

LEVINE: And where were you born?

FISHNER: In Hungary. It was called Veszprem Megye, and the town was Papa, P-A-P-A, with an accent on the first A, you know.

LEVINE: And was Veszprem Megye, is that like the county, or the . . .

FISHNER: Veszprem, yeah, that was, it had to be.

LEVINE: It was a region somehow.

FISHNER: Right.

LEVINE: And how do you spell that? (Mrs. Fishner laughs)
Do you know?

FISHNER: V-E-S-Z-P-R-E-M, and Megye, M-E-G-Y-E. It's a hard spelling. I would have to write it out.

LEVINE: Okay. Well, that's . . .

FISHNER: That I know the spelling, I mean, the pronunciation.
Veszprem Megye.

LEVINE: Okay. And, um, where in Hungary was it, do you remember? Was it located near a river? Was it north

or south? Do you . . .

FISHNER: Well, the Danube. It had, like, we didn't have the entire river, but it was like, uh, you know, a . . .

LEVINE: Tributary.

FISHNER: Yeah, or whatever, because we used to go swimming, and it was in that water.

LEVINE: Do you remember . . .

FISHNER: I have relatives that are from the same place, but they live in Williamsburg. Now, they're very orthodox people. I'm not. So we don't keep contact because, you know how it is. (she laughs)

LEVINE: Well, do you remember swimming?

FISHNER: Oh, yes.

LEVINE: When you were a little girl?

FISHNER: Oh, yeah.

LEVINE: Can you describe what it was like? Where would you go? What you . . .

FISHNER: Well, my sisters took me. And it was walking

distance, I'm pretty sure, because there were no streetcars or buses. And I remember we had, like, little wings. (she laughs) And we went, you know, swimming, whatever.

LEVINE: Now, you had four sisters and two brothers?

FISHNER: No, darling. I had six sisters at one time.

LEVINE: Oh. In Hungary?

FISHNER: Yeah. They were all here.

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

FISHNER: They were here.

LEVINE: I see. Were you closest to any particular, uh, sisters?

FISHNER: Oh, yes, sure.

LEVINE: Who were you closest to?

FISHNER: You want to know her name?

LEVINE: Yeah.

FISHNER: The, uh, married name, right? Elsie, Elsie Farkas, F-A-R-K-A-S. That's a real Hungarian name.

LEVINE: And was she older?

FISHNER: See, her husband was actually from the Holocaust and they were, you know, floating around, you know, hiding in parks and here and there. And the name came about, Farkas. That's a Hungarian name, like a wolf. And, uh, I was very close with her. As a matter of fact, she passed on about two years ago.

LEVINE: Was she an older sister?

FISHNER: Yeah, they're all older.

LEVINE: Oh, you were the baby?

FISHNER: Yes.

LEVINE: Uh-huh, uh-huh. So, do you remember any other things that you did, uh, in, in Papa?

FISHNER: Papa. (she laughs) Oh, you got a good memory. Eh, not really. You know, as a child, we were poor people, and you played with the other kids. There were plenty in the house, right? And then neighbors' kids. And I went to school there up to the fourth, and, uh, that's about all.

LEVINE: Do you remember the house you lived in?

FISHNER: Oh, yes, I do, very well.

LEVINE: And can you describe it?

FISHNER: I have a very good, you know, I really do remember it quite well. That was the only one I lived in.

LEVINE: Oh.

FISHNER: I was born there, I suppose.

LEVINE: What do you remember about it, anything you remember about the house?

FISHNER: Well, the house itself was dingy and dark. (she laughs) And there was a basement. You had to walk down at least a flight of stairs, pitch dark. But that really served the purpose of a refrigerator, and I always had fear of going down there. But, uh, the apartment was very dark, and, uh, I, uh, remember my mother, you know, like doing things, house chores, you know, cooking or whatever, and my father, Friday nights, we used to have like a belly little stove, a belly stove, you know, in the, we called it a living room, whatever. And he used to take an apple and eat

the apple, and gave us the skin, you know, of the apple. And I didn't really have a good life there.

