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Joseph Marciano

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Oral History Interview
with
Joe Marciano
June 29, 1978
109 Devonshire St., Providence, R.I.
By Henry J. Marciano

Interviewer: Hello, Dad, how are you?
Interviewee: How are you, Henry?

Interviewer: Dad, I want to start off this interview by asking you a few questions about your parents. Do you recall from what part of Italy they came from?

Interviewee: They came from a little village called outside Naples. And that's about half hour motor ride from Naples.

Interviewer: Did they ever describe their town to you, what it was like?

Interviewee: My father in particular would describe his town because he was old enough to remember. He came to the States when he was about sixteen years old. My mother wouldn't remember too much. She was about six or seven at the time of her immigration.

Interviewer: Did he explain what the people did in That kind of work they did?

Interviewee: My father impressed me fortunately, he had traveled outside of the village and he would describe, tell me the stories about Naples itself. The big city Naples.

Interviewer: Was that common for villagers to travel outside of the villages?

Interviewee: No no no. In fact, many of the early immigrants to America probably saw the first movie house in America or the first train in America, the first
circus, the first anything, in America, because they were completely isolated from the outside world, living in their villages.

Interviewer: So in other words what you're saying is that many of the new things that they saw in this country they actually had in their own but because they didn't venture outside of their villages, they didn't know this.

Interviewee: That's right.

Interviewer: I see. What kind of work did your father do while he was in Italy?

Interviewee: Actually he did no work because he came here as a child. But he had received elementary education and elementary education was sufficient to let you be considered intelligent.

Interviewer: What prompted your parents to come to America?

Interviewee: Well, as I understand it from my father's many, many stories, he came here along with two brothers not actually to stay but merely to earn money, to help pay the expenses of people at the old homestead, in Italy. But actually things turned out differently. I supposed that most of the immigrants that came here didn't have the idea that they would be taking up permanent residence. But in fact so little.....

Interviewer: What kind of values did your parents bring from the old country?

Interviewee: Oh, I would say to them virtues were worthwhile, honesty in particular. They were completely gripped by everything that was morally good. In fact I would guess they influenced my own personal life,
and my own personal outlook on life.

Interviewer: What about religion? Did religion play an important factor?

Interviewee: Yes, there was a deep religious attachment along with the virtues, religion, our religious outlook, our spiritual outlook on life was deemed absolutely necessary for well-being.

Interviewer: Did they ever mention any tales or superstitions that they had?

Interviewee: Yes unfortunately all the immigrants were superstitious, even the most intellectual of them. They were superstitious. I would say you don't call people superstitious but you consider them cynical or skeptical, about things. And really the citizens of today, and the skepticism of today was merely the belief in witches.

Interviewer: Can you recall any specific superstitions your parents believed in?

Interviewee: I don't recall any specific superstitions my parents actually had. But I knew that they were superstitious. And as I just said, it was more that they were somewhat cynical and skeptical.

Interviewer: Did they belong to any societies or clubs?

Interviewee: No, my father perhaps in later life belonged to some fraternal society. But my father was a rather shy person and I don't say exactly a loner but he wasn't too much attracted to club activities of any kind.

Interviewer: How about your mother? Did she belong to any religious clubs?

Interviewee: No, no, no no. You must remember at that time—my mother came over as a child, as I mentioned earlier and she was one of many in the family. She merely
accompanied her mother and father, along with her sisters and two brothers. So the whole family was uprooted and came to America. And as I look back now, I imagine just like they were, they were somewhat exploited. I don't say this in a derogatory sense, cause I would really do them an unkindness. But they came here at an early age and they worked in the mills. My grandfather was rather a shrewd, practical man and he perhaps quickly learned there was much importance to making money. So his daughters worked in the mills earning their weekly pay and handing it in. And it was like a group activity or gypsy tribe where the entire family worked and the sons and daughters contributed to the family kitty if you will.

