Gerard Radice Oral History Interview

December 19, 2013

Interviewed by Jerrod Howe

Howe: We are here at the Pritzker Library today, Thursday, December 19th, 2013. My name is Jerrod Howe and we are here with... Gerry...R...

Radice: Gerry, well it's Gerry Radice, in Italian.

Howe: I was gonna say Gerry Radice, but we were introduced...

Radice: R-a-d-i-c-e, Radice in Italian. That is radish in English, and it's Red Ass in the locker room.

Howe: [Laughs]. That's fair. And we're here to tell Mr. Radice's story of service.

Radice: Gerry, just Gerry.

Howe: Gerry. Do you ever go by Lieutenant Colonel, Colonel?

Radice: Hmm, that's…I became one. I did my job. I retired.

Howe: We thank you for that.

Radice: It's amazing how many people get into the military and rise to the rank of lieutenant, and captain and major, and then there's a sort of a silence, and then lieutenant colonel, and another silence, then colonel, and then a big silence, and maybe a one star or two star.

Howe: Right. Brigadier General.

Radice: Brigadier, two star, three star, et cetera.

Howe: Well, if we can, I'd like to start back here in Chicago. When were you born?

Radice: December 9th, 1918.

Howe: Okay, and here in Chicago?

Radice: In Chicago.

Howe: What was it like growing up during that time?

Radice: Well, I grew up on Taylor Street. I'm Italian, and I grew up on Taylor Street for about eight years, and then my father and mother moved to Hyde Park. We grew up in Hyde Park in the late '20s and '30s. That's the beginning.

Howe: Okay, and that was during the Great Depression.

Radice: That was during...you used the words the *Great* Depression. I have no comparison except it was *the* Depression.

Howe: Right. What did your father and your mother do?

Radice: My mother was a seamstress... a design seamstress for the people in the North Shore—Winnetka, Wilmette, Lake Forest, etc. She would make dresses for the hoighty toighty of the time—the '14s, '15s, and then the '20s, in that area. She would make one dress and then throw it away. Throw the pattern because the woman who wanted the dress wanted that to be the only dress ever, and she was asked at various times to make dresses. She said, "No, I made one, and that was it." She was an artist of her own time, and [had] her own validity [of] what she was doing. She and her older sister worked out of Winnetka. That's where the sister was living, and they had their shops there. They had their shop and a room where they had whatever they did. I was too young to know what the hell they were doing.

Howe: Fair enough. And your father?

Radice: My father was a—is…was—a cabinetmaker, a finish carpenter. He worked with metal, he worked with wood, he worked with stone. He was very talented with his hands and his mind. He made all of the tools that he used, in every vocation that he was working with. Tile, or wood or metal—he just, he had that instinct or that training he got in Italy at ten, twelve, fourteen years of life. He came from the hills of Italy—east of Naples—the second branch east. My mother came from Bari, which is on the eastern coast of the Adriatic Sea. They did not meet there, they met here. My mother…my father came to America, I think it was in the 1999 or 2000…no, 1899 or 1900. In New York, [he] came to Chicago in 1907 with a couple of his brothers. They started building contractors, and they built homes and apartment buildings in the '20s and the '30s.

Howe: Did you have any siblings?

Radice: I'm sorry?

Howe: Did you have any siblings?

Radice: Me? I have no biological children.

Howe: Do you have any brothers and sisters?

Radice: I have a brother who is still alive. I have two sisters who have died, unfortunately, because my mother died of cancer in 1928. In her family there was a cancer gene in the women. Now, there were three women that my grandmother had—my mother and two of her sisters. Of the three sisters, my mother had the cancer gene that manifested itself in her. My Aunt, Mary, and my Aunt Leisha were like Belgian horses—no matter what you did you couldn't hurt 'em. They just went on. They lived...they both lived to be in their eighties, and my mother died when she was thirty-eight. Thirty-eight, about that time… I think she was born in 1890, and she died in 1928 so...

Howe: Okay. Do you recall how old were you at the time?

Radice: Nine years old. Nine years old and nine months.

Howe: Okay, and you mentioned your aunts. Were they living in this area as well?

Radice: Oh yeah. They all lived in Chicagoland.

Howe: So, growing up, was kind of a tight-knit family?

Radice: My father had four brothers here in Chicago, one brother in California. He only had one sister. So he had four brothers and one sister in the Chicagoland area. And yes, we were a very close-knit family. It was—I'm laughing—my father was a man of the ground. He was the worker. He was the person that made things happen, who built things, and did things. My mother's family were intelligentia. Three of her brothers graduated from the University of Bari, in Bari, Italy. The other person who was there was not an intelligentia educator, but he was a super cabinetmaker and a carpenter. I mean, he had trades-wise. His three brothers… one became a jeweler in Wilmette, one became an inventor that ended up in Milwaukee, and he invented the manner of taking corrugated cardboard and making boxes out of it in 1913—which is up there some place in one of the paper companies. And the other boy—the other person was in World War I, and was in the Surgical [not clear] Corps—he came back after the war, went to the University of Chicago, and got a Ph.D. in physics and ended up working for Western Electric about 1924-1925…somewhere in that period. And then [in] 1927, when the movies became with sound, they shipped him to California, and he was their sound superiors—or he was the fellow who had the mind of physics and sound to assist Western Electric and them. When the war came along, on a Monday morning, he came to work at his desk and they said, “Unfortunately you can't work here anymore; you're now assigned to the Navy.” So he went to work as a civilian for… still worked for Western Electric, but was assigned to the submarine, whatever they did of sound.

Howe: Probably working with maybe the sonar products.

Radice: Whatever he did, he did. He was well known and well appreciated and he also—in spite of being intelligent and that PhD of, let's say, 1924—was a human being and understood

people. My father was the same way. My father was only a fourth-grade person from Italy, but he could walk in a room of fifty people, didn't know anybody. An hour later, everyone was his friend forever. He had the ability to look at people, to meet people, to listen to people and make comments that they appreciated and liked. And I think I have the same abilities, which I inherited from him. Unfortunately, my brother, who became a professional engineer, only does things by the book. [If] it ain't in the book, he can't do it. And of course, his book is twenty-five years old. So there's a lot that's happened in twenty-five years that he knows nothing about because it's not in the book.

Howe: There's a lot that needs updating.

Radice: He didn't update too much. That was part of his problem. He was a good engineer and ended up working for the city of Chicago for twenty-five years, was a project manager or whatever they call them in public works. Had a... I don't know what he did but was an engineer for the city and was involved in many engineering projects in the city of Chicago. [He] was involved in the ‘30s and ‘40s. Not the ‘30s, the ‘40a, because he got out of school in 1940. The ‘40s he... he went to IIT and got a degree in engineering, joined the Navy for three or four years and he came back and went to work for his companies that he did in the fifties and sixties and the seventies, and then wanted to work for the city of Chicago, and I think retired in… sometime late in the nineties. He was born in ‘22 and… so he's ninety-one this year of ‘13.

Howe: Okay, and you're right on his heels.

Radice: I'm sorry?

Howe: You're right on his heels.

Radice: Explain… no he's on my heels because I'm older. How old am I?

