

EI-1105

RAMILDE MARCANTONIO

BIRTHDATE: OCTOBER 18, 1922

INTERVIEW DATE: OCTOBER 5, 1999

AGE AT TIME OF INTERVIEW: 76

RUNNING TIME: 44:25

INTERVIEWER: JANET LEVINE, PH.D.

RECORDING ENGINEER: JANET LEVINE, PH.D.

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ITALY, 1953

AGE: 30

SHIP: THE CONSTITUTION

PORT:

RESIDENCES:

LEVINE: Okay. Today is October 5th, 1999.

MARCANTONIO: Yes. Okay.

LEVINE: I'm in West Hartford, Connecticut at the home of Ramilde and Luigi Marcantonio.

MARCANTONIO: Marcantonio. Yes.

LEVINE: And both Mr. and Mrs. Marcantonio came through Ellis Island. Mrs. Marcantonio came through in 1953 and Mr. Marcantonio came through in 1954.

MARCANTONIO: '54. Yeah.

LEVINE: Okay. Now, at the time that you came through, Mrs. Marcantonio, you were 30 years old.

MARCANTONIO: Yes.

LEVINE: And today you are 76.

MARCANTONIO: Seventy-six.

LEVINE: Seventy-six. [chuckles] Great.

MARCANTONIO: [chuckles]

LEVINE: Okay. And this is Janet Levine for the National Park Service.

MARCANTONIO: Yes.

LEVINE: Okay. If you'd say again for the tape, your birth date.

MARCANTONIO: My birthday, that's—I—you want me to tell the actual birth? Twenty-two—no, October 18, 1922.

LEVINE: Right.

MARCANTONIO: Yes.

LEVINE: Okay. And where in Italy were you born?

MARCANTONIO: I was born in Pratola Lapalenia [PH].

LEVINE: And is—is that in the north or the south or the—where is that?

MARCANTONIO: I think it's north.

LEVINE: North.

MARCANTONIO: Yeah, Louie? North.

LOU: Central.

MARCANTONIO: Central.

LEVINE: Central.

MARCANTONIO: Yeah. [chuckles]

LEVINE: Central. Okay. And so, the—was it a little town or—

MARCANTONIO: Yeah, it was—

LEVINE: —a village or—

MARCANTONIO: Was a small town, yes.

LEVINE: Small town.

MARCANTONIO: Small town. And then I moved to Simona. [PH]. My father opened a restaurant over there. So I was young and then, you know, I stay over there for many years. My son—my father—the [unclear] he passed away. So—and then I have a stepmother. I—my stepmother passed away too. I [unclear]. I was the one who buy, cook and everything, a small restaurant.

LEVINE: I see.

MARCANTONIO: Yeah.

LEVINE: Well, what—how old were you when you moved to Simona?

MARCANTONIO: When I moved, Simona, I was very, very young. You know, maybe 13, 14. Yeah.

LEVINE: Do you remember life in the little village before?

MARCANTONIO: Yeah, it was—was funny. There was nothing at that time. You know, not too many car. Few, you know. There was a small [unclear]. People, they go out and work on the farm, you know. And I used to work on restaurant. My father have a small restaurant. And we go—every day we go on—my father have a motorcycle, go and, Simona. And then we go back on—then after, we settle over there in Simona.

LEVINE: I see.

MARCANTONIO: Yeah.

LEVINE: So your father had a restaurant in the little village too?

MARCANTONIO: Yeah. No, in Simona, it's like city.

LEVINE: It's like a city.

MARCANTONIO: You see.

LEVINE: I see.

MARCANTONIO: Little village is Pratola.

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

MARCANTONIO: Now, it changes to big now. [chuckles]

LEVINE: Yeah. D—was it—were you a religious family?

MARCANTONIO: Yes.

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

MARCANTONIO: We had religious but we didn't go to church every single Sunday. Now, I do but before, I was busy and I didn't go to much church.

LEVINE: Do you remember—

MARCANTONIO: [unclear].

LEVINE: —the way that people celebrated different church—

MARCANTONIO: Yeah.

LEVINE: —holidays?

MARCANTONIO: Yeah.

LEVINE: Like Easter or Christmas?

MARCANTONIO: Yes.

LEVINE: Can you describe what people did?

MARCANTONIO: Well, on—on Christmas, like they do, they go visit the church a lot. You know, they make a lot of—kind food. That's what they do. You know, I don't know. [chuckles] Then, you know, we—we visit each other and then we bring the gift, you know, and we make, like, Christmas tree. Then Easter. You want me to jump to [chuckles] Easter now?

LEVINE: Yeah.

MARCANTONIO: Easter, the same thing. Like, they—they go visit the church three times, you know, before—three days before, you know, God died. You know, they go around the church. All the church,

they make a [unclear]. They [unclear]. Then they—you know, they go around and pray and that's what they do. And then on Christmas—or, no—on Easter—on Easter, you know, they make, like, big procession. You know, when God, you know—Mary—Mary [unclear], you know. They come, you know, because Christ is—

LEVINE: Risen.

MARCANTONIO: Is risen. That's right. They make a big procession on city and piazza. And then, [chuckles] I don't know. I can explain to you but it—it was beautiful at that time, you know. All the friend, they go look, you know, outside, you know. They—they shoot with the—you know, and then all the pigeon. They're flying. It was—

LEVINE: Oh.

MARCANTONIO: —very nice. I can't explain to you more. [chuckles]

LEVINE: Uh-huh. But you have good memories of that.

MARCANTONIO: Yeah. Well, I—I remember all those things when I was young, you know. It was different than now. Before, we didn't have too much. Now—now, we have too much. [chuckles]

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

MARCANTONIO: Over there too in Italy, now, everything's got more—mostly more than over here. Yeah. They—people, they have good life over that. Yeah.

LEVINE: Now, when you were in the little village, did you—was your father farming?

MARCANTONIO: No, my father was, you know—he was, like, buy—you know, he'd buy—sell well, you know. And he'd buy wine, you know, a big, you know—on big, big things. How they call, Lou?

LOU: Salesman.

MARCANTONIO: Sales—like salesman. Buy—buy, you know, from all over, buy the grape and he make wine. And then we sell the wine, you know.

LEVINE: I see.

MARCANTONIO: Yeah.

LEVINE: And what was your father's name?

MARCANTONIO: My—my father was Rocco, yeah. Rocco Bitrara. [PH]

LEVINE: And your mother?

MARCANTONIO: Beratta [PH]. My mother die when I was six years old.

LEVINE: Oh.

MARCANTONIO: Yeah. She die. I think she have baby and then she went [unclear]. That's what I've been told, you know. She catch, not pneumonia—some [unclear].

