

Gordon Bergholtz
Narrator

Cole Steinberg
Concordia University, Saint Paul
Interviewer

Thanh Huynh
Concordia University, Saint Paul
Transcriber

July 26th, 2022
Minnesota

CS: Cole Steinberg

GB: Gordon Bergholtz

CS: This is an interview conducted as part of a larger faculty and student research project initiated by Dr. Julie Luker of Concordia University, Saint Paul. Today is July 26, 2022. I'm here with Gordon Bergholtz. My name is Cole Steinberg, and I'm an undergraduate student at Concordia University, Saint Paul. Today, I'll be talking to Gordon about what life was like growing up in the Twin Cities. During this interview, I'm going to ask you to reflect on your childhood life experiences as they relate to a variety of social topics from that time period. For the purposes of this interview, we have defined childhood as birth through 17 years of age. To begin, please state and spell your full name.

GB: Gordon Bergholtz. Middle name Arthur. G-O-R-D-O-N. Middle initial A. B-E-R-G-H-O-L-T-Z.

CS: Please identify your race and gender.

GB: I would be considered Caucasian, and I'm a male.

CS: Please state your date of birth.

GB: February 13th, 1960.

CS: Finally, please share where you grew up, such as the name of the neighborhood or a nearby street intersection. Include any major moves you made during this time period?

GB: I grew up in Saint Paul at the near the intersection of West Seventh and St Clair. Five blocks off of that intersection. And we lived in the same house the whole time. The house is still there, actually. My parents were the last to leave in 2005. They had the house from 1954 to 2005, and before that it was my mom's parents' house. They bought it from her for \$6000 bucks in 1954. And they added on to it. But anyhow, I digress.

CS: Thank you. I would like to learn more about your family life. Let's begin with the memories you have for immediate and extended family. Please share some memories that you have about these relationships.

GB: Well, I was born into a family of five children. I was the fourth of five. My parents quickly had four children after they got married in 1954. They were middle class people. My dad was blue collar, my mom homemaker. And then we didn't have another addition to the family until 1967, child number five. So, there's four boys and one girl in the family. And it was very close knit. Most of the time, we had dinners together, you know, during the week and especially on Sundays. And then it started to kind of go away as some of my siblings got older and, you know, the microwave got presented into the home too. So, but still we were very close knit, lots of sports activities, school activities, neighborhood activities, close to neighbors, no fences between homes, bushes maybe that's it. So, there was definitely a bonding that was there for you to take-if you want it to-to know your neighbors and them to know you. And my neighborhood was populated by mostly older people as I look back. Am I allowed to go into this monologue?

CS: This part we'll talk about family and then as we go on to the next subject.

GB: Okay, what would you like to know more about my family? Any dynamics or makeup or any more of that?

CS: Which family members did you engage with the most growing up?

GB: Are all of them, really. Because we were in a house that was about a thousand square feet before my dad added maybe another 300 or 500 square feet to the house. And we had a rustic old basement, meaning it was unfinished with water running down the walls and long-legged things running around. And we kept our canned goods down there and laundry and all of that. My dad was busy; he was a truck driver in the city. But he did do over the over the long hauls for extra money as needed. Like to Chicago or Minot or Bismarck. And then my mom started working in the field of market research. She was into market research and eventually I got a job there too when I was older. But so that was the dynamic we had. We're heavily involved in basketball. My dad was from Wisconsin, a basketball player in his small town of these. He lived in a real tiny-it's a stupid little name, too. I can't think of it. I should know it. I'm being put on the spot. But anyhow, I grew up in this small town over by Lake Pepin. He played basketball and he imbued that upon us to go play basketball, too. And we were tall guys, you know, we were all a family of towering guys. My brothers played football; they were the big burly ones. I was the skinny one. And we went to Monroe High School, and my brother was all city, Carl Bergholtz. He was pretty good in his games. Well, we had a dog and a cat. I grew up with a cat in the family. We had pets, and we were involved in our neighbors' lives a bit. We were very friendly with our neighbors. And there's other relatives, too, extended relatives like cousins and uncles and grandparents. I only had one set of grandparents. My dad's parents died when he was young, a teenager. So, I never got to know them. But I got to know got to know my great Uncle Hugo, who raised my dad and took him under his wing. My dad was only like 17 when he lost his last parent. So, Hugo was my defacto great grandfather, and he lived in Ellsworth, Wisconsin, 50 miles out.

CS: So how are household chores divided between members of your family?

GB: Ah, well, that one was pretty much gender traditional, I would say. My sister helped out with washing dishes a little bit. Everyone was kind of involved in housekeeping. But the boys we did shoveling of the snow, mowing of the grass, household chores as needed. Like doing anything needed to replace ripping tiles, things like that. Helped my dad with auto repairs in the garage. The old shade tree mechanic was the term when it was still possible to work on your cars. And still they started going really high tech. So, there was a lot of wrenching our garage for sure. We did our own brakes. We did our timing chain replacements, things like that. Some pretty involved repairs. So, yeah, we were definitely doing that and fixing sidewalks, pouring cement, things like that. Heavy lifting. So, there wasn't a lack of... Pulling weeds, things like that. Helping to garden, painting

rooms in the house. So, you know, there was no screen time back then. There was absolutely none. So, and I think that's lost on this generation now. It's like they don't know. They can't connect to the earth. Really, when you get down to it, we live on a freaking planet, get to know it. Go out there and touch it for once. You know what I mean? Don't touch a goddamn piece of plastic. I helped develop those things, too, which sucks, man.

