

**EI-903**

**FRANCINE HIRSHBERG**

**BIRTHDATE: SEPTEMBER 11, 1931**

**INTERVIEW DATE: JUNE 19, 1997**

**AGE AT TIME OF INTERVIEW: 65**

**RUNNING TIME:**

**INTERVIEWER: JANET LEVINE, PH.D.**

**RECORDING ENGINEER: JANET LEVINE, PH.D.**

**INTERVIEW LOCATION: TENAFLY, NEW JERSEY**

**TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY: TAPESCRIBE**

**TRANSCRIPT REVIEWED BY:**

**BELGIUM, 1939**

**AGE: 8**

**SHIP: STATENDAM [PH]**

**PORT:**

**RESIDENCES:**

LEVINE: Today is June 19<sup>th</sup>, 1997 and I'm here at the home of Francine Hirshberg in Tenafly, New Jersey. Mrs. Hirshberg came from Belgium in 1939 at the age of eight, and this is Janet Levine for the National Park Service. Okay. If you could start by saying the name you were born with and your date of birth.

HIRSHBERG: I was born in Affinland [PH] and September 11, 1931.

LEVINE: And your maiden name?

HIRSHBERG: Shamruff [PH].

LEVINE: Shamruff, okay. And when you were born, did you have brothers and sisters?

HIRSHBERG: No, I'm an only child.

LEVINE: Only child. Okay. And your father's name?

HIRSHBERG: Isadora [PH] Shamruff.

LEVINE: And your mother's name?

HIRSHBERG: Regina [PH] Shamruff.

LEVINE: Okay. And did you have grandparents when you were in Belgium?

HIRSHBERG: Yes, I had my father's parents and my mother's parents.

LEVINE: Oh, so both.

HIRSHBERG: Yeah.

LEVINE: And did you see them? Were they—did you have contact with them before you came over here?

HIRSHBERG: Oh, yeah. We used to—I—we used to all go away together to Klaka [PH]. That's a hotel [unclear] in Klaka.

LEVINE: Oh.

HIRSHBERG: As a family. We took my uncle and aunt and my grandparents.

LEVINE: You mean for a summer vacation?

HIRSHBERG: For a summer vacation, every summer.

LEVINE: Oh, wow. Uh-huh. Now, you had cousins. Your aunt and uncle had one child or—

HIRSHBERG: They had one child and my aunt was pregnant in Ellis Island with the second child.

LEVINE: Oh, wow. Uh-huh. So d—what do you remember about, let's say, your mother's parents? How did they treat you? What—what are the things that you recall about them when you came—

HIRSHBERG: Well, my grandfather died when I was about five so I don't remember too much, but my grandmother lived till I was in my 20s, so—

LEVINE: Oh, and they came here also?

HIRSHBERG: They went—my grandmother went to Cuba first and came here later after the war.

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

HIRSHBERG: And my grandparents on my father's side both came over to Manhattan.

LEVINE: Oh, okay. Well, your mother's mother then, do you have any memories of her in Belgium?

HIRSHBERG: In Belgium?

LEVINE: Yeah.

HIRSHBERG: Ah, not—not—well, I would have stayed over. When my parents went on vacation, I stayed at my grandparent's house, my grandmother's house.

LEVINE: Uh-huh. And did they have any ways about them that—that stick in your mind or—

HIRSHBERG: Not really, just—

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

HIRSHBERG: —she cooked a lot, gefilte fish and chicken soup and things like that.

LEVINE: Were they religious?

HIRSHBERG: My grandfather was religious. My grandmother was not so religious.

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

HIRSHBERG: They didn't—I think she kept a kosher home.

LEVINE: Oh, uh-huh.

HIRSHBERG: And my mother kept a kosher home in Belgium. Once she came here, she was—

LEVINE: She didn't.

HIRSHBERG: She didn't.

LEVINE: Uh-huh. Now how about your father's mother and father? Do you have memories of them?

HIRSHBERG: We used to go to—when we were in New York, we went every Friday night to my grandparents, my father's parents. We used to have dinner there.

