted the torture to end but you
wanna live more than anything else. You
wanna live more than any-- it's all I can
tell you. More than-- more than anything
else. But at-- at a time like when I told
you when I became hysterical and I-- I
collapsed and my father-- my father wouldn't
go and I didn't wanna--

11:31:41;07

I-- I mean, yeah, there was-- would say,
"Like, let's-- let's just all die." And
that's it. I mean, it's gonna happen anyway.
So-- but the-- the predominant feeling is to
want to live in spite of all the torture.
It's-- it's amazing but that's what it is.

But it's a very good question. I think most of us don't have death wishes. So-- some people do. But-- most people wanna live no matter how hard it is. Truth.

11:32:13;09

(OFF-MIC CONVERSATION)

FEMALE VOICE:

11:32:29;05

I was just wondering how you felt when (UNINTEL PHRASE) back to civilized land when you were living underground in a bunker for so long.

LOLA:

11:32:39;27

That's a good question. Well, first of all, I have to-- tell you that it wasn't that civilized. (LAUGHTER) Because-- when we-- were taken back into Russia-- Ukraine part of Russia-- that was still-- there was still-- air raids by the Germans. There were still-- the town were still being bombed.

11:33:01;19

So we were-- had area alarms. And-- the conditions were very, very primitive. So

civilized has to be taken with a grain of salt. I mean, to give you an idea when we were taken to this town. And-- the town hall said, "Okay, we're gonna place you." We had nothing.

11:33:27;24

We had no food, we had no clothes, we had no shelter, we have nothing. Of course, no resources of any kind. So-- they-- they-- well, wonderful. They said-- said, "We're gonna set you up in this-- house of this-- man who's an office manager who is expecting his family back from Siberia day-- they-- went into Siberia when the Germans came."

11:33:52;24

You know, left town. And now he came back. Resumed his position in that office. And he was waiting for his family to come and join. He had the house. He want-- and it was spring. It was-- March. He wanted-- and then the snow started falling. At this time

it was already like beginning of April. He wanted the garden to be-- started for his family, his children and his wife. And so he said, "Okay, we'll-- (UNINTEL) put you up in my house in exchange for you-- making the garden."

11:34:19;23

So we're digging-- you know-- the-- planting things and all. But for where do you get food? Well, he-- he had no food for us. So-- he gave us shelter. That-- that's all he could do. And-- what-- what-- the way we got food was-- and I'll tell you again what my father was able to do. So that's what you-- if you wanna call that civilized, okay. My father knew that the German soldiers wanted liquor. They-- they loved-- of course, they wanted-- they wanted drink.

11:34:55;06

He-- he-- he knew that the Russian peasants were very poor. And-- during the war

especially had no clothing. But (UNINTEL PHRASE) so he went to the Germans, begged them for-- I mean, to the-- not Germans. I'm sorry. But the Russian soldiers wanted liquor and the Russian peasants wanted clothing. The Germans were gone. Sorry about the-- you know-- I'm feeling a little shaken up.

11:35:23;07

So-- so he went to the Russian soldiers, got a shirt which is called a rubashka (PH). Sort of a warm shirt like a quilted jacket you might say. Begged and he says, "Look, I have nothing." So they gave him the jacket. But he didn't take it for himself. He took it to the Russian peasants. Oh, they loved that. Gave him a bottle of vodka for that.

11:35:44;12

And he took the vodka back to the Germans-- to the Germans-- to the Russian soldiers. And still in back of my mind that he loved

vodka for the German soldiers. See, I'm still like in the-- so took it to the Russian soldiers. Now he had-- vodka, he got two shirts. So-- one he kept for himself and the other one he traded for more vodka. And that-- and this went on until-- then when he had-- he had more of these shirts, the Russian peasants didn't give him just vodka but gave him some food.

11:36:17;13

Gave him-- eggs, chickens, this, that. And this is how-- and then my mother started baking cookies. And I and my cousin would go to the market and sell cookies. And that's how we were supporting ourselves-- for the few months until we went back to Poland. At which time it was right after the war. There were no schools open.

11:36:39;02

There was no library. And this is where I met this friend that I told you jumped out of

a concentration camp and broke his (UNINTEL).