LEVINE: Oh.

MARCANTONIO: And she die, you know. I was six years old and the other kids—the last one she had one months, was one month old. We were five kids, yeah.

LEVINE: What was your mother's maiden name?

MARCANTONIO: I don't—Bruno. I don't remember exactly now. DePetro. [PH]

LEVINE: DePetro.

MARCANTONIO: Yeah.

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

MARCANTONIO: Yeah.

LEVINE: And so you had—you had four brothers and sisters?

MARCANTONIO: Yeah. We were five altogether.

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

MARCANTONIO: I have four brother and sister after me. Yeah.

LEVINE: You were the oldest one?

MARCANTONIO: I am the o—the oldest one. Yeah.

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

MARCANTONIO: Yeah.

LEVINE: Well, as the oldest one when your mother died—

MARCANTONIO: Yeah.

LEVINE: —did you have to take on certain responsibilities?

MARCANTONIO: Yeah, yeah. I have to do a lot of things.

LEVINE: What did you have to do?

MARCANTONIO: Yeah. Well, do some cleaning. You know, do some, you know—not shopping over there because they have everythings on farm, you know. Do some cleaning, do some cook—but very little because then there is the grandmother in there, because I was six years old, you know.

LEVINE: Yeah, right.

MARCANTONIO: I do some dishing, you know. So—

LEVINE: Do you remember your grandmothers?

MARCANTONIO: Yeah, my grandmother, I remember. I remember both the grandmother. My mother, because—my grandmother, no. The first one, the mother of my mother died many years ago, maybe over 30 years ago. But the last—the last—oh, more than 30 years ago. [unclear]. She—she dead when I was in—before I came in this country; a long time ago, she died.

LEVINE: Oh.

MARCANTONIO: And then my father mother die a couple—couple weeks before I came over here. Yeah, so she died 45 years ago—40—yeah, 46. Because now I am over here for 46, because [chuckles] I don't remember. I got to count. Hey, Lou, what? Forty-six? We over here 46 or 47? Yeah, I got to count; I don't remember anymore. [chuckles]

LEVINE: Do you remember any experiences—

MARCANTONIO: Yeah.

- LEVINE: —that you had with your grandmother? With either of your grandmothers? Things that you did with them or—
- MARCANTONIO: Yeah, well, the grandmother, you know, they—they were very strict because they were, you know, oh, very old. And I didn't understand too much on them. You know, sometime they say, "Don't do this. Don't do that." You know, didn't do much because I was baby. I was six years old.
- LEVINE: Yeah.
- MARCANTONIO: So, and then I stay from—one—one grandmother live in one place. Another one live in another place. So I go both one time at one grandmother, another time at one. Then my father remarried, you know, after—after one year, or before, because he had five kids, you know. So—and then the stepmother came, who was not too good with us. I—it was okay, you know. Then after—she passed away too. She have cancer when—this happened when we were in Simona. Yeah, so—
- LEVINE: What was Simona like when you first moved there?
- MARCANTONIO: Yeah.
- LEVINE: What was—
- MARCANTONIO: It—it's a—
- LEVINE: What was different about it?
- MARCANTONIO: It's a city. It's more—better than Pratola. It was—at that time. Now, Pratola became big and Simona too. Now, all the big building, you know. Many years ago now it was very, very ugly [chuckles] before. Now, it's nice.
- LEVINE: Uh-huh.
- MARCANTONIO: Yeah, very, very nice.
- LEVINE: Now, did you go to school in either of those places?
- MARCANTONIO: Yes, I went to school. I started to school in Pratola and then I finished in Simona, because I went to school in—the first school in Pratola. And then I went to fifth grade, finished in Simona.
- LEVINE: Uh-huh.

MARCANTONIO: Yeah.

LEVINE: And—

MARCANTONIO: At that time, there were a lot—now, they go—everybody goes to college. But this time, people don't go to school too much.

LEVINE: Yeah.

MARCANTONIO: Yeah. So then, the school, you know, you have to walk to go to school far away, you know. You don't want to go. [chuckles] My sister, she—she started to college, you know, from Pratola to Simona. But she have to walk [unclear]. She—she go a little bit. She didn't go anymore. She drop out because she have to walk seven, eight mile. You know, it was too—and wintertime and summertime, you know. She went a little bit and she didn't go anymore. There was, like, a train, by the trains. Didn't come on time. You know, come once a day. It was very bad. Now, everybody got [chuckles]—

LEVINE: Yeah.

MARCANTONIO: —car. Everybody—

LEVINE: Yeah.

MARCANTONIO: So—

LEVINE: So—so did you stop school to work then?

MARCANTONIO: Well, yes. You know, at that time, people don't go to school there long. You know, they go a little bit. But we have [unclear] and I have to have—my—my father and my mother. So I went to school a little bit, you know—

LEVINE: Uh-hmm.

MARCANTONIO: —after that. And then they stop. But there—there was—they—there was not a—people, they don't go to school too much. You know, they don't push you to go to school. They—they brings you the job. You know, and then I went to school, the—for design clothes, you know.

LEVINE: Oh.

MARCANTONIO: I—I stayed to make my [unclear]. Excuse me. Lou, I think somebody at the door. Lou.

LOU: Yeah.

MARCANTONIO: Somebody at the door, I think. I'm sorry. [chuckles]

LEVINE: Yeah, that's okay.

MARCANTONIO: Yeah, so—

LEVINE: So—so you—when—when did you go? After you were working in the restaurant, is that when you went to the school for design?

MARCANTONIO: No. This—this, you know—there was, you know—is it all right now?

LEVINE: Shall we—shall we pause here?

MARCANTONIO: Yeah. [tape off/on] So I was in Simona and then I didn't get along with my stepmother because she—you know, she did a lot of things to me. You know, she wanted me to do this, do that. So I went back in Pratola and I stay a little bit with my grandmother. And then, over there, not too far from my aunt, you know, there was this teacher who teach me, you know, how to make a dress. So I went to school over there. I went three months over there and then I went two months another place. And then when I go back—when back in Simona, on top of my house, you know, [unclear] on third floor. [chuckles] I'm sorry. So there was this dressmaker, very, very good dressmaker. So I make—I sketch a pattern and then she—I went—learn how to put the dress together. And then I learn very good. So I make all my clothes. I—I—I used to sew for people but now—now, I'm old. I don't do too much, you know.

LEVINE: Uh-hmm.

MARCANTONIO: Beside, we don't stay. We—in wintertime, we spend in Florida.

LEVINE: I see.

MARCANTONIO: Yeah. We—

LEVINE: Well, now, when you first went to learn how to—how to sew—

MARCANTONIO: Yeah.

