



Smithsonian  
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Oral history interview with Joe Schwartz,  
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**Contact Information**

Reference Department  
Archives of American Art  
Smithsonian Institution  
Washington, D.C. 20560  
[www.aaa.si.edu/askus](http://www.aaa.si.edu/askus)

# Transcript

## Preface

The following oral history transcript is the result of a recorded interview with Joe Schwartz on April 25, 2009. The interview took place at the home of Joe Schwartz in Atascadero, California, and was conducted by Paul Gardullo and James Miller for the Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution.

Paula Motlo, Joe Schwartz's daughter, has reviewed the transcript. Her corrections and emendations appear below in brackets with initials. This transcript has been lightly edited for readability by the Archives of American Art. The reader should bear in mind that they are reading a transcript of spoken, rather than written, prose.

## Interview

PAUL GARDULLO: When did you buy this house?

JOE SCHWARTZ: When?

PAUL GARDULLO: Yes.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Oh, you're going to make my brains work. Let's see. 19[88 -PM]—I've got to think of events. There was this political upheaval going on. And I decided to leave—finally to seek my dream kind of thing, which I was in a farm area where there was the ecology—trees and beautiful things and all that. And I'm trying to think of the—

PAUL GARDULLO: 1980s? 1985?

JOE SCHWARTZ: I do have a receipt, I guess. It tells when. But I didn't prepare for it.

PAUL GARDULLO: Mm-hmm. That's okay.

PAUL GARDULLO: Mm-hmm.

JOE SCHWARTZ: No, I know I came to Los Angeles in the [1950s -PM]—

PAUL GARDULLO: In the 1950s.

JOE SCHWARTZ: The 1950s.

PAUL GARDULLO: This is Paul Gardullo and Jim Miller interviewing Joe Schwartz at Joe's home in Atascadero, California, April 25th, 2010, for the Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution. Disc number one.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Let's see. Now, when we had that—

JAMES MILLER: The event in Hartford? [CT exhibit—maybe met Jim Miller about that time. -PM]

JOE SCHWARTZ: That was after—that was after I moved in, of course.

JAMES MILLER: Right, that was 1994.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Yeah.

JAMES MILLER: Yeah.

JOE SCHWARTZ: And I was thinking of that number, 1994.

PAUL GARDULLO: Yeah.

JOE SCHWARTZ: But it was in the '70s that I—and '80s that I had finally decided to move. [He had been moving up to nature for a long time. -PM]

PAUL GARDULLO: Mm-hmm.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Because in the '70s, I started the little lithographic shop, tried to make a go of it. And I got acquainted with any number of people during that time that were artists and so on.

PAUL GARDULLO: Where was that shop located?

JOE SCHWARTZ: Actually, to begin with I was sort of a person that deals with lithography, and act as a salesman. So I didn't actually—and see, the shop was on La Brea. ["Color Magic" was the name of his lithography shop. -PM]

JAMES MILLER: In Los Angeles.

PAUL GARDULLO: So in Los Angeles?

JOE SCHWARTZ: In Los Angeles.

PAUL GARDULLO: Okay.

JOE SCHWARTZ: And I lived not too far from there.

PAUL GARDULLO: And you said that you had moved out to Los Angeles back from the East Coast in the 1950s. Is that right?

JOE SCHWARTZ: I think so, yeah.

PAUL GARDULLO: And so it seems like a good deal of your life you've spent—

JOE SCHWARTZ: Going back and forth.

PAUL GARDULLO: Between the two coasts.

JOE SCHWARTZ: For sure.

PAUL GARDULLO: Between the East Coast and the West Coast and that really has—can make for some unique living experiences.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Well, when I joined the Photo League [of New York -PM], it occurred to me that that—the way I would focus my life, and that is to report to myself, so to speak, and take photographs on that report kind of thing, would be during the period of going back and forth in a sense. [Photo League- a group of activist photographers. The League provided a dark room, well-known speakers on photography; Marguerite Bourke-White, Dorothea Lange, Eugene Smith, and the comraderie of other photographers with similar passion. -PM]

The only time I had to—when I was 19, just getting out of high school was when I began to realize that I had to get—I needed experience of an older person and after my relative [cousin. -PM], Ben Mundeville, had gone on a trip across country on trains and so on. And it just fascinated me. And I began to realize that that's where I've got to try that.

PAUL GARDULLO: Mm-hmm.

JOE SCHWARTZ: And my father, by that time, had already separated with my mother and came out to Los Angeles, and actually Highland Park, and started a tailor business. [First time Joe moved to CA with his mom was at 11 years old (1924) to follow his father, who was trying to make a go of it with his tailor business. In 1929 his parents divorced and Joe and his mom returned to New York at age 16. 1933 Joe traveled by rail—hitching rides on the cars where he traveled all through the U.S. and California. Ended up as a "deck boy" on an oil tanker and made his way back to New York from CA. -PM]

JAMES MILLER: So the first time you came out to the West Coast was then in the mid-1930s?

JOE SCHWARTZ: To the—

JAMES MILLER: To California.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Oh, California.

JAMES MILLER: You said you were 19 the first time you—

PAUL GARDULLO: Or did you spend time as a child in California too?

JOE SCHWARTZ: Well, let's see now. '39 was the New York—was the New York—

JAMES MILLER: World's Fair?

JOE SCHWARTZ: World's Fair.

JAMES MILLER: Mm-hmm.

PAUL GARDULLO: Right.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Because I got all kind of photos showing the signs and so on.

PAUL GARDULLO: Right.

JOE SCHWARTZ: They were part of—so I was really hot for getting into photography.

PAUL GARDULLO: Right.

JOE SCHWARTZ: That is just doing—that was part—I don't know. But I didn't have anything—equipment on the road, so to speak, the road—I was traveling on the train and hitchhiking and so on.

PAUL GARDULLO: Well, it seems to me that this travel, this movement between Brooklyn and California exposed- you to many different kind of people, many different cultures and people. Is that true?

JOE SCHWARTZ: It exposed me to a lot of things, just like before—before that occurred, the actual leaving Brooklyn, a friend of mine was teaching me how to travel with a pack, you know, hitchhiking, and we had a tent and so on, that some people that had some kind of—they lived in Pennsylvania and they were friends of ours.

So we visited there and camped there. Well, that was—you know, it was a mixture of all things like that. This business of walking such a long distance and hiking such a long distance was part of becoming, I guess, becoming a man, taking your responsibilities.

PAUL GARDULLO: Mm-hmm.

JOE SCHWARTZ: And the more—the more I had, the more events that occurred, the more I learned, of course. One of the things besides learning—now, this is something that I had recently thought about—You know, I didn't really graduate. What had happened was that in my last class, I guess that's the eighth term or something like that, I was in an English class with a guy by the name of Baldwin [was a teacher who flunked him in English (don't know his name)]. But he did eventually pass English at Alexander Hamilton High School in New York. -PM]

Actually, he was—he was very tough on kids, kids that he was teaching and he was certainly tough on me one time where I didn't do my homework properly. And he gave a lecture to the school—I mean, to the class—and was around my neglecting, that is what he thought, I neglected the homework. Actually I was just suffering from this division between my mother and father.

PAUL GARDULLO: Mm-hmm.

JOE SCHWARTZ: And I realize today that all this was the reason for all of my forgetting or this was part of my thing. I couldn't—I couldn't study well.

PAUL GARDULLO: Right.

JOE SCHWARTZ: And when he was lecturing, he comes up with his finger, you know, and pushes me up against—up against the blackboard. Now, we had one—actually I think in the whole school we had one Black person, Black student, a guy who was most of the football team, so to speak. And I had his name down and he was very sympathetic, and, you know, told me not to worry about it. He was—he was in the back, he was the tallest in the particular class. And the teacher was shoving me back there and told me that's where I want to sit. In other words, he was letting me know that I was wasting my time in there.

PAUL GARDULLO: Right.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Or wasting his time mostly. So you know, this came up recently. And I begin to realize that here's a guy that was committing himself to me and doing what perhaps he—the teacher = should have been doing and the sympathy of what was going on, you know. [High school went through 1933. -PM]

He was a friend to me. And it came a part of my feelings of not understanding Black people. I was getting a very good realization and besides some of the lectures my father had brought me to. Now, at this time I'm not giving you a time thing that's correct because I don't remember exactly when all of these things happened.

PAUL GARDULLO: Right.

JOE SCHWARTZ: I really don't.

PAUL GARDULLO: But this guy stuck up for you.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Huh?

PAUL GARDULLO: This guy stuck up for you.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Oh yes. This was something that—I learned something from this. I learned what a friend could be.

PAUL GARDULLO: Right.

JOE SCHWARTZ: And I learned what maybe my father or mother should have been.

PAUL GARDULLO: Right.

JOE SCHWARTZ: And here these people were—their background was part of Poland and part of Romania.

PAUL GARDULLO: Right.

JOE SCHWARTZ: You know, so—you know, there was a whole thing working up against me at the time.

PAUL GARDULLO: So early on, these kind of things are helping you develop a sense of fairness, would you say?

JOE SCHWARTZ: Yeah. I was—I didn't feel I was just good enough. That's what he was telling me, that I'm just—you know, I'm pretty stupid.

PAUL GARDULLO: The teacher, this is?

JOE SCHWARTZ: Yeah.

PAUL GARDULLO: The teacher.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Yeah, and I began to realize where it all came from—start, anyway, except when my mother and father were—they used to fight.

PAUL GARDULLO: Right.

JOE SCHWARTZ: And that was happening in a lot of foreign families—the Italian areas. That was a reason why many times in the Photo League, I chose the idea of nationalities and usually the nationalities, when they came over, they were quite poor. [Joe focused on inter-racial harmony; especially between children with his photography. -PM]

PAUL GARDULLO: Mm-hmm.

JOE SCHWARTZ: They were struggling at a time to become a part—an American, so to speak.

PAUL GARDULLO: Well, you mentioned the Photo League a couple times. When did you first pick up a camera?

JOE SCHWARTZ: You know, this business of when and when—

PAUL GARDULLO: Well, about, like when you were in your teens or in your 20s, do you think?

JOE SCHWARTZ: Well, I think when I first picked up a camera was my father's camera. It was an old big camera. I guess he was interested in trying—getting into the arts, in a way, during that period. That's the only thing that might have interested me in a professional kind of way because I didn't know very much about photography. I was really interested in art.

And if I was looking for a subject, I had my way of finding subjects. And one way soon became photography.

PAUL GARDULLO: Talk a little more about that. What art were you interested in?

JOE SCHWARTZ: What was happening? The teachers, actually, the way they taught me and so on, I became interested in who I was being taught by, and this was—that was—you know, kids would always talk about that, you know, what we thought about it.

PAUL GARDULLO: And is this at that same high school or is this afterward, when you developed this interest?

JOE SCHWARTZ: No, that school.

PAUL GARDULLO: That same school?

JOE SCHWARTZ: Yeah, oh yeah. That feeling of a good looking woman, you know, [laughs] all kinds of talk around that. And of course, when you—when you did a job of any kind, you think of how you affected the teacher.

And sometimes the kids would get together or I would get together with—oh, what was his name, now—I had a name before. Tony [sp] was somebody else. This guy was a poet. Another guy was an artist, different people of different walks of life, you know, that are pursuing things that I was looking at, looking for. There's so many things.

Of course, that experience of finally breaking away after the graduation—now, how did I get graduated? Well, that was interesting because there was a Miss Keyser [sp] who was an English teacher who took me on, so to speak, and actually in—I can remember this, where we had compositions to write, which is normal, you know. But I didn't know how to write a composition, actually how to put it together. So instead, she said, "Do it most anyway," and, you know, would explain what was necessary for a composition and so on. So I would—I would talk about—I guess by that time I had made a trip or something like that to California, just with my mother. And that's when everything blew up. And while I was there, while I was in California, I became—really, I just loved the place. You know, you couldn't help it. And so, when I went back and started writing in her class—now, time is such a—I can't seem to give you time there [1924-1929 in CA with his mom. -PM]

PAUL GARDULLO: That's okay.

JOE SCHWARTZ: I think I lost that. But I know the things that happened to me that got me interested in the arts mostly. I began to get interested in music and so on, you know, and I began to get friends that were interested in music. It was just a whole lot of things like that happening.

PAUL GARDULLO: And did you—so you were inspired by all sorts of creativity.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Yeah.

PAUL GARDULLO: And at some point in your life, around this time—

JOE SCHWARTZ: Well, I knew that the families made a lot of—

PAUL GARDULLO: Right

JOE SCHWARTZ:—of their sons and daughters—I realized that they appreciated their sons and daughters that got into music or got into art or got into whatever, except photography wasn't a big thing.

PAUL GARDULLO: Right. But you gravitated to that for some reason.

JOE SCHWARTZ: But it was to me because that was about the only way I could express myself, I think. I think that was the reason.

PAUL GARDULLO: And soon after, did you get introduced to the Photo League?

JOE SCHWARTZ: Yeah, but I'm not giving you proper times, I don't think. [1930s introduced to Photo League. -PM]

PAUL GARDULLO: That's okay.

JOE SCHWARTZ: But it did—it did follow through like that. The more the things happen, the more I became—I became more radical, let's say, and until I finally met a Photo League member who was himself thinking the way I was thinking. But he taught. He was teaching. He taught photography in the Photo League.

PAUL GARDULLO: Who was that?

JOE SCHWARTZ: That was David Robbins. At least I remember his name. And he actually—I don't know how he got into the business of selling these funny things, selling teeth.

PAUL GARDULLO: Selling teeth?

JOE SCHWARTZ: Yeah, and he came all the way out to San Diego [CA] and actually not knowing what turmoil I was going through, he was involved with—let's see, how will I put it—my wife's, he was involved with my wife's sister's husband. [Ruth and Harold Greenwald. -PM] [Laughs.] And I don't know what he had to do with teeth. I don't know how that came about. [They laugh.] But in discussing things with this particular person, who was a

political guy, actually.

PAUL GARDULLO: Right.

JOE SCHWARTZ: He worked—later on he had worked on newspapers and so on. And his sons are still around doing the same thing. Going through it that way—gosh, you know, it's like going through a whole lot of paper and that's—and much of it is blank.

PAUL GARDULLO: So what did he do?

JOE SCHWARTZ: So what do you see in the blank paper?

JAMES MILLER: So what did you learn from the Photo League?

JOE SCHWARTZ: What's that?

JAMES MILLER: What did you learn from the Photo League?

JOE SCHWARTZ: Oh. Well, techniques of how to get to certain photographs. When you see the kind of photographs they were getting, Paul Strand was part of that. You had Margaret Bourke-White.

JAMES MILLER: Right.

JOE SCHWARTZ: And you had a lot of different people like that.

JAMES MILLER: Yes, you mentioned in your own writing about how valuable their critiques were.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Oh yeah.

JAMES MILLER: So what was that about?

JOE SCHWARTZ: Critiques of each other.

JAMES MILLER: How did that work? You would go out on the streets? You'd take shots? You'd bring them back to the group?

JOE SCHWARTZ: [Yes. -PM] Well, the critiques—I wasn't very well-known in the organization at all. I was just a little, smart guy trying to get a place in the world, but not doing too well, you know. Especially beginning in an organization like that, you know, that's a lot of top people there. But they weren't there all the time. They'd come occasionally.

JAMES MILLER: So they were what, regular scheduled meetings?

JOE SCHWARTZ: They had regularly scheduled meetings and they had people—

JAMES MILLER: Who decided—

PAUL GARDULLO: Who's in it?

JAMES MILLER: Who was in it, whose work was going to be critiqued today? In particular, you're a young guy who's sort of trying to make your way in the world. You know, how do you work your way into an organization like that?

JOE SCHWARTZ: Well, at the same time I was looking for jobs too.

JAMES MILLER: Mm-hmm.

JOE SCHWARTZ: I was getting into lithography. Like during the time I was working for Knudson, that was his—that was his name. and he invented certain things in lithography. Have you ever looked into that?

PAUL GARDULLO: Into who?

JOE SCHWARTZ: He was a—at the time, I was hired by him and he was going to teach me how—or have me taught while I'm in there—how to strip, how to silhouette and how to do things that was important in the lithographic field. And even had me sell to—I was in a shop that was considered a—what were they called, names—

PAUL GARDULLO: Trade shop?

JOE SCHWARTZ: Trade shop, exactly, and being a trade shop, they had—they were tops, they were tops in that kind of work.

PAUL GARDULLO: Right.

JOE SCHWARTZ: They were doing work for the trade. And as a matter of fact, one of the—one of the things I learned how to silhouette was the [John James] Audubon book, that big Audubon book. It went through that shop. They made the plates for it. They didn't do the press work. That was done by the press that had plates made. And I was working on the negatives, a lot of the negatives and so on. And I learned how to do a lot of silhouetting. I became pretty good at it. So that's—my artwork steadied me for doing lithographic work.

PAUL GARDULLO: Right. So what—

JOE SCHWARTZ: But I met Margaret Bourke-White in that shop.

PAUL GARDULLO: Really?

JOE SCHWARTZ: She was a friend of Knudson. And he had also two sons working in there. But Margaret Bourke-White, I don't think—I guess she didn't have her own darkroom. She was using Knudson's darkroom.

PAUL GARDULLO: Oh.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Now, going along—and I can't—as I say, I can't give you times. I was beginning to—the technique of keeping a camera on you all the time I began to learn, even when I was going to work on—what was it—it was downtown where he had his shop. And I was beginning to go—when I went downtown, I'd see different things. And I'd take photos of them.

JAMES MILLER: But it's clear to me that there were always certain things that you were looking for in your shots. Right? I mean, you were on the alert.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Oh, in the neighborhood?

