

**Oral History Interview of
Jim Goggin**

**Interviewed by: David Marshall
October 13, 2014
Lubbock, Texas**

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Transcript Overview:

This interview features Jim Goggin, who discusses his upbringing, early life, education, and his experiences as a student of psychology and CIA agent during the Cold War.

Length of Interview: 02:11:21

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David Marshall (DM):

The date is October 13, 2014. This is David Marshall interviewing Jim Goggin at his home in Lubbock, Texas. And can we begin with your date and place of birth? Your date and place of birth.

Jim Goggin (JG):

May 8, 1940 in Queens, New York City.

DM:

Okay, and what's your full name?

JG:

James Edward Goggin. G-O-G-G-I-N.

DM:

Okay, you come from New York; you had mentioned that you were from Queens. How long had your family lived in Queens, or that area?

JG:

Actually, my father's family goes back—well, his mother was born in Ireland, but his father was born in the United States. They were Irish Catholics, and so that goes back, you know, prior to World War I, even, I guess, before the turn of the century, I think on that side. And the other side—my mother, actually, was born in Germany. Her father was in World War I, against us, but he was offered a very fine job in Turkey, and it turned out his wife was—or my grandmother—couldn't tolerate not being with people who could speak German. So the Turkish doctor said "She needs to go back to Germany." So after that he still wanted to get out of Germany—my grandfather—so he had relatives here in the United States—they decided to come here. The one interesting thing about that was, the relatives they had planned to meet lived in Chicago, originally, and when their boat came in, there was a rowboat with two of his cousins out in the middle of the ocean—just near the New York Harbor—yelling and screaming that "We've changed where we live." They kept rowing and rowing and finally got the attention of my grandfather, and so they lived—had moved into Brooklyn, okay, the German section of Brooklyn. So that's my family heritage.

DM:

I'm glad they hooked up all right.

JG:

Yes, I guess I do, and my parents do, too—my mother and dad.

DM:

Did they have a strong religious affiliation in Germany, were they Lutheran, were they—do you have Jewish—

JG:

Yes, I—they were Lutheran. But I don't know what—actually, I had relatives coming here after World War II. I don't know if you want to hear this. One of them—was actually a second or third cousin of mine—and his father was a Lutheran minister. Now, this one guy, who professed to be part of a partisan¹—I discovered at a very young age, I knew uniforms—I was a kid that going to West Point, until I fell in love with basketball, then it changed. But I knew every uniform and every kind of uniform—you know, Canadian, German, British, American—and I saw a picture of him with a lightning bolt—that means SS. I raised a rumpus. My good doctor had to talk to me. My father talked to me with the Jewish doctor. And I thought I was—because I was so upset—I thought he'd be on my side. But I was fifteen years old, and he told me “I think, James, we have some of the same Bible. Now do you know what one of the Commandments has to do with your parents?” I said “Yes, sir.” And he said “That's what I want you to do, James, you have to control yourself, and not be so mad.” I was mad at my mother, because she had thrown away the picture of him with the uniform and a lightning bolt. And so my father took me to him, and he was very nice, he also was at the Battle of the Bulge, where he was—my physician was a hero in World War II, he had—at the Battle of the Bulge, when they ran out of corpsmen, he went out himself and pulled in American wounded troops—got shot at, his had was shot apart, he had only one hand—got two Silver Stars for his heroics. Anyway—

DM:

Do you remember his name?

JG:

Jerome Malcolm. He was an old-fashioned doctor who came to the home. When I had asthma he made sure my mother understood that it was all right for me to play ball, so he was my hero for that, because my mother didn't want him, and my father didn't want to argue too much. So he came to my rescue, and I felt like he would be behind me with this—because he was Jewish, I thought he would be behind me about this second cousin.

DM:

It sounds like he had to learn to deal with anger, himself, maybe.

JG:

Yes. I'm sure he was very bright, and he came back a hero in '45, and I was five years old, and everyone on my block—every kid, every—went to him because he came back, and he was a

¹ A guerrilla band operating within enemy lines.

hero, and he stayed a hero in my mind, because he always came out at night and visited folk, and you know, was a good man.

DM:

Yeah, sounds like a bright fellow, too. Do you have any Jewish ancestry?

JG:

No, none.

DM:

I'm wondering because, you know, you went to a university that had Jewish connections, but I think their graduate school is more secular, or is it not.

JG:

The undergraduate school is very Jewish and very—there's a strong religious bent. Graduate school and the Albert Einstein College of Medicine is really not entitled Albert Einstein College of Medicine, Yeshiva University. But no, it says that, so people don't know. I was in the first graduate school of Yeshiva University. So that's—and I grew up in a mostly—it turned into a Jewish neighborhood. Because my father, who had a keen eye for things, was in all kinds of trades growing up—his father died young, so he had to do all kinds of construction jobs, and he knew a good house when he—he bought the house for six thousand, one hundred dollars. When I inherited it, it was worth three hundred thousand dollars. That's a fair return.

DM:

Right? Yeah, that's appreciation on an investment, there, isn't it? Well, I wonder, did this migration of Jewish families to the neighborhood happen during World War II, and that was after World War II?

JG:

Well, during World War II and after World War II. There still were Christians and Catholics and Protestants on the block, but mostly—it turned into a mostly Jewish neighborhood. And now it's gone back a bit, as I understand it from my friends in New York, it's more multicultural than it was, but it still is an expensive—a good neighborhood right by the—you had access to the subway, which meant twenty minutes into Manhattan and anyplace else. So it was a very desirable neighborhood.

DM:

How long would it take to get to Yeshiva University? Would it take about twenty minutes to get to Yeshiva University?

JG:

Well, if I had—by that time, I was out on Long Island. I finished—I took three and a half years to finish my degree, and I was working as a school psychologist, so I had to drive. And that was one of the reasons I left New York, because it was hours and hours on end—Long Island. You know, it was the biggest parking lot in the world. That's what it was called. I didn't want to do that anymore.

DM:

And mostly yellow taxicabs. (Laughing)

JG:

Yes, —in Queens, there weren't hardly any—and Manhattan, get them all the time. Queens was a little harder. If you could walk to the subway—it was about a mile and a half—my father used to do that just for exercise, and my mother did it—I mean, she walked—I mean, they were the healthiest people in the world, and I never knew that, you know, why they lived so long, but they were walking all the time built them good health.

DM:

Well, the subway's great, anyhow.

JG:

The subway is wonderful—especially when they brought—the police finally brought it under control. I mean, I got beat up when I was a teenager, but that—there were police put on every train. Every subway had a policeman on it. There are forty thousand policemen in New York City. Forty thousand.

DM:

That's amazing.

JG:

I mean, it's, well—

DM:

That includes Manhattan, Queens, Brooklyn, Bronx—

JG:

That's right, but it's—still for eight million people—proportionally, is a large amount of policemen. And that's—I forget—it wasn't Lindsay—I forget the mayor who—it was a Democratic mayor; Lindsay was Republican, he was a liberal Republican, very liberal.

DM:

But it was the Democratic mayor that brought up the force—the number of the force.

JG:

Yeah, my father was a policeman, so I always very proud. He had an unmarked police car, which all my friends wanted to go to school in with me.

DM:

What were some of the influences in your early life, did you have a strong Irish Catholic influence, or Lutheran influence, or other religious, or political, social—?

JG:

I went from being a—my mother signed a commitment that I would be brought up Roman Catholic. I got my first communion, and soon thereafter, I was in religious training schools, and I would—the way my father tells it, I was asking too many questions. They started to hit me with a ruler, drawing blood. My father went to talk to the priest—it was nuns that were doing it, but—and they wouldn't—they said they'd do something, they didn't, I came home with bloody hands, and he took me out. And then my mother's influences are—I went to Lutheran school, and that was very demoralizing, because that's—that minister came from Germany and had the son that was SS. So, I mean, when I realized that, it was only Muhlenberg College, a Lutheran college that brought my faith back. It had an unbelievable—the head of the religious department was an enormous—he was in World War II, fighting on the German side, although he was one of the trained ministers who was anti-war. And so they sent him to the Eastern Front to get killed.

DM:

That's what they did with what you would call “conscientious objectors,” huh, send them to the Eastern front.

JG:

Yeah, he had to fight, but he didn't want to be there. But he came back to the United States, went to Muhlenberg College when—and he was a class scholar, too. He participated, I know, in Princeton Theological Seminary, they—the churches found in Germany for World War II. Why didn't they stand up more? And there was no conclusion to that. There was no good answer. So he was a brilliant man; he got my heart and soul, because he would debate atheists in chapel. The final comment of the atheist was—from the University of Chicago—his last sentence was “If this was true, the way your Lutheran minister says it is, it would—if it was absolutely true that Christ rose—it would do; the religion would work for me.” That was the closing point he made. He was a very intelligent man and asked questions all the time, and wanted the controversy.

DM:

This was at your—this was your undergraduate work, at Muhlenberg, right?

JG:

Undergraduate. Muhlenberg College.

DM:

What about high school, junior high—were you in religious schools or secular schools?

JG:

Well, I went to the—Queens was growing so fast, I—my first experience was five miles away. Then I moved closer, very close. PS 26 was about a mile away, and by the fifth grade, I was in PS 176, which was three blocks away from my home. The building boom was going wild in New York, you know—

DM:

Now, what's "PS"?