CS: I do have a question. Can you share a memory to help describe what mealtime was like in your family?

GB: My mom preparing, let's say, a dish for, for instance, like a casserole or something. She would be pulling out a big chunk of frozen roast nut roast ground beef, frozen ground beef and thawing it out quickly. You know, like you're going to scrape the meat off of it well and turn it over as it browns. It's kind of like spaghetti she was almost making, you know, without the meatballs. And a lot of times I would spike her food, though my mom's cooking was kind of bland and old school. So, I was kicking it up a notch and I wasn't even watching TV. I was watching my other friends' moms, and I was getting ideas from them and what cooking was like. So, it just opened another piece of the spectrum to help with cooking. I think that's cool thing about things like art, yeah, you know, pick up little pieces. Anyhow, I never told her at all. I would always change it and "oh, this is good sauce, mom", you know, like I'm the one that did it. I kind of upped her game a little bit because of that, but I didn't instruct her, I just kept going behind her back when it was bad sauce. Other things though, when she made a really good dish that she did good, well then that was her thing. And she made old-fashioned meat and potatoes. You know, there was no change up for Mom. She was busy with five, so it kind of made sense. But that's one memory. Cooking outside on the barbecue. My dad loved to cook, he would. I was the most adventurous in the family. He loved oysters. And my dad loved all kinds of seafood. So, did I and no one else would touch oysters but me. That created a very special bond with my dad throughout our lives. That we were the adventurous ones when it came to culinary things. And he liked to cook, too, with different stuff. He was the meat guy or seafood guy. Throw on a big slab of salmon in the oven and cook it the way his cousin in British Columbia did. You know because we have relatives in Canada, too, which is another story.

CS: Okay. Thank you. Next, please describe the ways in which your family's economic status influenced your childhood.

GB: My dad, bless his soul, he was taking care of us. And I look back and as a truck driver, I know he wasn't making more than \$30,000 per year back in, let's say, 1972, which if you do the math now and calculate what it's today, it's pretty good coin, I guess. But he bought a trailer. He bought a boat. We had a place up in Brainerd in the summertime. So, it was great. He took care of us and we traveled a lot. So, he made sure we had good vacations. And the thing is, he drove on those vacations. So, for a guy that drove for a living to turn around and take five kids and are in a cramped vehicle and go on a four-week trip. He had long vacations, do the Teamster truck driver union, and we did that. And so, the way he stretched his money was incredible. I don't know if he was in debt. I don't think so. I just don't. He wasn't that kind of guy. And he didn't have a huge house payment because, you know, that was on the cheap from his in-laws that he bought the house from. So, I remember my dad breaking his foot-though I don't recall the reason-but he couldn't go to work. And for a short time, we were on food stamps and my mom didn't want us to tell anybody, and we didn't. We got the free cheese-I don't know if that's a joke or what-but it was real. It had government cheese, big block Velveeta, you know, like a butcher block this size, and we'd get that. My parents are very frugal. Hand me downs are very common in clothing and all of that. But we weren't left wanting. Definitely we were involved. We had motorcycles, you know, dirt bikes. My brother bought one and my dad, you know, little guys, you know, we just motored around. So, we were always on the go as kids, doing stuff, getting in trouble, doing things that kids do. So yeah, the

economics were that we weren't rich by any means, and we didn't know any wealthy people really, other than, we had some relatives that were wealthy. We liked our existence. We didn't know anything else. I know my dad wanted a bigger home, a better home. My dad wanted better things. He wanted to be out of Minnesota, big time in the worst way. And that's what probably planted the seed. Well, that did plant the seed for me to get the hell out. Due to the weather and the costs, it impacted on your pocketbook. So really, that's the thing that was always drilled into me. Winter socks, snow socks. It cost a lot of money. You're paying to do this stuff. It's hard work. You prepare for winter. You undo winter prayer for spring. You're working to live there. You know, it's like it's a second job. Just to live. And I'm glad I got the hell out.

CS: I would like to know about your experiences with religion such as Catholicism, Lutheranism, etc... Describe what you can recall about your family's religious practices when you were growing up.