JAMES MILLER: Yes, so what were you looking—

JOE SCHWARTZ: Oh yeah. [Oh the streets -PM] Well, there was this woman who was—you'll see a lot of. In other words, I learned to represent the poor by taking photographs of the poor.

JAMES MILLER: Right, right.

JOE SCHWARTZ: And these people had histories of their own.

JAMES MILLER: Right.

PAUL GARDULLO: Right.

JOE SCHWARTZ: And it was showing in the city.

JAMES MILLER: But a lot of people were taking shots of the poor in the Photo League. I don't know of anybody who took as many shots of interracial interactions as you did.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Well, that could be. I don't—but I never—I never made a record of that. I mean, I never—

JAMES MILLER: Sure you did.

PAUL GARDULLO: You made a huge record. Did you consciously—do you feel like you consciously sought that or you may have been more naturally drawn to that?

JOE SCHWARTZ: Well, my consciousness was to look for things. That showed I was beginning to form my own theories on the things. I felt that in order to understand each other, and that kind of thing was already in existence where people were politically trying to understand each other. And I thought the best way was—as far as my living is concerned, I should live with people that I want to understand. So I made that kind of arrangements at times.

JAMES MILLER: Some of those interracial images that we were talking about—

PAUL GARDULLO: You know I'm—

JOE SCHWARTZ: Yes, I—



PAUL GARDULLO: I mean, I think that you talk about this—you talk about your work at the Kingsborough—

JAMES MILLER: Yes.

:

PAUL GARDULLO: Community, that Kingsboro projects in the Kingsboro communities.

JOE SCHWARTZ: I will. But before I come to that—[Weeksville Heritage Center, recently claimed that Joe has the largest collection of photographs of Kingsborough housing project from the 30s-40s. -PM]

PAUL GARDULLO: Yes.

JOE SCHWARTZ: See that woman up there? She was the mother of children that I had as friends. And she and her husband, for that matter, were planning a [inaudible] or whatever that—

PAUL GARDULLO: Right.

JOE SCHWARTZ: For the IWO, that's the International Workers Order.

PAUL GARDULLO: Right.

JAMES MILLER: Right.

JOE SCHWARTZ: And I lived in her place for a little while, not very long.

JAMES MILLER: That's a great shot, Joe. But look at it, I mean, but it's dignity, it's pride, you know, it's power, it's a forceful image. Not everyone's going to see that. You go back and look at some of the images that are coming out of the period you're talking about. Let's call it broader than the others.

JOE SCHWARTZ: And my mother just below her.

PAUL GARDULLO: Right.

JOE SCHWARTZ: That's my mother just below her where she's making maybe dinner or something like that. She's chopping certain kinds of food.

JAMES MILLER: Mm-hmm.

PAUL GARDULLO: But you clearly have this sense in your work, it seems to me, that your artistic sensibility and your politics are starting to come together. And it seems that—and I think this is—

JOE SCHWARTZ: I hope so.

PAUL GARDULLO:—what Jim is beginning to ask—to ask, is that it seems like it's documentary. Yes, it's documenting—you're documenting people.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Right.

PAUL GARDULLO: But you're capturing some sort of inner essence.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Exactly. The emotional areas I was trying to find, even in the way they were dressed, people were dressed.

JAMES MILLER: Right, right.

JOE SCHWARTZ: You can—even with the kids playing with a doll and using the swing and so on, but the way they were dressed you can see how they're being raised in their homes. That was at the housing project. This depicted more or less of what was going on in a certain street where there was a lot of wealthy people living and the shoe shine boy is something unusual—had to make a living for the family. And I was thinking in time I would go to try to visit his family.

JAMES MILLER: Mm-hmm.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Didn't get around to it but did other things. This young lady was—she was actually an artist. I have a shot of her. I was doing artwork with another person.

PAUL GARDULLO: This young girl?

JOE SCHWARTZ: Yeah.

PAUL GARDULLO: I think I've seen that picture—on an easel, two young children working on easels.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Yeah, yeah. The easel—you see the easel as well in that shot.

PAUL GARDULLO: And so you have this—so this idea that what you're doing with a camera is artistic, is conscious.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Yeah.

PAUL GARDULLO: It's coming from you, that it's more than just, "I'm just taking a picture of life."

JOE SCHWARTZ: I was very much interested in composition—composition, meaningful composition, and also if I taught anything to kids or young people, I would make sure that they understood or tried to get them to look into. I'd say, "First of all, if you can take art," that's more or less the way I started, you might say. "Take art in school and do the best you can. Learn about composition. Learn where you can get your ideas. Learn the things that interest you or you would like to be interested in, you know, and what other people are doing and sort of find other techniques that can help you in your own technique. Find the—you know, figure out a technique."

It could be—I have some of my art. I'll just bring one out here so that it illustrates what I'm talking about. Later on, while I was in lithography, I picked up the idea in art—what is that? The name of that is—

PAUL GARDULLO: The Yellow Submarine.

JOE SCHWARTZ: The Yellow Submarine. OK, there is—a, the lady I took photographs of—going to work.

PAUL GARDULLO: Yes.

JOE SCHWARTZ: This was a lady—an actress, I think, that was in one of the galleries that I had approached for business because I did a lot of—I did a lot of cards for—I'd create them sometimes for a gallery or I'd even give them ideas of how to word them.

PAUL GARDULLO: Right.

JOE SCHWARTZ: I was starting to be pretty good at that. So the art—I learned a new technique, which I hadn't seen anybody do. When they were mixing the inks, I used to—excuse me.

JAMES MILLER: Want something to drink?

JOE SCHWARTZ: I learned from some guy who was taking his ink off the press and I saw him—he was pressing some weigh sheets on them and he said, "Look, you've got some art."

PAUL GARDULLO: Yeah, yeah.

JOE SCHWARTZ: You see?

PAUL GARDULLO: [Laughs.]

JOE SCHWARTZ: And so I used to tell the pressmen, I'd say, "Listen, leave the inks on the side—you know, mix them so that they're"—and I told him what I was going to do. And then I would—I would, with my fingers, make some kind of art that I thought was art. At least I had seen stuff like this somewhere, but maybe not that, you know.

But that was a technique I started to understand. And today, you're getting a lot of stuff that you only can define it by a title.

PAUL GARDULLO: Right.

JOE SCHWARTZ: The title defines it, in many cases I would say, maybe not all cases. Now, I'll show you more as we go along.

PAUL GARDULLO: Sure. But these same principles of composition you were applying to your work in photography?

JOE SCHWARTZ: Well, I had to. That was what they talked about in the organization.

PAUL GARDULLO: And so what goes into that? Tell me a little bit about what are those qualities of composition

that they would talk about, that you would talk about?

JOE SCHWARTZ: Well, composition—after all, you think of background, you're looking at background, you're looking at the center of interest, the point of interest, you're looking at this Cartier-Bresson way of doing things and getting things at the end of the point of shoot, you know, the point of interest or whatever. But he was a great photographer. I wish I had met him. I wanted to meet him before he died—which I'm known for actually now is composition.

PAUL GARDULLO: Right.

JOE SCHWARTZ: All of my things have some kind of—although I have a lot of negatives that are—you might as well forget it. You know, I wouldn't be using. But I kept them anyway just in case.

PAUL GARDULLO: Sure.

JOE SCHWARTZ: There are parts, just like you keep parts in organizing ideas and so on. Oh yeah, and that's why I like—I want to start to use and learn how to use the digital camera.

PAUL GARDULLO: Right. Well, so it seems like, you know, you've got this—you're learning this quality of strong composition, and you're actively putting yourself in places that you think let you capture a part of life that you think is important and not being captured by others, specifically like places where interracial—

JOE SCHWARTZ: I had other ideas too. I thought I should let people know what's going on, what I see.

PAUL GARDULLO: Right.

JOE SCHWARTZ: And they could see it.

PAUL GARDULLO: So it seems—

JOE SCHWARTZ: I'm not just talking out of my—out of my hat.

PAUL GARDULLO: Yeah, and it seems like one of those places that you clearly consciously put yourself and made yourself a part of was at Kingsboro.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Oh definitely.

PAUL GARDULLO: And I'm looking at I think a couple—these couple of photos, for instance, are from there and they're pictures of children coming home from school.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Well, actually there those are tenants. Those are people that lived in Kingsboro and they were going home.

JAMES MILLER: Mm-hmm. [Affirmative.]

JOE SCHWARTZ: That's on Ralph Avenue, I think it was. I'm not sure, but I think so. This was before that, before they—now, these kids were playing together.

PAUL GARDULLO: Oh, okay.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Where does it say?

PAUL GARDULLO: It says in Bedford-Stuyvesant [Brooklyn, NY].

JOE SCHWARTZ: Huh?

PAUL GARDULLO: It says Bedford-Stuyvesant—Bed-Stuy.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Yeah, well of course, it would be the Brooklyn part of it. It would be Bed-Stuy, I think—that's the way they—when they hear me saying Bedford-Stuyvesant—"Don't you know that it's Bed-Stuy?" [Laughs.]

PAUL GARDULLO: Right.

JOE SCHWARTZ: [Laughs.] Yeah. Well, this is something I knew I could get good compositions and I knew when my mother had taken me to areas like that, that I have seen—I've seen the compositions and I knew where I could go to get them—there, right in Brooklyn and Bed-Stuy actually.

Well actually, it was in Brownsville. This was Brownsville in one of those Yiddish neighborhoods. And there, there

was quite a large mixture in that area. So you can see there is a mixture and people getting along well, you know, buying from each other, talking to each other. No bombs. I never had—during that period I never heard of any happening. It was those things that are kind of recent.

PAUL GARDULLO: Mm-hmm.

JOE SCHWARTZ: I don't know.

JAMES MILLER: You were talking earlier, when you were talking about your own sense of growing up, about nationalities, struggling to become Americans. Was that the connective tissue? Was that what you saw?

JOE SCHWARTZ: Oh, absolutely.

JAMES MILLER: But you talk about it in an interesting way because on the one hand you talked about it in terms of the tensions that came out of that, you know, that struggle to become American took its toll, right? At the same time—yeah.

JOE SCHWARTZ: The tension—I saw it in homes. There were tensions, of course. But they weren't tensions that you see right on the surface.

JAMES MILLER: Right.

PAUL GARDULLO: Mm-hmm.

JOE SCHWARTZ: It's underneath it, a lot of tensions.

JAMES MILLER: Right.

JOE SCHWARTZ: You know, you've become a—if you want to work in salesman and you want to be an honest salesman, you've got to get into that kind of thing. Well, I had to be able to learn to sell myself, or sell others.

PAUL GARDULLO: Mm-hmm.

JOE SCHWARTZ: If it was a matter of making a book. Yeah, you know, all those things in terms of living and you have to sort of adopt some of the things you read or you see. That's why museums are so good. You know, you see a lot of things that you don't exactly see, you know, in your living.

You learn how to maneuver your life. There's a lot of that going on, especially in Yiddish areas. To be maneuverable only meant to be acceptable in certain ways and sometimes you copy certain things, you know? Hey, I used to like to go to lectures for only that, to know what the people had done in their lifetime. And lectures in some ways meant that to me, that was what had happened. I'll watch a lot of people and try to figure their kind of philosophy and so on.

PAUL GARDULLO: I want to ask you about a specific photo that I saw in the book.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Yeah.

PAUL GARDULLO: Because I'm intrigued by it.

JOE SCHWARTZ: It's not in the book?

PAUL GARDULLO: It is in the book. I saw it in the book and I had tagged it. And now I've lost it. So maybe we can ask a—while I'm searching for it, there'll be another—

JOE SCHWARTZ: You see a lot of stuff. There's a couple of things that have the WPA [Works Progress Administration]

PAUL GARDULLO: There's a lot of great—yeah.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Signs of the WPA. As a matter of fact, there's one fellow in New Jersey that buys from me once in a while and just recently he's asked me to look up something.

PAUL GARDULLO: I'm interested in this photo. It's a photo that it says here in your book is called *Harlem Visit* and it's a Kingsboro tenants union and project VIPs—

JOE SCHWARTZ: Oh yeah.

PAUL GARDULLO:—demonstrate to the City of New York. And in this photo there are—it's a stage and there are

people up on the stage.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Yeah, yeah.

PAUL GARDULLO: And then there's—it's up in Harlem but it's all about—it has signs, "our goal, a community center for Kingsboro."

JOE SCHWARTZ: Oh yeah, yeah.

PAUL GARDULLO: And it's got your photographs.

JOE SCHWARTZ: That was my stuff. That was my head, and people I was with—

PAUL GARDULLO: Tell me about this.

JOE SCHWARTZ:—that were thinking about those things. We even had a—at the beginning, we had a—we started to picket some of the stores. It was right after the war.

JAMES MILLER: So who were the people you were with?

JOE SCHWARTZ: Yeah.

JAMES MILLER: Who were they?

JOE SCHWARTZ: Well, it was right after World War II that we picketed some people that were charging—overcharging for sugar. We thought it was overcharge.

JAMES MILLER: Did you picket in Brooklyn or in Harlem?

JOE SCHWARTZ: Oh no, that was in Brooklyn.

JAMES MILLER: That was in Brooklyn.

JOE SCHWARTZ: The Harlem thing—evidently the people—the housing projects got together and said, "We ought to compete with each other."

PAUL GARDULLO: Or collaborate, you mean?

JOE SCHWARTZ: Yeah, compete.

PAUL GARDULLO: Oh compete?

JOE SCHWARTZ: We would compete in sports, in this and that.

PAUL GARDULLO: Oh I see. I see. Right.

JOE SCHWARTZ: You know, after all, the housing project was a new thing.

PAUL GARDULLO: Right.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Which we did, and we had people here that were—well, here of course, she was a—she was in charge of the housing project of Brooklyn.

PAUL GARDULLO: This woman here?

JOE SCHWARTZ: Yeah. I'm trying. I can't remember her name.

PAUL GARDULLO: I think it's really interesting that you're up in Harlem, and it seems like you've got a mini-exhibit here of your photographs.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Yeah, that's right. That's right.

PAUL GARDULLO: And you're profiling what life is like in Brooklyn to the people of Harlem.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Not necessarily, no.

PAUL GARDULLO: No?

JOE SCHWARTZ: No. We were advertising the arts, so to speak [a Community Center for Kingsborough Housing

Project. -PM] These are people that were interested in football and, you know, the sports. And some of these people were people that were behind the microphones. This fellow here—and I should remember his name but I don't remember it. And this I remember, Gerard was one of the leading members of our organization. You see, even in organizations we had fights with politics.

JAMES MILLER: Right.

JOE SCHWARTZ: They were the first tenants union. They called themselves a tenants union. But they were led by Tammany—Tammany Hall.

JAMES MILLER: Right, right.

JOE SCHWARTZ: The Democratic Party actually.

JAMES MILLER: Right.

PAUL GARDULLO: Right.

JOE SCHWARTZ: And when we would—several of us—it was in the group that this fellow organized, this Gerard, we would speak up and say, you know, certain things we thought we wanted to follow as far as fixing the place was concerned, certain issues of the place we wanted to talk about.

JAMES MILLER: Right.

JOE SCHWARTZ: They didn't—they always stopped us.

JAMES MILLER: The Tammany crowd?

JOE SCHWARTZ: Yeah.

JAMES MILLER: Right.

JOE SCHWARTZ: So I spoke up against them.

PAUL GARDULLO: And was your union—it was interracial?

JOE SCHWARTZ: We had a double union.

PAUL GARDULLO: Right. You had two.

JOE SCHWARTZ: We had a double tenants union and actually ours was doing much more than what they were doing.

PAUL GARDULLO: Yes.

JOE SCHWARTZ: We had people—we activized people that lived in the housing project.

PAUL GARDULLO: So you got them involved in their own rights but also in sports and the arts, like a—

JOE SCHWARTZ: Well yeah, we thought that was a way—that was a way to become a tenants union. That was something that we should deal with because the kids liked that and why shouldn't we? We had motion pictures, you know, pictures of certain—I don't know where we got them from. But we had committees who were working on these things. Yeah, these—

[END OF CD1.]

JOE SCHWARTZ:—you would talk about.

PAUL GARDULLO: Schwartz, disc two.

JOE SCHWARTZ: That was really a feather in her hat that she was able to talk about these things.

JAMES MILLER: So at this point, you're really using your photographs—

JOE SCHWARTZ: We helped her.

JAMES MILLER: Yeah, as a means of social and political mobilization. I said, at this point here, you're really using

your photographs as a means of social and political mobilization.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Yeah. Oh yeah, definitely, sure. Look, this one had already sold. People buy—

PAUL GARDULLO: So those were for sale?

JOE SCHWARTZ: These are the old ones.

PAUL GARDULLO: And they're big! I mean, those are—those are poster-size.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Yeah, I used to do it—well—

PAUL GARDULLO: Were you making those posters?

JOE SCHWARTZ: The thing—the reason why they're big is because I could buy them cheaper.

PAUL GARDULLO: Oh.

JOE SCHWARTZ: I used to buy a lot of stuff. I had to throw away a lot of stuff. Yeah, I wasn't rich.

PAUL GARDULLO: Right.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Well, I must have been pretty poor.

PAUL GARDULLO: Who was buying that stuff? Do you know?

JOE SCHWARTZ: Well, actually at this time there wasn't anybody buying it.

PAUL GARDULLO: Okay

JOE SCHWARTZ: It was later on actually.

PAUL GARDULLO: Okay

JOE SCHWARTZ: But that wasn't the reason I made them. I made them because they illustrated the idea better. That's the only reason I made them.