Howe: Oh okay. I apologize, you're born in 1918 so, yes...

Radice: You can't count! [Chuckles]

Howe: So you're three years ahead of him.

Radice: Three and a half years, right.

Howe: Okay, so all this gives us a good perspective.

Radice: Slow down. Don't get excited. Slow down.

Howe: Okay.

Radice: Go ahead.

Howe: This gives us good background to discuss how you decided to enlist and per your questionnaire in the National Guard.

Radice: Illinois National Guard. The only reason I joined the Illinois National Guard on March 5th of 1939 was to ride a horse. To learn how to ride a horse because at that time, the artillery was horse-drawn, the guns were horse-drawn, and the Caissons were horse-drawn. And I became—in 1939, a kid from Chicago—a wheel-horse driver. There were six horses that pulled the Caisson or pulled the gun. It was the lead driver who had the first two horses, there was nobody in the middle, and then there was me in the end. I had to make sure that the back two horses were really pulling, they weren't fakin' it, because horses could fake work. [Laughs]

Howe: Okay. What influenced your decision...what made you want to go ride a horse for the National Guard?

Radice: I don't know. I was a sunny kid. I don't know, I just thought I would learn how to ride a horse. Also because it was only a block away from where I lived [laughs], so it was very convenient. I didn't have to worry about it. I joined the National Guard in '39 and went to Camp McCoy and I have pictures showing me on a gun crew—1939, 1940—when I was thin and young, and also the kind of uniform we had because we didn't have uniforms—we only had the old clothes that we wore because in the '30s, they didn't treat the military too good. They barely subsidized—my comment at this time about that is that America does not really know how fortunate they are to have had the military leaders of the end of '30s, that from the '20s and the '30s like Marshall and MacArthur and the Navy people. They really don't know that they were still there, and they still had the minds to understand what war is—and just to make a comment on General Sherman, and some of the Civil War— "War is hell." You don't talk about it. You don't...you just don't tell people about it. You can talk and talk and talk, and it doesn't get across. Once you see people die, all of a sudden, you begin to understand what war really is, and you're still alive.

Howe: As are you.

Radice: Pardon?

Howe: As are you.

Radice: As I am?

Howe: You are also alive.

Radice: Yeah...I am alive, I can't tell you how many times...do you want me to talk or do you want to ask me more questions?

Howe: I mean, we're up to the point now where you've joined the National Guard. So, tell us your experience from there. How did you...Did you become a part of the [US] Regular Army?

Radice: Did I what?

Howe: Did you go from the National Guard into the Regular Army.

Radice: No, we were federalized in February, and we were federalized in September of 1940, and then we went to 333rd Division, which is the National Guard division, [then] went to Camp Forrest, Tennessee in March 5th of 1941—and we went down there to make the post and correct the post, and get ready to train for war. We—being enlisted at that time—didn't know what war was like. I was just a gun crew. I knew a little bit about guns. I knew very little about guns but I knew how to call fire and shoot the gun. Shoot the projectile out. We had French .75s in 1939 and early in '40, and when we went to Camp Forrest, Tennessee, we received the 105 Howitzers—and that was the standard, low level artillery piece. I guess it still is. But it has a distinct function; it assisted the infantry to do what it has to do, which is to advance. I became a Corporal sometime, became a Corporal clerk in '41 or '42, and then when there was a call for people who want[ed] to go to artillery school, I put in my application, and I was successful. Then I went to Fort Sill to Artillery School, graduated, and became a second lieutenant.

Howe: How did that process work? Was Fort Sill a commissioning post?

Radice: Fort Sill is... the way I think about it, Fort Sill is the artillery center of the world. There may be other artillery activities around the world. Russia may have one, the French had them, but I don't know whatever happened to 'em. Germany had one also because they needed it for what they did in the '30s to make their tanks and their artillery. But to me, Fort Sill was the artillery center of the world, and probably still is. I shouldn't say that, because I'm not sure what China is doing. No one knows what they're doing.

Howe: Certainly. How did you become an officer?

Radice: I applied for OCS, which is Officer Candidate Student, and I got commissioned on October 22nd of 1942.

Howe: That was while you were at Fort Sill?

Radice: I completed Class ‘35. I was in Class ‘35 of Fort Sill in 1942. And then I was assigned to the 7th Division in California.

Howe: And that's still within the National Guard?

Radice: No, this is the [US] Army. When I said federalized, it meant that the 33rd Division was not an Illinois entity at the time; it became a federal entity at that time.

Howe: And so then they fold under the purview of the Regular Army.

Radice: They're the Army.

Howe: Okay. Alright. After Fort Sill, you're a Second Lieutenant, a field officer.

Radice: No, don't say that because the field officer is the Major or Lieutenant Colonel. [Laughs]

Howe: Understood, as far as the ranks go.

Radice: I was a second lieutenant and joined the Division and trained with them.

Howe: Okay. Where did you go from there?

Radice: Where did I what?

Howe: Where did you go after Fort Sill?

Radice: We went to Camp Sally Episcopal in California, then went to Fort Ord in California, and then... in May and June of '43 we went to Attu.

Howe: Did they deploy you directly to Attu or were you...

Radice: I'm sorry?

Howe: Did they deploy you straight to Attu?

Radice: Don't say me. They deployed the Division to go to Attu. Attu is A-T-T-U.

Howe: Right. In the Aleutians.

Radice: Where?

Howe: In the Pacific.

Radice: Where? I'm asking you where are the Aleutians?

Howe: The Aleutians are west of Hawaii.

Radice: No. See, I'm testing you now.

Howe: I can appreciate that. I tried to do as much homework as I could for this.

Radice: Now, where is Attu, as far as you know?

Howe: As far as I know, it's the furthest islands west in...

Radice: It's the second island at the end of the Aleutians, is Attu, 1000 miles west of Alaska.

Howe: Okay, and where is that in relation to Hawaii?

Radice: About 5000 miles north of Hawaii. Could be 4,000, but about 5,000 miles north of Hawaii. 3,000, what do you mean 3,000?

Howe: I appreciate that, Sir. Did they set you down in Hawaii first?

Radice: No, no. In California, we were trained to be desert troops. In our training at Fort Ord, we were trained to be desert troops. We got on the ship in San Francisco, and the ships went underneath the Golden Gate Bridge, and then it turned right. And we said, "Why is it turning right? Gotta turn left down to the Panama Canal and go over to Africa where the fighting is." And then only by that time, maybe there was twenty people aboard the boat knew what was happening. My comment at this point is that the invasion of Attu was the worst example of war thinking up to that time. [It] could not have been worse. We had the wrong equipment and clothing. Our shoes were... we had summer clothes on, we didn't have winter clothes on. We got to Attu, [and] we led her ashore. We had trouble getting the guns ashore because there was a tundra there. A tundra is about six foot, and it's just rock and then some grass. That's all it is. So that when you sat down, your ass sat on the grass and you had a wet ass. And the guns were too heavy, the trucks couldn't pull them up. We had to hand—not carry, hand—whatever the…I'm trying to think of the word…hand 'em up to the hill so we could put them in place to assist the infantry to do their job of taking care of the Japs.