GB: It's a good one. My dad was raised Lutheran, and he didn't really practice. But, you know, that was his thing. And he didn't really vocalize anything religiously in the house. And nor was he atheist and anti-religion. My mom spearheaded everything for us kids. She put us in Saint Francis Grade School. It was a parochial, you know, a Catholic school. All of us went there from grades one through eight and bar none, we all went-which was great. And then my younger brother got to go to Cretin, which was a like high school. But we all went to public schools, which was Monroe. And then for me, Monroe and Humboldt, because Monroe, it closed as I was exiting my junior year. My brothers were Altar boys. I wasn't, and I had a reason. I just want to be serving all the time doing this stuff. But I wanted to wear the outfit though, [Laughter] and I asked the priest if I could. He goes, well, you're reading for us you can wear it while you're reading. And that's fine. Because he liked how I read. I would read the epistles on Sundays, and we would plan a mass once a week as part of our religious studies at Saint Francis. So, all in all, we went to church three times a week as students of that school. She'd take us to Sunday church every Sunday until we were older. And my brothers could drive. We would choose a different time to go. Then things start to happen, like ditching church. My brothers would go do something else, just drive around, not go. You know, it's like, okay, great influence there, buddy. [Laughter] But that started to happen, you know, quick go in and get a program from the church so we can prove to mom that we went. All right, hold on. It instilled in me, you know, my Catholicism. I'm not a practicing Catholic, but it surely put the sense of godliness in you and doing right. Having a conscience, for crying out loud. You know what I mean? Some kids don't have that. I don't think. And don't ask me if it's because of a lack of religion or not. I don't know. But what I do know is that I came out that way. And sure, one could think that it had an impact. I would say that it did. I think it was a very positive experience. And there was none of this child abuse back then. You didn't hear about it anyhow. And I certainly wasn't. And I was very close with the pastor, and it was a great guy and may he rest in peace. I just it was great. It was a great upbringing with the with the school and church being right there in the neighborhood. And you're a part of that, you know, to certain degrees. Some families were really involved and some were less involved. And we were probably less, we just went. We did our duty and went in that and then the extra things like me reading, my brother's doing the altar boy activities, things like that. And then we got to do funerals and weddings. No, not weddings.... We got to do funerals like choir, things like that.

CS: Now I'd like to learn more about the neighborhood in which you grew up. If you move during childhood, you may wish to reflect on more than one neighborhood. This is fine to do, but please indicate as you're doing it, please describe what comes to mind when thinking about the neighborhood in which you grew up.

GB: Well, I grew up in Michigan street. So, if you're going west, you would go down St Clair off of west, over to, you know, Peel right. Go up about five blocks. Michigan streets, on your right. Well

right there St Clair playground and that was my hub of activity. The other one was Palace Playground. Little farther away, not much. But again, this was my area, my stomping ground, as it were. And they had many activities there: tennis, basketball, baseball, softball. So, we did all that in my neighborhood and on my block. We didn't move at all. So, I was there the whole time, my existence. And as I mentioned earlier, was populated primarily with older folks, some having fought in World War One. My next-door neighbor, Charlie, definitely told me about his war injuries. He fought in World War One. And hearing him talk about that, that was pretty cool. And then they pass away and you get sad, go to funerals, all that. So, I was surrounded by old people, you know, Czechoslovakians, Hungarians, Slavs, you name it, almost, you know, and very ethnically diverse. Not many African Americans, maybe a couple of families, a few Spanish, no Islamic, no Indian, barely an Asian that I can think of. So predominantly white. And the neighborhood could be dangerous as well. We did have some rough families there and a lot of thefts. Things like that. Auto theft. Just petty crimes. Nothing serious. We did have a serial killer strike in our neighborhood; Once the Weepy-Voiced Killer. My brother and his two friends found the body a couple of blocks from our home; I remember that. And that was in like 1980, 81, something like that. But yeah, the neighborhood was pretty pastoral. It was nice. Old homes. Our house was built in 1900. And so were the homes mostly that were around us. And I would go around and mow lawns for money and shovel snow for money. I also sold flowers. I would go into the dumpsters where they had thrown out their flowers. They weren't dumpsters, but they were throwing away flowers at the nursery nearby. And they're like a few days old. Just aren't prime for selling. Well, they were good enough, so I thought I'd sell them. Basically, used roses, but they were alive. And if they wanted me, I planted them in their yard. Ladies. So, I did that for extra coin. So, my neighborhood was pretty chill, you know, and a lot of little businesses cropping up like Cossetta's as I knew the Cossetta's family. And now there's a huge restaurant. One of my best buddies, the head chef there today, he's been there for 30 years. And, you know, that was just a little, little, little store, at that time. Now, look at it, you know. It was really cool. And there's there was more of that, too. You know, some businesses came and went.

CS: As far as transportation options, how did you typically get around town?

GB: Walking, and my bicycle, and bus. Definitely, city bus. Not afraid of the city bus at all. But I was in walking distance of downtown Saint Paul in which I did stroll down there quite a bit, and if I was tired or just opportune, I would stop on the bus and go the extra distance. Wherever it was. In either direction, and I loved hanging out downtown. I'd go into the old buildings, go up and down the elevators, get some snacks here and there, just kind of screw around. Explore that cubbyhole and the spaces and the library and the science museum and these other buildings and, you know, just going where you shouldn't go. I was one of those guys going to the boiler room, go here, go there, explore, check it out. And I did that with abandon. I just went nuts. And going downtown. It was always my thing. Getting out of the neighborhood, just go into the big city. It was fun for a little kid, you know, ten years old. Chewing gum, going out. Minding my own business, but having fun too, and meeting people. That was cool. But that's how I got around my bicycle. Again, we didn't have lots of money, and so I would buy mine on the cheap, you know, used or hot or whatever. You know, you didn't ask questions. But, you know, you'd get a bike and use that, and it could end up getting stolen and you just get another one. Sleds, in the wintertime, were fun for sledding, but we didn't have a snowmobile or anything like that. And so yeah, footing it was big. I'd walked everywhere, almost. Down to the river. Over to my cousin's house or all the way up onto the short line downtown. All the way across the river, up above across the high bridge. Things like that. Love the high bridge going over there and bicycling across it.