LEVINE: Uh-hmm. How about when you were a little girl in Belgium? You—any—any—

HIRSHBERG: We didn't go as often, I don't think.

LEVINE: Yeah. Now, like, when you went away in the summer, did both sets of grandparents go?

HIRSHBERG: No, just my father's parents went.

LEVINE: Uh-huh, uh-huh. Okay. And were they your father's sister or brother, your aunt and uncle, that—that went on vacation?

HIRSHBERG: They went too. My father's brother and my father's sister went also.

LEVINE: Oh, uh-huh.

HIRSHBERG: The—my cousin was about two years older than—so I guess he would have been about, well, 10 but—

LEVINE: When you came?

HIRSHBERG: When I came here, yeah.

LEVINE: Yeah, uh-huh. So what was it like, going, like, for a summer holiday in Belgium at that time?

HIRSHBERG: Well, I was only eight so [chuckles] we used to go to the beach and build sand castles and—

LEVINE: Mmm.

HIRSHBERG: —you know, play. I played with the two boys, used to play soccer.

LEVINE: Oh.

HIRSHBERG: So I would follow them around and—

LEVINE: Huh.

HIRSHBERG: [chuckles]

LEVINE: Now, was it like a hotel here or how was it different? Can you—do you have any way of, like, sort of comparing what—what that kind of a ho—resort hotel was like compared to here?

HIRSHBERG: It was on the beach and we ate there. I think we ate the breakfast there and dinner.

LEVINE: Uh-hmm. Hmm.

HIRSHBERG: I don't—

LEVINE: Was that typical? Like, would your friends do a thing like that too, go off for—what, go for a week or—

HIRSHBERG: I don't remember how long, a couple of weeks, I guess.

LEVINE: Yeah. Huh.

HIRSHBERG: I don't—I don't know. Yeah, a lot of people probably did too—do that.

LEVINE: Uh-huh. And your father, what did he do for work in Belgium?

HIRSHBERG: He was in the diamond business, Antwerp. Most people [chuckles] were in the diamond business.

LEVINE: Oh, uh-huh, uh-huh, uh-huh. And—

HIRSHBERG: My grandfather was in the diamond business. He started the business.

LEVINE: I see. So that was—they h—did they have, like, a shop or—

HIRSHBERG: In wholesale.

LEVINE: Wholesale.

HIRSHBERG: For the family business.

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

HIRSHBERG: My uncle and my father were both in the business.

LEVINE: Oh, I see. Uh-huh. And, [clears throat] okay. Well, when you were—did you—oh, so you went to school then.

HIRSHBERG: I went to school—to a French school.

LEVINE: Oh, so French was—

HIRSHBERG: As part of French school.

LEVINE: Was the language spoken? Everything was done in French?

HIRSHBERG: In the school, yeah.

LEVINE: Oh.

HIRSHBERG: I didn't know too much French [chuckles] before we went to school, because we spoke English at home because my father was English.

LEVINE: Oh, uh-huh.

HIRSHBERG: So we spoke English mostly at home so I knew English when I came here.

LEVINE: Okay. Well, now, your fa—had your father himself or had his father come from England?

HIRSHBERG: They came from England. My father came from England to Belgium at 13.

LEVINE: Oh. The whole family came there?

HIRSHBERG: Yeah.

LEVINE: Uh-huh, I see. And how about your mother? Where was she—she stemming from?

HIRSHBERG: She's born in Belgium.

LEVINE: Oh. And her parents, were they also born in Belgium?

HIRSHBERG: They were Polish.

LEVINE: Oh, they were coming from Poland.

HIRSHBERG: They were Polish, from Krakow, I guess.

LEVINE: Oh, right. Uh-huh, I see. I see. So—so this was sort of—there was, like a—an immigration first to—to Belgium and then to this country for your family, pretty much?

HIRSHBERG: Right, uh-hmm.

LEVINE: Uh-huh. Okay. Let's see. So school was—so when you first went to school, like, you—you really didn't even know what was being said?

HIRSHBERG: That French, I didn't hardly know French. [chuckles] But I—I learned it right away, I guess because I had to. [chuckles]

LEVINE: Yeah, right.

