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The Effects of the Holocaust for Six Polish Catholic Survivors and their Descendants

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THE EFFECTS OF THE HOLOCAUST FOR SIX POLISH CATHOLIC SURVIVORS AND THEIR DESCENDANTS

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ABSTRACT

THE EFFECTS OF THE HOLOCAUST FOR SIX POLISH CATHOLIC SURVIVORS AND THEIR DESCENDANTS

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It is now well known that six million Jews, 220,000 Roma, 250,000 disabled persons, and thousands of Homosexuals and Jehovah's witnesses were murdered in the Holocaust. It is less understood that due to their ethnic identity that approximately, 1. 9 million Polish Catholic citizens were murdered during the Holocaust and that 1.7 million Polish non-Jews were imprisoned in concentration camps in Siberia, 2.0 million were deported as forced laborers for the German Reich and 100,000 were killed in Auschwitz. To date, there are no studies within Western psychology that address the effects of the Holocaust for this population and/or their descendants. Given the known after-effects of Holocaust-related trauma for Jewish Holocaust survivors and their families, the trauma response observed in other genocide survivors, and the lack of psychological research aimed at exploring the experience of non-Jewish Holocaust survivors, there is a need to study the lived experience and effects of Holocaust-related trauma with Polish Catholic survivors and their families. This is an interpretative study that explores the lived experience of six Polish Catholic survivors and their descendants. The sample included 12 participants comprised of six survivors, four second generation and two third generation participants. Semi-structured interviews were used to examine participants' perception of how Holocaust related trauma influenced their lives.

Textual analysis found that the Holocaust has lasting effects for survivors and their descendants.

Findings indicate that the effects of the Holocaust for its Polish Catholic survivors are similar to the effects of the Holocaust observed in Jewish survivors and survivors of other genocides. Survivors conveyed that the Holocaust related trauma they experienced continues to effect them in their present day life through: loss of family, feelings of sadness, Holocaust related flashbacks and nightmares, and disturbances in memory or the ability to recall Holocaust related trauma. Findings indicate that the Holocaust has intergenerational effects for the survivors' descendants. Children and grandchildren of survivors described themes about loss of family, the effects of the Holocaust on survivors' parenting, on familial interactions and on second and third generation parenting. The findings in this study offer ways for psychologists to understand the long-term effects of persecution, suffering, and genocide, and the experience of survival in the aftermath of the Holocaust. The electronic version of this dissertation is at OhioLink ETD Center, www. Ohiolink.edu/etd

DEDICATIONS

I would like to dedicate my dissertation to my grandmother, Josephine Pogoda and to my grandfather Janusz Sieroslawski, who are both Polish Catholics who survived persecution and enslavement by the Nazi regime. It is because of their strength, courage, and determination to survive and prosper that afforded me the opportunity to be born in the United States and gave me the belief that I too can survive trials and tribulations. They laid the very foundation upon which I live and it is to them that I owe my professional and personal accomplishments.

To my mother, a member of the second generation who has brought light and healing into my life and whose love and care has afforded me numerous opportunities to grow, to thrive, and to create a life for myself. It is because of her love and steadfast belief in me that I am the person I am today and without her unwavering support this research would not have been possible.

To the current and future generations of Polish Catholic Holocaust survivors, it is my hope that the past will not be forgotten and the individual, familial, and collective wounds created by the Holocaust will be acknowledged and eventually healed. And, that the day will come where we will live in a world that refuses to tolerate genocides and recognizes that the atrocities perpetuated through genocides and cultural oppression—affect us all—in a multitude of ways, for we all suffer and are in need of healing.

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It is with the deepest gratitude and great respect that I thank my committee: Dr. Philip Cushman, Dr. Mary Wieneke, and Dr. Samantha Slaughter. I would like to give special acknowledgement to my Dissertation Chair, Dr. Philip Cushman, whom has been an unwavering beacon of hope and encouragement. He has taken great care in supporting me in engaging in critical thought and giving attention to the research processes. His constant encouragement to ponder the sociopolitical and cultural influences on my work has afforded me tremendous growth.

I would like to offer special acknowledgment and deep gratitude to all of my participants. My deepest gratitude is extended to the six Polish Catholic Holocaust survivors interviewed for this study, without their courage and willingness to face their past and share their experiences this research would not have been possible. I want to acknowledge the Polish Catholics throughout the world, both living and deceased, who suffered persecution by the Nazi regime and whose stories remain untold. It is my hope that this research will shed light on their experiences and make visible a group of peoples who have suffered in silence and without acknowledgement.

I would like to offer acknowledgment to all the people who were targeted and persecuted by the Nazi regime, (that is, to the Jews, to the homosexuals, to the Roma, to the Political dissents, to people of color, to the disabled, and to those whose suffering I am unaware).

I hope that the day will come where others will bear witness and bring awareness to all who suffered at the hands of the Nazi and Stalin regimes. Above all, I will not forget. I promise to remember. And, I pledge to bring visibility to the persecution and suffering as well as the healing and survival of Polish Catholics during and after the Holocaust.

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Overview of Problem

The Holocaust was the systematic, state-sponsored murder of an estimated 6 million Jews; 1.9 million Poles Catholics and Christians; 220,000 Roma (Gypsies); and other Slavic peoples. The Nazi regime persecuted the Jews, Poles, Roma, and Russians based on an ideology that deemed these people as racially inferior; other groups such as homosexuals, the disabled, Russians, Communists, Socialists, and Jehovah's Witnesses were persecuted based on differences in behavioral, political, and ideological grounds (United States Holocaust Museum, 2012). During World War II, it is estimated that 3 million Polish Catholics and Christians were murdered. The German Reich forcibly deported 2.0 million Polish citizens of Catholic ancestry to Germany for forced labor, 1.7 million were imprisoned in concentration camps in Siberia, and 100,000 were exterminated at Auschwitz (Schwartz, 2012). The lived experience and after-effects of Holocaust-related trauma have been examined with Jewish Holocaust survivors, (e.g., Chodoff, 1997, Niederland, 1968), their children (e.g., Chaitin, 2000; Lev-Wiesel, 2007), and their grandchildren (e.g., Chaitin 2002; Rubinstein, Cutter, & Templer, 1990). Currently, there are few psychological studies aimed at examining the effects of the Holocaust on the lives of Polish non-Jewish survivors. To date, there are no studies within Western psychology that address the effects of the Holocaust on Polish Catholics and/or their descendants. There is a need to research the effects of Holocaust-related trauma on the lived experience of Polish Catholic Holocaust survivors and their families. This study attempts to do so by interviewing Polish Catholic survivors and their offspring.

Background of the Problem

During World War II, as German-occupied Poland was subjected to the rigorous racial planning polices of the Third Reich and in circumstances that can be rightly described as brutal and violent, German-occupied Poland became the center of the genocide and the incarceration of millions of Europeans. It was German-occupied Poland that became the scene for all forms of the Nazi's campaign of exterminatory violence (Lukas, 1997).

During World War II the majority of Polish citizens were of Catholic or Jewish faith, and it is imperative to acknowledge that the faces and voices of Holocaust survivors are many. Poland was home to a rich array of religious and ethnic groups who suffered the persecution and torment perpetrated by Hitler and Stalin. In addition to Polish Jews and Catholics, Poland was home to those who were Moslem, Orthodox, Uniate, Protestant and Polish Germans, Tartars and Gypsies, Ukrainians, Lithuanians, Byelorussians. The atrocities of the Holocaust include many that know no parallel (Lukas, 1997). It is estimated that eleven million people were murdered during the Holocaust. Among them six million were Polish citizens comprised of 3 million Polish Catholics/Christians and 3 million Jewish Poles (Schwartz, 2012). The Nazi regime focused on acquiring control over Polish land to gain *Lebensraum* [living space] for German use, consequently marking the Polish people for enslavement. The Nazi campaign of persecutory violence and enslavement treated the Poles as *Untermenschen* [subhumans] who occupied the land that the Nazi's coveted. Thus, the Nazi subjected the Poles to a program of enslavement and extermination (Lukas, 1997).

"On August 22, 1939, Hitler authorized killing 'without pity or mercy all men, women, and children of Polish descent or language. Only in this way can we obtain the living space we need' " (Lukas, 1997, p. 3). The Nazi regime perceived the Poles to be racially inferior and ideologically dangerous. Polish citizens were slated for subjugation, forced labor, and obliteration (Rylko-Bauer, 2005). The Poles as an ethnic group were considered inferior by Nazi racial ideology. "Hitler called the war against Poland a new type of war" (Berenbaum & Yitzchak, 2009, p. 50). On September 1, 1939 the Nazis invaded Poland and subjected Polish citizens to the inauguration of Nazi policies of systematic terror, enslavement and murder. It was clear from the beginning of the German attack that this was not a conventional war waged against a nation's government and armed forces; the Nazis waged a war against the Polish people and they were intent on destroying a nation (Lukas, 1997). Hitler executed a policy of physical annihilation of intellectual, cultural, and political elites of the Soviet Union and Poland. Tens of thousands of Polish intellectuals and Polish Catholic priests were killed in an operation called *Ausserordentliche Befriedungsaktion* translated into English as AB-Extraordinary Pacification Action (Rylko-Bauer, 2005). In addition, thousands of non-Jewish Poles constituted the majority of inmates in Auschwitz when the concentration camp was first built before Jews were imprisoned there in 1942. It is estimated that 50,000 Polish children were forcibly taken from their families, abducted by the German Reich, and forced to undergo a program of *Aryanization*. They were denied all knowledge of their families and cultural past, and were adopted and raised as Germans, by Germans families (Berenbaum & Yitzchak, 2009).

