

weren't so funny, but they were humorous when we were young. As we got older, we heard more of the serious things. I still find out more even today. But my dad would tell us mostly just the heroic things that happened to him. I was always aware as a child. I was named for at least one relative who probably died during the war. I don't think anybody knows what happened to him.

Sarah. I always remember knowing. It sounds very familiar. I remember coming over on the boat. I remember seeing the Statue of Liberty and everybody being very excited about being in America. But I remember knowing, I think, because so many of my parents' friends were Holocaust survivors and they all had children who were born in Germany in '47; it was like the thing to do, obviously, after the war. A lot of these people had been married before the war or remarried right after, so we were all a group. It was nothing that we ever talked about. I don't think it was anything that my parents talked about when they were with their friends, or when I was with their friends' children who were the same age. But it was just always very, very much there. Not something that I enjoyed feeling, certainly. I don't even have any pictures because I don't want to have them around. I would look at them and mainly look at my grandparents because I was named after both of my grandmothers. Unfortunately, some neighbor in the building decided to translate the name, not to what I would have liked. I don't feel I can change it because that's the way my parents see it now. So I feel that would be hurting them to do that. But, basically, I feel that I've always known.

Joel. I sort of feel the same way. I remember at five I already had asked my parents where my grandparents were, and had this understanding that my grandparents were not alive. And . . . wasn't that disturbed by it, because . . . I didn't know what I was missing. My father used to tell war stories as well. They used to be just like stories—just like watching television. In retrospect, they were sort of devoid of emotion. They were just kind of amazing stories of survival and what happened, and always a little bit here and a little bit there—never really the complete story of what happened in the war. On the other hand, my mother could never really talk about it. She could talk about it for about five minutes and then she'd start crying. . . . As a child I could never understand why she had to leave the room and she'd start crying in the next room. And my father didn't feel that way at all; he could just kind of talk about it.

Interviewer. And when she left the room, your dad wouldn't say anything?

Joel. No, actually. . . . I don't know if he completely understood why she was crying. He definitely didn't feel the same way about it. It just

seemed—I think—it lacked a lot of emotion for him; and it was overwhelming for my mom. I think—she always used to say, "I don't want to hear about it." She'd come in and try to talk about it for a few minutes, and then she'd have to leave. It was mostly my father who told us stories.

Nina. My parents didn't ever talk about it. In fact, I just recently found out that my grandfather was in a concentration camp. Growing up I had a very vague feeling that something wasn't right. . . . I knew I was a German Jew and I knew that a lot of people had died in the Holocaust. It kind of scared me, and I was sort of relieved that I didn't look very Jewish because I thought no one would find out. That was never openly discussed in my family, but I think my sisters also felt the same way. They felt kind of afraid of people knowing they were Jewish. My father alluded to things, but it was always friends who would say things like, "Wow, did you know that your dad was in the German underground?" Because he would tell friends of the family, and then I would find out through them. . . . My family made a big, big point of not talking about the Holocaust, and feeling like they were sick of hearing about it and didn't want to talk about it. . . .

Reuben. I also had the feeling that there was something dangerous about being Jewish. Maybe this is an immigrant experience, not necessarily a Holocaust experience. . . . I'm sure my father passed that on to me. I probably also got that from my mother, who was a second-generation immigrant.

Interviewer. How do you think your childhood might have been different as a result of being in a survivor family?

Miriam. I grew up in a well-known Jewish community in Los Angeles, the Fairfax area. Lots of my best friends' parents had been in concentration camps and had lost children. My best friend's mother had lost two sons. She was waiting in line in Auschwitz and was saved by a guard. Those stories were around me all the time. That was also true for me—my father would not necessarily consider himself a survivor of the Holocaust because he wasn't in a camp, even though he had lost his whole world. There were 20,000 Jews in his town and maybe 300 lived. My parents would talk about so-and-so, "she's a little crazy, because she was hiding in Amsterdam for five years without knowing where her daughter was, and that's why she acts a little funny." They would drop these little stories here and there; these stories were the backdrop of my life. To refer to your question about how our lives were different—I grew up knowing about these real people who came to our house with their Danish pastries, chickens and stuff to our little refugee parties—this was my world. I think it did make me different. . . . I think my brother and I were more nervous chil-