PAUL GARDULLO: Would this have been a common—is this a unique day or is that kind of common? Would you have that—would you be displaying your art around—

JOE SCHWARTZ: It would be unique. Nobody had that. Nobody had all of these things.

PAUL GARDULLO: No?

JOE SCHWARTZ: Nobody—actually the May Day parade and so on—

PAUL GARDULLO: Yeah.

JOE SCHWARTZ:—that was—now, evidently that was a Socialist and Communist idea, this May Day.

PAUL GARDULLO: Yeah.

JOE SCHWARTZ: And so—but we supported it because it meant us. It was actually pointing to us in many respects.

JAMES MILLER: Sure.

JOE SCHWARTZ: And that's where I think the government was afraid that our organization was becoming a—

JAMES MILLER: Communist front?

JOE SCHWARTZ: Something like that.

JAMES MILLER: But were you on the list? After World Word II were you on, like, the Un-American [House Unamerican Activities Committee, HUAC]—

JOE SCHWARTZ: I wasn't on it, no.

JAMES MILLER: No, I mean, the organizations, you know, the tenants union—

JOE SCHWARTZ: But before, I guess they must have had—they must have had—

JAMES MILLER: Sure.

JOE SCHWARTZ: I'm sure they never—they never questioned me as being a Communist or anything like that.

JAMES MILLER: Right, any people—

JOE SCHWARTZ: But there were people that were—had trouble during that period.

JAMES MILLER: An awful lot of people had trouble during that period.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Yeah.

JAMES MILLER: An awful lot of people who were involved in the workers' campaign.

JOE SCHWARTZ: And of course when that happened, I was interested. I became interested because I wanted to be a part of something progressive at that time.

JAMES MILLER: Very, very dangerous—

JOE SCHWARTZ: So I was—I was—oh, before I got into the housing project, it was before the war came on. I was involved with—what was it called—I know I have a photo showing they were marching. And they happened to be Black and White, marching. And let's see. What did they call it? Well, you had the NAACP [National Association for the Advancement of Colored Peoples].

PAUL GARDULLO: Right.

JOE SCHWARTZ: That was involved. I had taken photos of their marches—small marches and the flags and the Boy Scouts and all that stuff. Then there was the other—the other very active Black [National Negro Congress Citizen's Civics Affairs Committee with the photo "Does Discriminate" showing first Black women to picket a chain for jobs -PM]—I'm thinking now in terms of there was a picketing against—this was before we left.

There was a picketing against the 5&10 before they—before they quit. And the picketing was young women because—and their slogan was to picket stores that wouldn't hire people living in the neighborhoods.

PAUL GARDULLO: Right.

JOE SCHWARTZ: They were actually—they were actually supporting them.

JAMES MILLER: Sure, those old don't-buy-where-you-can't-work campaigns—

JOE SCHWARTZ: And the women—

JAMES MILLER: Right.

JOE SCHWARTZ:—were—they began their campaign, the Black women. Now, this was actually I think the more or less the first picketing of the Black women.

JAMES MILLER: This was after—

JOE SCHWARTZ: They would go from grocery to grocery store.

JAMES MILLER: This was after World War II, after the end of World War II, or before?

JOE SCHWARTZ: It started before.

PAUL GARDULLO: Before, in the late '30s?

JAMES MILLER: Right, this is the '30s.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Yeah. It started before.

PAUL GARDULLO: When you went—when you went out to photograph these events, now clearly sometimes you're out and you're on the way to work and photographing—

JOE SCHWARTZ: Yeah, well—



PAUL GARDULLO:—and close to home. This was clearly something you would go to do.

JOE SCHWARTZ: No, this—I knew where they were going.

PAUL GARDULLO: How many—how many people were there to do what you did, to take pictures of these kind of things?

JOE SCHWARTZ: I hadn't seen anybody.

PAUL GARDULLO: You didn't see them?

JOE SCHWARTZ: No. I've got a photo that was about this big. I guess it was even smaller, in a 35 millimeter. I got a photograph of the first picketing of nurses—you'll see it—of nurses, but it doesn't show Black and White but it shows White nurses organizing unions—

PAUL GARDULLO: Right.

JOE SCHWARTZ:—organizing their union. So I had a digital made, and it came out, here it is—

PAUL GARDULLO: Wonderful.

JOE SCHWARTZ: And it showed the nurses out there for the eight-hour day. And the sign is there. I have photographs of picketing of the railroad. They were tearing down the EI, old EI.

PAUL GARDULLO: Yes.

JOE SCHWARTZ: And this was taken at night and this was—Black and White people were picketing to save the five-cent fare. It's a sign. These are all historical things.

PAUL GARDULLO: Yeah.

JOE SCHWARTZ: And they happened in these neighborhoods. You didn't see it in Fifth Avenue.

PAUL GARDULLO: Right, right. [Laughs.] So let me take you back for a second to the—to the—to Kingsboro and the tenants union because I'm interested in that story and I want to find out what happened.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Oh.

PAUL GARDULLO: What happened with that conflict between the two tenants unions and—

JOE SCHWARTZ: Yeah, well—well, one part of it is I was—I was waylaid one time, and there were two or three people that were—mauled me actually. And I was in my uniform. This was right after the—well, it was just when I got out of the service.

PAUL GARDULLO: The service, so you were in your Marine Corps uniform?

JOE SCHWARTZ: Yeah.

PAUL GARDULLO: So you had been involved with Kingsboro prior to service and then after as well, or it was so close that it's right on top of one another?

JOE SCHWARTZ: Well, they made me president of the organization.

PAUL GARDULLO: Right, right. And so—

JOE SCHWARTZ: Just a minute—I have to show you these.

PAUL GARDULLO: So you got attacked by the Tammany folks, you think?

JOE SCHWARTZ: I started before I even left New York—left the town—I started a little newsletter. Now, this is when I went with a—her daughter—I used to take her to the area where the—well, that was one of the newsletters. There were several. I had three of these, but that will give you an idea. Read some of it.

PAUL GARDULLO: This is your—this is a 1948 newsletter.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Yeah.

PAUL GARDULLO:—called *The Kingsboro New Look*.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Right.

PAUL GARDULLO: And it's got your photograph right on the front cover. Who was—

JOE SCHWARTZ: Right. Well, and there were—more of my photographs on the inside and my writing. I wrote about—well, I had a starter thing, so—

PAUL GARDULLO: Who's who in Kingsboro. This is a community newsletter with cartoons and—

JOE SCHWARTZ:—and we even started—

PAUL GARDULLO: Even ads.

JOE SCHWARTZ: There they are.

PAUL GARDULLO: Are these all your photographs?

JOE SCHWARTZ: Yeah.

PAUL GARDULLO: Can we get a copy of that? That's fabulous, Joe.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Listen, I was in civil rights—

PAUL GARDULLO: Have you seen these?

JAMES MILLER: I've seen them, yeah.

JOE SCHWARTZ: I was in civil rights for a long time.

JAMES MILLER: Bring it with you. I'll make a photocopy of it at my house.

JOE SCHWARTZ: I'll never forget when we—when we start—a group of us started to put the—let's see, the sheriff's office would be taking—what do they call it when they take their furniture out.

PAUL GARDULLO: They were evicting people?

JAMES MILLER: Evictions—

JOE SCHWARTZ: Huh?

PAUL GARDULLO: Evicting?

JAMES MILLER: Evictions, housing evictions—

JOE SCHWARTZ: Yeah, evictions. I've got one photograph of an eviction. It's a wonder I didn't take many more. But I—

JAMES MILLER: It sounds like—

JOE SCHWARTZ: I was involved in stopping the eviction. We went up there and put the stuff back.

JAMES MILLER: Right. It sounds, Joe, like some of the organizations that you were involved in after the war were parts of the Civil Rights Congress. Does that ring a bell?

JOE SCHWARTZ: Yeah.

JAMES MILLER: The Civil Rights Congress?

JOE SCHWARTZ: Yeah, I mean, it would be connected.

JAMES MILLER: Yeah.

JOE SCHWARTZ: We went to Washington one time.

JAMES MILLER: Yeah, it would.

JOE SCHWARTZ: And I remember it was—her daughter was involved, and we went to Washington, and I remember going to—and I could type at the time. And I think we visited the—what's it—not the Smithsonian, but they had a lot of stuff that you could type. There was a lot of material.

JAMES MILLER: The Library of Congress?

JOE SCHWARTZ: Yes.

JAMES MILLER: Yeah, the Library of Congress.

JOE SCHWARTZ: We went to the Library of Congress.

JAMES MILLER: Right.

JOE SCHWARTZ: And I typed out certain things she was working on Black history. So I'd be getting—I was getting my share of black history just from her—Augusta, Augusta Jackson. At that time Jackson but she became—I've forgotten. It was a writer.

JAMES MILLER: Was her first name Juanita?

JOE SCHWARTZ: No.

JAMES MILLER: Okay

JOE SCHWARTZ: Oh Juanita?

JAMES MILLER: Juanita Jackson, does that ring a bell?

JOE SCHWARTZ: Oh, she was a—yeah, but I never came across her. I think she was a—she was in the arts.

JAMES MILLER: Yeah.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Juanita Jackson.

JAMES MILLER: Okay

JOE SCHWARTZ: Was she a writer?

JAMES MILLER: I'm not sure. I know she was—

JOE SCHWARTZ: Either a writer or an artist.

JAMES MILLER: I know she came out of the NAACP Youth.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Yeah, well we'll go over—we'll find a lot of different people that you'll recognize that you're not thinking of now.

JAMES MILLER: Interesting.

PAUL GARDULLO: Were people at this time - you know, looking at that the community newsletter—

JOE SCHWARTZ: Yeah.

PAUL GARDULLO:—and thinking about publications at the time, and I'm wondering if certain publications might have been asking you for—

JOE SCHWARTZ: People like me.

PAUL GARDULLO:—to put your pictures in their publication. I think about—

JOE SCHWARTZ: There wasn't anything like this.

PAUL GARDULLO: Right. But I'm thinking about what is the—what is the publication that Claudia Jones worked for? Do you know Claudia?

JOE SCHWARTZ: Claudia Jones?

PAUL GARDULLO: She was a—she worked for—it was a Communist publication based in New York. But that's beside the point. I'm wondering if—

JOE SCHWARTZ: But I remember seeing the name.

PAUL GARDULLO:—if people were asking you to kind of put your photographs in some of the—some of the

newspapers or pamphlets and stuff that were being distributed for political causes.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Well, I asked—I tried to get into the *Times*. I tried to get into, oh, several newspapers that were getting—and especially the—*Life* magazine, which—David introduced me to a woman that was in charge of the photography and all of them. The photograph you see of the two kids, that's the one I was showing them. It was too controversial. And that's the—and all of them had the same thing: too controversial. And at that time, in other words, they never showed kids—

JAMES MILLER: Right.

JOE SCHWARTZ: You know, and maybe, maybe they did. But you know, I didn't know about it.

JAMES MILLER: Well, that's what I mean about what's so unique about what you were doing. I know in the 1930s, the late 1930s, *Life* magazine had a big spread, a big photo spread on the Scottsboro Boys. But that's the—

JOE SCHWARTZ: Oh, yeah.

JAMES MILLER: But that's the kind of image that was being—

JOE SCHWARTZ: It was always—

JAMES MILLER: It was always criminals.

JOE SCHWARTZ: It was always a pure image, the pure thing.

JAMES MILLER: It was always criminalization or extreme poverty.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Right, and they went—and people always went to Harlem. They all went to Harlem and got the poverty of Harlem.

JAMES MILLER: But that's exactly the difference between—

JOE SCHWARTZ: One time I went to Wilmington [DE]. My wife and I hitchhiked to Wilmington, where we got married. It was—it was cheaper that way, but we hitchhiked. Well, okay, when we got there, there were a lot of incidents—got a shot of her in front of the store. You'll see that, too. It's in here, where Blacks stay in the rear and so on, you know, all that stuff.

PAUL GARDULLO: Yes, yes.

JAMES MILLER: Right.

JOE SCHWARTZ: And that was when we got married at that time. Actually she was in the corner of the picture, but I don't think it shows here. Well, what else was I going to mention to you?

PAUL GARDULLO: You know, I think it's interesting that even pictures of children getting along were deemed too controversial.

JOE SCHWARTZ: That's right.

PAUL GARDULLO: But you know, one of the things that Jim and I—and I'm sure many people who've looked at your work over the years have noticed is the way that you take wonderful pictures of children. You take really evocative pictures of children, and they are—

JOE SCHWARTZ: But they were happening!

PAUL GARDULLO: So I'm just—

JOE SCHWARTZ: I didn't have to set them up.

PAUL GARDULLO: So I'm wondering what is—what is it about—you know, do you—do you think—is there something about pictures of childhood. Do you think kids are getting along with one another better, especially in these interracial shots—

JOE SCHWARTZ: Oh, sure.

PAUL GARDULLO: What is it about kids?

JOE SCHWARTZ: Well, it's the innocence of kids. They're not looking at—the only time they start looking at the

differences is when they got [inaudible] for it. I remember—I'll never forget when I invited one of her daughters. I guess it was—let's see—I can't remember, but one of the daughters, and I—my mother wasn't very attentive. Anytime somebody came up—but finally she came out. It came out with her that it didn't make any difference to her who came up there, and—but I got angry. I became—I was the snarl kind of thing. I got angry with her that she didn't talk much with—she did say something. She says, "Well, don't you have any other girls that you can have visit you?"

See, now that was already a statement of—what I thought was a—it provoked me, anyway, that it was anti-Black and that kind of thing. So I really—and later on in life, I began to realize how wrong I was to place it that way, because here she left fruit and everything else for both of us to have, you know. She wasn't making a difference. She had—anybody came and was a friend or something like that, she would always have fruit, a bowl of fruit. But you know, you see, you don't—you don't philosophize that way. Maybe later on it comes—it comes to—you begin to see how wrong you are in taking certain stands.

PAUL GARDULLO: And this is—this is your mother?

JOE SCHWARTZ: Yeah.

PAUL GARDULLO: Well, we always act—we always react the most strongly to our—to our parents and their perceived—

JOE SCHWARTZ: Oh, sure. Well yeah, you think they should know better.

PAUL GARDULLO:—and our perceptions about their inabilities.

JOE SCHWARTZ: They should know better, you see. And I said, "Well, what are you learning in the union?" She was a union person. Well, the unions—you never learned anything like that, either. Oh, that's the—

PAUL GARDULLO: Is this the image you were referring to?

JOE SCHWARTZ: Yeah, this one here. See, this girl, *Whites Only*—

PAUL GARDULLO: Whites only—

JOE SCHWARTZ:—but she was standing here.

PAUL GARDULLO: And so, you now, I really like the way that you, you know, you have—you spent time documenting the awful.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Well, yeah, I saw them as being one and the same thing.

PAUL GARDULLO: So you spent time showing pictures of—

JOE SCHWARTZ: Oh yeah.

PAUL GARDULLO:—racism and oppression, but there always—there always—

JOE SCHWARTZ: I'd always been able to recognize racism.

PAUL GARDULLO: Right, and then—but what you've done so wonderfully is what we've talked about, which is kind of showing the resilience of people regardless of that, and the strength of people regardless of what—you know, of this environment.

JOE SCHWARTZ: In what way? Strength in what way?

PAUL GARDULLO: People getting along—

JOE SCHWARTZ: Oh, oh, oh, oh, that I took photos of them.

PAUL GARDULLO: Yes.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Yeah, sure.

PAUL GARDULLO: But I'm—

JOE SCHWARTZ: I saw that all the time. But I wasn't always ready—I didn't have always a camera.

PAUL GARDULLO: Right.

JOE SCHWARTZ: I utilized that as an idea, you know.

JAMES MILLER: So how's your energy, Joe?

JOE SCHWARTZ: Huh?

PAUL GARDULLO: How are you doing?

JAMES MILLER: How's your energy? How are you doing?

JOE SCHWARTZ: My energy?

JAMES MILLER: You want to take a little break?

PAUL GARDULLO: You want to have a snack?

JOE SCHWARTZ: No, I already got part of my breakfast in the—in the freezer there, rather in the refrigerator.

PAULA MOTLO: Yeah, I'll get some cheese out and stuff.

JOE SCHWARTZ: No, I'm waiting for you guys to look at the photos and make your remarks at them. [They laugh.]

JAMES MILLER: That's tomorrow. That's tomorrow.

PAUL GARDULLO: We'll have some time. We'll find some time this afternoon to do that.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Yeah, you better start today.

PAUL GARDULLO: We will. We will today.

JOE SCHWARTZ: I know each one, you're going to have something you're going to say about it.

PAUL GARDULLO: But we're still interested in—

JOE SCHWARTZ: You're going to ask about each one of those. There's some duplicates there.

PAUL GARDULLO: You know, one of these other photos that I was so impressed by is this picture you have of a newsstand—

JAMES MILLER: Yeah.

PAUL GARDULLO:—because, you know, you've got these photos of—like the one we saw—*White Only*—or you know, the—you know, *Jew Town* or *Dirty Niggers* or whatever.

JOE SCHWARTZ: You can learn what was happening.

PAUL GARDULLO: But you see this one—well, not only do you see what was happening to me, but you look at these titles—

JOE SCHWARTZ: Yeah, right, right.

PAUL GARDULLO: And they are so—you realize that—how pervasive the racial attitude (can get ?).

JOE SCHWARTZ: That's how I realized it, by seeing that title in the—at the (peach pit ?).

PAUL GARDULLO: You know, I mean, these are just—you know, *Christine Keeler and her Negro Lovers*.

JAMES MILLER: Yeah, right.