The Nazis occupied Poland and used the land and people as the foundation for the implementation of Nazi terror and to create a Eurasian empire stratified by race where the *German masters* would rule over *racially inferior* Slavic peoples (Rylko-Bauer, 2005). "The Nazi theory of colonial empire in Poland was based on the denial of humanity to the Poles whom, next to the Jews, Hitler hated the most" (Lukas, 1997, p. 2). Between the years of 1939 and 1945, it is estimated that 1.7 million non-Jewish Poles were deported to Siberia and imprisoned in concentration camps, 2 million Polish Catholics/Christians were deported by the German Reich for forced labor and 100,000 Polish Catholics were killed in Auschwitz. Reliable statistics for the total number of Polish citizens murdered in the Holocaust do not exist. It is estimated, that at minimum, 6 million Polish citizens were exterminated during World War II and among these individuals were 3 million Polish Catholics and Christians and 3 million Polish Jews (Schwartz, 2012).

More than 67 years have passed since the Nazis' closed their concentration camps, the Nazi regime lost power, and the Holocaust ended. The destroyed cities of Europe have been rebuilt. Those who survived the Holocaust have returned home or scattered around the world, many immigrating to the United States or Israel, in an effort to build new lives for themselves. As the years passed, for many survivors in the United States, silence formed around the Holocaust (Faber, 2005), and for others the experience was communicated and retold primarily within the family system (Mor, 1990). For subsequent generations, the Holocaust became understood through a bond of silent knowing (Rosenthal, 1998), non-verbal behaviors or

symbolic expressions (Mor, 1990), and unconscious expression of intergenerational trauma (Rosenthal & Rosenthal, 1980). Sometimes, Mor (1990) observed,

> It was the way in which their parents swallowed bread, or the way in which they reacted to the whistle of a kettle that reminded them of the trains to the death camp. Through such symbols, sensations became imprinted on the youngsters' minds that were beyond any logical understanding. The children sensed their parents' vulnerability and knew that probing into the past would inflict too much pain. (p. 377)

In the United States, the generations following World War II have a different experience of knowing the Holocaust. Those who did not have family members targeted during Hitler's Final Solution often conceptualize the Holocaust as a distant, unfathomable atrocity that is outlined in the text of history books or an atrocity that affected the lives of those in another country. Throughout the world, the victims of the Holocaust are usually thought of as Jews. However, despite the difficulty in gaining accurate number of those killed by the Nazi regime, it is estimated that there were also 5 million non-Jewish victims of the Nazi terror (Schwartz, 2012). The experience of these victims is often unseen and unacknowledged in the larger sociopolitical context of the United States or within the psychological literature. The Holocaust became a symbol of dehumanization; it will never be forgotten, and probably it will never be fully understood (Mor, 1990).

The liberation of the concentration camps in 1945 did not end the horrific trauma experienced by hundreds of thousands of survivors. For most Holocaust survivors it was not possible to return to their lives as they were prior to the war. Family members, friends, and communities were gone; anti-Semitism still remained strong in Europe (Bender, 2004). Holocaust survivors usually immigrated to new countries where they had children. As a result, the intersection of the difficulties of

immigrating to a new country and the trauma of the Holocaust created difficulty in distinguishing between traumas related to immigration issues and trauma connected to Holocaust experiences (Mor, 1990).

Immigration and manifestation of trauma. Holocaust survivors re-entered the world and began the long process of rebuilding their lives. Many survivors possessed a strong need to rebuild their lives anywhere but in their country of origin. As survivors relocated in new countries, they became immigrants and had to learn a new language, occupation, as well as navigate in a new sociopolitical environment (Mor, 1990). It is common for children of Holocaust survivors to report "feeling different" and/or alienated from their peers (Winik, 1988), but this sense of being different is not unique to Holocaust survivors and their families. Feeling different is also common to children of immigrants who do not have a Holocaust background (Obermeyer & Lukoff, 1988). Numerous researchers postulate that a parent's immigrant status is a stronger factor than a Holocaust background in predicating significant differences among descendants of Holocaust survivors, immigrant offspring, and those in the comparison group in studies that measure psychological, academic, occupational, as well as interpersonal adjustment and family coping (Baron, Reznikoff & Glenwick, 1993; Rubenstien et al., 1990). Additionally, Mor (1990) stated,

> Under these circumstances, struggling to make a living, they often chose not to dwell on the past, but rather to concentrate on immediate social and material rehabilitation. As a result, they continue carrying an enormous burden of unresolved emotional issues and unfinished mourning. Many of them walk around with withheld tears, ready to burst forth at any moment. One meets people who function well and are able to enjoy life, but tears well up in their eyes the moment they remember, or have to talk about their past Holocaust experiences. (p. 374)

It is important that researchers attempt to understand and decipher intergenerational transmission of trauma related to the Holocaust versus the traumatic impact of immigration and acculturation. It has been over 60 years since the end of World War II, and the traumatic after-effects remain common themes within the psychological literature (Bar-On, 1998), both within the United States and Israel. As the survivors of the Holocaust start to approach an age where their living testimonies are slowly vanishing, it becomes increasingly difficult to study and write about the after-effects of the Holocaust and gain survivors' perspectives.

Western psychology and Holocaust-related trauma. During the late 1950s and the early 1960s, research emerged throughout the world (Chodoff, 1975, 1997). A review of clinical literature and research in the early 1960s indicated that the majority of reports on the psychological consequences of the Holocaust were provided by psychiatrists treating survivors or through the testimony of survivors themselves (Barel, Van IJzendoorn, & Sagi-Schwartz, 2010; Frankl, 1959; Niederland, 1968). These reports told the stories of the atrocities endured by survivors. Researchers and scholars often characterize the late 1950s and early 1960s as a time period embedded in silence (Bar-On, 1995). Because the atrocities committed during the Holocaust were horrific, and was an event that many individuals within the larger societal context did not want to acknowledge; this denial created a *conspiracy of silence* (Danieli, 1984) between Holocaust survivors and their society. Importantly, this silence was characteristic of sociopolitical contexts throughout the world, including many of the locations of survivor immigration, such as Israel and North America.

This period of silence in various societies, in psychological literature, and in the testimony of survivors shifted in the 1970s; and as a result, the focus of psychological research turned to understanding the long-term psychopathological effects of the Holocaust for survivors and their descendants (Lomranz, 1995). A constellation of trauma symptoms emerged in Holocaust survivors these commonly included a chronic sense of anxiety (De Graaf, 1975), depression (Niederland, 1968), feelings of guilt (Chodoff, 1963), emotional difficulties and disturbances in cognitive functioning particularly in the areas of concentration and memory (Prager & Solomon, 1995). This set of symptoms expressed by Holocaust survivors was first described as *Concentration Camp Syndrome* (Chodoff 1963; Eitinger, 1964 Matussek, 1975) and *Survivor Syndrome* (Niederland, 1968). In his work with over 200 individuals, Chodoff (1963) observed a set of common trauma symptoms that he labeled Concentration Camp Syndrome. He described the distinguishing features he frequently observed, which included a severe state of anxiety noticeable specifically by apprehensiveness and hypervigilance and numerous sleep disturbances such as nightmares and night terrors. At times, the survivors' sleeplessness, fatigue, and anxiety caused concentration difficulties that mimicked an organic syndrome. Some survivors were obsessively preoccupied with recalling persecutory experiences, and Chodoff (1963) stated that during some of the interviews with survivors, "I was sometimes left with the uncanny sensation of being transported in time back to the gray inferno of Auschwitz as if nothing of importance had happened in their lives since" (p. 101).

Chodoff (1963) observed that the survivors he interviewed experienced a depressive state that was often accompanied by feelings of guilt and an anhedonic lifestyle. The guilt expressed by survivors was associated with specific actions committed while imprisoned in a concentration camp or with surviving when family members and others died. Other times, survivor guilt was felt without a conviction of having done anything shameful or wrong. Chodoff (1997) described that the guilt was also associated with expressions of incredulity and wonderment at the immensity of the human tragedy Holocaust survivors suffered and a sense that "we can still hope that no man is an island, and that there may exist, somewhere within all of us, a shared sense of a common human responsibility of each other" (p. 154). Chodoff asserted that Concentration Camp Syndrome is different from posttraumatic stress disorder because of the presence of depression and intense survivor guilt.

