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Gottfried, Jean, Oral history interview conducted by Sady Sullivan, November 10, 2010; Brooklyn Heights Synagogue oral histories, 2011.005.004; Brooklyn Historical Society.

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Oral History Interview with Jean Gottfried

Brooklyn Heights Synagogue oral histories, 2011.005.004

Interview conducted by Sady Sullivan on November 10, 2010

at 140 Cadman Plaza West, Brooklyn with Frances Gottfried [Jean's daughter]

SULLIVAN: So if you could count to five.

J. GOTTFRIED: I should count to five?

SULLIVAN: Yeah, just so I can hear you.

J. GOTTFRIED: OK. Tell me when to start.

SULLIVAN: You can go ahead.

J. GOTTFRIED: One, two, three, four, five.

SULLIVAN: That's great.

J. GOTTFRIED: Again?

SULLIVAN: No, that's good. All right. [pause] So, uh, the recorder is on, and I will just begin by saying that today is November 10, 2010, and I am Sady Sullivan from the Brooklyn Historical Society. This interview is part of the Brooklyn Heights Synagogue Oral History Project. And now, if you would introduce yourself to the recording.

J. GOTTFRIED: Uh, my name is Jean Gottfried. I live at 140 Cadman Plaza West. I've been in this building since the -- one of the original tenants, 1967 [laughter]. Nineteen sixty-seven. Um, what else can I say? I -- I'm a Brooklynite all my life except for perhaps one year when -- I was born in Philadelphia because I had an older, another bro -- another brother, should rest in peace. Um, we were almost two years apart. But we're in New York, but my father -- when my mother evidently was pregnant with me, there was a -- he was an egg handler. You know what an egg handler is?

SULLIVAN: Uh-uh.

J. GOTTFRIED: Well, in the butter and egg business. Today, things are done mechanically, electrically, everything, but years ago, to -- an egg handler would look at the eggs through a certain light to determine the quality of it, if it was, um, with bloodstain or

anything that was-- But anyway, he would decide. Today everything's done with machines and electrically, but that was done by hand. Well, it seems -- my mother's entire family was in Philadelphia, but she got married; she lived in New York. But at the time she was pregnant with me, um, I think there was a -- there was no employment in the city, so my father -- we moved to Philadelphia, in my aunt's house, and that's how I was born in Philadelphia, but then we came back to -- and I've been in Brooklyn all my life. We've always lived in Brooklyn. But I don't remember -- I think when we came back from there, for a short time, we lived in Williamsburg, Meserole Street, around there, those areas. And then I've lived in East New York here all my life, all my life, between, um, well, East New York and here, you know, but Brooklyn in general all my life. Went to school here, everything, you know.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm. Um, and so what is -- for the archival record, what is your date of birth?

J. GOTTFRIED: [date redacted for privacy], 1915.

SULLIVAN: And so how old are you today?

J. GOTTFRIED: Today I'm 95 plus, from March [laughter] on.

SULLIVAN: Wow.

J. GOTTFRIED: March, April, May, June, July--you know, past the half mark.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: On my way to 96 in March, you know? But over the--

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm. And so you were born in Philadelphia?

J. GOTTFRIED: I was born in Philadelphia, but I've lived in New York all my life.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm. So tell me a bit about your parents.

J. GOTTFRIED: My parents were born in Europe, and they came here. Um, my mother's family settled in Philadelphia. Her -- she was the second-youngest of a large family, and my aunts and uncles all lived in Philadelphia, and they decided, luckily, before they -- to come back -- come to the United States. So naturally, the older children, my aunts and uncles, all living in Philadelphia, they settled there. My father was, um --

lived in New York, though, but he was friends with one of my uncles, who, you know, and, and even as children, so -- and in Europe, they were brought up-- So they lived -- so naturally -- they lived in Philadelphia, and when we were married, we lived in New York, actually, Brooklyn, all our lives. Meserole Street, around there, in that area.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm. So where in Europe are -- were your parents from?

J. GOTTFRIED: Austria Poland, isn't this? [asking her daughter] Yeah.

SULLIVAN: And so they were from the same place?

J. GOTTFRIED: They were also -- they were close to the Russian border.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: My grandfather worked -- was a -- they lived in Poland here, but it was like the border near Russia --

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: -- and he worked in Russia. My grandfather was a painter, but he didn't paint this, he did murals.

SULLIVAN: Oh, wow.

J. GOTTFRIED: Years ago, and though many years ago, they did mural -- they did murals. You didn't paint one color, you know?

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: So they -- he lived-- But it was on the border line, because he would go -- he had apprentices under him, and they would, by horse and wagon, years ago, and go into the Russian area to the [inaudible] all the landowners to work there.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: And then he went -- later on, they were the last, the children, got to -- came to America, and my grandmother and grandfather, and my mother and another brother, younger too, and a sister -- three children of the family -- they came here. But the older children married and were here first. But they all settled in Philadelphia. That's how we ended up there.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm. So do you know what year, around, your, your

grandparents came to Philadelphia?

J. GOTTFRIED: I-- probably-- They probably came--oh, maybe the latter part of 18th and early 19th.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: Sure, I imagine that.

F. GOTTFRIED: Yeah, because --

J. GOTTFRIED: What?

F. GOTTFRIED: Because my grandmother was -- when she lived here, she was a teenager.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

F. GOTTFRIED: Which means -- and my mother was born in 1915 --

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

F. GOTTFRIED: -- and she was -- her uncle -- you know, she was married a couple years, so it had to be late -- you know, late 1800s.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm.

F. GOTTFRIED: Just [inaudible] tell about Manuk [phonetic] -- that was her grandfather -- how he went back and forth across --

J. GOTTFRIED: Oh.

F. GOTTFRIED: -- the border and that --

J. GOTTFRIED: Oh, the borderline.

F. GOTTFRIED: -- it was the time of the pogroms --

J. GOTTFRIED: Yeah, we used to say --

F. GOTTFRIED: -- and that he smuggled people.

J. GOTTFRIED: Yeah, he would -- you know, many families that have sons, you know, didn't want them to get them into the army -- get in the-- So they would approach my grandfather, having the right to go across the border back and forth every day because he, as I said, he painted in all these large mansions and estates, you know. So the people would approach him many times, and he would help them cross the border. Yeah.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: Right. He would help them and get the young men across the border to avoid going into the service there.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: That was a common thing, I think, that people with families and sons tried to get the children out.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: You know, the sons. It was very common, you know --

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: -- to try to help them, to keep them alive.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: Otherwise they'd draft them into the service there.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: You know, we take things for granted here, but those years, it was different.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: There was -- you didn't have the freedom you have today.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm. So when your family came to Brooklyn, where -- you said you were living in Williamsburg?

J. GOTTFRIED: Well, I was -- I'm trying to think. We lived in East New York, you know, but I was born in Philadel -- my mother and father evidently lived in Williamsburg --

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: -- because Charles -- Dr. Bernburg's [phonetic] parents lived there. They had, um -- my grandfather had a house in Europe.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: Years ago he had a house. He had -- it's not the type of houses you have here; you had a -- well, bedrooms, everything, but they had a lot of, uh, looked like cousins or friends of people. And Dr. Charlie's parents lived -- they were the -- one of the tenants that my -- actually my doctor, my gynecologist, his parents we're talking

about, too, lived in my grandmother, grandfather's house. But they came to America before my grandmother and grandfather, you know.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: But they lived -- they had a dairy store, and years ago, you had that -- the butter and eggs. You didn't have just grocery -- you know, grocery. Butter and eggs and dairy stuff was popular, one area, you know. So they got a, uh -- my mother and father an apartment there in Brooklyn. That's how. And when -- as I said, there was no-- strike and there was no employment here, so for a short time, we went to Philadelphia. And that's how I was born.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: We came back. We came back to Brooklyn again, you know.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: And, um, I'm just --

F. GOTTFRIED: You lived on Walter Street, right?

J. GOTTFRIED: Eh?

F. GOTTFRIED: You lived on Walter Street.

J. GOTTFRIED: Oh. Lived right off --

F. GOTTFRIED: East New York.

J. GOTTFRIED: -- Linden Boulevard --

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: -- so on Walter Street was there.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: And it's right across the street from the synagogue. There was a synagogue.

And Walter Street was a short -- do you know East New York?

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: New Lots.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: And Hegeman Avenue -- Hegeman, Hegeman, and then you have New

Lots. Hegeman and Linden Boulevard. It's Linden Boulevard, I think, Hegeman, and New Lots.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: I'm trying to remember. I think that's how it goes. Yeah. So we lived on Walter Street, 30 Walter Street, uh, until, um -- I'm just -- I went to -- what was I -- what happened? Oh, for some reason or another, as I said, there was no, uh, uh, work, so they moved -- then my father opened a dairy grocery store in Jersey City.

SULLIVAN: Oh.

J. GOTTFRIED: Yeah. And at that time, I had finished high school, and I went to -- incidentally, one of the earliest people of Thomas Jefferson High School.

SULLIVAN: Oh.

J. GOTTFRIED: That was a beautiful high school years ago, a beautiful -- I remember when it was built.

SULLIVAN: Wow.

J. GOTTFRIED: It was a beautiful school, a beautiful school, and the teachers -- everything about it was very wonderful.

SULLIVAN: And where did you go to elementary school?

J. GOTTFRIED: Um, elementary school, we had to walk quite a distance, because [PS] 190 was not built at that time. We had to go to [PS] 174 on Livonia Avenue. Do you know Livonia Avenue?

SULLIVAN: I do not.

J. GOTTFRIED: Oh, that's also beyond -- we had to go beyond -- and I'll remember, my mother, you know, was -- what -- one thing about the old time is everyone, education was very important to them --

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: -- for their children. Education -- my mother -- was very important that the children have. My mother used to take us in a carriage wrapped up in the winter to school, all the way to Hegeman Avenue to Livonia there every day to school, back and

forth, and come back at three o'clock for us with food and sandwiches. Oh, going to school was very important to the old folks, old-timers years ago.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: An education for their children was very important.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm. And you had -- oh.

F. GOTTFRIED: [inaudible] tell about uncle --

J. GOTTFRIED: I wish you'd sit here; I think I can hear you better.

F. GOTTFRIED: Oh, I want you to see. But tell about Uncle Charlie and the carriage.

J. GOTTFRIED: Yeah, I said she used to take us to the carriage, but my brother, we're almost two years apart. My mother had to drop him off a block before the school so nobody -- his friends wouldn't see that he was in the carriage, [laughter] because we were wrapped up from top to bottom, but school was important, you know?

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: She had to drop my brother off a block before. Yeah, yeah.

SULLIVAN: [laughter] Do you have other siblings, or just the one brother?

J. GOTTFRIED: I had a younger brother also who's ten -- who should rest in peace -- ten years, uh, younger than me, almost ten. Right?

F. GOTTFRIED: Yes.

SULLIVAN: So there was three of you?

F. GOTTFRIED: Right.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: Yes. Two -- my --

F. GOTTFRIED: Yeah. He -- he died last year.

J. GOTTFRIED: Eh? Three, yeah.

F. GOTTFRIED: Yes. And then your other brother, Uncle Charlie died --

J. GOTTFRIED: Yeah, yeah, he --

F. GOTTFRIED: -- quite some while ago.

J. GOTTFRIED: Right. But my younger brother and I are almost ten -- he was like a -- I don't

know, uh, I practically brought him up every time, you know what I mean?

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: Years ago my mother worked the house, every place we went, you know?

But my older brother was also very close. See, we're -- we're less than two years apart. If -- he never went anywhere -- if, if he went with his friends and I was there too, he never let go of my hand. He used to drag me all over with his friends, you know, how -- I was a youngster, too. How old was I then? Also maybe eight, six years. You know, with the-- But he took -- he wouldn't leave me alone, so he would be dragging me with one hand, too. We were very close. The younger one and I were ten years apart. Yeah. We're very close, you know.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: Through that.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: You know, it was -- you were -- and I tell you, it was natural to be brought up and respect each other.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: You know, it just came naturally then, you know.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: We didn't have much, but neither did anybody else around there.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: You know? We were children, so you had food on the table. But we used to go for -- the farms were open. On Linden Boulevard then were all farms.

SULLIVAN: Wow, yeah.

J. GOTTFRIED: So three o'clock when we came home from school, my brother and I would walk -- and at that time, you had aluminum pitchers -- we would get the milk from the farm. And my mother would use -- you know, she couldn't read or write, but she knew it was told, so she would take that milk and boil it. We didn't drink that milk until the following day.

SULLIVAN: Ah.

J. GOTTFRIED: Directly from the cow, because even at that time, it was told, you know, they had to boil the milk.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: Even -- but the farmer used to have a glass there and give the children. We used to sip when we came there. There was nothing like that -- have it squirt -- the glass squirted right in front of you from the cow.

SULLIVAN: Yeah.

J. GOTTFRIED: It was, you know, it was fun for us, and we used to drink it, you know.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm. So that was within walking distance of your -- of your house?

J. GOTTFRIED: What?

SULLIVAN: The farm was in -- was within walking distance?

J. GOTTFRIED: Well, for us it was walking distance --

SULLIVAN: Yeah.