'Cause my father met her-- her father and the only way to make a living then was to smuggle cigarettes illegally. And so he met her father and he said, "I have a daughter. You have-- okay, let's." And she had a book.

And that, to me, was the greatest thing ever. I finally got a hold of a book to read. So that was after the war.

11:37:09;01

And it wasn't-- you know-- then we went to western Poland where, again, there was no school for me yet. Because we were constantly moving. On the move. The object was, of course, to get to the United States eventually or to Paris or to Israel. And-- so we-- I didn't begin a normal life until I came to the United States. So that was a long time before.

11:37:34;18

Now, that-- that was a wonderful feeling.

Coming to the States is really a-- a great feeling. No question. It took a long time.

FEMALE VOICE:

11:37:44;28 Yes? I'm sorry-- you had your hand-- this young woman in the--

11:37:49;22 (OFF-MIC CONVERSATION)

FEMALE VOICE:

11:38:14;19 I (UNINTEL PHRASE) about how when your father and brother were (UNINTEL) bunker. And you were so excited to be reunited with them and then realized that your cousin would never have her father back (UNINTEL). After that, did you (UNINTEL) try to (UNINTEL PHRASE) your father in front of your cousin? Or--

LOLA:

11:38:35;22 No. No, no. You can't-- she was happy with her uncle, you know? She was happy that her uncle was alive and-- her cousin, my brother, was alive. No, no, that's-- we just all-- were very much in mourning for her father. And, of course, there was an aunt, too, that

I didn't tell you about.

11:38:52;00

Another cousin's-- mother. My father's sister-in-law was-- killed in front of him, too. No, that was not gonna make things easier for her if I-- because I wasn't jubilant about my father. I don't think that's what we did. We just-- helped her-- and her mother mourn. And-- you just have to go on. That-- that's all.

11:39:16;04

You just have to go on. And somehow whatever he did for you will live in you. And-- you know-- whatever he meant to you will-- will live-- his life through you. But-- there was nothing you-- you know-- that-- that would not have helped her.

FEMALE VOICE:

11:39:34;08

Yes?

11:39:37;00

(OFF-MIC CONVERSATION)

FEMALE VOICE:

11:39:37;00 Oh, I'm sorry, this woman behind you (UNINTEL PHRASE).

11:39:40;12 (OFF-MIC CONVERSATION)

MALE VOICE:

11:39:48;19 Do you ever think about what might have happened or have any regret about the decisions that your family made like-- not getting on the truck to go to Russia?

LOLA:

11:39:58;25 Well, sure. I mean, I-- I didn't hold that against my father because he saved our life as you see in many different ways. But-- that has been with me because it was a judgment-- a poor judgment on his part. My mother was not in charge. He was.

11:40:15;25 It was poor judgment. But then-- but then I understood his fear because-- of the problems that-- that he went through. And it was very difficult to make a choice at that point. And as I told you, one of the problems that

we, as human beings, have is to fully realize what's imminent, what is unavoidable. We don't want to-- we don't wanna face reality because it's so horrible.

11:40:41;05

If it's horrible you just wanna-- make believe it's not gonna happen. So instead of realizing that Hitler was about to-- to-- to-- to kill us all, he would kept thinking of the past. And it's understandable. Human beings have-- you know-- react certain ways based on their past experience. And it is more diff--

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* * *END OF TRANSCRIPT* * *

CHELSEA PICTURES, INC.

"HOLOCAUST DOCUMENTARY"

LOLA @ MAMARONECK

Q & A

INTERVIEWER: (NOT IDENTIFIED)

PRODUCER: ZUCKER

W6 - TAPE #4

**TRANSCRIBER'S NOTE: QUESTIONS SEVERELY OFF-MIC. UNIDENTIFIED
SPEAKERS ARE LABELED AS "QUESTION." BEST ATTEMPT FOLLOWS**

QUESTION:

11:39:51;18

Do you ever think about what might have happened or have any regret about decisions that your family made, like-- not getting on the truck to go to Russia?

LOLA:

11:39:59;05

Well, sure. I mean I-- I didn't hold that against my father because he saved our life, as you see many, many different ways. But that has been with me because it was a judgment-- a poor judgment on his part.