In the 1980s, the term posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) was introduced into diagnostic nomenclature and was accepted into the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (American Psychiatric Association, 1980). The concept of PTSD was further revised in subsequent editions of DSM-IV (American Psychiatric Association, 1994) and DSM-IV-TR (American Psychiatric Association, 2000), to include trauma victims such as those in combat, natural disasters, and threats to personal, psychological, and physical well-being (American Psychiatric Association, 2000). Throughout the last six decades, researchers have examined the effects of the trauma experienced by Holocaust survivors, their children, and their grandchildren. The majority of the research on survivors and their families has

taken place in Israel (Barel et al., 2010, Bar-on 1995, 1998; Sagi-Schwartz, Van IJzendoorn, Bakersmans-Kranenburg, 2008; Van IJzendoorn, Bakersmans-Kranenburg, & Sagi-Schwartz, 2003) and the United States (Suedfeld, 2003), with a few studies in Canada (Sigal, DiNicola, & Buonvino, 1988), Germany, (Rosenthal, 2002) Australia (Halik, Rosenthal, & Pattison, 1990).

Until recently, the majority of psychological research on the effects of the Holocaust had focused on the difficulties encountered by survivors and their children, that is, the second generation. Within the last two decades (Bar-on, 1995; Chaitin 2000, 2002) scholars have started to study the grandchildren of Holocaust survivors, the third generation, in an effort to learn about the long-term effects of the Holocaust on family members who did not directly experience the Holocaust, but who have family and/or collective connections to it.

Over the years, a pattern in the focus of the psychological research has emerged. The majority of the research that explored the after-effects of the Holocaust with the survivors and their children focused on psychopathology. Research aimed at exploring the experience of the grandchildren of survivors has primarily focused on the perceived significance of the Holocaust for this generation and their resilience (Gopen, 2003; Sagi- Schwartz et al., 2003; Zelman, 1997). Over the last twenty years, psychological research has found more optimistic findings with regard to the descendants of Holocaust survivors, although there is still a divergent picture within the literature (Barel et al., 2010). The long-term effects of Holocaust-related trauma can be studied with a focus on the manifestation of psychopathology, which is often the case; psychological research on the effects of the Holocaust can also focus on

post-trauma resilience and growth (Cassel & Suedfeld, 2006) as well as the adaptive and appropriate response of Holocaust survivors and their families (Albeck, 1994).

Intergenerational transmission of Holocaust-related trauma. In the 1960s, Israeli psychoanalysts were pioneers in expanding the traditional concept of trauma. They reported serious psychological problems in the children of Holocaust survivors and proposed that the psychopathology expressed could be connected to their parents' unresolved traumatic Holocaust experiences. Israeli psychoanalysts were fundamental in establishing the theory of intergenerational trauma as an essential part of the field of traumatology (De Graaf, 1998). Intergenerational trauma is frequently referred to as trans-generational, multigenerational, or cross-generational trauma and can be defined as "the accumulation and transmission of historical trauma from one generation to the next among ethnic groups" (Simmons, 2008).

Over the past fifty years, the concept of intergenerational transmission of trauma has received significant attention in the fields of psychology, sociology, and psychiatry (Kellerman, 2001). While the concept of intergenerational trauma originated almost exclusively in studying Holocaust survivors and their children, this way of understanding trauma has become a theoretical lens through which psychological problems plaguing other groups, such as African Americans (Leary, 2005), Japanese Americans (Nagata, 1990), Native Americans (Duran, Duran, Brave Heart, & Yellow Horse-Davis, 1998), and Vietnam Veterans (Slaughter, 2008) could be understood.

Within psychological literature, intergenerational trauma is conceptualized as the accumulation of trauma across generations that can be transmitted specifically or generally, through intrapsychic processes or behaviorally, and consciously or unconsciously to one's offspring (Simmons, 2008). One example is of a child of Holocaust survivor who has nightmares involving a concentration camp without having directly experienced the camp. The transmission can also occur in the form of specific thought processes and behavioral patterns that are believed to be passed to descendants of Holocaust survivors (Bender, 2004).

Parental communication. Sigal, Rakoff, Silver, and Ellin (1973) posited that Holocaust survivors have experienced intense trauma and deprivation and, in response, developed distorted practices in human relations. During everyday parenting and everyday communication, these distorted practices are thought to be transmitted to their offspring. This communication could occur through an all—consuming, seemingly protective silence that sometimes became a bond of silence between Holocaust survivor and their child. Bar-On (1995) illustrated this process through the image of a *double wall* of silence that is maintained by the children and their parent. Other Holocaust survivors engaged in a seemingly obsessive, repetitive telling of their Holocaust experience to their children (Mor, 1990). Danieli (1985) postulated that survivor parents tried to teach their children how to survive in case further persecution occurred, and although the parental intention was often one of protection, they inadvertently transmitted the trauma of the Holocaust experience to their children. Danieli (1985) observed that the children of Holocaust survivors

displayed Holocaust survival behaviors and sensitivity to Holocaust imagery coinciding with their parent's anniversaries of Holocaust-related trauma.

In recent decades, intergenerational transmission of Holocaust-related trauma has been discussed broadly within a two-generation framework (i.e., Holocaust survivors and their children) (Chaitin 2000; Danieli 1985; Sagi-Schwartz et al., 2003). Within psychological circles, it was often agreed that certain psychological processes were transmitted from the survivor to the child, primarily through parental communication and family patterns (Barel et al., 2010; Mor, 1990). However the scientific and clinical literature remained divided regarding the presence of long- term psychological effects of the Holocaust on the survivors and their children (Bar-On, 1998). Clinically-based reports (Rosenthal & Rosenthal, 1980) often observed the manifestation of intergenerational transmission of trauma. Some controlled studies have not found evidence of psychopathology (Van IJzendoorn et al., 2003) except when children of Holocaust survivors were confronted with life-threatening situations (Solomon, Kotler, & Mikulincer, 1988).

Contrary to research that suggests an absence of intergenerational trauma, there is substantial psychological research that has found evidence of the transmission of Holocaust-related trauma. Wetter (1998) completed a study with three generations of Holocaust survivors and found evidence of intergenerational Holocaust effects, such as the display of survivor syndrome symptoms in Holocaust offspring. Clinical observations further corroborate these findings (Rosenthal & Rosenthal, 1980). In addition, Wetter found signs of increased anxiety in descendants of Holocaust survivors. Research aimed at examining the

intergenerational transmission of trauma in Holocaust survivors and their families (Bar-On, 1995; Danieli, 1988; Solomon, 1998) has shown that each generation gives a different meaning to the Holocaust, indicating that Holocaust-related trauma could be experienced differently by each generation.

Sociopolitical context of the survivors. Many Holocaust survivors immigrated to new lands and encountered a sociopolitical environment that honored values and ways of being different from those of their homeland. The cultural values of a community are acquired through a socialization process in which the family prepares its members to behave in ways that are socially desirable (Kingsbury & Scanzoni, 1993). This socialization process is not limited to the family; rather, the larger societal context teaches each new generation the right way to be in the world, with accompanying values, beliefs, and goals (Skolnick & Skolnick, 1999). Consequently, value orientations held by each family member have a dynamic and interactional nature that reflects the interplay of the sociocultural context and family members (Chaitin, 2000).

Considering the fact that the majority of the research has occurred in Israel and the United States and each country has a dynamic set of cultural values, it seems likely that individuals and the larger cultural context of each country would interact somewhat differently resulting in a varied influence on each generation. For Holocaust survivors residing in Israel, the research on the Holocaust is connected to their social world. Israelis live in a sociocultural context in which the history of the Holocaust is deeply associated with their national history (Chaitin, 2002). In Israel, the topic of the Holocaust is institutionalized; it is taught in schools, and each year

there are groups of school children that take trips abroad to see different concentration camp sites. *Holocaust Day* is memorialized throughout Israel and most individuals were personally affected or know of someone directly affected by the Holocaust. Consequently, the entire third generation is aware of the atrocities of the Holocaust (Mor, 1990). Moreover, Chaitin (2000) stated,

> Even for those who do not wish to delve into the past, the Holocaust is not a subject that can be easily forgotten in Israel. If nothing else, this generation is confronted with issues connected to the past through their exposure to the media, participation in Holocaust Commemoration Day ceremonies, and in school. (p. 22)

Holocaust survivors living in Israel who helped build a new nation after the war are part of a large cultural context and community that holds a collective memory of the Holocaust. This membership may have acted as a possible protective factor (Solomon, 1998). Other Holocaust survivors encountered the tribulations of immigrating to a new country where the collective memory of the Holocaust resided only in the memory of those survivors (Sagi-Schwartz et al., 2003) and for some, remained unacknowledged by the larger sociopolitical context. In the United States, the Holocaust is often associated with the people of Jewish descent. The atrocities they experienced are somewhat acknowledged in the history books and common cultural, yet in a more detached way than described in Israel.

The persecution and detainment of non-Jewish Holocaust survivors often remains unacknowledged or discussed in western culture. It seems likely that this sociocultural invisibility affects all groups of Holocaust survivors and their children who reside in the United States. It seems imperative that psychologists and researchers attempt to understand the complexity of meaning making about the

Holocaust for each generation, including all groups that were marginalized and to examine the interactional effect of national origin, collective identity, and trauma.