JG:

Public school. It means "public school." "173 public school," "26 public school," that's how they—

DM:

Do they not have names? They have numbers for their public schools.

JG:

Huh?

DM:

Do they have numbers instead of names?

JG:

Yeah, they have numbers—and names, Jamaica high school—I forget the number, but it was Jamaica High School. It was right in an upper-middleclass neighborhood.

DM:

Jamaica High School was where you graduated?

JG:

High school, yes.

DM:

What year?

JG:

Huh?

DM:

What year?

JG:

Nineteen fifty-eight, and I was there when Jamaica won the basketball championship of the city. And they guy that was All-American—high school All-American, college—taught me how to shoot baskets from the side—jump shots from the side. And that was my claim to fame; I wasn't that fast of foot.

DM:

Were you—so you were on the basketball team?

JG:

Huh?

DM:

You were on the basketball team?

JG:

Yes, I was. Yes.

DM:

Was basketball the main sport that you were interested in?

JG:

Yeah, we did not have football. New York City, at one time, stopped playing football—the whole city—because too many kids were dying. One year four youngsters died, and then, when they reopened it, many parents—it was a vote in every school district—and it was voted out of Jamaica High. And so there were very few teens from New York City high schools' football teams—Long Island, yes, upstate, yes, but not New York City.

DM:

So the more rural areas—

JG:
Exactly.

DM:
Is it still that way, you think?

JG:
I don't—you know, I think—I mean, basketball was king in New York. Everyone had a playground, that's how you got better. You went to playgrounds during your summer—and Harlem—I mean, that was the up and coming—and then there was Long Beach that was Jewish ballplayers at that time—very prominent. And then there was the Irish ballpark in—uh, a beach—Rockaway Beach—that was the Irish. And then there were some mixtures in between, but that's where you went to get better.

DM:
Okay. I wonder if space considerations came into that, because it takes a lot of land to build a stadium—football stadium.

JG:
Absolutely, that was a big—I think that was part of it, although Jamaica High School was huge. We had a huge football field—unused—a great quarter-mile track, and a world class swimming pool.

DM:
Growing up in Jamaica, or Queens—Jamaica and Queens are right together—

JG:
Jamaica is in Queens.

DM:
Okay. Growing up there, did you get out of that metropolitan area often, did you go to the other end of Long Island or upstate New York, or about—

JG:
Yes. There used to be something called a “police camp,” which was for people who were New York City policemen, or women in the police department, and it was very reasonable, so during my—I guess—when I was five to ten, I guess, we went there all the time. And then we took—

DM:

Was this Long Island?

JG:

That's up in the Catskill Mountains, it was in the mountains. Dirt road that my mother was always scared to death of getting to that place, there was a drop off. And then I—my parents took me to Washington, D.C., I went to—I love war things, so they took me to different battlegrounds on Long Island, and Fort Ticonderoga, where the Americans seized the cannons from the British and brought them to Boston to face off the English.

DM:

A very scenic spot, up there.

JG:

I loved history.

DM:

Good. And you got to get out and about a bit.

JG:

Huh?

DM:

And you got to get out.

JG:

My parents took me out. And then, also, I had—both the neighbors would take me to things like polo matches. Whoever went to a polo match? Not anybody in my family, I can tell you that, but I was brought as a friend of the—you know, one of their kids. I had two polo balls—I don't know what ever happened to them, but as a kid, they gave me them.

DM:

You liked sports, especially basketball. You were interested in history, especially military history, it sounds like. What were some other things you were interested in in the school years—in the—before college?

JG:

Okay. The Air Force. That's still military, but it was—my father gave me the finished part of the basement for my area. He had his workbench area in the other part of the basement, and I had pictures of all kinds of airplanes all over the place. —airplanes in particular.

DM:

Do you think this was fed by the fact that you grew up right during and after World War II?

JG:

Absolutely. My birthday—May 8, 1945—was when Germany surrendered. And I thought, first, it was a celebration for me. But my mother said no. There were parades, there were people waving American flags, and I said “Wow, this is my birthday.”

DM:

VE Day wasn't for you.

JG:

No, it wasn't for me, it was for a much better cause than me.

DM:

You know, that was the case for some time to come, because I was born in '59, and it was the same thing for me. We played Army, we played World War II. We were growing up during the Vietnam War; we didn't really know anything about it. We were playing World War Two. I guess because the movies—

JG:

It was the greatest war we ever fought, and we absolutely need to win it. In Hitler's second book—which was, maybe twenty years ago was finally accepted as really his—he actually had plans to attack the United States, and that's why he was building the V-1's and V-2's, so eventually they could hit New York.

DM:

Well, a pivotal time in world history.

JG:

Yes, and it opened this country up—we came out of it, I think, and it was a glorious victory. We lost three hundred thousand—three hundred and fifty thousand men—four hundred thousand. The Russians—Soviets—lost five million soldiers. They threw them at the Germans—they threw them. And they had machine guns behind them if they stopped, and the Germans did that, so—but the Soviets were more like that. They were brutal. But I didn't know any of that until much later. But I was just fascinated by our—what we did.

DM:

I understand completely—just absorbing that war, after the fact, that history—

JG:

Absolutely, people—next door neighbor was in the Marine Corps, and he took pictures back there of—as a little boy of maybe eight years old—no, five years old—and him holding me and my best friend with his Marine uniform, and I used to think he was the greatest. Yes, very much—very—my father, as I grew up he made comments. We had blackouts in New York City.

DM:

Do you remember?

JG:

Yeah, I remember that. I remember everything had to be turned off. My father was a policeman, he was supposed to go up and down the block and make sure it was all dark. The submarines were all off Long Island, sinking ships as they came out of the harbor. And so we thought started to put our Navy muscle together, and—

DM:

Did the people of New York go out to see the transport ships coming in at the end of the war?

JG:

Actually, it was an event, sometimes, yeah. It was a huge event, especially when I was young. I remember—my father took me to see some of those. That was a wonderful experience, seeing those huge boats come in, wonderful. I also got taken to the Thanksgiving parade, my father had people who he knew that would open their offices to—second floor, so we'd get a full view of the Macy's Day Parade. It seemed nice, that happened—I was very fortunate in many ways that way.

DM:

Sure, and that's things you remember, you know, you would always remember those. Now what about, you know, you went in to psychology, did you have any interest, as a child, in medicine, or psychology, was—?

JG:

No. Until I got to college.

DM:

That's when that happened, okay.

JG:

Well I first was a history major, and then I learned what lawyers really did, so I changed major in

my junior year. I loved history, but I guess I could've taught it, but I didn't think that was what I wanted to do at the time. So I shift psychology, which I then became inspired by.

DM:

Now, this was at Muhlenberg, in Pennsylvania. Allenton?

JG:

Allentown, Pennsylvania.

DM:

Well what was it that made you go to psychology? You were in history, do you know what—?

JG:

I guess by that time, curiosity was perked a bit by human behavior. There was a young one of my—I was in a fraternity—mostly for the better food—but there was a—one of the people that was in the fraternity went psychotic, actually. I mean, I wouldn't have known it at that time, to call it, but he became psychotic and his father had to be brought up and—I mean, I have bad memories of him. I don't know if he was the cause of the boys, but the boy was pre-med, and would drive himself to death, really, almost, to get high marks, and eventually he broke down. And so that was one of the things.

DM:

This whole process, this interaction, father with son—

JG:

Yeah, I saw that, and everybody—all of us would talk about that, what happened to him, why would that happen to him?

DM:

You were probably nineteen or twenty at this time?

JG:

No, there was—I largely—some experimental psychology, I liked the idea of finding out things. I really couldn't get into any use for that, until graduate school, but we talked about that, and how you had to run experiments, and how to set up things and use statistics and different techniques—that part interested me, too.

DM:

Was this—did you pick this up in a psychology course at Muhlenberg?

JG:

Yeah, there were several. There was the abnormal course, and then there was a research course, and that's where I learned all the different ways you can do research which we didn't do much of. We had one little project, as I remember it, but it wasn't until graduate school that I got into doing research, actually.

DM:

But you said may your junior year was—maybe your junior year is when you made the transition.

JG:

Yes, absolutely, my junior year. When Muhlenberg was a Lutheran college, and they decided—the board decided to get away from scholarships, and some of the things that were happening at some of the schools, where they had athletes become so dominant, and I guess they figured they were out of order. That football team, I think, had some problems, and things, and there were some, I think one or two were arrested, and—but we were never sure about that, but that was what we figured out had happened.

DM:

Okay. I'm really interested in the age you were when this transition occurred, because I have found from working with college students that that age of twenty—maybe nineteen, twenty, twenty-one, is such a transitional period. And they think they're going in a direction, and, all of the sudden, "Pow", they—something clicks, and it's a lifelong change—have you seen that kind of thing?

JG:

Oh, I think that happened to me. I think that, you know, the combination of basketball becoming, well, a nonfactor, really—scholarship taken away, and my growing fascination with—like that boy, he actually had attacked another teacher. He had been on the football team; he had dropped off because of grades, and then he actually attacked somebody during a meeting, and I was present at the time, and I had to try to get between them—it—then it took, actually, maybe fifteen of us to get that big guy off, of course he was a giant. That experience of seeing that, and then having—walking around in a trance, and things, was a little frightening, but it also caught my interest.