PAUL GARDULLO: *These kids were sold as Slaves. He slept seven years with his dead lover.* I mean, it's just—it's hilarious on a level. I mean, it's just—

JOE SCHWARTZ: [Laughs.]

PAUL GARDULLO: It's hilarious on one level and it's—and it's so utterly sad.

JOE SCHWARTZ: And realize that being a Black person, walking by there and if somebody was looking at you seemingly the wrong way, you know, and if the person was very sensitive or had a lot of problems like this

already—

PAUL GARDULLO: Right.

JOE SCHWARTZ:—you know, this becomes more sensitive to that person. And I wrote about that, I think, in the—in the book.

PAUL GARDULLO: Right, right.

JOE SCHWARTZ: And in the book I say that also that when a young Black person sees on the next block somebody getting a certain kind of a job, and he applied for something similar, and he couldn't get the job—how he feels, what's the feeling. Do you want to destroy that thing that does that? Of course. You see, it's a question always—I have to get something that's going to make—bring out that question. And if I can do it, I'm going to do it. I have other ideas.

PAUL GARDULLO: Did you ever get in trouble with—

JOE SCHWARTZ: For instance, you see that photo there?

PAUL GARDULLO: Mm-hmm.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Take a look at it again. No, no, it's stuck on the wall. You'll see it in here, too. It's a digital actually.

PAUL GARDULLO: This one here?

JOE SCHWARTZ: Yeah. You see the background?

PAUL GARDULLO: Yes.

JOE SCHWARTZ: It's—the mayor is running for mayor.

PAUL GARDULLO: It's for Tom Bradley.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Tom Bradley.

JAMES MILLER: Right, right.

PAUL GARDULLO: The Tom Bradley billboard going up.

JOE SCHWARTZ: And then you see the kids on Halloween.

PAUL GARDULLO: It's a Halloween Day picture. But what are they doing out there in the highway?

JOE SCHWARTZ: Isn't that a friendly thing? How can I set a thing like that up?

PAUL GARDULLO: Right, yeah.

JOE SCHWARTZ: [Laughs.]

PAUL GARDULLO: Right.

JOE SCHWARTZ: You know, it was there.

PAUL GARDULLO: Right.

JOE SCHWARTZ: And luckily enough I had the camera with me. There's so many shots that I didn't have the camera for, I could kick myself.

PAUL GARDULLO: Well, you've got an amazing record with what you have.

JOE SCHWARTZ: I think so. I think so. I enjoy looking at the photos again and again and again. Every time I look at these things and I show them to others, I'm enjoying and I realize what I'm doing.

JAMES MILLER: It's an extraordinary visual record of the whole 20th century, Joe.

JOE SCHWARTZ: By the way, you would be interested in—for instance, this was a person—two people who were squatters. Well, there's a color difference. [Laughs.] Not only that, but you can see—but you see these are people that were in my position, I felt. It's the same thing.

But I would have liked to have done what they did. I didn't do that. Oh, I squatted. I squatted in front of a—one time on the road. I squatted in front of a place where they sold five cent coffee, and sure enough, somebody came by and asked me if I'm thirsty or anything or they wanted to buy a cup of coffee. And so—you know, so I know what it was like, the begging kind of thing.

PAUL GARDULLO: Yeah, yeah. Well, let's take a little—let's take a little break and have a little bit of food and drink and we'll come back and talk a little bit more. It's been great.

JOE SCHWARTZ: [Laughs.]

PAUL GARDULLO: Thanks so much.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Well, I hope so.

PAUL GARDULLO: I'm learning a ton.

JOE SCHWARTZ: I think it would be easier if you can go through this thing quickly and just put them on—pile them up here.

PAUL GARDULLO: Uh-huh. [Affirmative.]

JOE SCHWARTZ: And it would be easier for you. You come across things, which bring out the questions.

PAUL GARDULLO: Right. Well, I'm not worried. I think things are going great. So you don't—I don't think you need to be worried about how we're doing, Joe.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Well, okay.

PAUL GARDULLO: You are—you're—this is fabulous stuff.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Well, I'm worried. [Laughs.] I like—I'd like everything to be out there.

PAUL GARDULLO: [Laughs.] I know. You want us to get these out.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Is the artist that way?

JAMES MILLER: Joe wants the action. You want the action. You want the action. You want the deal. [Laughs.]

JOE SCHWARTZ: Well look, I'd like you to know that Elizabeth Catlett gave me this—

PAUL GARDULLO: Well, let's talk about her when we—you know, in the afternoon or when we finish lunch, let's talk about Elizabeth Catlett.

JOE SCHWARTZ:—and that Artis Lane gave me that.

PAUL GARDULLO: That's a beautiful, beautiful portrait there.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Oh, it sure is.

PAUL GARDULLO: Do you know—

JOE SCHWARTZ: She took it out of her scrapbook. Oh, no, that one there, that one was taken from one of my photographs. I made a trade with her.

PAULA MOTLO: Harvey, did you want me to warm up the Chinese, too?

HARVEY MOTLO: Yeah, that's fine, yeah. That's what we brought it for, for lunchtime.

PAUL GARDULLO: That'll be great.

JAMES MILLER: Yeah.

JOE SCHWARTZ: I think maybe—

PAUL GARDULLO: Yeah, I'd love to talk more about the friendships you developed with other artists and photographers. We've got time, though. We're not—we're not in a rush.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Well, you know—[laughs]—when you—



[END OF CD2. Track 1.]

JOE SCHWARTZ: I can't do much talking when I'm eating.

[END OF CD2. Track 2.]

PAUL GARDULLO: Schwartz, disc two, track 3.

JOE SCHWARTZ: That was a big thing for the commercial people.

PAUL GARDULLO: Yeah.

JOE SCHWARTZ: You see when I'm eating—

PAUL GARDULLO: So let me ask you—

JOE SCHWARTZ: I had to get my top teeth filled and I'm having one hell of a time with it.

PAUL GARDULLO: Oh. So you said the World's Fair was great for the commercial people. Did you take pictures at the 1939 World's Fair?

JOE SCHWARTZ: Well, I took pictures.

PAUL GARDULLO: Yeah.

JOE SCHWARTZ: But not in the World's Fair.

PAUL GARDULLO: Oh, OK.

JOE SCHWARTZ: I took maybe one or two.

JAMES MILLER: Take us back to an earlier period. Go all the way back to the beginning. So when were you born, again? What year? 1914? 1915?

JOE SCHWARTZ: [1913. -PM] Something like that.

[Audio break. Something falls.]

PAUL GARDULLO: I'm afraid some things are going to not be—

JOE SCHWARTZ: They're slippery with that little—

PAUL GARDULLO: Maybe we should stand them up. So we were talking about when you were born, Joe. 1913, is it?

JOE SCHWARTZ: It was.

PAUL GARDULLO: It was?

JOE SCHWARTZ: It was Humboldt Street. I think it was 47 Humboldt Street, on the corner across the street from my uncle's speakeasy.

PAUL GARDULLO: And you—do you remember your uncle's shop? Do you remember your uncle's saloon or speakeasy when you were little?

JOE SCHWARTZ: I remember I got poetry on something like that. And the nearest I got in photography was after a fire in a beer joint, where these guys were drinking beer on a table that had been in the fire, and you could see the window. And outside of that area was—and this is in Ohio.

I quit—my father sent me to the IOOF [Independent Order of Odd Fellows] to join the lodge. And when I got that card I went up there and complained to the—I think they must have taken that out. What they had to say was they—let's see. What did it say now? Let me have that. It said, "I"—you know, and I'd put my name down—"am of full white blood of sound health and was born in" so on and so on. I said, "That's"—I guess I called it—that was a statement. And I gave him the definition of what I thought of it and that I wouldn't join until they took that off. I never went back.

But outside of that lodge was a building. I think this is—well, this—was this in New York or was this in California, because I—but I found a photo that had been thrown away. Sousa and his band—

PAUL GARDULLO: John Philip Sousa?

JOE SCHWARTZ: Mm-hmm. [Affirmative.]

PAUL GARDULLO: A photo that you took?

JOE SCHWARTZ: Mm-mmm. [Negative.]

PAUL GARDULLO: No, okay

JOE SCHWARTZ: It was thrown away. And when I came out of the building—and I usually used to look in piles of things. And that's what I found. I hadn't done anything with it.

PAUL GARDULLO: But you did walk back with a couple of photos. What are these?

JOE SCHWARTZ: Well, this is just a digital—or this is a different kind. I forgot what they call this photo. But it's a bad—I haven't got the original here. The original I took and it had—it had been the first bread line. I think it was the first breadline. I don't know how I'm going to find out. Oh, this was taken in Mexico by a lady that started a Los Angeles photo league with several others. We started that. She gave me this photo.

PAUL GARDULLO: It's beautiful.

JOE SCHWARTZ: She died in Mexico, you know.

PAUL GARDULLO: You mentioned Mexico—

JOE SCHWARTZ: She had a—she had a great book that she did in Mexico—*The Women of Mexico*.

PAUL GARDULLO: Have you ever traveled internationally? And I know that you traveled when you were in the service.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Not much.

PAUL GARDULLO: And I'd love to talk to you about that in a minute. But so not much international travel?

JOE SCHWARTZ: Mm-mmm. [Negative.]

PAUL GARDULLO: You did mention—

JOE SCHWARTZ: I went to Mexico.

PAUL GARDULLO: Mexico makes me think of your—before you mentioned how you had the friendship with Elizabeth Catlett and—

JOE SCHWARTZ: Well, that had nothing to do with the travel.

PAUL GARDULLO: No, but I know she lived in Mexico.

JOE SCHWARTZ: I knew her from—the thing you wrote about me by—was her friend. She took this woman that I gave you the statement of—

JAMES MILLER: Oh, Samella Lewis?

JOE SCHWARTZ: Hmm?

JAMES MILLER: Samella Lewis.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Samella, yeah. She was her student. But we're very good friends. We're both very good friends.

JAMES MILLER: Ah, okay

JOE SCHWARTZ: And this was done by a Johnny, by a WPA worker, Johnny Atkinson, but he did other things. This was just—but I consider that a little—

MR.: Do you guys know Fred? Have you met Fred?

JAMES MILLER: Jim Miller.

PAUL GARDULLO: Okay

JOE SCHWARTZ: What you might do is maybe look through these that are—that are framed and see which ones you—or you may—you may just choose them all. That's why I put them out:

PAUL GARDULLO: Right.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Because I had a feeling that you might choose them all.

PAUL GARDULLO: I want to get a sense of how you're feeling. Do you want to take a rest, or do you want to keep talking about the past?

JOE SCHWARTZ: Well, I ought to talk to you as I think of what should be talked about. Can I show you—we can walk a little bit.

JAMES MILLER: Joe, why don't we do that for a little bit.

PAUL GARDULLO: Yeah.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Come on, take a little walk. You guys are tired. I'm not.

PAUL GARDULLO: Hey, I could—I could take a little nap.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Could you? All right, then you'll have to take all that stuff off there. [Laughs.]

PAUL GARDULLO: You know, you talked a little bit more about—a little bit earlier when we were talking about Kingsboro and the issues you had there. And you were mentioning that one time you were confronted by a man and you were wearing—

JOE SCHWARTZ: A couple of people.

PAUL GARDULLO: Yeah, and you were wearing your Marine Corps uniform, and I wanted to take some time to talk to you about your time in the service. Would you like to talk about that?

JOE SCHWARTZ: I'll say this: That when I was in boot camp, I didn't get advanced training—

PAUL GARDULLO: No?

JOE SCHWARTZ:—which I should have gotten before I left. They didn't give me advanced training, but I didn't complain. And I was assigned one of the—I got the photograph of that, one of the photographers. No, I don't think you'll see it there. I'm trying to think of where I left it.

PAUL GARDULLO: You did—you did some work photographing for the Marine Corps, didn't you?

JOE SCHWARTZ: You mean after the war?

PAUL GARDULLO: No, while you were serving.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Oh yeah, of course, a number of things actually. I actually was invited to a Filipino church, where they had different groups of people and I was invited to dinner there and so on. And also they—I have a letter of invitation asking for me to give the talk—the speech of Rabbi [Roland B.] Gittelsohn. And I have it in there. You can open up that—oh, no, in here.

PAUL GARDULLO: Okay

JOE SCHWARTZ: You can just open that cover, and I think you'll see his speech.

PAUL GARDULLO: And you were stationed in the Philippines?

JOE SCHWARTZ: No.

PAUL GARDULLO: No?

JOE SCHWARTZ: No, there were a lot of Filipino people in the—in the communities.

PAUL GARDULLO: Where were you stationed?

JOE SCHWARTZ: That was Maui [HI]

PAUL GARDULLO: Maui?

JOE SCHWARTZ: But this was after—after the war when we were retiring. That's it. And in there I mention—here, let me have that one—that one. While you're looking through that, I'll read it.

"This is perhaps the grimmest and surely the holiest task we have faced since D-Day. Here before us lie the bodies of comrades and friends, men who until yesterday, last week laughed with us, joked with us, trained with us as we prepared to hit the beaches of this island, men who fought with us and feared with us, with men. Somewhere in this plot of ground there may lie the man who could have discovered the cure for cancer. Under one of these Christian crosses or beneath a Jewish Star of David, there may rest now a man who was destined—who was destined to be a great prophet, to find the way perhaps for all to live in plenty, with poverty and hardship for none.

How they lie here silently in this sacred soil and we gather to consecrate this earth in their memory—it is not easy to do so. Some of us have buried our closest friends here. We saw men killed before our very eyes. Any one of us might have died in their places. Indeed, some of us are alive and breathing and at this very moment only because men who lie here beneath us had the courage and strength to give their lives for ours. To speak in memory of such men as these is not easy. Of them, too, it can be said with bitter truth the world will little—not long remember what we say here.

It can never forget what they did here. No, our poor power of speech can add nothing to what these men and the other dead of our division who are not here have already done. All that we—all that we even hope to do is follow their example, to show the same selfless courage and peace what they did in war, to swear that by the grace of God and the stubborn strength and power of human will their sons ensure shall never suffer these pains again.

These men have done their job well. They have sent the ghastly—they have paid the ghastly price of freedom. And if that freedom once again—will once again be lost as it was after the last war, the unforgivable blame will be sure not theirs. It will be ours, not theirs. And it is the living who are here to be dedicated and consecrated."

"We dedicate ourselves,"—the last paragraph—"first, to live together in peace the way they fought and are buried in this war. Here lie men who loved America because their ancestors generations ago helped in her founding and other men who escaped—who lived with equal passion because they themselves or their fathers escaped from oppression to her blessed shores.

Here lie officers and men, Negroes and White, rich men and poor together." He didn't know about that acceptance of the word Negro. She wanted that. "Here lies officers—here are Protestants, Catholics and Jews together. Here no man prefers another because of his faith or despises him because of his color. Here there are no quotas of how many from each group are admitted and are allowed. Among these men there is no discrimination, no prejudices, no hatred. Theirs is the highest and purest democracy."

That's quite a thing, wasn't it?

JAMES MILLER: Mm-hmm. [Affirmative.]

PAUL GARDULLO: Mm-hmm. [Affirmative.]

JOE SCHWARTZ: Well, actually one of the actors went all across the United States and gave this speech.

PAUL GARDULLO: Mm-hmm. [Affirmative.]

JAMES MILLER: Who wrote that?

JOE SCHWARTZ: His name is Gittelsohn.

JAMES MILLER: Oh, that's the Rabbi?

JOE SCHWARTZ: Yeah.

JAMES MILLER: Oh, I see. okay.

PAUL GARDULLO: Chaplain?

JOE SCHWARTZ: He was at the head of the—

MR MILLER: No, he was a Rabbi.

PAUL GARDULLO: Yeah, and he definitely was inspired by Abraham Lincoln's Gettysburg Address.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Well, I talked to him, believe me.

PAUL GARDULLO: Yeah?

JOE SCHWARTZ: I had a little—we had quite a little talk and he said, "Joe, you're absolutely right." And he changed his speech.

PAUL GARDULLO: And was this the same chaplain [sic] who you said later you published in the Kingsboro newsletter?

JAMES MILLER: Yeah, it is.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Oh, yeah.

PAUL GARDULLO: Yeah?

JOE SCHWARTZ: He sent a—he sent a letter to me stating what he thought of the newsletter, yeah.

PAUL GARDULLO: So I'm intrigued by this. I was looking through this World War II—these images.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Yeah. You won't find any photos that show both groups together.

JAMES MILLER: Right.

PAUL GARDULLO: Right.

JOE SCHWARTZ: The only photograph I was able to take was when they all came together on the island, and it's in—it's probably in that book. I don't know—not in there.

JAMES MILLER: No, not in here.

JOE SCHWARTZ: No, it wasn't in there. But they were—they were actually near their foxhole and they were just waving at me, and that's all. But I knew that they were shining the shoes. They were in the kitchen. They were in the cleaning positions and all that. And my complaints didn't mean—

JAMES MILLER: Right.

JOE SCHWARTZ:—crap—

JAMES MILLER: Right.

JOE SCHWARTZ:—didn't mean a thing.

JAMES MILLER: Right.

JOE SCHWARTZ: So you know, the way the Marine Corps was or the Army was or anybody else was, you had to do as they asked you to.

PAUL GARDULLO: Right.

JAMES MILLER: Yeah.

PAUL GARDULLO: Did you—did they—were you taking the photos on your own?

JOE SCHWARTZ: Sure.

PAUL GARDULLO: Was it just you or were you employed by—

JOE SCHWARTZ: Yeah. Yeah, I took photos on my own.

PAUL GARDULLO: And that was okay with the Marine Corps to just be—have your camera along?

