

Michael Kline: Tell me your name again so I can just get a level.

Roberta Schoemberg: My name's Roberta Schoemberg.

MK: You are from?

RS: I'm from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

MK: You worked with?

RS: I'm a child development consultant.

MK: With?

RS: With children.

MK: Oh, a consultant.

RS: Yes.

MK: So, you are independent?

RS: Right.

MK: What is your phone number in Pittsburgh?

RS: 774-1167.

MK: Your address?

RS: RD1, Rochester, PA.

Unknown Female Speaker: You drove all the way from Pittsburgh to be with us. We know of several cases where children are afraid to move back into their homes that have been flooded even though their families have gotten things cleaned up and back in order. There are families who are facing those kind of crises with their children. Plus, some children have moved back into their homes and are faced with nightmares and things like that at night and are not sleeping very well, are suffering from various illnesses because of what they have experienced in this disaster. So, we are happy to have Roberta with us today to talk about children as they face disaster. We are putting it on video so that we can use it for future occasions, especially since there are people I know who wanted to be here today who did not come because of the weather. But Roberta can introduce herself a little bit more thoroughly.

RS: My name is Roberta Schoemberg. I work as a child development consultant in the Pittsburgh area. I've had a lot of experience in teaching in preschool children and day care centers. Mainly, what I do now is go in and work with agencies and training staff and working

with individual children. I've had experience doing play sessions with children, too. Most recently, I worked with a group of children after some tornadoes that were in Western Pennsylvania. So, later on in the presentation, I'd like to talk about some of the case material from that. I'd like to also hear from you, any of you who are working with children, the kinds of play that you're observing, the kinds of behaviors you're observing, the stories that children are talking about, so that we can incorporate some of that into what I'm talking about today. What I want to present is a view of children in disasters. Particularly, I wanted to talk about crisis intervention, the kinds of things that adults can do to help. It's now been about three months, I guess, since the floods occurred. So, my guess is that you're beginning to see different kinds of behaviors emerge. Immediately after any event, you will see some crisis reactions, and then things sort of go underground for a while until children are able to start dealing with them. Now's the time when adults can really move in and start helping children in that process and the healing begins. I thought I'd begin today by talking about what is a crisis. All children, just like all adults, face crises in their lives. We can define a crisis as a situation that's out of the ordinary that demands attention and resolution. A crisis is something that just doesn't go away. It's something that has to be dealt with at some level. It's also a situation where the usual coping skills break down, where a person finds that the things that always worked in the past are no longer working to help maintain one's sense of balance. Also, there's an experience of overwhelming feelings. Feelings such as grief, particularly, loss, sadness, and sometimes a diffused sense of anxiety that prevails, that children, as well as adults, have a hard time getting a handle on. Another thing that's characteristic of a crisis is that even after some initial resolution, the feelings remain. What happens is that then they reemerge in similar situations later on. So, my guess is that you often see children who seem to be doing all right until some heavy rains come or a storm. Then all the feelings come back and the anxieties reemerge and you have to deal with it all over again. That's characteristic of things that happen in crisis. There are generally two types of crises, and I'd like to mention this because I think the ways of dealing with them are very similar. One kind of crisis is a developmental crisis. Those are the normal developmental issues that all people experience as they grow and develop. They're usually tied in with attempts to master new skills or new and changing needs of a person. These crises are triggered by an internal change, usually the push or need to grow and develop. For example, any of you who have seen toddlers going through a period of crisis around the issues of autonomy where they really want to be independent. I'm sure you've seen a lot of the kinds of behaviors, the temper tantrums, the outbursts, the inability to maintain control and to stay on an even keel. Also, you see these kinds of behaviors again in adolescents when teenagers are pushing to move out away from the family and they're striving for independence. You see the same sort of these same unsettling behaviors. Even another example is the adult midlife crisis that people are now talking about. It's the same sort of unevenness, inability to cope, and where the usual coping skills break down. Those are developmental crises. I think the behaviors are often very similar, and the kinds of things you can do in response to that are very similar to situational crises. But for the rest of today, mostly, I'll be talking about situational crises. If you want to tie it in with any developmental issues, you can bring them up and we'll go back to that. Situational crises are those external events that cause an unsettling experience. Many of these are very commonplace. For example, the birth of a sibling, a move to a new house, a change to a new school – just entering school is one external situational crisis that can cause problems for children. Then there are the more traumatic experiences. Things like divorce, being a victim of child abuse, the death of a parent, or the experience of natural disasters such as floods and tornadoes and earthquakes.

Frequently, these situational crises are precipitated by a sense of loss or fear of loss. I think that's something that we need to keep in mind in all of these, that there is a sense of loss that the children have experienced. Whether it's a concrete loss of their home or someone in their family, or just the fear of losing their home and security, having seen that it can happen to other people brings about a feeling of anxiety that it might happen to them at some point. Another characteristic of situational crises is that they generally affect a group. Any of these crises would affect maybe a family. If it's the birth of a new sibling, it affects the whole family. If it's a natural disaster, it affects the whole neighborhood or an area of the state. What happens is because a number of people are involved, it makes it difficult for children to get the support they need from the important people in their lives. Because those people are also experiencing stress and are in a situation of crisis. That's why it's very important for other people who can move in at this point to help out. Because the people children generally rely on are often unavailable to help children through this period. Now, I'd like to talk a little bit about the typical ways that children respond to crises. If you have any examples of this, please feel free to contribute some. One thing that generally happens is that children regress to earlier behaviors. This is an attempt for them to restore order to get back to some safe period where they feel more comfortable. Often, maybe with preschoolers, you'll see them reverting back to thumb-sucking again, or children will begin wetting their beds. Older children, school-age children, you might begin to see more four-year-old behavior – hitting, punching, kicking, biting, things that they really have put aside and that they're returning to as a way of coping. Another way that they respond are that the age-appropriate behaviors are exaggerated, so that if you're looking at toddlers, even though we would expect toddlers to throw temper tantrums now and then, what you see is an increased number of temper tantrums in this age group. Also, with preschoolers, although four-year-olds tend to be highly aggressive, you'll see an increase in the amount of aggression that four-year-olds display. With teenagers, even though there are periods of unsettledness, this is even more exaggerated when they're in a situation of crisis. Another thing that is characteristic is that there are variations that are often based on sex and ages of the children. Most of the studies that have been reported, there do seem to be some differences in the way that boys and girls handle stress. Some of this is probably due to the fact that they have grown up in cultures where it's accepted that men and women react differently. So, children are following along in those models and are reacting differently. But generally, the boys will do more acting out. In some cases, it's easier for teachers and adults to deal with that because it's observable. You could see what's going on when the boys are fighting and hitting and kicking, and you can move in and help. The reaction often that we see in girls is that they withdraw. They keep it inside. They become good little girls. They don't let any of it be seen. So, what happens is that the girls just sort of go off, and people don't realize that there's anything going on. So, that's something to be especially aware of when you're working with children, especially with girls. If they're not acting out, that doesn't mean they're not in a crisis situation. Another thing that we found is that the way that children cope with the crisis is often tied into their developmental stage, so that the kinds of activities that you see them using to get themselves back in balance again will be age typical. Later on, I'm going to talk about the way that some children used to play after the tornadoes. I think you'll see what some of those patterns are, so that very young children will engage in sensory types of activities with their bodies. School-aged children might use dramatic play as a way of working through some of the issues. Older children, teenagers, junior high schoolers, will use language as the way of getting a handle on it. So, we'll talk about that a little bit later. Another response is that children, in a sense of crisis, are attempting to master or regain control. This can sometimes