LEVINE: —was it a pers—a woman who had students come to her house?

MARCANTONIO: Yes, there—yes, yes.

LEVINE: And how many were there?

MARCANTONIO: Well, not too many. Fifteen, you know. Yeah.

LEVINE: And you would all be together?

MARCANTONIO: Yes, we'd be toget—

LEVINE: And how would she teach you? How would she—

MARCANTONIO: Well, she teach, like we have a—we have a—like a—like the [unclear] they call. You know, you make—she—she show you how to make, like, the [unclear], the paper. We have paper we sketch with, you know. We sketch with the pattern and then we pull the pattern together.

LEVINE: Oh.

MARCANTONIO: Yeah. Now, I don't remember anymore. We used to have tools that—that—I—I can't lift my hand. So they curl like this and one was triangle, you know. And we make a pattern with that. We used paper and then we pull the pattern together. We make, like, the smaller [unclear] and then we make the big one.

LEVINE: Ah.

MARCANTONIO: Yeah.

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

MARCANTONIO: Yeah. Now, we [unclear]. I can use—I use any kind of pattern. I know how to use. I use Vogue, Butterick, McCalls, you know, any—any kind. Yeah.

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

MARCANTONIO: Yeah. But now, for—I didn't sew too much for a long time, you know. But before, I used to sew. Oh, my husband used to work construction. He was a contractor so—and I used to have a—you know, people, you know, they come.

LEVINE: People would come to you, huh?

MARCANTONIO: Yeah, come to me, you know. They—

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

MARCANTONIO: My husband don't like but I did onsite, you know, because I—I know how to do. People told me, "Well, you are a good dressmaker. Why don't you, you know, do it?"

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

MARCANTONIO: So I—I did and then, now, you know, for 10 years I didn't do. I just do sometime in—now, I [unclear] because I—in the wintertime we go in Florida.

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

MARCANTONIO: So we are there.

LEVINE: Okay. Now, when you came to this country, were you married?

MARCANTONIO: Yeah, I was married because, see, my—my aunt call us many years ago, like, we were—we were on a list for 15 years because there was war, you know, things like that. Then I just married—not just married. I—I left my son, five years old. I left with my husband. So—and I came over here and I live with my aunt. Yeah.

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

MARCANTONIO: Yeah.

LEVINE: Now, why did you come when you did? Why did you leave at the time that you did?

MARCANTONIO: Well, because we were—we were a list before and then when—when the—

LEVINE: With the quotas, do you mean?

MARCANTONIO: Yeah, for the quo—yes, yes.

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

MARCANTONIO: Quota. And then when they arrive we came right away because over here it was better than over there.

LEVINE: Yeah.

MARCANTONIO: So—

LEVINE: What did you know about America before you came?

MARCANTONIO: No, I didn't know nothing about—May—my aunt, who was over here since she—she was over there, like, now she passed away—and now, they've been 80 years ago. Eighty years. She was away for 80. She came when she was 20. She married—

LEVINE: And this was your mother's sister?

MARCANTONIO: Yes.

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

MARCANTONIO: Yes. She didn't have no children so she take care of us. She sent the money. You know, she do everything for us and then she call one by one over here.

LEVINE: Oh.

MARCANTONIO: Yeah.

LEVINE: And you were the first?

MARCANTONIO: I was the first. No, two. We came two—two girl—one. I came first and she came second. And then another one came and she went back. She didn't like it. Now, she's good over there. Yeah, she's—she didn't like it.

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

MARCANTONIO: And then my brother was in Venezuela and she called my brother and he came over here. And then I call another sister. I—I'd been citizen. I call another sister with a family.

LEVINE: I see.

MARCANTONIO: Yeah.

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

MARCANTONIO: So—

LEVINE: So, now, how did you meet your husband?

MARCANTONIO: My husband—I met my husband in Italy because we were a neighbor.

LEVINE: Oh, you were a neighbor?

MARCANTONIO: Yeah.

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

MARCANTONIO: Yeah. He was in war.

LEVINE: In Simona?

MARCANTONIO: In Simona. He was in war and then he came back from the war. So we see—he come, you know, because I guess he was—sold wine, you know—sold [unclear]. Came here—beer. You know, he came over there. So that's how I met because he didn't live too far from me.

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

MARCANTONIO: Yeah.

LEVINE: Well, now, when you first got married, did you plan to come here? To come to this country?

MARCANTONIO: Yeah, we already were—were on list though, you know.

LEVINE: You were both on the list?

MARCANTONIO: Yeah. Not him.

LEVINE: Oh.

MARCANTONIO: I—that's why I came first and then I call him.

LEVINE: I see.

MARCANTONIO: We were—

LEVINE: But you were on the list?

MARCANTONIO: Yeah, I were on the list. Me, my sister, another sister and then my brother. So we were on list. So when that came, we waited 15 years. We waited every day, calling, calling, never come. Then finally, we came so I left everythings and I come.

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

MARCANTONIO: So I left my son over there with my husband, my brother-in-law, my sister-in-law. So they took care of him, yeah.

LEVINE: Uh-huh. So you c—did you travel by yourself?

MARCANTONIO: On—to come over here?

LEVINE: Did you come all by yourself? Were you alone when you traveled to—

MARCANTONIO: No, when we go, the neighbor—every—all family that came over with me.

LEVINE: Oh, okay.

MARCANTONIO: Yeah.

LEVINE: Talk about that.

MARCANTONIO: Yeah, yeah.

LEVINE: When you were getting ready to leave—

MARCANTONIO: Yes.

LEVINE: Did people come around and—

MARCANTONIO: Yes, people come around, you know, say goodbye and then some people, like relative—you know, my sister-in-law and brother-in-law, they came to Naple, you know. And then they say goodbye and I left. So I was on—on a boat.

LEVINE: Yeah.

MARCANTONIO: A lot of people. [chuckles] And then—

LEVINE: Now—

MARCANTONIO: —you started to be sick. [chuckles]

LEVINE: Yeah, right. [chuckles] Okay. Before we talk about the—the boat trip—

MARCANTONIO: Yeah.

LEVINE: Do you remember anything about World War II? Were you—were—

MARCANTONIO: [chuckles] Yes.

LEVINE: What did you experience—

MARCANTONIO: Yes.

LEVINE: —yourself?

MARCANTONIO: Experience World War II. So all the time they came and bomb, you know, in the city. They bomb everything so we tried to run away. We gone up the mountain. And then, like I say, little restaurant, they came—the soldiers, they come and eat and drink. And then they say—I say, you know, the pay. And they say, “No, [unclear] going to pay. Mussolini going to pay.” [chuckles] So they did—

LEVINE: Oh, so they didn’t pay.