Review of Literature

The research studies that have examined the effects of the Holocaust on the lived experience of survivors and their descendents are varied in study design, methodology, sampling methods, and means of interpretation: anthropological observation, interviews, standardized measures, longitudinal designs, and examining data retroactively have been utilized. Consequently, the research findings have demonstrated inconsistent results, themes, and conclusions (Van IJzendoorn et al., 2003). The effects of Holocaust-related trauma in the form of trauma reactions that fit with the signs and symptoms of posttraumatic stress disorder have been well established. However, the psychological literature is divided with regard to the degree and intensity of the long-term effects of the Holocaust for survivors. Many social scientists and clinicians found that the Holocaust had a profound effect on survivors, leaving many with psychological suffering, such as chronic anxiety and depression (Niederland, 1968), posttraumatic stress syndrome (Barel et al., 2010), and personality inhibitions (Dor-Shav, 1978). Some studies have found that Holocaust-related trauma continued to influence a survivor's emotional and psychological well-being, interpersonal functioning, and familial relationships for decades after the initial trauma (Barel et al., 2010). Other scholars found that Holocaust survivors did not manifest serious psychological problems (Leon, Butcher, Kleinman, Goldberg, & Almogor, 1981) and lead happy and successful lives (Suedfeld, 2003). Barel et al. (2010) completed a meta-analysis on existing

Holocaust survivor research and suggested numerous theoretical and methodological issues might be contributing factors in the differences found among studies.

The psychological literature on Holocaust survivors and their descendants is composed of studies categorized by the manifestation of Holocaust-related trauma in the form of trauma symptoms, psychopathology, and difficulties in interpersonal and familial relationships. Psychological researchers have observed various historical trends in the research. Researchers and scholars often characterize the late 1950s and early 1960s as a time period embedded in silence (Bar-On, 1995). Many individuals within the sociocultural context in which survivors resided did not want to acknowledge or hear of Holocaust-related trauma. This created a *conspiracy of silence* (Danieli, 1985) between the Holocaust survivor and society. A review of clinical literature and research in the early 1960s indicates that the majority of reports on the psychological consequences of the Holocaust were provided by psychiatrists treating survivors or through the testimony of survivors themselves (Frankl, 1959; Niederland, 1968). In the 1970s, this period of silence shifted, and the focus of psychological research expanded to understanding the long-term effects of the Holocaust on survivors and their descendants. This literature review will be organized chronologically and categorized by the historical time period in which the research was published.

During the years of 1950-1970: Expression of Holocaust-related trauma in Jewish survivors. Many Holocaust survivors demonstrated trauma symptoms that reflect the diagnostic criteria for posttraumatic stress syndrome as outlined in

the DSM-III and posttraumatic stress disorder as categorized by the DSM-IV-TR. A substantial body of research affirms that Holocaust survivors experienced trauma symptoms characterized as survivor syndrome (Niederland, 1968) and concentration camp syndrome (Eitinger, 1961) as direct consequences of trauma experienced in the Holocaust. The first studies involving Holocaust survivors found that the majority of survivors reported psychological difficulties such as nervousness, irritability, dysphoric mood, anxiety, emotional instability, sleep disturbances, loss of initiative, somatic complaints, and impairments in memory (Chodoff, 1963). Survivors also described experiencing a state of unresolved grief and mourning. The loss of family members and loved ones created strong feelings of sadness, helplessness, and rage, along with a sense of survival guilt (Sagi-Schwartz et al., 2003).

Eitinger (1961) completed a study by interviewing 100 Jewish concentration camp survivors 15 years after liberation and observed that the majority of survivors reported being unable to experience emotion, whereas other survivors experienced a paradoxical response of both euphoria and emotional numbness. Eitinger used the term concentration camp syndrome to describe symptomology he observed in Holocaust survivors of the 100 survivors interviewed, only 4 of them did not show signs of this syndrome.

Schneider (1964) sought to understand the manifestation of survivors' guilt in the lives of 50 Jewish Holocaust survivors. The sample included 25 male participants and 25 female participants, and the researcher hypothesized that gender would play a role in the intensity of the guilt experienced. The researcher

utilized interviews and an orally administered questionnaire to explore the lived experience of 50 Jewish Holocaust survivors, the majority of who had immigrated to the United States after the war. The findings indicated that many survivors' sense of guilt was intertwined with the perception that they were responsible, in some way, for the fate of their loved ones. The male participants blamed themselves for Holocaust-related trauma they had no control over and for their lack of resistance toward their Nazi captors. Schneider (1964) observed that these survivors had endured the Holocaust, had been liberated, and yet "They felt they were not deserving of life" Schneider concluded that this form of guilt was a part of concentration camp syndrome (p. 83).

Niederland (1968) was a psychiatrist who treated 2,000 concentration camp survivors and he described a clinical entity he named survivor syndrome. The common symptoms identified by Niederland included the following: depression, anxiety, guilt and unresolved grief, isolation, alternation of personal identity, somatization, disturbances in memory, anhedonia, psychic vulnerability, nightmares, and the living corpse phenomena. Niederland theorized that those who survived the Holocaust and suffered persecution and torture rarely healed and even many years later manifest survivor syndrome.

Overall, the research studies conducted between the 1950s and the 1970s focused on clinical populations and examined clinical symptomology, difficulties in post-war adjustments, and life styles. The majority of conclusions based on early studies postulated that Holocaust survivors suffered from a fixed and long-lasting survivor syndrome (Jurkowitz, 1996).

During post world war II years 1971-1990: Expression of Holocaust-related trauma in Jewish survivors. In the 1970s, psychological researchers gained a renewed interest in studying the presence of Holocaust-related trauma in the lives of survivors. Many studies examined survivors' emotional and psychological well-being. Niederland (1981) found profound disturbances in Holocaust survivors such as depression, chronic anxiety, and difficult in family functioning. Studies that examine the occurrence of posttraumatic stress disorder symptoms (Matussek, 1975) as well as psychiatric symptoms in Holocaust survivors found that survivors experienced these symptoms significantly more than individuals in the comparison groups (Niederland, 1981).

Matussek (1975) utilized a combination of physical exams and a psychiatric interview to assess the effects of Holocaust-related trauma in concentration camp survivors. Participants reported symptoms akin to the present posttraumatic stress disorder constellation. Matussek (1975) concluded that 52.2% of these Holocaust survivors would have met the diagnostic criteria for posttraumatic stress disorder and reported that the Jewish survivors who stayed in Germany after liberation experienced signs of concentration camp syndrome far more than those who immigrated to Israel. Matussek (1975) postulated that the survivors' willingness to immigrate and fight for a new country earned them a part in its existence. This proved their valor and assuaged their guilt assisting them in returning to their previous identities.

Levav and Abramson (1984) interviewed 384 concentration camp survivors in Jerusalem. Researchers examined the long-term influence of an individual's

concentration camp experiences on their level of emotional distress. Participants were identified through a community health survey and were administered questions take from the Cornell Medical Index in an effort to measure of emotional distress. These researchers compared Holocaust survivors with a comparison group comprised of European born participants who had not been detained in concentration camps. They found Holocaust survivors exhibited increased emotional distress in comparison to the non-intern group.

Carmil and Carel (1986) compared a sample of Holocaust survivors and a group of non-Holocaust survivors in the areas of emotional distress, psychosomatic complaints, and overall life satisfaction. They did not observe group differences on psychosomatic complaints and overall life satisfaction; however, they did find differences with regard to emotional distress. Holocaust survivors reported more difficulty with emotional distress than non-Holocaust survivors and reported experiencing frequent anxiety, uncontrolled anger, and irrational fears.

Nadler and Ben-Shushan (1989) examined the role social support played in 68 Holocaust survivors' ability to cope. Participants were divided into two groups based on where they resided, those who resided in a kibbutz and participants who resided in urban areas in Israel. The authors proposed that the unique ideological and social nature of the kibbutz might serve as a protective factor. These researchers used the Clinical Analysis Questionnaire to measure general personality factors and the Tennessee Self-Concept Scale to assess feelings of esteem in physical, moral, social, family, and personal self-esteem domains. The results of their study suggested the effects of the Holocaust on the survivors were evident forty years

later. Holocaust survivors perceived themselves as less stable emotionally and reported decreased feelings of self-control, assertiveness, and dominance as well as a decreased energy level. Holocaust survivor participants seemed to experience more difficulties than the control group in the areas of emotional expression and reported feeling worthless and inadequate more often than participants in the control group.

Interpersonal and familial relationships. It is commonly postulated that Holocaust survivors experience difficulty in interpersonal and family relationships and in the role of parenting. Barocas and Barocas (1973) reflected on their clinical observations with Holocaust survivors and observed that some survivors developed anxious and ambivalent bonds with their children and could be overprotective, which may hinder their children's search for autonomy. Conversely, there is also evidence that Holocaust survivors do well in the role of parenting (Gross, 1988) and demonstrate resilience and competence (Keller, 1988). These findings suggest that Holocaust-related trauma did not lead to extremes in parenting styles. Many survivors were adaptable and returned to typical pre-trauma family childrearing practices and the cohesion of the family was not comprised.