cause problems because they will go to great lengths to regain the sense of power that they feel they've lost. Sometimes, that brings them into conflict with the adults around them. They'll challenge. They'll defy. They'll try to push all the boundaries in an effort to regain the sense of control that they feel they've lost. Part of this response can be directed through play. If they can use play or if they can use story to recreate the event, then they can turn it from a passive experience into an active experience, and in that way, gain control. So, that's a really important avenue for children to use. This can be through play. It can be through their artwork. It can be through creating stories, songs, poetry. I think those are probably the avenues that you will see most often. Those are the responses that you probably see. Are there some other things that you're seeing that are different from those?

Unknown Female Speaker: Nightmares.

RS: That's one thing I didn't mention.

Unknown Female Speaker: Difficulty in bedtime and the wakefulness. Just a lot of traumas around bedtime.

RS: Some of that is, I think, part of the regression that I talked about and that children – you see them going back almost to the seventeen-month period where they're afraid to let go to go to sleep. So, I think that's probably what you're seeing. It's a form of regression where they really are afraid. When toddlers go to sleep at night, they're often afraid to close their eyes because they think that the world won't be the same when they open their eyes. If children have experienced a situation where they did go to sleep and the world was different when they woke up, then they might go back to that level. So, I think that's what you're seeing, is that they're afraid that things will change; something will happen while they're asleep. If they stay awake, then they can keep it from happening. That's exactly what toddlers think. If they can stay awake, they can keep things stable. [laughter] What do children need then? There are a number of things that they need. Most of them are reliant upon the adult. The adults are really the important people after a crisis. One thing they need is for the adults to recognize the crisis and to acknowledge it and to acknowledge the feelings that the children have and to let the children know that it's okay to have those feelings. That's probably the most important things that adults can do initially after any kind of crisis. For young children, especially, and also for older children, I think it's important for the adults to name the feelings. Children have this diffused sense of anxiety or this fear, and they often don't know what it is. It's important for adults to say, "You're feeling afraid. You're feeling grief. You're feeling sadness," and give them a name for it. That gives them a feeling that they can get a handle on it. They can call it something. Once they can call it something, then it's easier for them to deal with it. Again, that it's all right to feel. It's all right to grieve. It's all right to be afraid. It's all right to be sad, that it's important, especially when there's a loss of family members, that they have a lot of time to grieve. Not that we want them to dwell on it, but they need time to do that. They need time to deal with that all. Another thing that they need is for the adults to provide an organization and structure for them. One of the things that happens after a crisis is that children are often overwhelmed by their feelings, and everything seems chaotic and unorganized. So, one thing that adults can do is to keep things as stable as possible, continue with the routines that the children have – whether it's going to school, after-school activities – as much as possible to keep those things consistent so

that they have some sense of where the boundaries are. That's hard to do, because after crisis, all kinds of things change. Children may be staying at someone else's house. There are new situations to get used to. There are new people in their lives. So, it really is hard to do. But as much as possible, if things can be kept stable for them, then that's helpful. In the school situation, it's not a time to be making changes in schedules or anything if you're in classrooms. It's important to keep things the way they were beforehand so that children have that sense of constancy – also that adults are available. I mentioned before that when family members are in a crisis situation with a child, they are often not available. So, it's important to get adults in there who can be available to children. Another thing that's important is for adults to provide accurate and factual information. Children need to understand what happened and what occurred. I would like also, though, to caution you against giving children too much information. They need all the facts and they need accurate information, but we don't need to scare children. They don't need to know that this might happen again in three months or six months. That's not helpful. But what is important for them to know is what caused it. If they can understand what caused it – what happened, exactly what happened, why it happened, the way it happened – then they can feel that they have some control over it and that something could be done to prevent it in the future if they understand those things. Sometimes, this might involve taking field trips to see some of the things that – with older children, I think you could do that. Younger children, it would probably be too traumatic to take them to any site where any of this occurred. But with older children, older school-aged children and adolescents, certainly, they could go see some of the changes that occurred and begin to understand them.

Unknown Female Speaker: Could you give us a sense of the age range that you were talking about when you were talking about younger children?

RS: Younger children, I would say up through eight. Three to eight, I think, probably couldn't handle it. They would be so caught up in the emotional impact of it that I'm not sure they could handle the information that they would observe. But certainly, the five to eight-year-olds could use books to understand, because they're asking lots of questions about why this happens. After the tornado experience, one of the children that I'll be talking about later asked for a tape and book on weather where they talked about hurricanes and tornadoes and explained how they occur and what causes them. That kind of thing can be helpful to children in the five to eight-year-old group. I guess along with this, it's important to remember that knowledge is power. If children have a knowledge about something, they feel that they have power over it and control over it. They can control their responses if they have a chance to rehearse what they might do if it happened again. Let me pair along with that then, when you're giving them information, the other thing that's really critical for adults to do is to reinforce the fact that they will be safe. The whole safety issue must go along with that hand-in-hand. We can't expect children to feel responsible for their own safety. That is really the adults' responsibility, and we have to communicate that to children. That might mean saying, "We won't let this happen. This is what we can do to prevent it. These are the things we are doing so that floods don't happen again," or "These are the precautions we're taking so that we can get you out of here if something like that would happen again," so that children feel that the adults are taking steps to keep them safe and that they won't let anything happen to them. That, I think, can help reinforce a lot of the feelings you were talking about where they feel so helpless and powerless. If they feel that adults are there, making some arrangements and making plans, then they don't have to worry so much