MARCANTONIO: They didn’t pay, didn’t want to pay.

LEVINE: These were Germans—German soldiers?

MARCANTONIO: German and the English too, but mostly German. Yeah.

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

MARCANTONIO: Yeah. They say—when I say they pay, say, “[unclear] Mussolini going to pay.” [chuckles] The other one—when I say the other one from Germany. What’s the name?

LEVINE: Hitler?

MARCANTONIO: Hitler, yeah.

LEVINE: He’s going to pay?

MARCANTONIO: [chuckles]

LEVINE: Yeah, uh-huh. Uh-huh.

MARCANTONIO: Yeah, so we—you know, when are deciding, you know, we just tried to run, you know. But a lot—a lot of my friends die, yeah.

LEVINE: From the bombing?

MARCANTONIO: Yeah, from the bombing. They went on market. You know, they bomb everythings in a market.

LEVINE: Oh, [unclear].

MARCANTONIO: A couple of my friends die in the market, yeah.

LEVINE: So you saw a lot of destruction of your—

MARCANTONIO: Yeah, a lot of destruction—

LEVINE: —town?

MARCANTONIO: Yes.

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

MARCANTONIO: A lot, yes. Next, my husband, you know, house. Young men die. You know, there were all small piece. You know, the bomb there. [sentence unclear]. It was—

LEVINE: Oh.

MARCANTONIO: Yeah, it was bad and then the war finish and so they started calling people from, you know—and we came over here.

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

MARCANTONIO: So—

LEVINE: So some of your family went with you to Naples to get—

MARCANTONIO: Yes.

LEVINE: —the ship?

MARCANTONIO: Yes.

LEVINE: And do you remember what you took with you?

MARCANTONIO: Yeah. I took big trunk. You know, I was going to give it to Ellis Island but they want us to bring [unclear]. It's bigger. It costs too much money to go there. So we got—I brought a lot of things and I still got a couple dress. I'll bring to you. I'll show it to you.

LEVINE: Okay.

MARCANTONIO: Yeah. You want me to get it now or at the end?

LEVINE: Yeah, later will do.

MARCANTONIO: Later.

LEVINE: Yeah. Okay, so you had—

MARCANTONIO: Yeah.

LEVINE: So you brought dresses—

MARCANTONIO: I brought all dress. I have a nice suit at that time. I dress nice, you know. I have a nice suit, a black suit, gabardine, and I have a nice gray suit, you know, the—

LEVINE: That you made?

MARCANTONIO: Yeah.

LEVINE: Did you make them?

MARCANTONIO: No, this a man made—a tailor made for me.

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

MARCANTONIO: Yeah, the suit, the tailor used to make. Yeah. And the dress, I make. I've got upstairs, you know, now. I make this 50 years ago. They—they're [unclear]. Yeah, I just—I got a lot of things, you know.

LEVINE: Yeah.

MARCANTONIO: And so I'm—they came and say goodbye. I brought a big—big suitcase. You know, a lot of things. Pocketbook, shoes, a lot of nice shoes. I give it away, you know, because [chuckles] you

didn't keep the shoes so long. But I got a lot of [unclear] from Italy. [unclear] I got the letter, good letter.

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

MARCANTONIO: Yeah. And I got a lot of things. You know, a lot of memory. [chuckles]

LEVINE: Well, h—do you remember that day when you left?

MARCANTONIO: Yeah, it was—

LEVINE: How you felt?

MARCANTONIO: Was—yeah—

LEVINE: What you—

MARCANTONIO: It was [chuckles] bad, you know. What can you do? You've got to [chuckles]—

LEVINE: Yeah.

MARCANTONIO: You've got to leave. Yeah, it was bad. We left early in the morning. Yeah, because the [unclear]—Naples is so far, you know, from us.

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

MARCANTONIO: Yeah, we left over there and then the—the boat was there waiting. You know, a lot of people from all over, you know, Italy. So I met a lot of people. There was a lot, a thousand—thousand people, maybe 12, 15 hundred. Yeah, so I met a couple, three friend over there.

LEVINE: You—you made friends on the boat?

MARCANTONIO: On the boat, yeah.

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

MARCANTONIO: Because, you know, one—one girl slept with me, you know, the bunk bed.

LEVINE: Uh-hmm.

MARCANTONIO: Another one was next door.

LEVINE: Uh-hmm.

MARCANTONIO: Yeah. One was Maria Achieri [PH], you know. Then Maria—I don't know where she is now. Another one, I don't remember the name. But [chuckles] this one—the other one, I [unclear]. I have a nice dress, nice, fancy. And she—you know, she say, "Why don't you sell this dress to me? Sell it to me. It's beautiful. I don't have a dress, you know, like this." I sold to her. I don't remember. She gave me [unclear] money. I sold it because I have a lot of dress that time. [chuckles] I remember—

LEVINE: [laughs]

MARCANTONIO: —there was a brown—in fact, [several words unclear]. It was nice. I was skinny then. [laughs]

LEVINE: Uh-huh. So you sold her the dress?

MARCANTONIO: I sold her the dress.

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

MARCANTONIO: She—

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

MARCANTONIO: She say, "Give it to me. Give it to me. I like this dress." I wore it many times in Italy so I gave it to her.

LEVINE: Oh.

MARCANTONIO: Yeah.

LEVINE: Yeah. So—

MARCANTONIO: So very—more, [unclear] money she gave me [unclear]—

LEVINE: So what did you do aboard the ship while it was—while it was going?

MARCANTONIO: Well, we—we—on the ship, like with a friend, and then when it time to go eat we go up. And then [chuckles] we started to have seasick. You know, we can't eat. So we have to go back and

lay down. And then we go back. We see the movie. We do a lot of thing, the [unclear].

LEVINE: Uh-huh, yeah. Did—do you remember what you—what you talked about? I mean, what—what was on your mind when you—

MARCANTONIO: Yeah, we talked about the [unclear] America. We never been in America. I don't know. It's beautiful and everybody said, "America is beautiful, a nice country." So we just can't wait to reach America. We—we thought—we thought that the money grow on a tree over here. But it's not true. [chuckles] You've got to work hard. Yeah, that's—everybody thinks, the money grow on tree. [laughs]

LEVINE: Right, right. Yeah.

MARCANTONIO: Yeah.

LEVINE: Do you remember when the ship came into the New York harbor?

MARCANTONIO: No, I don't remember the—the day.

LEVINE: Did you see the statue?

MARCANTONIO: Yes, I see the statue. From far away, it seems very [unclear]. Now, we went inside. It's like town. [chuckles] Yeah. It's—you know, I was surprised to see the statue.