11:40:14;02

My mother was not in charge, he was. It was poor judgement. But-- but then I understood his fear because-- of the problems that-- that he went through. And it was very difficult to make a choice at that point. And, as I told you, one of the problems that we as human beings have is to fully realize what's imminent, what is unavoidable. It-- we don't want to-- we don't wanna face reality because it's so horrible.

11:40:40;25

If it's horrible you just wanna-- make believe it's not gonna happen. So, instead of realizing that Hitler was about to-- to-- to kill us off he was-- kept thinking of the past. And it's understandable. Human beings have-- you know, react certain ways based on their past experience. And it is more difficult to face the-- the-- what's more imminent, what-- what's gonna come.

11:41:05;04

And maybe it was just the-- the fact that he couldn't face it, I don't know. You know, I was-- I never blamed him for it. I just know-- it taught me a lesson. And the lesson is that people should be able to face reality. And to-- not to hope it's not gonna happen: it won't-- gonna be me. I mean, a lot of-- a-- even the United States now feel-- like you feel told, "Well, there may be another terrorist (UNINTEL) so maybe this," many people probably feel, "Well, it's not gonna be me. It's gonna be somebody else."

11:41:39;08

Well, that-- doesn't matter if it's gonna be you or somebody else. The point is it can happen. And it can destroy life. And it can destroy a society, and it can destroy-- order and so forth.

11:41:51;29

So, if you can learn a lesson from poor

judgement and mistakes that-- then it's okay, you have to accept it.

11:42:04;29

(IRRELEVANT MATERIAL OMITTED)

QUESTION:

11:42:42;20

How do you (UNINTEL PHRASE) mother and father twice. And you were (UNINTEL PHRASE) family. (UNINTEL PHRASE) a lot more?

LOLA:

11:43:00;13

Thank you, yes. You need to appreciate your family, that's right.

11:43:09;15

(IRRELEVANT MATERIAL OMITTED)

QUESTION:

11:43:59;26

After September 11th (UNINTEL PHRASE) really upset. I was really scared for my life and all I wanted to do was (UNINTEL) family and everyone I knew and loved. And just when you were experiencing (UNINTEL PHRASE) when you were losing the people that you loved I mean (EMOTIONAL) I'm like so embarrassed (UNINTEL PHRASE).

LOLA:

11:44:23;14

Well, thank you. I saw your face throughout my talk, and it was so-- and I wanna say that to all of you, I didn't necessarily see every face. But-- but I saw a lot of your faces. And your sympathy has touched me a lot. And your alertness, your-- your-- the way you're reacted is really remarkable because it-- it's so difficult to imagine that when you're not there. And, yet, your-- your reactions are-- almost as if you are witnessing this with me.

11:44:55;05

So it-- it's extremely-- extremely touching for me. And I just have a-- I just hope that it's-- gonna stay with you not in a sense that you're gonna cry, but that you're gonna feel positive about and do something that-- anything that you can to make this world better.

11:45:18;26

(IRRELEVANT MATERIAL OMITTED)

LOLA:

11:45:22;00 It-- that's why I'm here. Yes?

11:45:26;17 (IRRELEVANT MATERIAL OMITTED)

 QUESTION:

11:45:36;11 Is there-- coming out of this, is your value
for life just so much greater? And do you
find that you appreciate little things more?
Like just having a family around you and
things (UNINTEL PHRASE)?

 LOLA:

11:45:49;20 Uh-huh (AFFIRM). It's a good question. Yes,
and-- but I'm constantly aware of the fact
that-- that I take too much for granted. And
that's not good, you know.

11:46:07;19 So I tell you one thing that I do. I-- I am
a-- I'm an Atheist. I don't-- I-- I am a Jew
and I-- I observe the Jewish traditions, you
know, holidays, cultural things. And-- I'm
very, very strong in that respect-- as far as
wanting to be part of the Jewish people and
their tradition. But I do not believe in God

partly because of what happened and my mother stopped believing in God because she felt: how could-- what did her family do to deserve to die like this, every one of them? She could not believing.

11:46:49;29

And it rubbed off on me. And partly because I'm a scientist and I can't reconcile science with religion and so on-- and-- and I happen to be a geneticist who knows a lot about evolution.

11:47:04;06

So-- but in any case, I fast on Yom Kippur, you know, the holiday, Yom Kippur? And I fast mainly-- and my husband too who's also an Atheist. The one reason why we fast is not just to observe the holiday but to be reminded of what it's-- of how valuable food is. To have food.