Howe: So aside from the weather conditions, the harsh terrain...

Radice: We did have an enemy in the Japanese on the island. Our worst enemy was the weather. The weather was...we were there for June, July and August, and I don't think we saw the sun, twenty, thirty times at the most in that ninety days. We had a lot of clouds, a lot of rain, a lot of clouds. It was just, it was the worst kind of war we ever could have. I mean we wore out our shoes in seven-eight days. It was...we had a...the people who were from Alaska lived in Alaska. The Aleutians tried to—I'll use the word educate— the War Department in Washington that we really didn't have it to work well, and they said, "Go." So what do you do? You go. That's all we did. They say go, we follow through.

Howe: Did they ever learn any lessons from that and correct the mistakes?

Radice: What they learned about, everything they learned, they shut up. They didn't want to broadcast it. Because they learned that they didn't know what the hell they were doing. And that's where we learned how to... when we were at Fort Ord, we were taught to climb up and down the ships, [climb] the rope ladders, et cetera. How to get on the ship,

how to get off the ship, but it wasn't... what they learned when you got ashore was a different story. Once you put in the operation charter—as far as Attu was concerned—it was a crime. I'm talking, me as a lowly lieutenant. We were up on the front lines all the time, but the... I gotta get my mind going. Going right. We learned what we did right, we learned what we did wrong. Part of that was what helped in the invasions in Africa and Italy afterward because they took some of the things that the people who analyzed what we did—things we did right, things that we did wrong, what we should have done. All those things that, in 1942, we were not prepared for World War. [In] 1943 we began to be prepared for war—from the [US] Army, the [US] Navy, the [US] Marines, the [US] Air Force, [the US] Coast Guard. We all were getting prepared. We really didn't know what the hell we were doing, but there were a lot of people in Washington who were only working by the book. They were not working on the ground. I don't know if I could explain it any simpler than that…

Howe: You gotta get out of the office to see what the guys are doing.

Radice: You gotta get in the front lines. As I have told people in the past, for every person that's in the front lines, there's eighteen people behind him. There's the quartermaster, there's the medics, there's the ordinance people, there's the truck drivers, I say the medics, the chaplains, there's signal. All these people are there to support him so that—and when I say him, I'm talking about the people in the front lines—so they can do their job of conquering the enemy and taking charge, and that's the Marine concept and that became. Well, the 7th Division became known as the 7th Marine Division because we did the same thing that they did, except we were Army and they were Marines. They are more of a get in, do it, get out. The Army is, you get in, you settle down, then you make things better.

Howe: And I understand that you worked with the 7th Marines.

Radice: I'm sorry?

Howe: You worked with the 7th Marine Division, yes?

Radice: No we were known... there were only six Marine divisions. That's all there were. We were known as the alternate as the "7th Marine Division" because we did the same things that they did. We went ashore, we took over. Because what we did after Attu, we went to Kwajalein. We were supposed to go Mannesberg, go to reserve, [but] we went to Leyte too, and we went to Okinawa. I was in all of 'em, and I survived.

Howe: We'll get to those individually. What else would you like to tell us about Attu? You said you were facing an uphill battle. This is your first time in combat?

Radice: Yes, that was our first time in combat. We really didn't know what the hell we were doing. We had been trained in California, and [we were] well trained. But we were not

trained for that kind of combat, and I don't know who made the...they made a decision that this was what they had to do. They said pick the decisions and send them. So that's what we did. That's what we did. The Marines were better trained in that area than we were.

Howe: Okay. How did you overcome those hurdles in Attu?

Radice: Well...We just did it. I mean, we just had to do it, so we did it. We didn't have a machine to do the...the trucks weren't too good because they would get stuck in the tundra and not go. It took time to make roads. It took time to make paths for the vehicles to work. That's all I can say, that's all I can recall at this time. If I was there, I could probably tell you more because toward the end of June when we got there, we had a... about the end of June was when we officially conquered Attu, and we had to. So at that point, we just had to sit and wait to see what was happening next because the Japanese—many were killed. I don't think there were ten, fifteen prisoners if I recall correctly, and I don't know. But we just sat there and trained. We kept on training. By training, we meant how to use the guns, how to use the signal stop, how to do what we were supposed to do, no matter what happened.

Howe: Gotcha. There was another island over...

Radice: There was one island west of us that was closer to the International Date Line, which I forgot the name of. Also, we were gonna be the reserve division for the invasion of Kiska, which was also in August. We were ready to go, but they didn't need us because the Japs weren't there anymore.

Howe: Right. They'd already...before the Army got there, they had already fled or retreated.

Radice: You used the wrong word, retreated. The submarines took 'em out.

Howe: Okay.

Radice: They had a submarine base on Kiska, and they just…they took the personnel out. They didn't leave anything. They left. They had a—as I recall, I wasn't there to see it—but as I recall, they had people in the kitchens who were sittin' down, and the plates were still there, [but] they were gone. Human beings were gone. So the Japanese took 'em out by submarine.

Howe: So then you waited in Attu...

Radice: We what?

Howe: You waited in Attu...

Radice: No, we were. After the island was secured, we said, "Well, what's next?" and they said, "Well, just wait." So we made tents and had…we didn't have any war to do because

there's no more Japs. Because they had them make... Because the Air Force had made a landing strip there so that the planes could land there, [so] our planes could land there. So they didn't have to go 1,000 miles further east to the mainland of Alaska. I don't know too much about what was east of us, and the way of landing places, or where the Navy was. I have no idea of that.

Howe: Okay. So when did you get engaged in Kwajalein?

Radice: Kwajalein.

Howe: Atoll?

Radice: Well, when we got back in September of '42, we were assigned to Hawaii. [When] we got to Hawaii, we then trained in October, November, [and] December to go for another invasion. We didn't know where or what. We were just trained. Like the Marines were also trained. We did landings on the island of Maui, which is now where all of the resorts are on Maui. And on February 1st of 1943, we invaded Kwajalein. At that particular time, I had been assigned to be an observer in a…with the Navy. To observe. I was assigned to the cruiser, San Francisco. There were three of us. There were two lieutenants and an officer to three different cruisers. I was assigned to the cruiser, Frisco. I did know who the other two were, but I forgot. That was a long time ago. But I observed Navy gunfire from battlewagons and cruisers on the islands—on targets from the island that they thought would hamper the infantry. Well, once the infantry got a gun ashore, and so that when we invaded on the 1st, the Army, our division—it was the only division there—landed at the other atoll, west of it. West of Kwajalein, but a small one where we landed the artillery, and they shot the artillery on the targets of opportunity on the island. On the atoll of Kwajalein, as we went up the atoll, there were gun positions, and machine guns, and all the rest. And at that point, I went from observing naval gunfire to observing gunfire for the infantry up in the air because the highest point above the atoll was about 20 feet. So if you had a shot, it'd be off the ground in the water. You had to bring it down on top so it would, in some way, hamper the Japanese so that our infantry could come in and conquer them.

Howe: Okay. And did you continue to do that from the ship?

Radice: No, not from the ship. Up in the air.