JOE SCHWARTZ: The only thing that I took that was relative to this kind of thing was a sign, and I don't—I haven't seen that. The sign only said what they were—what they were doing, I think, soup or something like that, "Get your soup here." And I wasn't able to get any shots of people.

There were some that had gone on the line, on the north end of the line. That was the area where it all ended. I got—but I didn't—I couldn't find anybody, couldn't find any Black people. That was the only one shot that I took that had anything like that. So I knew, I knew then what my job was for the rest of the time on this Earth.

Well, I don't know. Do you want to look through there, or is that—[laughs]—

PAUL GARDULLO: Sure.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Actually, all the—all these that are out here—now, that's something else.

PAUL GARDULLO: Right.

JOE SCHWARTZ: That is the hand of—what do they call these baseball players, football players when they were top people? And they were called—

MR.MILLER: All stars?

:

JOE SCHWARTZ: They'd be—their names would be put into the—

JAMES MILLER: The hall of fame?

JOE SCHWARTZ: What?

MR.MILLER: The hall of fame?

JOE SCHWARTZ: Hall of fame, that's it. These are hall-of-fame people. Now, I got a number of these—I was going through—gosh, where was this. It was a very rich area.

PAUL GARDULLO: The photos would have been taken when you moved back to the West Coast in, you know, the period of the 1950s or something.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Well, yeah. Well, yeah. Well, yeah, I took the photo of the kids on the fence when they had the Watts [Summer] Festival.

PAUL GARDULLO: Mm-hmm. [Affirmative.]

JOE SCHWARTZ: And in Watts, they had the drummers. I took photos of the drummers. It had their—it had a—some kind of celebrating somehow. I forget what that was.

But I thought I ought to show you one of my—I started to write poetry a long time ago after the—after high school. But then I don't know—I can't write poetry anymore, I guess. But this is one thing that happened in New York before I left. I'm going to read it so everybody can hear it.

PAUL GARDULLO: Sure.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Sure. "The shot that killed Bill Shepherd was meant for me and you." By the way, I got a shot of—remember the first literary person that was celebrated? I can't think of his name. But I took a photograph of his wife who was White. And she—

JAMES MILLER: Richard Wright?

JOE SCHWARTZ: Huh?

JAMES MILLER: Richard Wright?

JOE SCHWARTZ: Richard Wright, yeah, and she—before she left for France, she was with a committee to—I have the—I have the photo with a sign and everything else—

PAUL GARDULLO: Great.

JOE SCHWARTZ:—of a letter that she was having people sign to send or give to the mayor—yeah, Richard Wright.

Anyway, so, "The shot that was killed—that killed Bill Shepherd was meant for me and you. And when society strikes a helpless being, he's doubly helpless being a Negro. Society is—[inaudible]—gunmen shooting at democracy. Mr. Justice Lynch seem—came to Brooklyn to make a decision. A being was killed, the being a Negro, the killer—[inaudible] society." I hope you don't mind me repeating those words, but that's what—so I—

PAUL GARDULLO: We don't mind.

JOE SCHWARTZ:—and I use the terms and I didn't care for it.

PAUL GARDULLO: Keep reading.

JOE SCHWARTZ: "The killer—[inaudible]—society shooting at democracy—what good are brass buttons. Give them two clubs. Teach them proper use of the gun." And this is a lecture by a priest in Brooklyn, and he was a follower of Father [Charles Edward] Coughlin.

PAUL GARDULLO: Uh-huh. [Affirmative.]

JOE SCHWARTZ: "Mr. Justice Lynch came to Brooklyn to make a decision. A being was killed, the being—the killer—[inaudible]—society shooting at democracy." I already read that.

"What good are brass buttons? Give them two clubs. Terrorize, subdue, beat down, all of these shouts coming from Father Lynch, father of—[inaudible]—society." Now, who was civil? Sumner—(name inaudible)—had a—he was a real estate person. And he had—he had organized real estate people and also a lot of elderly people, trying to get them to sell their homes.

PAUL GARDULLO: Mm-hmm. [Affirmative.]

JOE SCHWARTZ: This was a situation happening there. Let's see. "And Mr. Justice Lynch took the Holy Father's advice and struck his victim, a Negro. Is democracy in danger? A gentleman of the same social order aimed his gun at me. My skin is white. I was walking across my street, and a policeman came after me.

He wanted to bring back the silk stocking neighborhood. [sneezes] Of course, scum like me who can't afford rent so high as—[inaudible]—society would like it to be isn't wanted—isn't wanted, either. Is democracy in danger? Segregate, terrorize the Negro. Then plunder the poor White. That is the hymn of hate sung by—[inaudible]—society. He hates democracy. It is an age-old slogan that Negro and White must unite to defend democracy. But"—I can't read it. "But a battle of"—oh, but it's the battle of—it's the battle cry of today.

PAUL GARDULLO: And what is it signed?

JOE SCHWARTZ: Joe Sawyer—[laughs]—

PAUL GARDULLO: What does that mean?

JOE SCHWARTZ:—not Schwartz.

PAUL GARDULLO: Did you call yourself Joe Sawyer?

JOE SCHWARTZ: I called myself Joe Sawyer.

PAUL GARDULLO: And it says 1938 you wrote that?

JOE SCHWARTZ: Yeah, evidently.

PAUL GARDULLO: Did you do the artwork, too?

JOE SCHWARTZ: Yeah.

PAUL GARDULLO: And I've got to ask, just because I don't know—Bill Shepherd? Who's Bill Shepherd?

JOE SCHWARTZ: Oh, no, Bill Shepherd.

PAUL GARDULLO: Was it a victim?

JOE SCHWARTZ: Wasn't it Bill Shepherd?

PAUL GARDULLO: Bill Shepherd—who was Bill Shepherd?

JOE SCHWARTZ: Oh yeah, he was one them who was killed. He was a kid. He was a kid walking up on a station of the platform waiting for a train.

JAMES MILLER: In Brooklyn—

JOE SCHWARTZ: In Brooklyn and had his grandma's, I think, sewing machine or something that he had. And they asked him to wait, and he just walked on or something like that, and they shot him.

JAMES MILLER: The police—

PAUL GARDULLO: The police?

JAMES MILLER: Mm-hmm. [Affirmative.]

PAUL GARDULLO: And Sertel [sp]—

JOE SCHWARTZ: And that stirred me up terribly. I just had to say something.

PAUL GARDULLO: Yeah, and Sertel [sp] was a housing developer?

JOE SCHWARTZ: Well, he was—

PAUL GARDULLO: Was?

JOE SCHWARTZ: I don't know exactly. I think he—but I know he organized the real estate people.

PAUL GARDULLO: Okay.

JOE SCHWARTZ: And they had meetings, scaring the elderly people that the Black people are—

PAUL GARDULLO: Coming to take over, take your homes—

JOE SCHWARTZ: Yeah, coming to take over the whole—that part of Brooklyn especially. Oh, yeah, that was going on. And his church—not Father Coughlin's church but the—that—I've forgotten his name. That father used to lecture. I went to it one time to listen to him. It was all propoganda against the Jews.

PAUL GARDULLO: Mm-hmm. [Affirmative.]

JOE SCHWARTZ: Oh, yeah. I was invited by a guy who was involved with the Jewish militia. I don't know—something like that. And he was a druggist and he sent me—I have his letter here somewhere. I had—I was walking down the street—Reid Avenue, I guess it was, and there was a meeting—a meeting of—from this church that I mentioned.

And he was haranguing the people. He said, "You're looking for good Jews." He says, "They're dead. They're in the cemetery." Well, I was in the crowd, and it started to rain a little bit. The umbrellas were opening up. And I said, "I'm a good Jew and I'm very much alive."

And he pointed to me and said to the policeman, he says, "Arrest this man." He says, "He's disturbing my meeting." So I was arrested. There was a Black Maria sitting there waiting for people like me. [Laughs.] I was the only one demonstrator.

I was demonstrating and I asked for his arrest because he was—he was getting these people all excited against the Jewish storekeeper who was across the street. He said, "You're all looking for good Jews," and he says, "The dead ones are good ones." So I said, "Well, I think I'm very much alive."

JAMES MILLER: So what was the outcome of your arrest? What happened? How did you get out?

JOE SCHWARTZ: Well, it was taken—it was at court, and I can't remember the judge. But the judge said, "You arrested the wrong man." Now, this policeman that arrested me was a young policeman. He said to me when we were in the Black Maria, he says, "Don't"—he said, "Don't blame me." He said, "The sergeant ordered this." Well, it was put out that the sergeant had ordered that I get arrested and all that sort of thing. So [Fiorella] La Guardia took that into—evidently they were investigating the police at the time And a whole lot of sergeants actually—all Irish sergeants were being tossed out. Actually, they got tossed out of their job or demoted actually. I got a good shot of La Guardia, by the way.

JAMES MILLER: Yeah, we saw that in there.

PAUL GARDULLO: Yeah.

JAMES MILLER: Yeah.

JOE SCHWARTZ: [Laughs.]

JOE SCHWARTZ: So you know, I had my—I had another incident where the gang of—let's see. I was up on 12th Street, I think it was. No, not 12th. It was uptown in the Bronx. I can't remember what—I was alone. And the lecture was being—there were a lot of people—several people that were booing him or something.



I don't know what happened. Something happened, and a group of guys muscled one person and knocked them down. And I couldn't see that and I got into the—I don't know what I tried to do. I tried to pick them up, I guess, and call the police. And then I got surrounded by this tough bunch. And they were—they were Coughlinites, they called them. That's what they called them. So those were the things that happened in time. I got a—I got a—I got a letter here—"why don't you go back to Russia."

PAUL GARDULLO: Here at the home, here?

JOE SCHWARTZ: [In New York. -PM] Yeah—"why don't you go back to Russia where you belong," something like that.

PAUL GARDULLO: Wow.

JOE SCHWARTZ: And that was front news—well, when it was reported in the newspaper, a lot of people got excited about it, and there was—like I say, the town was full of Coughlinites. They were all against [Franklin D.] Roosevelt.

JAMES MILLER: Right, right.

JOE SCHWARTZ: A lot of action—

JAMES MILLER: Yes, indeed.

JOE SCHWARTZ: I remember—I remember actually putting—I was helping to put this—these people that were being—the sheriff was taking their—their furniture out and so on, had them on the sidewalk. And we put them back in. That was in Brownsville, Brooklyn. That's the Jewish area, Jewish neighborhood.

PAUL GARDULLO: Well Joe, look, I think we're—I think we've got a lot of great information.

JOE SCHWARTZ: [Laughs.]

PAUL GARDULLO: And we'll let you take a little rest. I want to ask you, though, you know, one question, and maybe we'll have a chance to do a little bit more tomorrow. But are you still taking pictures?

JOE SCHWARTZ: Not really. I'm trying to learn the digital camera, and somebody was going to come here today. I was going to take—use one camera or the other. But he might be busy because he just—he just got into a storefront for his—oh, some kind of a studio that he just got. So you know, he might be—

PAUL GARDULLO: So you'll get your first digital camera. It might be coming today. We'll see.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Well, I've got to—I have to learn. You know, being used to the ordinary camera, it's hard for me to—

JAMES MILLER: It's quite a transition.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Yeah.

JAMES MILLER: And make sure you get a lot of batteries too, or good ones.

PAUL GARDULLO: Yeah.

JAMES MILLER: They use up a lot of batteries.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Oh—

JAMES MILLER: This is a digital. But you notice I haven't taken pictures for a while.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Well, I should learn, and these two—these two—questioning and me answering and so on will help get me interested more.

PAUL GARDULLO: Mm-hmm. [Affirmative.]

JOE SCHWARTZ: Can I take a course in digital—

MR. LEVENSON: Sign up. Come on. Bring it on.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Yeah? [They laugh.]

MR. LEVENSON: Hey listen, I don't want you to take a course. I want you to teach a course.

JAMES MILLER: Teach the course.

PAUL GARDULLO: There you go.

JOE SCHWARTZ: [Laughs.]

JAMES MILLER: Teach the course.

PAUL GARDULLO: Teach the course.

JOE SCHWARTZ: You think I could teach? I couldn't teach.

JAMES MILLER: I think you can.

MR. MILLER: What were you doing today?

PAUL GARDULLO: I think you can.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Yeah? Well, I don't know.

PAUL GARDULLO: Well, I think we're going to—I'm going to turn the tape recorder off and maybe I'll turn it back on if—after a little rest and if we—if we start looking through photos. But I just want to thank you. This has been tremendous.

JAMES MILLER: Fabulous.

PAUL GARDULLO: This has been great.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Well, listen, it has been for me too. You know—

[END OF CD2.]

PAUL GARDULLO: Schwartz, disc three, April 26 with Paul Gardullo and Jim Miller—

JOE SCHWARTZ: You already have the—

PAUL GARDULLO: Yesterday, I noticed this piece that Elizabeth Catlett did with you—

JOE SCHWARTZ: Oh, yeah.

PAUL GARDULLO:—you know, for you, and I see the—for the signature, "For dear Joe Schwartz"—

JOE SCHWARTZ: Right.

PAUL GARDULLO:—*On the Subway* [1986]. And I didn't notice before that it's a study off of one of your pictures. I didn't realize that. Did you know that, too?

JOE SCHWARTZ: Oh, well, I didn't tell you probably. [Laughs.]

PAUL GARDULLO: So tell me about—tell me about that. Why did she decide to do a print of one of your—

JOE SCHWARTZ: Oh, well she had—she had seen my work. I suppose Samella introduced her to me and I don't remember when it was. But she had seen my work and she asked me to—if she could—you know, she had something in mind, and I didn't know.

PAUL GARDULLO: Right.

JOE SCHWARTZ: And you know, I said, "Well, you do a little drawing of it, and we'll make a trade." That's how it happened.

PAUL GARDULLO: So what did you trade her for?

JOE SCHWARTZ: [Laughs.]

PAUL GARDULLO: So what did you trade her for?

JOE SCHWARTZ: I didn't charge her anything.

PAUL GARDULLO: Trade, trade. What was the trade? She would give you a—

JOE SCHWARTZ: Oh, actually—oh, there's about—I'd say about maybe \$1,200 or something. That's what it would amount to.

PAUL GARDULLO: So you did work for her? Did you make prints for her?

JOE SCHWARTZ: No, not very much because she didn't come up often.

PAUL GARDULLO: Okay

JOE SCHWARTZ: You know, she lives in Mexico and is married to a Mexican artist. And I have one of his drawings, which he gave me, that I can remember, you know. I just don't remember everything, and—but, well, Samella did a lot of work for her, and I did printing for Samella.

That was the—and he [Roosevelt] was talking to the people at Holy Trinity Church, I guess. And this was part of the—this was where we had the meetings in the cellar. [Laughs.] But here, you see we had the posters of Roosevelt.

JAMES MILLER: Roosevelt.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Yeah.

JAMES MILLER: Yeah.

JOE SCHWARTZ: And here is some of the shots of the area where we—you know, people buying food and so on.

PAUL GARDULLO: So you mentioned early on—I'm sorry, I was plugging in the recorder.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Yeah, oh.

PAUL GARDULLO:—but you mentioned you were part of this organization here.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Oh yes, the Citizens Civic Affairs Committee.

PAUL GARDULLO: Tell me what that was about.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Well, we—as you see, we had a large group of Black and White people that were sort of fighting the Catholic priest. What was his name again?

PAUL GARDULLO: Father Coughlin?

JOE SCHWARTZ: Father Coughlin, right, and they grew into an organization just before the war.

PAUL GARDULLO: So this is the '30s or '40s?

JOE SCHWARTZ: Right around the early '40s, very early.

PAUL GARDULLO: And where was this taking place?

JOE SCHWARTZ: That's Brooklyn. I guess the—I take—there were other parades, too. There were other people in that parade—what are they called—NAACP and this—

PAUL GARDULLO: So this was—this was a—this was an interracial committee—

JOE SCHWARTZ: Well, this—yeah, an interracial group—

PAUL GARDULLO:—that was formed to kind of—

JOE SCHWARTZ: Exactly.

PAUL GARDULLO:—protest against Father Coughlin.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Well, they did a lot of work in the neighborhood, in the Brooklyn neighborhood. You see Citizens Civic Affairs Committee, that's my sign.

PAUL GARDULLO: Oh, you wrote that sign, penned it?

JOE SCHWARTZ: Well, I did a lot of work around the area.

PAUL GARDULLO: What kind of work? Tell me what kind of work did you do. I know you took the photograph, but what other kind of—

JOE SCHWARTZ: I took photographs and I also did—I painted signs for them. There were organizations that came to me to take photographs, and I have one photograph that you wanted to see, the one in Washington.

JAMES MILLER: Right, you mentioned that.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Yeah, and that was—that was taken in Brooklyn.

PAUL GARDULLO: And did you do—did you do other kinds of organizing?

JOE SCHWARTZ: Well, I talked to people. [Laughs.]

PAUL GARDULLO: Uh-huh. [Affirmative.]

JOE SCHWARTZ: But I—you know, I didn't—well, when I—when I finally had—you know, after the war—although we, my family got a place in the housing project. While I was there, I spoke up on a lot of things, oh yeah.

PAUL GARDULLO: How did you get—

MR. SCHWARTZ: There were a lot of things that were happening, you know, during that period.

There were—well, we still had, I think, the Scottsboro Boys, and there was a whole lot of general things that had occurred. And like you saw—you know, I felt very deeply about the things that were going on. It wasn't fair to try and keep the people coming from the South, so to speak, to try to keep them from getting places to live. The rents would go up and so on. But then when this was put up, it was a different situation.