During the years of 1971-1990: Expression of Holocaust-related trauma by children of Jewish survivors. Between 1970 and 1990, studies involving the children of survivors often referred to as the second generation focused on the presence of psychopathology and trauma symptoms in survivors and their children. Researchers tended to examine the Holocaust survivor in the role of a parent, especially in the process of attaching to their children.

Children of Holocaust survivors have been observed expressing Holocaust-related trauma symptoms. Winnik (1968) found that children of survivors were afflicted by nightmares that contained terrifying Holocaust imagery. The researcher postulated that these were reactions to hearing Holocaust-related stories from their parents.

Sigal, Silver, Rakoff, and Ellin (1973) found children of Holocaust survivors to have significantly less adequate coping abilities and greater behavioral and personality disturbances than offspring in a control group. Freyberg (1980) posited that survivor mothers experienced a sense of fear and a feeling of being overwhelmed during the normal separation-individuation process and in response, were emotionally unavailable for their children when they attempted to individuate. Barocas and Barocas (1973) suggested that an early symbiotic relationship developed between the survivor and child that disrupted the typical developmental separation-individuation process because it represented a threat to homoeostasis of the family system.

Jucovy (1983) noted that Holocaust trauma plays a large role in the family environment created by Holocaust survivors, their children are exposed to the Holocaust as it is filtered through the experiences of the parents. Mor (1990) observed that children of Holocaust survivors often grew up in home environments governed by overprotection (where extreme parental concern was shown over even the common cold). The second generation reported a sense of feeling different (Aleksandrowicz, 1973), difficulties in expressing anger, and a sense of over-identification with parents (Danieli, 1982). Leventhal and Ontell (1989) posited that

the children of survivors struggle with personal contentment and often strongly identify with the expectations established by their parents.

During the years of 1971-1990: Expression of Holocaust-related trauma by grandchildren of Jewish survivors. Symptoms of Holocaust-related trauma have been observed in grandchildren of Holocaust survivors. Several clinicians have addressed their work with Holocaust survivors and their families through clinical impressions and interpretations. Rosenthal and Rosenthal (1980) described their clinical experience working with a family headed by a Holocaust survivor. When the grandchild of the Holocaust survivor entered first grade, he started to display symptoms similar to "the concentration camp-survivor-syndrome described in the literature" (Rosenthal & Rosenthal, 1980, p. 772). These included anxiety in the ordinary classroom experiences, a fear of death and fear that his skin would fall off. He isolated himself from peers and had nightmares and insomnia. He expressed that he felt "everyone hated him." The authors stressed the importance of integrating multigenerational historical data in the diagnosis and treatment of clients who have a Holocaust survivor background.

Sigal et al. (1988) examined the presenting complaints in all the charts of Jewish patients who received treatment at a child psychiatry clinic throughout a ten year period that ended in 1985. The purpose of the study was to explore the possibility that the consequences of the Holocaust for survivors and their families can be observed two generations later. Researchers split the files into the following four groups: children whose parents were born in Canada and who had at least one grandparent who was a Holocaust survivor; children who had both one parent and

one grandparent who were Holocaust survivors; children (without a Holocaust background) whose parents were immigrants; and, children who had four grandparents who were native born. Researchers found that the grandchildren of Holocaust survivors reported signs of nervousness or fear in common everyday situations significantly more than the individuals in the control group without a Holocaust background. They also found that the grandchildren of survivors were overrepresented in a child psychiatry clinic population by approximately 300%. Researchers observed that although the sample size of the participants with both a parent and a grandparent in the Holocaust was too small for statistical analysis, these participants demonstrated increased sadness, school difficulties, eating problems, and nervousness in everyday situations in comparison to the other groups.

There is some evidence that grandchildren of Holocaust survivors perform better when compared to peers without a Holocaust background. Sigal and Weinfeld (1987) studied 70 grandchildren of Holocaust survivors in Canada. In this study, parents were asked to rate their children using a 50-item behavior problem checklist. Grandchildren of Holocaust survivors were rated by their parents as having higher self-esteem and coping and lower on behaviors that are indicative of severe psychopathology. The researchers concluded "that the superior psychological functioning was probably the outcome of their parents' and grandparents' investment in them because they represented hope for rebirth" (Sigal & Weinfeld, 1987, p. 3).

Rubinstein et al. (1990) recruited 40 families headed by a Holocaust survivor. Researchers administered questionnaires to both the grandchildren of Holocaust survivors and participants without a Holocaust background. Researchers found that teachers and parents identified higher levels of aggression, fear, social withdraw, and inhibition in the grandchildren of Holocaust survivors.

The late post war years 1991-2012: Expression of Holocaust-related trauma in Jewish survivors. During the last two decades, research in the long-term effects of the Holocaust for those who survived has increased. Holocaust survivors have been observed expressing numerous trauma symptoms related to the Holocaust, including depressive symptoms (Danieli, 1998), increased emotional distress (Levav & Abramson, 1984) increased vulnerability to stress (Solomon & Prager, 1992), anxiety, somatization, anger and hostility (Amir & Lev-Wiesel, 2003), impairment in sleep, nightmares, headaches, nervousness, intrusive thoughts, and exhaustion (Joffe, Brodaty, Luscombe, & Ehrlich, 2003), and self perceptions of low emotional stability (Nadler & Ben-Shushan, 1989).

Many studies within the last 20 years have explored the presence of posttraumatic stress disorder symptoms in survivors decades after the Holocaust. In a retrospective archival study, Kuch and Cox (1992) investigated 124 German files kept on Jewish Holocaust survivors in order to ascertain the presence of posttraumatic stress disorder symptoms in survivors. Researchers categorized the files into the following three groups: participants who were detained in a concentration camp for one month or more (n=78), participants who had been detained in Auschwitz and were tattooed (n=20), and subjects who were detained in

labor camps, were in hiding or lived in ghettos. Researchers determined that 46% of survivors would have met DSM-III-R diagnostic criteria for posttraumatic stress disorder. The survivors of Auschwitz who were tattooed were three times as probable to meet diagnostic criteria for posttraumatic stress disorder and to experience a greater number of symptoms than those in Europe being persecuted by Nazis, imprisoned in labor camps, in hiding, or in the ghetto.

Joffe et al. (2003) investigated the psychosocial functioning of 309 Jewish Holocaust survivors in comparison to 210 Australian-born persons and 127 immigrant refuges. Researchers utilized a semi-structured interview that included a PTSD Assessment, a Mini-Mental Health Status Exam, the General Health Questionnaire, Brief Psychiatric Rating Scale, Impact of Event Scale, and Instrumental Activities of Daily Living and Social Functioning. The findings of this study indicated that the psychological effects of Holocaust-related trauma are still evident 50 years later. On all measures of emotional well-being and psychological functioning, survivors scored significantly worse than participants in the control group. Survivors suffered significant psychological problems, including symptoms of depression, anxiety, insomnia, headaches, dizziness, exhaustion, backache pain, intrusive thoughts, and nightmares. These participants also reported taking more hypnotics and anxiolytics than participants in the control group. Researchers observed resilience in the experience of these survivors and found similarities among Holocaust survivor participants and comparison group participants in social activities and achievements in social functioning. Joffe et al. (2003) concluded that

despite the numerous symptoms experienced by survivors, they are functioning well in society.

Dissociation is thought to be a common symptom experienced by victims of trauma and the role of dissociation has been explored with several Jewish Holocaust survivors. In a longitudinal, quantitative design, Labinsky, Blair, and Yehuda (2006) evaluated the presence of dissociation in Jewish Holocaust survivors. Participants included 26 survivors with posttraumatic stress disorder, 30 survivors without trauma symptoms and 19 Jewish participants without a Holocaust background. Participants were initially evaluated in (1995) and then 8.11 years later. Researchers assessed using the Dissociative Experiences Questionnaire (DES) and PTSD symptoms (Mississippi) to investigate the presence of dissociation. The statistical data analysis (ANOVA) found a marked decline in symptoms of dissociation and PTSD symptoms in Holocaust survivors and the researchers "found a significant main effect for time and significant group by time interaction" (Labinsky et al., 2006, p. 220).

Auerbach, Mirvis, Stern, and Schwartz (2009) completed a qualitative study that examined 20 interview transcripts of Jewish Holocaust survivors provided by the Holocaust Memorial Museum as part of the organization's Post-Holocaust Interview Project. The study utilized the theory of structural dissociation to describe the life trajectories of Jewish Holocaust survivors after their detainment in concentration camps. The sample was comprised of 9 male and 11 female Jewish Holocaust survivors aged 64 to 85. In their thematic analysis, 13 overall themes

emerged in four stages: surviving the camps, post-war adjustment, developing a motivation to remember, and creating a historical self.