Howe: So you were...

Radice: We were...The first day we were catapulted up. After we had landed, the ships came into the atoll lagoon, and then what we did was…the airplane was put in the water, and the pilot and I were in the water. We took off from the water, and we were up there for two hours or three hours and came back on the water. [We] came up to the ship, got pulled up back, and then got more. We had an hour or so of rest, and then made sure

that the airplane…by the way it was a 1917 airplane, and this was 1943. It was a cyclone 13 cylinder, cyclone engine, and the pilot and I couldn't talk to one another like we're talking now. We had to use the radio to talk to one another, as well as talk to the command center for the battalion. I had control over twelve guns, and there were two other divisions. Two other artillery battalions that were there that were also fighting, that were also rigging and fire on the Japanese.

Howe: Okay, so you were land, sea and air. They put you all over.

Radice: Well about February 10th, a couple of days I'd go off there. We were up on eight miles North [of] where the infantry was. We were going up the atoll—eight miles, or maybe about 5 miles—we were out about 500 feet, and the machine guns—which we didn't see—the machine guns on the ground hit the airplane, and the engine went out. The engine just stopped. And of course, it was the pilot's first combat deal. He was from Brooklyn, New York. He turned to me, and he said, "What do I do?" I said, "Get us on the water, and don't kill us." We got on the water, and then at that point, the machine guns on the shore were reaching us. So we went over the side, in the water so that we wouldn't get shot at. Then, [at] about that time, there were two mosquito boats—Navy mosquito boats that were gun boats that came in and silenced the machine guns ashore. Well, then CN came in and pulled us out of range of the machine guns on shore, and then at that point, they then told us [to go] back—by the way this was a pontoon boat. It could land in water and take off on the water. It brought us back to the ship, the San Francisco. And as I'm sittin' there watching, I saw the thing come down to pick it up, and the pick-up, no sooner had put the hook on. Then, the plane dropped about a foot. It tightened that hook because the pontoons were now full of water, and they couldn't support the water. So as they came up, the bottom of the pontoons were like a sieve—all the water was coming out. Well, they put us back on there, and we couldn't get off them. But the gun crews, and the gun people—or the crew people for the airplane—fixed that thing over night, and the next morning we took off again. The same airplane. They found out what was wrong with the bullet. They turned the motor off, made sure it ran, made sure there was...so we were back and up in the air. So, as I tell people…well I got shot down, and then the Navy picked us up and brought us back.

Howe: During this incident, did you get injured?

Radice: No. I was not injured at all up to that time.

Howe: Okay. What was the rest of Kwajalein like?

Radice: What was the what?

Howe: As they're trying to take over the atoll?

Radice: The army on Kwajalein and the Marines were up north. On the north end of the whole atoll, we took the Army to the bottom, and Marines to the top. The Marines had very little problems. We had all the problems. I'm sorry I missed the way…I mean, it was about February 15th or something like that when they finally got everything done. They finally took control of the lower part of Kwajalein so that they could use the airstrip. Because at that time, they needed the airstrip for people to make it back to Hawaii without having to take too much gas in the aircraft.

Howe: So the entire time with Kwajalein, were you just always up in the air, being an observer?

Radice: I was either up in the air or sleeping. I would do at least two or three trips up in the air a day. And I would control Army artillery gunfire on the targets that the infantry wanted. I had contact with the command center, [and] they had contact with the infantry. We could find out where they were [and] what they were doing. I assisted them by putting the artillery fire where they wanted it.

Howe: Got it. Naval gunfire support.

Radice: Yes.

Howe: So then, what happened after they secured the atoll?

Radice: I went back to the ship, and I was on the ship again. At that point…the…I'm trying to think...this is forty...I think also almost at that time…I think the Marines were on Iwo Jima at that time. I'm not sure about that, but the day we decided to do a raid on Truk—T R U K, was a lagoon in the Pacific like Guantanamo down in Cuba. It was a perfect place for ships, [a] perfect place for the aircraft. And what we did is, they sank seven…eight…nine warships in the lagoon, which was still there. At that point, I was just a passenger. I was just there for the ride, wondering what the hell was going on.

Howe: How was ship life for you? What was it like being on a ship for you?

Radice: I was the only Army officer on the ship. I was the second lieutenant. I saw the way the ship operated. The commander of the ship at that point was a…he was not a captain—a Navy captain yet—I don't think. But he was still a Lieutenant Commander, and he brought...when the ship, the San Francisco, was bombed or torpedoed, and the captain at that time died, and he was the second in command and he brought the ship back to San Francisco, where they rebuilt the ship and he got the Medal of Honor for what he did. He deserved it. He was a very quiet man, but he stepped and took over the command function, and people who didn't know—who didn't think much of him before—would swear by him now. Or at that time, because they saw what he did. They didn't know what he had told them, but he told them the right things, and they did it, and they survived, and that was important—the ship survived and the personnel survived. He and I had some conversations. I think he was still lieutenant commander

then…no, Commander then. And there was a Captain; another Annapolis graduate was the Captain of the ship. I do know that eventually, he became a two-star admiral because the Navy at that time really didn't know what their personnel could do under fire, or when it was demanded of them, or when the time came for someone to act. It's the same in the Army…the same maybe because you could get captains and lieutenants to die, and you need Sergeants to take over. You need someone to accept the responsibility of authority and carry on. And that is what makes the military, the military. I'm Army. I have a lot of respect for the Navy, the Marines, the Air Force—we're all together as Americans. To be Americans—not be anything else—except be an American. I just happen to be American of Italian descent. Other Americans are all the rest of the world—from Europe, from South America, from maybe…some from Africa…but Asia—but we're all Americans. One of the most important things that I think happened that I would like to just talk about is that when we got to Hawaii and... in September of '42, sometime in October…November, all of the officers on all of the military units that were in Hawaii were called into the largest moving picture... I'm trying to figure... I'm getting old...

Howe: It's okay.

Radice: At the moving picture place—where they showed moving pictures. And it was a two-day affair. And the person who was the speaker there was a three-star General, called Richardson And he told us what we had, happened in the war. [He] told us that the next two or three years were gonna be hell, a lot of people are gonna die, a lot of people are gonna get hurt, a lot of people are gonna cry. And then one of the things he said…he said, “Now that I've said that, I've got something else to tell you. The Black people—the Negroes—are doing the job. I'm from Virginia.” This is what he said: “And I know what it is to slaves. We don't have slaves here in the Army, or the Marines, or the Navy. There may be Black people there, but they're not slaves, and they're not to be treated as slaves. They're to be treated as what you are because you're all gonna go through some things together. And if you don't work together, you're gonna die.” “Now,” he said, “you've heard what I said, but you don't understand it because you have not been in situations where people died, and you're still alive. That's gonna happen to you in the next couple of years.” Now, this was '42...No this was '43...We're thinkin' '43, '44,'45... And he says, “And if we ever get to—not if, but when—we get to Japan, it's gonna be worse.” Now, how can I, today, still remember that hour of conversation that he gave to ten thousand… twenty thousand officers in two days? [He was] trying to get them to understand that we needed people to do the jobs, that we had to respect people… I have to add one more thing because of the…the two elements of any military organization that very seldom get any respect, or any publicity, are the chaplains and the medics. The medics are on the ground with the infantry. [If] somebody gets hurt, they call a medic. He goes and gets them, brings them out of the firepower area to make sure that he can live, or he dies, he dies. And the second thing, which is almost as