LEVINE: Well, um, do you remember any, well, what was your mother's name?

FISHNER: Charlotte.

LEVINE: And her maiden name?

FISHNER: Hoffman.

LEVINE: Her maiden name was Hoffman? I thought that was your maiden name?

FISHNER: My maiden name, that's right.

LEVINE: Remember your, did you ever know your mother's maiden name before she married?

FISHNER: That was her name.

LEVINE: Oh, it was the same as when she married.

FISHNER: Yeah. It was related, you know. Married, you know, in those days. It wasn't the best marriage. I think it's a very, it's not a healthy one. But the name was Hoffman.

LEVINE: Okay. And your father's name?

FISHNER: Hoffman, too. Bernard.

LEVINE: Bernard. And, um, can you describe what your father was like, as you remember him as a little girl?

FISHNER: Well, that's a very poor, I would have to give a very poor description. My father was away most of the time, and, uh, I really can't give you a good description. I don't, we didn't have such a relationship. It's not like in the United States. Or perhaps it was just him. I don't know. But he was away all the time.

LEVINE: Was he away on business, or . . .

FISHNER: Yeah, on business. But, uh, before we came here, uh, he was thrown off the cart or something, you know. And he was imprisoned. He was put into prison. And then somehow whatever, how, you know, it started with Hitler, so somehow I had a brother here, and he helped the family to come over.

LEVINE: Well, of course, you came over . . .

FISHNER: I came over with my parents.

LEVINE: With your parents in 1922.

FISHNER: Right.

LEVINE: So, um, so that was, uh, like after the First World War.

FISHNER: Oh, yes.

LEVINE: Do you remember anything about the First World War? How about your mother? Could you describe her?

FISHNER: Well, she was a lovely lady. (she laughs) And she was on the short side. Not as short, maybe, as I am. She was a little heavier. And, look, she raised the children to the best of her ability, and she had gorgeous dark hair. Even when she passed away, she wasn't gray like me. And, uh . . .

LEVINE: Do you remember any things that she told you, or anything, uh, when you were little, when you were still in Hungary? Any, uh, attitudes she had or things she told you to do or not do, or any ideas?

FISHNER: No, just to behave. And we had to be, we had to, uh, obey whatever, you know, her word was law. And in school, too, it's not like here now, they let you run,

you know, don't obey. And, uh, not really.

LEVINE: So, so was she, she was pretty strict, your mother?

FISHNER: She never touched, yes. We knew that we had to obey. When she said something that was her word. You had to obey. She never hit us, never. With all the kids, never.

LEVINE: Do you, did she ever tell you stories?

FISHNER: Bible stories sometimes, you know.

LEVINE: Uh-huh. Was she a religious person, your mother?

FISHNER: Well, I wouldn't call her religious. No.

LEVINE: Well, did she, how did she get along?

FISHNER: She did come out of a religious home. As a matter of fact, even I did, because I was taught at home. But she didn't really, you know, abide by the religion.

LEVINE: Yeah. Did you know your grandparents on either side when you were in Hungary?

FISHNER: I know my mother's father.

LEVINE: And what was he like?

FISHNER: I don't, I really was there maybe, you know, a year or two before we came to this country. He had a second wife and, uh, we, I went there, you know, to stay with them for a week, but he didn't really, uh, pay attention to us. He had a daughter who had a clubbed foot, and she didn't want to get married, so she really paid all the attention to us. They had a dry goods store and an orchard. Ah, that was gorgeous.

LEVINE: Oh, tell me about it.

FISHNER: But that was in the real village, in a small village. But I have never seen anything like that, because where I live they had stores, you know, and all. It was a small, like a very, very small city. But where he lived, oh, he had an orchard, I'm telling you, it was gorgeous. But now I don't know what happened. Hitler finished all of them.

LEVINE: What was the, what kind of orchard?

FISHNER: Fruits, all kinds. Fruits. Apple, pears, you name it, corn. Oh, it was gorgeous. Bees, he had a good hive there with bees. I was afraid to pass there. You know, you're a kid. You're afraid of everything, yeah.

LEVINE: So did you spend that much time in the orchard?