11:47:27;17

You know, to-- to remember that we shouldn't

take things for granted. So your question was excellent. And-- absolutely that's true.

And-- you-- you would tend to do that because that's been na-- human nature. I mean it's basically, again, from the evolutionary point of view it's a way of survival. Because if we were to think all the time about the horrors and-- and-- and we wouldn't be able to survive as (UNINTEL PHRASE) and we would be probably re-- repressed and God knows what?

11:48:00;02

You've gotta-- you know, sort of take things a little bit for granted in order to-- to be able to survive. But not too much. You should always be aware that-- that you should be thankful for what you have, absolutely. Absolutely.

11:48:15;00

(IRRELEVANT MATERIAL OMITTED)

QUESTION:

11:48:33;19

What do you say to the people who, after you

came to the States, didn't believe that it happened? And they (UNINTEL PHRASE) that it didn't happen? So what do you say to them and in response to them saying, "Oh, it never happened. You're just making it up?"

LOLA:

11:48:49;00

Well, I-- never met anyone personally who believe that it never happened. But I heard about that. That there are people (UNINTEL) are not that few.

11:49:03;07

And when I hear that I get-- I get frantic. I mean I get so upset. And-- I can only tell you something that's-- very unpleasant. I was at the de-- dedication ceremony of the Holocaust Museum in Washington. And I'm sitting there with my husband. And very close to us were banners carried by-- Muslims, Palestinians saying "Six million lives-- six million lives-- six-- " and they were chanting.

11:49:45;17 It was just before (UNINTEL) and pre--
President Clinton and Musel (PH) came to the--
- to speak to us and all that. And this-- I
can tell you that now, I mean this is human
nature, I said to my husband, "You know, one
more chant and I-- I'm-- I'm gonna go and I'm
gonna tear these people to pieces."

11:50:03;13 And if I-- if-- if I-- if I had the guts I
would not have been responsible for what I
was doing. Honestly. I was-- I mean
hysterical like I was during the war. I mean
I was-- I was shaking, I was trembling, I was
gonna-- I was-- I was ready to kill them, I
really was.

11:50:18;05 I mean, I don't know if I would have done it,
had I had a gun. But it was-- it was-- I
couldn't bear it. It was impossible to bear.
And when I hear it now it's impossible. But

being faced with this like that, you know, is a-- the Holocaust Museum, me-- call-- you know-- a dedication and here are people saying that the-- these are lies, that six million Jews didn't die? I mean, that was-- so. Does that answer your question?

11:50:46;18

(IRRELEVANT MATERIAL OMITTED)

QUESTION:

11:51:09;08

I was wondering what you think-- I mean, have we made progress in-- in the world and (UNINTEL) society since then? And especially if you look at what's happening in Israel right now and what your opinion of that is?

LOLA:

11:51:24;17

It's-- it's-- the question probably doesn't-- you know, it's an excellent question, but the-- you know the answer as well as I. Did we? We haven't. You see what's happening in the world. We haven't.

11:51:35;01

That's-- the-- that's the-- that's what's so

difficult for me to bear now, to see that things are happening all over again. The people killing each other everywhere. That there is such hatred, that there is such inability to accept other people. It's just horrible. It's horrible. We-- we haven't learned any-- I mean I don't-- by we I don't mean we here. I mean human kind is-- is going through one crisis after another. And it's-- for me it-- it's horrible to-- to face this.

11:52:12;17

It's-- the answer is there. It-- it's just-- the only-- (CLEARS THROAT). The only thing that I can say is that-- it-- (SLIGHT PAUSE) I-- it-- if it were to happen again, you know if-- it's-- it's happening again only when both the government and the population are collaborating, are-- are-- are-- are agreeing on a course of action.

11:52:57;05

I think that the biggest hope we have in the United States is that, as I saw when the-- during the McCarthy era, which devastated me, that we have-- it's sort of a system of checks and balances, at least up to now, where there are extreme groups among the people. The government goes-- you know, is there to protect us. And that there's a-- a-- a-- very-- dangerous or-- ominous sign in the gov--

11:53:32;23

(CUT IN TAPE)

LOLA:

11:53:32;23

(IN PROGRESS)-- so hopefully in the United States that will be the case. Now, in other parts of the country that's not-- in other parts of the world it's not necessarily so, as you know. So-- it's unfortunate. I don't know what we can do about it. Actually-- pretty hopeless, actually.