DM:

Right, so questions began to arise—why did this happen to this person?

JG:

Why did this happen, why did this happen, why, why? What could've made him such a—I don't even want to mention his name, but he was a year ahead of me. And I thought he was a pretty good guy, seemed generous and thoughtful, but he changed dramatically once he—and, I guess it was psychotic, I mean, I don't know the particulars, but it was schizophrenic, or maybe bipolar, or something. But he started “crazy” —not being able to talk to him until—and I think it was the people—we had some kind of counseling service, I don't think it was large, but some of the guys in the fraternity went over to talk to one of the psychologists, and finally, I guess, his father came up, and—or, something about his father, he sounded mean and scary. He was authoritarian, or something, everyone got afraid of him because he was so loud, himself.

DM:

Well, that would probably make you start thinking “Maybe here's the situation, here's the problem.”

JG:

Yeah, we talked about that. “Was that because his father was like that?” His father and a man—it was kind of a joke, but it really wasn't a joke—when his father came up, he brought his wife up, but he would not—very seldom would he talk to the boy. He would sit in a library, or something, or go and read. Okay, so—

DM:

there was little interaction.

JG:

Well, actually, I do remember those things. And that priest thought, you know, when you see somebody's father walk off and not have anything to say to them, in this small school of, you know we had twelve hundred students at the time. You know, these things were really pretty noticeable.

DM:

It got you to thinking.

JG:

It got me thinking, yes it did.

DM:

What else about Muhlenberg? You continued, then, in your upper-graduate years in psychology, or—?

JG:

Uh, there was a pretty teacher, I guess, that—little motivation, I don't know. But, at the end, I liked her, and she would—and then, there were some good teachers, but my best teachers were history teachers, I tell you. But I knew I—everybody told me the only thing you can do, really, is become a lawyer and go to law school. I didn't see myself standing up in courtrooms and arguing cases, it just wasn't me.

DM:

Well you were there—were you there for four years, thereabouts?

JG:

Yeah, four years. '58-'62. And that's where I was recruited, yeah.

DM:

Bachelors—you received your bachelors in '62 in psychology?

JG:

Yes.

DM:

And you were recruited before you graduated, or right after?

JG:

Before.

DM:

And this was into the CIA.

JG:

They were looking—you're talking about recruit—

DM:

By the CIA, right, yes.

JG:

I guess someone came to the school. They were looking for basketball players, and so—

DM:

You're talking about recruited from high school into Muhlenberg?

JG:

I was at Muhlenberg at the time, and—all these changes started taking place my junior year. Basketball was given up upon, yet, I guess the recruiter first—because I was interviewed and the assistant dean office, I think, and they talked to me and then they actually wanted to speak to my parents about it. They told me what it would include, and that it was a dangerous thing to do—

DM:

Now you're talking about the CIA recruitment, now?

JG:

Yes. That's what happened, then they—I think that was the year that this young fellow had this awful reaction, it was a very important thing that we all discussed, because it was—we were in a group—I was still living in a fraternity house, and everyone talked about that. They were very smart people. It was only—actually—those kinds of events made me get into psychology. No more basketball, which was good—my father was very happy about that.

DM:

Now it was all academics.

JG:

Yeah, and you know I had a scholarship, but he said “James we can afford it.” That was, what, twelve hundred dollars a year? Thirteen hundred? Maybe four hundred dollars for room and board, seems unreal now, it really does, private school.

DM:

Are you able to talk about CIA a little bit—the recruiting, and just at least around the subject of what happened that year?

JG:

Well, I can talk about some of this. I started to say—I was interviewed, I was very patriotic—I had known the Soviet—things were transparent in New York City. From wearing dog tags, I put the dog tags on, I asked my father why that was, and that was in case the city was attacked, we could identify the bodies. And then at one point, I guess, the dog tags came off. And that was because there would be nothing left—the H-bombs, or intercontinental ballistic missiles. So those things, I mean, I was curious. And then there were Nike missiles²—interceptor missiles in—I'm trying to get the years right, because at one point they took them down, because they couldn't stop the incoming ballistic missiles.

² Project Nike, anti-aircraft missile project developed by the U.S. military beginning in 1945, became obsolete with development of ICBMs.

DM:

You know, it's an interesting thing. Your life—the life of a person living in New York City during the Cold War seems like it would be very different from the life of someone living in Ottumwa, Iowa, or somewhere that's not a target. That would be a totally different situation, where you have to know, if anything happens, it's going to happen right here.

JG:

That's right. Yeah, I mean, you know, seeing those rockets pointed up towards the sky, you know, was a sight I saw when I went to play basketball at one park. I'd put the ball in the basket, and I drove by those rockets pointed into the sky. And they would bring down bombers—and I should think, early forms of missiles—but then they came down when the huge silos were built, and there was no hope of stopping them.

DM:

You mentioned that when the CIA became interested in recruiting you that the dean—the associate dean—a dean talked to you? Did you say that?

JG:

They invited—they talked to me: “Would you like to be interviewed for”—they said—“CIA?” I actually didn't—as interested as I was in World War II, I knew what the OSS³ was, and that's the way they—they said “Do you know what that is?” I said “Yes, I know what that is, that's when we sent—troops and people were trained to drop in behind enemy lines and do sabotage, and some were spies” and so I knew what that was all about, I sort of knew, anyway.

DM:

How did they—why did they choose you? Why do you think they came to you and asked if you wanted to be interviewed?

JG:

Well, my guess is I played basketball, number one, which was something that—

DM:

Athletic, they wanted someone athletic.

JG:

Yes, and that was something that was used to get us into East Germany—East Berlin—because it was—during the Eisenhower period, I don't know the particulars about it, but there was some kind of event program for—I guess it was 1962 was the end of—yeah, 1962. And there were—

³ The Office of Strategic Services, United States intelligence agency formed during World War II, predecessor to the CIA.

we didn't learn altogether what—before we got there—was vague about what we were going to do. But what we were going to do was free some people who—one of them who—I gathered later—was a CIA agent. But the—Stasi⁴ did not know what they had; they did not realize he was CIA. They just thought he was sort of a revolutionary type people, or something, and he knew all of our secrets about our country, and the way the CIA worked, and I guess that was one of the things. So he wasn't kept by the KGB, so he wasn't thought to be that important. But we knew—I mean they knew—he was important, and there was a—we also were programmed—well, when got there, we realized how we were going through. We went to our buses, and we had a safe bus place where we changed into Soviet uniforms on certain days, okay—very strange to put on a Soviet uniform. But they had trained us in burp guns⁵, which I carried—was a Soviet tommy gun.

DM:
Tell me what it was again.

JG:
Burp. B-U-R-P gun. You know, I mean, it was like a Tommy gun. And they had, I guess, Kalashnikovs, we all had different weapons. We traveled—could travel into East Berlin. It was pretty hot there, but you still could get through the—visit there just being a citizen of the United States. And you could pass through that way, or, actually, when we went as a team, you know, we went through with busses. And they stopped us and went through our orders and passed us on through, because this was something East Germany wanted. They had, I think—Czechoslovakia, Romania, East Berlin—East Germany, rather.

DM:
This guy you were talking about, he was in West Berlin, though, wasn't he?

JG:
Huh?

DM:
Was the guy you were talking about earlier—

JG:
The dean?

⁴ The Ministry for State Security, the secret police of East Germany.

⁵ PPSH-41, called the "burp gun" for the sound it made.

DM:

No, the guy that you think was with the CIA, but they didn't know he was in the CIA. Was he in West Berlin?

JG:

He was captured in Germany—he spoke fluent German—but he wasn't German. I think he might have been Operation Paperclip, I'm not really sure, fully, but Operation Paperclip allowed certain people into—German people—into the United States, even Nazis, actually. The most famous one was the guy that put up our—Kurt von Braun was the head of our rocket team—was actually in the Nazi Party, and some others. Others we brought through who weren't Nazis, I mean, and I'm not—but I think he knew a lot of—I mean, that was the impression that I—was clearly told that we needed to get him out. And then there were, I guess, a couple of other people there that were—that needed to be gotten out. Since it was Stasi and not the KGB, they thought we could—and we did, we took them out—we took it out pretty easily. We had things from—free-for-all that told of how each house was constructed and everything about it, and we practiced in the summertime, blowing holes in it, and least amount of noise, and most amount—and somewhere in Pennsylvania, and I—it was maybe fifty miles from Pittsburgh, or something like that—

DM:

There was some field training you were doing.

JG:

Yeah, we did some things, and we decided to use those guns. You know, even before 1962, I mean. We were never—I don't know if I had mentioned this in talking, but we were never part of the CIA Service that was in Berlin—that was established. I later learned that it had been penetrated by the KGB and it was, I think—there was a German person who was part of this—the West German government, who was also caught there, and there was another one—

DM:

He was a double agent.

JG:

There was a lot of things that were going on in that place. It was hot.

DM:

That's probably why they kept you separate, then, from the main CIA group.

JG:

Yes.

DM:

Di you actually ever put on Soviet uniforms when you were over there in Berlin?

JG:

Yes. We had a safe garage. And they pulled in, this one garage—and you say “How could that happen in a city?” Well, it was a bombed out city. East Germany—East Berlin was still a mess. It was horrible in some places. Some of the places faced off—they had wonderful parks, but they were burned—blown up. At Bonn, they said “massacred Berlin”—we had pounded it into the ground. And their side had never—not got close to fixing it up.