Interviewer: Who was the head of your household, your mother or your father?

Interviewee: Well, my father was not a dominating person. But my mother, I wouldn't say she was domineering but she dominated the family you see. Because she was more practical. My father, while a good man, honest man, he was too shy to be aggressive in any way. Whereas my mother was somewhat aggressive. And she commanded the performance, the family performance.

Interviewer: You commented that your mother worked in the mills. What kind of work did your father do when he came here?

Interviewee: My father was fortunate. As I mentioned he had received an elementary education. When he came here a family in a school, they most likely emphasized penmanship, because his penmanship was so good that he landed a job as a shipping clerk. Now for an immigrant
to get a job as a shipping clerk in America, that was quite a feat. But his penmanship was so good and it wasn't necessary that he was proficient in English, but he became rather proficient in English later. But at the time that he got the job, it was because of his penmanship. So he got the job as a shipping clerk and it simply meant that he could letter the addresses of companies on wooden boxes in which ........... famous .......... were shipped all over the world.

Interviewer: Now your parents settled originally on Charles St. I believe. Is that correct?

Interviewee: Yes on Charles St.

Interviewer: Why on Charles St.? Why on Charles St. did they settle there?

Interviewee: Well, I suppose they were influenced by other immigrants from the same locality in Italy. And you must remember that in those early days of immigration to the States, it was more a tribal atmosphere, if you will, in that birds flock together. The birds of a feather flocking together. And so the immigrants of a particular area in Italy flocked together in the States.

Interviewer: Was Charles St. divided up into particular areas? In other words, were there certain groups of Italians, say Sicilians, living on Ledge St. and say Neapolitans living on Rose St.?

Interviewee: No, no, no, they were simply getting together in this huge tenement district.

Interviewer: What about pushcarts? Did they have pushcarts like on Federal Hill?
Interviewee: No no, Charles St. had if any pushcarts around they had few pushcarts, probably in a corner area, around the community you could probably see a few pushcarts but pushcarts were not as plentiful as they were on Federal Hill.

Interviewer: Can you describe what the pushcarts were like on Federal Hill in those days?

Interviewee: Well, the pushcarts were nothing more---made of---picture or imagine a wooden flatbed, made of wood, on two wheels which were actually pushed along the street.

Interviewer: What kind of goods were sold in the pushcarts?

Interviewee: Fruit and produce, vegetables and fruit.

Interviewer: You mentioned one time walking through the streets of Federal Hill for some notorious event. What was that event?

Interviewee: Oh, the notorious event. Well, I was sixteen years old I was greatly impressed by the great champion boxer Jack Dempsey. He was at the Federal Hill and as a youngster of sixteen years of age I was very impressed. And then I had the opportunity to walk along side the champion of the world. The champion the heavy-weight boxer of the world.

Interviewer: You mentioned a little earlier about discrimination. Were your parents discriminated against when they went to look for work?

Interviewee: Well, I wouldn't say my parents, I have no evidence of discrimination against my parents. But I dare say there was discrimination against Italian immigrants. Before the Italian immigration to America, there was also the Irish immigration and before the Irish immigration there was the English immigration. And I suppose the English one time felt that we
ah, the Irish were somewhat bothersome. The Irish and the Italians to the Irish were somewhat bothersome, in that perhaps they present an economic threat. But you must remember the boss before the Irish were the English and the Irish were ill-treated by the English and the Italians in turn were ill-treated by the English and the Irish. About the only thing they had in common, that the Italian immigrant had with the Irish folks were predominantly Roman Catholic.

Interviewer: Now when you lived on Charles St. as a boy, was Charles St. then an Italian neighborhood solely or were there other nationalities there?

Interviewee: No it was strictly an Italian community, with a sprinkling of Irish. Now when the Italians came in

... in other words with bigger families and they practically pushed the Irish out. And the Irish in most instances just moved away from the most predominantly Italian community.