about that. Another thing that adults can do is to be somewhat tolerant of the regression that children have and the minor infractions of rules. But it's very important that boundaries remain solid so that children have a sense of where those boundaries are. While the adult is tolerant, the adult doesn't let children just get away with anything because they're in a very difficult situation. What happens in that case is that all it does is reinforce the child's feeling of being out of control, and then the child gets even more scared. So, it's important that the boundaries remain constant, but that the adults don't react in angry ways is probably the best way. When adults are reacting in angry ways, then the adults seem out of control, and that's frightening, too. When the adults can establish the boundaries and stick with them without getting angry with the children for regressing or violating the rules, children can use that a little better than either being really flexible or very rigid. The last thing that adults can do – well, the last two things. I guess they kind of go together here – and this is probably the second most important after being available to the children, is providing opportunities for symbolizing experiences, so that children can find ways to express their concerns, express their fears, and express the feelings that they're having. For example, let me just give you some examples of ways that children might symbolize a disaster. A group of children, after the tornado – these are young children, maybe three, four – really got caught up in breakdancing. I think what happened is the wild, uncontrolled body movements were very appealing to them. What happened in their exploring breakdancing was that they could control those wild body movements in a way that helped them symbolize what they would like to be able to do with that tornado, which is to control the wild, out-of-control feeling that they had. Other ways that they might deal with it after the space shuttle disaster, in daycare centers, in nursery schools, and in elementary schools, there's been a real increased interest in space Legos, little toy shuttles. What we see is that children are really working on those issues through that kind of play, symbolizing what had happened for them, and trying to look at ways they could handle it. One example that I saw really fascinated me. A child had a shuttle that didn't ordinarily come apart. It wasn't a Lego shuttle that fit together, but it was a shuttle that had been assembled at some point. It was bought in a box and put together. Well, this child remembered that the shuttle came apart even though that wasn't part of the way he ordinarily played with it. He took it all apart just the way he had put it together. When the adult said, "Why would you do that to the shuttle?" He said, "I had to pretend that it was broken in a way that no one could fix it." I thought that that was a really important way for him to symbolize the feeling of helplessness that he was feeling after seeing the shuttle disintegrate and knowing that people felt so helpless, that there was nothing that could be done. So, I think if you keep your eyes open, you'll begin to see, I think, a lot of ways that children are symbolizing their experiences with this flood. They need opportunities to do that. Other things you might see, especially with natural disasters, you might see an increase in medical play, an increase in rescue play with children up through about eight. With older children, I think you find those themes in their stories. But with younger children, it's a lot easier to observe. Also, with floods, probably water play is something that many children will use. For some, it may be too frightening. You might find them staying away from water altogether. For preschool children, it might mean pouring and filling containers. For older children, it might mean controlling it in terms of blowing bubbles or doing floating and sinking experiments, or in some other way, using water. Maybe using it cleaning, cleaning up a little more, and scrubbing the floors and doing that sort of thing; some way where they can get a feeling that they're controlling water. With early elementary school children, you might see an increase in children wanting to pour their own juice or pour their own milk and feel that they can control other kinds of fluids in addition to

water. What happens during this process is that children begin to represent the frightening elements of the situation. When they can represent it, then they can control it. They can control it in a couple of different ways. One way they control it is by changing the outcome. So, if they're making up a story or if they're playing out a theme, they can change the ending so that nobody gets hurt, or they can bring people into rescue or they can change it so that the water doesn't really wash people away or the shuttle doesn't really crash. Another thing they can do is play out the same theme, the real disaster, but play it out over and over and over until they feel they've mastered it and they've mastered the feelings that go along with it. Another thing that they can do in recreating the situation is that they can come in as the rescuer. That's often really important for five, six, seven, eight-year-old children, to feel that they can save someone. They can go in and pretend to save someone, or they can use little people to pretend to save someone. The other thing that it does is it provides a distance for children who feel they can't talk about it. Often, children – immediately after, particularly – really can't verbalize what they're feeling, what occurred, but you will see it in their play. So, if you're observant, then you can start picking up some of these themes that children – often, if you'll ask them what they think about it, they'll say, "Oh, nothing," or "I don't want to talk about it." But if you watch their play, you can see that they really are dealing with it. If you can get them to talk about their night dreams, you'll find the themes in their night dreams. If you can get them to tell you stories or draw you pictures, you'll find the themes there. Then you can begin to talk about it. You can get them to begin to talk about it in a more distant way. Then they begin working on it and working through the feelings, and at a later time, then perhaps they can deal directly with you and talk directly with you. Along with this being able to symbolize the experience, it's important for them to have outlets for expressing the strong feelings that they have. These outlets might be talking or writing for older children. They might be drawing, painting, expressing through music. So, in addition to just symbolizing the event, they're expressing the feelings so that they are making angry pictures or they're making sad pictures or they're singing sad songs. They're writing poetry that expresses the sadness, the grief, the loss. That's another important thing for children. One thing that's especially helpful for children under eight is to have unstructured art materials – things like clay, Play-Doh. Even for older school-age children, clay is a really nice medium for expressing the feelings, for pounding and getting out some of the anger, for molding and creating some of the more scary things that don't have any form that seem very amorphous to the children. Clay is an unstructured medium that they can use to do that sort of thing. Also, paint is an important medium for children. Sand for children under eight – I don't know if older children would use sand that much. If they were at a beach they might, but I'm not sure you could get them to play in a sandbox. But that would be an important thing, I would guess, for children after the flood, because they can contain water with sand. For four, five, six-year-olds, that might be an important way for them to play out their feelings. Once children can express their feelings, then they can begin to organize them. If they can organize their feelings, then they can start to control them. Do you have any questions?

MK: You were talking about how adults can help. It seems like the adults and the parents, at least, are at risk, too. If they have been affected, they may not have the strength to go the extra mile with the kids because they might be experiencing increased alcohol or anything in their own lives. How have you intervened in a family situation? When it is real important for parents to be able to do that, and they cannot, do you do family therapy –

RS: I think that would be one avenue.

MK: – or some individual work?

RS: – are unavailable to the children. So, generally, what I would recommend is to get some help in there for the children, and then see what you can do for the parents too. But you can't wait for the parents to get themselves together to move in and work with the children. That's why it's so important to have someone working with the children right away, because it does take time. It can take months for parents to feel that they can handle their own feelings. What happens is then when they see their children experiencing the same things, it stirs it all up all over again, and they don't want to deal with it. They'd rather deny it than have to face it again when they think they've just begun to reconcile their own feelings.

MK: Along with that, if kids maybe do not show something now, but a year from now, things start to happen that the parents cannot explain, how do you help community groups and teachers and things know that it may not happen now, but it could?

RS: I think by educating them and letting people know that there is often a period where all of these things just get pushed under. The sooner children can deal with it, the sooner they can work through. But sometimes, they aren't able to deal with it right away, and then it will stay there. It won't go away. What you're describing is eventually what happens is that it comes out. It comes out a year later or it comes out two years later or it comes out as adults when they're in some sort of a similar crisis situation. All of those old feelings get stirred up. So, that's why it's so important to deal with it now in these few months afterwards, because it will come up again if it isn't resolved.

Unknown Female Speaker: What would you recommend to parents who are having trouble getting their children to move back into their homes – people who have gone into a temporary living situation or the home was being repaired and then are having trouble convincing the children to go back. Would you please reiterate the question through the mic?

RS: Oh, the question was, what do you do about helping parents with children who don't want to move back into their homes and are afraid – what suggestions to give to the parents. I'm not sure that it would be the same for all children, because my feeling is that for different children, the issue would be different. My guess is that the safety issue is a really important one. But children aren't going to feel safe until they feel safe, so it's hard. There might be some ways with an individual child that someone could work with that child so the child feels safer. Then I think the child would feel more comfortable moving back. Probably the best thing to say to parents is that this is why the child is feeling the way the child is feeling, and whatever you can do to reassure the child will make this go easier. It's not helpful to get angry about the behaviors, because the child is doing the best he can trying to keep things level and on an even keel. Does that answer –

Unknown Female Speaker: Yes, I think so. I guess I am wondering, if the parents could afford it, should they just put their house up for sale and move someplace else, or would it be better to have the child deal with it?