J. GOTTFRIED: -- but I would say that the -- sometime about eight blocks or more a while.

F. GOTTFRIED: Oh, I --

J. GOTTFRIED: Yeah.

F. GOTTFRIED: -- you know, I wasn't there. [laughter]

J. GOTTFRIED: No, no. What is the distance like from Hegeman Avenue, that, to Linden Boulevard? It's quite a distance.

F. GOTTFRIED: Well, it's a few long blocks.

J. GOTTFRIED: Eh? Well --

F. GOTTFRIED: A few long blocks, I think --

J. GOTTFRIED: [inaudible].

F. GOTTFRIED: -- when you're a child, it seems longer.

J. GOTTFRIED: It was still walking distance, you know.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: Today you have a bus all over --

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: -- but years ago, there was no such thing as buses, you know?

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: You didn't have that.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: So, you know, you just walked all over.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: I'm trying to think with the trolley -- wasn't it--? But that's-- Did we have a troll -- I think the trolley didn't come till later years in the neighborhood. They may have had it in Manhattan or other areas, but in that part of Brooklyn, East New York, you didn't.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm. So what was your religious education like as, as a kid?

J. GOTTFRIED: What?

SULLIVAN: What was your religious education like when you were growing up?

J. GOTTFRIED: Well, I didn't have -- I was just brought up with tradition that I've seen in the house. I was not taught, taught Hebrew, because years ago, girls were not taught, only the boys for their Bar Mitzvahs.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: If you were a girl, you didn't, unless -- some families I guess did, you know, there were ones, but the average family like ours, the girls didn't -- were not brought up with the Hebrew.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: We observed things on Saturday like everybody else, but we were not taught reading Hebrew.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm. But your brothers were taught?

J. GOTTFRIED: Brothers -- well, my older brother, and then later on, my younger brother. Of course they were Bar Mitzvahed, yeah.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: But girls were not taught.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: I don't know whether -- well, nobody did, none of my friends, so I'm just trying to think whether it was -- and our economic condition also, you know. It may have been both.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

F. GOTTFRIED: Well, the synagogue across the street, the synagogue across the street from you --

J. GOTTFRIED: Oh, yeah.

F. GOTTFRIED: -- was Orthodox, right?

J. GOTTFRIED: Oh, yeah.

F. GOTTFRIED: Right, so girls would not have been Bat Mitzvahed.

J. GOTTFRIED: No.

F. GOTTFRIED: Correct?

J. GOTTFRIED: Yeah, they didn't believe in that. Girls weren't.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm. And is that the synagogue -- was your family members at that synagogue across the street?

J. GOTTFRIED: Years ago there was no such thing as members. You went to the synagogue. It was open to everybody.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: Yeah. A synagogue was open to everybody. You didn't have special memberships. I guess -- I was a child, I don't know -- but I'm sure they must have been given donations. Nothing subsists on its own.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm. But that's where you would go to services?

J. GOTTFRIED: That synagogue was our synagogue.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: Until years later when we moved to Jersey City. But we lived in East New York all that--

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: And we lived in a -- uh, there weren't apartment houses. There were a few tenement houses, like six floors, but we lived in a private house. There were three houses across, directly across from the synagogue, with open porches -- two-family houses. They were two-family houses, a family upstairs, family down. And you had -- everybody had a wonderful porch in the front. We as children used to congregate there, especially on rainy days, you know?

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: So we lived there until we went to Jersey, yeah.

F. GOTTFRIED: But you were in Jersey for a short time, right?

J. GOTTFRIED: Yeah.

F. GOTTFRIED: A year?

J. GOTTFRIED: What?

F. GOTTFRIED: A year?

J. GOTTFRIED: In J --

F. GOTTFRIED: In New Jersey. A year?

J. GOTTFRIED: We didn't live there too long, yeah, Jersey City.

F. GOTTFRIED: That was very short.

J. GOTTFRIED: Jer -- then we came back, and then we moved to Hegeman Avenue, which is right off New Jersey, right off Pennsylvania Avenue there.

SULLIVAN: So what did you do after Thomas Jefferson High School?

J. GOTTFRIED: Well, I -- after that I went -- it was depression time, so you couldn't get jobs very easily when I graduated from -- I -- I was still a young -- years ago you had rapid advances classes.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: So I graduated. I was 16 years old, 15, not even 16 yet, years. So, my father being known in the butter and egg -- you know, working over there, he was able to get me through a friend a job. I -- I worked in one of the -- actually, not in the butter-egg --

at that time, the next -- Greenwich Street, the next one, was wholesale fruits and vegetables, and butter-eggs were on this side of Chamber -- uh, Chambers Street and Duane, all that.

SULLIVAN: Oh, tell me more about that. So where -- where was the area?

J. GOTTFRIED: Oh, that was some area. Butter and eggs and fruits and vege --

F. GOTTFRIED: That's Tribeca today.

J. GOTTFRIED: That was the hub of New York City in those years.

SULLIVAN: So Chambers and Duane were the butter-and-eggs place?

J. GOTTFRIED: That -- Duane and all that whole area. Butter and eggs, and the fruits market was on Greenwich, uh, you know, going, uh, west.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: Going east was butter and eggs. But they -- they congregated in the restaurant, and you know what, they're all -- it was mixed in.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: But those were the -- that was the wholesale, uh, market of butter and eggs and fruits and vegetables of New York City then.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: Today you have Bronx and all those, but those years, that was it.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: Yeah.

SULLIVAN: So what were you doing -- did you -- you said that you got a job there?

J. GOTTFRIED: I got a job, actually my first job. I was able -- one of the friends of my husband [father]-- I was able to get a job as the cashier in the restaurant.

SULLIVAN: Where was the restaurant?

J. GOTTFRIED: On the corner of Chambers, I think it's -- and Duane. It was the corner at-- It was very popular, you know, for the -- all the merchants would come in there, everything. It was very popular. And of course this was mostly Jewish [inaudible], but they were both half [inaudible], because the fruits and vegetables -- butter and eggs

was mostly a lot of Jewish people owned it, but fruits and vegetables, you had a lot of Jewish and Italian.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: That was very popular, Italian then. And -- but all the wholesalers, yeah, everybody knew each other. You know what I mean? For blocks and blocks around, you know, people knew each other. You know?

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: And in those years I think anything that happened, anybody in need was helped. You know, it was different then.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: Yeah. It was different years, you know. And people were not envious. It didn't matter if the one over here was very wealthy and the other one was not -- the average person I'm talking about, you know. The wealthy were not greedy. You know what I mean? People helped them. They were happy. People were happy.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: You know, happy if you were well and stuff like that. But you didn't have the greed you have nowadays. You didn't have that.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: It was different times, you know.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm. So did most of --

F. GOTTFRIED: Where did you work after the cash -- after you worked in the restaurant, where did you work?

J. GOTTFRIED: Uh, then -- I'm trying to think -- where did I--? Oh. The owner of the restaurant was -- had a wholesale fruits and vegetables, you know, on the other Green -- I told you, Greenwich Street, one side was fruit -- was butter and eggs, the other side, fruits and vegetables. So I got -- he got me, um, in the office, I worked. They had about three--three or four women, the head bookkeeper at that time, and I was able to get a job there.

SULLIVAN: In the office of the, the wholesaler?

J. GOTTFRIED: Yes.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: Fruits and vegetables. You know, you'll have to excuse me for a minute.

SULLIVAN: Sure.

[Interview Interrupted.]

J. GOTTFRIED: -- a little better than this normally, a little bit.

F. GOTTFRIED: Yeah, true, [inaudible].

J. GOTTFRIED: Just I didn't sleep well last night, so.

SULLIVAN: Um, so I turned the recorder back on, so this is part two of our interview on
November 10th, 2010.

J. GOTTFRIED: What?

SULLIVAN: Oh, I was just -- just for the recording, telling the date again. Um, so can we go
back to the, the neighborhood where you grew up in East New York? Can you describe
it?

J. GOTTFRIED: It was -- well -- you had houses. They were mostly a lot of private -- in other
words, I wouldn't call them private like today; they were like two-family houses. You
know, people had a house, they had a tenant to help them support the, uh, taxes, you
know. It's not like you had a -- a few of them occupied the entire house; they had
children who went to work. But that's about -- but I think somehow or other it was a
different life. People were always -- people were happy. You didn't see people, uh,
crunched, you know, or of [inaudible]. They usually -- most people got along
everything, yeah.

SULLIVAN: What was the technology like then in terms of what kinds of appliances and
resources you would have in the house?

J. GOTTFRIED: Um, well, when we lived on Walter Street, it was the cold water flat. You
didn't have heat. The heat -- you had a stove in the kitchen, a large stove. You can cook
on it, bake in it, you know. In the summertime you had gas -- that's different -- you

didn't use that, but that stove would heat the apartment. We had four -- as a child. We lived there. We had two bedrooms, you know. But the rooms were large rooms in those years, you know? They were large. And we -- most people lived, in fact, that way, families together, you don't know, to the-- And we lived there until we moved to Jersey City. It was --

SULLIVAN: Was the stove a coal stove? What -- what --

J. GOTTFRIED: Coal stove. You didn't have steam heat.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: You didn't have steam heat; you had coal stoves, and that's how you got the heat -- You didn't have steam heat; you had coal stoves, and that's how you got the heat --

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: -- from there, too.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: It was -- you used it for cooking in the wintertime because the stove was on. But after that, you had gas stoves that they would keep on top on the stove in the summertime, you know.

SULLIVAN: Oh, so just little gas burners to cook on?

J. GOTTFRIED: Hmm?

SULLIVAN: Uh, gas burners to cook on?

J. GOTTFRIED: That was gas, yes.

SULLIVAN: Oh, oh.

J. GOTTFRIED: And you didn't have electricity. We had gas jets for lighting.

SULLIVAN: Oh. How did they -- how did those work inside a house?

J. GOTTFRIED: You -- it was fine. This was it. You didn't know anything better.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: It's like when you -- when you have candlelight. You know it's candlelight. You're getting light from that light. You can't compare it with electric because there

was no electricity. When electricity came out, it was probably the more affluent people, you know, but we didn't have it.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: But you didn't miss it.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: Nobody else had it either.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: And you were happy. You were light, that's it.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm. How did you light the gas lamps? How did you turn them on?

J. GOTTFRIED: Oh, uh. Yeah, you needed a match for most of the stuff, yeah. Yeah, you needed--

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: They put it on -- I'm trying to think. The gas jets were on the -- you had to put a match to it, you know?

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: You had to put a match to it to light it.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: And, you know, it was different life. You went to sleep early, and you got up early.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: Most of them. You know?

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

F. GOTTFRIED: What about the refrigerator? What kind of refrigerator did --

J. GOTTFRIED: Oh, we didn't have. We had iceboxes.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: And the man -- a man would come in the middle, uh, was in the streets.

Vegetables wagons -- everything was brought to in front of your house. They -- all, all the merchants sold. There were vegetables-- Butter and eggs was mostly in a store,

though, because it had to be refrigerated. When I say -- not refrigerated, but with iceboxes to keep -- that was not a -- it couldn't be brought -- you had to go there to get a piece. And then also you had to go to certain ice houses to buy ice, a cake of ice. You bought a cake of ice to put in the icebox to keep stuff cold. You had to buy-- One section of the icebox was ice, and the other parts were shelves for milk and dairy, whatever. But people bought food every day. You didn't -- because you need -- you wanted it fresh, and it had to be fresh, because you -- it couldn't keep as long as it does in the refrigerator years ago.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: But you just -- you didn't know anything better. This is what everybody did, and this is the way you lived. Actually, it was luxury.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: You know?

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: In those years, it was luxury to have that. You know, we take a lot of things for granted here that you don't know, but those things were-- You know, for us it was part of living then, you know?

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: They were--

SULLIVAN: And what did the carts, the vegetable carts and stuff, what did they look like?

J. GOTTFRIED: Wagons with horses, driven by horses.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: Everything was driven by horses, you know, and anything that was sold, you know, whether it was -- people -- you used to have salesmen coming around selling fabrics, threads, and everything, you know, to the women. Women didn't get around that much. They were raising families or working.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: You know? They didn't get-- So a lot of things were brought in the

neighborhood, and the seller would, you know, announce his arrival and everybody would come out of the houses to see what the wares were, you know?

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: It was different, you know?

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm. And did you travel by horses also?

J. GOTTFRIED: Oh, sure. We had an outing every Sunday. My father, when we were children and younger, my father would rent a horse and surrey. In those years you had a horse, and the -- it was like a four-seater. The -- what would you call it? The surrey, you know. More than four. Three people on one-- It's like you go in a car. People sit in the back, and people sit in the front. That's the way it was in the wagon, only this was a surrey, it wasn't a wagon; this was like a surrey, they called it, you know, I think. That was different, with blankets, you know what I mean?

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: And that's how we would travel and go, and we would go to -- it wasn't Prospect Park, it was-- What was closer than Prospect?