Interviewer: Now, you were born on Charles St. Whereabouts?

Interviewee: I was born on Social St. in one of my grandfather's houses. He was quite a character as I remember him, in that he operated a grocery store and also a boarding house. And so every, as the immigrants came in, they lived in this boarding house, shopped at his grocery store, and he even got them jobs in the mills. So his was a rather unique operation, unique in the sense that he as an immigrant was quite enterprising.

Interviewer: He was quite an entrepreneur then.

Interviewee: He was quite an entrepreneur.

Interviewer: With regards to discrimination, I just wanted to get back to that. Do you recall what it was like
applying for a job, as an Italian American, as a boy? Were there any derogatory remarks made in newspapers with regard to say the want ads or the job ads?

Interviewee: No, no there was no such thing as Italians keep out or signs reading dogs and Italians keep out. The Jews in particular were discriminated against. In some areas of the United States it was common to see signs in hotels reading the Jews and dogs Keep Out. But no. In fact in every Italian community the Jewish or foreign or any other outside of Italian businessman he would always be welcomed in the Italian community. And the Italians I would say, not because I'm not interested because of my Italian origin but I would say they were most tolerant than any other group of immigrants because they accepted any new immigrants whatever his background, into their area.

Interviewer: I'm going to ask you a question that I haven't asked any of the other people I've interviewed, maybe you have some insights into this. I noticed that among Italians, Italian-Americans that is, there are some who are proud of being Italian-Americans and there are some who are ashamed of it. Why is that so?

Interviewee: Well, I think I can offer an explanation. Remember at one time the elite were Irish and English. And then the Italians to make some headway, began hypernating or emphasizing their name. For example, a Capobianco became Whitehead and Bevalacqua became DrinkWater. And this was simply because they wanted to belong. And it was a subtle way. They tried subtlety to actually gain favor. So for example,
if my name is Marciano, or in Italian, Marciano, and I emphasize it to March, that's actually what they were doing. The name means to march, it's the Italian verb to march, then I would be hiding my true identity. But this is merely to win favor.

Because you picture yourself living in an Irish community for example, you're moving in, and to more or less gain entrance, into the Irish community, you more or less have to use every kind of strategy.

Interviewer: Being of Italian decent, what do you like about being Italian?

Interviewee: Now what I like about being Italian is everything in Italian is purely original, it's creative, it's for the first time. And I don't think I'm exaggerating in any way when I say I'm proud of my Italian heritage. There's no question about it, the Italians contributed more than any other group, more than any other people to Western Civilization.

Interviewer: Can you give me some specific examples?

Interviewee: Well, let's consider for the moment Leonardo da Vinci. Perhaps the greatest man that ever lived. Strictly Italian. No one has along in maybe five hundred years and no one will come along in a thousand years. is truly a case of immortality. The greatest mind that ever lived. Now when you say the greatest mind that ever lived, he was everything, he was the master of everything and above all he was Italian.

Interviewer: What don't you like about being Italian?

Interviewee: There's not a damn thing I don't like about being Italian. In fact, I'm so proud of being Italian because when I think and feel Italian, I'm being original. I'm being creative. I'm not copying, I'm
Interviewer: You've made many trips to Italy. What are your impressions of Italy, past, present and future?

Interviewee: Well, my first impression of Italy was most favorable. Not only my liking for the Italian people but also for Italy's natural beauty. And the fact that Italy is so small, about two-thirds the size of California, it runs about 800 miles long, and about 100 miles across and the fact that you can change the scenery, the natural scenery within 24 hours. The people are most kind, most lovable. And so I share an indestructible friendship with the Italian people. Let me give you an example of this, my strong feelings for the Italians. I remember my experience during World War II. There it was amazing. It had practically been defeated in War, having nothing at all and all I had to say to the Italians in any village, that I was hungry and food of all kind I could share with them. And not only that but when the war was over and the Italians back to the devastated villages, the thing that really impressed me more than anything else was they didn't start building their own homes or rebuilding their own homes. They simply started to build the Church. And they all pitched in, as one big family. This was perhaps their spiritual upbringing. They all were dedicated to their God. They didn't bend to themselves.