FISHNER: No. Me? Well, when I was there, listen. They had fruit. You were able to eat it, you know. That was everything organic. It's not like what we buy here. Yeah. But, uh, I didn't have a great life.

LEVINE: Well, did you have chores you had to do as a child in Hungary?

FISHNER: Uh, very little. Yes, yes. Yes, we did. We had to clean out, like, that I remember, every Friday. Like a little sewer that, you know, runs through. It was narrow, I recall, very narrow. It had to be cleaned up. Every Friday that was our job, dust the furniture, help out a little cooking, with the cooking. My mother was sick. So, you know, you help out, the other girls, you know, they went to business already. But, uh, I wouldn't call it, uh, such a big chore.

LEVINE: Yeah. Well, what kind of . . .

FISHNER: Kept us out of, uh, mischief.

LEVINE: What kind of medical care was there available? Do you

remember anything?

FISHNER: Oh, we had a doctor, sure. And I guess when my mother gave birth each time she had a midwife. We had many relatives there, that we weren't the only ones living there. I had an uncle there whom I really adored, adored. His daughter, his granddaughter, we keep contact with in Connecticut. Yeah. Thank God, they're doing very nicely, very nicely.

LEVINE: What was your uncle's name?

FISHNER: Ignatz.

LEVINE: I-G?

FISHNER: I-G-N-A-T-Z, I think. Ignatz.

LEVINE: And what was it about him that made you like him so much?

FISHNER: He was wonderful. He was close to us, you know. We saw them very often, because it was walking distance. In the summer when you don't have school, what do you do? You go to see your uncle, right? I guess he gave us a few pennies or whatever. I don't recall. I don't really recall.

LEVINE: But he was affectionate? Was he an affectionate uncle?

FISHNER: Oh, yes. He was beautiful, beautiful. But he was there. I have a number of uncles there, about seven of them. But they lived elsewhere. When people are poor, they can't afford to travel around. They don't have the means. And we were poor, so . . .

LEVINE: Yeah. Well, now, did your father send money to your mother while he was away?

FISHNER: No. They, no. You mean, in Europe?

LEVINE: Yeah.

FISHNER: No. He came home for the weekend. No. I don't know how they managed but, uh. And then we came together.

LEVINE: Well, uh, tell me anything about school. You were probably in school when you came here. What was it like there compared with school after you came here?

FISHNER: I don't really, uh, recall too much of it. Well, taught reading, you know, reading and writing. I knew how to write. I knew how to read in Hungarian. And, uh, I think there was a little, uh, Hebrew background.

That must have been, you know, once a week or something. I don't really recall it. What I objected to is when I came to, my name was Aurelia, Aurelia. When I came to this country, I had to go to school. We came, I think, in July or August, I don't know. And we had to go to school. They put all these children like myself to one grade. And I don't speak Jewish, so I don't know whether the teacher did speak Jewish at the time or not. She had to make the children understand, right? Somehow whatever she had to, uh, translate or something. Well, anyhow, uh, she said, "Well, we'll change Aurelia to Amelia." Now, when I went to work on my first job, I met a woman, an American woman, born here in this country. Her name was Aurelia. She pronounced it the same way. But it was legal, so I never, not that I liked it, but it remained as is. And, uh, they, you had to be in that grade for a whole year. Maybe there were people, children that remained there two years, you know. I wasn't observant enough to know it. And, uh, then she, uh, graded you accordingly. Now, she put me into the fourth grade. I should have been higher. But either because of the English, or my knowledge wasn't there, they put me in the fourth grade, which I

really, later on in life I says, "Gee, what was happening to me? I was always behind." (she laughs) And the children, like, when I raised my daughter, and they came from Hitler's time, they didn't have this experience whatsoever. They went, if you were ten years old, you went here. If you were eleven, you went here. And no changing names. I have friends here now that they came from Europe, you know, maybe, maybe about the same time I did. That was no change of any kind. Oh, but they were older. No, they were older, older. They didn't go to school here the way I did. I really went to school here like a kid. But they were, whatever they did, I don't know, but they were older. They probably came in the '30s.