important is as that—[is] the chaplains. It didn't matter what religion, or what they were—Catholic, Jewish, or Protestant—they all took care of each other. They didn't care what religion the chaplain was. [If] you had a problem, [if] you had thought of something, you could go to him. It was a time of trying to understand what you could do, [and] what you couldn't do. Now see, I'm talking today...I didn't realize what I just said at the time. [Howe inserts: Certainly.] But as I'd look back to two or three years afterwards, [or] as I'd look back to those days on Kwajalein, [or] on Leyte—we haven't talked about that yet, or Okinawa—that's where I learned what the medics could do, [and] what the chaplains could do. How chaplains cried when people died because...but they also felt that was God's call, not their call. I mean, as I also say today, how would you like to be July 5th [June 5th] of 1944, and be General Eisenhower, and say that tomorrow we go? Knowing that tomorrow there are gonna be twenty or thirty thousand people die...How do you tell people that? How do you explain that? I'm not asking you—I'm just saying—where did those kind of men come from? Where were they? They were in the military, but the military hierarchy…because of the '20s, because of the '30s, and because of the way Congress treated them, [and] didn't give them what they needed to do the job—and that's because we had just had World War I, and we really didn't know what we did. We knew we won. We didn't know why. The biggest thing that occurred in the '40s was the...Japan did not understand the manufacturing ability of America, which today does not exist. Now it's all worldwide. It's not American-born. So I don't know if there will ever be a war like that. There will be wars, there will always be wars. And there will always be wars because man has got greed, because man has got ego. Because man wants to prove that he's in charge, and some men don't care who dies and that's too bad. What else you got? I'm just talking...

Howe: No that's...that's profound. You mentioned we haven't gotten to Leyte yet. So in '44 the division goes to...

Radice: We went back to...The division went and I didn't get back to my unit until sometime in March because we had to wait for the Frisco—the USS Frisco—to get back to Pearl Harbor so they could release me, and go back to my artillery unit, which was March. So [in] April, May, June, July [and] September, we trained again on many things. We trained, and we actually trained as if...If I recall correctly, we actually trained to be a reserve division to overtake the island of Manus. We were not gonna be the frontrunners, or land on Manus unless they needed us. It turned out that Manus was occupied very quickly and they didn't need us, and we were out there. And I guess our commander, MacArthur said, "Let's go to the Philippines. As long as we're here, let's just keep on goin." So, the next thing I know, we're heading for the Philippines. So at that point, all of a sudden, there was a tremendous amount of information coming to the armada of Navy ships, and merchant ships, and ships that were carrying two or three divisions to give them information about the Philippines. Where we're gonna go? Where we're gonna land? We didn't know at that point where we were going, except we were

goin' west. This was in late September, [or] early October when all of this was going on. Because we landed in Leyte, I'm not sure if it was the 20th or 22nd of October of '44.

Howe: Do you need to drink water, or need to take a break for a second?

Radice: I don't need to...but...?

Howe: I'm good.

Radice: You're good? So am I.

Howe: So 20, October, you guys land in Dulag? In Leyte?

Radice: We landed in October, let's say the 20th—or could be the 22nd...I'm gettin' old... I don't know dates. But we landed up on the shore, [and] we got ashore okay. [It] wasn't till we got about two or three miles in that we hit the Japs, and from that point on, it was hell going forward.

Howe: Can you describe the experience for someone who's never had to see it?

Radice: We did a job. [We] saw the infantry advance, saw people die, [and] saw people get hurt. You...I just kept on going. My job was to support them with artillery fire, and that I did. And I will say that I was good— or that I am good, I still am good—and I was one of the last people that came into the division. So the other people had seniority in the battalion, in the division, so I was just put aside. But either fortunately or unfortunately, my ability to handle artillery gunfire surpassed a lot of other people because I could do things in my head, but they had to do it on paper. I could look out there, see what was happening, and give the directions to the artillery command to put the artillery fire where the infantry wanted it quicker than anybody else. And things happened that they all said, "Call Radice for this, or call Radice for that." And then I would do the job, and then they would just forget me because what they did is…they had other senior people who wanted to be recognized. I'm not sure for what, but to be recognized.

Howe: That's what they do.

Radice: I got wounded on Leyte...today's the 18th?

Howe: 19th.

Radice: December 22nd by 10 o'clock in the morning. I went up with the company that was relieving another company and ... Ormoc—on the west side of the island of Leyte—that's where the Japs were, and they had good firepower and good military people there. But we were there, and we got ambushed. Just like we would ambush them, they'd ambushed us. So I did things, and then I got shot by a machine gun bullet from them in the leg... and my comment on that is that I laid on the ground, then began to roll. And the ground was going down so I was going down, and the machine gun was

following me, but it was shooting where I was so it was always shooting over me, over me. And then I got into a defilade and then maybe about twenty minutes, [or] thirty minutes later, another platoon came up and helped us—not me but helped the infantry—push [the] other Japs back. There were about...I'm not sure how many died but there were about eight other wounded also that were close to me. There were other people, also that were wounded, but there were two Jeeps. Two Jeeps came up, and I think they could only take four a piece or something like that, and they had to leave people. I was the least wounded. I said, "I'll stay here until you come back and get me," and that day was the only day in my life I've ever smoked. I smoked a pack of cigarettes—a pack in twenty minutes. I was just in shock. And then also as a...I'm laughing now...The sergeant that I had with me at the time came to me, [and] he said, "Are you alright? Get back." He says, "Okay, I'll take your cigarettes." I used to carry the cigarettes for my crew because I didn't smoke, but they did and they always had cigarettes in their pockets, and hand grenades. So [if] they wanted the cigarette, they were gonna go forward. They wanted the cigarettes...I was alive—that's all they were concerned about—I was alive!

Howe: Now give me the cigarettes!

Radice: Give me the cigarettes! And they went back, and then that night—when the field house called on the operator—when the doctor operated on me, I was on the floor. And I saw him work on a guy who had...Well, this arm was almost crazy, and he was putting the arm back together again. And he said to me, "How ya doin', soldier?" I says, "I'm doin' fine." He says, "I'll get to you." I says, "You take care of him first. He needs you. I'm still here." Now at that point, I didn't know if I still had a leg. I didn't know how bad my leg was hit; they had bandaged it up and shoved me out of the front lines. But at that point...anyway, he took care of the guy, and then he took care of me. The other points, the things you remember in life. As I woke up the next morning in the hospital tent, there was a guy about two beds down screamin', and there were guys holding him down. And he said, "They took off my leg. How can I work? How can I have a family?" I'm hearing all these things, and I'm just coming out of a stupor...out of the anesthesia that I was involved in. At that point, I didn't know whether I had a leg or not until I went down...oh yeah, I got a leg. I guess I'm okay. I can always remember my Christmas breakfast—which was three days later—and we were on the west side of Leyte. And they had to take me back to the east side where I could get on an airplane and come on back. I was in the back of a truck—not an ambulance—the back of a truck. I was just there, and what I had for breakfast was a couple of canteen cups of cold coffee, and cold bacon—cold, thick bacon and bread that was about three days old, that I could barely put my teeth in and get back. And I said to myself, "Gerry, you better remember today because you're still alive." So I got back, and they got me back to Hawaii. They fixed up my leg again and then sent me back because I was functional at that time. So I got back to the battalion roughly the first of February, about a month later.