Interviewer: Can you explain one thing. We know the Italians are religious people. Today Italy has the possibility of becoming a Communist state. Doesn't there seem to be some contradiction between being Catholic and being myself.
being a Communist at the same time? How do you explain that phenomena?

Interviewee: I would explain it thusly. Today, Italy has the largest Communist party outside Russia. That is, the largest political party outside Russia. I don't believe that the Italians are demonstrating that they have a great love for Communism. I see it as a form of protest. A convenient way of protesting against the establishment. Now the Italians find Communism a convenient way, the mechanism or the agency through which they can protest. And I dare say the average Italian doesn't know where Moscow is. Doesn't know that Moscow is the capital of Russia. It's a form of protest and it's the Italian brand of protest which is a nothing more nothing less. So I don't see any fear of Communism taking over Italy. Despite the fact that they are the largest Communist party outside Russia.

Interviewer: You said that your first impressions of Italy were favorable. Recently, you made a trip to Italy about a year ago, or so, have your impressions changed at all?

Interviewee: I was disappointed in the Italian movies, in particular. Apparently there's no question about it, America has great influence. And I was somewhat disturbed that the Italians from something of their originality that I always admired, and there is some of it that is apparently vanishing. Some of its originality is vanishing. And it started under the American influence. Apparently, the American movie, and the American lifestyle is catching on.
Especially among the Italian youth. And that was disappointing to me. Because everything bad, everything that is bad in America is being exploited. Really. And I was mad. There's no doubt. But I never felt that the Italians would have such plastic minds that could be easily molded.

Interviewer: So you said you were dissatisfied with the Italian youth. Are there any other specific reasons why besides the lack of originality among the youth of Italy?

Interviewee: Well maybe the youth of Italy, I wouldn't say all, every Italian youth, heritage, no, I didn't say that at all. But most of Italian youths are greatly influenced by American lifestyle. And that has disappointed me. Because the people have so much, I keep repeating, originality, creativity. They shouldn't be influenced by anything outside their own.

Interviewer: Can you tell us something more about the Italian way of life? During the War for example, you ran some kind of a camp after the War years. What camp did you run? And what was your responsibilities?

Interviewee: Well after the War I directed a Jewish refugee (a U. N.) camp because and I was a Roman Catholic and I was allowed to direct the activities of the Jewish refugee camp. And the residents, the camp residents were all Jewish. They had escaped Hitler's concentration camps, had been liberated from Hitler's concentration camps. And I was the United Nations top in command, which meant Italian military barracks. And I had ten thousand residents, and I was certainly responsible for them.
Interviewer: Did they describe any of the atrocities that the Nazis had committed against them?

Interviewee: Oh yes. They even had Hitler's trademark connected to their bodies. It was on their arm or shoulder...

Interviewer: When they came to your camp, what did they look like? Were they feeble-looking and weak, skinny.

Interviewee: No, not all of them, not all of them. They had been totally liberated. Some of them needed to come there to the camp themselves and others would befall and they were actually doing fugitive act. But what I am really particularly interested in, at least the American Zionist movement to go to Palestine. And I went there. This was in 1948, in particular, that is when you was born. They wanted all these Jewish refugees to go to Israel. As the American commander of the camp, I gave them a choice. They could go wherever their family were. The Jews are very international in character. So if this particular Jewish camp visitors wanted to go to South America, because of some family ties, I went to him and asked a member of his family in South America if he could immigrate to South America and they'd be responsible. We had the American Zionist Movement. I somewhat was heartbroken for those who wanted to go to Israel. I could see them telling the Italian authorities to close their eyes to the clandestine move, to the movement from the camp to Israel. And then they moved of course to the Mediterranean, into the Middle East and on the way, if the ships would carry them there, intercepted by the British authorities they simply would be herded to British camps.
But I'm glad to say that most of them did get to Israel, those that wanted to go there. What I'm trying to stress is, that I felt, despite the opposition of the Zionist that I felt to give them the choice. This was freedom of choice, to do whatever they wanted.

