

1 **ORAL HISTORY OF:** Ruth Broder
2 **INTERVIEWED BY:** Sharon Alterman
3 **DATE OF INTERVIEW:** Wednesday, June 22, 2005
4 **LOCATION OF INTERVIEW:** Jewish Federation of Metropolitan
5 Detroit
6 **SUBJECT MATTER:** Role as a leader in the Jewish
7 Federation community, family
8 life, aide to Senator Carl Levin
9

10 **MS. ALTERMAN:** I'm Sharon Alterman, and I have the
11 great pleasure of interviewing Ruth Broder for the Leonard N.
12 Simons Oral History Project. Today is Wednesday, June the
13 22nd, and we're here at the Max M. Fisher Building.

14 Ruth, do we have your permission to use your words
15 and thoughts for historical research?

16 **MS. BRODER:** Yes, indeed.

17 **MS. ALTERMAN:** Thank you. You are a distinguished
18 leader of our community, and your leadership predates 1965,
19 when you won the Sylvia Simons Greenberg Award, and continues
20 to this time and we hope long into the future. We're so happy
21 that you are also part of our interview team for the Leonard
22 N. Simons Oral History Project.

23 **MS. BRODER:** It's a pleasure.

24 **MS. ALTERMAN:** So let's begin. Where were you born?

25 **MS. BRODER:** I was born at Harper Hospital in

1 Detroit many years ago, and spent my first five years living
2 in Highland Park, which is where my mother and father both had
3 lived at one time. So that was our first home. I was born --
4 I'll blurt it out -- a month before the stock market crashed,
5 and I'm writing my memoirs now, and as I wrote, it wasn't my
6 fault. I know some people would like to blame it on me, but
7 it wasn't my fault. So that identifies my era.

8 So apparently I grew up during the Depression. I
9 remember nothing at all about it.

10 **MS. ALTERMAN:** What were the names of your parents?

11 **MS. BRODER:** My mother was Vera, maiden name Marks,
12 Kahn married name. My father was Ivor Kahn, middle name of
13 Jarmin. We don't know where it came from except he was born
14 in a small town up north, and we always accused my grandmother
15 of naming him after the ice man. I think it's probably a
16 northern Michigan kind of a name. So those were my parents.

17 **MS. ALTERMAN:** And what do you know about your
18 parents' backgrounds?

19 **MS. BRODER:** My mother was born in St. Louis. Her
20 parents were immigrants from Germany. My father was born in
21 Bay City but lived in Harrisville. They had to go to Bay City
22 to have babies. That's where the hospital was. And his
23 parents both grew up probably in Latvia, Lithuania, whatever
24 it was in those days, and I don't know. Sometimes I hear that
25 they were born in Germany, sometimes I hear they were born in

1 Russia, but I think one them was born in Riga. My parents
2 were both born in this country.

3 **MS. ALTERMAN:** And how big a family did they come
4 from?

5 **MS. BRODER:** Well, my mother's mother -- and her
6 maiden name was Schubach -- from Germany, she was one of 18
7 children. My great grandfather had three wives. The first
8 one only had one child and she died, the second one had four
9 children and she died. The 13 came from the third wife, and
10 my grandmother was one of 13. So it was a very, very large
11 family. The man she married, it turned out, was one of 15
12 children, one man, two wives.

13 I think in Germany in the old country they were
14 Orthodox Jews. They didn't practice any kind of birth control
15 obviously. Very interesting things happened in the families
16 because of the great span of years of these generations. And
17 as it turns out, which I didn't know until a few years ago, my
18 grandmother Marks and my grandfather Marks were cousins,
19 probably second or third cousins. They were the same age but
20 from different generations. So we found that to be kind of an
21 interesting fact, but they had normal children. I think three
22 of their children died very young, so who knows.

23 **MS. ALTERMAN:** When did they come to the United
24 States?

25 **MS. BRODER:** The Marks family started coming over

1 here we think in the 1860s. There is rumor and we can't
2 narrow it down -- we've gone back in the census as far as we
3 can -- that my great grandfather may have come here with his
4 first family. This is the Marks family, the first six
5 children. There were six by the first wife. He may have come
6 here. His wife died. Supposedly she is buried here, and
7 that's a fact we haven't been able to find yet. And then may
8 have gone back to Germany and had nine more children. That is
9 one theory.

10 The other theory is that a son of his was here very
11 early, a son by the name of Moses who was from the first wife,
12 may have come early in the 1860s, may have been a founding
13 member of Shaarey Zedek. They were Reform Jews but came as
14 Orthodox Jews, became Reform Jews.

15 My grandfather, who was one of the last of the
16 second family, who was born in 1867, I know was born in
17 Germany. I was very young when he died. His accent, I can
18 still hear him talking. So therefore either my great
19 grandfather didn't come until he brought the next nine
20 children or he came and went back. And some day we hope to
21 figure out this mystery. I have letters saying that the first
22 scenario is what happened, is that he came, buried his first
23 wife, went back, found another wife. We may never find out.
24 That's for my son Hugh to dig out. He's the archivist in the
25 family.

1 **MS. ALTERMAN:** About how many descendants would you
2 say there are of this large family?

3 **MS. BRODER:** Of this large clan? In the Marks
4 family I think there's probably close to 1000. We're in the
5 sixth generation, probably the seventh generation, but there's
6 people we don't know. They didn't all come to this country.

7 In the Schubach family there were 18 children. Lots
8 and lots. The Marks family came to Detroit, and that's a name
9 that was known here. Rabbi Marcus from UAAC thought that the
10 Marks family was the largest Jewish family in Detroit in that
11 era. So of the 15 of the Marks family, 14 of them are buried
12 in Detroit. So we know a lot about the Marks family.

13 The Schubach family, my grandmother's family,
14 apparently went to St. Louis. That's where my grandfather
15 found her. He had gone there to work for a while and brought
16 her back to Detroit. We think she's the only one that ever
17 came to Detroit to live.

18 So there are relatives, and they are all over the
19 country. We found some in Great Britain, too. So we know
20 that.

21 So between the Marks family and the Schubach family,
22 that's 33 children in that generation. But the Marks family
23 is the family of interest in Michigan.

24 **MS. ALTERMAN:** You mentioned that they were here so
25 early that they were community builders. Do you know what

1 their involvement was?

2 **MS. BRODER:** I don't know too much about what they
3 did in the community. There are papers that say my great
4 grandfather may have been the first kosher butcher in Detroit.
5 I don't know how to confirm that. That he sold meat to the
6 Union army during the Civil War. Robert Rockaway knows
7 something of the Marks family. I have never talked to him, so
8 I don't know how much he knows.

9 They were there very early on, and I don't know how
10 many Jews there were in Detroit in 1860. Not that many. But
11 we made up a lot of them, the Marks family made up a lot of
12 them.

13 **MS. ALTERMAN:** In the book The Jews of Detroit we
14 might be able to find that information.

15 **MS. BRODER:** Yes. Hugh, my oldest son, is digging
16 up a lot of this stuff, and he looks at census reports. He
17 found Moses Marks -- who would be my grandfather's brother,
18 one of the oldest; he may have been the second child, maybe
19 the first child -- in the census reports of the 1860s. So we
20 know he was here then.

21 He found David Marks, my great grandfather, the
22 father of Moses Marks, in 1872 in the census, and hasn't been
23 able to find anything else, but it may be that the census
24 doesn't go back that far. And it may be that he just hasn't
25 been able to dig it out.

1 So that is only half of my family, because when Hugh
2 started doing the archives -- over 10 years ago Hugh decided
3 that for his children he would do eight family trees, four on
4 his wife's side and four on our side. He started with the
5 Marks family, which may have been a mistake because he got
6 bogged down there were so many of them. Then he went to the
7 Schubach family, which was harder to dig up, but by God, he
8 finds these people. You know, the Mormons keep great records
9 in Salt Lake City. He's found a lot there. He goes downtown
10 to the Burton Collection and finds a lot down there.

11 Then he got to the Kahns, which is my maiden name,
12 and the Sandorfs, which was the other part of that family. So
13 now we have four running family trees, and we're upwards in
14 1000 names in each of them. He went back to my great
15 grandparents in each one. That's where he started. But he
16 didn't do their siblings. So it would be my great
17 grandparents and then my grandparents and my grandparents'
18 siblings. That's how he did it.

19 The Kahn family, I think the best-known families in
20 Detroit and in Michigan are the Marks family and the Kahn
21 family. These are the names that are known. And the Kahn
22 family had a lot of community activists.