DM:

This was only seventeen years after the war ended, so not—

JG:

Yeah. And it still was run down. They were very slow—I never found them, but I had pictures—not supposed to take pictures, but at times I took pictures of breadlines and Soviet tanks. I had pictures of Soviet tanks facing off U.S. jeeps, and I was always impressed by the calmness and determination of those guys in their jeeps—they were—I later learned they were the best troops that we had, and they'd stand up to anything. That's why we wanted West Berlin to remain free, because General Clay wanted it that way. It pulled us two hundred miles inside of the Soviet zone, and they would have to hit that first, and it would be—they'd have to kill every one of those soldiers, and they would definitely fight to their death, and that's the way—that's why he went to Truman and asked for us to overcome the Berlin blockade and fly in.

DM:

Did you have much interaction—now, I'm talking about in '62—did you have much interaction with the German citizens? Did they show any gratitude for the way they were treated after the war—the blockade, you know, breaking the blockade, things like that?

JG:

Not until, I mean, I guess, to be honest, I had a very anti-German attitude, okay? That's another thing, I looked like could pass for a German. But, really, inside myself, because I had a member of my family who was SS. So that changed over time, I finally let that go as—my doctor said, “James, you're not of age to make those determinations, yet. You want to do something; you wait until you're older and write a book, or do something to show your gratitude.” And that's why I wrote the book.

DM:

This is Dr. Malcolm you're talking about?

JG:

That was my primary motivation. I mean, I also was very interested in the topic of psychoanalysis in the Third Reich, but I made that promise to him, that I—"Okay, I can do something. I will."

DM:

It was a productive reaction, instead of a nonproductive thing. It became a productive reaction instead of an angry reaction.

JG:

Yes, exactly. That's what he wanted me to—he said "Wait, you're too young to be arguing with your mother. She's okay, I know she's okay." He knew everyone on the block, and everyone—he knew my block up and down. Because he was who he was, and he came back a very big hero—there were stories in the papers about him. So my father and mother were convinced pretty quickly he was a good person, and so we got him as a doctor. But, see how that influenced me? I remember that. He made me think.

DM:

Right. It was quite an influence, because you remember it to this day.

JG:

Absolutely. Well, it was—I mean, I can't tell you how I watched the—Dwight Eisenhower's *Crusade in Europe* was a book, and it was made into the documentary. It was one of the first documentaries on World War II. For the first one I was, I guess twelve, thirteen—I saw the pictures of what the Germans did to the Jews, and well—six million Jews and seven million others—you know, they slaughtered them. I was watching their television, in a Jewish household—actually it was a mixed marriage—the woman was German and her husband was German, too, but a Jewish German—and very wealthy people, and they had televisions before we did. That's where I first saw that documentary that made me really wonder about my background—that's where I first, really—that bothered me, and then finding out I had somebody in the SS in my family was very hard to take.

DM:

But, anyway, Dr. Malcolm did turn it in to a positive thing.

JG:

He made it productive—that's exactly what he did. And that's why I still think about him as one of the best people that influenced my life. And that's, you know—at one time, these things were, I think, more natural, when doctors visited homes and got to know families and got to know neighborhoods. But that doesn't exist anymore, anywhere.

DM:

It used to be a personal connection, now it's very clinical.

JG:

Very personal. He knew your family, knew everything about you—I had asthma, so he used to come out—calm my mother down—would get real worried. He would give me—I forget even what the shot was—he gave me some kind of medicine, and he taught me how to use a spray early on. Actually, about age thirteen or fourteen, it disappeared. So I could go full out.

DM:

Well, let's go back to Berlin in '62. It sounds to me like—and you may not be able to comment on this, I don't know—but it sounds to me like they trained y'all to escort people out and maybe even be ready to go get somebody if you had to.

JG:

If we ever had to kill somebody?

DM:

No, just to escort people out and go in and get people if you had to and bring them out.

JG:

Yes, we did that. We went through tunnels. Went through tunnels—CIA analyst was once caught by the KGB in clothes, and when this happened we were inside of East Berlin, and there was—we did have some ways of communicating—director. Found out the student—the German student tunnel was—still had to prove to them that this was not—you were not doing something to hurt people, you were only trying to save people. Since I had some German background, the guy that was heading us told me to go in with two other guys to talk to the students, and I did.

DM:

And you got on through.

JG:

And they let us through with—there was a Russian general, I think, we had—might've been Jewish, I don't know about that. He was one—he turned—

DM:

Was he a defector, then, you think?

JG:

Yeah, he defected.

DM:

You know, not many people got to go into East Berlin in 1962. That's pretty amazing.

JG:

No, not many people did. Not many people wanted to. I mean, it was not a good place to visit. There's a few—they'd showcase place—fairly okay, but not even that was very—the Russians put up these apartment houses that supposedly—well, even after they put them up, there was a few things missing. And when I went back, much later in my life, there were rooms, like twenty years later, that were absolutely falling down.

DM:

This was in the summer of '62—June and July, maybe August

JG:

Actually, I went into Berlin in late July of 1962, and I had—I was able to go with my son and wife—friends from Muhlenberg—unbelievable rate because one of the fathers of my friends were very wealthy, and they were well connected, and we got one—what was it—flying—air—

DM:

Flying Tiger Air?

JG:

There was an airline called Flying Tigers, okay? No one ever heard of it, but we got on a plane—he paid for it, actually, for us to travel there.

DM:

Was this from New York City to Berlin?

JG:

No, it flew into Scotland, and so I was—from mid-June to mid-July, I was with my friends, going through Europe. And then we—I told them I had to meet there—Berlin—and that's when I dropped off and them—we had a car. Again, we had a very good deal on a car. I spent a thousand dollars altogether living lavishly. And then my friends went on.

DM:

So your friends weren't part of the CIA thing. Did they know—?

JG:

No. They had no idea what I was going to do—they had no idea.

DM:

Did they probe, and try to find out?

JG:

They thought I was going to go visit relatives in the East zone.

DM:

Well, now the timing is interesting, because here you are in late summer in Berlin, and then in October, it's one of the touchiest times of the Cold War—you know, the Cuban Missile Crisis—was there anything related to that? Were you in there because of other things that were going on?

JG:

It was the Cuban Missile Crisis. Well, everything turned on its head during that period. There was one of the times—we were going to break in to the Stasi place, and we kept our leader—who we always called him our director—kept phoning Washington, and asking if we still going to go through with this. There was a great sense of feeling that this might stir things up. He was told—he went up—I don't know how high he got up, I think it was close to the President—and somebody wished us good will—Godspeed—one of the people he talked to, because it was so dangerous. That whole period—there was tension—the Berliners were up tense—because Berlin was a hotspot. We knew that they wanted Berlin. The airlift was one thing, but when it came to the wall and all that, we wanted—we really wanted the whole city. But we couldn't get the whole city, the best we could do was get some people out, because they were killing them. Once they put that wall up there—the sequence was: barbed wire, one wall, then two walls—a dead zone in between—the death zone, and Stasi guards who, I think, killed three hundred people altogether during the years. And tremendous attempts at escape—hot air balloons—the kind of airplane that John Denver died in—I forget what they call them, but they really flimsy little things. People got out on them—

DM:

How about tunnels, did people try to—?

JG:

People wanted out, and they couldn't get out. That was during those hot times, and when we had that Cuban Missile Crisis, we all thought we'd be dead.

DM:

You couldn't be in a touchier place than Berlin at that time, and it was as touchy a time as any of the Cold War—the Cuban Missile Crisis, and the problems in Berlin.

JG:

Absolutely, the jeeps and things facing off Soviet tanks and knowing people were being gunned down trying to escape from one side to the other.

DM:

Were you back in New York City when you heard about the Cuban Missile Crisis?

JG:

No, I was in—that crisis was in October, 1962.

DM:

Right, were you still in Berlin?

JG:

I was there. I mean, I was there from the beginning to the—sort of end? There was no—there was animosity, but not to the point that it looked like war.

DM:

You were in Berlin still, in October?

JG:

I was in Berlin at that time. I was in Berlin to hear JFK's speech—I couldn't hear him, but I remember him introducing General Clay, who he brought with him. General Clay was beloved by all the Berliners because he was the one that went to Truman and got Truman to back up Berlin as a place we would put our foot down, and stay as long as the Berliners wanted us to, and they desperately wanted us. So he gave a speech—I had to read it the next day, really, in the—I think it was the International Herald Tribune. We had copies, and I read his speech, and I was very impressed by that speech. He kept talking about—let us compare—he was talking to this huge German audience in Berlin—Let us compare West and East Berlin. Let anyone come to Berlin and see what it's like—let them see the food shortages on one side and plenty on the other side. Let them see people living in freedom, and then people living under totalitarian government. Let them come to Berlin and let the Berliners know that they will be part of the greatest victory of all, when the Soviet Union falls, you should be proud of yourselves. He said that, not knowing, of course, that he would soon be assassinated. Ultimately, because I was so impressed with that speech, I went to read his experience, I think it's called—EXCOMM⁶—it was the group that met once we found out missiles were being installed in Cuba. He was masterful, even though he was insulted by Curtis LeMay—General Curtis LeMay of the Air

⁶ The Executive Committee of the National Security Council (commonly referred to as simply the Executive Committee or ExComm) was a body of United States government officials that convened to advise President John F. Kennedy during the Cuban Missile Crisis in 1962.