Interviewer: What about Italy at the end of the War? How did the Italians view the Jews, the atrocities that had been committed under the Fascist regimes of Hitler and Mussolini?

Interviewee: Well the Jews in Italy if you're thinking particularly of the Jews, they weren't totally mistreated in Italy. In fact the Jews in Italy before the War and after the War, they felt a threat during the War because of Mussolini's partnership with Hitler. But other than that they have absolutely no fear. They are strictly assimilated in Italian life. You know earlier we were talking about the Communist threat to Italy. Well I remember one particular incident. I remember I was talking with a sanitation worker, a garbage collector, I used to see this fellow going to the Communist party headquarters in the city of Naples. And one day I asked him what he learned at those meetings. And he quickly told me that counter-revolution, counter-revolution because if the Communist revolution, he wouldn't be collecting garbage anymore.

Anyway, he would become

And I quickly asked him if he believed this

No, he said but it's wonderful to So this is what I meant. That it's a form of protest-
ing. Believing in Communism, not because they were actually committed or dedicated or really champion to the Communist cause. It was simply a way of protesting. And the mere fact that he told me that he didn't believe there was any such

So it provided him with a wonderful
Another time I remember there was a very popular radio program, similar to our Meet the Press. And the question that these five panelists were debating was, "Why does a man who works with his brain earn more than a man who works with his muscle, really wastes his muscle?" And the five panelists were comprised of a Communist politician, a Democratic Christian politician, a Msgr., or Roman Catholic prelate, a professor of Economics, and a journalist. Well, the prelate spoke first, the Msgr. spoke first, and he simply made no distinction between the brain and the muscle. He said all work was noble, just as you'd expect a prelate to say. He didn't commit himself. The Communist, the professor of Economics he addressed himself to the question but he simply said well it's simple to answer. He said on the one hand we have abundance on the other hand we have rarity. So the economic line is that it didn't amount to too much, by way of explanation. The journalist had a facility with words Then along comes the Communist. He suggested that we all do this, That's the question that he really wants to know why does one man work 365 days a year and the other man works as a seasonal worker, in other words the
of the year, as a seasonal worker, why he doesn't work the full year. You see. It's brain versus muscle. Now in all honesty, not that I embraced his reasoning, but I must conclude now as I did then, that he won the debate. Again, protest, protest. So these Communists are a symbol of protest.

Interviewer: What about once you told me a story about a man who lived in Sicily who had to give up one of his homes for some project?

Interviewee: Well this terrible fear, especially the rich, the super-rich this terrible fear of Communism because near the village in Sicily, this very wealthy man had two empty castles. Each castle was comprised of about 50 to 100 rooms. They were huge. And they were empty. And there was this village of over a thousand people without a clinic, without a medical center. And from what I could gather, the people wanted a hospital in this village. So I simply asked what they were doing about it and there wasn't much they could do about it because there was this terrible fear on the part of the authorities. And the rich who lived in this village, they were most likely absent landlords, but they owned these huge terrains, huge areas, tracts of land. And they simply could get no one to listen. So I thought I'd be helpful and I talked with the man who owned these two empty castles. And when I suggested that they be used to actually bring about the medical center, he thought I was somewhat of a comedian. He thought of all Americans as comedians. He said "me, give to the Communists? These people are all
Communists, they hate me." And I simply tried to convince him that he was a victim of his own imprisonment. Well, it took some doing but I finally succeeded in getting him to believe that there was no hatred on the part of the people for him. He was really addicted to his stubbornness because he could become a real hero in the community if he gave in to their demands. So where they failed, I succeeded. And it turned out as I had imagined that he was welcomed as a great hero. And he came to me as I have to say to practically beg forgiveness for being so stupid. You see? And for believing that the people hated him. And he accepted that by attitudes that he had imprisoned himself. That's just an example of the misunderstanding that can exist that brings people farther apart.