In the stage called surviving the concentration camps, survivors described numbing their feelings in an effort to concentrate on survival (Theme 1). Participants also described attempts to hold onto their pre-war personality while pondering future, after the war plans (Theme 2). In the post-war adjustment stage, participants reported seeking out normalcy (Theme 3) and tried to forget about their past (Theme 4). Despite efforts to suppress traumatic experiences, traumatic memories of the Holocaust continued to interfere with the survivors' attempts for normalcy (Theme 5). Within the category of developing the motivation to remember, survivors described the importance of social support in remembering the past (Theme 6), and as the survivors aged, they became increasingly motivated to remember their Holocaust experiences (Theme 7). The survivors expressed a perceived moral obligation to *bear witness* to their family and the larger societal context, which in turn motivated survivors to tell their stories (Theme 8). Lastly, under the category of creating a historical self, survivors reported integrating their experiences through accepting the past (Theme 9) and developed their perspective through generating a meaningful and coherent life narrative (Theme 10). Survivors also integrated their experience by connecting it to a bigger goal, such as educating others about the Holocaust or fighting other forms of dehumanization, such as racism and prejudice (Theme 11). This process of emotionally reconnecting contributed to a partial decrease in trauma-related symptoms (Theme 12). Lastly, for many survivors, there was a sense that the trauma of the Holocaust will not be

forgotten and continues to cause suffering (Theme 13). Auerbach et al. (2009) observed that for many participants, the process of "recollecting the trauma was a powerful experience that enabled them to reconnect both emotionally and interpersonally. The first time they shared their story with others, 'the floodgates opened,' resulting in an emotionally moving experience" (p. 398).

Interpersonal and familial relationships. Numerous clinical studies have explored the influence of Holocaust-related trauma on the interpersonal and familial relationships of Holocaust survivors. It is has been well-documented that Holocaust survivors try to protect their children from their Holocaust-related trauma. This sense of protectiveness can manifest through parental communication, in the form of a consuming silence or as repetitive story telling about Holocaust-related experiences (Mor, 1990). Clinical studies have found that some Holocaust survivors experienced disturbed family relationships and difficulty in the role of parenting after the war (Van IJzendoorn et al., 2003). Survivor parents have been found to have trouble facilitating separation and individuation in their children (Freyberg, 1980), hold high expectations for their children and suffer from Holocaust-related trauma, which may be passed down to their children (Mor 1990). In a meta-analysis of traumatization in third generation survivors, Sagi-Schwartz et al. (2008) observed, "studies on the second-generation and third-generation's psychological consequences of the Holocaust indicate a remarkable resilience of traumatized survivors in their parental roles, even when they personally may be traumatized profoundly" (p. 131).

In her work with survivors, Mor (1990) observed that for many Jewish Holocaust survivors, creating a new family after the war became an existential must, and often children signified the continuation of the family and gave meaning to their parent's survival/existence. In the role of a parent, some survivors struggled with emotional availability in relation to their children and when intense emotional reactions occurred, survivors engaged in a form of psychic *switching off*, which in the concentration camps was a survival tool and later became an impediment to interpersonal connection rather that a strategy to survive.

Scharf (2007) examined the long-term effects of the Holocaust in 88 Jewish families residing in Israel. The study examined the differences in psychosocial functioning in the adult children and adolescent grandchildren of Jewish Holocaust survivors through a mixed-method design utilizing both standard measures and a semi-structured interview format. The findings indicated that mothers with a Holocaust background displayed increased levels of psychological distress and their parental representations were found to be less positive than individuals in the comparison group without a Holocaust background. The adolescent grandchildren of Holocaust survivors reported perceiving their parents as less accepting and less likely to encourage autonomy in comparison to participants without a Holocaust background.

Resilience and adaptation of Holocaust survivors. While numerous reports exist that have examined the long-term adverse effects associated with the Holocaust, other empirical studies, which focus on the adaptive capacities and resilience of Holocaust survivors, have emerged during the last two decades. The

success and psychological growth of some Holocaust survivors has been documented. Adaptation, resilience, and adjustment have been recognized in the stories and lived experience of Holocaust survivors and these studies reveal minimal differences between Holocaust survivors and comparison groups (Van IJzendoorn et al., 2003). In fact, some findings highlight the satisfaction Holocaust survivors gained from their family and work. Holocaust survivors reported they developed stable and successful careers and found enjoyment in their social interactions (Lomranz, 1995); they did not differ from comparison groups on social activities and achievements in social functioning (Joffe et al., 2003).

Eitinger and Major (1993) maintained that human adaptability and the *regenerative powers of the ego* (p. 628) had been overlooked in research. The researchers postulated that the pathology observed in Holocaust survivors was misinterpreted, and the belief that the pathological reactions expressed by some Holocaust survivors would be persistence and unchangeable is incorrect (Eitinger & Major, 1993).

Meta-analysis of Holocaust survivor research. Barel et al. (2010) conducted a meta-analysis of Holocaust survivor research that elucidated the long-term psychosocial, psychiatric, and physiological effects of the Holocaust for those who survived. The meta-analysis involved 71 samples comprised of 12,746 Holocaust survivors who were compared to participants without a Holocaust background through measures of psychological well-being, physical health, posttraumatic stress disorder symptoms, signs of psychopathology, stress-related physiology, and cognitive functioning. Researchers divided the studies into

categories of *select* and *non-select* based on sampling methods. The non-select samples were defined as studies using random sampling methods, whereas select samples were defined as convenience sampling or samples that involved recruiting participants from personal contacts, advertisements, and survivor meetings. The researchers also coded the studies by country of residence, proposing that the country that Holocaust survivors resided in after the war may have influenced the survivor's adaptation, and, in part explain the variation within study outcomes. Researchers found Holocaust survivors, when compared to participants with a no Holocaust background, were less well-adjusted and displayed more psychopathological symptoms and posttraumatic stress symptoms.

Researchers also observed a significant difference between studies with select sampling methods in comparison to studies with non-select sampling methods. There were no significant differences found between the groups in the non-select studies on the measure of physical health. On the measure of psychological well being, researchers observed a significant difference in non-select samples and no significant differences between groups in the select sample. On measures of cognitive functioning, a significant difference between those with a Holocaust background and those with no Holocaust background was observed in the select samples, and there was no significant differences observed in the non-select samples. Researchers concluded that Holocaust survivors demonstrated remarkable resilience and postulated that living in Israel may be a protective factor for some Holocaust survivors.

The years of 1991-2012: Expression of Holocaust-related trauma in the second generation. Holocaust survivors suffered inhuman treatment and injustices at the hands of the Nazi regime. Their children, the next generation, did not directly experience the cruelty that their parents were subject to, yet there is substantial empirical evidence to suggest that the many of the offspring suffered in response to their parent's trauma (Baranowsky, Young, Johnson-Douglas, Williams-Keeler, & McCarrey, 1998). Albeck (1994) stated the children of Holocaust survivors bear "the scar without the wound; since they are significantly, if only indirectly, affected" (p. 106). Van Alphen (2006) observed, "In discussions of second- and third generation Holocaust literature and testimony, it is an accepted idea that the trauma of Holocaust survivors is often transmitted from the first to the second and later generations" (p. 473). However, previous studies on the children of Holocaust survivors and transmission of Holocaust trauma to their offspring have provided inconsistent and equivocal findings. There are some clinical studies that found emotional distress transmitted through the generations (Jurkowitz, 1997); other studies did not find evidence of such transmission (Van IJzendoorn et al., 2003). The research within this historical time period tends to focus on the presence of psychopathology in the children of survivors. Their parents survived horrific trauma, and perhaps this led researchers to postulate that this would influence their parenting ability and family relationships (Van IJzendoorn et al., 2003).

Numerous studies exist within the psychological literature aimed at exploring the lived experience of the second generation. "For the second generation,

the significance of the past is tied to their relationships with their parents and to the historical, societal, cultural contexts, in which they live" (Chaitin, 2000, p. 220). Bar-On (1998) proposed that the second generation grew up during a historical time period in which the societal norm was to encourage and maintain silence around the Holocaust. In response to this silence, children of survivors often did not ask about their parent's wartime experiences. In some instances, this not knowing led to children having horrific fantasies about their parent's Holocaust-related trauma (Wardi, 1990) or contributed to children trying to understand their parent's Holocaust-related experiences and pain as a way of connecting with their parents. This process, termed *empathic traumatization* (Albeck, 1994), involves the child imagining Holocaust scenes in which they successfully survived or escaped. Often the parent and child bonding created a *double wall* (Bar-On, 1995) of silence, created a situation in which where neither the child nor survivor speak about the Holocaust. For some survivors, silence was not possible, and they wanted to talk about their trauma; their homes became the forum and their children the audience (Mor, 1990). However the Holocaust-related trauma was communicated or expressed, through silence, symbols, or story-telling. Many researchers (Baranowsky et al., 1998;Bar-On, 1995) postulated that the children of survivors maintained familial ties through integrating their parent's Holocaust-related experiences; anxious attachments with parents; (Freyberg, 1980); and difficulty with separation, individuation, trust and intimacy (Mazor & Tal, 1996; Mor, 1990).