LEVINE: Uh-hmm.

MARCANTONIO: It was very nice, far away and Ellis Island. They change now. When we came—now, it's beautiful inside. They did a lot of nice things. Yeah.

LEVINE: What was it like when you came?

MARCANTONIO: Well, there—there was not like this. I can't explain to you but it was more, you know—there was nev—we didn't go inside. You know, we just seen it from outside.

LEVINE: You didn't go inside Ellis Island?

MARCANTONIO: Yes. Now—last year—

LEVINE: Yeah, but I mean when you first arrived.

MARCANTONIO: That—maybe we did. I don't remember exactly. Maybe we passed by because they—you know, they [unclear] you, see if you got a germ. You know, they—they did a lot of things. You know. We went by—don't remember too much, you know, the time.

LEVINE: But you—you probably passed right through.

MARCANTONIO: I pass—

LEVINE: You [unclear]—

MARCANTONIO: Yeah. I passed through but the people before me, just before, they don't pass through, you know. Yeah, we passed through and then we went—we have to go the—you know, where you collect the suitcase. What do they call that? Where you take—

LEVINE: The luggage?

MARCANTONIO: The luggage.

LEVINE: Yeah.

MARCANTONIO: You know, where—yeah. We have to go wait over there.

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

MARCANTONIO: And then I don't remember. My—my aunt came and pick—picked me up. She didn't have a car. I don't remember how—how we bring the stuff home. Somebody came with a car, maybe, because I have big trunk. Very big, you know, and suitcase and bag. Yeah.

LEVINE: Now, did you remember your aunt? How long had it been since you had seen her?

MARCANTONIO: Oh, I—I never see her because she was—she came to America when she was young. She came to America when she was young and then she went and married, you know, in Italy. But she came back.

LEVINE: I see.

MARCANTONIO: Yeah. So I—I never saw her.

LEVINE: Now—

MARCANTONIO: I saw her in a pix.

LEVINE: Oh.

MARCANTONIO: Yeah.

LEVINE: How did you recognize each other?

MARCANTONIO: Oh, I—she recognized because I sent a pix and, you know, she sent it to me. We recognized right away.

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

MARCANTONIO: Yeah.

LEVINE: Yeah.

MARCANTONIO: Okay.

LEVINE: And so—so you left Ellis Island with her.

MARCANTONIO: Yeah.

LEVINE: And then where did you go?

MARCANTONIO: I went in—over here in West Hartford, over her house. I stay over there for one year.

LEVINE: Uh-hmm.

MARCANTONIO: And then I find a little job, Royal Typewriter, they call. Royal Typewriter. They make typewriter.

LEVINE: Uh-hmm.

MARCANTONIO: So I work over there a little bit and then I got lay off. And then I [unclear] a little bit. And then the next year my husband came.

LEVINE: Uh-hmm.

MARCANTONIO: So—and—

LEVINE: Do you remember any of your first impressions when you first got here, that first week—

MARCANTONIO: Yeah.

LEVINE: —and month? Things that were new and different—

MARCANTONIO: Yeah, it was—

LEVINE: —that you never saw?

MARCANTONIO: It was nice. Yeah, it was new. It was beautiful. You know, things nice, a lot of tree. Because on a town, we don't have a lot of tree like this. Before—many years ago. But, you know, now they do. They have a tree, you know, but not like this big, you know. So it was—over here, it was beautiful. I like it right away but I—just, I miss them, you know, my husband and my son.

LEVINE: Yeah.

MARCANTONIO: So I feel funny. But we like it. You know, my—my—my aunt didn't have no kids. She—she didn't have kids. Her husband worked on [unclear], work over there for many years. And then he passed away, very young, when he was 63 years old. That's when.

LEVINE: Uh-hmm.

MARCANTONIO: Yeah. So that's—

LEVINE: And how about the clothes that you brought? Did you—did you—

MARCANTONIO: Yeah.

LEVINE: Did they—did you keep them and wear them or did you want to change—

MARCANTONIO: No.

LEVINE: —them for American clothes?

MARCANTONIO: No. I—I wear them because they were almost the same, you know. They was almost the same. The [unclear] very—very chic. Over that, yeah, they wear everythings—everything's— they don't wear polyester. They wear wool, linen and silk.

That's what they wear. They don't buy a lot of clothes like they do over here. They buy—you know, like they buy it before Easter and Christmas, but they buy good clothes.

LEVINE: Uh-hmm.

MARCANTONIO: They got to be mark, the name, good name design over there. Over here, they wear more, you know—

LEVINE: Uh-hmm.

MARCANTONIO: Yeah, things like this, you know, because they go to work. But over there, wear better clothes.

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

MARCANTONIO: Best suit.

LEVINE: Now, when you started working—

MARCANTONIO: Yeah.

LEVINE: —at Royal Typewriter—

MARCANTONIO: Yeah.

LEVINE: —you didn't know any English.

MARCANTONIO: I didn't know no English.

LEVINE: So how was that for you?

MARCANTONIO: Well, some—someone, like an Italian, they explained to me. They show me and I learn because what you got to do, they show you a job and you learn.

LEVINE: Uh-hmm.

MARCANTONIO: Then you got to fill out the paper and they show you, you know. You know how to write and read [unclear].

LEVINE: Uh-hmm.

MARCANTONIO: It was a little bit, you know—

LEVINE: Yeah.

MARCANTONIO: —odd but there was—it was good. I—

LEVINE: Yeah.

MARCANTONIO: —manage good. Yeah.

LEVINE: Good.

MARCANTONIO: Yeah.

LEVINE: Now, were—were there a lot of people from Italy—

MARCANTONIO: Yes.

LEVINE: —around West Hartford here—

MARCANTONIO: Yes.

LEVINE: —when you first came?

MARCANTONIO: Well, I didn't know nobody. My aunt, you know. Yeah, there were a few people. Yes, yeah.

LEVINE: So in other words, was there a little Italian community here? In other words, if you went to the butcher or the—

MARCANTONIO: Yeah.

LEVINE: —baker or the—

MARCANTONIO: Yeah. Well, yeah, there were Italian—some Italian—there is Italian store on Franklin Avenue. A lot of people over there speak Italian that—everybody go shop over there, you know. A lot—a lot of stores on Franklin Avenue Italian, yeah. But now—before we used to go. Now, we go and shop around here. It's better around here.

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

MARCANTONIO: So they have a lot of store, Italian, you know, at that time too.

LEVINE: Did—

MARCANTONIO: Yeah.

LEVINE: Was there, like, a social club where people went—

MARCANTONIO: Yeah.

LEVINE: —to get together?