Interviewer: Staying on the subject for a moment, you lived through the War period and saw Italy destroyed and at its worst, and since that time the Christian Democrats at the end of the War ruled that country and they've been ruling now for the last thirty years. Do you feel in your own estimation they have met the needs of the Italian people?

Interviewee: No, unfortunately, they haven't met the needs of the Italian people. Like you would hear me say despite the fact that we have fewer political parties in fact no political party satisfies the full needs of the people. Politics, whether you're talking about American politics or Italian politics, they're all the same. It's compromise. Unfortunately, in Italy, the Democratic Christians they favor with the rich. Before them there were the Fascists
Mussolini's party. They favored the rich too. So there is this gap between the rich and the poor. It is never narrowed. It's always been widened.

Interviewer: On that note, I wanted to ask you this. Your parents came from the southern portion of Italy, the portion where most Italians who immigrated to this country came from, this land is sometimes referred to as the land of La Miseria. Can you describe scenes of Italian misery, what it was like?

Interviewee: The Italian misery in most of the cities including Rome, itself, there are the shanty towns. Real shanty towns. Indescribable.

Interviewer: How would they compare say for example, to the slums in Harlem?

Interviewee: Well the slums in Harlem would probably be far better to live in than the slums in Italy. But at any rate, what I want to emphasize is that the poverty is different. This poverty is indescribable. It's not the poverty of India. Nevertheless, it's poverty, where people struggle to make a living, mere existence, it's a struggle for survival. It's a struggle to live. It's looking forward to nothing.

Interviewer: Can you give us any street images that you recall of this kind of poverty you're describing?

Interviewee: Well, I can speak of, I lived just outside, just a little beyond the Vatican there's this poverty that's totally hidden by the facade of St. Peter's. But it's hard to imagine. Anyone can imagine it and see for themselves. You walk behind this great religious and behind it is this terrible, hideous of poverty.
Interviewer: What is meant by the term of ................ (Italian)

Interviewee: ................ means street kids. They are kids that have to learn to --- they actually talk by . It's what they pick up in the streets, themselves.

Interviewer: Do you recall any ................?

Interviewee: Oh yes, I recall the .............

The whole southern area of Italy from, from all the way down to and across the Messina Strait into Sicily. They would have the street kids. They lived at their risk. They remind me of alley cats.

Interviewer: Do you remember any scenes of them?

Interviewee: I remember any scene that you can imagine. I remember one particular scene when they had to steal to eat. It involved several of them forming a relay team. They simply wanted to grab the melons from the push-carts then deliver them to his partner who in turn gave them to the other fellow. And off they would go with several melons.

Interviewer: Italians are accused of being fatalists. This is their basic philosophy. Why is that so?

Interviewee: Well it's not that they're fatalists. I wouldn't call them fatalists. Many times they're described as a people who resign themselves to their fate. No it's not that. It's total indifference. For example, they won't get excited about politics. They won't get excited about politics because politics means nothing. Politicians are very unpopular in Italy. I dare say they are getting more and more unpopular in every part of the world. So they're not resigning themselves to their fate or fatalistic.
They are merely demonstrating their indifference to the life all around them. There's so much individuality. We talked about originality.

Well, there's this individuality. The Italians I would say, especially in southern Italy are a total undisciplined people. They feel they don't need politics, or any kind of discipline. They have this discipline.

Interviewer: Is this attitude shared among northern Italians?

Interviewee: No the northern Italians look upon the southern Italians as lazy, .......... (Italian)

Interviewer: Why is that?