RS: My feeling is it would be better to deal with it, because by moving away, then it's not resolved. At some point, it's going to have to be resolved.

Unknown Female Speaker: On the other hand, what about kids who do not want to go back to school?

RS: This question was about what about children who don't want to go back to school. I think that, probably, that is similar to not wanting to go to sleep. If you leave the home situation, things might change. Your house might not be there when you get back. The only solution is to work through those feelings by all of these different techniques and by having adults reassure them that they will be safe, that the house will be there. It's almost like going back to a two-year-old who's afraid to leave her mother to go off to nursery school or daycare. All of those, you have to handle it in the same way. You have to be patient. You have to maybe go with the child to school. Let the child call home if the child's concerned – whatever you would do for a younger child, because it is an example of a regression to an earlier developmental stage.

Unknown Female Speaker: Do you have any suggestions on how to deal with a situation where there is a second disaster? We have had several families with small children, they were flooded. Now, their homes, they have had house fires. The kids were just beginning to get settled in and start to feel safe again and to deal with the flood business. Then all of a sudden, they have got this other thing.

RS: The question was how do you help children deal with a second disaster? For instance, if, after the flood, they've experienced a fire in their home, how do you help children who are just beginning to deal with the flood also then deal with the second disaster? Unfortunately, it's really difficult, because what has been undermined is their sense of trust that you've worked so hard to develop after the flood. All of that is wiped out again and you have to start all over. It's really hard. What happens is those children are even more mistrustful than they were beforehand. So, it takes a lot more energy.

Unknown Female Speaker: Just more of the same?

RS: Yes.

Unknown Female Speaker: One of the questions that I have is that a lot of what we are talking about here is assuming that the parents are articulate and able to process their feelings and, first of all, work through them, process them, and then talk about them. But in lots of families, the situation is just the opposite. People are not used to talking about their feelings and expressing their emotions. I realize that the answer to this question is to get people to do that. Do you have any very specific therapeutic approaches that we can use with parents who are in that situation?

RS: The question was how to help parents feel comfortable with expressing their feelings and concerns so that they can help children. That's hard. [laughter] I find it almost easier to work with the children. If you can get support and help for the parents, fine. That's helpful. If you can work with them as a family, then I think that's helpful. But I don't know that you can wait

for the parents to feel comfortable. Some parents will never feel comfortable dealing with their feelings in that way. But that doesn't mean the children ought not to learn to do that. So, my feeling is that somebody needs to work with the children anyway. Sometimes, what happens is that when parents see that children are talking about it, are drawing about it, are playing about it, and they're feeling better, then parents can begin to see that that could be helpful if they could talk about it. Sometimes, the children, in their spontaneous conversations with parents, can get them to open up in a way that adults can't get them to open up. That's my best suggestion. Any other questions?

MK: I have just some feedback on the situation where the children have not only lost – we already saw that children not only lost their homes, but they have lost their school situation. They are in different settings, and it is up in the air. The rooms are different. Public scheduling and all that is different. So, do you have any ideas where their sense of identity might then be focused if it is not even with school anymore?

RS: That's difficult. The question is what happens when children are uprooted at home, and then their school situation is uprooted and they really have no sense of identity. That's one of the reasons I said where, as much as possible, keep things stable. If you can't, then maybe if there's something that's stable – maybe an extended family support group, a church group. If there's anything that children can fall back on to rely on during that period that can be stable, that's helpful.

MK: That was what I thought, study groups and kids...

RS: Yes, I think groups for children – the other thing is that even though some things change, it's important to look at what relationships stay the same. Is there a certain teacher or a counselor who still has a relationship with that child and trying to keep that relationship stable at least? This might be the parents. It might be an uncle. It might be a neighbor or a distant relative. It could be anyone, but somehow getting some stability. Let me go on and just go over some examples. These are play examples of children who were from three to nine years old after the tornado. I'm using these as examples because I'd like you to begin thinking about the kinds of behavior you see in children and what that might mean. These behaviors were reflecting the concerns that children had about a tornado. Some of them might be similar to what you're seeing. Some of them might be very different. But I think it will get you thinking about the kinds of things you might be observing with children and what they might mean and how then you could start helping children cope with the feelings. Before I start this, let me just – well, I'm going to skip this section, but there are some theorists who talk about the important role of play and the important role of telling stories. If any of you are interested in that kind of information, I can give you some of the names and sources of people who have written about that. I'm going on the assumption that you all believe that's important. So, we'll just progress from there. One thing that's important to remember is that the degree to which children are affected by any situation is variable. You might find children who are affected directly who lost either their house or home, or you might find children who are affected indirectly. They still might have the same level of anxiety. Even children who are affected indirectly can be just as afraid as the child who actually lost a home. In fact, in some cases, children who actually experienced the disaster directly are helped more and helped faster to deal with that than children who are afraid that it

might happen to them. So, keep that in mind that there are a couple different layers of being affected by a disaster.

Unknown Female Speaker: Can you talk a little bit about survivor guilt?

RS: I think that you're touching on a part of that, that sometimes, it's harder for children who survived it to cope with their feelings because they look around them and they see that other people didn't survive. Then they wonder a couple things – what they ought to have done to save the other person or to make it better for the other person, then they also sometimes wonder why they were not affected. Then along with that comes the real concern that next time, it will be my turn to be affected. So, I think that it's a cycle that keeps going on, because it's hard to break. It's hard to break into that when children are not affected directly. They still feel the effects in other ways. I think you see that probably more with older elementary, pre-adolescent, adolescent children. I don't think you would see it too much with younger children under eight. These first set of play experiences occurred the day after a tornado went through Western Pennsylvania. There were three tornadoes that went through and destroyed a number of farms and homes in the area. This group of children were not affected directly, but the grandparents of four of the children who were all related – they were two sets of siblings. The grandparents' home had been flattened. So, what the children did observe was that their parents had gone out in the middle of the night and had been involved in the cleanup process. Then they observed truckloads of debris coming back to the house that people were sorting through. So, in a sense, although not affected directly, they did see what the results of the tornado were. They also lived in an area near a fire station. So, all of the fire engines that were out all night were running past their houses, so that they were aware. They were aware, first of all, of the thunderstorms in the area, and they were aware of the fire engines going past all night and then their parents leaving in the middle of the night, and then the next day, all of this debris coming back to the house. So, that was the level of involvement. Additionally, the following morning – this was a Friday evening. So, the next morning was Saturday morning. Of course, children were – first thing they did when they got up in the morning was to turn on the Saturday morning cartoons. All of the cartoons were, of course, interrupted with the news coverage. So, the children were bombarded with images of the disaster itself before the adults even had a chance to talk with them about it. So, that was a bit frightening for some of the children. The initial reaction of three of the children – now, these children ranged from two years, ten months, to three years, eight months. They became involved with pounding, poking, and tearing up Play-Doh at the kitchen table, pulling things apart, tossing it around. The older children came over and then began to use the Play-Doh, but they used it in very different ways. They used it – molding it and putting it back together, making balls and putting things back together. The older children were able to start talking about the tornado. They kept saying, "A tornado came and flattened my grandma's house. My dad has to go over there now and pick up all of the clothes, and everything's all over the place." They were able to talk about the concrete experience of it, but they weren't able to talk about what were their feelings and the anxieties they felt. They felt nothing. What did you think about that? "Nothing. Oh, nothing." They just really had no response. The one child who did most of the talking was a five-year-old girl. She repeatedly asked about her grandmother, and she talked about her grandmother's home being gone. She returned periodically during the day back to the Play-Doh table. That seemed to be a place where she could pull herself together. Whenever she got too frightened, she went back to the kitchen and asked for some Play-Doh – again, taking it apart and