MARCANTONIO: Yeah, they have Italian—they have a Pradalana [PH] Society. Yeah, they—they [unclear].

LEVINE: What was the name of it?

MARCANTONIO: Pradalana Society.

LEVINE: Pradalana?

MARCANTONIO: Pradalana Society. Yeah, even now, they—you know, they have a lot of—a lot of people over there. You join over there. You pay some money and you go over there all the time. But I—we did go. Now, we don't.

LEVINE: Well, what did you do back then when—with this society? Wh—what would you do when you went there?

MARCANTONIO: Well, we—we visit each other. You know, we go over there. They do something, like they make a feast, like from Pradalana. You know, they have feast. And then at Christmas they have party. They do all these things, you know, and then—

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

MARCANTONIO: Yeah. When somebody got married, they invite you and you go over there. And they invite a lot of people. You—right away, when we [unclear] we meet a lot of people because, when you come from one country, all the people come and visit you. They bring you gift. That's the way they do.

LEVINE: Oh, really?

MARCANTONIO: Yeah, yeah.

LEVINE: Like, what kind of gifts?

MARCANTONIO: Oh, like something to wear or some perfume or some—something, like [unclear]. Many years ago, I bring nightgown. You know, things like that.

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

MARCANTONIO: Yeah. There was come—you know, with—they bring gift.

LEVINE: Now, when—

MARCANTONIO: And then they invite you over for dinner. Yeah.

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

MARCANTONIO: Yeah.

[END OF TAPE 1, SIDE A]

[BEGIN TAPE 1, SIDE B]

LEVINE: —they have been from the same area in Italy or they—

MARCANTONIO: No.

LEVINE: —could be from anywhere?

MARCANTONIO: They're from—from anywhere.

LEVINE: Yeah.

MARCANTONIO: We met over here a lot of people. They're not from my town.

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

MARCANTONIO: We have some from my town and some from all over, near Rome, near Naple. You know, we met, you know, and are friend.

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

MARCANTONIO: Yeah.

LEVINE: Yeah.

MARCANTONIO: Yeah. Before, we used to have a lot of friends and now we all—you know, we used to have party all the time, a cookout outside, you know. Now, it slowed down a little bit, you know.

LEVINE: Uh-hmm.

MARCANTONIO: Yeah, because I got some problem in my shoulder. I can't lift too much. So—

LEVINE: Well, now, the pe—the girls that you met on the ship—

MARCANTONIO: Yeah.

LEVINE: Did you keep up correspondence?

MARCANTONIO: Before. Yeah, before, we did for two, three years before [unclear]. And then we didn't—we didn't do anymore. So I like to—

LEVINE: Did you ever see each other again?

MARCANTONIO: No, no.

LEVINE: No, uh-huh.

MARCANTONIO: I never see—we talk on the phone many years ago and then we—we didn't see anymore. I got to look. Maybe I got the address now. [chuckles] Yesterday, you called me. You make me think. I say, "I got to look if I got the address."

LEVINE: Now, that would be fun to find.

MARCANTONIO: Yes, fun.

LEVINE: Yeah.

MARCANTONIO: To find, yeah.

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

MARCANTONIO: [unclear] they live far away.

LEVINE: Where did they settle when you first came?

MARCANTONIO: The—my friend? Oh, they—one of their—one went in Canada.

LEVINE: Oh.

MARCANTONIO: Yeah. Another one, I think went in—I don't know if she went in Boston. I don't remember because so many years ago. One in Boston and then—then there was another—another one. They was from Aus—Austria.

LEVINE: Austria?

MARCANTONIO: Yeah.

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

MARCANTONIO: So it—

LEVINE: I see.

MARCANTONIO: —was over there. But I don't know if she went b—I was most close with the Italian.

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

MARCANTONIO: Yeah.

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

MARCANTONIO: We go together over there to dinner and for breakfast. Then we can't eat [chuckles] because you get seasick.

LEVINE: Yeah.

MARCANTONIO: Yeah, it was bad. Seasick. They give you lemon, things like that. But it didn't help.

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

MARCANTONIO: Yeah, at that time.

LEVINE: Uh-huh. So let's see. So now, when you—when—so then a year later, your husband came over.

MARCANTONIO: Yes.

LEVINE: And that's when you moved out from your aunt's house?

MARCANTONIO: Yes, yes.

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

MARCANTONIO: Yes. So we find an apartment, you know, not too far from my aunt. But it was harder to find at that time, you know. So

through friend, you know, we find. But it was not very good, you know, but we settle there.

LEVINE: Uh-hmm.

MARCANTONIO: Yeah, was not—

LEVINE: And then your son came over with your husband?

MARCANTONIO: No—with my husband, yes.

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

MARCANTONIO: Yeah. He was five years old. Yeah.

LEVINE: And then did you keep working?

MARCANTONIO: Yeah, I worked there for—for a little bit and then I guess I got layoff.

LEVINE: Uh-hmm.

MARCANTONIO: So—and I collect—when my husband came, I was out—

LEVINE: Laid off.

MARCANTONIO: —out a job. Laid off, yes. Yeah. So—

LEVINE: So it must have been nice to see your husband and son.

MARCANTONIO: Yeah, it was nice. Yeah, we went to New York and pick him up, you know.

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

MARCANTONIO: And it was nice.

LEVINE: Yeah.

MARCANTONIO: Yeah, was a nice time.

LEVINE: So then—let's see. So then did you have other children?

MARCANTONIO: Yeah, they born over here. Yeah.

LEVINE: What was your first child's name? The one that you had in Italy?

MARCANTONIO: John.

LEVINE: John.

MARCANTONIO: John Carlo.

LEVINE: John Carlo. And then your other children's names?

MARCANTONIO: Yeah, children. Rocco and Nancy. They're twins.

LEVINE: Oh.

MARCANTONIO: Yeah.

LEVINE: Yeah, uh-huh.

MARCANTONIO: Yeah.

LEVINE: And so what would you say was a real high time in your life that gives you—gave you a lot of satisfaction?

MARCANTONIO: Well, [chuckles] there—when I have kids, you know, I have children, you know.

LEVINE: Uh-hmm.

MARCANTONIO: So that was nice time. But it was a lot of work. [chuckles]

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

MARCANTONIO: It was a lot of work because the twins, you know, they crying both time. They want to eat on both time. You know, and then I met some—some girl on the street, you know. They wanted to baby sit. But this time, we didn't think of this bad things, you know. I give it to them. I didn't even know who—who they are. [chuckles]

LEVINE: Oh.

MARCANTONIO: So now, you don't trust nobody now with the kids.

LEVINE: Right.

MARCANTONIO: You know? But that time, you know, I was busy or would do some work and they take the kids, the twins. They bring outside and then they bring back.