HIRSHBERG: I went to first and second grade in a French school, and when I came to the States I was in third grade.

LEVINE: I see. But you—you didn't have—you had sort of the reverse of most people. You didn't have a language problem when you came here.

HIRSHBERG: No. Well, I didn't know how to read English, really.

LEVINE: Oh, uh-huh.

HIRSHBERG: Because I was reading in French.

LEVINE: Yeah. Could—is there any comparison? Any points of—that you would make about how the s—school, first and second grade in Belgium compared with when you came here?

HIRSHBERG: I was way advanced in the math—

LEVINE: Oh.

HIRSHBERG: —when I went to—when I came to this country.

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

HIRSHBERG: Third grade.

LEVINE: Yeah.

HIRSHBERG: Compared to the other kids.

LEVINE: Yeah. So did—did you—what did you do f—like, for fun, like when you were little? When you were still in Belgium, what kinds of things did you do?

HIRSHBERG: Oh, I had a neighbor who was a friend of mine, right next to her. She got killed in the concentration camp.

LEVINE: Hmm.

HIRSHBERG: And we used to play together all the time with dolls and carriages and same thing that all little girls do. [chuckles]

LEVINE: Uh-huh, uh-huh. And how about your parents? Do you—did you have any memories of, like, what kind of a social life they had in Belgium?

HIRSHBERG: In Belgium?

LEVINE: Yeah.

HIRSHBERG: No, that I don't remember at all.

LEVINE: Was there any—did—did you—did you, like, go to the synagogue? Were you observant of—

HIRSHBERG: In Belgium, I don't remember ever going.

LEVINE: Yeah.

HIRSHBERG: I guess my parents went. I don't remember going. When we came to this country, my mother was left behind. I came with my father, my uncle, my aunt and my cousin.

LEVINE: So how was it—

HIRSHBERG: And she came later. She came six months later.

LEVINE: How was it that you and—and your father and the whole rest of the party you came with, how was it that they came when they did?

HIRSHBERG: Because they were on a British passport. We all—I was too on a British passport.

LEVINE: Oh, because your father's family had—

HIRSHBERG: They were English. He was born in England so I was on the British passport. My mother was still on the Belgium passport so that's why she couldn't come at the same time.

LEVINE: I see. Now, did you experience—you came in September? September, 1939.

HIRSHBERG: Right.

LEVINE: So did—did the family personally experience any of the rise of the Nazis or—

HIRSHBERG: No, we came before it started in Belgium.

LEVINE: Ah.

HIRSHBERG: Before the war started in Belgium so we didn't experience anything.

LEVINE: But—

HIRSHBERG: No.

LEVINE: No. And things hadn't, like, built up—

HIRSHBERG: Nothing happened yet, no.

LEVINE: —before you came?

HIRSHBERG: Hmm-uh.

LEVINE: Uh-huh. Okay. So [clears throat] let's see. So do you remember leaving?

HIRSHBERG: Oh, yeah, because I didn't know why we were leaving. It was in the middle of the night and my parents woke me up and put me in the car, and it was raining and I was crying because I was leaving my mother.

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

HIRSHBERG: And they wouldn't tell me why we were leaving. It was a secret because they didn't want me to tell anybody else, I guess.

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

HIRSHBERG: So it was very upsetting. [chuckles]

LEVINE: Yeah. So what did you do? You went by car—where—

HIRSHBERG: To the boat.

LEVINE: To—

HIRSHBERG: To the boat.

LEVINE: To the boat.

HIRSHBERG: Uh-hmm.

LEVINE: And you left from—do you remember what the port was?

HIRSHBERG: No.

LEVINE: No, uh-huh. And it was—it was your father, his brother with his wife and their child—

HIRSHBERG: Their daughter.

LEVINE: Was a—was a girl?

HIRSHBERG: Yeah, a girl. Uh-hmm.

LEVINE: Uh-huh. And how close in age was she to you?

HIRSHBERG: About five years younger. She was about three.

LEVINE: Oh, wow.

HIRSHBERG: Very, you know, small. [chuckles]

LEVINE: Yeah.