Howe: They were still fighting to gain control...

Radice: Oh, they were still fighting. I think we were…that they had still controlled. They took control of Leyte—and there were other divisions up in Manila, and someplace else in the Philippines—but Leyte in January [and] February was quiet. There were no Japs around. Well, there were no live Japs around.

Howe: Gotcha. So Leyte was secured, and you mentioned Okinawa, but there's a good year that we're waiting to get to Okinawa. So what were you doing while you were waiting after Leyte?

Radice: We had two months.

Howe: You had two months?

Radice: Just talking '45. I got back to the battalion about 1st of February of '45, and we landed on Okinawa on April 1st of '45—Easter Sunday.

Howe: There was no time.

Radice: No kidding. No kidding.

Howe: So once you're done with Leyte...

Radice: You gotta go to the next one.

Howe: They didn't give you any time in reserve?

Radice: What do you mean reserve?

Howe: They didn't give you any time to...

Radice: R and R?

Howe: R and R, yeah.

Radice: You could go to lunch [and] training… I mean we got on board ship around March 10th, or something like that. We got on board ship to go...we didn't know where we were going, let me just say that. [Not] at the time. When we were on board ship, we were told we're going to Okinawa next. Where's Okinawa? Well, it's just below Japan. Oh, we're going there? Today? Well, not today but, sometime soon. So we got to Okinawa—and this is August 1st of about...not August 1st, April 1st. So we're talking about the 20th of March. All of a sudden, the Air Force, and the battlewagons, and the cruisers were layin' firepower on the island.

Howe: Were you a part of that?

Radice: I walked ashore on April 1st of '45. We were...the 7th division was in the center, there were two Marine divisions on our right, [and] there were two Army divisions on our left. In these five divisions, there was roughly 100,000 men. I got ashore with the infantry, and I'm lookin' around, lookin' north, lookin' south, lookin' behind me in the water. All I see are ships and airplanes up there. I'm sayin', "What the hell am I doin' here? What am I doin' here?" Then, I just shut up. "Radice, just get to work." So I got my gun, joined the infantry and...we had no problem the first two days on Okinawa. But when we crossed the island—when we were about halfway across—we did an abrupt right turn so that there were five divisions going south, and we were in the center. Why did they put us in the center? Because they knew we could do the job, and that the center could be the point, [and] the rest could follow. This didn't mean that the Marine divisions and the other Army divisions weren't good. It's just that they didn't have the experience that we had had on Attu, and Kwajalein on Leyte, and now, Okinawa. When I think back, we had about fifty-three officers in the battalion, and by the time Okinawa was through, we had gone through another 50 between Leyte and Okinawa. A lot of them died, [and] a lot of them got wounded. I was wounded. In fact, I got wounded twice on Okinawa. [On] Day Ten, or something like that, I was going forward with the infantry—with my radio crew behind me—and we had an airburst above us from the Japs, which killed a Sergeant behind me, and I was about…maybe six…eight in front of him, but he got it. I had shrapnel all over my back, and everything else, and the other two men who were behind him were wounded. They were all there. And so he didn't die immediately, but he died while I was there. So I just picked up the radio, put it on my back when I had to, and did my job. And what they tell me…is that about—this is about ten o'clock in the morning—is that about two or two thirty, I was up there, [and] I just collapsed. I didn't die, I just, my energy level went boom. I was gone. So, the fortunate thing about me at that point was that the medics from my artillery battalion got news that I had been wounded. They said wounded—they did not hear the word die. So two of them got in a Jeep and came up to see where I was, and at that point I was just about to be transferred to the field hospital, and man—the Sergeant man—says, "Put him in our Jeep." "But he's goin' to the hospital." And the Sergeant said, "Put him in my Jeep." So he and Gerry, the other medic, took me back to battalion, and they made me well in about three days…four days. They, and the other three or four guys, and the doctor. Doctor Angelitis—I haven't thought of his name in many years—but he came to me and Dr. Angelitis, out of New York. But they fixed me up, and then... and now I'm laughin' again, and then all of a sudden, there was a call because we didn't have any more... So somebody... We had one or two more deaths of artillery officers in the front lines, and the command was, "Send Radice up here!" "Well, Radice is at the medics"... And the colonel said, "Send Radice up here." Now, the doctor was not there, so they didn't know what to do. So they sent Radice. So I went back to the front lines. When the doctor came back, and saw I wasn't there, he almost had a shit hemorrhage. He says, "You can't do this," he said. The Colonel said, "You're right, I ordinarily couldn't do it. But I had no other people. I needed somebody up there. He was available. He did a job."

"Yeah, but, he could've died!" And the colonel said, "Yes, that's right, he could've died. But he didn't! He did a job. That's all they could ask"...and then it was about, maybe a week later, I was still up on the front lines in the fire port when I got shot in the left arm...and it hurt a little bit, but it didn't stop me from workin', and…I'm trying to think how to say what I'm going to say, but we just went ahead and did it. Later on, I was thinking, "it hit me in the arm"...and look at my hand. Six inches the other way was my heart. Now, what happened? Did I move? Did the twitch of the trigger finger move? Was there air in the ear that moved the trigger? What happened that it hit the arm, and not my heart to kill me? Now, the—and now I'm laughin again...the additional story to that is that I was wearing a khaki undershirt and that there was a shirt here, in the undershirt. I brought that thing—that undershirt—back with me when I left Okinawa to go back home, and I remember because I was supposed to go back to Japan, but when I left Okinawa, the day we dropped the bomb the next day, so I was sent home. So I got home, and I got married in November. And about a year later, I'm lookin' through some underwear, and I talk to my wife. I say, "I had this Army undershirt that was here. I'm trying to find it. I can't find it." And she says, "Oh, I threw that out." I said, "You what?" "Yeah, I threw it out." "Well why did you throw it out? It was still good." "Well no, it has a hole in it, and you don't wanna wear underwear with a hole in it." There wasn't much say to a woman at that point. That little memento—that khaki undershirt— I keep that around. [It] brought me down to ground zero. That's how close. I could've died. Now, why am I not dead? That's because God has let me live. And as I was gonna say earlier, I can't tell you how many times I had breakfast with two, or three, or four other guys, and two of them were not there that night. You don't know if they died, or they were wounded, but they weren't there, and what did you have to do? You had to keep on going. And that's what the military is doing in Afghanistan, and Iraq, and in many other places around the world. We Americans don't really understand what the military—and I'm not talking Army, I'm talking military, which is the Army, the Navy, the Marines, the Air Force, the Coast Guard…all of them doing what they're trained to do. Why has God let me live? He's got a plan for me. I'm a bit worried because, at my age of ninety-five, all I'm doing now is helping people with my experience, my education, my personality, the way I listen to people, the way I look at people. I help them solve their problems. I don't solve 'em, and they don't solve 'em. We discuss them, and then they pick a way. They pick the one, how they wanna do it. Most of the time, it's right, because I sometimes lead them a little bit more toward one than the other. They take the other, [but] they come back to what I said. But God has let me live, and God has let me enjoy life. And I'm alive. That's all I can tell you.