LEVINE: Oh, uh. Well, talking about, uh, Hungary, before we talk about your actually leaving, is there anything else? Do you remember, for example, foods that your mother cooked when you were a little girl?

FISHNER: Oh, sure. Of course.

LEVINE: What do you remember?

FISHNER: Huh? Oh, many of the foods.

LEVINE: What foods?

FISHNER: As a matter of fact, Arthur, on the radio, Arthur, Arthur, whatever his name is, twelve o'clock he's on. Even he mentions something, the food. And I said, "My goodness, I remember my mother making that." Uh, a lot of, like, dough, doughy food, like bukete.

LEVINE: How do you spell that?

FISHNER: I would just spell it the way it sounds to me, but I don't know if it's the correct spelling. B-U-K-T-E. Bukete, bukete. T-E.

LEVINE: What was that?

FISHNER: Oh, delicious. I, perhaps today I wouldn't even like it, but in that time it was good. It's a, most of these doughs are made from potatoes, boiled potatoes. And then they work it around it, you know, with, uh, flour and eggs and so on. Then it's filled with jelly or with other, you know, like, there are other things that they could fill it with, potatoes or whatever. It was good. And, uh, what else? What's it? Uh . . . (she pauses) I do remember the name. What's the name? It's also with a B. Uh, I don't, but

I know it. It was a round ball. This was, what I just had mentioned was long, you know, like oblong. This one was completely round like a ball, and it was also very good. Then it was fried over. It was really good stuff.

LEVINE: Was that potatoes?

FISHNER: All the doughs are made from potatoes, and then, my mother was a good cook and a good baker. Ah! Nobody in the family was like that, nobody, nobody. And, uh, shlikas, shlikas. I don't know how to spell it. I would spell it S-H-L-I-K-A-S. Shlikas. People that are familiar with it, they would know what it is, you know. People that aren't, you know. And, uh, I don't know. Many different foods, which I don't eat that any more. I've been eating, my husband was American. He didn't have desires, and my mother didn't make it here, you know. You learn to make, prepare other foods. You eat differently, different diets.

LEVINE: Well, now, um, how was it decided, do you remember why it was decided that you would leave for America, you and your family?

FISHNER: Oh, that's a good question. My mother always wanted

to come. She didn't like to be there. And, uh, I guess it was my father's objection or whatever, they didn't have the opportunity, and you have to have the dollar to come. But my brother came to this country, and somehow he helped us, the family, to come over. Now, he helped two of my sisters, the older ones, come here to the United States. And then amongst the three of them, they helped along. Now, when we came to this country, there was no assistance of any kind from the government. Somebody had to, uh, vouch for you that you will not become a burden. And my sister, one of my sisters, we were here a short time, and she took very ill. And the doctors did not know what was the matter with her. Oh, I lost my father a year-and-a-half after that, after we came to the United States. So my mother had no means of, you know.

LEVINE: Well, first, if you would first talk about, uh, your coming here.

FISHNER: Yes.

LEVINE: Before we talk about what happened afterwards. In other words, your two sisters and your brother were here.

FISHNER: Here.

LEVINE: And they sent money, or, so that your mother and father and your little sister could come.

FISHNER: We all came together. The rest of the family came together. When we came, my mother had five kids going to school.

LEVINE: Well, do you remember anything your mother packed to come here?

FISHNER: The past?

LEVINE: What she packed to take with her.

FISHNER: Oh, packed.

LEVINE: No? Did she, what did she do? Did she sell everything from the house, or . . .

FISHNER: I have no . . .

LEVINE: Do you know . . .

FISHNER: I said, I don't, really. I only remember my sisters used to send those balls from the United States, and had like little pimples on it. Oh, we were so thrilled with it. That I remember. But that was it.

LEVINE: These balls were, uh . . .

FISHNER: Bounce.

LEVINE: Like you would bounce?

FISHNER: Sure.

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

FISHNER: Yeah, oh, from the United States.

LEVINE: (she laughs) Do you remember why it was your mother wanted to come so much?

FISHNER: I guess she wasn't too happy in Europe.