Force—he said something in that meeting, I still remember, he said something—“You’re just like your father, you’re not a true American. And you’re too soft on them; we should be bombing the hell out of them.” And of course—“And we should be invading them.” The atomic missiles could reach Washington, D.C., Miami, Atlanta, Dallas, Houston—if we did anything like that, they would’ve been fired—they had what’s called “Tactical Nuclear Weapons” as well. And he kept his cool, he made lots of mistakes, I understand, but he’s not responding, and he’s keeping his cool with all that heat in that room. There were lots of viewpoints, but most of the military people were for invading, and he and his brother came up with the idea of—what they called blockade, which—no, they called it something else, not blockade, because that’s illegal, but they came up with another name. And that saved us from World War Three. I mean, we were that close.

DM:

I mean, it was touchy. Yeah, DEFCON 2 is what they went to, right?

JG:

What’s that?

DM:

DEFCON 2 is what the—

JG:

DEFCON 2, that’s right, it went to DEFCON 2. That’s a step away—one slight step—actually may wanted this or not, one of their B-29s penetrated Soviet airspace during that and, by mistake, a missile was launched—a practice missile was launched somewhere—no, it wasn’t Hawaii, but it was some other island, and if the Russians took it the wrong way, it would’ve been on; if we took it the wrong—anyway, he had to do exactly what he did to win the game, and save mankind.

DM:

And twenty-seven years later, the Berlin Wall comes down. Would you have ever guessed that, sitting there in 1962?

JG:

I never thought it, but he said it in his speech. He said “When the Soviet Union is defeated, you Berliners will be known for your heroic efforts through all the world.” And he was absolutely right. Only he had that belief that we would win, and he was right.

DM:

As touchy as it was in '62, though, only twenty-seven years later, the whole thing falls apart. It's amazing to me.

JG:

But that was—every president followed that line of thought of containing Communism, but not going to war. You know, holding the line—very different and difficult places—

DM:

But not going into a nuclear war.

JG:

Not ever getting into a nuclear confrontation, and going on—we were at the confrontation level—that's DEFCON 2.

DM:

How did New York City prepare for this possible missile war during the Cuban Missile Crisis?

JG:

Well, I wasn't there for it—there was nothing you could do. But people were building underground bunkers and things—I mean, people were really doing—and still do it. But then there was a real close call, and it was understandable—why people would be building things in their backyards and stuff.

DM:

There was a panic—I was in Fort Worth—Fort Worth/Dallas was a target area—pretty close to Cuba, they thought. Carswell Air Force Base, General Dynamics, you know, there were aircraft industries there, and I know that there was a lot of bunker digging. And people, even in their homes, just did little things like hang blankets in the hallway, hoping it would knock down radiation, there was a lot of panic that I vaguely remember, and I was three. But when something big like that happens, you remember parts of it. But yeah, it was a real thing. It was real in a way that would be difficult to explain to a younger generation, that feeling of fear during the Cold War.

JG:

Oh, I think that's right. It was scarier than all.

DM:

When did you get back to New York? How long were you in Berlin?

JG:

Well, the truth was, after we did our thing, we still had assignments, but the CIA was—at least our situation was such that—I guess they never—they didn't know if we would ever carry out some of those missions that we were sent for. So after that, I was given freedom to fly back to New York, and take—they wanted—they said okay, take some graduate courses here, and—somebody went to Queens college, where I got my Master's in Psychology, a CIA person went with me, talked to a dean, and I was allowed to take courses that, you know—

DM:

Were you still in the CIA at that time?

JG:

Yeah, I was being, you know, I was, then, yeah, I was flown back even for that interview. I could jump on an Army plane almost—you know I had a lot of freedom after that, and we all did. It was a different—we were students—I'll tell you an incident that happened there—

DM:

At Queens College?

JG:

I guess this guy was more narcissistic than—I mean, there's one guy that really didn't like the guy that we called our director—he was the head of us—and he was mouthing off to us about how awful he was—authoritarian he was—and he said “I'm going over to the CIA Headquarters in Berlin,” and we poured on him. The guy just walked into that room and heard that—he said “Stop where you are,” he didn't, he fired a bullet that close to his head. Stop. I had signed off on—we all signed off on—you know, that we would be shot if we ever broke one of the basic rules, and that was one of our basic rules. And he gave everyone a whiplashing about tolerating that, and then he went on to talk about “If I hear any political arguments in this station, you go home the next day. You will not talk about Democrats and Republicans,” he pointed to the flag, “As far as you know, that's the only thing you think about; that American flag. Anything that gets people off with each other can cause a great problem, and you guys are used to arguing about things that sometimes make you—make others mad, and we can't afford that in the kind of work we do.” He was—and he bawled this guy out—three days—he gave him the opportunity to come and talk to him and convince him that he could stay, but three days later he was gone.

DM:

Was this while you were in Berlin, or back at Queens College?

JG:

This was in Berlin, we were there, and he was—you know, he was going to go out and report

him to the higher authorities, and that we had—that was one of the basic orders we were told over and over, you cannot disobey basic orders. Because it'll mean you—and it would've meant our—only later did I learn—eight years, or ten years—where I saw in a paper that we—the CIA Headquarters in Berlin had been penetrated by the Communists. And he probably knew that, and that's why—I was shocked when it happened. I understood what he said, but the reality was he knew that we would all be killed if it got to anybody, then we knew the time and place of where we were going to hit, and what we were going to do. Everything was so—you talk about tension, that's tension. Seeing someone—and he meant it—he was going to kill him.

DM:

Because he jeopardized everybody else's—

JG:

We was jeopardizing everyone's life. Absolutely. We would've been all dead if he—because that was—the way that works is once a place finds out, it gets all through the place. They don't contain it, they just contain it within the unit, they hope, but when there's a traitor—

DM:

You just can't have it.

JG:

Those were pretty scary experiences.

DM:

Do you feel like that your group accomplished the objectives you went over for?

JG:

Yes. We did what we were supposed to do. And we kept doing that. I think that the major thing that we did—we accomplished that, we kept getting other people out—tunnels were—tunnel building and tunnel finding. The KGB were always—I think it got worse, and then they finally found a way to stop it completely.

DM:

But tunnels were the way y'all worked. You operated through tunnels?

JG:

What's that?

DM:

But you operated through tunnels?

JG:

Yes. We did, and sometimes buses. When we went as a team, we would go on a bus. Then we would—safe house—safe bus house—it was a huge garage, I mean, two busloads could be in there, and they had Soviet uniforms, and burp guns and Russian—and it was—

DM:

What would've happened if you were caught?

JG:

We would've been killed. We all had pills to commit suicide, because they had sent a video of a CIA guy—being burnt—being rotated like a pig on a—

DM:

Really.

JG:

Yeah. The KGB sent that to scare us.

DM:

Sent that as propaganda.

JG:

Well, it didn't stop us, we just took pills to commit suicide rather than go through that. They gave us pills and gave us a choice. I would've taken it, for sure.

DM:

Otherwise, it would be a torture—

JG:

Yeah, the KGB was rougher than—but—not rougher, smarter—than the Stasi—the Stasi had dirty uniforms, ashes—you'd see them smoking and ashes would be all over their uniforms. You look at our troops and it was night and day—rock solid.

DM:

So the Stasi weren't to be feared like the KGB, right?

JG:

KGB, I mean, gosh the KGB was—they were, I guess, I know I never killed a K—I killed some people that they sent me to get certain places, and I was with other people, and we were told that we would get somebody at this address out, and maps were drawn, and if anyone tries to stop

you, kill them. I mean, that was our orders, kill them. No mercy, nothing, that's the way—we didn't—at that time, we did not torture, we were taught that was a very bad thing to do, and only Soviets—now, I guess, we're doing it, too—we've done it, I don't know. But I was trained that was wrong, that our Communist China and Russia did that, that Communist China that tortured our soldiers, I don't know that you know this, but during the Korean War, they brainwashed many Americans who went on the air and told how awful the American system was, all kinds of things like that. And they were tortured to do that, and so at least, we were told that's not the American way. So I still have trouble with the torturing, because I'm not sure how much we get out of that. In fact, I think what we did get out of it was—what they—and then when they got Bin Laden, the woman that picked that up picked it up because this one person was never mentioned or—and always downplayed by every—in every interview, and they got that through the interview series, it didn't happen through the torture.

DM:

It didn't happen due to torture.

JG:

The torture did not reveal that. It was her studying what they said, and what they didn't say. So she picked up on the person that was Bin Laden's correspondent to the rest of world. And it was an exceptional moves, they had unbelievable amounts—there was nothing in or out, there was only this guy—and she picked up that name, and they found him in Pakistan in a city, and that's where they found his location, and that's—that was the big argument whether—how many people thought it was—certain people said seventy-five percent chance, some people said forty percent chance, and the woman that found this out said a hundred percent—it was a woman that said that. And I think that won Obama. And so—

DM:

It was a long time coming, but it worked.

JG:

It was a risky business, but they got him. So many Americans and people from other countries that died—these people were monsters, they still are—you know, it goes on. Anyway—

DM:

How long were you in the CIA?

JG:

What's that?