CS: How well did the residents in your neighborhood know each other and what were some of those relationships like?

GB: We knew each other pretty well, I would say. Of course, people, you know, kind of guarded here and there like they are today. But it was pretty open. I mean, there were some angry older guys, you know, like, don't touch my car, you know, like that. And they had some good classics, too. Come to think of it. We just tried our best to be good citizens. The neighbors were more receptive to that. Of course, be nice to them. Some kept to themselves, and some were really weird. Like the bird lady across that we called her the bird lady, fed birds like crazy. Charlie that was all or one veteran would be shooting them in the trees with a BB Gun, taught me that you know. I was like, so she's feeding the birds across the alley. He's killing the birds in the trees on this side of the alley. You know, and then she was living with her daughter, and both had white hair and they looked like they were mummified practically. They're so goddamn old, you know, just ancient. Wouldn't be a man in that house to save your life. So, I don't know what's going on in there. I didn't want to ask, but we shared an alleyway with them, and they had they had a car and they parked it in their little garage. They would get out, open the door, or take a half hour to just park your car. You know, I mean, they didn't have an opener, so I had to get out. We didn't have an opener either until later, but. Yeah. So, the neighbors were cool. The neighborhood was cool.

CS: If you had to describe the best part about growing up in your neighborhood, what comes to mind?

GB: A sense of community and people were involved. My mom was involved in the elections, you know, handling and helping out at the polling stations and things like that. Civic minded people. Very civic minded. Not a lot of rancor over politics, things like that. I didn't notice any racism or anything like that in my neighborhood. There were racist words they used to describe things maybe, which is probably, you know, a vestige of the past from where they grew up. So that question is loaded with a lot of ammo there because you have you almost have to frame it from how you see society today versus what was so good about where I grew up as compared to today. You almost have to compare things, and it just seemed more innocent. You're closer to the people. People are real, tangible things. They weren't online. We saw them talk to them, helped them. You worked with them. You saw them do things. Ask them what they did for a living. So, a rich history, kind of a tapestry. You know what I mean? Just people from different walks of life, different histories, different stories, the stories they had. And like you in this interview. I would absorb those stories and ask the questions. I was a very curious kid, very curious. In a good way. I would say mostly I didn't get in a lot of trouble from my curiosity.

CS: Next, I would like to learn about the value shared by your family and your neighbors. Values are principles or standards that help guide behavior. What memories come to mind that demonstrate what these values were for your family and your neighbors?

GB: Well, I think helping again, helping people out when there is a need to help them out was there. People constructed things when something broke. Someone with a carpenter background versus an electrical background. You know, someone there to help you out in times of need, you know, lift a hand, give you something that you need to hold you over or whatever, or repair something. So that was always there. There were so many different trades involved in the neighborhood. Some did this, that, this, you know what I mean? It's just like it runs the gamut of expertise that people had and they shared that. So, your sense of community, really tight. I would say not too tight like nosiness, none of that. You know, of course there were some of that. Keeping up with the Joneses and stuff, there was some of that too. But mostly it was just nice people being people, you know. No axes to grind or anything like that. I think people just loved our country and for what it was. Yeah, it was a very blue area for sure, which I consider myself to this day. But there was no like I said, there was no rancor with people that were Republicans. You know, they might have had their disagreements over a beer or something like that. But as a child, I never saw that. I

never did, which is good. I'm glad I didn't. I don't know. Kids are going through today. I could only imagine.

CS: In what ways were your values similar to or different from others who lived in your neighborhood at that time?

GB: Again, it was just doing right. I mean, and looking at the future, how are you going to contribute to this world you're growing up in? You know, it's like, what are you going to do? Are you going to be a carpenter or going to be like my dad to a truck driver? The world was your oyster. You just had so many opportunities. And, you know, and then, of course, it was based on your studies to how far you could go, you know, and we weren't in the greatest schooling area, so we weren't, our school was not cranking out doctors, trust me. So, it was a those were the values, you know, make do with what you have. And don't draw too much attention to yourself, you know. Don't be a peacock, so to speak. You know what I mean by that. Yeah.

CS: Now I'm going to ask you all about leisure time. Describe some of the ways in which you, your family and your neighbors engaged in leisure time when you're growing up.

GB: Well, in the neighborhood, we had cookouts and potlucks, things like that among neighbors. And lots of neighbors or just a couple or one family even where we would just combine the families and have a cookout. And then in the summers, we had that place on the lake near Brainerd, and every summer I was up there, and my parents would leave me, in a lot of cases, just leave me up there, and I'd love it. And they'd come up on weekends or maybe every other weekend or for a couple of weeks when they wanted to spend more time up there or my grandparents would come up. But I was left to my own devices up there. I had a bit of an allowance, I had my dirt bike, I had a place to stay, and I had a boat, a nice boat, actually. My dad, you know, got for the family. And so, we water skied, and I was like the swinging dick on the lake, you know, because I had this frickin' nice boat, you know, when I was about 14. I'd go looking for girls at the other resorts and shit, you know? I was like, I thought I was king of the world because of that boat. And I was good with it, took care of it, loved it, and I didn't abuse it. That's one thing I didn't do was take advantage of my dad. I made him sure. I made sure that he was happy with what I did. I took care of that boat as if it were my own. And I had a great time on that lake: fishing, skiing, meeting girls, hanging out with my buddies. Partying a bit as I got older. But it was a blast on that lake. It was so much fun in the summers. North Long Lake, Brainerd, Minnesota, right by the speedway. I could hear the engines over on the other side of lake were so frickin' loud. And then Camp Ripley, the "Boom! Boom! Boom!" in the distance. But yeah, it was great up there. The stars at night were wonderful. Just didn't like those mosquitoes in the summer. That was it. You could deal with that. Then you're okay.