23 **MS. ALTERMAN:** Did the Marks and Kahn family go
24 elsewhere in the state of Michigan?

25 **MS. BRODER:** My Kahn family -- sometimes I get it

1 flipped -- my grandfather was one of 10, and they came to this
2 country piecemeal, but the first two to come were my
3 grandfather and his brother Joseph. They both settled up
4 north, my grandfather in Harrisville, my Uncle Joe went to
5 Mikado, Michigan, which a crossroads. There was nothing there
6 but a general store. My Uncle Joe ran the general store and
7 lived above it with his wife and all his children. And they
8 kept kosher in these days.

9 Bay City became the place where they would get their
10 Jewish whatever. They would import their meat from Bay City,
11 they would go down to Bay City to have their babies, they got
12 married in Bay City, but then they went back. Northern
13 Michigan became our territory. So my father's father, Samuel
14 Kahn, had a general store in Harrisville, Michigan. His
15 sister married somebody by the name of Josephson, and they
16 ended up in Rogers City, Michigan. Another sister married a
17 Sherman and that's a family we know in this community, and
18 they ended up in Bay City, Michigan. Another aunt of mine,
19 Aunt Grace, a great aunt of mine, married a Mahler, and the
20 Mahlers ended up in Detroit, as did a lot of the Shermans, as
21 did all the Kahns practically except Uncle Joe stayed up there
22 in that general store in Mikado.

23 They came as peddlers I'm sure. They opened stores.
24 The Shermans went into the shoe business in Bay City. So they
25 all became merchants. That was the upbringing.

1 **MS. ALTERMAN:** What was your early life like with
2 this tremendous family?

3 **MS. BRODER:** You know, the Marksese were older, so I
4 knew some of them. The generations now that are my
5 generations, I look at the names and I say I don't know any of
6 them. I just don't know them, there are too many of them.

7 The Kahn family and the Sandorf family, my
8 grandfather Sam Kahn married my grandmother, Nellie Sandorf.
9 They also lived in Harrisville. It may be that they were the
10 only Jewish man and woman and therefore they had to get
11 married. I don't know. But those are families I knew well.
12 The Kahn family was around. I knew my Rogers City relatives
13 well, I knew the Shermans well, the Kahns in Mikado.

14 We used to summer in Oscoda, and I would go up to my
15 Uncle Joe's general store in Mikado, and I have to tell you,
16 when I think of it now, I thought it was huge. I don't know
17 if it was, but I thought it was huge. And he sold everything
18 from penny candy to tractors because it was a farming
19 community. And then we would go upstairs and have dinner with
20 his family and my aunt -- I don't even know her first name, I
21 can't think of it -- my Great Uncle Joe always called her Mrs.
22 Kahn, always. They had lots of children. He called her Mrs.
23 Kahn. I remember that so distinctly. I remember going to
24 that store. And I remember which cousins I favored. The
25 summers were wonderful because I could get to Mikado and the

1 penny candy.

2 My father came down to Detroit when he was 16, so he
3 went to Highland Park High School and graduated from there,
4 and married down here. But some of them stayed up north for
5 quite a while, and I still have my -- I understand there are
6 five people from my father's generation still left. My aunt
7 lives in Detroit; she just turned 96 today. I talked to her
8 before I came. And I have a cousin that's living up in
9 Lincoln that's one of Joe's children. I'm going to go up
10 there this summer because I hear she has stuff about the
11 family, and we could use it. She's 91 or 92. So we have to
12 get this stuff while there's still people with memory.

13 But the Kahn family, we were very, very close. My
14 father was one of four children. There were seven first
15 cousins. It's amazing how the size of the families shrink.
16 My parents had far fewer children than their parents, I have
17 more children than my parents had. My children have fewer
18 children than I have. So the generations go back and forth.

19 The Kahn family was the family I interacted with the
20 most.

21 **MS. ALTERMAN:** How many siblings do you have?

22 **MS. BRODER:** I only have one. There was a
23 miscarriage in there somewhere, nothing viable. So there were
24 really only two of us. I have a brother who's still living.

25 **MS. ALTERMAN:** What is his name?

1 **MS. BRODER:** Richard -- Dick. I call him Dick, we
2 still call him Dick.

3 **MS. ALTERMAN:** What did your father do?

4 **MS. BRODER:** My father was a merchant. He started
5 out in the advertising business. This is interesting. Mary
6 Lou Zieve and I talk about this often. My father started out
7 working with Leonard Simons. They both worked for somebody by
8 the name of Herschfeld. I think that was the name. Then I
9 think Leonard partnered up with Larry Michelson. I'm not sure
10 that my father went with them. I'm not sure when he left the
11 advertising business and went in with his father. His father
12 died in '32, so sometime between his graduation from college
13 and when his father died he went first into the advertising
14 business, but left it and went into my grandfather's business,
15 which was a drygoods business in Highland Park, the Highland
16 Park Drygood Store.

17 That grandfather Kahn died when I was very young. I
18 was three years old, and I don't remember him at all. My
19 father eventually closed that store in Highland Park and
20 opened children's clothing stores in 1940. So he was always a
21 merchant except for that short period of time in the
22 advertising business. My brother until he retired kept up
23 those stores. So the merchant strain is very strong in our
24 family. That's what we do.

25 **MS. ALTERMAN:** What did your mother do?

1 **MS. BRODER:** My mother was a school teacher. She
2 went to Ypsilanti State Normal when it only took two years to
3 become a teacher. When they got married, my dad was making
4 \$25 a week and she was making \$50 a week. Big deal. Maybe he
5 went into business with my grandfather when we were born. I
6 don't know. There probably was not enough money. My mother
7 didn't work. Women didn't work in those days. Not many
8 anyway. She gave up teaching and took care of her children.

9 **MS. ALTERMAN:** Were your parents active in the
10 Jewish community?

11 **MS. BRODER:** My father never was high up in the
12 organization, I don't think, but he always solicited for the
13 campaign. That he always did. His father was president of
14 the Jewish orphanage when we had one, and was very active at
15 Shaarey Zedek. In fact my grandfather was probably one of the
16 first people to be buried from the main sanctuary of Shaarey
17 Zedek. That was very rare.

18 My father really wasn't that active in the
19 community. When the Women's Division, which we called it in
20 those days, began, my mother was right there, right from the
21 beginning. In fact she never was president ^{or} of campaign chair.
22 She was a pre-campaign chair once, a co-chair with my mother-
23 in-law as it turned out.

24 But my mother sent me out when I was 16 years old --
25 I'm trying to think where we lived then; probably on Chicago

1 Boulevard -- with a little kit -- and this was before Israel
2 -- and said, here are five women that live on Clairmont,
3 between Joy Road and Linwood. Go solicit them. I said okay.
4 No training, no nothing. Go get money from them for
5 Palestine, for the Jews. So I went on these upper flats on
6 Clairmont, and the first four were so poor I took nothing.
7 The fifth one was so poor I gave her a buck, and I left. And
8 that was the end of soliciting them. The next year she took
9 me a little higher on the scale. It was either on Rochester
10 or Genesee. I didn't do much better there either.

11 I do remember -- my training was this: When I was
12 in high school, I was very close friends of Golda Krolik's
13 daughter, who was Judy Mayer at the time. Golda used to have
14 the meeting of the Women's Division of the fund-raising at her
15 house. So I would go and sit on the steps. When you walked
16 into the house, you went straight up the steps and the living
17 room was over there, and I'd sit on the steps. So the wall
18 was between me and the living room.

19 She'd have all these women in there, and they were
20 doing their pledging. Dora Erlich was the card caller, and
21 she would be flipping through her cards. I can almost see it
22 because I would peek around, but I sure would listen to it.
23 In those days we announced our pledges out loud, and that's a
24 long time ago. I was always a firm believer in that. Not
25 only that, I never knew any other way. I mean when they told

1 me I was going to go to a meeting and sign my card, I was
2 shocked because I was used to getting up and announcing my
3 pledge.

4 Dora Erlich, God love her, would have this whole
5 stack of cards, and she'd call somebody's name and they'd give
6 their pledge, and she put it down. She'd call somebody else's
7 name, and then she'd call a name and they'd give their pledge,
8 and she'd look at it and she'd say, "We'll come back to that
9 one later," and put it at the bottom of the pile, and she
10 would go back to it. And this is how Dora Erlich fund-raised.