putting it back together; again, trying to make it better. I think that's part of wanting to restore things and wanting to save, wanting to make things better for the people who were affected. At one point, though, she began to draw some pictures. I brought these in because I think it shows a good example of the way children initially seem pretty well together after an event. Yet, if you look closely, you see that there's a lot of underlying anxiety. In the first picture she drew, this is a picture of herself. It's a pretty typical drawing of herself, except that her hair is standing on end. She didn't generally draw her hair that way. But other than that, it's pretty typical for the drawings that she made. This was the second one. She did these one right after another. You can see she's getting more and more afraid, more and more concerned about herself. There's a cloud over her head here. Then in this third one, it's a closer view, and also a more frightening expression. The last one that she did was totally disorganized. I think that this is very typical. This child was just five years old. So, developmentally, she's still pretty concerned about her own body. This is how she reflected it in her drawing of herself, of her body. She reflected those concerns about bodily injury to herself. One thing I might mention, this child had lived in the grandparents' home for about six months while her house was being built. So, that might be the reason that she was the one that reacted so strongly, or it might have been that she was just the most verbal child. But she seemed to be the one who talked the most about the experience.

MK: I have a question. How far apart were these drawings?

RS: Minutes. She tore it off and went right through the other one. So, it was so clear that you could see the disintegration and how anxious she was. She just couldn't hold it together to make more than one drawing without having it fall apart.

Unknown Female Speaker: Was the child at home when she made those drawings?

RS: No, she wasn't at home. What happened is – I guess I forgot to mention this – all of the children were being cared for while their parents were in the cleanup efforts. So, all of these children were together. There were seven of them, and they were all together at a neighbor's home. Another thing that this child did after this experience, after drawing these, she came into the kitchen and asked if she could use some puzzles. The puzzles were people puzzles that she took apart and put back together again, and that seemed really important for her. Again, I think having to do with body image and body integrity and keeping herself together and not being blown apart. There were two boys who were five and six years old who were able – because I think they were a little bit older, they were immediately able to start playing about the tornado. They went outside into a sandbox where they began building mountains of sand. But interestingly, they didn't talk about tornadoes. They talked about volcanoes. They built volcanoes. They scooped out the center and they poured water in, and then they threw all the people in and then they had them all spewing out all over. They couldn't deal with it as a tornado, but they could deal with it as a volcano. So, that was their way of distancing. They couldn't deal with it directly. A lot of people would say, "Oh, look, that didn't even bother them. Look, they're playing about volcanoes. That's what they're worried about." But really, if you analyze the actions, they were the same kinds of fears – the fears of things being thrown around and spewed around in the water, being a part of that. The one thing they did do was every time they smashed the volcano, they went back and rebuilt it. I thought that that was significant, that they were really trying to cope with that by building it up again. They got very upset when the

younger children, at one point, destroyed it by kicking it in. They wanted control over destroying it and rebuilding it. They didn't want anyone else doing that. There was an eight-year-old girl and a nine-year-old girl. They didn't get involved in the play very much, but there were two things that were significant. One thing that they did was they began watching over the other children in a very exaggerated way. They wouldn't let the younger ones out of their sight. If they left the yard for a minute, they were hovering over them. They wanted to take them for rides in the wagon. These were behaviors that were not that characteristic. I mean, generally, these girls would go off and do whatever they wanted to do and not be too concerned about the others. So, there was this interest in caring for the younger children. The other thing they did was to draw on a chalkboard. They would draw things and then wipe them out with the eraser really fast. Then they would draw something else. They would draw houses, they would draw scenes, and then just obliterate them with the eraser. So, those were the two themes that we observed. I have one example that a child did. This is one the nine-year-old girl did for her mother. I think you can see the chaos reflected. Oh, I forgot. I think you can see the chaos reflected in this. She said it was a picture of a windstorm, but it says, "I love you, mom." It's a card for her mother, but you can see the representation of the windstorm. Those were the themes that we saw immediately after the event. What we saw later on was that the play began to develop. This observation is a play sequence that was initiated by the five-year-old girl that I mentioned before and included one other three-year-old girl and two boys who were then four. So, this was a little bit later. The play began around a home-nurturing theme taking place in a tree house, where the children were pretending to eat lunch and go to bed. At one point, they pretended to set out dishes and pour beverages. The five-year-old said, "Oh, no, here comes the tornado." With that announcement, the three children climbed down the ladder and hid under the tree house. "We're hiding in the basement," they said to the observer, "So the tornado won't get us." The play continued as the children came out. They looked around and said, "Well, no more tornadoes." They dutifully then returned to the upper level of the treehouse. The sequence was repeated again with everyone scrambling out of the treehouse. This time, though, there was a lot of laughing and giggling going on as they scrambled down out of the treehouse and hid. They repeated this over and over. Each time, it became a little more playful. I think this is a really good example of how they were finally able to, after a couple of months, deal with the theme directly and play about the tornado, and even turn it into a playful theme, so that it had begun to lose the sense of fear and anxiety. They had begun to lose the sense of fear and anxiety associated with the tornado. With the laughing and giggling, they would say, "Let's get out of here," and then all scrambled down. Then they would check to see if it was all clear again, go back up again. It's interesting, though. At the same time, although they could play about it directly, none of them would talk about it yet. If you said, "What did you think about that tornado?" "Nothing. I don't want to talk about the tornado." At one point, one child drew marks all over the place and said, "These are sticks, but I don't want to talk about them." So, again, I think they were using play as a way of distancing themselves a little bit. But you can see that there was a progression that they were coming to the point where they could begin to cope. Another play theme that developed with the four-year-old boys was that of whirlwind. I mentioned this before in terms of breakdancing. These were the same boys that became involved with breakdancing. But initially, they played whirlwind, where they spun around in the yard, and they would upset everything that was around. They would upset the toy chest. They would upset the sandbox. They would just spin all around. When anyone asked what they were doing, they would say, "We're playing whirlwind."

Unknown Female Speaker: How long did you see this behavior going on after the tornado?