CS: Can you recall if your family ever took vacations and if so, to where? I know you mentioned your cabin, but any other trips? Feel free to bring those.

GB: My dad loved the mountains, and he hated the flat. So basically, he just loved mountains. And, you know, I didn't have any. But, you know, again, he had some kind of not a hatred, but it just like a of that area for whatever reasons, he had his reasons. And so, we took these four- and five-week adventures in the car, sometimes pulling a trailer, other times going into motels, nothing expensive, and taking road trips out west. Every state in the West I saw by the time I was 18. And we had relatives in California, our friends in Seattle, relatives in Vancouver, British Columbia, relatives in Saskatchewan. Up north of North Dakota. So, we would take these circuitous trips all in the car on Trans-Canada see one relative and then go down and navigate. I would navigate or somebody else and my dad... It was kind of loosey goosey. We're just going to go to these big cities and on the way, we're going to chart where we're going to stay, how long the trip is going to be for that leg for

that day and make it fun. So, we're not sitting cramped in a car for 8 hours killing each other, you know. So, we'd do that, and we saw there's the greatest things, had so much fun usually during the summer holidays, you know with 4th of July, you know, we might be in Yosemite, we might be in San Francisco, we might be in Seattle, we might be in Colorado. So, we definitely got out and lived and enjoyed the land of America, for sure. No question. And come home. The grass was like high in the backyard; we had to mow that; you know. So going away for those long trips was so, so fun. And it really made an impact on me. Took a lot of photos. You know, my dad loved slides, you know, on camera. And he was into that. And so, the outdoors it was in our in our DNA just to get into the outdoors, you know, camping especially. I could survive in the forest. I knew I had friends who are Indians that I grew up with, American Indians that, you know, I learned a lot from. And I had survival instincts. And I wasn't afraid to go kill a fish and eat it and, you know, cook it, and clean it and eat it. So, yeah, fishing was huge in our family too. Huge! We loved fishing and we would freeze our fish for the wintertime, you know, we'd freeze it in the summer. So, we'd have a big block of ice, you know, and a carton of milk and a milk carton that was, you know, for preserving the fish. So, date it writes on what kind of fish it was. Throw it in the freezer, you know. November rolls around. Let's have some fish. Okay, this one, you know how it is. And then you did it yourself. So, we had tons and tons of fish filets in the house. Yeah. Always. Fish, fish, fish. And enjoying and hunting deer, duck, and pheasant. Not so much pheasant. My friend's father's did and we tag along. But it was either deer or fishing. Another big thing.

CS: Describe some of the activities engaged in when you were with your friends.

GB: And in that time when I was a young kid, I had friends that had things and friends that didn't, you know, the haves and have nots kind of thing and to varying degrees. And so, a lot of it was like, you know, model airplanes, rockets, make your own rocket. We'd make bombs. We were into guns. And, you know, not, you know, heavy, heavy guns, but our own our own guns and things like that. And we would hang out, tool around the neighborhood on our bikes, not get into trouble too much. Nothing that a cop would worry about. And never got arrested. Yeah. We partied a bit, you know, we discovered weed, you know, or discovered us. And, you know, it was there. I don't think anybody would say that they are immune to that stuff because it grows on the ground. You know, it's God given in my book and it's legal here. So, it's not it's a non-thing here. The people that whatever, you know, it's like cigarettes. Seriously, I mean, people smoke everywhere, you know, different backgrounds, you know, and it's therapeutic. I don't want to get on a rant, but it... Wait, no, it's it was the thing back then a little bit because I grew up in the seventies and oh and we went to a lot of concerts, and I snuck into concerts. That was one of my things. The St Paul Civic Center, when it was being built for the Saint Paul Saints, the hockey team for the WHL World Hockey League that lasted a few years. Well, I watched the construction of that thing and I started to get some ideas about how to get in it, and I was able to get in it. And boy, did I get him in. I didn't crash gates like a lot of people understand or thought running through. You know, I did a couple of those, but no, I would get in early and fit in with people and then hide out and wait for the show to start and the gates to open. So, I saw a lot of free concerts in my day and a lot that I paid for, you know, and good bands like Led Zeppelin, you know, the original Skinner, you know, just awesome bands and lots of them. That was one of my things actually going to concerts. Loved it. Went to a lot of them.

CS: What television shows did you watch growing up?

GB: Yeah. Well, you only had like four channels right before cable came around. And so, yeah, you had, you know, UHF, a local channel, and your three major networks, PBS. So, I was watching, you know, All My Family was huge then. In its first run, Brady Bunch watched that. Gomer Pyle. I Dream of Jeannie. All of those shows. Just turn on Me TV, that's it. That was us. That's what we were watching. Andy Griffith. You know, land stuff. That's it, really. And you watch that stuff.