Children of Holocaust survivors have been found to experience trauma-related symptoms, such as nightmares containing Holocaust related imagery (Lev-

Wiesel, 2007). There is also research that indicates that children of Holocaust survivors may experience a latent vulnerability because of Holocaust-related trauma experienced by their parents. Baranowsky et al. (1998) observed that the children of Holocaust survivors exhibit a tendency to toward latent vulnerability when they are exposed to trauma and respond with an increased number of posttraumatic stress disorder symptoms.

Lev-Wiesel (2007) completed a qualitative study and interviewed members from three generations of a family headed by a Holocaust survivor. The children and grandchildren of a Holocaust survivor expressed signs of Holocaust-related trauma. Participants from both generations reported having nightmares that involved being chased by Nazis.

Yehuda, Schmeidler, Wainberg, Binder-Brynes, and Duvdevani (1998) examined the prevalence of stress and trauma exposure, the lifetime and current presence of posttraumatic stress disorder symptomology and other psychiatric diagnoses in 100 children of Jewish Holocaust survivors in comparison to a demographical similar group (n=44) without a Holocaust background. Researchers gained participants stress and trauma history utilizing the Antonovsky Life Crises Scale and the Trauma History Questionnaire. A diagnosis of posttraumatic stress disorder was assessed through the Clinician Administered PTSD Scale, whereas the presence of other psychiatric disorders was evaluated using a Structured Clinical Interview for DSM-IV. The results of the study indicate that although adult children of Holocaust survivors did not experience additional traumatic events in their life, they did display a greater prevalence of lifetime and current posttraumatic stress

disorder symptoms and other psychiatric diagnoses than the comparison subjects. This was true for both community and clinical participants. Yehuda et al. (1998) concluded that children of Holocaust survivors might have an increased vulnerability toward posttraumatic stress disorder as well as other psychiatric disorders.

Family context and parent communication. The homes and familial interactions of Holocaust survivors and their children have been the site of much research. Children of Holocaust survivors have been found to experience difficulty with separation and individuation as well as experiencing hardship in developing trust and intimacy with others (Mor, 1990).

Mazor and Tal (1996) conducted a study with 70 adult children of Jewish Holocaust survivors residing in Israel in an effort to investigate the intergenerational relationships within families of Jewish Holocaust survivors. Researchers aimed to explore the role of differentiation and adjustment within these families and used the standardized self-report measure, the Multigenerational Interconnectedness Scale to evaluate psychological functioning and financial interconnectedness in participants. Adult children of Jewish Holocaust survivors demonstrated an increased level of emotional dependence on their parents in comparison to participants without a Holocaust background. Children of survivors displayed a low level of parent dependence in the functional and financial domains. The results found that adult children of survivors reported a decreased capacity for intimacy within their intimate partnership in comparison to participants without a

Holocaust background. Despite this finding, all adult children of survivors in the study were married to their spousal relationships.

***Adaptation and resilience in second generation*.** Some research studies with children of Holocaust survivors have also found resilience, adaptation, and psychological well-being. Children of Holocaust survivors have been found to have high educational and occupational achievements, as well as stable social, marital, and family lives (Baranowsky et al., 1998; Sigal & Weinfeld, 2001).

Meta-analysis on second generation research. To date, one meta-analysis exists that investigated the presence of Holocaust-related trauma in the children of survivors. Van IJzendoorn et al., (2003) conducted a meta-analysis involving 4, 418 participants from a total of 32 samples with a distinct focus on *select* versus *non-select* sampling methods, i.e., clinical studies versus non-clinical studies. They explored whether secondary traumatization exists in the families of Holocaust survivors. The researchers hypothesized that one reason for the differing study results may be understood by examining the quality of research designs, specifically participant recruitment. In many Holocaust studies, researchers used convenience sampling, such as Holocaust survivor meetings and recruitment through advertisements, and Van IJzendoorn and colleagues (2003) coded these sampling methods as select. The researchers proposed that this method of acquiring participants might lead to increased presence of Holocaust effects because it involved participants who already experience difficulties and may have increased awareness of the influences of the Holocaust. In contrast, non-select samples were defined as random samples from several neighborhoods or communities.

Researchers also examined differences in the presence of intergenerational trauma when one or both parents were survivors.

Researchers examined the role of the country of residence and differences between Holocaust survivors and their family's experiences in North America and western Europe versus Israel, thus examining the possibility that there are protective mechanisms that are present specifically within Israeli society. They proposed that survivors may have felt supported by the emergence of Israel knowing that anti-Semitism was unlikely to occur within a community that was predominantly Jewish were united with the common goal of re-building a society (Van IJzendoorn et al., 2003).

The findings of the meta-analysis are particularly interesting. In nonselect/non clinical samples there was no evidence to support the intergenerational transmission of parental Holocaust-related trauma. Holocaust-related traumas were observed in select and clinical samples; this was particularly true for studies involving clinical participants who also experienced additional stress for other reasons not associated with their experience in the Holocaust. This meta-analysis further reflects and reiterates the differences in research findings with clinical sample versus non-clinical samples. Researchers used a stress-diathesis model to interpret and understand the absence of secondary traumatization in the children of Holocaust survivors (Van IJzendoorn et al., 2003).

The years of 1991-2012: Expression of Holocaust-related trauma in the third generation. Throughout the last few decades, social scientists and researchers have increasingly focused on the experience of the third generation, the

grandchildren of Holocaust survivors, many of whom have reached an age that moves them to have questions and seek ways of understanding the atrocities of the Holocaust (Mor, 1990). Extensive research has been conducted with Holocaust survivors and their children; little research exists focusing on the lived experience of the third generation. The studies that exist are often of a quantitative nature and lack statistical power and suitable research design and methodology to explore emotional subtleties and nuances (Simmons, 2008). The majority of the studies completed with the grandchildren of Holocaust survivors have been conducted in the United States, Israel, and Canada (Barel et al., 2010) where the sociopolitical and cultural context, national identity, and the collective memory of the Holocaust differ. The research aimed at exploring the lived experience, the presence or absence of intergenerational trauma, and the psychological suffering or resilience of Holocaust survivors and their families has yielded different findings and interpretations. Research involving the third generation suggests they experience increased fear or nervousness in everyday situations (Sigal et al., 1988), helplessness (Rosenman & Handelsman, 1990), and depression and anxiety (Huttman, 2003) in comparison to participants with a non-Holocaust background. Other studies have found no difference between grandchildren of Holocaust survivors and grandchildren in families with no Holocaust background on measures of aggression (Bachar, Cale, Eisenberg, & Dasberg, 1994), intimate relationships and family climate (Gopen, 2003), eating problems (Zelman, 1997), and measures of attachment (Sagi-Schwartz et al., 2003).

Some researchers have examined the presence of psychological distress or suffering in grandchildren of Holocaust survivors. Wetter (1998) and Huttman (2003) both conducted quasi-experimental studies with the grandchildren of Holocaust survivors, and both researchers found that the third generation of Holocaust survivors experienced increased difficulties in parental relationships and higher rates of depression and anxiety in comparison to the control group comprised of participants without a Holocaust background.

Scharf (2007) conducted a study in Israel aimed at differentiating between families where one parent was a child of Holocaust survivor, both parents were children of Holocaust survivors, or where neither parent had a Holocaust background. The findings of this study revealed that individuals with a Holocaust background (whether it was one or both parents) displayed greater psychological distress and less positive parenting representations. Families headed by parents who were both children of Holocaust survivors displayed the most distress symptoms; the grandchildren in these families disclosed lower self-esteem and reported less positive self-perceptions in comparison to participants without a Holocaust background. Grandchildren of Holocaust survivors perceived their mothers and fathers as less encouraging of independence, less accepting, and displayed an ambivalent attachment style. Grandchildren that had one parent who was in the Holocaust did not display significant differences in comparison to those whose parents did not have a Holocaust background.

Resilience and adaptation in the third generation. Several studies have been conducted examining the psychological resilience in the grandchildren of

Holocaust survivors. It was found that grandchildren of Holocaust survivors displayed strength and resilience. Israeli researcher Bar-On (1995) interviewed members from all three generations of a family headed by a Holocaust survivor. Bar-On interviewed 12 families in total and observed that many of the grandchildren of Holocaust survivors had "developed an ability to sense their grandparent's pain, listen intently and sensitively to their memories, and talk to them about their past in a far more open manner than that of which the second generation has been capable" (p. 435).

Some researchers have theorized that Holocaust survivors and their children experience difficulties in externalizing aggression. An Israeli researcher Bachar and colleagues (1994) conducted a study with 97 Israeli children. Fifty-four of the participants were grandchildren of Holocaust survivors and 43 of the participants were from a family with no Holocaust background. A projective test, the Externalization of Aggression (EAS), was administered to all participants. Grandchildren of Holocaust survivors and participants without a Holocaust background displayed little difference in their expression of aggression. Bachar et al (1994) concluded that the results of this study may be an indicator that the intergenerational transmission of trauma does not occur in third generation.