F. GOTTFRIED: Highland Park?

J. GOTTFRIED: Highland Park.

F. GOTTFRIED: Was it Highland Park?

J. GOTTFRIED: Yeah, and all that. We'd go there Sunday and picnics, because the women -- the women used to cook all night long, and food -- you didn't go to restaurants. Nobody -- I'm trying to think. Were there restaurants? I guess there were for the more affluent people in Manhattan. After all, Fifth Avenue was born years ago. But we were not in that class.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: So. Not that we missed anything. We didn't know. We were happy. We were brought up here.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: We were brought up here. We weren't [inaudible].

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm. How long of a ride would it be from your home to Highland Park?

J. GOTTFRIED: Oh, by horse and-- not too long, maybe about 20 minutes, 25 minutes, a half-hour. You know, it wasn't-- And that -- the park. But people went to the parks. That's what you had. And you spread out, you ate there, and look, there were trees, and it was cool. It was summertime. You had to go somewhere. And later on, we went -- I -- I'm just trying to think. When we lived there, Coney Island, you know? You went-- That was your-- But I don't think --

F. GOTTFRIED: Did you go to Coney Island by subway?

J. GOTTFRIED: I don't think we went. We went to Canarsie because Coney Island, you have to go by -- I think it must have been -- well, I don't remember when the subway started.

F. GOTTFRIED: But you said you went to Luna Park.

J. GOTTFRIED: Huh?

F. GOTTFRIED: You went to Luna Park.

J. GOTTFRIED: Oh, that was later on.

F. GOTTFRIED: Oh, later?

J. GOTTFRIED: Luna Park was later on. No, no, no. You went-- My grandfather came from Philadelphia to -- for the holidays to us by trolley.

SULLIVAN: Oh. From Philadelphia?

J. GOTTFRIED: Yes.

SULLIVAN: Oh, wow.

J. GOTTFRIED: Yes. Yes. You know?

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: People who had to travel distances had food, sandwiches, with them, because in that day, you didn't go to restaurants. You know, nonperishable things. So.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: It was different.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: I'm telling you -- you know what, I had forgotten all that. [laughter] Sure. In

other words, different. But, uh, we didn't miss anything. We were happy, happy children, happy-- I went to school. You didn't have dresses and high boots. You had a navy blue skirt, so probably two of them, one to change over, and a white middie blouse, and a red tie for assembly. You didn't have fancy clothes. You came home, you took that off.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: That was for school. And, you know, you wore skirts, whatever it was. Girls, you didn't wear -- girls didn't wear slacks or anything in those -- you know, you wore skirts and --

SULLIVAN: Even for playing? So even after school, you would -- you would change into a skirt?

J. GOTTFRIED: I was just thinking. I don't remember us wearing slacks.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: I don't remember. You had the knee-high -- first of all, you had stockings, cotton stockings that went all the way over -- you know?

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: You had garter belts that hold up the stockings. But you had stockings in those -- you didn't have slacks. No, they didn't wear them, the girls.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: Maybe they wore later, maybe I don't remember, the overalls or things like that for, you know, knocking around or what. I don't remember. But they must have, you know?

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: Definitely not deluxe slacks.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: No, nothing. But you didn't miss it. You didn't miss it. Nobody else did.

F. GOTTFRIED: Well, in 94 years, my grandmother never owned a pair of slacks. [Sullivan laughter] Isn't that correct?

J. GOTTFRIED: What?

F. GOTTFRIED: Grandma never owned one pair of slacks.

J. GOTTFRIED: Slacks?

F. GOTTFRIED: Grandma.

J. GOTTFRIED: Of course not.

F. GOTTFRIED: Never, in 94 years.

J. GOTTFRIED: Nobody wore slacks then. The women wore housedresses and regular dresses. And I remember fancy for when they went to weddings. They all had -- I remember my grandma had it made. They had their dresses made by the tailors. You didn't have department stores when -- at least not in East New York [inaudible] in that. You know, maybe those -- we didn't know -- those who lived along Fifth Avenue must -- because, after all, those stores were established years ago, too.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: But that wasn't our class.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: You know?

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: So. I know my mother had -- if we had once -- I forgot whose -- a Philadelphia wedding or some -- she had a black Georgette dress made. Loads of beads. You know, that was expensive because they had to sew those beads in.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: Beaded dresses. That was popular. Beaded dresses were expensive, popular, very dressy. But the women didn't -- that was something special, you know, like if you went to a wedding, you know.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: And you kept that dress for the next wedding, too.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: You didn't have that many. But we as children were -- one of our cousins,

my mother's cousins, lived around the corner. She had two daughters my age also, and [inaudible]. She was able to sew very well, so she used to sew up for the three of girls -- her two girls and me -- dresses all the time, yeah.

SULLIVAN: Oh. So your cousins lived near you?

J. GOTTFRIED: Well, they weren't really -- they were more like sixteenth cousins, you know, [laughter] you know. Still relatives, you know.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: They lived at New Lots --

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: -- around the corner. They lived on New Lots, around the corner, yeah.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: And the two girls, they had -- she had a son. She had a son? Yeah, I think so. I go back 90-odd years--

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: I don't know. Did Frances tell you how old I am?

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: Ninety-five. [inaudible]. Ninety-five is not--

F. GOTTFRIED: But you had -- you had a -- there were a lot of relative people.

J. GOTTFRIED: Huh?

F. GOTTFRIED: There were a lot of relatives in the neighborhood, right?

J. GOTTFRIED: Uh, not --

F. GOTTFRIED: No?

J. GOTTFRIED: Some cousins.

F. GOTTFRIED: Maybe later?

J. GOTTFRIED: It's mostly them around the corner, and that's -- Philadelphia, and then people lived on the East Side, too.

SULLIVAN: The East Side of Manhattan?

J. GOTTFRIED: Yeah, like Second Avenue and that.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: That was a very popular place.

SULLIVAN: The Lower East Side?

J. GOTTFRIED: Lower East Side, that was --

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: -- Yiddish, all Yiddish.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: They had Yiddish theaters there, everything.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: That was a popular neighborhood.

SULLIVAN: Did your family speak Yiddish?

J. GOTTFRIED: Only Yiddish.

SULLIVAN: Only Yiddish.

J. GOTTFRIED: Uh-huh.

SULLIVAN: Is that -- was that your first language?

J. GOTTFRIED: Huh?

SULLIVAN: Was that your first language?

J. GOTTFRIED: No, no. I don't-- I don't know what was my first language. My mother spoke
to us in -- no. My mother spoke to us in Yiddish; we answered in English.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: That was it.

SULLIVAN: Yeah.

J. GOTTFRIED: You know?

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: She spoke to us in Yiddish; we answered in English.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

F. GOTTFRIED: But -- but my grand -- but Grandpa, because he worked in --

J. GOTTFRIED: Oh, my father --

F. GOTTFRIED: -- the butter and egg market, I mean, he was --

J. GOTTFRIED: My father -- my father --

F. GOTTFRIED: Yes.

J. GOTTFRIED: -- your grandfather. My father spoke English well.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: He worked also in the Washington Market in the butter and egg. But there are also the men over there. So he was able to pick up English very well. When he came here he was 17 years old, and then he brought the whole family over [inaudible]. It took years, years ago, for those people to save money to bring family over.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: You know, we take things for granted, but these people used to work for years to bring their family over to America, you know?

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: So my father used to -- brought his family over, too. But he went to school at night --

SULLIVAN: Mm.

J. GOTTFRIED: -- to learn English, and he worked with gentile peoples. I mean, it's a famous com -- uh, it's all gentile -- it's a famous company [Swift and Company] years ago he worked with, butter and eggs. I forgot the name already. I forgot. So he worked with gentile people a lot.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: And my father, every night, believe it or not, he used to sit with the *New York Times* --

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: -- to teach himself reading, and reading that. He did. I always remember that.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: I'll always remember that. He taught -- he's self-taught, everything self-

taught. You know?

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: He would -- he would ask us children, you know, when we went to school, the spelling of words, you know, that he needed, but, but he -- the *New York Times* every day, he used to read.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: Besides Yiddish papers, you know.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: He did. He did.

F. GOTTFRIED: Where did his parents live?

J. GOTTFRIED: Eh?

F. GOTTFRIED: Where did his parents live?

J. GOTTFRIED: His parents lived -- today it's called -- on Second Avenue, the East Side. There -- that was all Yiddish, you know.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: And they had an apartment. No, but they lived in the Bronx. That's right, my grandparents lived in the Bronx. And I remember they had an apartment, my grandmother and grandfather, and then I had two aunts who lived with them. But the Second Avenue trolley used -- train used to go by. Today they don't have it. But they

SULLIVAN: Oh, the Second Avenue-- yeah.

J. GOTTFRIED: Yes.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: We as children, my brother and I, used to sit in the window and wave to people. [laughter] You know? But that -- that was funny. We used to wave to people you know. So every Sunday we'd go visit my grandmother, my older brother and I. My younger brother was a baby. He was ten years younger than me, you know. But today you don't do that, but years ago a little girl and little boy of 10 and 12 would ride the train alone.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: You know?

SULLIVAN: So you'd go all the way from, from East New York to the Lower East Side to visit your grandmother?

J. GOTTFRIED: She used to make for us pierogi, we called ramekins, you know. We loved it. That's what she used to make for us, everything. We loved it. Pierogi and sour cream, you know.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: She used to make that for us, yeah. We'd go visit her on a Sunday. Yeah. You had school-- Today, you do. You respected your elders in those years. You know, it was a different life. We were brought up. We -- you didn't have riches --

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: -- but you had respect for each other and everyone.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: It's a different life.

F. GOTTFRIED: What about -- what -- when -- when Grandma's family came to visit, and Sarah, did she come?

J. GOTTFRIED: What?

F. GOTTFRIED: The older sister from Philadelphia.

J. GOTTFRIED: Yeah.

F. GOTTFRIED: Did she come by car?

J. GOTTFRIED: Who?

F. GOTTFRIED: Sarah.

J. GOTTFRIED: Oh, she was one of the only-- My mother's eldest sister was the only -- she married well.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: So she had, I don't remember what, but from Philadelphia. I don't remember what business he must have been in, but it was in dresses or something, whatever. But

she came, and he had a car with a chauffeur.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: You know what, though? They came there with a car and a chauffeur, [inaudible] money in those years, and when I come to think of it, but they slept in your house! [laughter] Well, I don't think you had hotels or motels or anything around.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: But we were kids. My mother used to put up two chairs together and you slept on two chairs. You put it up against the wall so it becomes a bed with blankets, you know?

SULLIVAN: Yeah.

J. GOTTFRIED: Two chairs becomes a bed for a child.

F. GOTTFRIED: Oh, you mean so you could give them your --

J. GOTTFRIED: Eh?

F. GOTTFRIED: So you could give them your bed.

J. GOTTFRIED: Of course.

F. GOTTFRIED: Yes.

J. GOTTFRIED: Of course.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: Of course.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: Yeah. But they came to visit, yeah, come to-- You didn't have hotels, you know.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: At least not the Yiddish people of our class, you know what I mean?

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: You had it. You had-- They were well-to-do, you know. But they came to visit, I never will forget. And then when we went to Philadelphia, also, my aunt -- I had several aunts and uncles, and they all had a home. You stayed in their homes.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: You know, you didn't go-- I don't think they had motels. You had probably hotels because hotels existed for the wealthy, you know.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: And traveling people, you know. But we didn't -- we didn't -- we weren't -- I don't know whether you would say we weren't in that class; we just didn't.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: You didn't go that far that required that, you know.

F. GOTTFRIED: And -- and you took the train to Philadelphia to visit, yourself? Did you take the train to --

J. GOTTFRIED: Oh, yeah. That's later on. I was -- when my younger brother was born. I was ten years old. So I used to -- my father -- you know, today you don't do those things. They would put me on the -- he'd put me on the train in Pennsylvania Station. I was a little child.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: On the train. And then my older cousins, who were going to business then, they would pick me up in Philadelphia. [laughter] Today you don't, but they used to do that.

SULLIVAN: Yeah, yeah.

J. GOTTFRIED: You know? And I'd go -- I'd go to Philadelphia. But they don't do that today.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: You know, you didn't -- you didn't have that worry that you have today, you know --

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: -- like you have to look over your shoulder or anything.

SULLIVAN: I realized I forgot to ask --

J. GOTTFRIED: What?

SULLIVAN: -- you and your siblings, when you were born, were you born at home or, or in a

hospital?

J. GOTTFRIED: [sneezes] At home. Only I think Alan -- I don't remember -- I think Alan was born in a hospital.

SULLIVAN: And so would there have been -- was there a doctor there or a midwife?

J. GOTTFRIED: I don't remember.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: I think you had midwives and doctors, you know. I don't remember. You know what I mean? I was a child, so I don't remember, but I'm sure they did. They had a doctor come to the house.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: You didn't -- I think you went to hospitals for only emergencies in those years, you know?

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: People had -- they came to --

F. GOTTFRIED: Well, we know where you were born, right?

J. GOTTFRIED: Huh?

F. GOTTFRIED: Was it 431 Titan Street? Was that it? In Philadelphia, right? Four thirty-- Was that it?

J. GOTTFRIED: Titan in Philadelphia.

F. GOTTFRIED: My --

J. GOTTFRIED: In one of my aunt's houses.

F. GOTTFRIED: -- one of my grandmother's sister's houses.

J. GOTTFRIED: My mother was pregnant at that time. That's how I was born in Philadelphia. I told you my father had to -- went there for employment because there was nothing in New York. There was -- I don't remember there was a strike or just no work.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: But-- they did.