LEVINE: Had you ever, uh, heard? What did you think the United States was going to be like? Did you, do you (?).

FISHNER: Oh, I wasn't smart enough to have that imagination. When I, uh, well, coming here, I remember being on the boat. A lady came over, and she gave me a box of chocolate. It wasn't open. And I was so excited with it. I ran to my mother. "Look what a lady gave me." I thought I would have to return it, but I didn't return it. But, uh, packing, I have no recollection.

Maybe I was in school while they were doing, I don't know. And, you know, you have all the family, all the sisters and brothers. So . . .

LEVINE: Do you remember what the name of the ship was?

FISHNER: Mauretania.

LEVINE: Do you remember leaving your town and going to catch the (??)?

FISHNER: Yeah, we went to Vienna. Vienna, from there, I had an uncle there. And, uh, we stayed overnight. And then we continued, I don't know, on a small little boat, where everybody was sick. Young or old, it didn't make any difference. Then we came with the Mauretania. That was a brand new boat. It was beautiful.

LEVINE: What was that like?

FISHNER: But I was never on another.

LEVINE: What were your accommodations like on the Mauretania?
Do you remember?

FISHNER: What kind of accommodations?

LEVINE: I mean, do you remember where you slept, or food or any of that?

FISHNER: I don't remember. And not only that, I don't even remember at Ellis Island. I remember some things, because that was an outstanding thing. But otherwise, I don't remember ever eating there. I remember going to sleep, and . . .

LEVINE: Tell me what you remember. Is there anything you remember about the voyage?

FISHNER: Well, I remember being on the boat, coming here. It only took five or six days. I think five days, which was very fast. And then we wound up at Ellis Island.

LEVINE: Do you remember when the boat came into the harbor, into the New York . . .

FISHNER: No.

LEVINE: Okay. Tell me what you were . . .

FISHNER: I'm stupid. (she laughs)

LEVINE: No, you're not.

FISHNER: I don't remember.

LEVINE: Do you remember any, well, tell me anything you remember about Ellis Island.

FISHNER: Well, Ellis Island, we got there. And at that point, I thought, you know, that we would all be leaving. But we spent the whole week there, because I had a brother who had a disease of some sort. It has a name, but I don't know. And he lost all his hair, and therefore they kept him there, and I guess, uh, my parents didn't want to leave him alone. They wouldn't let us out either. And I remember that we had to be naked, even as a kid. There were so many doctors examining us, and at night, before going to sleep (she laughs) they used to throw the bedding, the linen, to us, rather than hand it to you, you know. So, you know, these things were outstanding, because they never occurred in my life like that. And when I saw it, I asked one of the ladies, one of the guards there, there was a place where we used to play ball. You know, every day, what do you do then? You had no chores, you had nothing. And I didn't come across that area, and I says, "The Ellis Island is here. What happened to that part?" And she said that it's, it's there, but you couldn't see it. It was a wall

built around it or something. But, uh . . .

LEVINE: Where do you remember it to be? Do you have any sense of where that area was?

FISHNER: Not exactly where, but I remember it was a big yard.

LEVINE: Oh, uh-huh.

FISHNER: It was a big yard. And, you know, all the kids, we used to play there. And then when they used to call the people to leave, you know, everything was in order. So they used to say, you understand Jewish a little? Not much, right. (Jewish) They didn't know how to say it, but that was German or Jewish, whatever. And that . . .

LEVINE: All the children with a package?

FISHNER: With the packages, you know, with your belongings.

LEVINE: Oh, uh-huh. But that's what they said, packet. They didn't know how to translate it into the Jewish word. (Jewish) means "all the children." And at that time, I believe everybody had a lot of children. (she laughs)

LEVINE: I see.

FISHNER: But it took a whole week before they released my brother.

LEVINE: Were your, was your mother or father worried that you might be sent back, because your brother was ill?

FISHNER: Not us, him.

LEVINE: Your brother might be sent back.

FISHNER: My father, my mother wanted to leave him there in the first place. He should have been a married man by then, but he didn't get married. He never did.