Howe: Thank God for that.

Radice: I'm sorry?

Howe: Thank God for that.

Radice: I do thank God, every day. I say on Sunday morning at mass, I say two prayers. I say one to God for allowing me to be at mass, and worship him, and say thank you. And then I say a prayer for all of the Americans overseas who are never gonna come home because they pay the ultimate price, and there. But for the grace of God, I would have laid there too. So what should I say, I can't say much else. I mean, as I tell people, I'm just one of 15 million guys who were called to do something for America, and we did it.

Howe: Thank you.

Radice: Unfortunately. Today, the year 2013—soon to be 2014—we don't give correct acknowledgement to the things that have been done by prior Americans and current Americans to allow us to do what we're doing—which is to have an education, whether it's an education of a trade or a profession. To have a family. To have friends. But mainly to have faith. As I said earlier, I don't have any biological children, but I have many people who have learned from me. I don't know what I taught 'em, but they learned. What else you got?

Howe: Well you gave us a good idea of what fighting was like in Okinawa, and your experience there...

Radice: As people have said, [during] the World War, people didn't talk much. The only people who talked much about World War II were the support people—because they had things they could talk about,-- the front line people, the front line tank people, the front line infantry people, the Air Force, and what they did in bombing, and etc. The air fighters… the Navy people…they didn't talk much. You can't explain that to someone. You can say that I got shot down. I actually got shot down about two weeks ago with a little group. I said, "I got shot down over Kwajalein, and then the Navy picked us up and brought us back." One guy says, "Hey wait a minute, what'd you just say? When did all this happen? I've known you for thirty, forty years. I didn't know what the hell you doin." And I said, "It never came up." I don't brag about myself. I don't...All I know is that the Army has made me what I am. They've helped me become what I am. I've had to take the lead to go where I wanted to go, and there were many times when I didn't know where I wanted to go. I knew what I needed was…I needed to have faith in God. I needed to have an education. I needed to have a profession that would allow me to earn a living and raise a family—which unfortunately, God had other plans for me than that. That's all I'm doing.

Howe: Right. So when you came back, you went back to school?

Radice: I'm sorry? When I came back? Well the first thing I did...there are two things that I should mention. One was on Oahu, the battalion had us send somebody to Ranger School. So I'm the one man on the roster. Send Radice. So I went to Ranger School, and I learned to kill in ranger school. There's also something else coming up. I'll tell you in a second. But there were forty-five guys that were at this...this group. When it was done,

at the time it took eighteen of us. Out of all of us left, I was the shortest one. A lot of guys who were macho, who were men, who were all ego, all the rest. They just fell by the wayside. They said, “How'd you do?” I said, “Oh, I passed, I passed. What else can I say?” The antithesis of this was on the boat coming back from Okinawa to Fransisco. All of a sudden, there were eight of us. Eight guys that were... I don't know how they found out, but they did. They called us together and said, “You all went to Ranger School, and you all learned to kill.” And we looked at one other and, “Yeah, yeah. We have to tell you that you're going back to civilization. You can't take those things we taught you to do back into civilization.” In combat, when something happened, you killed and we all looked and said, “Yeah, that's about right.” He said, “When something's gonna happen in ‘Frisco, or Chicago, or wherever you live, you can't kill; just hurt. [Laughs] They got us together for about three days, just over a three day period, and that goes back to the fact that it was two weeks on the boat from there to ‘Frisco. Two or three weeks… whatever it was. That had a lot to let the combat conditions—mental and physical—come out of my system. Now, today, they're bringing guys from Afghanistan back here in one day or two days. He's still got combat emotions. He's got combat reactions. He's got combat self-survival still in him. Still in him. Also, when I came back, I laid in the hospital for a couple of days. I came back in September with hay fever, and as a consequence I went...I asked them,” I'd like to see the psychiatrist.” “What for?” “Well, I just wanna talk to the psychiatrist for a minute or two.” So I got to talk to him. I said, “My only reason for talking to you, Sir, is that I just got out of Okinawa.” And I know…and then I mentioned the fact about Ranger School, and I know that I do have it here, but I wanna know, am I normal? Am I normal to be in Chicagoland? We talked, and then we talked again the next day, and on the next day I said, “Well, tell me, what is it...” He says, “No, you're okay. It's gonna take you about a year and half for what you have gone through to excrete out of your mind and your body. They're gonna take that long.” The reason I'm smiling and laughing now is I got married in November, and then— which was two months or so later—and then we're married. And all of a sudden in bed one night, I'm up and I'm under the bed. My wife says, “What the? What happened?” I said, “wha…wha…what?” “Well, you just got out of bed and...” I said, “Well, I guess that's part of the combat comin’ out. Coming loose, coming through.” And she said, “You scared me!” I said, “Scared me too!” What are you talkin’ about? When you're on one side of the hill, and the Japs were hittin’ you over here, and you're waitin’ for them to hit you over here, you haven't got much time to think. You pray! That's it. I thought I had something else to tell you, but I guess, like I said, I'm getting old. I'm getting forgetful a little bit.

Howe: That's okay. I have all these questions here, but you're giving me the stories, so... I guess one question I didn’t ask—you've alluded to a couple of times—your faith, and how you were able to get through. Was there ever an experience where you really just felt overwhelmed by danger?

Radice: Not felt overwhelmed. Scared as hell—yes. Scared as hell—absolutely. But bein' scared is one thing. I had a job to do, to help other people in the front lines. That had to be done because there was nobody there except me to do it. The sergeant who was with me had some knowledge, but he was just there to make sure we're alright. He knew some of the commands, but he didn't know the mechanics of the commands. I think I've told you that. I'm thinkin' just now I've said all that I think I can tell you, unless you have something down that I missed, or I didn't understand.

Howe: I guess the only last thing we usually say is, if there is anything else that you thought we would ask about, or that you wanted to share.

Radice: I talked all of the...that I thought I could share, or would be of interest to you, or the camera, or the audio. Any questions people want to ask me in the future, I'd be happy to try and answer them properly. I guess that's about it.

Howe: Yeah. We here at the Pritzker, and myself. I wanna thank you for sharing your time with us, and sharing your stories. It's definitely something that we wanna pass forward, and have for future generations to learn something from.