SULLIVAN: So going back to, to your jobs, I think the last one we were talking about, you were working in the office of the fruit wholesaler?

J. GOTTFRIED: Wholesale fruits and vegetables, yeah.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm. What did you do after that?

J. GOTTFRIED: I was a bookkeeper there, yeah.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: I think I worked there till I got married, didn't I? Yeah.

F. GOTTFRIED: Maybe.

J. GOTTFRIED: I think -- I'm trying to think. Sure, mm-hmm. I worked there. Of course.

Where else did I work? I didn't-- Oh, then I went to work for some also -- the next block.

His friends, butter and egg-- No, but I stayed in the fruit market.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: I stayed there until, until I was pregnant with Carol, because I remember my boss -- I wanted to stop. He said -- you know, years ago if you were pregnant you didn't go to work.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: So my boss at that time, he was saying, "What are you going to do home?

What are you going to do home?" You know? I worked, I think, well, till almost my ninth month, yeah.

SULLIVAN: Wow.

J. GOTTFRIED: Yeah, it was [inaudible] -- but I say -- all I know is I used to get off at Chambers Street, and there was -- and you walk over, and the next block was the fruit market. But my boss at that time also, he didn't let me do anything. He brought -- we were several girls there, too. But he brought -- they brought coffee to me, lunch, everything, you know, and sent home like I -- holidays and stuff, my mother -- I didn't even eat it -- cartons of fruits or vegetables they used to send home, you know?

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm.

F. GOTTFRIED: Was -- his name -- was that the people named Lustig? Was that --

J. GOTTFRIED: A. Lustig and Company.

F. GOTTFRIED: A. Lustig and Company.

SULLIVAN: Mmm.

F. GOTTFRIED: L-U-S-T-I-G. Right?

J. GOTTFRIED: Yeah.

SULLIVAN: Mmm. And how did you meet your husband?

J. GOTTFRIED: Well, the -- my cousin -- he was a friend of my brother's, you know, which was family like, you know?

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: I don't know how the decision was made or what, but it was all -- he -- he was brought up and friends with my uncles, you know?

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm. And is -- is Gottfried your married name?

J. GOTTFRIED: Gottfried.

SULLIVAN: And what's your maiden name?

J. GOTTFRIED: Mondschein.

SULLIVAN: How do you spell that?

J. GOTTFRIED: OK. M-O-N-D-S-C-H-E-I-N.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: Mondschein.

SULLIVAN: And what's your mother's maiden name?

J. GOTTFRIED: Minnie [phonetic] -- well, there are different forms of it. There are like Newborn [phonetic], Neugeboren [phonetic], Newburg [phonetic]. Different cousins, they all-- But you would say Newborn.

F. GOTTFRIED: No. Well, Newgeborn.

J. GOTTFRIED: Neugeboren.

F. GOTTFRIED: Hers was Newgeborn.

J. GOTTFRIED: Huh? Yeah.

F. GOTTFRIED: Yes.

J. GOTTFRIED: Well, in Yiddish, “Newborn” translated and the sound into German is
Neugeboren. It’s the same thing.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: You know, “Neugeboren” is “Newborn.”

F. GOTTFRIED: Right, but she didn’t change her name.

J. GOTTFRIED: No, no, no.

F. GOTTFRIED: Other relatives changed it, but she didn’t change it, so it was Neugeboren.

J. GOTTFRIED: Newborn, Newborn.

F. GOTTFRIED: Newgeborn. And --

J. GOTTFRIED: Neugeboren, yeah. N-E-U-I-G-E-B-O- --

F. GOTTFRIED: No, N-E- --

J. GOTTFRIED: -- -R-E-N, Neuborn, and--

F. GOTTFRIED: N-E-U.

J. GOTTFRIED: Huh?

F. GOTTFRIED: N-E-U- --

J. GOTTFRIED: G-E- --

F. GOTTFRIED: G-E-B-O-R-N.

J. GOTTFRIED: -- -B-O-R-E-N.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

F. GOTTFRIED: B-O-R-N-E, I guess, Neugeboren.

J. GOTTFRIED: Huh?

F. GOTTFRIED: And, and they were -- just to go back -- the -- where they were, Austria
Poland, they were -- lived in a shtetl called --

J. GOTTFRIED: Oh, called Husiatyner.

F. GOTTFRIED: -- Husiatyner.

J. GOTTFRIED: It was a small town, and --

F. GOTTFRIED: And how do you --

J. GOTTFRIED: -- [inaudible].

F. GOTTFRIED: How do you spell that?

J. GOTTFRIED: H-U-S-I-A-T-Y-N-E-R.

SULLIVAN: N-E-R?

J. GOTTFRIED: Yeah.

F. GOTTFRIED: Husiatyner.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: That was the town.

SULLIVAN: And both your mom's family and your dad's family were from the same town?

J. GOTTFRIED: Yeah, more or less. They -- no, my father's family is from the town, but they lived on the -- my mother's family lived in the town part; my father's family lived on the farms, but --

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: -- in that area.

SULLIVAN: But this area.

J. GOTTFRIED: Yeah, you know, around the border line.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: Yeah.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm. Mmm. Um, so when did you get married?

J. GOTTFRIED: Huh?

SULLIVAN: When did you get married?

J. GOTTFRIED: Nineteen -- where is [inaudible] Charlie--

F. GOTTFRIED: Well, Carol was born in '39.

J. GOTTFRIED: I'm trying to think. Carol --

F. GOTTFRIED: Carol was born in '39.

J. GOTTFRIED: Thirty-nine. So I was married in '37, I think.

F. GOTTFRIED: That sounds right.

J. GOTTFRIED: Nineteen thirty-seven.

SULLIVAN: And what's -- what's your husband's name?

J. GOTTFRIED: Max, M-A-X.

SULLIVAN: And so had he grown up in -- in East New York as well?

J. GOTTFRIED: Well, he grew up -- they knew more or less, cousins and knew of them, too, but they probably moved also more or less in another town, but more or less they -- Austria, Poland, that area, you know.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm.

F. GOTTFRIED: But he lived -- but in -- he came here when he was about five? He was born in Europe, and he came here when he was about five.

J. GOTTFRIED: His mother -- well, his mother never made it here.

F. GOTTFRIED: Right. His mother died when he was five.

J. GOTTFRIED: She died during the epidemic -- oh, what was it at that time?

F. GOTTFRIED: The flu I guess.

J. GOTTFRIED: Typhoid or what?

SULLIVAN: Oh, the 1918--?

F. GOTTFRIED: I think influenza, yes.

J. GOTTFRIED: What was it that was --

SULLIVAN: The flu in 1918, is that--?

J. GOTTFRIED: I don't know. She died there.

F. GOTTFRIED: I think around that, yeah.

SULLIVAN: Uh-huh.

F. GOTTFRIED: See, but they -- then -- but when he came here with his family, he lived on the Lower East Side.

J. GOTTFRIED: Yeah, yeah. Every -- most people lived on the Lower East Side, you know.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: They all congregated there, you know. You had society -- they belonged to different societies. Each town had societies, you know --

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: -- in those years. Today they don't have those.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm. And so where did you -- where did you live when you got married?

J. GOTTFRIED: When I got married?

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: Wyona Street. You know where that is?

SULLIVAN: Uh-uh.

J. GOTTFRIED: That's also East New York, there, two blocks -- two blocks here, two blocks there, three blocks--. You know it's all walking--

F. GOTTFRIED: It's W-Y-O-N-A, Wyona.

J. GOTTFRIED: Right.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm. And so your first child was born in 1939, is that--?

J. GOTTFRIED: Alan?

F. GOTTFRIED: No, no, Carolyn.

J. GOTTFRIED: Carol?

F. GOTTFRIED: Your child.

J. GOTTFRIED: My-- Yeah, Carol is '39, yeah.

F. GOTTFRIED: That's right.

SULLIVAN: So tell me about your children.

J. GOTTFRIED: Well, Carol's my older daughter.

F. GOTTFRIED: C-A-R- -- C-A-R-O-L-Y-N.

J. GOTTFRIED: Huh?

F. GOTTFRIED: I'm spelling it. I was spelling her name. I was spelling her name.

J. GOTTFRIED: Oh. And Fran. I have two daughters, two wonderful daughters.

SULLIVAN: And what year were you born?

F. GOTTFRIED: Forty -- 1946. So and my, my -- the full given name is Frances, F-R-A-N-C-E-S, 1946.

SULLIVAN: Um, and so you lived in -- did you live in East New York until you moved here?

J. GOTTFRIED: We lived -- yeah, what's -- yes. [inaudible]?

F. GOTTFRIED: On New Jersey Avenue.

J. GOTTFRIED: Yeah, but it's still East New York, isn't it? Of course.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: That's still in East New York.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: Fran, that's right. Was it New Jersey, or was it on Hegeman?

F. GOTTFRIED: New Jersey, you lived with Carol on Miller Avenue -- did you live there a little bit? On Miller?

J. GOTTFRIED: Oh, yeah, that's right, she -- when she was born, on Miller Ave. But it's still East New York, too.

F. GOTTFRIED: Yeah, but then -- but then you moved to New Jersey Avenue when Carol was about five? My grandfather bought a house, two-family house.

J. GOTTFRIED: So we lived in a two-family house my grandfather bought.

F. GOTTFRIED: Your father.

J. GOTTFRIED: On New Jersey, near Hegeman, Linden Boulevard, all of that walking distance.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: Until we came, came here.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm. And so what -- why did you make the move here?

J. GOTTFRIED: Well, the neighborhood was changing already, and we had to get out. And my older daughter was "Let's go" every time. And then my son-in-law had said, heard about this place, and my brother, should rest in peace, everybody was saying, "Where are you going with the hippies? [laughter] Where are you going with the hippies?" Because this neighborhood was different then.

SULLIVAN: It was hip -- it was a lot of hippies?

J. GOTTFRIED: No, you had both, you know. You had a lot of people, writers and poets -- all the famous writers here, not hippies.

F. GOTTFRIED: Yes, but it's not different today than it was then.

J. GOTTFRIED: No, no.

F. GOTTFRIED: They just didn't know.

J. GOTTFRIED: But my brother, to him, it was "Where are you going to the hippies?" I'll never forget that. "Where are you going to--" [laughter] There wasn't-- You had people [inaudible] -- there are people here who go, their families go back hundreds of years. They live in the brownstones all around here. The brownstones are [inaudible] all the way around, you know, people lived there.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: Years ago. And especially, uh, I was told also -- you know all along here, and Henry Street and all, there were all brownstones.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: People lived in the--

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm. And so how did you first come to know Brooklyn Heights Synagogue?

J. GOTTFRIED: Um. Oh, what was her name? She passed. One of our neighbors, too, she lived with her mother. Uh-- On the floor over here, down on the H apartment.

F. GOTTFRIED: Freddie Herman [phonetic]?

J. GOTTFRIED: Freddie Herman. Freddy Herman. She -- the Brooklyn Heights Synagogue was not -- I forget when it was first established. They used to meet in -- what's -- what was her name again? The couple. He was the president, and she --

F. GOTTFRIED: Levinson.

J. GOTTFRIED: Huh?

F. GOTTFRIED: Levinson?

J. GOTTFRIED: Um, they started the Brooklyn Heights --

F. GOTTFRIED: Huffman.

J. GOTTFRIED: The Huffmans. Did you ever hear of them?

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: The Huffmans.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: They started everything. They started everything.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: There was no Brooklyn Heights Synagogue at that time, nothing.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: They started -- they got together people, and they called -- like we used to meet -- they lived on, you know --

F. GOTTFRIED: Cranberry.

J. GOTTFRIED: Cranberry, yeah. We used to meet -- go in there, Sundays in their house. That's how it started.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm. So how did you -- how did you know the Huffmans?

J. GOTTFRIED: Because they lived over here a half a block away. Oh, how--? Freddie Herman, who lived down the hall here, she was familiar with it, and then she says, "Why don't you come up to one of those meetings?" I was going to business then, too. And that's how I go to know them, and that's how little by little they decided to have a synagogue of their own.

SULLIVAN: What were those conversations like when, when -- what were the meetings like at the Huffmans'?

J. GOTTFRIED: Oh, I -- just -- it was more social, I think, just getting people together, you know?

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: It was more social at that time. Of course, they didn't -- until they decided to get -- you know, and get together the Synagogue.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

F. GOTTFRIED: I mean, you were not one of the founders.

J. GOTTFRIED: Huh?

F. GOTTFRIED: You were not in the group of one of the founders.

J. GOTTFRIED: No.

F. GOTTFRIED: No.

J. GOTTFRIED: Not directly, no.

F. GOTTFRIED: But --

J. GOTTFRIED: But shortly after that, because the founder -- the -- what's her name? The president's mother, uh--?

F. GOTTFRIED: Levinson.

J. GOTTFRIED: The Levinsons. They -- she used to call, and, "Jean, why didn't you join?" So shortly after that, I joined, but they were still meeting in houses.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

F. GOTTFRIED: And then in the church and in the Bossert Hotel.

J. GOTTFRIED: Yeah, yeah.

F. GOTTFRIED: In different places.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: Yeah, yeah. The Bossert Hotel. The church. Bossert Hotel for holidays, and then -- until they were able to afford a house on Henry Street -- oh God, I'm [inaudible].