Some of them I didn't go into, you know. You know, like today. I didn't get to see Breaking Bad. I know it's a great show, but I was late to the party. I just didn't wasn't on the Johnny on the spot to watch it. But back then, same thing. You know, there might have been shows that I didn't glom onto, like, Taxi. I barely watched it. My dad loved it. I didn't watch that much. Huge show, though, right? And Happy Days, I watch because we were it was there was a fifties revival back then and we were involved in it at Saint Francis for this little extracurricular stuff. So that was one I did watch, those Happy Days. And Three's Company was one I barely watched either. I thought it was stupid except for the chick, you know, you'd watch it for her. And she was on the first season anyhow. That girl that she was hot. I forgot her name, anyhow. Anywhere you could see for me a nice story. And I loved Monty Python, man. I cut my teeth on comedy. English comedy was the bomb back then for me. And Monty Python was on TV. I thought that was so edgy. And I watched that on PBS. And that being on TV they had tits on there, you know, I mean, like from time to time. You're like, whoa, how can you get this? You know, imagine that, you know, seeing a nice lady's boobs, you know, on TV, you know, in primetime, only on PBS. Right. You know, and then you had the nightly news, which I loved the news. I still do. We always had Dan Rather, or no... Walter Cronkite. You know, the evening news. You need to watch that for a half hour. And there are different talking heads for each channel. They are different guys. They all had careers in that. So that was big because there was a lot of things going on that, you know, like the oil embargo and news of the day, Vietnam. You know, that was getting over by the time I was 15. But that was on the news all the time. Body counts. They would tell you the body counts for the day. I remember that. How many we lost. Yeah.

CS: Next, let's discuss your experience with schooling. Please describe what it was like going to school as a child.

GB: At Saint Francis, you had to wear a uniform, but that kind of got a little bit relaxed. You know, you can't just wear the colors. It was okay, but I didn't really like that a whole lot wearing the uniform myself. And it was nuns teaching mostly. There were some lady teachers there that also did a good job there. And one of them still friends on Facebook with Mr. [Bretormiss?], he is a teacher. He was my teacher; I think seventh and eighth grade and good guy. Good sense of history. Schooling was all of the basics, really. Math, science, English. And pretty strict at my school. Monroe was not strict at all. That I was it was, you know, "Animal House", practically. I'm glad I got out of there. Actually, went to Humboldt. It was a better school. It was brand new too when I got transferred, and it was the first time I had to take a school bus. Imagine that... a senior. I didn't have a driver's license yet, though, and I wasn't going to get a car at that age. My brothers had already torched a couple of my dad's, and they kind of paved the way of destruction for me, so I didn't dare ask. I was nice that way to my dad. I saw what it did to him. So, yeah, my brothers. Thanks Bob, Carl. Bastards...

CS: For our final topic, I'm going to ask you to reflect on local and global issues such as war, poverty, discrimination, social unrest, etc... In your opinion, what were some of the biggest local or global issues affecting the people in your neighborhood when you were growing up?

GB: The Cold War. Definitely overarching from the day, I was born all the way through the eighties, so impacted my entire upbringing. The threat of nuclear holocaust was always there. Tensions are always there with a new president, meeting the leaders of these other countries. And then there was the breakthrough at Nixon and in China. "I'm going there." And China is just the still a third world country almost, you know. And yeah, it was news of the day. We had we had NAM. We had the oil embargo. That was huge. Watergate: that was huge. And some of the other scandals that were coming on at that time. You know, there was the shootings of the guy from Hustler magazine, Larry Flynt, got shot. You know, there was the assassination attempt on Reagan. There was the buffoonery of Ford. You know, just the guy was kind of a clown. You know, he just picked

up for Nixon. Whatever. And then the Carter, the yahoo. He was just in a bad time and place. I don't think anyone could have gone outside of that because of the inflation like we're seeing now. This is definitely a repeat of that time, I can see, because things are kind of like resetting. And when you think about it, you almost have to have that. It's a marker. It's no different than geological finding, you know, a stratus of stones. You know, here in this time, you know, they had to, you know, these times come, and they go. So, people are all freaked out. Well, I lived through that. You know, we had that around the turn of the seventies into the eighties, just like this. And then it, you know, it blossomed afterwards. And it will again, you know, it always does, you know, always follow the S&P 500. If you want to invest in anything, get an ETF, load up on that. Don't look back. That thing will be huge when you're older. It's true. The only fund I have right now that didn't see red all the way down was my S&P because it saw so much growth, you know, and you know who about just for that too is Warren Buffett huge on that he knows he said you follow the S&P get a get a sector fund on that only. Outperform any single stock you want unless of course, you got in an Amazon at, you know, in 1997, of course. Or Apple back in the day. But if you're going to go for a mutual fund, which is the safest place. More balanced. S&P 500 is the way to go. And you could definitely see that trend playing itself out in the economy when I was growing up, and in the twists and turns it took. And then I remember buying my first car in 1980. The interest rate was 14% on my car note. 14%. Frickin huge, man. Well, I wasn't buying a house back then. Could you imagine buying a house back then? I don't know what the rates were for a house back then. Could probably look it up. It had to be pretty damn high. We were impacted like anything else, you know, by changes in the world. You know, adjustments being made. Like I said, inflation adjusted. Those are just adjustments. You can't have a low price on something forever. Come on. It's going to go up at some point, right? And it could go up a lot. So, it did. And it's not one person's fault. Certainly not our presidents.