DM:

When did you leave the CIA?

JG:

I officially left it in the summer of 1964, but I had spent weeks back in the United States at times, I didn't want anyone to see me, so I just went to Queens College and I went home, to my parents' house. So, you know, it was a—I guess there was a lot of money around, too, so they were very lenient with us after we did some of those horrible things. I guess they didn't expect a whole lot from us, you know, we were new at this. And when we took over this building—we were so well-trained by then about this building, that we knew it inside out.

DM:

Could you talk to anyone about this back in 1962, '63, '64? Could you talk to your family about it?

JG:

Yeah, my father. My father I talked to, my father was—he was a very American person. I think he wanted to go to war, but I was born in 1940, and I don't think he—my aunt told me he didn't want to leave my mother with me. And so he stayed on the police department. And he saw how stupid some of the things were—New York City was lit up—he told me about all the time the lights were on, and as the ships went out the harbor, they got torpedoed. You know, the Nazis put the lights—there were lights, then there was the ships leaving—bang, they got them.

DM:

Right, silhouette.

JG:

It took a year, I think, for us to finally do what the British were doing all the time and go in convoys, make sure it's safe as possible, run the destroyers through, you know, monitor—use your sonar, use everything you have, make sure—it took us a year to do that. We were so thick, I mean, we had to learn a lot from Britain in World War II.

DM:

You know, it took a while for the United States to learn that we were actually vulnerable to a degree.

JG:

Absolutely.

DM:

You know, we always thought of ourselves as so far removed from everything, but not in World War II.

JG:

That was really true. Not many people talked about it back then, my father said. And he also was very mad—there was “Irish Sweepstakes,” they were called—I don’t know if still, though—but my father, as a detective by that point, found out that the Irish Sweepstakes was money going to the IRA, and that they were actually helping the Germans during World War II, and they would use—I don’t know if they telegraphed it, or if they spoke, but they let the German submarines know where ships were coming from. And my father was absolutely furious. In fact, he said “Those goddamn dumb Irish idiots, they all give to the Irish Sweepstakes, and it’s a good old day,” but they were killing Americans during that time.

DM:

What are the Irish Sweepstakes? I know it was a way of getting money, but what was the Irish Sweepstakes?

JG:

The Irish Sweepstakes was—you know, you made—it was like a bet, you know, on a horserace or something—that’s the way they did it, and you could be a winner, but tons of profits were going—some went to a good cause, but most went to the IRA. And my father said they were terrorists, they’re just terrorists. And then—and it was true, they killed—well, when they went over to—I’m sure they—I think I later learned, they went into the African countries that were totalitarian-type governments, or dictatorial places, and they taught them all their dirty tricks—in fact, the head Muslim was in Berlin during World War II. I don’t know how many people know that, but that was true. And many of the German Nazis went to places outside of Israel. My father was not a naïve man. But, of course, he was a detective, and he had information that most citizens did not have.

DM:

Well, let’s go back to the Queens College years. I’ve got that you were there from ’62 to ’65.

JG:

Well, that what I put down to camouflage the fact that the truth was I was mostly overseas, but I was allowed to take courses. And that I was actually allowed to take courses that—you couldn’t take courses—I mean, if it wasn’t for the CIA thing, I couldn’t take—so people were pretty patriotic at that time. And I don’t think that could ever happen today. Everyone—no one trusts the government, and maybe rightfully so.

DM:

It makes you wonder who you're sitting next to in the classroom, if there's another CIA fellow over here, you know?

JG:

Maybe—could be, you know?

DM:

But you did get a masters from Queens College, didn't you?

JG:

I got my masters from Queens, it was a sixty-credit masters, it was a joke—some of the education courses I had to take twelve hours of education courses. I never opened a book, I never did.

DM:

Well, what was the degree in? Was it in psychology?

JG:

Huh?

DM:

Was the degree—

JG:

It was school psychology. It was—

DM:

School psychology.

JG:

It allowed me to work as a school psychologist. A year after I got into yeshiva, I started working—I was full-time at a place—these things were unbelievable—at a—outside of Port Jefferson, but I worked for BOCES, which was through Suffolk County, Long Island, and I worked from nine to two.

DM:

Okay, you worked where? Bo—

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JG:

BOCES, it was Suffolk County—

DM:

How do you spell that, B

JG:

B-O—Board of Cooperative Educational Services—we have one here in Lubbock. Okay, they have the same idea. They have people who are specialists, and we had special education places. I was supervised three hours for each patient I saw. An hour a day, each patient I saw, I got supervision an hour for. That was the law of New York state at the time. Like everything else, it went the way of—quickly—the '60s, money was being spent right and left, and too much so. I was on this committee to push the—allow students into our special ed classrooms. I guess I was the golden boy of the child psychiatrists—ran the team—saw me as a very disciplined person, and—but people trembled—they would present cases—and he would always—but they were basic things, I mean, people used to question us: “Why is he so mean?” He wasn't mean, he was the nicest man in the world, he just had discipline, and if the kid didn't have an eye exam, if the kid didn't see a physician for this problem he had, we had all kinds of criteria you had to meet. And it was just like college, or something, there were qualifications that I established.

DM:

Now this was to get them into the public schools?

JG:

This was meant for the public—actually, no, it also went those Catholic and private schools that wanted to use our services—they got at a very reduced rate.

DM:

And so these were students with special needs who came to you to see if they could get into the schools.

JG:

Yes. Right.

DM:

That was your process.

JG:

And we had different kind of specialists that sometimes served in the schools, like full-time, part-time. I think something like that exists in Lubbock, today.

DM:

This is what I have down here as—I think I got this off of your resumè—school psychologist in special ed – 1962-65—in that time period somewhere. Does that sound right?

JG:

Well, I went to—okay—I went to work, let's see—I got my master's at—

DM:

Queens.

JG:

—Queens College, 1965. And there's where I got some education course—literally blow off, I mean—I had—actually, one of the people in the program got thrown out because she said something to the education teacher that we had that was insulting, and she got thrown out of the program. But she had such—she was so offended that she just couldn't hold back her opinion about what these education courses were like. So she got thrown out.

DM:

I've always heard complaints about education courses, you know?

JG:

Well, it was pretty easy compared to the other courses that they're—

DM:

So, was it at Queens College—while you were working this job, or was it after—

JG:

Yes, it was—no, I only worked after Queens College; I had to have what's called my master's and certification as a school psychologist. So I did all of the catching up, and I did much of it overseas, especially the last year. And I had lots of time.

DM:

Did you happen to take any courses while you were in Berlin?

JG:

Yeah, I started taking—actually, yes, I could take—at that time it was very unusual, but the CIA opened doors.

DM:

Yeah, that's really a good thing to have later on, you know, courses overseas, as well as—

JG:

Yes, and I always liked to learn, and we had time. At times it was very tense, but we weren't working twenty-four hours a day and things like that. I don't think that they have that kind of freedom anymore. The world has become—money is much tighter than it was.

DM:

Everything is under scrutiny.

JG:

And everything is under scrutiny, everything, and perhaps rightfully so. I did these dangerous things—I risked my life, no question, but I was also given lots of free time and got to see some things in Berlin that were nice and interesting. I took trips throughout Europe, especially—I went to cemeteries where American troops were buried. And I was always impressed that these countries had continued to honor our dead, and in France, above—you know, I saw that—I must have gone there three times.

DM:

Omaha Beach, is that what you're thinking about?

JG:

It was actually right above Pointe du Hoc, where the—

DM:

The American cemetery.

JG:

—it was a Texas—U.S. Rangers from the state of Texas that climbed that wall, and—

DM:

That is an immaculate cemetery, right there. Everything is perfectly in place—it's incredible. It does make you proud to see that, and to see that they're honored that way.

JG:

How many Americans died there—it's a—

DM:

What an incredible opportunity for you—your interest in history, your interest in what happened in World War II—now you're over there in Europe in the '60s, able to see some of these things, it's incredible.

JG:

Yes, I saw sights. I did go see, you know—and I saw the—in Berlin there's a Soviet cemetery, and how many men—they said two hundred thousand. Some people estimate it as high as five hundred thousand for the Soviets to storm Berlin. But they threw lives away like nothing. There was competition between the two major generals that Stalin set off, and lives didn't mean much to him. So this is huge, and it is a sad place; you feel it. It's dark, and there's not a whole lot of sunlight, and there's huge things of women holding their dying sons. It was very, very sad. And it was sad that so many—that they threw those lives away like that. It was terrible. The Russian soldiers were very brave, they held at Stalingrad. People still wonder how they did that, but they eventually beat the Germans back, and that was the end of Germany, really. When they beat them back, they took—what was it, a hundred and sixty-eight thousand—something like that—prisoners, and three months later, the African campaign—the British and we—latecomers—took another hundred and fifty thousand prisoners.

DM:

Yeah, you just can't sustain that kind of loss and keep a war effort going.

JG:

It's unbelievable. Only five thousand—out of all the Soviet—the Germans that the Soviets took—five thousand came back, from a half a million.

DM:

Well these—see, this kind of thing that you were able to see—the Soviet cemetery there in Berlin—that's just—it's an amazing thing that most people of that time—most students at that time—didn't get to see.

JG:

No.

DM:

So things worked out well, especially because you survived it. Well, you finished Queens College; it looks like you went right into Yeshiva.