F. GOTTFRIED: Remsen.

J. GOTTFRIED: Yeah.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm.

F. GOTTFRIED: But --

J. GOTTFRIED: The Orthodox people have our original house.

SULLIVAN: Right.

F. GOTTFRIED: But when -- but when we first moved to this neighborhood for the, the holidays, the Jewish holidays, we were finding places to go. I remember I think once we went to the brotherhood synagogue --

J. GOTTFRIED: Yeah, that's right.

F. GOTTFRIED: -- you know, just trying to find different places to go.

J. GOTTFRIED: Right. Yeah, we did that.

F. GOTTFRIED: We went to Mount Sinai [250 Cadman Plaza West] once, and then --

J. GOTTFRIED: Yeah.

F. GOTTFRIED: -- Brooklyn Heights became more viable.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm. So when --

J. GOTTFRIED: And then we used to go to Grandma's for a couple of times.

F. GOTTFRIED: Not much.

J. GOTTFRIED: [inaudible].

SULLIVAN: Were -- prior to moving here, were you going to the same synagogue that was your childhood synagogue in East New York?

J. GOTTFRIED: Yeah, I guess, uh --

F. GOTTFRIED: [inaudible] the Talmud Torah.

J. GOTTFRIED: I didn't [inaudible].

F. GOTTFRIED: The Talmud Torah.

J. GOTTFRIED: The only one we went --

F. GOTTFRIED: Pennsylvania Avenue.

J. GOTTFRIED: Wait a minute. The synagogue on the corner, the, uh --

F. GOTTFRIED: Talmud Torah [New Lots Talmud Torah, 330-370 New Lots Avenue at Pennsylvania Ave., East New York].

J. GOTTFRIED: The Talmud Torah. But we went Grandpa went -- on New Jersey Avenue near Linden Boulevard were private homes, you know, so there was one group we used to go, and they had it in the basement, they had a synagogue there, too, on New Jersey Ave. That's what Grandpa used--

F. GOTTFRIED: But he, he went there just in the latter years before he died, but for most of the years we went to the Talmud Torah.

J. GOTTFRIED: Yeah.

F. GOTTFRIED: Which was a very large synagogue.

J. GOTTFRIED: Oh, yeah.

F. GOTTFRIED: Major.

J. GOTTFRIED: Yeah.

F. GOTTFRIED: On Pennsylvania Avenue and New lots?

J. GOTTFRIED: And New Lots.

F. GOTTFRIED: And New Lots.

SULLIVAN: Um --

F. GOTTFRIED: And that was quite large.

J. GOTTFRIED: Yes.

F. GOTTFRIED: You know, a couple of -- at least two stories.

J. GOTTFRIED: Yeah, that, that was a large one.

F. GOTTFRIED: Uh, a good quarter of a block.

J. GOTTFRIED: Yeah.

SULLIVAN: What -- what --

F. GOTTFRIED: Orthodox.

SULLIVAN: Oh, Orthodox, mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: Orthodox.

F. GOTTFRIED: That was considered -- wasn't it considered --

J. GOTTFRIED: Huh?

F. GOTTFRIED: -- a prominent-- It was considered a major --

J. GOTTFRIED: Oh, yeah. It was a very large synagogue. They came from all over the --

F. GOTTFRIED: Right. That was --

J. GOTTFRIED: It was very large.

F. GOTTFRIED: -- really the main synagogue before moving here, so it was Orthodox. So
women -- weren't, right? Mother -- women sat upstairs, right?

J. GOTTFRIED: Oh, oh, well, yeah.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm. And so was that -- was --

J. GOTTFRIED: Women sat upstairs. Even on New Jersey Avenue, the little synagogue over
there, there was a curtain.

SULLIVAN: Oh, yeah, yeah. And so was that your childhood synagogue?

F. GOTTFRIED: Uh, this Talmud Torah.

SULLIVAN: Yeah.

J. GOTTFRIED: Yeah.

F. GOTTFRIED: And I went to Hebrew school when I was about nine for about a year and a half with my cousin. My mother's older brother lived three houses away in East New York and had children our respective ages; we were very close. And my mother's younger brother lived in the same house we did with my grandparents. So we all lived together. And my younger cousin and I, we were the youngest, we went and started Hebrew school together. But it was Orthodox, and I didn't conceive it -- I was not going to get Bat Mitzvahed there because that was not an option.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

F. GOTTFRIED: And I went for about a year and a half. I was a pretty decent student, but I quit because it just seemed too authoritarian for me --

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

F. GOTTFRIED: -- uh, and girls didn't have the same opportunity to participate.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

F. GOTTFRIED: So then when we came here, I think, as my mother said, I mean, we were -- you know, my grandparents were observant, but they were not Orthodox. I mean, they would --

J. GOTTFRIED: He had a --

F. GOTTFRIED: -- drive on Saturdays--

J. GOTTFRIED: He worked. He had to work. Years ago, some of them, you had to make a living.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: My grandmother didn't work, but you had to have something coming home. So he -- look, many times he had to work on a Saturday. Swift and Company!

F. GOTTFRIED: Oh.

SULLIVAN: What was that?

J. GOTTFRIED: Did you ever hear of Swift and Company?

SULLIVAN: Uh-uh.

F. GOTTFRIED: That's a -- oh, that's -- I didn't -- never realized that.

J. GOTTFRIED: The largest butter and egg everything in New York City at that time.

SULLIVAN: Oh.

F. GOTTFRIED: Right, right.

J. GOTTFRIED: Swift. I couldn't remember before the name -- Swift and Company.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: Oh, yeah.

F. GOTTFRIED: I never knew that.

J. GOTTFRIED: Very, very large company. Butter and eggs and all that in the Washington Market.

F. GOTTFRIED: Did -- but when you --

J. GOTTFRIED: That was called the Washington Market, Chambers Street, that whole area.

SULLIVAN: Oh.

F. GOTTFRIED: But that's -- and it's now Tribeca, right?

J. GOTTFRIED: What?

F. GOTTFRIED: Now it's Tribeca.

J. GOTTFRIED: I know, but then it was --

F. GOTTFRIED: Right.

J. GOTTFRIED: -- the Washington Market.

SULLIVAN: So -- so did you -- so you got started with Brooklyn Heights Synagogue when it was still -- before it had a building and--

J. GOTTFRIED: Oh, of course.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm. And what was it like to start -- um, to be going with a Reform congregation?

J. GOTTFRIED: Was [inaudible] what?

SULLIVAN: Did you notice a change because this was -- was it a Reform synagogue before it had a--?

J. GOTTFRIED: They weren't that strictly reform. They observed two days [inaudible]

whoever wanted on the holidays.

F. GOTTFRIED: Right. They would observe --

J. GOTTFRIED: They did.

F. GOTTFRIED: -- like two days holidays for Rosh Hashanah, uh, and other holidays when there's an optional --

J. GOTTFRIED: Yeah.

F. GOTTFRIED: -- one day or two days, but it was a Reform synagogue.

J. GOTTFRIED: It was Reform, but whoever wanted to observe the two observed it, and those that didn't, didn't, you know.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: But it -- so I would -- it's called Reform, but they -- whoever wanted to--

F. GOTTFRIED: But the big different was, from our point of view, was that it was open -- it was much more participatory in that women would get called up.

J. GOTTFRIED: Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah. That's -- that's the difference. Yeah.

SULLIVAN: What was that like for you?

J. GOTTFRIED: Well, I wasn't -- you know, you felt that it was an honor to be called up, you know.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: But I -- since I wasn't taught Hebrew or anything-- So you had the opportunity to -- to say your prayers in English, which in the Orthodox, very Orthodox, that wouldn't happen, you know?

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: That wouldn't happen in the very Orthodox.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

F. GOTTFRIED: So but -- wouldn't you say that actually you probably went to synagogue more here --

J. GOTTFRIED: Oh, yeah.

F. GOTTFRIED: -- at Brooklyn Heights --

J. GOTTFRIED: Yeah.

F. GOTTFRIED: -- as a Reformed synagogue because it was much more --

J. GOTTFRIED: Yes. Acceptable.

F. GOTTFRIED: -- welcoming.

J. GOTTFRIED: They accepted --

F. GOTTFRIED: Right.

J. GOTTFRIED: Yeah.

F. GOTTFRIED: Than in growing up.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: Women over at the Orthodox were nothing. Listen, that was it, you know.

The woman was a home -- a housewife, and that's it.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

F. GOTTFRIED: I actually went back and got Bat Mitzvahed with an adult --

J. GOTTFRIED: Yeah, Fran. -- yeah, Fran was Bat Mitzvahed.

F. GOTTFRIED: -- B'nai Brith group when I was 55.

J. GOTTFRIED: She went back --

SULLIVAN: Oh.

J. GOTTFRIED: -- as an adult.

SULLIVAN: That's wonderful.

J. GOTTFRIED: Yeah. She went back as an adult to get Bat Mitzvahed.

SULLIVAN: So you did the classes at--?

F. GOTTFRIED: With the rabbi. There were four other adults.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

F. GOTTFRIED: And we -- so we did it together for a year with the rabbi, and I had to go
back and learn to read Hebrew --

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

F. GOTTFRIED: -- which I did privately.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

F. GOTTFRIED: And then we did it, and we had our Bat Mitzvah, the five of us, and there were four women and one man on a Saturday morning, and, and we had some -- we had friends and family, all of us, and had a little party. It was great.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

F. GOTTFRIED: It was really fun.

J. GOTTFRIED: Oh, the Bar Mitzvah?

F. GOTTFRIED: Yes. Yeah, that was --

J. GOTTFRIED: Bat Mitzvah.

F. GOTTFRIED: Yes. It was --

J. GOTTFRIED: Bat Mitzvah.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: Yeah, it was very nice.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: Very nice.

F. GOTTFRIED: And then you were involved -- early on, you were involved in the, uh, Sisterhood?

J. GOTTFRIED: Huh?

F. GOTTFRIED: You were in the Sisterhood.

J. GOTTFRIED: Oh, yeah. Yeah. We had -- they -- at that time we had the Sister-- Now they -- they still have it, but it's -- Marion's [Cohen] gone. A lot of the old-timers who, who ran the Sister -- it's still there, it's part of the Synagogue, but it's not as active --

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: -- you know, socially, as they did years ago. We used to have a meeting once a month. They had luncheons, the women. There were women working, you know, there. We used to work, help each other, you know. There was a lot of activity not now [inaudible]. It remains you're a part of the member, but it's -- there's nobody there to--

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: [inaudible]. The -- it's not that they -- the young people today, it takes two

salaries to run a home.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: It's a different time today.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: You know? The women have to go to work. It takes two salaries to bring up a family.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: You want your child to go to college? You want this? It's a different life today.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm. So do you mean that there was more time -- women would have had more time for the Sisterhood because they weren't working?

J. GOTTFRIED: Yes, yes.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: You had more. Definitely, definitely. And who was it? The older women like me --

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: -- who had retired. The young people, women, had to go to work. As I said, it takes two salaries today to raise a family.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: It's a different time.

SULLIVAN: There's also -- in, in my research in the Synagogue, there also was the change where women -- there was the first woman president of the Synagogue and woman rabbi. So what was that like?

J. GOTTFRIED: Yeah, yeah, the Reform started that, yeah.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: Today it's very popular. All of -- I get all these magazines from Hadassah and from women's [inaudible], and women all over running everything.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: You know?

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: Today it's different, yeah.

F. GOTTFRIED: So what -- what was -- what did you think the different when, uh, there was a woman rabbi?

J. GOTTFRIED: What?

F. GOTTFRIED: What's her name?

J. GOTTFRIED: Women rabbi?

F. GOTTFRIED: Uh, here at the Brooklyn Heights, at the Brooklyn Heights Synagogue.

J. GOTTFRIED: So, what, the rabbi?

F. GOTTFRIED: Remember? Yes.

J. GOTTFRIED: What about it?

F. GOTTFRIED: When we had a woman rabbi.

J. GOTTFRIED: Yes. What was -- what was her name? Um-- She's -- pa -- pa -- she's in the main office. Uh.

F. GOTTFRIED: She's not there anymore.

SULLIVAN: Wasserman?

F. GOTTFRIED: Yeah, Sue Ann Wasserman.

J. GOTTFRIED: Who?

F. GOTTFRIED: Sue Ann Wasserman?

J. GOTTFRIED: Yeah.

F. GOTTFRIED: Right.

J. GOTTFRIED: She's not there any--?

F. GOTTFRIED: No.

J. GOTTFRIED: Yeah, no, she was rabbi. Yea h.

F. GOTTFRIED: What did you think when, when there was a woman rabbi for the first time?

J. GOTTFRIED: I -- I guess -- I didn't think -- to me, she was an educator as well as any of the -- them too.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: I just -- to me, I always felt a woman's rights, [laughter] you know what I mean? [laughter]

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: So I think she was entitled to it. If she was intelligent and [inaudible], well, that's what's important.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: Not because he was a man. She [inaudible]. Today, I -- you read all the magazines, these women run all of the -- all the synagogues in the United States --

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: -- or many of them, you know?