RS: This behavior was about four months afterwards. This was still going on. There's still remnants of it from time to time, and this has been almost a year now. So, it takes a long time. Another thing that the younger ones – these four-year-olds, when fall came and they began moving into playing in the house, they played whirlwind. But instead of playing it with their bodies, they would stir up the contents of the toy box or the Lego – the dishpan full of Legos. They stirred everything all up, saying they were playing whirlwind. They moved it one step further from their bodies, then onto the toys, so that things still were getting stirred up and crashed up. They also, at the same time, became once again interested in the swirling motions of water going down the drain. This was something they had done when they were younger, but that became of interest again. Another theme that came up over and over was a theme that is typical of a toddler theme, where toddlers often will load things up, dump things into trucks, into baskets, and then dump them out again. These four-year-olds went back to that sort of play. Initially, it was just dumping and filling, and then they began to call it playing tornado. "We're playing tornado." They would put everything in the wagon, take it somewhere else, and dump it all out. So, they were able to move with that. What we call this is regression in service of the ego. They were able to move back to a lower developmental level and a lower play approach, but they were dealing with it in an age-appropriate way, so that they were carting things around in wagons and dumping it out, pretending about a tornado, recreating that same sort of dumping and filling play that they had engaged in when they were toddlers. The six and seven-year-old – I mentioned before, one of the seven-year-old asked for books about tornadoes, asked for the tape or book about weather so he could begin to understand it. There are some drawings here that were done. This is a drawing of a house. This house is standing, because he said, "You see, the windows are half open, so it didn't collapse. This house didn't have its windows open, so it's gone, but the tornado is there." This is an example of his trying to explain why some houses were smashed and houses standing right next to it weren't. I'm not sure where he got the idea that the houses were standing because their windows were open. But somebody had said, "If you crack the window, then chances are that you're – that's why you cracked the windows, so your house won't fall in." So, he assumed that the reason houses stood is that they had their windows cracked and the other ones didn't. Let's see, I have one other picture here of – this was done by the nine-year-old child. I think you can see a little better cognitive understanding of what happens. One of the houses is going to be hit and the others are going to be saved. Again, I think dealing with the issues about being a survivor, that seemed to be something that – I said that it's more prevalent in older children, and yet, as I show you these examples, they're dealing with it in their artwork, even though they're not talking about it. Another thing that I was struck by as I was analyzing some of these play behaviors and these pictures is that they, in some ways, parallel the kinds of play that I had observed in preschool and head start centers after children had watched *The Wizard of Oz* and the tornado sequence. Well, there are two interesting things. One is that we saw some of the same sorts of patterns, and yet, the focus was different, so that younger children, after seeing *The Wizard of Oz*, focused on the dog and the family and the play themes. I think we saw that in the children playing in the playhouse, that they dealt with the tornado around the play theme of playing house. But because they had directly experienced the tornado, they brought it in directly into their play, too. After *The Wizard of Oz*, we found that school-aged children, after observing *The Wizard of Oz*, would often become very interested in

finding out how tornadoes occurred. They were interested in knowing how the witch melted or some of the more technical things. I think that's quite in line with how the six, seven, eight-year-old children were trying to deal with the information about the tornado, too.

MK: What was your answer?

RS: To which?

MK: Why did the witch melt? [laughter]

RS: I don't remember. I think it was probably left a question. The other thing is that children after *The Wizard of Oz*, older children...

[end of transcript]

Michael Kline: The first week that the children at Hamrick School up in Hendricks came back, I think it was either three or three and a half weeks that that school was closed after the flood. If anybody can correct me on that – it was roughly that time – almost a month, anyway – that the Hamrick School served as a recovery center for food distribution. The school was high and dry, and it wasn't hurt by the flood, fortunately. The school has an outstanding faculty of teachers and an outstanding principal. They tried immediately to launch a program of art and story therapy for the children after they came back. These pictures were drawn – oh, who knows, five weeks maybe after the flood. The children whose homes were destroyed had been scattered out with other families. So, coming back to school was the first real semblance of order, I think, for a lot of them. There are two grades represented here, fifth grade and second grade. I think the pictures aren't necessarily in order. I'll try to speculate about which grade they are. But I thought maybe Roberta could speculate about them a little bit too. This is Lambert's Chevrolet Car Sales, which you might – oh, you didn't get here in time to see the slideshow this morning, did you?

Roberta Schoenberg: No.

MK: That place was very badly destroyed.

RS: So, that's what the whole building is?

MK: It was sort of the center of town. Yes.

RS: I see. I think, in these pictures, because I don't know the children and I don't know the ages, there are some things I could speculate about and there are some things I would wonder about. If you had a chance to talk with them afterwards, they might clarify that. If they had given you any stories about their pictures, that might help clarify. The hole through the Lambert's building, I assume that that's a representation of whatever the building looked like. Is that a sign on the side? That's all bent.

MK: You can see the mud level in the other one there.

RS: I see.

Unknown Male Speaker: The sign on the left, yes, that's a sign.

Unknown Female Speaker: Then on the right is a roof.

RS: Oh, that's all skewed and off.

Unknown Male Speaker: Yes. Apparently, it was right up against the on the roof.

MK: But you can see the window on the left. It says mud, the mud level. Parsons had just a pall of mud, anywhere from eighteen inches up to thirty inches of mud in these buildings. It was the kind of mud that you could get a shovel into, but then you couldn't get it off the shovel. It was the stickiest, nastiest kind of mud everywhere. People are still trying to wash the mud out, get

rid of it. It just won't seem to go away.

Unknown Male Speaker: I've been stuck to the mud. When it gets real dry, it gets just concretized. When the rain comes, then you have the mud again. It's still on the streets. That would be the bay where you went to [inaudible] in the water line.

RS: You say this is the center of town, so it's an important – my question would have been why did he draw this.

Unknown Male Speaker: No, it's not the center of town, but it's the center of the flood.

RS: The center of the flood?

MK: It was the center of the flood.

RS: I see. So, it would have special significance for the children. That's interesting.

MK: Who's got the slide button now?

Unknown Female Speaker: Do you want to push it?

Unknown Female Speaker: Oh, yes. I thought she had it. Where now?

Unknown Female Speaker: Halfway up, right there.

Unknown Female Speaker: Oh, this thing here?

RS: Oh, here. This works, maybe. Oh, you're working it.

Unknown Female Speaker: It doesn't seem to be doing anything.

Unknown Male Speaker: No, it didn't move.

MK: It didn't move?

Unknown Female Speaker: Do I just push this one here? Oh, boy, that's a great –

RS: Look at this view. This is a fifth grader?

MK: Yes, this is the same artist, I noticed. Pat Roy.

Unknown Female Speaker: Boy, the dimensions of that one are wonderful. You really get a sense of depth.

RS: Yes, the view of looking down on something. I assume those are trees that have toppled and buildings and a playground – is that?

Unknown Female Speaker: What's the square up there where it says "hole," and there's an American flag? I wonder what that is.

Unknown Male Speaker: That may have been the old gym, which would be catty-corner across from Lambert's.

MK: Yes, that's a real good guess.

Unknown Female Speaker: That looks like a refrigerator.

Unknown Male Speaker: Isn't that the front of the apartment house where they had a flag hanging outside?

MK: Yes, that's it.