JG:

I was accepted into Yeshiva. I did go there, but I first had a part-time job, and that's when I—the guy that—the child psychologist—he liked me a lot, because I was disciplined. He was a World War II hero, also. He was in the Navy—I think they took three torpedoes, it was on a destroyer. Somehow he got through that. He never talked about it; everyone that knew about it always told me these stories about how brave he was in World War II. He came back and he became a child psychologist. Same thing happened when I went to Kansas Medical School; the head of child

psychiatry was also a decorated veteran from World War Two. I think he was in the U.S. Army, and he received many awards for heroic duty. And, interestingly enough, he went into child psychiatry to—wanted to make it a better world. These were great Americans, I thought.

DM:

But you were accepted into Yeshiva University in 1965, does that sound right?

JG:

Yes.

DM:

Albert Einstein Medical School.

JG:

Well, it's—part of it was housed there, now all of it is housed there. We had great teachers, the teachers that came—either they came to us, or we went to them. We had—my research project that I always wanted to do, which I never did—Birch with one of the people who investigated temperament. Thomas, Chess, and Birch were the threesome that developed a research model that identified temperament as a major factor in determining how a person behaves. And there was—it wasn't a syndrome, because they wouldn't call it—it was a pattern—they called it difficult child pattern.

DM:

Now I want to make sure I get the names right: Thomas, Chess—

JG:

And Birch.

DM:

—and Birch.

JG:

Stella Chess, Herbert Birch, I'm forgetting Thomas' first name. But he was married to Chess, she was Stella Chess.

DM:

C-H-E-S-S?

JG:

C-H-E-S-S. Stella Chess. Thomas was the husband, and Herbert Birch was also at Albert

Einstein. But they all taught at Yeshiva—at the Ferkauf⁷, too, and sometimes we took courses up there. But they had this thing about temperament—the natural pattern of development that just is—it's a naturally occurring pattern. And it was called the difficult child, and then, if you had a high activity level that was the same pattern that we call hyperkinesis, or hyperactivity. No one has ever studied what the differences are, what the similarities—are we talking about the same thing? Are we giving medications—temperament has slid; it used to be a primary way of looking at behavior. Hyperactivity is now so accepted, and always treated with Ritalin. Questions coming from that, are we giving normal children medication—

DM:

So is that a study that still needs to be done?

JG:

Yeah, there's nothing done on comparison and figuring out, you know, what is biological, and what—There's no solid evidence that makes somebody—there is no one-to-one ratio in the research that they can find an inner mechanisms that lead to hyperactivity. And so, it's a—and that's a diagnosis that—this, they called normal, but they never evaluated both of them and saw what was similar or what was different, and found—are they common? Are they different? And are we giving children too much medication? Normal children.

DM:

As a quick fix.

JG:

Yes, it's a quick fix. Today's world—the schools send them to certain physicians or recommend—automatically, they get something like Ritalin, or other amphetamine-based things. It still is a war—and I was promised that at the medical school. I was promised it twice—once before I came here—

DM:

As a research topic, you mean?

JG:

Yeah, as a research topic. I was offered—after I accepted verbally here at Tech, I was getting to be paid thirty-seven thousand dollars with the promise of being able to do that research. When the dean turned that over to—he wanted to make it a more alcohol program—they changed the vote on my tenure committee, and they fired people on tenure for unfair reasons. The guy I came with was a child psychiatrist, and he had three children, and he agreed to renounce his vote for me—in favor of me. José Beceiro, who's still in private practice—was head of the medical

⁷ Ferkauf Graduate School of Psychology at Yeshiva University.

school credentialing committee and tenure committee, and he came over to me and told me “You would not only pass from your department, we pass you on the medical school department.” And then my lawyer kept me on, and I was—getting ahead of ourselves—Mary Ann South was the new head of pediatrics, and I was placed in the pediatric department. And she promised me that she would get me back on tenure track, because when I told her my ideas—she was a world class physician—pediatrician—in immunology—the bubble boy at Baylor—I mean, her research was world-renowned. But our dean didn’t know what he had, and so when she argued with him, he fired her, because it wouldn’t fulfill his commitments to research, and so he fired one of the—and she told me that he hired her because she was from Roswell New Mexico, and close to the medical school—that’s why they hired her.

DM:

Scoring some points—

JG:

Unbelievable what she was told—she got depressed—I’m sure the dean’s office put this out, that she was mentally ill—she was not mentally ill. She asked me to work up her diagnostically, I did, she had a major depression, and she then called her friend—and I’m forgetting her friend’s name, Brooke? Brooke—she went to—her friend was a psychiatrist at Baylor Medical School, and was a world-renowned psychiatrist. She said I was right, and she prescribed medication for her.

DM:

Did that save her career? Did she come back to—

JG:

She went back to Baylor, but six months later she quit, got married, and gave up medicine. She was—

DM:

She was demoralized.

JG:

—a very influential person that I felt very strongly about, and as much as I went through hardship, she deserved much better, and was not even—that really hurt her. She was never treated like that before.

DM:

I’ll tell you, academia can be a very mean place.

JG:

It can be a very dirty game.

DM:

Now we're going to come back to all of that at Texas Tech—I want to get the whole story on the Health Sciences Center—

JG:

Yeah, that's right. I'm sorry—

DM:

That's okay, no, I like jumping into these things. It'll be something for us to come back and explore. That's probably something we're going to do at another time. But what we were talking about was your interest in this research subject. Were you ever able—so you expected that you would get to pursue this at Texas Tech, but that didn't happen.

JG:

It didn't happen here. I could understand there, for a while, but then—there was a guy who recruited me that had a department—I'm forgetting his name

DM:

Maybe if you can remember it next time, when we talk more about that, we'll get into that. It's a very interesting subject, though. I thought you were going to say—this is what so often happens. People come in, they have a research expectation, but there's a heavy class load—in your case, maybe a heavy clinical load—and just not enough time for research. Did you ever face that?

JG:

Well, that was part of it, we were spread thin. But then I was told that in a few years—and the next department chair was Jim Lawson, who had great expectations for me. He said he would do everything in his power to back me up, but he was fired to turn this place into a[n] alcohol program.

DM:

It was his agenda. He had his agenda, and he wanted everybody else to feed into that.

JG:

The dean did. Anyway, he drove people out. But getting back—you know, I was promised—actually, it was my word I gave to—I never signed a contract, but I was—after that, after I gave my word, the head of pediatrics offered me the highest salary ever given by a college in the state of Kansas. So I had—he gave me a small grant—when I was still in my second year—it was

post-doctoral training, and he gave me ten thousand dollars to help his study of mothers who smoke, and what—the medical impact and what psychological impacts may have. And I had to—then designed a rating—a behavioral rating system that would rate the babies' behavior and the mothers' response to that behavior in empirical form. And he loved that idea—

DM:

This was at Kansas, you said.

JG:

This was at Kansas. So after I had agreed to—you know, so I had set this thing in motion, and he flew me back for three years after, to monitor the people who were doing the behavioral model, so once a month I would fly to Kansas City. For three years. And he also offered me thirty-five thousand. It wasn't the money, but I'd given my word I would come. And even though he offered me thirty-five thousand and twenty-five thousand out of his research fund to do my research there, but I had given my word.

DM:

I'm going to make a note to bring this back up when we talk. I want to talk about Kansas and Texas Tech—your career aspects—next time. But I want to make a note, because I want to hear the results—this is smoking mothers—I want to flesh this out a little bit more. But today, let's go back and look more closely at Yeshiva while we're there. You were there about five or six years; received a PhD in—

JG:

And I left—I waited to get my PhD before I left, because too many people go on internship or something, and never get their degree.

DM:

That's right, you really have to focus, don't you?

JG:

Yeah, you really have to focus.

DM:

Okay, well, now you're—you were still working in psychology, but were you starting—you had to have specialized to a fairly large degree during this time, what were your areas of research interest, and what was your special area by the time you received your PhD?

JG:

Well, my first area was Freud. My research study was based on—his term would be “anaclitic

dependency” —in behavioral terms, it would just be dependency—that’s how much time a child goes to the parent and needs the parent—has to do with attachment to, you build a research study of all these interaction effects by breaking it down systematically, in a time-based way. Every thirty seconds, you would check off what the—like a parenting figure—would be doing, or a teacher would be doing, and what was the student’s response, and what was the teacher’s response to that, and you’d have minuses and plusses up and down as time went on—thirty second intervals. And you’d cross—it takes—the parent said something positive, and you’d give a minus if it was something negative to the child—initiated behavior. And I did my research on that study, expecting to find certain things based on Freud’s theory, because I was influenced by “Psychoanalysis”, but the research—and I’ve continued to find that research—was not validated. The clinical terms used in “Psychoanalysis” have turned into a very good way of thinking about things, because they have—what’s it called—“eco-psychology” —that’s conflict-free thinking, it’s reasoning. So you have that school of psychoanalysis, where you have this objectivity built in to the organism. But early on, there was no thought that was free—everything was driven by instincts, according to Freud, everything. But that slowly changed in psychoanalysis. So you had the people who were called “eco-psychologists” who thought that the mind could be independent of any biological things. And then there was an interpersonal school of psychoanalysis who evolved into what’s called “attachment behaviors” —

DM:

Yes, social influence—

JG:

—that there’s touch, and the soothing of a baby is absolutely critical to their life. So that’s another level, it’s called “interpersonal school.” And then there are—let’s see, the French school was really hard to define—I never understood the French school, I mean, I never really did.