CS: You mentioned the Weeping Killer earlier. Do you remember your experiences, or do you remember, like, specific memories about that?

GB: Absolutely. And it's almost a little humorous because I was working a swing shift at Honeywell. I was working nights, afternoons, and days. And it was kind of weird. But anyhow, I was on the third shift, 11 to 7, and I got home, and I don't know, there's been a kind of crime that took place. And I got a phone call. The house gets a phone call. My aunt, my dad's house, I picked up, it's a guy, a reporter from the Pioneer Press. We're calling about the body. You know, this murder. What are we talking about? I got a body. And your brother was involved in, you know, finding it or something. I said, well, my brothers probably involved. Talk to him. I got to go to bed. I left it at that, and I left. After I hung up, I thought, my brother's involved. Doesn't it sound incriminating? Like he, did it? You know, I was like, no, no, no. So, then the next day, I woke up and I found out more about what happened, and I thought she was one of my neighbors. Definitely. My eyebrow raised. I'm one of the friends because he's kind of a wacko glue sniffer. You know, I could see him doing something like this, but they found her body on grass right up where they're building 35 W with a block and a half from where my house was. And they were just walking up that path and they saw a girl lying face down in the grass on top of a paperback book. And they looked at her and it didn't look right. And they kind of like nudged with the foot. No movement, and they didn't bother turning over, I don't think. But then they went and got the authorities and that's when they found that she was stabbed 61 times or something like that with an ice pick by that guy Stephani. That was his name. He died in prison. They picked him up after attacking a prostitute in Minneapolis. I believe they pinned a few murders on him. Enough to put him in prison where he died of cancer. He was on the news too. You heard the news? I mean, you it watched news, and they would play these tapes of him, the weepy voice guy. And that's how they came up with the moniker. You know, they always do that for these guys. And so, yeah, I saw those pieces. So yeah, that was the other piece of the exposure. And talking to my brother about it, he was kind of.

Lackadaisical about it. You know, he didn't really want to talk about it. Maybe he was traumatized. You know, I wouldn't doubt it.

CS: Did your family or your neighborhood have a bomb or fallout shelter in case of a nuclear war?

GB: We did! They gave you a sticker and it was put on the inner jam; whatever they call that part of your front door. But you know where the door meets the inside of the of the jam. And ours was the Schmidt Brewery. And it's like yay beer, you know, it's like, so if you're going to be kissing your ass goodbye, crack open a cold one! Might be your last, you know. But yeah, our was in Schmidt Brewery, you know. And I saw fallout shelters in our church basement, too, when I was in Boy Scouts, because that was our storage place. And I saw big vats, 55-gallon drums of chicken soup. Like, what? How's this any good? You know, it was in military green containers, you know. And a lot of stuff stored back there. It was interesting. I was looking at it like, Wow. Yeah. So that was our fallout. And Wednesdays at 1:00 first, Wednesday of every month, they tested the sirens. Yeah. The air raid sirens went off. I don't know. Do they still do that?

CS: I think they do it for the tornadoes. They test the tornado sirens.

GB: You got them for that. So, and double fisted, you know, I had to be for that or the nuclear holocaust. So, they had to test them. And it was always on the first Wednesday of every month at 1:00. And I always thought, if they're going to attack, why wouldn't they do it now dad. It's like they aren't smart enough to figure this out. And I would see B-52s flying over, not really see them, but hear them, because that was when sonic booms were allowed. And it'd be boom. I look up, not really seeing anything, trying to see something. But it could have been. It could have been. Call it. Cloudy. So, yeah, that was kind of interesting.

CS: Do you have any other local or global issues that come to mind that are particularly memorable for you?

GB: I went to a Hubert Humphrey funeral. Oh, yeah. I went to that on my own. I walked to it and Carter showed up. I took a photo of his car, you know, the beast. Yeah. I went to I didn't go into the church. You weren't allowed. But they had these little satellite places where you could watch on closed circuit. And I remember going to that. We did have floods. You know, in 1967, I think I was a little kid. My dad took photos. When Johnson came to see the disaster area. It was declared when the river, the Mississippi, was so high, it took out so much along Shepherd Road, you know, and all of that and flooded like crazy. So that was a big topic, a big event. You know, we had some things like the Fridley tornado. I remember that. And the destruction there. And we had one up in Brainerd two that was devastating. I wasn't there at the time, thank God. I think I might have been taken out because the woods there were just mangled. And that's where I spent most of my time. So yeah, we didn't have any trial things or no serial killers or anything like that. I'm trying to think of other than the Weepy Voiced guy. Lots of accidents on that damn river, you know, boating accidents. I lost a few friends swimming in it. Drowning. You know, there's a reason my mom told me not to go in the river or in the caves, but we'd go in the caves too. Frankie's cave had a nickname. We go in those caves down by the river. Big ones. There were parties in there and everything. Seriously, yeah, keggers, and keggers were a big thing down at Crosby Park, Estes Park down on the Mississippi. I helped build trails down there as part of a summer work program that the government put on for kids making, I remember it was a \$1.60 an hour and I was irrigating trees. You take a spade shovel. Ding, ding, ding. Go around the base of the tree and dig up the grass so it can accumulate a little. You made a little moat around the tree base so water could get there. And they put us kids to work. And it was good they gave you a lunch and they got paid for it. It's even on my IRA statement in 1972, 12 years old, they made like, I don't know, 300 bucks or something that year. But it's you

know; it was reported. I paid my taxes. It follows you on your form, you know? What was the question again?