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

MARCANTONIO: [chuckles] They want to baby sit—

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

MARCANTONIO: —at that time.

LEVINE: Yeah.

MARCANTONIO: Forty-five, forty-six years ago.

LEVINE: Yeah.

MARCANTONIO: A long time ago.

LEVINE: Do you think—what—when you look back on it now—

MARCANTONIO: Yeah.

LEVINE: —and you think of coming here, like when you were 30 years old—

MARCANTONIO: Yeah.

LEVINE: —and starting all over again, really—

MARCANTONIO: Yeah.

LEVINE: —do you think that that made a difference in the way you are? Do you think coming to a new place and starting over—

MARCANTONIO: Well—

LEVINE: —ma—had an influence on your personality, on the way that you—

MARCANTONIO: Yeah. Yeah. Well, I still like to come over but my husband, he doesn't. He say, "You would have been better over there."
[chuckles] You know?

LEVINE: Really?

MARCANTONIO: Yeah, because now, everybody rich over there. Their business there, you know, was big, you know. Like, my sister then came over here. She came over here. She went back and now she's—she's rich. She got a business. You know, she got a—like, they—like hardware store. But—

LEVINE: Oh.

MARCANTONIO: —they—they have a lot of stuff. They borrow. They were little and then they went up. They making pretty good. They have a lot of property.

LEVINE: Uh-hmm.

MARCANTONIO: You know. She went back. She was [several words unclear].

LEVINE: Well, how about you? How do you feel about—

MARCANTONIO: Well, I fe—I feel it's okay still. Yeah, I like it still over here. Now, I—I like better being over there because I am more, you know, American, not Italian, because over here I stay for 46 years. Over there, 30 years, so—so—

LEVINE: Uh-hmm.

MARCANTONIO: —I like it better over here. Now, got used—even over there, they're nice now. They got a lot of things and now, like, they got a dishwasher. They got a television. Before, we don't have all those things.

LEVINE: Right.

MARCANTONIO: Now, they have everythings. They have a car. Each kids, they have a car, like over here.

LEVINE: Uh-hmm.

MARCANTONIO: But still, I like over here now.

LEVINE: Uh-hmm.

MARCANTONIO: Yeah, my husband like in Italy.

LEVINE: Yeah.

MARCANTONIO: He go every year; he wants to go.

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

MARCANTONIO: Yeah, yeah.

LEVINE: Now, when was the first time you went back? After you first came over here, when did you go back first?

MARCANTONIO: We went back, I think, after 15 years. I don't remember exactly when we went back.

LOU: Twelve years.

MARCANTONIO: Twelve years? Yeah.

LEVINE: Twelve years. Uh-huh.

MARCANTONIO: After 12 years.

LEVINE: Now, what was the occasion?

MARCANTONIO: We went, all the family.

LEVINE: Oh.

MARCANTONIO: No, brought the kids over there.

LEVINE: I see. You wanted your children to—to see—

MARCANTONIO: Yeah, yeah.

LEVINE: —where you'd come from.

MARCANTONIO: We wanted to see [unclear] and everything.

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

MARCANTONIO: And then we went again. We went again. And then the kids don't want to go anymore so we'd go. Like, my husband went last year. Yeah, he got to go to—this year. But this year he was, you know, sick. You know, so he couldn't go. He have to go to the doctor a lot for checkup. So—and I—I didn't like too much to go. So he go alone. I—I went two years ago with him. He wants me to go again but I don't care to go—

LEVINE: Uh-hmm.

MARCANTONIO: —too much. You know, travel. We went all over before. We went all over Italy before. When I was younger, I never went no place. Then when we came, you know, to America we went over there 12 years to—after, you know.

LEVINE: And then you traveled around?

MARCANTONIO: We—we traveled around, all over. We traveled around, bring the kids all over.

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

MARCANTONIO: Yeah. Then we went again all over. So now, we no—I don't care anymore to go.

LEVINE: Yeah.

MARCANTONIO: I like the [unclear] town. You know, go around to good Rome, good [unclear]. But me, I—I don't care. We don't have a house over there so when we go, oh, we got to stay over his sis—before, we used to go to my sis—and then we stay at the hotel. You know, it's too much aggravation. You know, when we were young we rented a car, you know. My sister give one car to him because they have two car. And one nice—we rent, because my son drove one car. [unclear] car so we went all over. We have a lot of people.

LEVINE: Uh-hmm.

MARCANTONIO: So—but now, you know, I am old; I don't care to go anymore. But my husband like—he like to go in—in metkart [PH], you know, the piazza and square. They talk to the friend. But I don't care—too much noise, you know. So I—

LEVINE: So when you think of yourself as Italian and American—

MARCANTONIO: Yeah.

LEVINE: —what—how do you think about that?

MARCANTONIO: Well [chuckles]—

LEVINE: How do you think about the Italian part? And how do you think about the—

MARCANTONIO: Well—

LEVINE: —American part?

MARCANTONIO: I like Italian but—because I was born there, but I like the American best. You know, I like Italian too. Yeah.

LEVINE: Uh-hmm. Yeah.

MARCANTONIO: Yeah. But—

LEVINE: Did you pass along some of the ways, maybe, that you learned in Italy, to your own children? Do you think there are things that you tried to pass along that are Italian?

MARCANTONIO: No, they—[unclear]. [chuckles]

LEVINE: No?

MARCANTONIO: No, I didn't. There's nothing. Just the cook. But my daughter—sometime, I say, "Look. Why you do this and that?" Say, "That's okay. I—I know how to do it." [chuckles]

LEVINE: [chuckles] Uh-huh.

MARCANTONIO: Yes, she—

LEVINE: I see.

MARCANTONIO: She's busy. You know, she's—she's work at Yale University in—

LEVINE: Oh, uh-huh.

MARCANTONIO: And then now, she's started the school. She wanted to get a master. She started in September. She go to school on Saturday and Sunday. It's too much for her. She hasn't got time.

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

MARCANTONIO: Yeah, she work all week. Yeah.

LEVINE: Yeah.

MARCANTONIO: So—

LEVINE: Now, do you still cook? Do you still cook—

MARCANTONIO: Oh, yeah.

LEVINE: —in Italian cooking?

MARCANTONIO: Yes. Yes, I do.