Radice: We're not training, we're not training, we're not educating. We're not showing the future generations the proper things in life. The proper things in life is: faith, family and friends. Those are the things that make us live, make us warmer, continue on to live, help other people. No matter what they are on the social strata, to help them. I think that the wrong word which is being used today, is people that think they're entitled to something, and that's because we're teaching them the wrong things. I don't know how we're teaching them; I don't know what the education process is at that level. But if you don't give...when I said family earlier, you need father and mother. You need boys and girls, children. You need them to get excited and fight with one another, and recover, and make friends, and all the rest. If we're not showing that, if we're not giving that, we're not doing our job as a human being. If you go back into history, you'll find out that the only thing that has survived in all the things that have happened are families, and families that got together to become units of civilization and to show that we do care for one another. That's all I got right now.

Howe: I think there's a lot of value in what you have just said.

Radice: Well, I'm ninety-five. I have no idea what God's got in mind for me the rest of my life. Whether it's one day or ten years, but I'm here. If he takes me, he takes me. I just wanna leave life that people remember how I've helped them. I'm not worried about money. I'm not worried about glory. All I want to people should think right. So people should act right. People should give, not take. People should respect one another. People should be held accountable. People should accept responsibility. What else can I say? I mean, you see, the older you get, the more you realize how important small things are.

Howe: The devil's in the details.

Radice: I'll leave with just saying...there are probably two phrases that we don't use enough, and one is that, “I love you”. And I'm not talkin’ sexual, I'm talkin’ “I love the children, I love my uncle and aunts.” And the second one we're really afraid to say is thank you. People are afraid to say thank you. I happen to be one who says thank you when people do something for me. Open the door downstairs, or wait on me in a restaurant, or step aside when I'm comin’ through a door. And I look at them, and I hit their eyes with my eyes, and I say, “Thank you for your courtesy.” Because it shows...and I say to myself, it shows me you had a good father and mother. That's what I say to myself.

Howe: Gerry, thank you for your service.

Radice: I was taught to be of service to America, and I still am, and I still wanna be. I still am doin’ it.

Howe: Thank you. I think we need it.

Radice: What else can I tell you? I should probably add one more thing, which is not military. I happen to have gone to school. I happen to become a professor of accounting at DePaul University, and at DePaul University I've had over ten thousand students—both in the undergraduate courses and the graduate courses. I was known as the MSOB, which means I was the mean son of a bitch. It's okay with me, but the reason I'm bringing this up is just for my next comment. Of the ten thousand students that I had, 5,000 hate me, and 5,000 love me—but both for the very same reason. I asked them to think. I was teaching accounting. I wanted the student to explain the accounting problem to me so that I knew they understood the problem. Because if you don't understand the problem, you don't know how to prepare a solution, and doing that, the people who don't like me were takers. They wanted to take all the credit. The people who love me weren't quite sure what I was doing to them, but once they got started, and saw what was happening, get out of their way because they wanted more. And that's today, and one of the things that has occurred—and I still have many people who are in contact over the last thirty or forty years—and the best one is the guys that said to me...when I was twenty-eight, I thought I'd do everything, and then I met you, took an accounting class, and then you kicked me in the ass. Twenty years later, I knew why you did what you did, and I appreciate it, and I thank you, and all I'm trying to do is pass on what you did to me to others. I said that's life. That's family. Just do it. That's it. No other comments right? Wait, wait. What did you learn about me today?

Other Voice: I'm not being interviewed, you are!

Howe: That's a fair enough question.

Radice: No, no, he's right. He's right. But I've seen him...We argue a lot, we argue, we discuss. There are things we like together, and things we don't like together, but he's a very fine person, and things he says to me are important, and that's why I consider myself a friend of his. He's gonna think for the next two or three days about all of this, and then he's gonna look at me with slightly different eyes. But I'm just that way. God has let me live this long for a reason. Maybe today was one of them.

Howe: I would like to think so.

Radice: What? Are you in a hurry to get out of here?

Other Voice: We're done.

Radice: Are you buyin' lunch?

Other Voice: Sure.

Radice: Okay!

Howe: Alright. Thank you both for comin' in today. And again, Gerry, I mean it.

Radice: Can I see a copy of this some time or...?

Howe: Absolutely.

Other Voice: What's your job?

Howe: So, I'm a fellow. There's a partner organization that allows me the opportunity to come work here because of my experience as a veteran. So...

Radice: You're a veteran? In what, where?

Howe: Navy.

Radice: Navy?

Howe: Served for five years out of Virginia. I was also a graduate of Annapolis.

Radice: Graduate of Annapolis? Let me ask a question of you. What's the one thing you learned at Annapolis? And then I'm gonna ask you another question. What's the one thing you learned at Annapolis? As of today, as you look back.

Howe: The one thing that I learned at Annapolis that I carry with me is... you don't know what your own potential is.

Radice: That's...you're absolutely right. You're absolutely correct.

Other Voice: What year did you get out?

Howe: I graduated from Annapolis in 2003.

Radice: 2003? That's ten years ago. That means you're thirty-two, thirty-three?

Howe: Thirty-three.

Other Voice: Is it a four year or five year?

Howe: It's a four year school with a 5 year commitment afterwards. So...but what's the next question.

Radice: I'm tryin' to think of what the hell it was I was gonna ask you... You left the Navy 5 years ago?

Howe: Correct.

Radice: Okay. What is the one thing you've learned in that 5 years? Don't answer yet. I want you to think for a second. What is it that as you got back five years, and the people you've met, and the things you've done, and the work you've done, and the education that you received in addition to that. What is it that, and be careful how you say this...What is it that makes you what you are today?

Howe: I'm gonna answer that with a quote from another veteran whom I respect. An author, Kurt Vonnegut.

Radice: Kurt...?

Howe: Kurt Vonnegut, he's an author. Wrote books like *Cat's Cradle*, *Slaughterhouse Five*—he was also a veteran of World War II, and died…I think 2004, 2005. "God dammit, you've got to be kind."

Radice: Well you are very close. You've gotta be kind.

Howe: We're put on this earth, and we're here with each other, and that's all we get. So we've gotta treat it good.

Radice: That's correct. See, you used the word kind, which is absolutely right. My comment to that is that we all have to learn to live with other people. We all have to listen. We shouldn't talk all the time, and that's what I told my students... There were two things I told them. The seniors, and undergraduates, and the guys that got a graduate degree who were unfortunate to take me and then suffered through it. I used the word suffer, but... I said, “You are now graduating. You are probably now technically proper. You had a good technology or technical information. Now you're gonna run into the worst thing ever...”And then they ask, “What's he talkin’ about?” “You're now gonna deal with people. Until you understand people. Until you try to understand what they do or why

they don't. That's how you become a better person. A better manager. A better teacher." That's all I got.

Howe: True words.

Radice: You're gonna reflect on the last couple of hours.

Howe: This is why I love this job.

Other Voice: Whatta ya got there?

Howe: These are for both of you gentlemen. So...this is a...we recently changed names, and the library is the Pritzker Military Museum and Library, and I'm sure you've seen a challenge coin before...

Radice: What's that?

Howe: Challenge coin?

Radice: No.

Howe: They're...In the military, oftentimes you get a command coin. They make a coin that represents...like the 7th Marines might have a coin. When I served in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, my unit in Cuba had a coin about that size with their color guard, their insignia on it. That one's for you, and Bob, this one's for you for comin' down today. And for bein' part of the oral history program.

[1:50:30]