11 There was no worker training in those days, nothing
12 like that. We got up and announced our pledges, but there was
13 always that policeman standing over us saying you're giving
14 enough or you're not giving enough, and believe me, I don't
15 know what the pledges even were in those days. This was
16 before I went to college.

17 **MS. ALTERMAN:** Where did you go to high school?

18 **MS. BRODER:** I went to Highland Park High School, as
19 did my brother, as did both my parents. We lived in Detroit
20 at that point, but I paid tuition, got on the Hamilton
21 streetcar every day and went to school.

22 **MS. ALTERMAN:** What kind of activities were you
23 involved in as a high school student?

24 **MS. BRODER:** I'm trying to think. I was a tom boy
25 growing up. I was a good athlete, but I never got involved in

1 athletics at school. I had an interesting gang of friends.
2 It was kind of an ethnic mix. There were a lot of Armenians
3 in that school, and there were very few Jews. You know, I
4 think I may have been in the glee club, but nothing is
5 standing out. I mean there's nothing that really stands out
6 that I was doing other than studying. I don't think I was
7 real active in high school.

8 **MS. ALTERMAN:** But yet your mother thought that you
9 had the abilities to go out and solicit at 16.

10 **MS. BRODER:** Well, I don't even know if it was
11 ability. The interesting thing about the way the Women's
12 Division was formed was that it started at a certain time. It
13 wasn't there before. And then it was there. And therefore
14 mothers and daughters started at the same time. It wasn't
15 like it is now, where you get married and you're working in
16 the Federation, and maybe 25 years later your child will work
17 in the Federation. It wasn't like that then. We all started
18 at the same time.

19 So my career at the Federation started very young,
20 but started when my mother did. It was just a different era.
21 My mother worked very closely with Shirley Harris's mother,
22 and because they worked very closely with each other, somehow
23 Shirley and I were always paired. We co-chaired a lot of
24 things together going up the campaign structure. It was
25 interesting. And I always concentrated on the campaign, more

1 than education. I liked it better. There wasn't as much
2 education then as there is now anyway.

3 The minute that I got married I was out of the
4 Junior Division, which is what it was called then, and they
5 sent you up into the Women's Division right away, and that's
6 where you start. You started in general solicitation, and
7 then we started with the \$50 Division, and the \$100 Division.
8 You know, how times have changed. And then worked our way up
9 the ladder.

10 **MS. ALTERMAN:** Were you very educated about the
11 Jewish community? Did you have a Jewish education as a
12 youngster?

13 **MS. BRODER:** I went to Temple Beth-El. My
14 grandparents on one side were Conservative, so that on
15 holidays I knew that they weren't with us until the meal.
16 Mealtime was all the Kahns together. That was the big thing.
17 We were a very, very close family. It was always at my
18 grandmother's house in the early years.

19 I went to Temple Beth-El. I was confirmed. There
20 was no bar or bas mitzvah in those days. Very early, very
21 young in my life I remember that we did have Christmas at our
22 house, which sounds shocking now, but they were German Jews
23 and they brought it with them. At some point, probably when
24 my brother started going to Sunday school, he came home and
25 said no more, and that was the end of Christmas in our house.

1 So we did Hanukkah. Seders were probably the best
2 thing that every happened. We had every Rosh Hashanah, every
3 Yom Kippur at my grandmother's house. Seders at my
4 grandmother's house. All the Kahns, always. And then
5 relatives from here and relatives from there that didn't have
6 children, they all came. My grandmother cooked it all, every
7 drop of it. Never sat down.

8 I asked my cousins lately, I said, do you ever
9 remember grandma sitting down when we were eating? This was
10 my Grandma Kahn, not Marks. And they'd all say to me, no, I
11 don't think she ever did sit down. I think she cooked and I
12 think she served us, and I think that's the way it was. When
13 it wasn't Passover, when it was Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur,
14 she made kreplach by the hundreds. I can still see her
15 sitting there making kreplach.

16 I only tried it once. It was a disaster. I never
17 did it again. I had them all made. I put them on cookie
18 sheets. I said to my daughter, take these down in the
19 basement and put them in the freezer, and she dropped them.
20 They went bouncing down the basement steps. My mother says to
21 me, save them. You're going to boil them anyway. I said, no,
22 we have cats in the house. I can't do that. So that was my
23 only try at kreplach.

24 My grandmother was a wonderful cook. I was giving
25 the family dinner one night, and I don't have help in the

1 house, and I had about 16 people there, and I was busy in the
2 kitchen and serving and everything, and I just stood in the
3 middle of the dining room and screamed, I'm my grandmother! I
4 can't sit down!

5 But good memories, I have to tell you, good
6 memories.

7 **MS. ALTERMAN:** Do you cook some of the things she
8 did?

9 **MS. BRODER:** No, I never learned to cook -- well, I
10 wasn't a bad cook. I'm not a bad cook. I wasn't a bad cook.
11 Never a cook like her and never a baker like my Grandmother
12 Marks who lived with us for a time when she was a widow. She
13 died in our home. That was a time when three generations
14 lived together, which was another thing, too. They had a home
15 for the aged, but they didn't have assisted living then. So
16 my Grandmother Marks lived with me, my Grandmother Kahn lived
17 with my aunt and uncle. And that's just the way it was in
18 those days.

19 **MS. ALTERMAN:** And then you went off to university.

20 **MS. BRODER:** I went off to Michigan, where my father
21 had graduated. My brother was there because he was returning
22 from the war. We're three and a half years apart. We
23 shouldn't have been at college at the same time, but he had
24 joined the Navy the minute he turned 18. So he went back to
25 school on the GI Bill, which was a wonderful thing.

1 He was off in the Pacific for a few years. When I
2 think of it now, when they talk about oh, so-and-so has been
3 overseas for six months, isn't that terrible, and we didn't
4 see my brother for two-and-a-half years. He was over there on
5 that ship. We didn't know what was going on. We didn't do
6 e-mail or anything. We just knew he was on a ship in the
7 Pacific.

8 So we were up at college at the same time, which was
9 nice.

10 **MS. ALTERMAN:** Where did you meet your husband?

11 **MS. BRODER:** I probably knew him at one time when we
12 were younger, but we started dating in 1953. I had been out
13 of college a couple years and had gone to work. He just
14 called me once. It wasn't an unfamiliar name. We started to
15 date, and then my cousin and I went off to Europe for eight
16 weeks. So he started to date somebody else, who was a very
17 good friend of ours. Things happen. We're very close friends
18 now. In fact the person he started to date, her daughter is
19 my son's second wife. So everything is very close. It's a
20 little too close.

21 He was in Korea, and when he came home, he called me
22 and we went out. Then I went off to Europe, and when I came
23 back, we went out a few times, and then somehow or other we
24 got engaged. I don't know what happened. I'm not sure what
25 happened. I think we had dinner at the London Chop House that

1 night, but I'm not sure. And we got married three months
2 later.

3 **MS. ALTERMAN:** Were you both active in the community
4 at that time?

5 **MS. BRODER:** Yeah. I think we had both worked in
6 the Junior Division, and his family, the Meyers family, Hy
7 Meyers, was very active. His father, who died in 1945, had
8 been president of the Center, and his father had been
9 president of the Center, and therefore that was the tradition
10 there. He became president of the Center.

11 His uncle -- not his father so much because his
12 father died when he was young. But his Uncle Hy Meyers was
13 very active in the general community, and therefore Brewster
14 became very, very active in the general community, much more
15 so than I did. I mean in Travelers' Aid, in USO, and Red
16 Cross, and all those things, as well as the Jewish community
17 because his uncle said to him, you have to do both. We are
18 part of a very large community. We are not just part of the
19 Jewish community.

20 I, on the other hand, concentrated on Federation,
21 especially fund-raising. I was on the boards of a couple of
22 agencies. But my interest kind of went off the side to
23 politics, too, and I was very political. I came from a very
24 liberal Democratic family. I'm still that way. Sometimes I
25 refer to myself a knee-jerk liberal. I'm out there. So

1 politics. I worked on Adlai Stevenson's campaigns, the
2 heartbreak of that. I worked in Hubert Humphrey's campaign,
3 heartbreak. I mean these were my heroes.

4 **MS. ALTERMAN:** Let's get back to Women's Division,
5 because you were one of the true leaders of the Women's
6 Division. Can you tell us how it was in those early days and
7 how things have changed.