F. GOTTFRIED: Well, actually the -- I think the majority of rabbinic students at the Hebrew Union College are women now.

J. GOTTFRIED: Hmm. Mm-hmm.

F. GOTTFRIED: That's the Reform --

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

F. GOTTFRIED: -- not the Orthodox.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm. Do you have -- your -- do you have family still in East New York?

J. GOTTFRIED: No, no, nobody. There isn't much family anywhere here, you know, just like nieces and nephews. They live in California. Here, Michael --

F. GOTTFRIED: Well, he lives in -- we have --

J. GOTTFRIED: Hmm?

F. GOTTFRIED: My cousin -- I mean, the only relative that we have in Brooklyn is my cousin, who's my age, and he lives in Sheepshead Bay.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: And even in Philadelphia, some of them. Because I was one of the youngest, so they're all gone, you know?

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: It's different, and I don't -- their grandchildren, I don't know, we just didn't -- weren't -- we were close with my mother's side of the family, and there were a lot of them, but they're gone.

F. GOTTFRIED: But we have, you know, cousins my age, you know, the next generation, several that we're -- you know, we're in touch in Philadelphia.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

F. GOTTFRIED: Well, they don't live in Philadelphia, but they live in Pennsylvania that we're --

J. GOTTFRIED: Several, yeah.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

F. GOTTFRIED: -- in touch.

SULLIVAN: I was wondering if there was -- if the family who was going to Orthodox services had thoughts about your family going to Reform -- to a Reform synagogue.

F. GOTTFRIED: I --

J. GOTTFRIED: No.

F. GOTTFRIED: No, our family was -- you know, if you wanted to go to synagogue, the Orthodox -- there was no other option in the neighborhood. There really was no Reform synagogue within walking distance, nor was there really a Conservative synagogue within --

J. GOTTFRIED: Yeah.

F. GOTTFRIED: -- walking distance, so if you wanted to go to synagogue, it was Orthodox. Today there are many places if you go to Europe, Orthodox is the synagogue that you go to.

J. GOTTFRIED: I wouldn't -- would you say -- our Synagogue is considered Reform, but they observe a --

F. GOTTFRIED: Well, that's -- no, it is a Reform synagogue. I think the different is today that a lot of Reform synagogues try to, you know, appeal to people who are a little more observant, and so --

J. GOTTFRIED: Conservative.

F. GOTTFRIED: -- observant.

J. GOTTFRIED: Yeah, observant.

F. GOTTFRIED: So it's not unusual to have -- most -- many -- most Reform synagogues, at least in New York, observe two days of Rosh Hashanah, for example.

J. GOTTFRIED: Yeah.

F. GOTTFRIED: Uh, that's really not unusual. But in terms of -- I don't think -- I mean, we didn't really have a lot of relatives growing up who were Orthodox.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

F. GOTTFRIED: Your -- in terms of Orthodox in the family, your grandmother, Grandma's mother, she was Orthodox, wasn't she?

J. GOTTFRIED: Oh, yeah.

F. GOTTFRIED: Right?

J. GOTTFRIED: Shendle [phonetic]?

F. GOTTFRIED: Yes.

J. GOTTFRIED: I'm named after her.

F. GOTTFRIED: My mother is named after my grandmother's mother. She died when she was in her fifties.

J. GOTTFRIED: She, she came from Europe, too. They gave her the wrong medicine.

SULLIVAN: Oh, no.

J. GOTTFRIED: Yeah.

SULLIVAN: What did she have?

J. GOTTFRIED: I don't know. Well, she may have had bronchitis.

F. GOTTFRIED: It was bronchitis or asthma or something.

SULLIVAN: Oh.

J. GOTTFRIED: Yeah, and she -- and the children all lived -- I told you, they moved to Philadelphia first, so when my grandpa and grandma came here, and there was my mother and the youngest sister and a brother -- three children came here, and then they

settled in Philadelphia where my other aunts and uncles were married already.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: They came here first. That's how we were in Philadelphia, yeah.

F. GOTTFRIED: But now your grandfather and grandmother, your mother's parents, that as an arranged marriage, right?

J. GOTTFRIED: Years ago everything was arranged marriages.

F. GOTTFRIED: But it was an arranged marriage, but --

J. GOTTFRIED: I didn't even -- I don't even question, don't think about it. Years ago I think everything was arranged.

F. GOTTFRIED: But he adored her, right?

J. GOTTFRIED: Huh?

F. GOTTFRIED: He adored her, right?

J. GOTTFRIED: Oh, he worshiped her.

F. GOTTFRIED: He worshiped her.

J. GOTTFRIED: He was. She -- he was not so strict.

F. GOTTFRIED: Well, he was not Orthodox.

J. GOTTFRIED: But she was. He respected her. He was very much in love with her. He was crazy about her. That's the one I'm named after.

SULLIVAN: Oh.

J. GOTTFRIED: But she died in Philadelphia, the wrong medicine.

SULLIVAN: Oh.

J. GOTTFRIED: But I don't remember what--

F. GOTTFRIED: But when, when he came to this country, he bought a house in Philadelphia.

J. GOTTFRIED: Yeah. He had -- yeah. I told you, he was a painter in Europe.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: He did murals.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: He did murals.

SULLIVAN: So he must have saved up a lot of money before coming here.

J. GOTTFRIED: Of course. He bought a -- when he came to Philadelphia, he bought a house.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: They didn't splurge on anything. They didn't -- it was a different time, you know, living. You know, you didn't go to museums or anything. They weren't brought up with that that much. Hebrew, they observed everything [inaudible]. But, but then again, they lived in small -- when you analyze it, they all lived in very small towns. Who went to museums? Only those who lived in the big cities.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: All over Europe. Not only our country, all over.

F. GOTTFRIED: But, but --

J. GOTTFRIED: People lived in small towns.

F. GOTTFRIED: But, but, but when he came here, your grandfather came here, he did not have to work, did he?

J. GOTTFRIED: No, he brought enough -- he brought the money here.

F. GOTTFRIED: That's my point.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: I told you, he -- what did they do? They didn't go to museums or anything. They lived in small towns. And he had all these -- he used to work for all the landowners in Russia, the --

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

F. GOTTFRIED: And he lived to 96?

J. GOTTFRIED: Hmm?

F. GOTTFRIED: Was he -- did he live to 96?

J. GOTTFRIED: Mm-hmm. And he used to smoke and light one end of the cigarette with the other. And when I used to come to visit him in Philadelphia, you know, he would always wear -- come to think of it, yeah. When I was not married, was single, where did I live then with Grandma and Grandpa? I'm still trying to think. If we lived in New York,

they lived in -- no, we lived in Philadelphia also. He lived in New York; we lived in Philadelphia. Yeah, we lived in Philadelphia. She lived a short time, and I told you, she got -- it was the wrong medicine.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: You think. You know, couldn't believe it, but I know that those things happened years ago.

F. GOTTFRIED: I can believe.

SULLIVAN: Yeah.

F. GOTTFRIED: So, now, why don't you tell -- when you moved to this neighborhood, and you went back to college.

J. GOTTFRIED: Oh. I went -- yeah. I lived on -- we lived on Hegeman Avenue, yeah.

F. GOTTFRIED: New Jersey?

J. GOTTFRIED: Jer -- Hegeman.

F. GOTTFRIED: When did you start, you went back--? She -- my mother -- she went back to college as an adult.

J. GOTTFRIED: I went back to -- in the evening. I went to Hunter.

SULLIVAN: Oh.

J. GOTTFRIED: I didn't graduate, because then I got married and the children.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: But I went back to school after age 55 --

SULLIVAN: Wow.

J. GOTTFRIED: -- to get my degree.

SULLIVAN: What did you study?

J. GOTTFRIED: Hmm?

SULLIVAN: What did you study?

J. GOTTFRIED: Accounting.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: But then I got married and the children were born, you know, and it's a

different life, you know.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: But--

F. GOTTFRIED: But then you -- you went back for your degree to here, what was New York City Community College --

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: Yeah.

F. GOTTFRIED: -- in this neighborhood, right? And then you went to work for the city.

J. GOTTFRIED: Yeah, until -- I worked for the city for 16 years.

SULLIVAN: Wow. What did you do?

J. GOTTFRIED: In the accounting department, you know?

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm.

F. GOTTFRIED: Which agency?

J. GOTTFRIED: Hmm?

F. GOTTFRIED: Which agency?

J. GOTTFRIED: HPD, Housing Preservation and Development.

SULLIVAN: Oh, cool.

J. GOTTFRIED: Yeah.

SULLIVAN: So were you working there when this neighborhood became landmarked?

J. GOTTFRIED: What?

SULLIVAN: Were you working there when this neighborhood became landmarked?

J. GOTTFRIED: I guess -- I'm trying to think. Yes. Weren't we living here when it was landmarked --

F. GOTTFRIED: Yes.

J. GOTTFRIED: -- already, right?

F. GOTTFRIED: Yes.

J. GOTTFRIED: Yeah.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: That's what I'm telling you, when we went to move here and Uncle Charlie used to tell me, "Where are you going with the hippies?" [laughter] Oh, I'll never forget. He used to tell me -- I don't know how he associated that. [laughter] We lived in East New York. They lived -- he had a house the second house from ours. We lived together. "Where are you going? Where are you going?" I says, "I don't know. This is what the children say I should do, and that's [inaudible] and that's--" My next-door, Charlotte and me, we were the first on this floor. Yeah.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm. And so what was going on in the neighborhood, the -- in East New York that, that caused you to want to move?

J. GOTTFRIED: It changed. It changed.

SULLIVAN: How did it change?

J. GOTTFRIED: It changed completely. It changed completely. The old-timers either passed away or they moved away.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: And you had a different class of people coming in. We were one of the last to leave, right?

F. GOTTFRIED: Yeah.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: Yeah, it changed.

F. GOTTFRIED: It was -- yeah.

J. GOTTFRIED: A different class of people.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: So and I was going to business too. You know, it changed, everything. We were one of the last. Everybody left, you know?

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: But New Jersey Avenue at that time was like one big family; you knew everybody on the block. Right?

F. GOTTFRIED: Yeah.

J. GOTTFRIED: And I'll never forget. They closed off -- when she was younger, they used to close off from New Lots to Hegeman and New Jersey Avenue during the weekdays for a couple hours, so the boys and girls would play baseball, everything, on the street.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: No cars were allowed there a certain number of hours during the day.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

F. GOTTFRIED: Right.

J. GOTTFRIED: The different --

F. GOTTFRIED: Yeah, they had -- in those days they had this concept, it was called a play street.

J. GOTTFRIED: Yeah.

SULLIVAN: Oh! [laughter]

F. GOTTFRIED: Which I don't -- I've never heard of that today.

SULLIVAN: Yeah.

F. GOTTFRIED: Right? Right. The -- in residential areas, there weren't -- there weren't as many cars. If you had a car, which we didn't --

J. GOTTFRIED: Yeah.

F. GOTTFRIED: -- and you couldn't find parking in front of your house --

J. GOTTFRIED: Of course.

F. GOTTFRIED: -- you couldn't believe that someone took your spot in front of your house, [laughter] so you had a-- And so during the day, my mother's -- you know, she's right.

They had this concept they called play streets, and they would close off the street --

J. GOTTFRIED: Yeah, they used to play --

F. GOTTFRIED: -- except if you lived on the block.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: So all the -- the boys and the girls used to play together on the -- baseball on the street.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: Right?

F. GOTTFRIED: Yes.

J. GOTTFRIED: Yeah, it was different. They'd come home from school, change their clothes, and then go in and to -- and play.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: Different, you know?

SULLIVAN: And so where did you go to school?

F. GOTTFRIED: I went to -- uh, growing up on New Jersey Avenue, there was an elementary school just the avenue across from our house, and both my sister and I went there, and it was called P.S. 213 [580 Hegeman Avenue].

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

F. GOTTFRIED: And then, um, my sister went to junior high school -- she went to 149 --

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

F. GOTTFRIED: -- Junior High School 149, where my mother went as well --

J. GOTTFRIED: Yeah.

F. GOTTFRIED: -- to Junior High School 149.

J. GOTTFRIED: I went there, too.

SULLIVAN: Ah.

F. GOTTFRIED: Uh, and then -- but I went to George Gershwin Junior High School, 166, which was on, uh, [800] Van Siclen and Linden Boulevard, because that was -- that was newer junior high school.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

F. GOTTFRIED: And then I went --

J. GOTTFRIED: That was -- they were both there --

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

F. GOTTFRIED: And then I went to Jeff -- Thomas Jefferson High School as well --

SULLIVAN: Oh, you did?

F. GOTTFRIED: -- and so did my sister --

SULLIVAN: Oh, wow.

F. GOTTFRIED: -- and my cousins. Our whole family -- and my mother's younger brother.

SULLIVAN: Ah.