LEVINE: Wh—what are some of the things that you cook that—that are the same as you—

MARCANTONIO: Well—

LEVINE: —would have cooked back—

MARCANTONIO: Well, no. I cook a lot—a lot of things in Italian but now we know—we try to watch because we can't eat—we got cholesterol. We can't eat too much. We say when we used to— "When we have teeth, we don't have bread." We say in Italy. [chuckles] Now, we got bread; we don't have teeth. We can't eat all those [chuckles]—those fattening thing, like when I make sauce now, you know, I make it very light. And my daughter, like, she put one spoon. She's very thin, like this. She looks like she has one—and she doesn't eat meat, you know. A lot of things we don't do. But when I got company, I do a lot of—a lot of things, like we make manicotti. We make fettuccine. Fettuccine Alfredo. A lot of things. Gnocchi.

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

MARCANTONIO: You know, a lot of things, I can imagine, then me to make, like, chicken scaloppini. We make, like, chicken torteleta [PH] and torteleta—veal torteleta. [unclear], yeah. A lot—a lot of things. A lot of cooking, yeah.

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

MARCANTONIO: Yeah. Risotto. Yes. Now, we—

LEVINE: You look like you like cooking.

MARCANTONIO: [chuckles] Yeah, I like cook when I get time. I cook a lot of things, a lot of veggie and a lot of—but now, we no—like, nobody—my husband—I don't want to give him fattening food,

like we eat very little meat because he got to watch his cholesterol so—and we've got to watch—I've got to watch too because, me too, I gain weight and I got a lot of [chuckles]—I got cholesterol too. So I got to watch.

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

MARCANTONIO: So all the food I used to eat before—we do on holiday, you know. We do—I make a nice pie. Yeah, like a—we have big [unclear]. So I—they—they all got [unclear]. I make a pie [unclear].

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

MARCANTONIO: Yeah.

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

MARCANTONIO: A lot of things. Yeah.

LEVINE: Yeah.

MARCANTONIO: Now, I make a nice cake. Can make coffee and you have a piece of cake. I make last night.

LEVINE: Oh.

MARCANTONIO: Yeah. [chuckles]

LEVINE: Oh, wonderful.

MARCANTONIO: Yeah, nice—

LEVINE: Okay.

MARCANTONIO: —sponge cake.

LEVINE: Okay. Well, now, let's see. Is there anything else that maybe we—we haven't talked about? About—

MARCANTONIO: I don't know.

LEVINE: About your first 30 years coming to this country, looking back on it now. How you think—

MARCANTONIO: Yeah.

LEVINE: —about it.

MARCANTONIO: Well, [chuckles] I think, at that time, I was young, you know. It was beautiful. Now, I'm old. [chuckles] I have good time and I like to do this and that. Now, I'm old. I don't like to do too much. Yeah.

LEVINE: Uh-huh. What is your life like now? Now that your children are grown and—

MARCANTONIO: Yeah.

LEVINE: —you—you have more time.

MARCANTONIO: Yeah, I got more time. Now, I don't have more time. [chuckles] I'm more—more busy because my daughter, she—she live with us. We like her to live with us. She's not married and then, you know, she have—she have a condo. But for 10 years, the condo was close. Now, we rent. I decide to rent. You know, she rent it. And she live with me. So I help her.

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

MARCANTONIO: I cook and I do things like that. She helps me a lot, you know. She vacuum cleaning. She does a lot of that work and I help her. I cook and I do a lot of stuff for her, you know. I used to do a lot of sew for her. Now, I don't sew. I make a lot of clothes for her. Now, I do little bit, you know.

LEVINE: Uh-huh. Do you have grandchildren?

MARCANTONIO: No, she's not married. My—no one is married. Yeah.

LEVINE: Right, uh-huh.

MARCANTONIO: So she—she went with this doctor two years ago, you know. They're supposed to get married. Then she find out he was no good. He was cheater so he left her.

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

MARCANTONIO: So—and she—she's home. She's a good girl. She—work and home. She doesn't got no life. She's working and working and busy.

LEVINE: She's busy like everyone, yeah. Uh-huh.

MARCANTONIO: Yeah.

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

MARCANTONIO: So—but [unclear]—

LEVINE: Okay.

MARCANTONIO: That's the way it is, you know. I work more now, you know. I—the other son—I work—[unclear] the clothes for the other son, washing, ironing, you know. I do a lot of things. They help me; I help them.

LEVINE: Good.

MARCANTONIO: We help each other.

LEVINE: Now, how about when you visited Ellis Island? How was that for you? How did it—

MARCANTONIO: Yeah, that—

LEVINE: How did you feel when you went there?

MARCANTONIO: Yeah, there was beautiful—there was—kind emotion. You know, when I came, I was young. Now, I went back; I was old, you know. My daughter, she—she took her ticket. All the time, she bring someplace. She bring the [unclear] or she bring her—

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

MARCANTONIO: —the movie, see all the time. She went to go [unclear]. She went to bring—so—and it was—it was very nice. You know, I—I would like to go again.

LEVINE: Good.

MARCANTONIO: Yeah, because when I went, I didn't have too much time because the boat leave, you know. Pretty soon, the boat going to leave. You know, the ferry boat, what do you call?

LEVINE: Right.

MARCANTONIO: And we have to rush; otherwise, we'll lose the bus.

LEVINE: Well, when we put your tape in the library, maybe you can visit again.

MARCANTONIO: Yeah, when—when are you going to do this?

LEVINE: Well, it—

MARCANTONIO: Takes time.

LEVINE: It'll take a little time.

MARCANTONIO: Yeah.

LEVINE: But I can let you know anyway.

MARCANTONIO: Yeah. But I like to go soon, you know, [unclear] and maybe next year. I don't know.

LEVINE: Okay.

MARCANTONIO: Yeah. So we don't know. [chuckles] So—

LEVINE: Well, is there anything else you'd like to say before we finish?

MARCANTONIO: No. I don't know. I don't remember nothing. Now, I don't remember nothing.

LEVINE: Well, you remembered quite a bit.

MARCANTONIO: Yeah—

LEVINE: I think you did a great job.

MARCANTONIO: [unclear]. I just go make a cup of coffee. You talk with my husband.

LEVINE: Okay. Okay, let me just—

MARCANTONIO: So—yeah, go ahead.

LEVINE: Let me just say—

MARCANTONIO: Yeah.

LEVINE: —that I've been speaking with Ramilde—

MARCANTONIO: Ramilde, yes.

LEVINE: Ramilde—

MARCANTONIO: Yeah.

LEVINE: —Marcan—

MARCANTONIO: Marcantonio.

LEVINE: Marcantonio and—

MARCANTONIO: Yes.

LEVINE: And she came here in 1953 at the age of 30 from Italy—

MARCANTONIO: Yes.

LEVINE: —on the Constitution. And this is Janet Levine for the National Park Service and I'm signing off. It's October 5th, 1999.

MARCANTONIO: Yeah. Pretty soon, my birthday.

[END OF INTERVIEW]