8 **MS. BRODER:** It's very, very different. I think
9 things happened by the fact of whose children the leadership
10 began to like. I think there was a lot of that. I became a
11 vice president of the Women's Division when I was very young.
12 I don't think I was 30 years old yet. And I didn't have a
13 portfolio. It wasn't like today. There wasn't as much going
14 on. We were fund-raisers. That's what we did. There wasn't
15 the programming that we have today. We didn't have worker
16 training like we have today. We had G Day and we had a few
17 divisions, and you moved up the ladder according to what the
18 different divisions were, according to giving. And the
19 divisions were low.

20 I remember the great big luncheons we had at Temple
21 Israel and the gift was \$36.50, which is obvious; something
22 about 365 days. And we had our shoebox campaigns and we had G
23 Day at the fairgrounds. It was a different thing. So even
24 though I was active in the campaign, they made me a vice
25 president, but they didn't give me anything to do other than

1 continuing to be active in the campaign. That's just the way
2 it was. It's a very different animal today. Tremendous
3 changes I feel, and probably much for the better. We know now
4 why we solicit, we know why we're asking for this money.

5 When I really started, when I was really young,
6 there wasn't even an Israel yet. But then Israel became our
7 focus, and we solicited on the basis of Israel, and this is
8 what you gave this year, so can you give 10 percent more this
9 year. That's kind of the way it was then.

10 Somewhere along the way Mildred Grossman -- I don't
11 remember what year it was -- had taken sensitivity training,
12 and she decided we could apply this to worker training. So
13 she trained a bunch of us. Worker training for women -- the
14 men of course didn't do this; the men solicited in an entirely
15 different way: this is what you'll give and I don't like what
16 you're giving and you've got to give what I'm giving and blah,
17 blah, blah.

18 But the women began with training, and I was
19 chairman of worker training for the women at some stage way
20 back then. What we were trained by Mildred to do was to sit
21 around a table of ten people and talk about our feelings about
22 being Jewish, about Israel, about our community, and we
23 translated that into worker training. We would do this in
24 homes. If we had 50 people, we would put ten people each
25 around five tables. And we would talk about tell us how you

1 feel about being Jewish. What's the first thing you remember
2 about your Jewish life. Tell us how you feel about Israel.

3 Then we would get into techniques. Now, how do you
4 take how you feel and solicit somebody and find out how they
5 feel, and really sit down and talk to people about their
6 pledges and do it face to face if you can. And this was the
7 genesis of all this. It was really Mildred who kind of got us
8 into it and how to do it.

9 So worker training became a very integral part of
10 Women's Division campaigning, and when I was campaign chair
11 for the women, Jane Sherman was my worker training chairman,
12 and the two of us became a team. It was kind of interesting.
13 We went to New Jersey, we went to Florida. Jenny Jones called
14 us to come down to Florida to train her women because Jenny
15 gets down to Sarasota, this god-forsaken land of Jews who
16 aren't involved, and organized the community. She brought
17 Jane and me down there.

18 It was fascinating. We stayed with Jenny, who
19 herself was a character and a great mentor. We stayed in her
20 wonderful place. I think Harry had died by then. I don't
21 remember him being there. I do remember getting up at seven
22 o'clock in the morning to go to the bathroom, and when I came
23 back Jenny had made my bed. I could not believe it. She was
24 obsessed. Jane and I would go in to take showers and we'd dry
25 ourselves, and the minute we were finished she'd grab our wet

1 towels and give us dry towels. Jenny was a character.

2 Jane and I had this dog and pony show where we would
3 sit down with the women in Sarasota, who knew nothing, and
4 train them how to ask for money.

5 We did this several places. Jane went a lot more
6 places than I did. I went to Cincinnati once, I went to
7 Lexington once, and we trained women. We kind of got this
8 movement going around the country. Detroit Women's Division
9 was the Women's Division. Those were good times. We had good
10 times together.

11 **MS. ALTERMAN:** You talked about Jenny as a mentor.
12 Who were some of your other mentors?

13 **MS. BRODER:** I would say -- there were certain women
14 that I really loved, but I can't say they were mentors because
15 I was too young to know where I was going. I loved Golda
16 Krolik. Beside the fact that she was the mother of some good
17 friends of mine, I just loved her.

18 I loved Gertrude Wineman. She became my girlfriend.
19 That's how I referred to her, as my girlfriend. She was a
20 wonderful, wonderful woman, very proper. She had these
21 meetings in her home. We became good friends because she used
22 to bring one of her grandchildren up to Charlevoix when we
23 lived there, and she'd bring this little Southern boy over to
24 our house in his white shorts and his white shirt, and she'd
25 say, Ruth, take him out and dirty him up a little bit.

1 I would say that Frieda Stollman probably -- if
2 anybody was my mentor, it would have been Frieda. Not because
3 she picked me, but because I picked her. We didn't do
4 mentoring in those days. She was just so admirable,
5 everything about her. Margie Fisher brought her into the
6 Federation picture.

7 Nobody knew about Frieda. Her husband and his
8 brother were maybe in the grocery business before the real
9 estate business. They weren't part of the so-called
10 Federation clique. That, by the way, has changed, too. There
11 was this Temple Beth-El Reform Jewish Federation clique at one
12 time, and that doesn't exist anymore.

13 Frieda was brought in by Margie, and she told Max,
14 her husband, here is a woman and here is a family, and they
15 should be involved in our community, and of course they were
16 involved. Phil became more involved than Max, Frieda's
17 husband. Frieda's husband was kind of a shy man and he didn't
18 do what Phil did. Phil was active. I think he was a campaign
19 co-chair at one time.

20 Frieda was a wonderful, wonderful woman. She
21 followed Margie as pre-campaign chair, and then she became
22 chair of the whole campaign. Then she became president of the
23 Women's Division. She brought a different tone. She brought
24 a real honesty, ethical -- I liked Frieda. She was a good
25 woman. A very good woman. I was sad when she died.

1 So I became friendly with Frieda and Tilly
2 Brandwine. These were the women I worked with. I like to
3 think they were a different generation than I am. Maybe
4 they're not. Maybe we're all part of the same generation. My
5 Aunt Bernice Hopp was a leader in the Women's Division. Had
6 they had a woman become president of the Federation way back
7 then, I would guess that my Aunt Bernice might one of them,
8 that Frieda might have been one of them, that Tilly might have
9 been one of them. It took a long, long time to recognize how
10 marvelous the women were at this job, which is fund-raising.
11 It took way too long. I think women were the people that
12 brought the campaign into the home and to the family and to
13 the children of all these people through the worker training.

14 I became a vice chairman of the campaign at some
15 point under Irv Selegman, which kind of surprised me, and Dave
16 Handelman. Michael Feldman and I were co-chairs of worker
17 training. They decided they were going to start to train the
18 men. Well, I have to tell you, Michael and I did the first
19 one, and we had these men, and they looked at us like we were
20 crazy. What do you mean, we're supposed to talk to our
21 prospects this way? This isn't the way we do it. We say, you
22 make so much money a year and you should be giving this, and
23 blah, blah, blah. Michael and I went through our whole
24 routine, which I had learned in the Women's Division. Michael
25 came right along with it. And that generation was wonderful,

1 and those men believed in worker training. But that's
2 Michael's generation, Larry Jackier, all those people.

3 I don't know if they still do it. I assume that
4 they do because women are now involved in the general
5 campaign. But that was our first shot. And I have to tell
6 you that walking into a room of men who had always solicited a
7 certain way and saying to them, you are doing this wrong.
8 There are things to talk about. Saying to a man you should
9 give X number of dollars isn't the way to do it. There's a
10 whole country called Israel, and you're just doing it on the
11 emotions, but you're not telling them why. And then we have a
12 community here and we have lots of agencies here and you don't
13 even talk about it. So it's time to be talking about it.

14 I think that's when we began to push our own
15 community as much as we pushed Israel. Even though Israel
16 still I think is the impetus for the way we give, our own
17 community is much more important. When I started, we didn't
18 talk about our community. We knew there were agencies out
19 there. We didn't talk about that.

20 **MS. ALTERMAN:** When was that breakthrough, when you
21 became an associate chair?

22 **MS. BRODER:** In the '80s, early '80s. I became a
23 vice president of the Federation, too. It's interesting.
24 Shirley Harris and I became vice chairs of the campaign at the
25 same time. Our careers were parallel. By that time we had

1 both been campaign chairs for the women. She had been
2 president of the Women's Division. I had been offered the job
3 and turned it down, which I'm kind of happy that I did because
4 had I not turned it down, I would not have been able to go to
5 work full time for Carl Levin, which was another career for
6 me.