HIRSHBERG: And then she was pregnant, my aunt, with—

LEVINE: Uh-huh. So, okay, so when you first got to the—the Statendam—

HIRSHBERG: Uh-hmm.

LEVINE: —did you get right on, or did you have to wait for a while in the port? Do you remember?

HIRSHBERG: We waited a while, I remember.

LEVINE: Like, days?

HIRSHBERG: No.

LEVINE: No.

HIRSHBERG: I think it's just a few hours, probably.

LEVINE: Did you go through any examinations that you recall before you—

HIRSHBERG: No.

LEVINE: Yeah, uh-huh. And—and what about the Statendam? Do you remember anything about that ship?

HIRSHBERG: I just remembered I got seasick sometimes. [chuckles] My father would take me on the deck—

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

HIRSHBERG: —so that I would feel better. [sniffs]

LEVINE: And do you remember the accommodations that you had on the ship?

HIRSHBERG: I think we had to share a cabin with somebody because we—we didn't have a cabin or something. Some woman took me in and my father went with someone else.

LEVINE: Oh, I see. So—

HIRSHBERG: We didn't really have a—

LEVINE: W—you—did you stay—you stayed with your aunt though, right, and—and your cousin?

HIRSHBERG: Yeah.

LEVINE: In one cabin?

HIRSHBERG: I guess.

LEVINE: Yeah. Do you know if you came third class?

HIRSHBERG: No, we didn't come—

LEVINE: Do you know if it was second or third class?

HIRSHBERG: Probably first class.

LEVINE: Oh, you think it was? It was—so the—so the accommodations were comfortable?

HIRSHBERG: I don't even—

LEVINE: You don't remember.

HIRSHBERG: I—I don't remember [laughs], hardly.

LEVINE: Yeah. Okay, so how about the—during the b—[telephone rings]—

HIRSHBERG: What?

LEVINE: We're going to pause here. [tape off/on] Okay. We're resuming here after a telephone call. Okay. So en route, there was an incident—

HIRSHBERG: Uh-hmm.

LEVINE: —of survivors of another ship. Could you say whatever you can remember about that?

HIRSHBERG: I just remember we were on deck and they picked up survivors from another boat, and that made our boat a couple of days late. That's why we ended up in Ellis Island, because the visas had expired.

LEVINE: Oh.

HIRSHBERG: [chuckles] Otherwise, we wouldn't have been in Ellis Island. We would have gone right through.

LEVINE: I see. I see. So that's right, because it was really third class and steerage people who went to Ellis Island—

HIRSHBERG: Uh-hmm.

LEVINE: —routinely.

HIRSHBERG: Uh-hmm.

LEVINE: But you were traveling in high-class tickets, but because of that, the visa expired. Uh-huh.

HIRSHBERG: That's why we ended up in Ellis Island.

LEVINE: Okay. Was it a big ship that—did you, like, see—

HIRSHBERG: I didn't see anything, really—

LEVINE: Yeah, uh-huh.

HIRSHBERG: —much at all.

LEVINE: Uh-huh, uh-huh. Okay. So then the ship got to EI—got to the—do you remember when it came into the New York harbor in a partic— and anything in particular?

HIRSHBERG: No, I don't remember anything special.

LEVINE: Yeah. Okay. So you—you were actually at Ellis Island for two weeks?

HIRSHBERG: I think about two weeks, maybe longer.

LEVINE: Wow. Uh-huh.

HIRSHBERG: Because I remember waiting to get out and everybody was worried and upset.

LEVINE: And do you remember, like, were there a lot of people there then or—

HIRSHBERG: Yeah, in the dining room was a lot of people and people with beards, which I hadn't seen before. [chuckles] And then we used to go outside and play. My uncle played soccer with the men and I used to go outside and watch. I remember that.

LEVINE: Uh-huh. And were you able to—w—did you—you stayed again with your aunt and her—and her—

HIRSHBERG: And her daughter, yeah. In the bedroom, in the room.

LEVINE: Uh-huh. And did she get any special attention? I mean, given that she was pregnant and—

HIRSHBERG: Not that I know of, no.

LEVINE: Mmm, uh-huh. Yeah. Did—did you feel you were treated well or what kind of treatment d—did—did you get there at Ellis Island?