LEVINE: Oh.

FISHNER: But my, uh, father didn't want it. We disagree lots of times.

LEVINE: So your brother was older when . . .

FISHNER: Oh, yeah, yeah. He was marriageable age. My mother wanted to leave him, but it didn't work, I suppose.

LEVINE: So at some point the doctor said he was okay.

FISHNER: Yeah. Well, he was cured, but they couldn't make his hair grow. And he was like that ever since I knew

him, you know, from childhood on.

FISHNER: You mean, he always was bald after that?

LEVINE: No.

FISHNER: Yeah. I heard of that. I heard of that. But I didn't know what it was called. You know, medical.

END OF SIDE ONE

BEGINNING OF SIDE TWO

LEVINE: So, so then you left Ellis Island. Where did you go?

FISHNER: Uh, well, uh, I had a cousin at the time. I lived in Brooklyn all my life. And, uh, this cousin found an apartment for us. And we lived there a short time, maybe a year-and-a-half. My father passed away, and then, you know, my mother moved out. Now, where we lived, this was the first apartment, in Brooklyn. I remember the name of the street where we lived. Kinsdale Street. Not the number, but the, and my sister was quite sick. And my mother couldn't get any assistance. Now, where we lived, the owner of the building was a widowed lady. Very fine, but I guess she was well-to-do. She belonged to an organization. And somehow there's (?) money, you know, and they

gave it to my mother, so to take care of, you know, my sister. She was a wonderful person, very nice. But after that, I continued going to school, and the girls grew up, you know. They went to work. One worked in the house, one was a cook, one was a maid, you know, in those days.

LEVINE: Do you remember any things that struck you as very different that were new to you when you first came here? Do you remember any things that . . .

FISHNER: There were bathrooms. (she laughs) Yeah. We didn't have hot water, but, uh, we had a bathroom, which was wonderful.

LEVINE: So was your mother happy she had come here?

FISHNER: That I would have to ask. How could a mother be happy when she has a couple of daughter of marriageable age and they're all single yet. They all made a later marriage, except, uh, the one that was sick. From her then on, you know, I have a brother, I have a sister, and, you know, it was different already, because more or less we grew up here. Not completely, well, but it was different. So I don't imagine she could have been very happy. You have to get that happiness, you know,

atmosphere in the house. But . . .

LEVINE: What about you? How did you feel as a child, being here? Were you glad you were here instead of . . .

FISHNER: Well, I don't know nothing of Europe, so to me this was my home all my life, all my life. I never went back, never. I have no desire at all. And I don't really have anyone because, as I say, the cousins, after, you know, from the Holocaust. I have many of them, they live in Williamsburg. They're very orthodox.

LEVINE: So how long did you stay in school?

FISHNER: Oh. I, uh, graduated from school. I was there till '30, 1930.

LEVINE: And then, uh . . .

FISHNER: Then I went to work.

LEVINE: Where did you, what was your first job?

FISHNER: My first job was in a factory. And I worked there for a few years.

LEVINE: What kind of factory, and what were you doing?

FISHNER: A textile house.

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

FISHNER: But I worked myself up. I had a nice little job. I had to remember certain style numbers, you know, and all. Well, at that time, many of them, I couldn't get a job. I went to Klein's just to pick up, I'm short, you know. They hired models, not me. Yeah. But then, uh, I, uh, had a very lovely boss, and he took his merchandise to a different place, and I went along with him. And then I worked myself up. And then I met my husband.

LEVINE: How did you meet him?

FISHNER: Coney Island, in a club, clubhouse.

LEVINE: Was it like a social club?

FISHNER: A social club.

LEVINE: People who came from Europe?

FISHNER: Yeah, boys. A boys club.