PAUL GARDULLO: And this is a—and then after the war, you got involved—you got a place in the Kingsboro—

JOE SCHWARTZ: Well, during, yeah, right.

PAUL GARDULLO:—the projects. How did people get a place in that? How did you get a selected to be a resident?

JOE SCHWARTZ: I don't know how we did. We knew somebody there. I think it was a person by the name of Wilkinson. He was the head of the housing department in—Frank Wilkinson.

PAUL GARDULLO: But it wasn't because you were a veteran or anything like that?

JOE SCHWARTZ: Well, that helped.

PAUL GARDULLO: That helped.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Sure. And these are just places I've been to.

PAUL GARDULLO: Right.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Like, that's a Cincinnati thing.

PAUL GARDULLO: And you went out to Cincinnati for this NAACP conference. Is that right?

JOE SCHWARTZ: Well, I—not to begin with, no.

PAUL GARDULLO: Oh.

JOE SCHWARTZ: I was—after the war, that—and I had—I was part of this newspaper group that was—what do they call themselves now. They called themselves—people that were vets that had been wounded and things like that, you know—

PAUL GARDULLO: Mm-hmm. [Affirmative.]

JOE SCHWARTZ:—things like that that happened. And they had a very—DAV—Disabled American Veterans.

PAUL GARDULLO: Oh, okay.

JOE SCHWARTZ: And they—there was a Japanese group that came that had just come from Italy, and they got pretty well shot up. But they were publicized quite a bit as to—so that the prejudice would go away, terrible

prejudice of course. You know, at the time we had to fight Japan as well as Germany—

PAUL GARDULLO: Yes.

JOE SCHWARTZ:—the Allies. Now, this—

PAUL GARDULLO: Now, this shot I love, this long line of buildings.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Oh, that's at the—at the housing project.

PAUL GARDULLO: This is at the housing project?

JOE SCHWARTZ: No, no, no, this is.

PAUL GARDULLO: Oh, the picture of the men playing music.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Yeah, yeah, I call them *The Project Troubadours*.

PAUL GARDULLO: So would that have been one of the cultural kind of initiatives or were they just gathering?

JOE SCHWARTZ: Oh well, actually it grew out of that kind of thing, yeah, although that wasn't our group. But they came behind—say my window's like this, and they were down there, and I took a shot through the window.

PAUL GARDULLO: That's through a window?

JOE SCHWARTZ: Yeah.

PAUL GARDULLO: Did you know—were those residents?

JOE SCHWARTZ: And I don't know—they came over and—yeah, they came over and—well, actually they were sitting on the bench or something like that, just having a good time, you know. Now, this is in—that was taken during the time when I got married. Let's see, that wasn't Wilmington, was it, where the white stoops—they'd always clean the stoops.

PAUL GARDULLO: Cleaning the stoops.

JOE SCHWARTZ: But not—that's not Wilmington. That's another area. Anyway, that's the housing project, and this is the housing project—I took inside the project.

PAUL GARDULLO: Right.

JOE SCHWARTZ: And I called that—

PAUL GARDULLO: *A Friend in Need*—

JOE SCHWARTZ: Oh yeah, I have it.

PAUL GARDULLO:—or *Good Neighbors*.

JOE SCHWARTZ: And this was they're planting a tree, and it was like the Iwo flag raising.

PAUL GARDULLO: So you didn't ask them to pose like that?

JOE SCHWARTZ: No.

PAUL GARDULLO: You just got it.

JOE SCHWARTZ: No, they were doing it.

PAUL GARDULLO: I wanted to ask you if you asked them to pose like that because that image is so—

JOE SCHWARTZ: No, no.

PAUL GARDULLO: That's funny.

JOE SCHWARTZ: [Laughs.] You know, all these things—like here, I didn't ask them to pose—

PAUL GARDULLO: No.

JOE SCHWARTZ: But the kids were doing that.

PAUL GARDULLO: Right.

JOE SCHWARTZ: So he was—she was showing them how to climb a fence.

PAUL GARDULLO: How to climb a fence—now, this is interesting, these pictures.

JOE SCHWARTZ: This was taken in Santa Monica [CA]. I caught that.

PAUL GARDULLO: Right.

JOE SCHWARTZ: And here are these kids playing, and there's that wall.

PAUL GARDULLO: Right.

JOE SCHWARTZ: You know, I was sensitive to those things and—

PAUL GARDULLO: I'm curious about this photo, this young boy.

JOE SCHWARTZ: That was taken before the housing project was even built.

PAUL GARDULLO: So this is in Brooklyn. It's a young boy standing at the foot of a stairs in Brooklyn.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Yeah, I was going around that area with Ernie Crichlow. He was showing me the area.

PAUL GARDULLO: Well, it's funny you mentioned that because I wanted to look at that—at that picture—

JOE SCHWARTZ: He lived there.

PAUL GARDULLO:—of Ernest Crichlow you have. Let me find it.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Oh, that—

PAUL GARDULLO: How did you get to know him? He was another artist. [Inaudible.]

JOE SCHWARTZ: Yeah, he lived on my—his—and lived on my block. He didn't live on my block, but his relative did. And they introduced me to him because they knew I was interested in art.

PAUL GARDULLO: Do you know who this is?

JOE SCHWARTZ: Yeah, oh, I visited him several times.

PAUL GARDULLO: Do you remember his name? Johnny Atkinson.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Johnny Atkinson.

PAUL GARDULLO: Okay.

JOE SCHWARTZ: And I've got a hold of it, and you know, later on he was—he introduced me to the Mexican artist that did that big mural.

PAUL GARDULLO: Diego Rivera?

JOE SCHWARTZ: Yeah, Diego Rivera—big.

PAUL GARDULLO: Johnny Atkinson introduced you to Diego Rivera?

JOE SCHWARTZ: Yeah.

PAUL GARDULLO: And did you go up to visit?

JOE SCHWARTZ: And he did—he did—he did murals himself. He was a WPA artist.

PAUL GARDULLO: Did you go to—did you go to see any murals being installed and painted?

JOE SCHWARTZ: Well, he had one in his—he was just painting that mural there. And yeah, I saw a lot of his stuff. He was—I actually hired him one time to do work for me.

PAUL GARDULLO: What kind of work?

JOE SCHWARTZ: Artwork—oh yeah, I was in—I was in the advertising—I tried the advertising business, didn't do too well at it. But we had ideas. I had the ideas in some cases, and he worked on them, and they made them, you know.

But he—I think he got addicted. As a matter of fact, I've got a shot of him on the subway as we were coming from one of his jobs. He had just finished, I think, work that was in a bowling alley, and he just finished a large fantasy thing—fantasy of bowling—there is Ernie—

PAUL GARDULLO: Right.

JOE SCHWARTZ: And there is—

JAMES MILLER: Jacob.

PAUL GARDULLO: Jacob Lawrence.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Jake Lawrence.

PAUL GARDULLO: So you had mentioned that you were friendly with Ernest Crichlow, and he lived in Brooklyn and he—

JOE SCHWARTZ: Oh yeah, well—

PAUL GARDULLO: And how did you get to know him?

JOE SCHWARTZ: Well actually, Ernie—this Ernie—not Ernie Crichlow, but Johnny Atkinson was active in a storefront organization around the Scottsboro Boys and, I think, Tom Mooney or something like that. And it was both those. And this came later. He and an artist that he married—I have photos of that, of both. I didn't get the marriage, but I took photos of both those people in this convention.

PAUL GARDULLO: Jacob Lawrence—

JOE SCHWARTZ: That came much later after then.

PAUL GARDULLO: Right, this is later. This isn't—this was in the 1930s perhaps.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Well, yeah—no, this is—no, that's—yeah—

PAUL GARDULLO: This picture of Jacob Lawrence is maybe in the '60s.

JOE SCHWARTZ: That's much later, yeah. Yeah, I've got a whole photograph of the whole group of artists and their artwork all over the place.

PAUL GARDULLO: I've never seen that.

JOE SCHWARTZ: I have it somewhere. Well, maybe here—I don't know.

PAUL GARDULLO: I'd love to see that.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Yeah, I have it. You'll find it as we go along.

PAUL GARDULLO: And you mentioned that you had met Diego Rivera. What was that like?

JOE SCHWARTZ: Well, I was—I was thrilled, actually. But I didn't take any photographs because the guy wasn't finished and I thought I can come up anytime and take them. I guess I was in a hurry to get out. And at the same time, before—I don't know whether it was before he—before Ernie introduced me to the artist, the Mexican artist. I don't remember if it was before or after. But I took a photo of a nude of Ernie's—one of Ernie's models, and she—while I was talking to Ernie, she was resting on this chair, and the lighting was just beautiful on her body. And I took shots of her. You'll see it somewhere around—a really good shot, that is, of a nude that really—you know, not pornographic in any way.

PAUL GARDULLO: Right.

JOE SCHWARTZ: You didn't even get that kind of feeling at all about that.

PAUL GARDULLO: Now, this is still in the 1930s, these children doing jump rope.

JOE SCHWARTZ: '39, yeah.

PAUL GARDULLO: And it's got—

JOE SCHWARTZ: Build for Tomorrow, right.

PAUL GARDULLO: It's got a billboard on the Brooklyn Bridge.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Yeah, Promises, Promises was my title. There were all kinds of things making promises and not doing anything about it.

PAUL GARDULLO: And so it seems that you—

JOE SCHWARTZ: And this became—I made a poster out of it and also

PAUL GARDULLO: Right.

JOE SCHWARTZ: I have at the center there—you'll see the posters later.

PAUL GARDULLO: So you have—you've made connections with artists your whole life, before the war—

JOE SCHWARTZ: That was my job.

PAUL GARDULLO:—with Ernie Crichlow—

JOE SCHWARTZ: Oh, yeah.

PAUL GARDULLO:—and Rivera, and here we're looking at—

JOE SCHWARTZ: I made that my job because I tried get into the art world, if I could, to reproduce their cards and their, you know, invitations and so on.

PAUL GARDULLO: And we're looking at four photographs of Dizzy Gillespie, and this was a little later.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Oh, well this was—this was—yeah, but this was—the woman that introduced me to him was the one that's still in—still in Washington at the head of this—what do they call that—the music of the U.S. She knew practically—she at that time was a—what do they call them—she made assignments and so on for artists—

PAUL GARDULLO: To play overseas?

JOE SCHWARTZ:—to play anywhere.

PAUL GARDULLO: Play anywhere.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Yeah. She was a—I forgot what they call the people, but she knew everybody.

PAUL GARDULLO: And she worked for the government.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Yeah, she's working for the government now.

PAUL GARDULLO: Interesting.

JOE SCHWARTZ: You probably know her. I'm trying to think of her name. I can't. And but she—

PAUL GARDULLO: So are these pictures—these are taken in Los Angeles after you moved out.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Yeah, these were taken in—with—on the radio stations, various radio stations. But I call them the *Moods*, just *Moods*. And then of course in the middle—well, you'll see the—you'll see the poster that I made.

PAUL GARDULLO: So what brought you—what took you back to California? Why did you move back to California?

JOE SCHWARTZ: Well that—you know, that's when I was a kid, and those different moves had nothing to do with—those were just moves as a child getting back. I just enjoyed the idea of being in this kind of a—until I finally got here. This was my—this is the end of the road. I'm happy here.

PAUL GARDULLO: So really you—and so in the—in the '60s or so, in the 1950s, you just really wanted a change of scenery. You wanted to move to the West Coast.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Well, I don't know. There was all kind of reasons, you know. I didn't get—I don't think we—my



wife, we didn't get along. There's a whole lot of things. I mean, I can't go into that history right now.

PAUL GARDULLO: That's fine.

JOE SCHWARTZ: I could, but I just don't feel like it right now. That's all.

PAUL GARDULLO: That's fine—personal reasons.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Yeah. Now, that was in New York, Brooklyn. You know, I saw a lot of stuff like that. And that was the thing I was looking for, and there they were. And this was something I call—I called it *The Game Of*—but how come, didn't I have that written?

PAUL GARDULLO: It looks like they're playing dice.

JOE SCHWARTZ: I called it *The Game Of*—in that particular neighborhood, that was actually a Yiddish neighborhood. But people were playing craps all the time during that, and I happened to see that and I slithered into the back of these gates to get that photo. And you know, to have that kind of a photo—that was really taking a chance. You don't—actually, he was the lookout person. You couldn't—you weren't supposed to—it was against the law to play craps out in the street.

PAUL GARDULLO: Yeah.

JOE SCHWARTZ: But after church a lot of people—or after synagogue, people would get together and have a crap game. And that of course is an evangelist at that small park where—I've got to think of names—where Johnny was across from that park. He lived on 14th Street. As a matter of fact, it was a photograph on 14th Street near him that I took in color and it took—I guess it was a time when I was pasting them up or something like that—that I noticed on that particular photograph it had a sign, IWW.

PAUL GARDULLO: Yeah, we looked at that.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Oh, yeah.

PAUL GARDULLO: Back in October, I remember you had discovered that little sign.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Yeah, but I never took the photograph because of that, because I didn't even notice it myself until later on. [Laughs.]

PAUL GARDULLO: So what was the IWW?

JOE SCHWARTZ: International Workers of the World [Industrial Workers of the World].

PAUL GARDULLO: Right.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Yeah, so you know, later on is when I really—I was glad I took it. Hey, that's history. [Laughs.]

PAUL GARDULLO: It was part of the landscape literally.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Oh, well nobody knew about—I didn't know anything about that organization. But as you read and you see history and so on, it made sense. Anyway, what's this—oh, come to the end.

PAUL GARDULLO: This looks like a photograph from L.A. in the '80s?

JOE SCHWARTZ: Well, that's in the -

PAUL GARDULLO: So it—

JOE SCHWARTZ: That's—yeah, that was up in the Black areas—you would say Black areas but Central LA—

PAUL GARDULLO: Right, it looks like it's during the movement to get the King holiday passed.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Yeah, there were things happening all the time. This was after the—I guess this was after the Watts riot [1965]—so-called—

PAUL GARDULLO: Yes.

JOE SCHWARTZ: I call it the revolution. Anyway, that I labeled—I had a good label for it. I forget what it was now. My memory is not very good right at the moment. And this was after I got out of the—out of the Marine Corps, and I was—I was in my—I had my camera and everything and I saw him coming down the area.

PAUL GARDULLO: This big cart with horses.

JOE SCHWARTZ: And I made sure that I got him a spot where I'd get a good shot of him. Well, that was—I got him without movement actually. But I would have liked to have seen some movement. But that was OK. It came out pretty good. Now, that's Cincinnati.

PAUL GARDULLO: Here's the EI.

JOE SCHWARTZ: [Inaudible.] What's this?

PAUL GARDULLO: It looks like the EI.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Oh yeah, that was—they took—they were taking the EI down in the area, and that was where I had the photograph of the people picketing.

PAUL GARDULLO: Yes.

JOE SCHWARTZ: I don't know. It should be here.

PAUL GARDULLO: Well, we saw it in the book.

JOE SCHWARTZ: That's in Cincinnati.

PAUL GARDULLO: They were picketing under the EI?

JOE SCHWARTZ: Yeah. Oh, this is interesting.

PAUL GARDULLO: Tell me about these two images. What are these?

JOE SCHWARTZ: Yeah, well I belonged to the Unitarian church, and a person came down there from the—what do they call it now—it was—it was Synanon. We called Synanon. And he lectured about Synanon. I wanted to—I wanted to know more about people that were involved in drugs and so on. I never took drugs.

But I wanted to know more about it and after the lecture, I surely wanted to know more about it because he sounded very intelligent, and he was. It was quite a—and I told him. I said, "You know, I'd be interested in taking a number of photographs in there," because they did not discriminate against—as a matter of fact, the head of the organization was married to a Black woman. And I wanted to get all of that.

PAUL GARDULLO: These gentlemen here sitting down, they look like they're dressed as—

JOE SCHWARTZ: Now, there—well, this is after I—after I negotiated it—that's a long story actually—I was a mess myself and—well, I drank a whole lot. And when I visited the organization, the head of the photographic department—they had one—invited me down.

He says at the time that they found out that I was a mess in—where I was living, they sent somebody down there to pick me up—and I had a bed. He arranged—this guy arranged a bed for me and so on. And he told me. I said, "Well, you now, I'd be glad to live there." That's what I wanted.

PAUL GARDULLO: And this is at Synanon?

JOE SCHWARTZ: Yeah. So while I was living there, they evidently had made an arrangement to—I guess they were having a problem with several of their own members, and so they wanted to find out more about what was going on. So naturally I took—when I saw them, I took photos. And they had put away their guns. [Laughs.] They had rifles.

PAUL GARDULLO: Well, it looks like they're dressed like Union soldiers from the Civil War.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Well, they were dressed that way because that was their—they were all—not only members of the organization but they were, certain members actually that were active members.

PAUL GARDULLO: Seen anything like this?

JAMES MILLER: No, I haven't.

JOE SCHWARTZ: So I took the shot. They were there—and I had it for a long time.

PAUL GARDULLO: It's really an interesting shot. It's a very interesting shot.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Yeah. And this of course is something else, another person who was very active, A. Philip Randolph.

JAMES MILLER: A. Philip Randolph.

PAUL GARDULLO: That's right here, yes?

JOE SCHWARTZ: No, that's the—the guy in the back.

PAUL GARDULLO: That's A. Philip Randolph?

JOE SCHWARTZ: Yeah, that's him.

JAMES MILLER: Hey. Good morning everybody—

PAUL GARDULLO: Good morning.

MR.: You guys got here earlier than I thought you were going to.