HIRSHBERG: Yeah, I was treated well. I—I mean, I remember going to eat and playing outside. And I don't—you know, nobody treated us badly.

LEVINE: Uh-huh. And it was clean or d—I mean, do—do you have any, like, thing about it that stands out in your mind that maybe was good or bad?

HIRSHBERG: Just a lot of people in the dining room, which was a surprise for me. [chuckles]

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

HIRSHBERG: I think I never saw so many people [chuckles]—

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

HIRSHBERG: —in one time.

LEVINE: Uh-huh, uh-huh. Let's see. And you said on—on the questionnaire that you were nervous about being sent back or—do—do you—do you recall, like, what hap—you—you were young, I know.

HIRSHBERG: Mmm. I was nervous about—yeah. Every—because I knew everybody else was nervous, just about getting out, you know, of Ellis Island. That's all. Hoping not to have to stay there, I guess.

LEVINE: Do you know—I—I suppose they went before the Immigration judge?

HIRSHBERG: Yeah. They did go before the Immigration judge. I remember vaguely—

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

HIRSHBERG: —sitting on the benches there. And I saw the benches later when I went back to visit Ellis Island.

LEVINE: Uh-hmm, wow. But I guess what happened is that the visa was ren—extended, given the circumstances or something? Is that—

HIRSHBERG: Well, they had to go through lawyers and—

LEVINE: Uh-hmm.

HIRSHBERG: —were in touch with lawyers. And then we got—we got in.  
[chuckles]

LEVINE: Uh-huh. Okay. Now, you said that—oh, so where did you go then when you—when you left Ellis Island? How—what do you remember [unclear]—

HIRSHBERG: We went to a family in Brooklyn. My father knew this family through business, I think, and when I stayed with the—we stayed with them for, I don't know how long it was, about a week or whatever.

LEVINE: Do you remember, like, your f—any first impressions as a little girl of eight that, you know, going to Brooklyn from Belgium?

HIRSHBERG: No, there was a little boy there that I played with and he had a airplane that went around. [chuckles] And I remember the airplane he used to play with.

LEVINE: Uh-huh, uh-hmm. And then where did the family go after that week in—in the—

HIRSHBERG: To—

LEVINE: Susskind [PH]. That was the name of the people?

HIRSHBERG: Yeah, I think so.

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

HIRSHBERG: Eighty-sixth Street and—between Columbus and Amsterdam.

LEVINE: Oh, and that's where you—

HIRSHBERG: Yeah, and we got an apartment there. Yeah.

LEVINE: Oh, uh-huh.

HIRSHBERG: Until my mother came and then we moved to our own apartment.

LEVINE: Do you have any recollections of that period before your mother arrived when—when you and your father and—and did your uncle and aunt and—and cousin also [unclear]?

HIRSHBERG: They went to a different place. No, they went to a different place. And I didn't go to school for six months till my mother came.  
[chuckles]

LEVINE: Oh. So [chuckles]—so your father—

HIRSHBERG: [chuckles]

LEVINE: Did your father work right away or he—he—he didn't work till after your mother got here?

HIRSHBERG: I think he must have start setting up their business. Yeah.

LEVINE: Uh-hmm.

HIRSHBERG: Well, they had the business in Europe and they just, you know, brought it over, sort of.

LEVINE: Oh, I see. Uh-huh. So—

HIRSHBERG: Continued it. They continued it. I guess that would be the right [unclear].

LEVINE: Uh-huh. So did he—did he, like, reset up, like around 47<sup>th</sup> Street?

HIRSHBERG: Yeah.

LEVINE: In the diamond area?

HIRSHBERG: Forty-seventh and Fifth, right there. Yeah.

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

HIRSHBERG: And he knew a lot of people because a lot of people from Antwerp had come here. And he knew Americans because he had dealt with them already.

LEVINE: I see.

HIRSHBERG: Because they had a big business.

LEVINE: Uh-huh. And how about your grandparents? Did they come over?

HIRSHBERG: They came over six months later with my mother.

LEVINE: Oh, then this was her parents?