7 I think what happened, and I think the reason --
8 Shirley went into the insurance business after she was
9 president. I think the reason that the men accepted the two
10 of us, and we were the first to break into that campaign
11 structure, was the fact that we were both working women, and
12 the only time we could come to meetings was 7:30 in the
13 morning, just like they did. That's when the meetings were,
14 7:30, 8:00 in the morning. I think we gained respectability,
15 and it made us valuable, the fact that we were women who
16 worked.

17 It was interesting because it worked for me two
18 ways. It made my transfer into the general campaign very easy
19 because I was a working woman, working for a United States
20 senator, and it made things very good for Carl that I was very
21 close, this close to the Jewish community in Detroit. That
22 was really something that he needed, because at that time he
23 was known because he had been on the Detroit City Council and
24 his brother had run for governor. But he needed that push
25 into the community for many, many reasons, including dollars.

1 The way I got to work for Carl is actually working
2 on his first campaign in 1978 for the senate, and he
3 apparently went to Joyce Cohn and said to her, I need to find
4 a fund-raiser. I have two women working for me, but they
5 don't know how to raise money. Joyce said to him, you need a
6 UJA fund-raiser who knows how to raise money. Call Ruth
7 Broder. I turned him down the first couple times, and then I
8 said okay. This was during the primary election in '78. I
9 said okay, I will come and I will do your fund-raising. I
10 will work for you only during the primary. I will do it as a
11 volunteer, and I will only work for you three days a week,
12 because I really didn't want to work. I still had one child
13 at home. Somehow or other it grew into a career, because I
14 was hooked. I was hooked.

15 **MS. ALTERMAN:** Let's go back and talk a little bit
16 about your children and then we'll talk about Carl.

17 **MS. BRODER:** Okay. He's one of my children. That's
18 how I treated him anyway.

19 **MS. ALTERMAN:** Who are your children?

20 **MS. BRODER:** Hugh is our eldest, and he just turned
21 50. I can't believe it. He has three children. He was
22 married and divorced and has remarried. He's in the
23 advertising business, and he started with Brad Doner, as
24 everybody in this community did, but he's now the vice
25 president and in charge of -- he does all the television

1 commercials for Chrysler, Dodge and Jeep. He works for BBD&O.
2 He worked for a few companies, but that's where he ended up.
3 He's very well thought of in his trade, and companies kept
4 taking him away from other companies, but that's where he is
5 today.

6 Suzanne, my only daughter, is 48 now. She went out
7 to Park City to go skiing after she graduated from college and
8 never came home. She's been out there for 25 years. I still
9 haven't forgiven her. But because of that I have a great love
10 for the West. I didn't know the West. She lives in Utah. I
11 love it. We visit the parks. I go in the winter, I go in the
12 summer. In fact I just got back. Her daughter just graduated
13 from high school. But I only see her three or four times a
14 year and it's not enough. A mother needs her daughter.

15 The next child is David, and he is now 46. He lives
16 in Waltham, Massachusetts. He is not married. He's been out
17 there in the Boston area for over 20 years.

18 Richard is 44 years old. He lives here. He started
19 a business with Todd Sachse. They're in the real estate
20 business. He's president of Hebrew Free Loan. He has two
21 little girls. One just bas mitzvahed.

22 So that's the family. I have two sons here, one
23 daughter who left me, and David who's in Boston. So four
24 kids.

25 **MS. ALTERMAN:** In their respective communities

1 carrying on the tradition?

2 **MS. BRODER:** David, no. He doesn't have a lot of
3 means. The Jewish thing is not that prominent in his life.
4 Being single doesn't help.

5 And Sue out there in Park City, which is an
6 interesting community. It's a blue city in a very, very red
7 state. It's probably the reddest state in the union. A lot
8 of transplants. Everybody comes from someplace else that
9 lives in Park City. A lot of mixed marriages. Sue married a
10 man who isn't Jewish, but he's an atheist. He doesn't believe
11 in any Christmas, Easter, forget it all. So Sue's children
12 were brought up Jewish to a point. Andrea had a bas mitzvah,
13 Allen did not want a bar mitzvah so he has not had it. They
14 do Hanukkah. Steve's family is wonderful. They do not send
15 the kids Christmas gifts, they send them Hanukkah gifts.
16 There's no mention of Easter at that time of year. They have
17 Seders every year.

18 There are a lot of families in Park City that are
19 half Jewish, and a lot of the children are brought up Jewish.
20 So it's there. Andrea knows she's Jewish. What she's going
21 to do with it I don't know. You just have to wait.

22 I never said to my own children you must marry Jews
23 and you must become active. They know that I spent and
24 Brewster spent our entire adult lives working for the
25 community as volunteers. Though we are not temple goers, we

1 don't keep kosher or anything like that, we have belonged to
2 congregations all our life, sometimes two at a time. Friday
3 night dinner was very important at our house. When I can on
4 Friday nights now, I have the kids here. And when it's at our
5 house it's candles and kiddishes and the whole works. And
6 Seders, I always have the Seders. I'm trying to get rid of
7 the Seders. I'm having a hard time. But it's important.

8 **MS. ALTERMAN:** Because you do them so well.

9 **MS. BRODER:** But it's too tiring. I can't do it
10 anymore. I can't sit there for two days and make gefilte
11 fish. Then Richard says it's okay, but it's not like Ruth's.
12 Ruth worked for my mother-in-law and made fabulous gefilte
13 fish. I use her recipe, I watched her make it, and that snot
14 sits down and says it's okay, Mom, but it's not like Ruth's.
15 I said, I don't need this anymore. Don't tell me that.

16 But they love my briskets. I only make kosher
17 briskets because it's better. Grandma, will you make a
18 brisket and we'll come for dinner. So that part's good. But
19 I'm not a Jewish grandmother like my grandmother was. My
20 grandmother was a Jewish grandmother who cooked Jewish food
21 and served it to her family, and never sat down. She was a
22 Jewish grandmother and mother.

23 **MS. ALTERMAN:** But you don't sit down either. You
24 do so much.

25 **MS. BRODER:** I eventually sit down. By that time

1 I've missed all the conversation. I know nothing that's going
2 on. And that's just kind of the way it is. I don't sit down
3 because I don't have help in the house. She didn't sit down
4 because she didn't sit down. She didn't set a place for
5 herself. Her job was to cook and to serve us. She was not a
6 liberated woman. She was a wonderful woman. I loved my
7 grandmother.

8 **MS. ALTERMAN:** And you are a liberated woman. Let's
9 talk about your time with Carl Levin, your years in Washington
10 and your time here with him. What did you do?

11 **MS. BRODER:** I went to work for Carl in '78 in the
12 campaign, and for his first four campaigns, his first one and
13 his first three re-election campaigns I was his fund-raiser.
14 So even though I went onto the senate staff after the first
15 campaign, when he first became a senator, I had to go off
16 staff when I did fund-raising. So there were times when I
17 wasn't on the senate staff anymore because I went back to be
18 in charge of his fund-raising.

19 When he asked me to come to work for him, I kind of
20 looked at him because the campaign was over and I said, what
21 is there to do? I said I can't come to Washington. He said
22 I'm going to have a Michigan office. I'm going to have
23 offices all over Michigan. I need you to come and work for
24 me. I said, well, okay, I'll interview.

25 It was a strange interview. In the first place I

1 was older than anybody that worked on that campaign. I think
2 I was 49 years old in the first campaign, everybody else was
3 in their early twenties.

4 As I sideline, I think that what has helped to keep
5 my frame of mind young, is the fact that I always worked with
6 young people; as I got older I was still working with people
7 in their twenties. Although I picked up some of their bad
8 language, it did keep me refreshed to say the least.

9 It was a strange interview because they didn't know
10 how to interview me. I was older than Carl and the people
11 that were interviewing me, and I had gotten pretty down and
12 dirty during the campaign, and they just couldn't get through
13 it. I can remember saying, come on, guys, you're doing an
14 interview; be serious here.

15 Anyway I was hired. It was a given obviously. I
16 didn't work in Washington. I worked in the Detroit office.
17 We had many Michigan offices later on, but we started in
18 Detroit. One of my portfolios of course was the Jewish
19 community. Carl had to always keep close contact with the
20 Jewish community, not just here, but all over the country. It
21 was important. It was important for his viewpoint and it was
22 important for future fund-raising naturally because that's
23 where most of his money came from. So I did that.