11:54:21;18

(IRRELEVANT MATERIAL OMITTED)

QUESTION:

11:54:36;09 I personally wanna thank you for coming because you made me feel stronger as a person. (EMOTIONAL) I just lost a very good friend of mine a couple weeks ago--

LOLA:

11:54:45;04 Oh, I'm sorry--

QUESTION:

11:54:45;25 --And I could never, ever (UNINTEL)--

LOLA:

11:54:47;13 Oh, I'm sorry to hear that.

QUESTION:

11:54:48;08 --(UNINTEL PHRASE) all at one time. And it really-- it just made me so much stronger inside--

11:54:55;17 (OVERTALK)

LOLA:

11:54:56;13 Well, thank you--

QUESTION:

11:54:56;14 (UNINTEL PHRASE).

LOLA:

some-- some who like to speak. As long as they listen well and carefully. I-- I appreciate very much having been invited to your school and being part of this very important program--

MODERATOR:

11:56:12;18 --A couple other people, I'm sorry.

LOLA:

11:56:13;10 Oh, sure. That's okay. No, why be sorry? I'm glad to be here. I-- obviously that's why I'm here.

MODERATOR:

11:56:19;22 Raise your hand again, I'm sorry, just-- was there anybody else who had wanted to say something (UNINTEL PHRASE) right here?

11:56:29;04 (IRRELEVANT MATERIAL OMITTED)

QUESTION:

11:57:23;00 Looking around the room (UNINTEL PHRASE) experiences on everyone's faces (UNINTEL) emotional and (UNINTEL PHRASE) I mean-- the tears in our eyes and just everyone's face--

you made such an impression on everyone
(UNINTEL PHRASE) one person who's-- like
everyone (UNINTEL) in tears--

LOLA:

11:57:44;16

Well, thank you, I-- I didn't mean to make
you go through this. (LAUGHS) I didn't-- I
didn't know-- I guess if-- if that's gonna
help you to be strong in the future that's
good. But I-- I-- I don't know if I wanted
you to be that depressed.

11:58:01;00

I think if, you know, if it's gonna have a
positive effect, a lasting effect that's
good. I-- I want you to cry. Go ahead and
cry. Yes, that's not-- that's-- no, that's--
very rewarding to me to be able to touch
people and make them somehow a difference in
their life.

11:58:20;18

That's what I've dedicated myself to now and--
- and I find it gives me a-- a tremendous,

tremendous consolation. And I think maybe Sarah didn't wanna tell you, but I'll tell you, I'm here. I have a sick husband at home who just had a pace maker put in. I have somebody with him, but he-- he feels very, very upset when I leave him. And I said I've gotta go to this. I have made a commitment and I have to keep it.

11:58:51;16

And so that-- should give you an idea of how important this is-- to me. So-- he's getting a little better, but I had to keep this (CHUCKLE) important because it meant-- it means a lot to me. So, I'm glad that-- that it's-- that there's some-- some meaning to you.

11:59:16;21

(IRRELEVANT MATERIAL OMITTED)

QUESTION:

11:59:28;12

I just wanted to say thank you for taking time out of your life and taking time (UNINTEL PHRASE) your husband and (UNINTEL).

And I just wanted to say thank you for-- for sharing your story (UNINTEL).

LOLA:

11:59:38;00

And thank you. Thank you for listening and being such good listeners. Really great to see you, you're young people. And you-- you're young. You're-- your lives are so different and it's amazing how-- you know, how you-- you've reacted. So I think that's a very positive thing. Very positive.

12:00:00;14

(IRRELEVANT MATERIAL OMITTED)

QUESTION:

12:00:22;17

There have been many, like, movies and films based on like true stories that people've told about the Holocaust. And I just wanna know from your personal experience-- I don't know if you've seen 'em-- but I just wanted to know how accurate some of 'em were and were they-- really as life like as they were in the movies?

LOLA:

12:00:41;17

That's a very good question. I've seen a number of them. I've seen "Shoah (PH)," and that was made by a French director-- a number of years ago. I've seen "Sobiebor (PH)," and I've seen-- others, but-- "Life is Beautiful," which has some events of the Holocaust, and "Schindler's List."