HIRSHBERG: His parents.

LEVINE: His parents.

HIRSHBERG: My father's parents.

LEVINE: And her parents? Did they come?

HIRSHBERG: They—my—well, my grandfather died but my grandmother and their—her siblings went to Cuba because they couldn't get 'em in here.

LEVINE: Oh.

HIRSHBERG: And they stayed in Cuba for quite a few years and then they came here after the war. She had four siblings.

LEVINE: Uh-huh, uh-huh.

HIRSHBERG: Two of them were in the Belgium Army and had been prisoners of war, but they escaped. So they all ended up [chuckles]—

LEVINE: Wow. Hmm. So let's see. And so what about your mother? She—she couldn't get—did s—what kind of a passport did she come on?

HIRSHBERG: Belgium.

LEVINE: A Belgium.

HIRSHBERG: She came six months later.

LEVINE: Uh-huh. And she had to go to Cuba first, did you say?

HIRSHBERG: No, she didn't. She came over straight.

LEVINE: She came straight over.

HIRSHBERG: Yeah.

LEVINE: Uh-huh, uh-huh. So what was it like seeing your mother after—

HIRSHBERG: I just cried and cried and cried. [chuckles] I said I didn't stop crying for a long time.

EI-903/HIRSHBERG

LEVINE: Hmm, yeah. And then you—by then, had you made some friends in the neighborhood or—

HIRSHBERG: Not really, because I was with another aunt. My father's sister came over and—and she took care of me. And I played with my cousin a lot. I didn't really make friends the first—

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

HIRSHBERG: —six months.

LEVINE: Uh-hmm. Do you remember any things about this country that struck you as new and different, sort of early on that you never saw before or—

HIRSHBERG: Well, big apartment buildings. I never saw that.

LEVINE: Hmm. In Belgium, what—what kind of a—

HIRSHBERG: We—we lived in a house, attached house.

LEVINE: Oh, like a row house?

HIRSHBERG: A small house, yeah.

LEVINE: Uh-huh. I see.

HIRSHBERG: I thought it was a big house until I went back and saw it. [chuckles]  
It's a little house. [laughs]

LEVINE: So you were speaking French then.

HIRSHBERG: And—

LEVINE: Oh—

HIRSHBERG: And English. I spoke English once I was here.

LEVINE: Yeah, I see. So then—

HIRSHBERG: I never spoke French with my parents, actually. Only, that was in school.

LEVINE: I see. And did your mother speak English as well?

HIRSHBERG: Yeah.

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

HIRSHBERG: Because she spoke with my father, in Europe, English.

LEVINE: Uh-huh, uh-huh. So when you got to school, what was that like, starting school?

HIRSHBERG: Well, first the—it was hard. They weren't so friendly to kids.

LEVINE: Did y—did they do that greenhorn business? I mean, were you—

HIRSHBERG: Yeah, how long—

LEVINE: —called a greenhorn?

HIRSHBERG: Yes. "How long were you in this country?" And then they all got together and I was sitting with the teacher and then one of the boys said, "Oh, we decided we accept you." [laughs] I still remember that. And then I made friends and that was fine.

LEVINE: Uh-huh, uh-huh, uh-huh. And you said you were ahead in—in math.

HIRSHBERG: In math.

LEVINE: Uh-huh, yeah. Wow. So y—did the family then stay on 86<sup>th</sup> Street for a while?

HIRSHBERG: No. Once my mother came, we moved to our own apartment.

LEVINE: Where was that?

HIRSHBERG: I think 89<sup>th</sup> and Broadway someplace.

LEVINE: Oh, but that same area—

HIRSHBERG: That same area, yeah.

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

HIRSHBERG: And then we moved to 88<sup>th</sup> and Riverside, which is where we stayed.

LEVINE: I see. I see. Okay. And how did your—how did your mother and father adapt to this country, would you say?

HIRSHBERG: Well, they seemed to have—they had a lot of friends from Belgium, from Antwerp, and they went with the same people really, mostly.

LEVINE: Uh-huh, uh-huh. And let's see. So then what did you do a—after you—you finished grade school, went to high school?