24 At the same time I was in charge of all the ethnic
25 communities. I began to work with the Armenians, the Greeks,

1 the Chaldeans, the Lebanese, mostly the Christian Lebanese but
2 later on the Muslims, the Latvians, the Lithuanians, the
3 Poles, all the anti-Semites. It was kind of interesting.
4 They loved Carl. And the only communities I never worked with
5 were the black community, because that would not have been
6 acceptable to them, and the Hispanic community, which was
7 very, very difficult. And he had somebody on his staff that
8 was Hispanic that did that. But I did all the European,
9 Eastern European and Arab communities. I even worked with the
10 Palestinian community. So that was a big part of what I did.

11 I was kind of a catchall. My title was Special
12 Assistant, which I gave myself because nobody ever knew what
13 to call me. I wasn't a case worker, I wasn't a community
14 developer. I wasn't in charge of the office. There was a
15 Michigan representative who was in charge of the office. So I
16 was really a special assistant to the senator, and basically
17 worked for him, even though the person in the Michigan office
18 was my so-called supervisor.

19 And that's expanded. As different things would
20 happen, Carl would call me into it. If there was case work,
21 which I normally didn't do, but if there was any immigration
22 or any kind of case work having to do with Israel, I was the
23 one that did it.

24 Carl had some very sensitive cases about people who
25 had become criminals who he had known from the Detroit

1 community, and some who went to prison. One who arrived in
2 our office one day with a gun. You know, that kind of stuff.
3 He put me in charge of those people.

4 **MS. ALTERMAN:** Lucky you.

5 **MS. BRODER:** Lucky me. If there was anything to do
6 with the courts, anything like that, he would have me do it.
7 And it just expanded. If there was anything at all political
8 that had to do, other than his own campaign -- during his own
9 campaigns I had to go off staff and do his fund-raising. But
10 if there was anything political that was happening, a senator
11 was coming to town to raise money, I was authorized -- he is
12 allowed to have one person according to Senate rules who does
13 political work for him when he's not in a campaign, because he
14 doesn't have a campaign staff then. So that was my job also,
15 is to do all that political stuff. And this is how I came to
16 know so many of the senators, and this is how I came to know
17 the community leaders all over the country.

18 What helped me was the fact that I was related to
19 people in a lot of these cities. The other thing that helped
20 me was that I was on the National Women's Board for a time,
21 when I was the campaign chair for the Women's Division. So I
22 knew people all over the country, and there's a real network
23 of Jewish people who give money to senators like Carl Levin,
24 especially Jewish senators. I mean he was at a great
25 advantage in the Jewish community.

1 In the second and third campaigns I would travel
2 with him to Philadelphia and New York, Cincinnati, Los
3 Angeles, San Francisco, all around the country to raise money.
4 I didn't have to do it in the fourth campaign. By that time
5 he could do these things by himself.

6 I remember in the first campaign Alan Cranston
7 calling up and saying I'd like Senator Levin to come to
8 California. This was in '78. I said what? He said I'd like
9 to raise money for Senator Levin. So we sent him out there.
10 He was so excited. We were all so naive during that campaign.
11 We really were all naive. There was only one person on the
12 whole campaign staff who had ever worked on a political
13 campaign; the rest of us were novices. We sent him out to
14 California and he came back with money. In the first campaign
15 we raised, altogether between the primary and the general
16 campaign, \$1 million, which we thought was a lot of money.
17 Later on it would be \$6 million, \$7 million. It became big
18 stuff.

19 The in-between years were just as interesting as the
20 campaigns. I loved working with the ethnic communities.

21 **MS. ALTERMAN:** What kinds of things did you do with
22 them?

23 **MS. BRODER:** There were always issues. There are
24 always issues with ethnics, and especially with the Arab
25 community. They're no different than the Jewish community.

1 They're emotional. They would have events, they would invite
2 Carl, Carl couldn't go, I would have to go and speak for him,
3 give little talks.

4 They would call me when they had problems. If it
5 was case work at the beginning, they would call me and then I
6 would hand them over to a case worker unless it was a really
7 sensitive immigration problem that they thought maybe I could
8 handle. The ethnic communities were very interesting and they
9 would call because they were tearing at him. The Indian
10 community was unhappy with the Pakistani community, and the
11 Palestinian community was unhappy. After Carl and I went to
12 Lebanon in 1982, we had a sit-in in the office. Part of the
13 Lebanese community came and sat in our office all night long.
14 So we had to stay there; we couldn't get out. I can remember
15 sleeping under my desk all night long. But they would not
16 move until Carl did a certain thing.

17 The ethnic communities are demanding, very
18 demanding. So besides keeping Carl in touch with them, which
19 I had to do. The Armenian community for instance, and those
20 were the days when Alex Manoogian was alive, and he was like
21 the Max Fisher of that community. A wonderful, wonderful man.
22 I grew to really love him. But he was tough, he was really
23 tough. He would call me up and say I need to talk to Carl
24 about this with Turks and this with the Greeks. So that's
25 what we did. And I was kind of the liaison to Carl from this

1 community. Either I would take down everything they said and
2 give it to Carl and get back to them, or get Carl together
3 with them. We had lots of meetings.

4 I would say the toughest meeting we ever had, given
5 all the ethnic communities we had -- it's interesting -- was
6 when Carl sat down with the Orthodox community. Tough. And
7 they were tough to the end. They're an unforgiving community
8 if they don't like what you're doing.

9 The other community, the Chaldean community, was
10 fascinating and I was very close to that community. They had
11 a supper club one night, and I remember Carl and I went and
12 had dinner with Mike George, who was the godfather of that
13 community. Then they had a meeting, and Carl was on the hot
14 seat literally. He was sweating, perspiration was pouring
15 down, because they were shrieking at him about the
16 Palestinians. They were Chaldeans, they had nothing to do
17 with that part of the world, but they were shrieking at him
18 about his views on the Palestinians and on Arabs.

19 When it's all over, the chairman called the meeting
20 to an end, and they all rushed up and threw their arms around
21 him and kissed him. Carl, we love you, we love you. So they
22 knew how to put it aside. They didn't agree with him on
23 issues, especially the Palestinian issue. Iraq wasn't an
24 issue in those days. They loved him, they loved him.

25 **MS. ALTERMAN:** Were you ever able to take some of

1 these ethnic people to Israel, ethnic groups?

2 **MS. BRODER:** No, we never did. But when I went to
3 Israel with Carl and Senator Chris Dodd in 1982 -- he was
4 another senator I fell in love with. I fell in love with two
5 senators. One was Paul Sarbanes from Maryland, the other was
6 Chris Dodd. We became very, very close friends. We went to
7 Lebanon and Israel together, and that was during the
8 bombardment of east Beirut.

9 I don't know what I was thinking. You know, it's
10 funny how sometimes people will say things are so scary in
11 Israel, terrible things are happening, how can you go there,
12 and you get there and you forget about it. We walked into
13 Lebanon, and we were in east Beirut. The State Department
14 asked us not to go into west Beirut. This was when Arafat was
15 still there. The Israelis were bombarding west Beirut and
16 they said don't go into west Beirut. If you have to talk to
17 them by phone if you want to, do it, but don't go in there.

18 I remember the trip well because we were in
19 buildings in the green zone between east and west Beirut and
20 there were pings going off against the wall. The PLO knew we
21 were there. They didn't want to kill us, but they were
22 popping these shells at the buildings, which were totally
23 ruined.

24 We had lunch with Jamil -- I can't remember his
25 first name now -- who was the president of Lebanon. They have

1 a Christian president and a Muslim prime minister. The food
2 in east Beirut is French Lebanese. I sat next to him. I was
3 the only woman and I sat to his right. One week later, we
4 were home, and he was blown to pieces. It's just like you
5 don't think when you're there what am I doing here. But when
6 you get home you say, what was I doing there?

7 We met with Begin. This was one of the most
8 wonderful meetings I've ever had. It was just Chris Dodd,
9 Carl and myself and one of his aides. Begin was sitting on
10 the couch when we walked in and Carl and Chris sat next to
11 him. I did what I always do when I'm with Carl. I go to the
12 back of the room. I like to get the long view, the total
13 view, so I can keep my eye on everything, and I can also give
14 him the time out sign when he should stop talking.