12:01:02;28

It's very difficult for me to go to these movies which of course I know are going to depict something that is very painful to me. But I go because I wanna see, in fact, how true to-- to my experience, to-- to the Holocaust in general these-- depictions are.

12:01:24;26

And-- I can tell you that the only thing that came fairly close (UNINTEL) where I was sitting-- and I said, "Geeze, this is what I went through," at least part of it, was "Schindler's List." I think that's the only

one that we really had tremendous impact. And-- they all had an impact, but the impact where I-- "My God, that's me there." I mean, he's showing (UNINTEL PHRASE) from ghettos and running and that's-- and-- and all this-- it was-- it was-- in fact, I had to close my eyes and not watch it. I couldn't watch it.

12:02:02;01

And my brother who went to see it actually walked out. He couldn't see the rest of it.

So I think that movie-- but they all contribute important-- things. It's not to minimize anything. It's just that it's so difficult to reproduce what is happening, it's limited impossible, unless you were there. And-- but I felt that he did a fantastic job with "Schindler's List." (UNINTEL).

12:02:28;26

(IRRELEVANT MATERIAL OMITTED)

LOLA:

12:02:45;28

(APPLAUSE) Thanks for listening and for

having me here.

MODERATOR:

12:02:48;03 Dr. Marguiles (PH), I just wanna thank you.

LOLA:

12:02:50;20 Thank you.

MODERATOR:

12:02:51;07 You're so gracious. You're so lovely to come here-- I'm gonna cry here-- (LAUGHTER) and share your experiences with us. To touch us in ways we couldn't have imagined. And I wanna thank you.

12:03:03;28 (OVERTALK)

LOLA:

12:03:04;06 Well, they were great. They were just wonderful.

MODERATOR:

12:03:05;03 --from the bottom of my heart for listening, for responding. As a teacher I never know what you'll learn. What you learned today we cannot measure. But you have learned

something that is so important. And you will never forget being in the presence of a Holocaust survivor.

12:03:26;22

And you can tell your children, "Yes, this happened. I heard someone speak who was there. And I'm gonna do my best to make sure this doesn't happen to any group of people again."

12:03:42;22

We were talking earlier and you said to me, that in your words, that that was the message. That's the message. When you see something happen that is wrong to another human being you said, "It's not enough just to say, "I see it, I know it's wrong." You have to act.

12:04:04;02

And I know every one of you will. Because you have been touched by this moment, and especially by Dr. Marguiles.

12:04:11;01

(OVERTALK)

LOLA:

12:04:11;07

Thank you. (APPLAUSE)

12:04:16;24

(IRRELEVANT MATERIAL OMITTED)

END SIDE A

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*** END OF TRANSCRIPT ***

CHELSEA PRODUCTIONS, INC.

"HOLOCAUST DOCUMENTARY"

LOLA @ MAMARONECK - W6

INTERVIEWER: NOT IDENTIFIED

PRODUCER: ZUCKER

TAPE #5

12:27:20;12

(OFF-MIC CONVERSATION)

QUESTION:

12:27:23;24

What do you feel your students get-- from a survivor such as Lola? What they can't get from a book or a museum or even you for that matter? What-- what do you think that is that-- that a survivor contributes?

FEMALE VOICE:

12:27:41;20

First of all, there's the reality. This is a real human being as I said to them. This is a real human being who has had this experience. It's not a story. It's not an anecdote. It's not fiction. It's real, it happened. So they get that sense of-- also

being a witness to history.

12:28:03;26

They're hearing someone who's experienced it.

They're listening first hand to his or her story. I think more important, though, or at least equally important is the emotional response that is much deeper than any book can convey.

12:28:24;08

When they read "Night" they're touched.

There's no doubt about it. They're touched.

We all are. I cry every time I read it-- read-- every time I read it. But when I hear a Holocaust survivor speak in front of students and I watch their faces and I listen to their responses, I know I've done something that's immeasurable.

12:28:44;25

I've touched them in a way that is so important. And I hope that that impact will translate into action in their lives, in

meaningful experiences. When the child said--
- when the student said-- "I appreciate life
in a different way." Or, "What you've gone
through gives me courage." That's important.
Or, "I value the people in my life in ways
that-- that maybe I take for granted all the
time." That's important.