CS: Oh, I was just asking if you had any more commentary on local and global issues.

GB: Yeah. Local and global. No. I mean, it's funny. I mean, funny in the sense that there wasn't really a big issue in the local sense. Globally, of course, all kinds of stuff were going on. Right? I mean, it started with activities and if you look through history and I was there for some of that. Yeah. Yeah. But trying to think of any other than what I already talked about, you know, like NAM things like that. Yeah, well, the hostages in Iran were a big thing, too. Of course, it was huge. And then Reagan got elected at the time, and he was a good fit at the time. I voted for him. I'm not. I'm apolitical. I vote for the person, not a party. I'm not a party guy. I'm not, you know, Hitler. You know, I just think of Hitler, when think of that shit. That's all I need to say. You know, anytime you see a lot of flags. Be afraid because that's what Hitler did. And think about it. You ever seen that show movie *The Wall* by Pink Floyd? "Teacher! Leave those kids alone!" You know, if you ever look at that movie, they've got so much imagery in there of fascism, and it's always flags and boots. Legs and boots and guns. Yeah, and that's what nationalism. I mean, when I see guys running around with flags. It's not patriotic. They're not. They don't know America. It's a symbol. And that's all. And that's for the simple minded, and that's all I'll say. But they don't know what America is. They're not patriots. They're disillusioned, I think. They're thinking of a person or an ideology. But it's certainly not American. I mean, I know I'm an American. I live here. I don't need a flag to prove it. I don't. I mean, my actions prove that. And how I treat my fellow man. Perhaps it's working towards a common cause in the world, having a career, dedicating your time to something bigger than yourself like you're doing now. You know, you're pursuing a career. A lot of people don't have any gumption or feeling about doing that. They want it all. They want it now. You know, it doesn't work that way. You worked? I worked 45 frickin years, if you count the first ones, I was telling you about. Yeah. I've put in 45 years until just recently and that's a lot of time. But it was time well spent. I know a lot of stuff. I work for cool companies developing cool products. And to me, that's my contribution to the world. And it made my career. It gave me a good living, you know, and I saved. Luckily, I saved early and often. And get used to that 401K because it's one of the best gifts our government's given us, I think. A tax deferred option. Park it because the way I looked at it max out and people I can't afford do that. Yes, you can. Every time you get a raise. Thank God. Hope you're getting raises every time you get a raise. What 4% let's say, park two of that in your 401k. Give yourself 2%. Next or do it again next... Pretty soon you're used to it. It's already collecting. It's already doing its job like a little motor. And you don't have to worry about it just as long as you're putting it in decent funds. None of this, you know, miracle shit like crypto. Don't crypto's a sham. It's the biggest fool philosophy. Like a pyramid. The biggest fool. You know, the one that will buy. The greater fool philosophy it is called. But no, it's more like the rabbit in hare. You know, if you're going to do something like start a business, you know, or really research a fund or a company, and then maybe you could do it like Amazon if you'd gotten on the ground floor of that. You'd be super wealthy by now. But just getting in the funds and contributing to is the best thing you could do. And then the company match. If they offer it, is free money. Take it. So let it grow, let it grow. And then after 45, you're going to go, Whoa, that's a lot of money. I can retire. The worst thing in the world is taking work all your life, and then you can't afford to live. To hell with that. Don't want that. My theme in life: stability, predictability. I wanted that. I don't know. It was because I didn't have it when I was a kid. I did. But there's always something, you know, could have set you off, you know, put you down into a lower category of survival, if you will. But my thing was stability, predictability. I want to know if I'm getting a check. I want to know if I have a job. And that's it. And it's nothing wrong asking for that. I think everyone wants that. You don't want upheaval in your life, you know, unless you live that way about it. Some kind of, you know. You get a thrill from it or something. I don't think people, you know, there's free spirits like that don't care. You know, wherever life takes them, they do it. More power to them. That was my philosophy, you

know, for life. And I think I did it. I had stability. Those around me definitely had stability. So. And I did. I don't know if it was luck. But I'll say this. It's there's no such thing as luck. There's only putting yourself in a position for luck to strike you. You have to put yourself out there. You know. So, it's really not luck in a sense. Being there at the right time and place; putting yourself out there so luck can strike you. It doesn't knock on your door. You have to go out and find it. And that's what I did, you know, and always had a job. And every time I got laid off, I'd find something else quickly, usually, too. Even during down times in the economy, I was able to grind out. You know, I just. A good resume will help you, too, for sure. You know, and I always made sure I worked for good brands. I was always a brand person. I want it too because it's huge. I know brands are big. When you look at the Coca-Cola brand, it's also noticeable. It's one of the first you know, one of the best ones, I think, in the world. Right? So, I worked for companies like IBM, Texas Instruments, Qualcomm, AT&T. Big names, you know. So that helps on her resume, I think. But that's just me. I could be wrong, as they say.

CS: This is the end of our interview. Your responses are invaluable, and we really appreciate that you took the time to do this today. Thank you so much for participating.