DM:

But the point is, there are several different schools that emerged at this time.

JG:

Yes. And each has something to add, actually. The way I see it, the interpersonal school has some behavioral things that evolved from that, you know, the touching of a baby, and the soothing, and you can see that right up and down the age range. It’s how much people want and need to be close and have affection—so you can measure that in adults, as well as with children, and it changes over time. And that’s—can be called our temperament, too. There’s where that temperament theory fits in with—you see how it fits together.

DM:

So you can’t say there’s just one way it happens. There are other ways it happens.

JG:

And that's the way I do. I started thinking—and that's the—I think the greatest contribution, then, is a way of thinking all different kinds of ways that people could be motivated by, and there's not just one, I mean, Freud—it was completely drive reduction. It had to be a biological need. But there are other schools—and scientifically, the interpersonal school, you know, there is something called “attachment,” and it is very real, and yet people like complete behaviorists—who am I—I'm thinking about the greatest behaviorist of all time⁸, who invented the baby box, and placing babies in this thing that takes care of biological issues, but does not have touch. That is a critical component of a baby's development, knowing he's—we call it—loved. Love in a behavioral term is touch, you know, and learning who that child is, every one's unique. That's the different temperaments, they call it—you know, this is—interaction factors. There's the mother's style, and then there's the child's style, and how much do you have to—some kids like to be held. And some kids actually like to be held looking out.

DM:

There are infinite factors, aren't there, it seems like.

JG:

There are lots of variations in there, and it gets very complicated.

DM:

It seems like the recurring theme here, in your education and your career, just at a glance, is this idea of child development.

JG:

Yes. Absolutely. That's why I wanted—working with children, research-wise and clinical-wise is wonderful. One turns into the other very easily.

DM:

Did this come out of Yeshiva, your training at Yeshiva?

JG:

Yes. The interaction—

DM:

Well, and at the same time, you were working for the public school, you were doing the evaluation.

⁸ B.F. Skinner, inventor of the “Skinner box.”

JG:

I doing evaluations. So I was applying what I was learning in school right directly in a clinical situation, that's correct.

DM:

Now you also had some internships and fellowships, I think, that might have been after you received your PhD, I'm not sure.

JG:

I had grants from Queens College.

DM:

Okay, maybe that's what I had seen.

JG:

And I didn't have to show up—I mean, I could do that in Europe, and they had me do the statistics on these interaction things that my—actually, I was taught that in a week's time by a person who was an educational psychologist, who was using this kind of behavioral checklist stuff to measure his pupil-teacher interactions, but it could be used parent-child or adult-adult. It could be used in all different kind of ways. And it simply was a timeframe behavioral thing where you check certain behavior by one and it was either a plus or a minus next to it, you know, positive and negative. And it cycles down for—I mean, you could have it for five minutes or ten minutes rating, and then you move on to another person. In a classroom, that's what you would do. You would kind of go from one class with a teacher and focus on—if you want to stay, you could stay there all day and do all the children—all the teacher, you know, and see how that worked. But anyway I learned this technique, and it was fantastic.

DM:

That seems like an important component—trying this technique, I don't like this part—trying this technique; there must have been a number of techniques out there to put to the test.

JG:

Exactly—that's exactly what I like doing.

DM:

Very intriguing.

JG:

Well, I still think it's the best way to do research. It's looking at the complexity of things as best we can in an empirical way. And that's hard. And you have to have—and you know, I was

fortunate, you know, I had a lot of good teachers. And then I was able to put together those—in a clinical field when I was working as a school psychologist. So it was a wonderful period in my time, I felt. I got married three years after I came back from Germany.

DM:

Can we talk about that a little bit? Are you okay talking about Eileen?

JG:

Absolutely. Yeah, I feel for you; I've thought about you and your wife many times.

DM:

Yeah, thank you. I want to get that kind of personal part in here, as well, if you don't mind, if you can tell me her name—Eileen Brockman, is that right?

JG:

Yes.

DM:

—was her maiden name, can you tell me about her—where she came from, how you met—

JG:

She grew up in a family that had been very wealthy. Her grandparents were in—it doesn't sound like much, but they were in selling different kinds of paper products. And he was a millionaire, her grandfather. When the unions came—and her father actually came from Russia—escaped from, and brought most of his family out of the Soviet Union just toward the end of the communist revolution. He had actually fought for the White side and the Red side⁹—different times—and then they finally got them out, got them to Turkey, except for three people that were left behind.

DM:

Now, did they end up in New York? Is that where you—?

JG:

So that's where her father's side came from. Her mother's side—they were the ones that had money and—I guess they were, what, third generation, already, Jews? They had established this huge business, but when the unions came—actually, Eileen's father went to work in that business, and he continued to work as the unions eventually made it very hard to keep in

⁹ White movement members during the Russian Civil War (1918-1923) were anti-communists, opposed to the Soviet Red Army.

business, but he stayed busy until he was seventy years old. They actually sold it to somebody else, and he continued to work, you know, as a salesperson for them into his seventies.

DM:

So these families—both sides of her family came to New York.

JG:

Yes, they met—yes, and that's where he met his wife, while he was riding a horse in Prospect Park, in Brooklyn. Prospect Park is a place you can ride horses. You can do it, also, in New York City. But they met there, and they couldn't have children, so they adopted Eileen. And Eileen was picked out by her uncle, who was an obstetrician at the time. He was training to become an analyst. He also got further training to be a neurologist, so he was extremely well-rounded. But he was working in 1941 as an obstetrician, and he picked her out for them. You know, you could do those things in those days. I think it was from a Jewish family, that's all he would tell them.

DM:

By the way, I want to get her—the spelling of her name right, because someone will eventually—

JG:

What's that?

DM:

We need to get the spelling of her name right, because someone will eventually transcribe—

JG:

Oh, yes. E-I-L-E-E-N Brockman, B-R-O-C-K-M-A-N.

DM:

One "N," okay. Good. I'm sorry, and go ahead.

JG:

Okay, so, when I met her—I met her after coming back. I had started at Yeshiva University, and took me into Manhattan, and I had known of a student—who I know she liked me—and I liked her, but not in the same way she liked me, I'm afraid. But when she moved—then she moved in with two roommates, so they invited me for dinner one time. And that's how I met my wife.

DM:

Okay, your wife was—Eileen was her roommate?

JG:

There were two roommates; Eileen was one of them. She was very lovely, and thoughtful. I was allowed to stay over if I slept on the couch, sometimes, and the couch—the cat would always jump all over me during the night, so we became—we were enemies of each other, but then I felt bad, because I was elected to take him, and we had him fixed. I felt very badly about having to do that. (Laughing)

DM:

The cat thought you were getting revenge, huh? (Laughing)

JG:

That's probably right. He didn't like—this cat did not like me. And I like animals, usually, but this cat didn't seem to get along with me. (Phone ringing)

DM:

Go ahead and get that if you need to.

JG:

Well, let me see who it is, I mean, some people I just let leave a message, sometimes—

Pause in recording

DM:

Okay, so you were dating Eileen, there for a while, and then it began to get pretty serious, I guess, because you did get married. Can you continue on and tell me how you came to the decision to get married, and when you got married?

JG:

Want me to tell you about what happened—how we got married? We started dating—

DM:

Sure, just the date and all—the date, when you got married, and all of that.

JG:

I first became friends with her friends, and she became friends with my friends. Then she enjoyed some of the same things—I like music, she liked music—classical music. She knew much more than I did, because she practiced as a child.

DM:

She played an instrument?

JG:

She did play the piano for a while until—she actually had rheumatoid arthritis as a child, and she went through various stages of that, but she was one of the first children treated, you know, with surgery and medication, and came out of that—I mean she still had to take care of herself, she still had to have operations to keep her fingers—every two years she had to have operations on her fingers. And finally, I guess when she was forty-five, she didn't want to do that anymore. And of course her—never—wouldn't care or anything about that. Anyway, we liked each other a lot. We saw shows together. Kid across the street from me turned out to be—was an actor, and we went to see him play a very—he played an Irish cop in this play, which was quite funny. He actually went to my father—

DM:

Is that right?

JG:

Yes—and asked him, you know, my father knew what an Irish accent was like, but he didn't have it, but he could teach Cliff that—his real name was Joel. And so he taught Joel how to be Irish.

DM:

To be an Irish cop.

JG:

Yes, to be an Irish cop. That's what he was. (Laughing)

DM:

That is something.

JG:

So, you know, we had some good times like that. Her family, at first, didn't like the fact that I was Christian. And the first two times, her father called me "Johnny." But later, as they came to know me and know how much I cared for their daughter, they were very—they cared for me a lot, and I felt very loved and appreciated by them. Eileen had broken away from—Jewish girls are supposed to stay home until they get married, and that was—and she broke loose when she went to CCNY¹⁰, and the last year of CCNY, when she—and then, also, she went into school psychology at CCNY. So when I met her, we had things in common. Actually, she was a better student, at that time, than I was. I think my interest and motivation eventually was an enduring thing. She did not like research, although she did excellent research. She won an award in her Master's—a ten thousand dollar reward—

¹⁰ The City College of New York.

End of recording



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