12:29:20;19

And, of course, when they talk about bigotry
and prejudice and hierarchy, social hierarchy
and differences in the school itself and in
their own personal lives and they see what
can happen and they listen first hand to what
happened to human beings because people in
their society and in their government said
this was not only okay and permissible but it
became law. And they maybe can-- can take
action themselves to stop it when so and so
says, "You're no good because you're black."
Or, "You're no good because you're Jewish."

12:29:52;01

Or, "You're no good because you're Italian."

Maybe their lives will be better, better for having heard this speaker. But, again, the most important thing is that emotional reaction. It truly touches them in ways that-- that are unpredictable, are absolutely unpredictable. I will never know how that Holocaust survivor truly is having impact on them. But I know it's profound. I know it's profound.

QUESTION:

12:30:25;23

This might be redundant but-- (UNINTEL) it is.

FEMALE VOICE:

12:30:29;25

Well, you can (UNINTEL).

QUESTION:

12:30:32;12

No, no. The survivors who have spoken here with the students-- well, the (UNINTEL PHRASE) contributed to or affected your life and the life of your students. And do you have any particular or specific examples of

that? If you don't, that's fine. But if you do, (UNINTEL). How-- how has it affected in lasting ways?

FEMALE VOICE:

12:31:05;05

I teach from the heart. I do. The most important thing for me is to make a personal impact on my students. And these speakers, these speakers are so dynamic, they're so sincere, they're so honest, they're so open with what they say that they touch these kids. They touch them in such deep, immeasurable ways.

12:31:34;29

For me, that's what education's about. And when I listen to them, both in the question and discussion sessions and in the classroom afterwards, I know something has changed in their lives even if they can't articulate it and even if I can't articulate it. We've had kids cry in front of other kids.

12:32:05;19

Something takes place when a child who wasn't necessarily a close friend reaches out and embraces that crying child whose tears were evoked by a story that a survivor has told. But more deeply evoked by his or her own personal human experiences. The loss of a grandparent, a childhood friend who moves away, a divorce, a death in his or her own family-- an illness. And then the classmate reaches out and says, "I care about you and I'm not embarrassed in front of other people to show I care."

12:32:45;04

That's a positive moment. That's an indescribable positive moment. I will use the word, "joy," for me because I've set the stage. I haven't created the experience but I've set the stage and I've allowed them to show their feelings. I think that's why I come from an awe of education. That's the heart of it. To reach them.

12:33:14;00

And to allow them to reach out to others. And if they can do it in the classroom. And tenth graders are really very private about their feelings. And they wanna be seen as strong and in control. And if they can say, "I can let go and I can care for you when you let go," something has happened that will carry over way beyond the classroom, way beyond the classroom.

QUESTION:

12:33:43;13

And my last question is there anything that you would like to say to Dr. Margolies (PH)? To-- to Lola? And if so, please feel free to say it. (LAUGHTER)

FEMALE VOICE:

12:33:59;22

Lola said something-- you said something very interesting. You said you were a pessimist. Maybe you are but I don't totally believe you because you stayed in that underground bunker for nine months and didn't give up.

That's optimism. That's at the core of your being.

12:34:16;20

No one was there to say to you, "You are definitely gonna survive." Yes, your father may have said it but you said you didn't believe it. But you had to believe it. You're an optimist. You came here today and you spoke to our students.

12:34:31;20

Your husband's ill at home. He didn't want you to go but you left because you believed that you had something to convey to them that they would carry for the rest of their lives. And even though you didn't say this, you must believe on some level that you survived and your survival-- was for a reason, was for a reason.

12:34:54;10

And that means you are an optimist. You're not a pessimist. And that was proven today.

You came. You spoke to my students and me
and you made us more optimistic for your
story.

12:35:15;11

(OFF-MIC CONVERSATION)

FEMALE VOICE:

12:35:24;15

I'd like to say to Dr. Margolies. I'd like
to say to you, Dr. Margolies.

12:35:32;03

(OFF-MIC CONVERSATION)

* * *END SIDE A* * *

* * *SIDE B BLANK* * *

* * *END OF TRANSCRIPT* * *