15 Begin looks at me and takes his finger and beckons
16 me and goes like this, and says, come and sit next to me. I
17 was horrified because I thought Carl was just going to be very
18 angry with me, but there was nothing I could do. So I sit
19 down next to him, and he leans over and says to me -- no one
20 else heard him -- don't you think I'm the ugliest man you've
21 ever seen? I didn't know what to do.

22 This meeting apparently was on Ted Koppel's show.
23 People told me they saw me sitting next to Begin. I never saw
24 it. I wasn't aware of it.

25 That was a very, very meaningful trip. That was one

1 of my highlights. I wrote two big long notebooks about it,
2 which I still have. I should drag it out and read it. We
3 went to Tyre, which was a Catholic city, and Chris Dodd went
4 to church there. We went to Sidon. We sat on the roof of the
5 hotel we were staying in as the rockets were flying back and
6 forth between west Beirut and east Beirut. The Israelis were
7 there. It was quite a trip. I guess it was a plus. I really
8 never was frightened.

9 I had two real highlights with Carl. That was one.
10 The other was the AWAC sale, which came up in Carl's first
11 term, but it must have been close to the second election
12 though. He had said to me something about are you going to
13 fund-raise for me again, and I said, yes, and I'll do a very
14 good job, but there's a quid pro quo. He said what is it? I
15 said, I want to be on the floor of the Senate when they have
16 the AWAC vote. He had to get permission because you don't
17 take staff. You can take one staff with you, and he had to
18 take his real staff from Washington. But they pulled a chair
19 up and I sat down right next to him.

20 If you've ever watched the vote on CSPAN, you notice
21 that the senators run in and vote and run out. For this
22 particular vote there were 100 senators on the floor hanging
23 around, or if they came in late, they didn't run out. They
24 waited. It was a very meaningful vote. I remember distinctly
25 because I was standing there when Zarenski came in, who was a

1 Jewish senator from out west, who was a Republican, and wanted
2 to vote against it because he was Jewish, but couldn't because
3 the vote was that close. He was one of the last ones to vote,
4 and I can remember Bob Dole saying to him, that's good, Ed.
5 You did the right thing. We thought the Jews at least would
6 hang together, but he was a Republican; he had to hang with
7 his party. That's the way it was.

8 So there were those kinds of things that happened.
9 It was a very fascinating interlude in my life to do this,
10 both the fund-raising because I met so many people, going to
11 Washington because I struck up a relationship with some of the
12 senators who I really loved, and then helping in those days
13 David Hermelin, who always had these fund-raisers at his house
14 for the senators, and getting them in here and knowing them
15 ahead of time because they had fund-raised for Carl and now we
16 were going to fund-raise for them. So it was a big thing.

17 Then when I left Carl in 1993, I said, okay, this is
18 it. He gave me a wonderful luncheon at the Detroit Club and
19 had members of the ethnic communities I had worked with. The
20 Asian Indians, dyed-in-the wool Democrats, all of them.

21 Then the next time he ran, I went back and worked on
22 that campaign. He begged me to come back. But in between I
23 got involved in the Miracle Mission with Jane in '95, and then
24 I went back to work for Carl in the '95 campaign.

25 **MS. ALTERMAN:** How did the Miracle Mission evolve?

1 **MS. BRODER:** The Miracle Mission evolved probably as
2 an idea, maybe originally Bob Aronson, Dave Hermelin and Jane
3 would be my guess. Jane, who ended up being in the first one
4 in '93 a co-chair, basically ended up running it, and she
5 wrote the bible for Miracle Missions. Other communities used
6 that as the bible from then on.

7 In 1995 I was finished working for Carl and she said
8 come and be my assistant on the second Miracle Mission, when
9 she was actually the director. When it came time for the
10 third Miracle Mission, which was 1999, Michael Burke asked me
11 if I would be the director, and I said only if Jane will hang
12 in there with me, which she promised to do, and then the
13 minute I said yes, backed out. You're on your own, kiddo.
14 I'm not doing it. So that's why I did the '99.

15 But it was Jane and somebody else's brainchild. She
16 was the one that learned how to put it together. Working with
17 her was very helpful. Doing it alone I thought was going to
18 be scary; it wasn't. I was able to do it because she had
19 taught me. I had to go back to her when I had to deal with El
20 Al. I just said to her, when it comes time to deal with El
21 Al, I will not do that. You know how to talk to them. I
22 cannot talk to people the way you talk to people. We all know
23 the way Jane can talk to people. And I wouldn't do it, I
24 wouldn't talk to people that way. She did that for me.

25 '99 was great. When they asked me to do the next

1 one, I said, no, I'm finished. I can't do this anymore.

2 Then last summer, the summer of '04, Mark called me
3 and said do you want to do a family mission, and I said
4 absolutely not, Mark. I can't do this anymore. I can't work
5 10, 12 hours a day anymore, because that's the way I worked.
6 When I worked here, I worked that way. When I worked for
7 Carl, I was in his office every morning downtown at eight
8 o'clock, didn't leave there until six o'clock at night. I
9 said I can't do it anymore. He said, come and get us started.
10 So that's why I was involved in the family mission. I said I
11 will help you hire somebody. I think we made a very, very
12 wise hire there. I'm so pleased with Deena.

13 **MS. ALTERMAN:** What have the missions meant for
14 Detroit, these mega-missions?

15 **MS. BRODER:** It's an interesting thing, I can say it
16 now, and I have said it to Larry Jackier I have said it to
17 Bob. I didn't like the fact that we would take people to
18 Israel and not solicit them there. My background is I'm a
19 solicitor, and I believe when you go to Israel, that's the
20 golden opportunity. I learned that in 1969 when I went on my
21 first mission. That's where you solicit people.

22 I was the first person to solicit Susie Citrin by
23 the way. She was on that mission, she and Bobby with us. She
24 had just gotten there. So I was the first one to solicit her.
25 I got her in the back of the bus. So that was my belief.

1 Bob's theory of the Miracle Mission and everybody
2 else's theory was get people to Israel, get them to Israel,
3 the rest will come. I don't know how good the history is of
4 giving, of people that we took to Israel. We kind of became
5 -- it was wonderful what we did. We put them on the plane in
6 Detroit, we brought them back Detroit, we got them to love
7 Israel, and we didn't ask them for money until they got home.
8 So I don't know the history of their giving, whether they gave
9 that first year because they were enamored and never gave
10 again. There are couples who have been on all four missions;
11 we know it worked for them. There are people who have always
12 given; we know it works for them. I know it works to give in
13 Israel, having been on enough missions, solicited enough
14 people in Israel, been solicited in Israel. I was taken to
15 the back of the bus by David Mondry and Marvin Goldman on one
16 mission when we went to Poland first and then Israel. I'd
17 never had an experience like that in my life.

18 **MS. ALTERMAN:** What was it like?

19 **MS. BRODER:** It was rough. I didn't have a lot of
20 money and I wouldn't give Brewster's money. It was always my
21 money. I had just begun to earn money. That was in 1980. I
22 had just been working for Carl a couple years, so I could do
23 better than I had done, but not as well as I had done way
24 back. But they were brutal. It wasn't, Oh, Ruth, this nice
25 little woman, we're going to be easy on you. No way. I was

1 one of the gang.

2 I was chairman of the Missions Committee in 1980. I
3 had been to Poland and Romania in 1975. I had been to
4 Auschwitz, which is a life-altering experience. I convinced
5 David and Marvin that they had to go to Poland. David had
6 promised his father he would never go to Poland. I said you
7 have to go to Poland and then to Israel. You have to take the
8 community. You are campaign chairs. And they finally agreed
9 and we went. It was quite a trip. Quite a trip.

10 My trips to Israel have been wonderful, every one of
11 them. I've been on missions. We took our family in 1972; the
12 six of us went. I went to a Jewish agency meeting once. I
13 went on a couple of Jewish Welfare Board missions once. That
14 was Brewster's involvement.

15 Every trip to Israel was wonderful in a different
16 way. The one in January of '74 was the most heartbreaking.
17 It was right after the Yom Kippur War. The hotels were empty.
18 the Israelis were down in the dumps. When I went down in '69
19 there was a real euphoria in Israel. It was right after the
20 Six Day War. Every Israeli man was a wonderful soldier, that
21 sort of thing. When I went in '73, boy, it was different. It
22 was so different. It was like all the warts came out.
23 Everything that was wrong showed up. It was a tough trip, one
24 of the toughest I've ever had. But it doesn't matter; every
25 trip to Israel is wonderful. Every one has been different and

1 every one is wonderful.