PAUL GARDULLO: Yes, we did. He was ready to roll.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Now, this showed Synanon games and so on. That's the kind of therapy they had. They had games, they called them. Boy, I thought it was such a terrible thing, that organization—what they had to do. Actually, the head of the organization went crazy actually. Yeah, poor guy, he was such a wonderful person. He had a lot of great ideas.

PAUL GARDULLO: How long did you live there? Did you have a—

JOE SCHWARTZ: About three years, yeah—yeah, three years. Now, what do we have here?

PAUL GARDULLO: Well, that's that same group of musicians from back at Kingsboro. That's a different shot.

JOE SCHWARTZ: No, that's not Kingsboro.

PAUL GARDULLO: No?

JOE SCHWARTZ: No, this is in Kentucky.

PAUL GARDULLO: Oh, it is. Okay.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Across the river of—

PAUL GARDULLO: Oh, interesting.

JAMES MILLER: Cincinnati.

JOE SCHWARTZ:—Cincinnati.

PAUL GARDULLO: Cincinnati, oh OK—I thought it was that same group from before.

JOE SCHWARTZ: No, no. No, I usually—most of my stuff you'll have different things happening.

PAUL GARDULLO: Maybe we should take a—take a seat. You've been standing up for awhile.

MR. : Getting tired?

JAMES MILLER: No, I'm just old.

PAUL GARDULLO: Continue to—continue to—

JOE SCHWARTZ: There is the controversial. [Laughs.]

PAUL GARDULLO: Shall we go back and sit down in the living room, and we can take a load off and look at some more pictures there?

JOE SCHWARTZ: Well, you might as well—while you're here, you might as well look through here.

PAUL GARDULLO: Are you sure you're not getting tired?

JOE SCHWARTZ: No, I get tired in time, but this is—I was much—I was actually much more—

PAUL GARDULLO: Many of these pictures are ones from your book.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Yeah, these are still in—yeah, a number of them are.

PAUL GARDULLO: Here's a picture you took of Paul Robeson.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Yeah, Paul Robeson speaking out in the—in the rain actually—

MR.GARDULLO: Right, and he's speaking at a Henry Wallace—

JOE SCHWARTZ: At a Henry Wallace rally in Brooklyn.

PAUL GARDULLO: And what did—you were talking a little bit about working for that campaign and—

JOE SCHWARTZ: Oh yeah.

PAUL GARDULLO: And were you employed by the campaign?

JOE SCHWARTZ: No, no, I was just—

PAUL GARDULLO: Just a supporter?

JOE SCHWARTZ: I went along with them to—with Pete Seeger and some others. We went into this caravan. They called it the caravan.

PAUL GARDULLO: Right.

JOE SCHWARTZ: And we went to Philadelphia where the convention—third-party convention, and here of course is Adam Clayton Powell. But he was at a meeting for the Black—the only Black captain of a ship.

PAUL GARDULLO: In the Navy.

JOE SCHWARTZ: No, well, I don't know. Was he—he must have been part of the Navy if he was a captain. Yeah. But he wouldn't take the ship, I understand—he wouldn't—unless they had a—his crew was integrated. And so I made sure and got that. It's over here somewhere, but here is the NAACP. I have a poster of that too.

And then here, of course, is that same area where you saw the White kid and the Black kids with him. It's probably in here somewhere. Oh, this is Captain Mulzac. He lived here somewhere. But a lot of these kids are his kids.

PAUL GARDULLO: Who was Captain Mulzac?

JOE SCHWARTZ: He was the one I told you about. Here he is.

PAUL GARDULLO: Oh, he was the naval captain.

JOE SCHWARTZ: He was the first captain—yeah. And this is his family.

PAUL GARDULLO: Where did he live?

JOE SCHWARTZ: In Brooklyn. Yeah, I got—

PAUL GARDULLO: Hugh Mulzac—

JOE SCHWARTZ: acquainted—I think I got acquainted with somebody there that was with that Missus—I've forgotten her name already. She was the head of that organization, the Citizens Civic Affairs Committee. Here, here is the crew. No, this is the crew.

PAUL GARDULLO: An integrated crew.

JOE SCHWARTZ: That was the crew. Now, these were the people that supported him. They were the high-and-mighty bunch. [Laughs.] There he is again. Here's the other one that was protesting that I took the photos. Yeah.

PAUL GARDULLO: And is that Mulzac's ship?

JOE SCHWARTZ: Yeah, that was his ship.

PAUL GARDULLO: There's Booker T. Washington.

JOE SCHWARTZ: And here's Mulzac right here.

PAUL GARDULLO: Uh-huh. [Affirmative.]

JOE SCHWARTZ: And here's the union head, and this is also part of the ship. He was—I don't remember his name. Now, this—she was an acquaintance of mine. I got acquainted with her through those people there. And she was a very good friend. She actually helped me get out of some—I was pretty sick at the time. But he also—he was a West Indian doctor.

PAUL GARDULLO: Do you remember the name?

JOE SCHWARTZ: Yeah.

PAUL GARDULLO: It says here Dr. Vassal.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Vassal, yeah.

PAUL GARDULLO: "Father of Dr. Lola Vassal." So she was also a doctor.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Yeah, her name—yeah, she was—she worked on me actually. That just shows you general—

PAUL GARDULLO: Street life in the '30s and here's some WPA workers—

JOE SCHWARTZ: Yeah. Yeah, here's the brick. It was tossed in the air and I—

PAUL GARDULLO: Oh, you got it, the brick flying through the air.

JOE SCHWARTZ: I don't think I knew that I caught it.

PAUL GARDULLO: That's funny.

JOE SCHWARTZ: But I did.

PAUL GARDULLO: That's funny. Firefighters, and men playing cards—

JOE SCHWARTZ: Yeah, well, this is typical of Brooklyn. Here's a kid watching—

PAUL GARDULLO: Yeah.

JOE SCHWARTZ:—a perfect kind of shot for me. You know, this is the—this is the kind of game that I caught, called punch ball. They'd punch it and they'd have bases like you would in baseball.

JAMES MILLER: Yeah, I used to play that.

PAUL GARDULLO: Punch ball?

JAMES MILLER: Yeah, street.

PAUL GARDULLO: So it's not like stickball? It's a softer ball?

JAMES MILLER: No, it's a—it was called a Spalding, a round softball.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Yeah, and a baseball diamond.

MR.: And you'd punch it.

JAMES MILLER: You'd punch it, yeah.

MR.: You'd roll it up and punch it.

JOE SCHWARTZ: You've got to wait until a car goes by, and then they'd get back into the game again. This is called *Ghetto—Ghetto—*

PAUL GARDULLO: We've looked at this shot.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Yeah, I know.

PAUL GARDULLO: You told me all about how you got that shot with those men playing craps.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Yeah, but I—the title I didn't give you because I had forgotten it. It's *Ghetto*—

PAUL GARDULLO: *Recreation*.

JOE SCHWARTZ:—*Recreation*. That's it.

PAUL GARDULLO: That's right.

JOE SCHWARTZ: And this of course was the area where I had my first good job in lithography.

PAUL GARDULLO: It says *Carpenter's Corner*, Bleecker and Broadway, New York City, 1930s.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Yeah, there was a carpenters' corner because all these people would need work, and they'd call a carpenter in.

MR.: That was on Bleecker Street?

JOE SCHWARTZ: Yeah, I called it *Carpenter's Corner*.

MR.: That was at printer's row. A whole lot of printing companies were in that area.

JOE SCHWARTZ: And this shows you a typical elderly woman and the way they collected their own wood for their fire to keep themselves warm. And this—

PAUL GARDULLO: Tell me about this one.

JOE SCHWARTZ:—is—the third-party moves to Bedford-Stuyvesant, yeah.

PAUL GARDULLO: So again, this is for the Wallace campaign?

JOE SCHWARTZ: Yeah, they had—they had a—they had a third-party store.

PAUL GARDULLO: Pet stores?

JOE SCHWARTZ: Yeah. And here's Wallace himself in that—this is also in Brooklyn on—speaking on Bergen Street, Brooklyn.

PAUL GARDULLO: Do you know any of these people in these photos?

JOE SCHWARTZ: Well, Robinson, I think. I didn't know her but I knew her name. Her name was Robinson. I think I have a—there's a Robinson that came to visit me. And it might be one of his—one of the Robinsons that were into labor.

PAUL GARDULLO: It looks like there's a policeman up on the rooftop.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Yeah, oh, yeah.

PAUL GARDULLO: A lot of police active at the Wallace political rallies?

JOE SCHWARTZ: Yeah. And here's Wallace and his vice president.

PAUL GARDULLO: I love this shot. This is a picture of Charles White.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Charlie White, yeah, yeah.

PAUL GARDULLO: What is it? *Charlie White and Killer*?

JOE SCHWARTZ: Well, that's his cigarette. That killed him.

PAUL GARDULLO: [Laughs.] I got it. That's a great shot of him at work. It's just, just, just wonderful. Where did you meet him?

JOE SCHWARTZ: Huh?

PAUL GARDULLO: Where did you know him from?

JOE SCHWARTZ: Oh, I knew him from this—I think I took it the—oh, no this—he was visiting—he visited Synanon

and I took photographs of him when he was visiting one of—the Horowitz Gallery. Horowitz has died since, and—but Horowitz, there was a lady who used to take care of his gallery after he died. She's still around. Her name is Charlotte—Charlotte something. Well, this of course is Paul Robeson here. This is during the time when they—when they gave Captain Mulzac something in a hotel, and she played.

PAUL GARDULLO: Who is that playing the piano?

JOE SCHWARTZ: That's—

PAUL GARDULLO: I think in the book it says Hazel Scott.

JAMES MILLER: Hazel Scott.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Huh?

JAMES MILLER: Hazel Scott.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Hazel Scott, right—and this was a union person, Dizzy Gillespie, and here is—that was at MoMA. But that—this is a famous dancer.

PAUL GARDULLO: Is that Pearl Primus?

JOE SCHWARTZ: Huh? Pearl Primus.

PAUL GARDULLO: Is that Pearl Primus?

JOE SCHWARTZ: Yeah, Pearl Primus, and these were dancers in her group.

PAUL GARDULLO: Did you know her, or did you just know the—

JOE SCHWARTZ: Oh yeah, I knew her quite well. And here's that—the photograph I told you about.

PAUL GARDULLO: Oh, Ernest Crichlow's model?

JOE SCHWARTZ: No, no, Johnny Atkinson's model.

PAUL GARDULLO: Oh, OK, but that's the one you were talking about.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Yeah, and she was just resting, and this was a light coming in from a big window he had right there near the—and yeah, she was just resting from his taking. This of course I used to take photos of a lot of dancers at the 93rd Street—I think it was the 93rd Street grammar school or something like that. This was—I had a name—I have the names somewhere of the group. This was the feeling of dancing. I took photos of it. You can see it has a—it looks like a dancer.

PAUL GARDULLO: Yeah, it looks like movement.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Yeah.

PAUL GARDULLO: This is very different from the other style of work we've seen.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Well, but I was an artist.

PAUL GARDULLO: Yeah, you were experimenting.

JOE SCHWARTZ: This was an art piece.

PAUL GARDULLO: But this looks like it's later.

JOE SCHWARTZ: And the same way with this, when he was doing yoga. It was kind of a dance, so I got him in that kind of action.

PAUL GARDULLO: Who's that?

JOE SCHWARTZ: That's me. I took the shot.

PAUL GARDULLO: You had a self-timer?

JOE SCHWARTZ: No, I had a—

JAMES MILLER: A bulb.

PAUL GARDULLO: Oh, the bulb.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Press the button, yeah.

PAUL GARDULLO: You were a fisherman?

JOE SCHWARTZ: Well, that was a—it was—that was a staged shot of myself. I figured since it was raining like that, I'd get something interesting. So once in a while I do some interesting things like that.

PAUL GARDULLO: It's a cool shot.

JOE SCHWARTZ: That was—my wife was doing the Martha Graham exercise, and I got a shot of her. She was a secretary to—oh, dear—one of the dancers.

Now, kids in Cincinnati playing marbles, kids in Brooklyn playing marbles, I call them *Innovators* because they were figuring how to make a game out of it. For a penny, you do that, and if you get them in there, why, you could get two cents maybe. [Laughs.]

So you know, it was anywhere. It didn't have to be a White and Black person. That was the way it was in that particular neighborhood.

PAUL GARDULLO: Kids gathering just to pass the time—

JOE SCHWARTZ: Yeah, the same way here.

PAUL GARDULLO:—hang out.

JOE SCHWARTZ: But I—as I took photographs, I got those kind of things. I quickly—here they were posing—they were posing, these kids from the housing project, and you could see the way—

PAUL GARDULLO: The older—the older boy and girl are trying to get the younger ones to behave.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Yeah, right.

PAUL GARDULLO: For the camera—

JOE SCHWARTZ: Yeah, right. [They laugh.]

PAUL GARDULLO: That's sweet.

JOE SCHWARTZ: This is—

PAUL GARDULLO: Where does that take place?

JOE SCHWARTZ: This is The Gypsies.

PAUL GARDULLO: In New York?

JOE SCHWARTZ: In New York—I got several shots. And this is a typical elderly person who was having a root beer, I guess, and pretty hot.

And this is in Los Angeles, a conversation with an elderly—he wasn't as old as I am now but I consider them—you know, the different mannerisms and so on.

And this was a—in front of a church. This was during the *Hippie Generation*, I call that.

PAUL GARDULLO: That's back out here in California.

JOE SCHWARTZ: And here—and here are the Boy Scouts—Black Boy Scouts and the White. They were always separated when they did anything, especially marches—separations all the time. What's this? I can't see it.

PAUL GARDULLO: It's a cat.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Oh, yeah.

PAUL GARDULLO: It's the last image in your book.



JOE SCHWARTZ: Yeah, it was [Dave] Robbin's—Robbin's cat. And this is also a shot of a cat—[laughs]—a kitten. I remember Marla? [inaudible].

PAUL GARDULLO: You've got some ranching photos here.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Huh?

PAUL GARDULLO: This looks like a ranching photo.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Well, that's Canadian.

PAUL GARDULLO: Canadian, OK—

JOE SCHWARTZ: Yeah, we were—we were going up towards Canada and we were going around Canada. It was a—it was a convention of Disabled American Veterans. So that was one of the things I noticed. And I also noticed that here are the elderly people that I took some of]. So it made a composition and so did he. Here's the same shot.

PAUL GARDULLO: We walked about this one yesterday—

JOE SCHWARTZ: The puppets, yeah.

PAUL GARDULLO:—the puppet show, puppet club.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Right.

PAUL GARDULLO: It looks like more punch ball, huh?

JOE SCHWARTZ: This would be—yeah, that's punch ball again, yeah, playground with some kids. Well, we—I was asked to take photographs of slum areas and so on to—for petitions.

PAUL GARDULLO: Who asked you to take photographs?

JOE SCHWARTZ: Who asked me to take photographs and petitions? It was my idea actually. But I was asked by the Citizens Civic Affairs Committee to do that.

PAUL GARDULLO: Okay.

JOE SCHWARTZ: I don't know. I don't know how many signatures we got, but we got signatures. I actually took a photograph of—I don't know whether I have it here or not but I think I told you that I had a photograph of—gosh, I've forgotten her name. But that writer that—

JAMES MILLER: Richard Wright.

JOE SCHWARTZ: There was a celebration of him and his—the book that he had written. It was a very shocking book.

PAUL GARDULLO: *Native Son*?

JOE SCHWARTZ: *Native Son* [1940], yeah.

PAUL GARDULLO: And so you have a picture.

JOE SCHWARTZ: I have a photograph of her having a petition signed, and the petition was—I don't remember who it was now.

PAUL GARDULLO: What was Richard Wright's first wife's name?

JOE SCHWARTZ: I don't know.

JAMES MILLER: This was Ellen.

PAUL GARDULLO: Oh.

JAMES MILLER: His second—his first was Rose—Rose Meadman.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Richard Wright actually became—he became a Communist, I think. I'm not sure.

PAUL GARDULLO: Yes, yes.

JOE SCHWARTZ: It seems like that was advertised.

PAUL GARDULLO: In fact, he wrote—I think he wrote an essay called "How I Became a Communist," isn't that right?

JAMES MILLER: Mm-hmm. [Affirmative.]

JOE SCHWARTZ: Oh really?

PAUL GARDULLO: Yeah, so he definitely did.

JOE SCHWARTZ: I didn't know that. Anyway, this is in California. It was in another housing project, a very small housing project for Spanish-speaking people. And this, of course, is the Watts—is the Watts Festival. Over here was the band that was playing and they were just climbing up to get a good view.

PAUL GARDULLO: In the 1960s? Is that when the—

JOE SCHWARTZ: You would have to find out. I have a sign of some sort talking about the festival. My father was visiting my—visiting my wife and myself. And he's sitting there at the housing—

[END OF CD 3.]

PAUL GARDULLO: Schwartz, disc four—

JOE SCHWARTZ: I took several—

PAUL GARDULLO: Now, that's that same image but it looks like it's been colored, this image of Ernie Crichlow.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Oh, no.

PAUL GARDULLO: But it looks tinted a little bit.

JOE SCHWARTZ: No, no.

JAMES MILLER: This is.

JOE SCHWARTZ: No.

JAMES MILLER: Yeah, this—

JOE SCHWARTZ: No, that's not tinted. That's the—that's the photo.

PAUL GARDULLO: Is it a color photo?

JOE SCHWARTZ: It wasn't in color. It just happened to be—

JAMES MILLER: It looks like a sepia tone.

JOE SCHWARTZ: I don't know. That was his color. I don't know. Maybe—

PAUL GARDULLO: Did you know anybody who hand-colored photos, who would do it after the fact?