LEVINE: Oh, uh-huh. I went with a friend, and I met my husband there. And, uh, I was working at this place,

and I wanted to let him go. No, oh, I was going with someone else way before that, you know. Forget it. And I always wanted to let him go, because it was depression. And, but he used to treat me so royally, and he took me all over. The other guys didn't take me, took me to the movies. They wanted something for their quarter. (she laughs) And the girls used to, "How could you leave him? Look, who's got that kind of money, you know, to take you out and take you to theaters and here and there?" Anyhow, I stuck with him. So, to make the story short, I moved to Washington, DC. It was wartime, in the '40s. And I went there, and my husband didn't do well. I didn't, oh, then I became a typist. Well, I had it in school, and I was able to go back to it, and I became a typist. I worked for the war department. And then things were really happening. But a year later, a year-and-a-half, I had to come back, because I did better than my husband. I says, "Hey, my time is running out." (she laughs) And we came back, and we remained in Brooklyn. Well, I'm a Brooklyn girl. I never lived elsewhere. I'm only living here, nineteen years, will be twenty in the fall.

LEVINE: So did you have your children, did you have children . . .

FISHNER: My daughter was born, in, uh, Brooklyn.

LEVINE: In Brooklyn, after you came back from Washington?

FISHNER: Yeah, sure, sure. I lived in a furnished room, and the couple was, at that time, maybe she was my age at that time, but when you're, you know, like late twenties, she seemed like an ancient person. And she said, "Oh, that's my baby, that's my baby." She was right.

LEVINE: So, uh, let's see. Well, when you think back about, you say you feel as though you lived here all your life.

FISHNER: All my life.

LEVINE: Yeah.

FISHNER: I don't feel as though I was in. I remember very vividly of the place, because, as I said, I didn't get to know anything. My mother didn't, there were no theaters. I didn't go. If they had something, it was the older ones that went. And I never went to a show,

I never saw a movie, nothing, till I came to this country. So to me this is my home all the time.

LEVINE: Do you think there's any influence on you of having , uh, been born, and your family coming from Hungary? Do you feel you have some sort of part of you that's Hungarian, or . . .

FISHNER: Well, not really. Because I don't mingle with them. I never did. See, we didn't settle in the right place. Perhaps my parents would have moved to Yorkville. At the time, all the Hungarians were there. Now I'm friends with people from, Austrian people. And when they came to this country, that's where they settled, you know, in the area where, uh, the German people lived.

LEVINE: Right.

FISHNER: But we didn't do that, so they're (?) that connection. And I don't speak Jewish. So that's, uh, I don't speak Hungarian, and I don't speak Jewish, because I have no one really to converse with. And when we came, my mother wanted to learn English. She didn't, she didn't want to converse. Not only that, at that time, if people, American people, especially kids,

"Greenhorns, greenhorns." Today that's all accepted. Today we're giving up our culture, our language, for the, for the, which is very wrong. I'm very much against it. When I, before I retired I used to say to my manager, when I go out to lunch I feel like I'm in another country. I don't feel like I was in the United States. And I worked on Maiden Lane. (she laughs) The heart of the city, right?

LEVINE: Yeah, yeah. Tell me your husband's name and your daughter's name.

FISHNER: Herman, he's gone. Herman Fishner.

LEVINE: And your daughter?

FISHNER: Charlotte Cole.

LEVINE: And do you have grandchildren?

FISHNER: I have two granddaughters, yeah.

LEVINE: Okay. Well, is there anything else you can think of?

FISHNER: I wish I could. But, as I said, I don't . . .

LEVINE: Oh, listen, you remember quite a bit, yeah.

FISHNER: I don't really, my life wasn't, you know, too great,

and I was the baby, so the baby's pushed aside.
You're not to be, you're not to be heard, or how do
they say it?

LEVINE: Seen and not heard.

FISHNER: So that's the way it was, and there was no
communication. You know, I mean, with the parent.

LEVINE: Okay. Well, I think maybe we'll close here. I want
to thank you very much.

FISHNER: Oh, don't mention it. I wish I could have really, you
know helped out.

LEVINE: You'll see when you hear the tape. You'll see you
remember quite a bit. I've been talking with Amelia
Fishner, who was originally named Aurelia, and Hoffman
was your maiden name.

FISHNER: Hoffman.

LEVINE: Yes. And, uh, today is, uh, June 26, 1994, and I'm
here in the Bronx at Mrs. Fishner's home, and I'm
signing off.