Interviewee: Simply it's because the conditions, the process. In the North, where you have laziness was rooted out of the area. But down South, where life was much easier What do you expect? It was rural. So you have this rural atmosphere competing with the urban atmosphere. There's the difference.

Interviewer: What do you think is the general impression that Italians have of Americans?

Interviewee: Well, unfortunately the Italians learned so much about America through the Navy, the American Navy. And the American navy gave them the impression that all Americans live in this rich atmosphere. It was Strictly a Hollywood production. But the Italians not knowing that this was just a make-believe thing, they would never suspect that they were being cheated of reality. So they actually learned the truth mainly from hearing and finding out through the T.V. they didn't expect to see poverty. They expected to see all the streets paved with gold.
Interviewer: What do you think is the image that most Americans of non-Italian descent have of Italians?

Interviewee: Most Americans would have the sense, they think that we're all Mafiosi, part and parcel of the Italian Mafia.

Interviewer: Why did the Mafia begin in this country?

Interviewee: I would dare say, the Mafia came into this country---they weren't the only immigrants that came to this country. Most of them came here as kids. So they didn't learn any of the Mafia tricks from Italy I'm sure. They learned that there was a lot of before the Italian immigrants came here, if you went to the police station and looked at the police files, you would not see not one Italian name there. You would see Irish names and English names; they were the criminals. sooner the Italians found the Irish cliques and the English cliques, and whoever ran the rings before them. So

Interviewer: We're going to switch now back to Federal Hill once again. I'd like to ask you some questions pertaining to Federal Hill. Specifically, the Atwells Ave. project. Do you feel that the revitalization of Atwells Ave. will improve the businesses in that area?

Interviewee: Hopefully, hopefully. I think that particularly the business people if they got together, really got together and decided to make the Hill quite attractive I think they could lure a lot of people. Because it's not only Italians that love everything Italian. We have other nationalities now that love Italian food, Italian anything. And they're attracted
by anything Italian. And everything Italian is quite popular today.

Interviewer: What about new homes being built in the area? Do you feel that if more homes were built more people would move on Federal Hill?

Interviewee: I would dare say so. The bank informed me that the federal program, New Homes for Federal Hill were making it possible for people to get mortgage with very low interest rates.

Interviewer: What about Federal Hill House? Do you feel that that's served the neighborhood well?

Interviewee: I would say it does. It's useful for the senior citizens particularly. It has many programs. It has high school equivalency programs, So it does serve the needs of not only the old but also the young. It's as asset I would say.

Interviewer: Now you yourself run part of an agency in the Federal Hill community. What is the name of your agency and what does it do?

Interviewee: The Rhode Island Consumers' Council and the R. I. Consumers' Council is a state agency that provides free services in the area of consumer protection. It handles consumer complaints, it develops consumer education programs, it recommends laws to benefit the consumer, it represents the consumer interest at public hearings especially in matters

Interviewer: We have just a few short moments left. I wanted to ask you if you could give us any anecdotes on
Italian philosophy. You told us many stories pertaining to Italians and their attitudes. Can you give us any anecdote on anything philosophical that you recall in your travels?

Interviewee: Well, the Italians are mostly philosophical.

in a Neapolitan village, fishermen. And there was a whole family on the beach and the whole family was pulling in the net. And there was this seventy-five year old woman and all I could see was a net filled with seaweed—no fish. And I stood there watching her until the net had been and not one fish was in that net. So I looked up to the old lady and I said, "--------------------," meaning "Not even one fish?" And she looked at me and said, "--------------------" "Tomorrow is another day." She went on and Now that was totally philosophical, as far as I'm concerned. I can imagine the city up here in America where this family hadn't caught a fish and they'd give up and say, "God," and start cursing, for not having caught one little fish. But this was a totally philosophical reaction to a situation where I thought they would give up in disgust. But tomorrow is another day. And they had worked all day and hadn't caught anything. But tomorrow is another day. Looking forward, always with It is part of the Italian Philosophy.