JOE SCHWARTZ: Well, I knew somebody that we—when we lived in—I forgot where we—the name of the area that we lived in. And we had a—we had a garage apartment for—and this woman was a tint—she tinted photographs and so on.

That was her job. I happened to meet her. But she had a boyfriend that used to come—came from—was a seaman of some sort and a Black guy. And she, you know, had him—when he came to town, he lived with her.

PAUL GARDULLO: Mm-hmm. [Affirmative.]

JOE SCHWARTZ: And—but that was—that was a no-no in the area. And the Ku Klux Klan actually burned a—on our lawn, burned a big cross.

PAUL GARDULLO: Really?

JOE SCHWARTZ: Yeah, yeah, I've had that experience—scary.

PAUL GARDULLO: And that was a woman who had done some tinting work for you or for—

JOE SCHWARTZ: Well, she didn't do any tinting for me.

PAUL GARDULLO: She just—you just knew of her. How's that then?

JOE SCHWARTZ: No, she didn't do that. I don't think this has been tinted.

PAUL GARDULLO: OK.

JOE SCHWARTZ: I don't think so.

JAMES MILLER: It looks like a sepia print.

JOE SCHWARTZ: I can't remember now, you know?

PAUL GARDULLO: Right. I love that shot. It's a beautifully composed picture.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Oh it's beautiful—a great shot of him.

PAUL GARDULLO: You know, it's interesting how you have these closely—close-ups of artists, and they're very intimate. There's a very intimate feel about them, Joe.

JOE SCHWARTZ: There's Joe Louis at that—*Thinking Joe Louis*.

PAUL GARDULLO: With his spats or something—

JOE SCHWARTZ: Anyway, yeah, and this was in—where was this now. Rose Hills Housing Project, *Down Home Young Man*. This was in Rose Hill. Let's see, that was—yeah, we lived in that housing project, too. And this is Atlantic—Atlantic Avenue, where they had the Atlantic train that went to Long Island.

And this is in Brooklyn. Evidently, he's carrying gasoline to pick up a car, I suppose. And this was a Harlem—was a Harlem Congressman. He used to—he was of an Italian family. He was very well-known. I've got to get these names down because these people were important people. And he came from Harlem. Oh, what was his name? This is his mother at a—at a big rally of some sort. He actually—he worked with the Unemployment Council. But he became a mayor of Harlem but worked with the Unemployment Council.

PAUL GARDULLO: It seems like you had a lot of involvement in Harlem, as well as in Brooklyn.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Well, I made it my business to be involved. And that's what one of the newspapers had written about me: That I was very much involved with people.

And here, here is Weston—Edward Weston—before he died. And this—this is a—was a—march under the elevator, and the kids were trying—the Black kids were trying to get into the march of these Boy Scouts. And they were cleared away from the area. They were being cleared away, and I saw that happening and took the shot.

PAUL GARDULLO: Mm-hmm. [Affirmative.]

JOE SCHWARTZ: And there's—

PAUL GARDULLO: That's A. Philip Randolph.

JOE SCHWARTZ: A. Philip Randolph, and here, this is Claude Pepper and there's another congressman, I don't know who he was. And that was at—the Disabled American Veterans had a convention of some sort. So I took shots of that, too. Of course, that was all in the newspaper. This is a—the vice president of the lithographers union. And this was—oh, Reverend Horton, and I know these are other people that were involved, sort of political hacks and so on.

And this is a—this is a typical street in—oh, what area is that? It was Yiddish.

JAMES MILLER: Oh, Delancey Street?

JOE SCHWARTZ: No.

JAMES MILLER: On the Lower East Side?

JOE SCHWARTZ: No, Delancey, that was in New York.

JAMES MILLER: Yeah, oh OK. This was Los Angeles?

JOE SCHWARTZ: This was in Brooklyn, and that was—yeah, Delancey Street was once a very—I don't know how I didn't—how I missed that one. As a matter of fact, there are—a lot of people that I knew went to—well, there was one fellow who—that had actually started the Delancey Street—like Synanon. They called it the Delancey Street House.

This is just what I caught while I was on the subway. See, I love this kind of photography where it shows humanness. I'm a humanist, actually.

PAUL GARDULLO: Joe, did you ever apply for any grants for money from philanthropic organizations to do your work?

JOE SCHWARTZ: Yeah, but I didn't know how to do it.

PAUL GARDULLO: Yeah.

JOE SCHWARTZ: And I wasn't—I called and made—or tried to make arrangements. I was supposed to be in one of the books, and it didn't happen.

PAUL GARDULLO: Did the—

JOE SCHWARTZ: I went to visit—the guy was a very well-known photographer and he saw—my boss had introduced me to the guy over the phone, and I made arrangements to see him, and he saw the—my photo that I had of this woman carrying wood on her head and told me to come back and he didn't take it seriously at all. And I was trying so hard to get recognition, you know.

PAUL GARDULLO: Did they talk about—

JOE SCHWARTZ: I don't feel sorry for myself—to hell with it.

PAUL GARDULLO: Yeah.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Anyway, this is my mother—

PAUL GARDULLO: Yes, I remember that image from your—

JOE SCHWARTZ:—chopping lettuce or chopping—she was chopping a special kind of vegetable. Anyway, this is a person in Wilmington, Delaware, that was—this is when I was hitchhiking with my wife, and I saw that and I took as much of the shot I could get. But it's a good shot.

Anyway, this was—[laughs]—a little comedy, and I call them the something *Gentlemen*. But he had—his coat was pinned together, and the buttons were broken. And this of course is a little bit of comedy, too.

And that of course—so this is the detectives back here. So this is New York. It looks like she's saying that, and my son was—an infant, this was in Chicago—she couldn't care less. She was smoking, and he was trying to sleep.

This is a May Day parade. It's not what I called it. They said, "We love a parade." I don't know. Maybe it wasn't a May Day parade. I labeled it that, anyway. And this was waiting for a bus in California. Here's the building that—the main building, city hall. And he's showing—still wearing that kind of a hat, but you could see there was another person on this side of the table.

That was in a Sixth Avenue—a Sixth Avenue café. And this shows of course the elderly again waiting for a bus. And this is an entrepreneur—with his—that was on a boardwalk, which was taken down.

This is in Chinatown. And I call that, *Who, me?* That's what it looks like.

PAUL GARDULLO: Mm-hmm. [Affirmative.]

JOE SCHWARTZ: And these are the nuns. This is in California, and this is in New York. This got first prize—that is, first place. There's no prizes. This is another story, though. I can't tell it to you now because I'm getting really tired now.

PAUL GARDULLO: Well, why don't we—let's take a—let's take a break.

JOE SCHWARTZ: All right. We can take a break, sure.

PAUL GARDULLO: Thank you for telling me that, Joe. Let's do take a break.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Yeah, I'm getting tired now.

JOE SCHWARTZ: It happened from what I was into.

JAMES MILLER: Yeah, yeah.

JOE SCHWARTZ: You know, and so I was maybe a little—a little guy, but you know, a whole bunch of little guys would get you there—

JAMES MILLER: Mm-hmm. [Affirmative.]

JOE SCHWARTZ:—would get history moving.

JAMES MILLER: Mm-hmm. [Affirmative.]

MR. : This is yesterday's pictures. This is yesterday's pictures. You can have that.

JAMES MILLER: Oh, thank you.

PAUL GARDULLO: Thank you, Harvey.

JOE SCHWARTZ: What's that?

JAMES MILLER: Thank you. These are pictures.

MR.: I took pictures yesterday and I have put them on a disc for these gentlemen and I have one for Paula also, for you. I'll give it to Paula. She can put it in her computer.

JAMES MILLER: It's really grassroots stuff. It's paying attention to everyday issues in very, very basic language.

JOE SCHWARTZ: That's the way I wanted it, yeah. So I made myself the editor.

JAMES MILLER: But serious grassroots organizing.

JOE SCHWARTZ: And I took it to the shop and had it printed. [Laughs.]

PAUL GARDULLO: How many issues did you do? Just these? It looks like three.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Three issues before I—we left—

PAUL GARDULLO: So we've got September, October '48 in *The Kingsboro New Look*.

JAMES MILLER: And November.

PAUL GARDULLO: November '48, in *The Kingsboro New Look*. And this is after you've been up and running for a little while.

JOE SCHWARTZ: '49, I think we left.

PAUL GARDULLO: Why'd you leave?

JOE SCHWARTZ: Huh?

PAUL GARDULLO: Why did you leave?

JOE SCHWARTZ: Well, it was a very bad period.

PAUL GARDULLO: This is when you—

JOE SCHWARTZ: I think we just left because we had the—we had the chance to.

PAUL GARDULLO: Yeah.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Friends of ours had moved out there. The Wassers [longtime family friends. -PM] moved out there. And so we thought we'd move out, too. And I looked for a job while I was there.

MR.: What was the name of the lithographer you worked for?

JOE SCHWARTZ: The first lithographer that I worked for was that organization that did *Time and Life*, the western *Time and Life*. They used to get the plates and do them out here, *Time and Life* magazine.

MR.: Okay.

JOE SCHWARTZ: And that's where I found—when I was rummaging through the lot of trash and stuff, they had these big tremendous things that I was rummaging in, and I found the photo of—I have it here actually—the duplicate of it—of [Albert] Einstein.

MR.: Oh yes, right, right.

JOE SCHWARTZ: And I don't remember how much I got for it. It was around 3,000 [dollars] or 4,000 [dollars] or something like that.

MR.: Yeah, it was a good picture.

JOE SCHWARTZ: That helped me out quite a bit. But now I told you I had the—I hunted through the trash at the IOOF, the landfills, and I found an old photo of—what was the name of the musician who was—

PAUL GARDULLO: John Philip Sousa.

JOE SCHWARTZ: John Philip Sousa, it was he and his band in an old frame. They threw it away. It was a—it's—I don't know what it's worth. It might be worth something. I don't haven't any idea now. I haven't tried to find out. But you know, I joined through—oh, I was going to show you these photographs that came from—names—they assisted, the assistant curator, curatorial assistant—

MR.: Yes.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Graham, Mr. Graham—

JAMES MILLER: Graham Howes (sic).

JOE SCHWARTZ: Graham Howell (sic), that's it.

JAMES MILLER: Graham Howe.

JOE SCHWARTZ: And I have—I have the list of the—that—of those photos that came in the—

PAUL GARDULLO: That were part of that exhibition—

JOE SCHWARTZ: The stuff that I showed you, yeah.

PAUL GARDULLO: And that exhibition, that was "Gettin' Along," Is that the exhibition that toured in the '90s? Was that the title of it?

JOE SCHWARTZ: After 9/11?

PAUL GARDULLO: I don't know.

JAMES MILLER: No, before—

PAUL GARDULLO: Before 9/11, in the 1990s—the one that came to Cal Poly [California Polytechnic State University] and went to Connecticut, was it this exhibition?

JOE SCHWARTZ: Yeah, during that period.

PAUL GARDULLO: Was that your first large exhibition?

JOE SCHWARTZ: Oh, no, no. My first exhibition was at this park that the Los Angeles, City of Los Angeles, put up for me that I should have—I got in, you know, the book that I had people sign and so on, there were several people that were involved in exhibitions. It was stated that I had very good photographs that they should get better—what's the word—better exposure.

PAUL GARDULLO: Mm-hmm. [Affirmative.]

JOE SCHWARTZ: And they suggested that I get in touch with certain groups and so on, but I haven't done that.

PAUL GARDULLO: Mm-hmm. [Affirmative.]

JOE SCHWARTZ: They could have gotten in touch with me. They were in touch. They were in this position. But I guess they must have thought that I—or they thought I knew how to get in touch with these people. I didn't know how.

PAUL GARDULLO: Did you ever work with any dealers to help sell your work or promote your work?

JOE SCHWARTZ: I used to keep after—after Jim, after I had that exhibit out there in Connecticut. I was hoping that Jim was in a position to let people know. Actually he wasn't. But he did—[laughs]—I'm glad to say.

PAUL GARDULLO: Well, this is pretty exciting, this exhibition on the Photo League coming up at the Columbus Museum.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Tell the truth, Jim. Did you—did you think I was—I was capable of the recognition that I—

JAMES MILLER: Sure, but I also felt that it was important for people to see your work—

JOE SCHWARTZ: Yeah, well, you kept in touch with me.

JAMES MILLER: If people saw your work, they would move with it. But there had to be ways where your work could circulate.

JOE SCHWARTZ: There was a lady that used to come. I've forgotten her name, but she worked with some—quite a big organization that had to do with photography and so on. I've lost her name, but she came to the—she came to the exhibit. She came to the first day of the exhibit.

JAMES MILLER: The one in Hartford?

JOE SCHWARTZ: I can't remember her name. Let's see. Who else? Yeah, that was the first meaningful exhibit that I had, although I—the 150 photographs—that I had at that park was of the have-nots.

PAUL GARDULLO: This is the one in LA, the Los Angeles exhibit?

JOE SCHWARTZ: Yeah. The Unitarian church had a big exhibit, not quite as big but they supported me. They'd send people down, and Mr. Fritchman was telling me that I—that I should—I should be more in the limelight than I was.

PAUL GARDULLO: Mm-hmm. [Affirmative.]

JOE SCHWARTZ: But you know, being in the limelight wasn't—that's not what we learned. We learned that we should be of importance. Our work should be important, you know. And if we take photographs, there should be a person in some way along the line that had an involvement in the photograph shown, which I thought I did.

I remember seeing a photograph of—it was just an old chair on an old stoop or an old—an old person. It was a rocking chair, I think, but nobody was sitting in it. But it had a good kind of feeling for the have-nots.

PAUL GARDULLO: What sort of—what kind of—who were some of the photographers that you looked up to?

JOE SCHWARTZ: What was that?

PAUL GARDULLO: Who were some of the photographers that you looked up to, that—you appreciated their work?

JOE SCHWARTZ: Oh, well I wish I had seen—well, Margaret Bourke-White was one of the first actually. I saw her work in the—*Life* magazine and I liked that stuff, kind of thing.

PAUL GARDULLO: So you saw her work before you met her?

JOE SCHWARTZ: Well, I talked to her but not very long. I met her. Who knows what I talked about? Also Cartier-Bresson—

PAUL GARDULLO: You mentioned him yesterday.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Yeah, he's a—was a great artist, and there were several. Eliot Elisofon was a *Life* photographer, and this Black photographer, he knew me.

PAUL GARDULLO: Were there any Black photographers that were members of the photo league?

JOE SCHWARTZ: Well, we started with a Black photographer, and I can't remember his name now. He and myself and several others started a photo league of Los Angeles. But we didn't get very far because I couldn't—well, I think I was just too busy trying to find work for myself. I couldn't just be giving myself out to this and to that and so on.

PAUL GARDULLO: Right.

JOE SCHWARTZ: So you know, it just—it doesn't always happen. You try, but if you can't hold on to it, then tough—what I did want to show you eventually is the slides of this art convention.

And what do they call it now? They have a special name for it, and artists, photographers, anybody connected with the arts would come to this convention and were Black artists. It was a Black artist convention.

PAUL GARDULLO: Do you remember where it took place?

JOE SCHWARTZ: Yeah, I think I remember. It took place in—I think it was Crenshaw, and that—that person who owned this clothing building. I think it was Crenshaw Boulevard. I can't remember the name of it.

PAUL GARDULLO: And this where you took pictures of—is this where you took pictures of Jacob Lawrence?

JOE SCHWARTZ: Who?

PAUL GARDULLO: Jacob Lawrence? Is this where—you were telling me—

JOE SCHWARTZ: Well, Jacob Lawrence was one of the people, yeah.

PAUL GARDULLO:—was there.

JOE SCHWARTZ: We'll come across it eventually. If you stay here longer, you'd come across it—

PAUL GARDULLO: So these are—these are slides?

JOE SCHWARTZ:—because I have photos of the people sitting in front, and photos of the areas that showed some of the arts and also this photographer that was taking photographs as well.

PAUL GARDULLO: Interesting—

JOE SCHWARTZ: And this poet, who was the chairman—and she—let's see. Oh, excuse me. What was her name?

JAMES MILLER: Last night, you said Maya Angelou.

JOE SCHWARTZ: What's that?

JAMES MILLER: Maya Angelou.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Maya Angelou, that's it.

PAUL GARDULLO: Was this an annual convention, or was it a one-time thing?

JOE SCHWARTZ: I think it was annual. I don't know. Maybe the name of the convention was a little different because I got—I got photos of other similar art get-togethers. And I forgot the lady's name that got them together—tall and good-looking. And of course Samella was always at the hub of it all.

JAMES MILLER: Right.

JOE SCHWARTZ: She was always involved with the—she had a whole backyard full of Black artists' work.

JAMES MILLER: Right.

PAUL GARDULLO: Did Samella Lewis live right in LA?

JAMES MILLER: She was in LA.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Yeah.

PAUL GARDULLO: She was in Crenshaw as well?



JAMES MILLER: Right.

PAUL GARDULLO: In the Crenshaw neighborhood?

JOE SCHWARTZ: Oh, yeah, she was in that. She was in—yeah—

PAUL GARDULLO: Wasn't there an art museum that was founded in the late '60s, early '70s.

JAMES MILLER: [Inaudible.] There was, yeah, it seems late '60s, early '70s.

JOE SCHWARTZ: Yeah, I have them. In the books—in these books, you'll see some of the stuff that I took.

PAUL GARDULLO: What was the name of that museum? I remember that was quite a moment.

JAMES MILLER: Right, right—an LA-based annual conference on visual arts.

PAUL GARDULLO: It sounded like it was more than just visuals, too.

[END OF INTERVIEW]