F. GOTTFRIED: Our whole family went to Jefferson.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: What? Jeff--?

F. GOTTFRIED: I said our entire family went to Jefferson.

J. GOTTFRIED: Oh, Thomas Jefferson High School.

F. GOTTFRIED: Right. And then I went to, um --

J. GOTTFRIED: I remember when it was first built.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: When it was first built. But Jefferson was a very highly respected school.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: Thomas Jefferson was a wonderful school, and some of the most
[inaudible] people you read about. You know, we still get literature. I get the, the letter,
the --

F. GOTTFRIED: Alumni letter.

J. GOTTFRIED: Yeah. And people from years ago, they're all over the world, went to
Thomas Jefferson High School.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: So. But I remember when it was first built. Where did they go before that? I
don't remember. You see, I was a child; I don't remember that far. What high school did
they go to before Jefferson was built?

F. GOTTFRIED: I don't know.

J. GOTTFRIED: They must have gone into Manhattan.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: The Manhattan school, because there were the -- those who went to high
school, you know, before my time --

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: -- they must have gone into Manhattan, because --

F. GOTTFRIED: And then I -- I went to Queen's College for my undergraduate and Master's, and I went to New York University for my doctorate.

SULLIVAN: What did you study?

F. GOTTFRIED: Political science.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

F. GOTTFRIED: My sister went to Brooklyn College undergraduate, and she took her Master's at the University of Wisconsin.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm. And what did she study?

F. GOTTFRIED: Home economics --

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

F. GOTTFRIED: -- undergraduate, and then she has a -- took a Master's, textiles and clothing, at Wisconsin.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm. And does your sister live in Brooklyn?

F. GOTTFRIED: Manhattan.

SULLIVAN: Oh, but, but --

F. GOTTFRIED: Close.

SULLIVAN: Yeah, mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: Mm-hmm.

F. GOTTFRIED: And then, you know, while my mother was working and going to college, she also -- she traveled a lot, living in this neighborhood.

J. GOTTFRIED: Oh, I -- I traveled all over Europe. My brother was with -- alone -- alone without a reservation. All I had was a plane ticket. My brother worked for KLM Dutch Airlines --

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: -- so I had a ticket. So I used to spend my vacation, like ten, out of two weeks, I used to take ten days and go to Europe.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: But I didn't run over, and I stayed more or less in one or two countries, like Portugal and Spain, you know what I mean?

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: Or some together, one that [inaudible]. And I traveled all over Europe in those years, all alone without a reservation.

SULLIVAN: Ah.

J. GOTTFRIED: I get off the plane, and I go over and, and get myself a hotel, you know, and there were young people at the counter there. They always probably pictured their mother standing there, so they would take care of me. I never [inaudible] their first -- their first class is not our first class --

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: -- so I usually ended up on like the next block from the main street with families.

SULLIVAN: Mmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: You know, small hotels run by families, and it was wonderful. I used to come home, they'd invite me to coffee, tea, or any -- and they'd tell me where to go, not to -- don't miss this, don't miss that. You know?

SULLIVAN: What a wonderful way to travel.

J. GOTTFRIED: I know. I had -- better than coming with a group.

SULLIVAN: Yeah. Oh, yeah.

J. GOTTFRIED: You know?

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: And I didn't -- I didn't walk around all the -- you know what, I was able to take -- I would take bus trips, and -- was it bus? Yeah, it must have been bus. Car trips, bus, at that time, and with people from all over the world would be on the bus, you know.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: Because the driver would explain things in several languages in those years, you know?

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: You weren't coming from the United States where the driver only spoke English.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm. Did you ever go to the town that your parents' families were from?

J. GOTTFRIED: No, no. I never went that far.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: No, I nev -- no. I, I didn't. That would have been -- it's like traveling from here to go to practically California. You know what I mean?

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: You didn't -- I didn't-- You know, Europe is large.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: You didn't go, you know-- I didn't do it. As I said, when I had vacation, I stayed in one country --

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: -- There is enough, you know, to see there, you know. And in those years, [inaudible]. And I had no problem, because all I had to do was approach the young people. They all spoke English.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: You know, it was required in school there to speak English, to study English.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: The young people.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: So it was different.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: Come to think of it, that's why -- now I'm -- I'm older, you know, and I'm

tired, but I've seen everything and I've done every -- you know, I have no desire -- I'm happy if I'm well I can get up and get out a little, that's it.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

F. GOTTFRIED: And we've traveled a lot as a family, so--

J. GOTTFRIED: What?

F. GOTTFRIED: I said we've traveled a lot as a family.

J. GOTTFRIED: Oh, I did it. I did and I've seen it.

F. GOTTFRIED: Yeah, as a family we've done a lot of traveling.

J. GOTTFRIED: It's interesting, because you open up a magazine, you look, and I say, "Oh, I remember I was over here, I was over there." You know?

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: I've been there. Yeah. As I've said, I didn't jump around, like today, people go to -- take a trip to Europe, they have two days in Spain and three days here, then there, you know what I mean?

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: I -- I didn't jump around.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: You know, the next year I went to the next country or something.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: Through there.

F. GOTTFRIED: You know, just to come back to the Synagogue, we went last, uh, March, I guess, to the fiftieth anniversary of the Brooklyn Heights Synagogue. They had the fiftieth anniversary at the Steiner Studio at the Brooklyn Navy Yard.

J. GOTTFRIED: The what?

F. GOTTFRIED: Steiner Studio --

J. GOTTFRIED: Oh, yeah.

F. GOTTFRIED: -- at the Brooklyn Navy Yard, right?

J. GOTTFRIED: Right.

F. GOTTFRIED: And they had a -- they had a birthday cake for my mother's ninety-fifth birthday.

J. GOTTFRIED: Yeah.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: [inaudible] Thing is, I'm older now, you know what I mean, and I'm tired. Look, 95 is not 65 or 75, you know? I'm old. I say, "Thank God [knocking on wood] I can still pick up a paper and read a paper and know what I'm reading." You know what I mean?

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: I mean, I do other things, but I can sit and read a paper.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: So I -- and then I say, "Thank God." When I feel all right and the weather's nice, I go out, but I use my car. I need support. I can't walk alone.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: Thank God I can get in the -- in the house slowly I can go to the bathroom, around the apartment, but outside, I need support.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: [inaudible]. I count my -- as I -- as I said, I count my blessings for what I have, thank God.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm. Were you -- were -- what do you think about the Synagogue being 50 years old?

J. GOTTFRIED: It's-- I'll tell you truthfully. I, I -- to me, it's like yesterday. You know what I mean? It's -- that 50 years is like from here to there. It go -- it went -- it goes so fast you don't really -- you know what I mean? I -- I can't believe -- I don't think about it as 50 years, you know?

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: Because I just remember when they first put it, everything together. You know?

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: It seems like yesterday. It's -- you know, you look back, it's entirely different.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm. Can you -- uh, can you describe the Huffmans?

J. GOTTFRIED: What?

SULLIVAN: Can you describe the Huffmans? What were they like?

J. GOTTFRIED: Um, they were busy people also. They, uh, uh -- they did -- even he -- they were very active in the Synagogue. He was active also in the neighborhood. He was an attorney. He was active, I think, in politics to the neighborhood, too, wasn't he? And she was active like we -- she, like, the same as me, we belonged to Hadassah, we belonged to the Brooklyn Heights Synagogue, all the organizations. I, uh -- they were very, very active people. Did you know -- you didn't know them, did you.

SULLIVAN: No, I didn't meet them.

J. GOTTFRIED: You heard of them, though.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: That's how they started. They originally lived here, and they said, well, the people [inaudible] that we've got to have a synagogue. They're the ones who started it. As I said, they met in people's homes and gradually they have -- we had -- the Synagogue on -- and -- that the Orthodox people have were originally ours.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm, on Remsen Street?

J. GOTTFRIED: Yeah, yeah.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: And then they brought the -- that was the -- our Synagogue was the, was that the --

F. GOTTFRIED: Brooklyn Club.

J. GOTTFRIED: -- attorneys? Yeah, the Brooklyn-- And then the --

SULLIVAN: The, the current building?

J. GOTTFRIED: -- Orthodox people bought our synagogue.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: Which I say *kinehora* [Yiddish: A curse in reverse]. Years ago you didn't have Jewish people, and now you have *-kinehora-* several synagogues, you know?

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: It's popular, because years ago you didn't have that.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: They had -- Mount Sinai was near Nevins Street, around there, years ago. Did you know that?

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: Yeah. They were around there, Mount Sinai. And then they moved -- brought their synagogues over here later, after we were established, because they were in the other one over there, down there, Nevins, then they bought this one --

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: -- building. Yeah. And now as I say *kinehora*, we have three, the Orthodox too, you know --

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: -- the Orthodox synagogue and then Brooklyn Heights Synagogue. I don't consider -- see, ours is Reformed.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: But I don't feel it like I -- we're not that strictly, you know, Reform, whereas the observant, you know, like completely American. It's more like -- I -- a little with the -

F. GOTTFRIED: You feel it's a --

J. GOTTFRIED: -- Orthodox mixed in, Conservative, I mean.

F. GOTTFRIED: You feel it's a little more conservative.

J. GOTTFRIED: What?

F. GOTTFRIED: You feel it's a little more Conservative?

J. GOTTFRIED: Yes, definitely, definitely.

SULLIVAN: What about, um, ritual practice, like wearing, wearing a yarmulke or kippah and

things like that in the Synagogue?

J. GOTTFRIED: Which?

SULLIVAN: What about some of the ritual practices, like whether people wear a yarmulke or--?

J. GOTTFRIED: Well, they don't. They're not required. Some people do.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: Some people still wear it.

F. GOTTFRIED: Oh, sure.

J. GOTTFRIED: Of course.

SULLIVAN: Have you seen that change?

J. GOTTFRIED: That's -- well, those who want to observe it, you know, they were brought up that way, families, they continue.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm. [phone rings]

J. GOTTFRIED: They continue. Call back, Fran.

F. GOTTFRIED: [in background] Hello?

SULLIVAN: Have you seen that change over the time of the Synagogue? Has that -- did that change, or has it always been sort of you can -- you can --

J. GOTTFRIED: You mean our synagogue?

SULLIVAN: Yes.

J. GOTTFRIED: I think it's always been-- I don't -- I don't -- I don't remember -- I'll tell you frankly, she said a change over being strict. Our Synagogue --

F. GOTTFRIED: You mean in terms of the rituals, of the wearing--?

J. GOTTFRIED: Yeah.

SULLIVAN: Yeah, have -- has there been a change over the years?

F. GOTTFRIED: Well, now, this --

J. GOTTFRIED: I don't think --

F. GOTTFRIED: In this Synagogue, it was always comfortable as an option to wear tallit or yarmulkes.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

F. GOTTFRIED: In -- you may not realize this because this is the Reform synagogue that you've always gone to --

J. GOTTFRIED: Yeah.

F. GOTTFRIED: -- but in -- and including the rabbi wearing a yarmulke and a tallis. In many Reform syna -- in many Reform syna -- synagogues, it was typical for, uh, people and even the rabbis not to wear yarmulkes, that they were almost frowned on wearing yarmulkes in Reform synagogue, and that was never the case here, but in many of the other in the Reform movement, there actually is a push towards the wearing of yarmulkes and the ritual. But in this Synagogue, that was really never the case.

J. GOTTFRIED: Yeah.

F. GOTTFRIED: It was always welcome, and basically you could always do whatever you want.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: Those who want to wear it, those who don't.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

F. GOTTFRIED: But it was never a "How come you're wearing a yarmulke?"

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

F. GOTTFRIED: It was always a comfortable thing to do.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: [inaudible] it was optional, whatever you want, and the ones that--

F. GOTTFRIED: Right.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

F. GOTTFRIED: And then -- and then including that --

J. GOTTFRIED: What?

F. GOTTFRIED: Even, even in times when prayer books didn't have transliteration --

J. GOTTFRIED: Yeah.

F. GOTTFRIED: -- the Brooklyn Heights Synagogue always had transliteration --

J. GOTTFRIED: Yes.

F. GOTTFRIED: -- in for the holidays, high holy holidays.

SULLIVAN: Oh, mm-hmm.

F. GOTTFRIED: To make it -- for people who couldn't read Hebrew.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: Today they all have it, I think, even --

F. GOTTFRIED: Well, the -- well, the new Reform prayer book has more transliteration than it did before.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: Anyway, it's a wonderful neighborhood because, you know, you have all your options to do what you want, and that's a very good --

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: -- wonderful neighborhood. Transportation -- I don't -- I don't travel now, but when I went to business, you know, I had -- I had the subscription at the opera and the ballet. I was there -- I did all that years ago, you know. All you did is go walk across the street, and there's the subway.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: You know?

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: It's -- it offers a lot, you know. Whatever you want. That's one thing about the neighborhood.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm. What about the -- this --

J. GOTTFRIED: And then the Heights and Hill, they, they're wonderful to people for the neighborhood. They have -- what is -- they contribute a lot to this neighborhood.