2 **MS. ALTERMAN:** This community continues to be so
3 supportive of Israel.

4 **MS. BRODER:** Yes. We do a wonderful job with
5 missions in this community, and this community went to Israel
6 after the intefada started. Nobody else was going. I didn't
7 go on that trip. There was a reason I couldn't go. I don't
8 remember what it is now. For some reason Detroit went,
9 Detroit participated, Detroit was always there. So we have a
10 wonderful reputation I think in Israel.

11 I think our Women's Division has a wonderful
12 reputation around the country. Still does. We still consider
13 ourselves the best. And I think the Detroit community is one
14 of the best -- maybe even the best Jewish community in the
15 country when it comes to giving, education, which all came
16 later. It's just so different than it was when I started.

17 **MS. ALTERMAN:** It's evolved.

18 **MS. BRODER:** It evolved into something wonderful. I
19 think it's probably going in the right direction. I can't say
20 that. I sometimes think we're involved in too much because
21 I've always felt that our main purpose in being here is to
22 fund-raise. That has always been my feeling. I think that's
23 why Larry Jackier and I would get into arguments. I would say
24 I can't stand the thought that we are taking 400, 600, 800
25 people to Israel and not soliciting. That's not the purpose

1 of the trip, Ruth. We used to get into our arguments about
2 it.

3 **MS. ALTERMAN:** I can understand that.

4 **MS. BRODER:** And why aren't we announcing our gifts
5 out loud at all these meetings I'm going to? I can't stand
6 this because that's not the way I was brought up. But it's a
7 different time, it's a different group of people.

8 **MS. ALTERMAN:** What do you think our challenges are
9 as a community?

10 **MS. BRODER:** My sons' generation I'm a little
11 worried about, but I think they're doing pretty well. My
12 grandchildren's generation I really worry about, and I think
13 the very big difference is this. When I grew up and when I
14 finally realized -- when I got into college and after that --
15 we had the Holocaust and we had the creation of the state of
16 Israel, and those things were at our core as Jews.

17 When I was in Poland, I was just -- I've been there
18 twice now, I've been to Auschwitz twice, and something just
19 happened to me. It became part of me, and really I was
20 affected in a way I never expected to be affected.

21 The creation of the state of Israel is in our gut,
22 my generation, for sure. We took our children to Israel when
23 they were younger. They got some of the feeling. My
24 grandchildren, I don't know whether their parents are doing
25 the same. And the world has gotten bigger or smaller,

1 depending on the way you want to look at it, and the young
2 people today have different issues. Israel's there, the local
3 community is there.

4 But there's hunger. There's a war going on in Iraq
5 which more and more people, finally -- and I've been opposed
6 since the beginning; more and more people are beginning to
7 think about what are we doing there. There's homelessness.

8 In Detroit there's the symphony, there's the DIA,
9 there's other things. When I was growing up, things were
10 there, but the Second World War didn't involve me, other than
11 the fact that my brother was out there.

12 Homelessness and hunger, I didn't know too much
13 about that. Nowadays we know about it all. It's in our face.
14 Health insurance, these are our issues now.

15 So therefore is Israel our children's and our
16 grandchildren's issue? I don't know if it's their issue. Is
17 the local Jewish community their issue? Only if they become
18 involved in it. Our children know that Brewster was the
19 president of the Jewish Community Center, they know that I sat
20 on agency boards, they know that I spent my entire adult life
21 raising money for the Federation. Does it hit them the same
22 way? I don't know. I'm just not quite sure about that part
23 of the future.

24 I think they're working very hard here. I think
25 they're doing a good job here. And maybe that's why they've

1 gone into so much programming. You know, I sometimes wonder
2 if there isn't too much programming, whether the Center
3 shouldn't be doing some of this, but maybe this is why we're
4 doing so much programming. It's certainly the reason we're
5 emphasizing Jewish education, because I think we can see out
6 to those future generations, and that maybe it's not going to
7 be there.

8 I think the smartest thing we've got going is the
9 philanthropic funds, and any community I talk to -- and I
10 don't talk to many anymore -- I say you need philanthropic
11 funds, you need a future when your givers are not as
12 plentiful, when they can't give as much. And I firmly believe
13 in the philanthropic funds. I have a PACE fund here, I have a
14 few life insurance policies. I did have a regular
15 philanthropic fund, believe it or not. I closed it up. I
16 sent all the money to the tsunami relief. I said to Stacy one
17 day, send it all for the tsunami relief. Close it up. I
18 can't keep it up anyway. I can't put any more money into it
19 because I'm not working. But I'm happy that I have my PACE
20 fund, which is nice, and which I know is always going to be
21 there.

22 **MS. ALTERMAN:** We're coming to the end of our
23 interview. Is there anything we missed that you'd like to
24 have on tape?

25 **MS. BRODER:** There's probably something out there

1 that I'll think of after you turn the camera off.

2 **MS. ALTERMAN:** What about a message to your
3 children?

4 **MS. BRODER:** You know, it's interesting because I
5 don't tell my children or my grandchildren what to do. I'm
6 hoping that they'll get it by watching what we did. I became
7 what I am because of my parents. They never said to me,
8 except my mother who said to me, get out there and solicit
9 when I was 16, they never said "do this." It happened. And
10 I'm sure Brewster's mother never told him "do this." It just
11 kind of happened.

12 It was an interesting thing. My granddaughter Erica
13 called me up one day, and she said, grandma, I want to
14 interview you. I said, what's it about, Erica? She said,
15 well, I want you to think about it. I'm not going to do it
16 right now. I want you to tell me who your hero is. That's an
17 interesting thought because I've never, I don't think, had
18 heroes, actual heroes.

19 I thought for a while and I finally decided it was
20 probably Golda Mier because she was a strong woman who made a
21 difference. She resigned because she was unhappy, because she
22 blamed herself for the Yom Kippur War, but she was a strong
23 woman who made a difference, who came to this country very
24 early on, before Israel was a state, to raise money for the
25 Jews to go.

1 Erica said to me, weren't your mother and your
2 father your heroes? And I said, no, they weren't, they were
3 my mother and my father. And what I am today is because of
4 them, and they weren't my heroes. And I think this is what I
5 want my children to understand.

6 My mother gave me a style of life and a feeling of
7 independent that as a woman I can do what I want to do,
8 because she was very independent, and she was just modern.
9 And I think it's because of her that I was able to work with
10 20-year-olds and be independent, which I think I am, though
11 not financially independent, but independent. And she gave me
12 a sense of style. She was just a wonderful woman. And she
13 also taught me to love licorice and red raspberries and
14 peanuts, and that was very important in my life. I'm still a
15 nosher.

16 My father was a very, very wonderful, nice, ethical
17 man. And I think he gave me my sense of ethics. I can
18 remember Carl asking me once if something he wanted to do was
19 legal, and I said to him, it's legal, Carl, but it's not
20 ethical. And he didn't do it. I think my father gave me
21 this: a strong ethical viewpoint. I don't think my father
22 ever berated anybody. I never heard my father swear. If he
23 heard my mouth today, he would be shocked. But that's the
24 times, too. That's the times today. He was sweet, he was
25 there, he was gentle.

1 Growing up, he was hard of hearing. He had
2 operations later in life. I think he probably enjoyed his
3 grandchildren more than his children because they did fix his
4 ears so that he could hear. But I think it was his ethics
5 that I latched on to, and I still today feel that that's the
6 most important thing. When Richard went into his own
7 business, I said to him, please don't ever do anything that
8 isn't ethical, because you're in a business where you can, and
9 just please don't do that. Be ethical all your life.

10 My father was such a wonderful man. He would say to
11 my mother before they went out, what are you wearing tonight,
12 Vera? And she'd say, I'm wearing my gray outfit, so he'd wear
13 a gray suit. Or she'd say I'm going to wear my blue dress,
14 and he'd wear a blue suit. He complimented her. He stood
15 next to her, complimented her. He was a lovely, lovely man.
16 My brother is the same way.

17 So I think that's what I want my children to get.
18 Try to be like we are. Try to be active, try to be ethical.
19 But I'm not sure I want to say that to them. I think I want
20 them to catch on.

21 **MS. ALTERMAN:** I'm sure they have.

22 **MS. BRODER:** Well, I hope so.

23 **MS. ALTERMAN:** Thank you, Ruth. I've really enjoyed
24 this interview. And thank you for your work as an
25 interviewer.