HIRSHBERG: And then I went to college, to University of Penn.

LEVINE: Oh, uh-huh. And what was your field?

HIRSHBERG: Sociology.

LEVINE: Uh-huh. And how did you meet your husband?

HIRSHBERG: Through my mother. [chuckles]

LEVINE: Really? [chuckles]

HIRSHBERG: He w—he was in the jewelry store. He owned a jewelry store and they brought the diamonds from my father. And then my mother and his father were talking together and I was applying to Syracuse. And his father said, "Well, may—is it okay if my son calls?" Because he was in Syracuse or whatever. And we went on a blind date and then we—we got married. Then he went back to medical school. [chuckles]

LEVINE: Oh.

HIRSHBERG: He went to medical school afterwards and he's a physician now, radiologist.

LEVINE: Oh.

HIRSHBERG: Retired. [chuckles]

LEVINE: Uh-huh, uh-huh. So you didn't go to Syracuse but you [unclear]—

HIRSHBERG: No, I went to University of Penn [unclear]. [laughter] It was a—

LEVINE: Uh-huh. Okay. And do you have children?

HIRSHBERG: I have three children.

LEVINE: And their na—well, why don't you give your husband's name?

HIRSHBERG: Hirshberg.

LEVINE: His—

HIRSHBERG: Irvin. Irvin Hirshberg.

LEVINE: Irvin Hirshberg. And your children's names?

HIRSHBERG: William, Karen and Leslie. Actually, it's Karen, William and Leslie [chuckles] in order of birth. Yeah.

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

HIRSHBERG: The way of birth.

LEVINE: Uh-huh. And how about grandchildren?

HIRSHBERG: I have five grandchildren.

LEVINE: Wow. Uh-hmm.

HIRSHBERG: Two—three girls and two boys, come to—from my two daughters. My son is not married yet.

LEVINE: Uh-huh. Okay. Let's see. Is there anything else that maybe—well, do you think it made a difference to you, coming here as an eight-year-old and kind of changing your—your life and living in a new place? I mean, do you think the immigration that you—that you went through had an impact on you, on your personality, on your ways of thinking about things or anything like that?

HIRSHBERG: Oh, I think it gives you insecurity when—you know, makes you insecure when you have to move from one place to the other.

LEVINE: Yeah, uh-huh.

HIRSHBERG: Because you're afraid that some people will kill you. [chuckles]

LEVINE: Wow.

HIRSHBERG: I think that always sort of remains with you.

LEVINE: Uh-huh, uh-huh. And how about your mother and father? Do you—can you recall any values or attitudes or ways of thinking about things that they tried to instill in you? And maybe you did the same with your children or maybe you did—

HIRSHBERG: [unclear]. I don't—to be honest, to be decent, you know, not to do anything wrong.

LEVINE: Uh-hmm. And how about this time in your life when you're retired and your children are grown? How is this time for you?

HIRSHBERG: Oh, I really can't complain. It's pretty good.

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

HIRSHBERG: Yeah, I play golf and tennis and—

LEVINE: Uh-huh. Did you actually—

HIRSHBERG: —bridge.

LEVINE: —work before you—I mean after you got your degree in sociology?

HIRSHBERG: Well, I did some teaching, really, when I first got married.

LEVINE: Oh, uh-huh.

HIRSHBERG: In Jersey City.

LEVINE: Oh.

HIRSHBERG: [chuckles] And then I worked for my father in the office some too.

LEVINE: I see.

HIRSHBERG: I did some bookkeeping there.

LEVINE: Okay. Well, is there anything else that maybe we haven't covered or anything you'd like to say in closing about coming to this country or living out your life really in this country?

HIRSHBERG: Oh, it's a nice country. I enjoyed this country and I had a lot of benefits and—

LEVINE: Uh-hmm.

HIRSHBERG: No, maybe turned out better than if I stayed in Europe. [chuckles] I don't know.

EI-903/HIRSHBERG

LEVINE: Mmm. Okay. Well, thank you very much. I've been speaking with Francine Hirshberg and we—it's on June 19<sup>th</sup>, 1997 and this is Janet Levine signing off.

[END OF INTERVIEW]