

I Really Am Lucky

When you add it all up, I really am lucky. Maybe it depends on your point of view: the big picture vs. the little picture. Still, big or little, now or then, I suspect, I come out ahead. Even the bad, has a little bit of good, even though you don't know it at the time.

Let's start with place: That's an easy one. Who is luckier than the person born in the U.S.? I have always been aware that if my folks hadn't come to the U.S. and if I had been born in Eastern Europe, I may not have survived the Holocaust. And if I had survived, what a different life I would have had. And being born in the U.S., even though I was Jewish, I was also white and male and heterosexual and without disabilities. At one time, just a few years before I was born, it was fashionable to be anti-Semitic. These days, being Jewish is a plus..

And what better city to be born in than New York. The Big Apple. The center of culture—music, art, theatre, literature. The best musical organizations, classic, jazz and pop, tin pan alley, where aspiring musicians and composers headed; the best museums, art schools, where aspiring artists headed; Broadway, where aspiring actors headed; the best publishing houses, where aspiring authors headed. I grew up surrounded by all of this.

Which brings me to:

Time: I was born in December 1927. During the first couple years of my life, things were great. I was living in the lap of luxury. Those were very formative years

The depression

The New Deal

Education

The Golden Age of almost Everything: Movies, Radio, Jazz, Folk Music, Theatre, Literature, Transportation, Manufacturing, Organized Labor, Medicine,

The exceptions: Art, unless you are a big fan of abstract expressionism; digital technology; social media, poetry, unless you are a fan of free verse; Classical Music, unless you are a fan of modern music like John Cage and composers like him.