Unknown Male Speaker: It took the whole front of the apartment house off. That's what that is.

MK: Yes, you're right.

Unknown Male Speaker: See, there's even a flag.

Unknown Male Speaker: But it could have been anywhere in Parsons, in the flood area – particularly, all of the cars.

Unknown Male Speaker: Is that a refrigerator?

RS: Did you ask them to draw about the flood or these are just spontaneous drawings?

MK: These were not drawn under my direction. These were pictures the teachers asked them to draw. So, I suppose they asked them to draw about the flood. The subsequent drawings I've gotten at the talk on tape about the pictures. So, the next batch will have a little more information about –

Unknown Male Speaker: Michael, what does the word say about that car in the lower left-hand corner?

Unknown Female Speaker: Crushed car.

MK: Crushed car, yes.

RS: Oh, crushed car.

Unknown Female Speaker: Well, that one looks like it's sideways.

Unknown Male Speaker: Yes, I'd say it looks sideways.

RS: What is it? These are the houses up on the hill that weren't touched? Then the ones closer are upside down?

Unknown Female Speaker: Yes, it looks like maybe the foreground is flooded.

MK: Another 180 degrees. There you go.

Unknown Male Speaker: It's Quality Hill.

MK: Yes, there's a place above Parsons called Quality Hill that wasn't hit. All the people that were flooded went up to Quality Hill to stay with the ones that didn't get flooded. This is a fifth grader too.

Unknown Male Speaker: That could also be the camera for Hendricks up at the high parts.

MK: Yes.

RS: The house that's upside down is the largest one. I'd wonder how this child was affected if his house was involved or whether he was one of the ones that lived up on the hill.

MK: I think the point you made this morning about the impact on children, whether or not their houses were destroyed, really comes across in this picture.

RS: Yes, that they saw it.

Unknown Female Speaker: Yes.

Unknown Male Speaker: Even that little house there, if he saw this possibly a mile, almost, away, it's easily, I think, going to look huge.

RS: I don't know. I wonder why it's so big - or if you'd just do it first and then added everything. "Go." [laughter]

Unknown Female Speaker: Woo.

RS: I assume that this must be a second grader. Is that somebody leaving the flood area in the car, or just...

Unknown Female Speaker: Where is it?

MK: Maybe that's somebody getting away.

Unknown Female Speaker: Do you have any comments on the choice of colors?

RS: It's hard for me to judge, not knowing how they generally draw.

Unknown Male Speaker: It looks like rain, kind of.

RS: Yes, it does look like rain.

Unknown Male Speaker: That's probably the Hamrick School [inaudible] in that area.

RS: I think it's interesting that he wrote the word or she wrote the word "Go" on it. That must have been really scary if he was involved or if he heard of people who were involved in getting out. Wow. That could be flood waters, probably, rain swashing all over. "Thank you for the ones that are airtight?"

MK: "All right."

RS: Oh, "All right." [laughter]

These look like they're in the middle of it.

MK: There were stories of people in Parsons, two women in particular, who were in the water all night for nine, ten hours. These stories were in the paper and very much told around in the community. These were people who were in the water but survived. There were four people from Tucker County who were drowned. So, I don't know if that person is -

RS: Is in the water?

MK: Went in the water or trying to run away from the water.

RS: Is that a building or a vehicle or something, the orange with the cross?

MK: Not sure.

RS: It would be interesting when you get these others back to look at the stories and to hear what the children say about them. Especially at this age, it's hard to know what was going on in her mind – or his mind, Daniel. On all of these, there's all of this chaos, the scribbling and washing over on all of them.

Unknown Male Speaker: Is there any difference between those and [inaudible]?

RS: Some of it is just a difference in style. If you had three or four over time of one child, then it might mean something. But it's hard to know if it's just this one, if it is, if it has any meaning.

MK: Is that Lambert's Chevrolet again? That could be anywhere in Parsons.

RS: Do you think their car's being washed away?

Unknown Female Speaker: I bet. So, many people lost their cars. That would have been –

RS: The line's probably rain, maybe?

Unknown Male Speaker: Can you go back [inaudible].

RS: There's so much of this scribbling on all of them. It's not solid coloring. It's just real washed, like things washing over. Look at the raindrops. I assume those are the floodwaters getting higher.

Unknown Female Speaker: "Terrible flood, wasn't it?" Is that what that says?

Unknown Male Speaker: Yes.

MK: That's what it said. "Terrible flood, wasn't it?"

RS: But the house is still standing.

Unknown Female Speaker: Oh, boy. I love the way that one has clumped things together, on that left-hand clump thing.

RS: Is that a church?

Unknown Male Speaker: [inaudible] with a family Bible on top of the TV set, on top of mud, but it still didn't have any – there was mud all around, and the Bible was white. I saw the Bible completely –

Unknown Female Speaker: Did you actually see it?

Unknown Male Speaker: Yes. I went to the guy's house and he showed it to me. The Bible was totally and completely white and not a blemish on it, no water damage or anything. It had floated on top of something. It wound up on top of the TV set. It was sitting there with mud all around it.

MK: The word "Church?"

RS: Yes, it looks like church, doesn't it? What was the ball that has an M on it?

Unknown Male Speaker: That would be the Hendricks Baptist Church. They [inaudible] of the building. They have stained glass that were not scratched. As I understand, the Bible was in great condition. That Bible story, though, I heard it in several different forms. They're always in the form that the Bible itself was not damaged, or the columns of the church. The only trouble was, when I was studying the Bible, the first [inaudible] I picked up was for the church study. When I found out it wasn't in the book to tell that story, [inaudible] was getting through. [inaudible]

RS: "My grandmother's home the day after the flood." Her grandmother was safe, I guess?

Unknown Male Speaker: Yes.

Unknown Male Speaker: A lot of cracks.

Unknown Female Speaker: Water cracked the house.

RS: Oh, with the cracks.

MK: Furniture stuck outside. Many things people had, they had to throw away, from first floor.

RS: What could that be?

Unknown Female Speaker: [inaudible].

RS: Oh, look at that one.

MK: There were people trapped in houses in the flood – some real dramatic stories. Particularly up in Hendricks, I know of two houses with people trapped in them, and there may have been more. In Parsons, there was a couple, I guess.

Unknown Male Speaker: [inaudible] in the water where she wrote hour by hour about the – she had a diary.

MK: She knew it was history in the making.

Unknown Male Speaker: What?

MK: She knew it was history in the making, so she kept writing.

RS: This was what?

Unknown Female Speaker: It must be Juan. It must be Hurricane Juan.

Unknown Male Speaker: That was very smart [inaudible].

Unknown Female Speaker: Well, I'm used to looking at things like that.

RS: The flood level. Look at that. This seems a little more organized than some of the others, where it was just so diffused.

Unknown Female Speaker: Yes.

Unknown Female Speaker: A smaller person [inaudible].

RS: It shows somebody going up the stairs, going upstairs.

MK: There's somebody up in the tree too, isn't there?

RS: I thought maybe that was clothing or something, hanging blankets, or – wow.