F. GOTTFRIED: Do you -- are you familiar with the Heights and Hill?

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm, a little bit, but --

J. GOTTFRIED: What?

SULLIVAN: -- tell me what --

F. GOTTFRIED: When she -- tell Sady about the Heights and Hill [Heights and Hill Community Council, services for older adults].

J. GOTTFRIED: What?

SULLIVAN: Tell me about, um, the Heights and Hill.

J. GOTTFRIED: Well, I know that they're in the -- they help -- they supply people practically with everything. I don't require it, you know, but they have people coming to clean your house, to take you shopping, take you -- do practically -- enabling people my age to stay at home in their own surroundings --

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: -- you know? There are a lot of people my age in the neighborhood, and that -- what Heights and Hill are wonderful people that way. They follow through, and they -- if for any reason you don't answer or what, they'll call. They follow through on every -- it's a wonderful organization, Heights and Hill.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: Really very good. So we're fortunate we have that in the neighborhood.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: I don't know -- I don't know whether everybody appreciates that. They take -- a lot of people just take it for granted for what they do, but they don't realize what a wonderful organization it is.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: It's true, right?

SULLIVAN: Um, is there a moment that stands out to you where you felt --

J. GOTTFRIED: What?

SULLIVAN: -- most connected to the Synagogue?

J. GOTTFRIED: What?

SULLIVAN: Is there a moment or an event or something that happened that made you feel most connected to the Synagogue?

J. GOTTFRIED: No, I don't know. Well, you know, I can't -- I can't think of anything. An

event or anything that--?

SULLIVAN: Yeah, or just -- or it doesn't have to be a single thing, it could be a recurring --

J. GOTTFRIED: Well, we used to have -- the Sisterhood was very active years ago --

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: -- so it was -- and today there aren't -- it's still in existence, you know, you pay dues, but there are no meetings or anything.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: And the old-timers are gone, everyone.

SULLIVAN: Who was -- who was on the Sisterhood with you?

J. GOTTFRIED: Well, I was during the time with the Huffmans, my time.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: You know, no --

F. GOTTFRIED: And Marion Cohen.

J. GOTTFRIED: Oh, well, but she was -- Marion Cohen's not in our house, she was in the --

F. GOTTFRIED: No, no, in the -- in the Sisterhood.

J. GOTTFRIED: Oh, yeah.

F. GOTTFRIED: Who, who else was ac --

J. GOTTFRIED: And, and, what's her name? You know, I forget a lot of the old people who worked in there and who went to business. There were women -- we had a Sisterhood, so women used to come there.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: But now, you know, they're all gone, the old --

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: The young -- as I've said, it doesn't matter. It's difficult because the young people today have -- you need -- they have to go to business. They have children, they have to go to school, everything. You need -- I told you, you need two salaries to run a house now.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: That's all I can say.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: That's my explanation. You need two salaries to run a home nowadays and a family.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

F. GOTTFRIED: Didn't you -- when -- I mean, when -- in terms of connection to the Synagogue for the high holy holidays, like the Yom Kippur services --

J. GOTTFRIED: Oh, yeah.

F. GOTTFRIED: -- is that a time that you feel close, connected to the Synagogue?

J. GOTTFRIED: Yeah.

F. GOTTFRIED: You enjoy those services, right?

J. GOTTFRIED: Yeah.

F. GOTTFRIED: Right, I think she --

J. GOTTFRIED: It's different.

F. GOTTFRIED: -- enjoys the -- those services.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

F. GOTTFRIED: They're special. To be with everyone at the Plymouth Church.

J. GOTTFRIED: Hmm?

F. GOTTFRIED: At the Plymouth Church [75 Hicks Street] --

J. GOTTFRIED: Yeah, yeah.

F. GOTTFRIED: -- it's great, a lot of people.

J. GOTTFRIED: They run -- yeah. That's one thing they -- the Synagogue, they -- they work together with the -- which is nice, you know, that they were -- they're able all these years. Of course, for the holidays, you can't accommodate all these people.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: You know what it is. It's not that -- people -- I told you, I go back to the basic thing that you need two salaries to run a family. So they have no time, the women, nowadays. Think of running of family, come Saturday or Sunday, you've got to take

this child here, you got to go shopping, the husband will take this one to basketball, this one will take that-- I -- it's a different life. It's a different life.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: And it's --

SULLIVAN: So more people just only come for the high holidays?

J. GOTTFRIED: Yes.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: The place gets filled up.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: And that's why they rent Plymouth Church here --

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: -- for the holidays, because -- and it gets full. Have you ever been there for the holidays?

SULLIVAN: Uh-uh.

J. GOTTFRIED: It's filled to the gills, right, Fran?

F. GOTTFRIED: Yes, the top and the bottom. Like 800 people.

SULLIVAN: Wow.

J. GOTTFRIED: You know, people -- as I've said, it's because people have got to work, but when it comes to the holidays, people come to the Synagogue but that don't come to the Synagogue all year 'round.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: But for Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, they -- Jews -- majority of Jews observe that.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: You know?

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: For Rosh-- They don't go to business, and they'll come, and the doors are open, and they come here. It gets filled up to the top. Very, very-- And it's a wonderful

feeling, also, you know? Like also to make you feel proud that you're in an area like this here with the offering, everything, and when you see all these people coming into the Synagogue --

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: -- it's a wonderful feeling. Yeah, yeah, yeah. Because I once read something, [inaudible] repeat it. Did you know that Brooklyn Heights, area-wise, just area-wise, has more churches than any other part of the United States?

SULLIVAN: No! Wow.

J. GOTTFRIED: I read that somewhere.

SULLIVAN: Hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: And you can believe it. On every other block, you got a -- you know?

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: So that you -- when we -- and now, *kinehora*, you have three synagogues.

[laughter]

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: I say [inaudible]. Right?

F. GOTTFRIED: Right. I thought -- well, I didn't realize that about -- I didn't realize that about Brooklyn Heights; I thought Brooklyn has more churches -- has a lot of churches.

J. GOTTFRIED: I don't know, but I think it was Brooklyn Heights. If you walk along, you got about -- almost every corner you don't realize that-- Yeah. Which is wonderful to have all that, you know, and to mingle with the Jewish and Irish, everything.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: You know?

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: It's wonderful to see that.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: So, uh, I think that a wonderful neighborhood, and I'm thankful that we -- I always used to be thankful that we live here, you know.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: Not to take it for granted.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: It's a very -- they got a -- and it's -- and you still feel you're close, somehow or other. People live in Manhattan, they're used to it, but to me, I don't feel that close to Manhattan as I do here, you know?

SULLIVAN: What do you mean?

J. GOTTFRIED: When close, it's more -- it's comfortable or more like -- like if you lived in a small town or a small village, you know --

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: -- rather than a big city, you know?

SULLIVAN: There's more community?

J. GOTTFRIED: Yeah, it's more close here than living in Manhattan, you know?

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: Especially. Yeah.

F. GOTTFRIED: It's a neighborhood.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: Eh?

F. GOTTFRIED: It's a neighborhood.

J. GOTTFRIED: Yeah, it's a neighbor -- a wonderful neighborhood.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: And they have -- and especially -- and then you have the schools, I see, coming out of here, it's wonderful. This school over here, you know, it's a popular school that a lot of young people use. They don't have to send -- not everybody sends their children to private schools. You know?

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: So we have a couple good schools here that you don't have -- which is important.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: You know, it doesn't affect me, you know, my -- but still, I like to see that.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: Yeah.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: [inaudible] surely -- especially I'm sure that a lot of -- and in our [inaudible] house, the young children, [inaudible].

F. GOTTFRIED: [inaudible].

J. GOTTFRIED: It's just one of a-- As I said, I was always thankful that I lived here.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: Yeah. I can't use, but you got the subways. I was able to do everything. And, and I'm thankful to this day even if I need something -- you know, in emergency, you have everything over here.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm. Well, thank you. I think I've -- I've -- we've covered the questions that I had. Is there anything that I haven't brought up that --

J. GOTTFRIED: I don't know.

SULLIVAN: -- that I should ask about?

J. GOTTFRIED: Nothing --

F. GOTTFRIED: But you always liked the history of, of Brooklyn Heights, the history of Brooklyn Heights, living in a historical neighborhood.

J. GOTTFRIED: Yeah.

F. GOTTFRIED: You, you like the history.

J. GOTTFRIED: I forget [inaudible].

F. GOTTFRIED: No, but you know, George Washington.

J. GOTTFRIED: Yeah, that's all --

F. GOTTFRIED: I mean, you -- my mother was -- you were always saying about --

J. GOTTFRIED: He crossed the river here, you know, when he got the-- The reason for that is because right over here is the narrowest part. When he crossed. But you have -- over

here in Brooklyn Heights, they have a lot of history there, too. I have books there that all will tell you, you know?

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: But it's historical. Well, you know.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: That you know, you know. Historical, yeah. But that part, I once read somewhere, the reason he -- it was the narrowest point between Manhattan and Brooklyn --

SULLIVAN: Oh.

J. GOTTFRIED: -- that when they had to cross --

SULLIVAN: During the Battle of Brooklyn?

J. GOTTFRIED: When George Washington, during the battle, yeah --

SULLIVAN: Yeah.

J. GOTTFRIED: -- to get from Brooklyn to New York or New York to Brooklyn, it was the narrowest -- and you know that yourself. If you go down to the river and you look, you're practically in -- you see -- you can swim across to Manhattan.

SULLIVAN: Yeah, that's true. [laughter]

J. GOTTFRIED: Right?

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: It's true.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: Which they didn't have further up, you know?

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: I guess. That's why also trades, everything, you know, was down in there in this area of Manhattan. You have the financial everything because it's so close together with everything else.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

F. GOTTFRIED: So you -- my mother -- she worked, so, for the city, downtown Manhattan.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: What?

F. GOTTFRIED: I said when you worked for the city, you worked downtown Manhattan, so
you --

J. GOTTFRIED: Yeah. I used to walk home --

F. GOTTFRIED: -- took the subway sometimes --

J. GOTTFRIED: -- almost every night across the river.

SULLIVAN: Oh, over -- which bridge? Over the Brooklyn Bridge? Oh, how lovely?

J. GOTTFRIED: [inaudible], and then I was right in front of my house.

SULLIVAN: Yeah.

J. GOTTFRIED: I was --

SULLIVAN: So did you work in City Hall there?

J. GOTTFRIED: I worked in the area, yeah.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: I worked there.

F. GOTTFRIED: Gold Street.

J. GOTTFRIED: Gold Street. I worked on Gold Street.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: And it was -- in the summer, summertime, I used to walk home a lot of-- You
know -- you know, in the -- for breakfast -- in the morning, you -- you know, you don't
feel so fresh, you want to get to the office and feel--

SULLIVAN: Right.

J. GOTTFRIED: But coming home, I -- you see mobs of people always walking home.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: Yeah. It's a -- it's a beautiful bridge, the Brooklyn Bridge.

SULLIVAN: It is.

J. GOTTFRIED: It is a beautiful bridge, and you have all that activity through there. I think -
- is it dark, or maybe you need some light in here? Yeah. I thought it was me. I'm sorry.

Yeah. I usually -- I take a nap, but I didn't have, so I feel a little, you know-- But I'm OK.

I say, Thank God I can still talk to a person and do things.

SULLIVAN: Yeah. And this was -- I'm -- thank you so much. This was a really wonderful interview.

J. GOTTFRIED: Yeah. I just -- yeah. I please -- you know, as I said, I still have the ability to sit and talk to people and pick up a newspaper, yeah, and [inaudible] that. I count my blessings. And I -- I get out when I feel all right. I get out. But I use my shopping cart. I have the walkers here --

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: -- but I find my shopping cart is the right height for me. I can't walk without the balance. I need something to balance me.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: So I have all these walkers, you know, but I take the little shopping cart. You know, I don't go that far. The furthest I go is Montague. I never go -- I don't even go there. [laughter] Thank God. I go into the diner here.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: You know where the diner is, on Mont --

SULLIVAN: Yeah, yeah, up the corner. Oh, the diner on Montague?

J. GOTTFRIED: Y -- uh, no. This one over here in Cadman Plaza.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: Yeah.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: They're very nice people, and I can make a coffee and that in the house, too, but when I feel all right, it's an opportunity for me to get out, exercise my legs, and you see people, and you're relaxed a little. Because I can do the same cup of coffee and a sandwich here, you know?

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm. But it's nice to get out and--

J. GOTTFRIED: Yeah, the main thing is getting out. Yeah, yeah.

SULLIVAN: Yeah.

J. GOTTFRIED: And if I can't make it one day, that's fine also, you know?

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: It's fine. As I say, thank God I can get up and still do things myself, you know?

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: I can -- knock wood -- can get dressed, you can take a shower yourself, you can do the same thing. So you're a little slower, that's all. I'm not punching the clock anymore. [laughter] Right?

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: Yeah. So yeah, that's about it, yeah. You know, I can't add any more outside of the fact that we're happy to be in the neighborhood.

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: You know? [inaudible]. And a lot of people don't realize that you take things for granted, you know?

SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

J. GOTTFRIED: And they shouldn't take it, and they should be happy that they're being here [inaudible]. I'm looking at this, which is the paintings that is --