Unknown Female Speaker: Oh, wow. What happened?

RS: I can't even tell what he drew under there. There's a sun in it. Look at the clouds and the rain. There's that scattered – whatever, rain, I suppose. It's interesting how scattered all of that is – whether it's rain coming down in all different directions – and yet, how organized the houses are with the windows in step fashion.

MK: There's an interesting perspective on that, too. You can really look down that street.

RS: See the ones behind.

MK: Some of them are a little too further away.

RS: The hell is, "Help, help?" Interesting. This child personalized those clouds. I wonder how many children – do you know if you have a sense of whether they've laid blame for this on a person or a thing?

Unknown Female Speaker: Right after the flood, in Circleville, for about a week, some other women and I had a daycare set up there in the kindergarten room. One day, we were singing a little song about Noah's Ark. A couple of kids got into this big theological trip about no – it wasn't about the flood, that it just happened. But it was about God punished all the bad people. I tried to squelch real fast. They had heard it, obviously. They've recently heard this. I mean, it was really in the forefront of their mind. I wondered how many kids made that association, because there are a lot of people who have really fundamental religious convictions –

RS: Yes, I would wonder that too.

Unknown Female Speaker: – the idea of punishment for bad things.

RS: Even after the shuttle disaster a couple weeks ago, I was struck with the television interviews and the radio interviews that they were having with children. I was struck by the number of children who were so angry. It was as though they were trying to blame somebody or something. These were school-aged kids. You would think that they would be beyond that, that they would understand about accidents. Yet, they still were really angry.

Unknown Female Speaker: Well, the adults also are going through that same thing. They just articulated as honestly –

RS: I guess I was wondering if all of the emphasis on trying to find the cause and lay blame wasn't fueling some of that.

Unknown Male Speaker: But on the other hand, finding out now about the [inaudible] that the kids may have been writing [inaudible] making that time.

RS: You mean being angry? [laughter] Can you back up to see that other one?

Unknown Male Speaker: That's the tracks.

RS: Oh, she started this one, I guess. Go on then and then to that.

Unknown Female Speaker: When was that little crane there?

Unknown Male Speaker: Oh, that's the railroad track that was torn up.

RS: Oh, how sad.

MK: Are those waves of water?

RS: That's my guess. Oh, is this a car?

MK: Well, the film only took half the picture. All the buildings that were destroyed had big numbers painted on the side for demolition purposes.

Unknown Female Speaker: People called it a marketing boost.

MK: Some people thought that it was a marketing boost.

Unknown Female Speaker: They called it that?

MK: They did.

Unknown Female Speaker: That's crazy.

Unknown Male Speaker: Some of it's used as a joke. This is where I think we need to be careful about language. When I say that the house was destroyed, I believe that it would mean that the flood itself took that house, and there was nothing but the foundation. But this was the house that was to be destroyed.

MK: To be destroyed. You're right.

Unknown Male Speaker: The red marks, or anything left of it, the red marks meant that that was judged to be totally uninhabitable. But they stood for a month or two.

Unknown Female Speaker: That's terrible.

Unknown Male Speaker: You can imagine what this meant to people whose home that was. It just sucked to see that staying week after a week after a week.

MK: What was the system of numbers? I never understood the numbers themselves.

Unknown Male Speaker: Who does? The authority, I forget whether it was the government or [inaudible]. Then you'd see somewhere where the numbers would be painted through, and that meant somebody had wanted to pull it out and get it changed. Then there were some that weren't numbered at first. Then for instance, if you get your house demolished, then you could get better terms from FEMA. Another house looked smaller than these houses [inaudible] we could really do better by double that. It was cheaper than your house. So, that was one of the hardest things that came to the start.

MK: They were really honest.

Unknown Male Speaker: That's a bridge.

RS: Oh, a bridge. This is a bridge. Was it destroyed? Broken?

Unknown Male Speaker: None of the bridges were destroyed. See, the railroad bridge had that kind of superstructure, and then the highway bridges [inaudible]. But the –

MK: The approaches.

Unknown Male Speaker: But the approach up to the bridge itself –

MK: Washed out.

RS: Washed away.

MK: Looks like a trailer in the river, maybe.

RS: Is this someone climbing out? Is this a ladder?

Unknown Female Speaker: Railway tracks.

RS: Oh, the railroad tracks. Trees floating by.

MK: Can everybody read that?

Unknown Female Speaker: "The flood had covered the house and –"

MK: "The next day –"

Unknown Female Speaker: "Now, there are islands surrounding –"

MK: "Surrounded by mud –"

Unknown Female Speaker: "By mud on the lower street. On the main road, the water turned, crash, and there were damage. The mud is something –"

RS: Everywhere?

Unknown Female Speaker: "Everywhere."

MK: Caked.

Unknown Female Speaker: "Caked everywhere. In the morning, the water was to the middle of the two-story houses. In two houses, people were trapped. They signaled each other through the night with lights and gunshots."

RS: Is that true?

MK: Yes.

RS: Now, this must be the picture that goes with that.

MK: Yes, that's the islands –

RS: The islands and the people. The bridges again. Look at those waves. Flood was November 4th. Is that a bridge or a ramp or a road? "This is my uncle's old house."

Unknown Male Speaker: Driveway, maybe.

RS: Driveway. Is that middle part the river there running through something?

MK: It says river here, doesn't it?

RS: Does it? Things on the bank. It's interesting to me how some of the children have their houses intact and others have it so chaotic. I would wonder whether they had seen houses or whether they were directly affected.

MK: I would say that by the time these pictures were drawn, all of these children had seen houses that were in all stages of wreckage.

RS: It's interesting then that some of them focused on intact houses and others on the destruction. Look at that one. These mounds of mud, maybe, or just boulders? Did you say there were boulders scattered around?

MK: Both.

RS: Were there boats or something picking people up or what?

Unknown Male Speaker: Yes.

RS: Were there?

Unknown Male Speaker: You can barely read some –

RS: Yes, they look like they're foreign.

Unknown Male Speaker: Like little Welsh characters. Is that upside-down?

Unknown Female Speaker: "I survived the flood."

MK: Oh, that's the cow washed up under the bridge.

Unknown Male Speaker: In the bridge at St. George.

RS: Was it dead?

MK: Yes. There you go.

Unknown Male Speaker: There were two of them, actually.

MK: There were.

Unknown Male Speaker: It took the health officer all morning with the Army. It would've been [inaudible]

RS: – kept showing up in two or three pictures would make me think that they must have seen it on the news or the newspaper to represent it so similarly. It's interesting.

MK: There is a photographer in Tucker County who went to work documenting this flood before it had crested, even. Since that time, he's probably taken two-hundred rolls of film. He hung showings of his work all over town. It was wonderful, the access that people had to his work. He would hang a hundred photographs all beautifully matted in the school where people were eating.

Unknown Male Speaker: They now have these fifty shots of the best picture – I had \$15 with an eight and a ten. Two of them happened to be one outside and one inside of my church. So, I'm definitely getting two of them. But it's a thing which I would never have thought to take pictures. It's very nice.

[end of transcript]