Many survivors discuss the experience of starving and receiving little food while detained in a concentration camp. Utilizing a quasi-experimental design Zelman (1997) examined eating problems among female grandchildren of Holocaust survivors (ages ranged from 14 to 25) and those without a Holocaust background. Participants were recruited through records kept by the United States Holocaust

Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C. There were no significant differences found between the two groups.

Gopen (2003) assessed normative functioning in grandchildren of Holocaust survivors. Participants were asked to describe their family climate and interpersonal relationships; there were no significant differences observed between grandchildren of Holocaust survivors and those with no Holocaust background. Moreover, Ganz (2002) utilized a convenience sampling to recruit grandchildren of Holocaust survivors in New York City. The study examined the presence of psychopathology, psychological symptoms, and clinical outcomes on standardized measures. Researchers did not observe any significant differences between Holocaust survivors and the participants without a Holocaust background on the psychological symptoms checklist or on their use of therapy.

Meta-analysis of research on the third generation. Israeli researchers Sagi-Schwartz et al. (2008) completed a meta-analysis on the extant studies with grandchildren of Holocaust survivors; they examined a total of 13 samples, comprised of 1012 families. The researchers reported no significant differences in the adaptation and psychological well-being between the grandchildren of survivors and those in the comparison group. Researchers concluded, "This meta-analytic finding may be interpreted as a sign of resilience on the part of the survivors that facilitated the well functioning of their second and third generation offspring" (Sagi-Schwartz et al., 2008, p. 118). Researchers proposed a bio-psychological stress-diathesis model of trauma to interpret the absence of transmission of trauma from the first to the second generation and for the remarkable resilience of first

generation Holocaust survivors (Van IJzendoorn et al., 2003). As the third generation continues to learn about the Holocaust and tell stories of their experience, "many will find it necessary to make a connection to the majority of the United States population that has no association with the Holocaust other than as a historical event in a textbook" (Bender, 2004, p. 213).

Three generation studies. Psychological research has demonstrated that trauma can influence both the family member who experienced the stressor and his or her descendants. Researchers postulate this occurs due to a combination of factors, including idiosyncratic dynamics, the unique developmental history of each family, situational constraints, and sociocultural changes (Aldous & Klein, 1988). Several researchers have aimed at exploring the lived experience and Holocaust-related trauma in Holocaust survivors and their families. Few researchers have engaged in exploring the experience of all three generations within the same study design. In Israel, Bar-On and colleagues completed much of the research involving three generations of family members headed by a Holocaust survivor (Bar-On 1995, 1996b, 1999; Bar-On et al., 1998). More recently, Chaitin (2000, 2002) expanded on research with all three generations. There has been research on the three generations of a Holocaust survivor in Germany (Rosenthal, 1998) and the United States (Lev-Wiesel, 2007; Jurkowitz, 1996). "As these researchers from different countries have observed, the past remains relevant for people who were born many years after the Holocaust, on manifest and/or latent levels" (Chaitin, 2002, p. 281).

Bar-On (1992) postulated that the significance that Holocaust survivors and their descendents attribute to the Holocaust is tied to the concept of *working*

through. This is "a process in which an individual learns to deal with internal, difficult, and unresolved conflicts that she or he has been trying to confront" (as cited in Chaitin, 2002, p 381). The concept working through originated in the realm of individual therapy and was later expanded to involve traumatic social and historical experiences (Rothstein, 1986). In the experience of the Holocaust survivor, the aim is to *live with* the traumatic experience rather than aiming for *letting go.* This concept of working through has been utilized to describe how survivors of the Holocaust cope with the traumas from their war experience and how these survivors display resilience and live their lives with no outward sign of psychopathology (Danieli, 1981).

In 1995 Bar-On interviewed the members from each generation in 20 Jewish Israeli families. The researcher interpreted their findings by using the image of a *double wall* to describe a common process of communication. The survivors tried to *spare* their children the horrors they experienced, and the children, who felt their parents recoiling, built their own *wall* alongside that of their parents, abstaining from asking question or initiating a conversation about what their parents had gone through (Hirsch & Bar-On, 2006).

In a qualitative study Jurkowitz (1996) examined a non-clinical population of 91 female Jewish Holocaust survivors living in the U.S, and their children and grandchildren, and found evidence of intergenerational transmission of depression, guilt, and shame in second generation and third generation participants. Jurkowitz observed that there was an openness in the communication between the third and second-generation participants, and this openness was connected to a decrease in

shame, guilt, and depression in the grandchildren of Holocaust survivors. Chaitin (2000) conducted a qualitative study with three generations of an Israeli family in an effort to explore the meaning of the Holocaust for these families. In this qualitative design, researchers asked participants to tell their life story. Through a thematic analysis, Chaitin observed the children and grandchildren of survivors tended to value non-conforming behavior and teamwork within the family.

In her second qualitative study, Chaitin (2002) interviewed 57 participants and examined the process of 3 generations of 20 Israeli families headed by a Holocaust survivor working through the past. Several themes emerged from this analysis for members of all 3 generations, which included: close family relationships, transmission of family values, avoidance of the subject of the Holocaust, and emotional difficulty associated with the Holocaust. The children of survivors stressed the values of self-protection, self-interest, and *going it alone* (Chaitin, 2002, p. 392). The grandchildren of survivors stressed both close familial relationships and conflict; they emphasized the imperative of teaching younger generations about the Holocaust. It appeared that the process of *working through* posed different difficulties for each generation. Chaitin (2002) explained that a major theme of research about the third generation, even more than about the second, is the importance of teaching about the Holocaust (p. 393). She explained that since survivors are reaching the end of their lives, the third generation will have to teach about the Holocaust to a generation that did not have a direct relationship with a survivor.

Israeli researchers Sagi- Schwartz et al. (2003) conducted a research study with all three generations from 98 Israeli families. Researchers engaged the grandmother, mother, and her child (12-15 months) in an Adult Attachment interview, observed the mother and infant interact using the strange situation protocol, and utilized questionnaires. Holocaust survivors who are now grandmothers showed more signs of unresolved loss, anxiety, and traumatic stress than those in the comparison group without a Holocaust background. Holocaust survivors did not display impairment in general adaptation. Also, the traumatic effects did not appear to transmit across generations; the daughters of the Holocaust survivors and the comparison group did not differ on levels of anxiety, attachment representations, traumatic stress reactions, and maternal behavior toward their children. Sagi- Schwartz et al. (2003) concluded

> We suggest that the child (of the) survivors successfully protected their social lives and family relationships from being influenced by their Holocaust experiences…. our investigation shows how resilient victims of major genocides might be in creating new hope for the coming generations. (p. 1092)

Hirsch and Bar-On (2006) conducted a longitudinal narrative research design in which they interviewed three generations of women in families where the eldest generation was a Holocaust survivor. The first round of interviews occurred in the 1990s (Bar-On, 1995) as part of a study involving participants from three generations and twenty families. This study is unique as it attempts to trace the developmental processes, changes in self-perception, and interpersonal relationships with three women over a period of 12 years. In these second interviews, researchers observed that the Holocaust survivors demonstrated the

ability to reflect on their emotional state and expressed themselves with more openness. Researchers also observed evidence that the Holocaust survivors had processed more conflicts in their life over time, for instance conflicts experienced in their relationships with their fathers. Researchers also observed that in the second interview the survivors displayed a new willingness to "examine and express criticism toward…[their] parenting" (Hirsch and Bar-On, 2006, p. 211).

In the second interview with the child of a survivor, researchers observed the second-generation participant expressed the emotional difficulties associated with being the child of a Holocaust survivor as well as difficulties related to her current developmental stage in the life cycle. From both interviews, the researchers noted that the child of the survivor devoted herself primarily to her work, her mother, and her children. In both the first and second interview with the grandchild of the survivor, researchers observed that although the grandchild's process of separating from the mother was complex, the grandchild achieved greater psychological freedom and was able to break through the *double wall* (1995) of silence between her grandmother (survivor) and her mother (offspring).

Israeli researcher Lev-Wiesel (2007) completed a qualitative study aimed at examining the intergenerational transmission of trauma across the generations of three families who experienced three different types of trauma. The traumatic experiences included a Jew who was persecuted in the Holocaust, an Ikrit refugee who experienced forced dislocation due to war, and a refugee placed in a transit camp after immigrating to Morocco. A PTSD self-report questionnaire (Shalev as cited Lev-Wiesel, 2007) was administered to participants to assess the presence of

trauma symptoms. The researcher interviewed participants and found that the primary emotional theme in the family headed by a Holocaust survivor was sadness; the observed psychological impact of Holocaust-related trauma were symptoms of PTSD in the survivor and secondary traumatization in the subsequent generations. The child of the Holocaust survivor reported symptoms of trauma "such as intrusive thoughts (painful memories throughout the day and nightmares), anxious behavior (being frightened in the presence of strangers or new places), and avoidance behaviors (avoiding bus or train stations, avoiding new acquaintances" (Lev-Wiesel, 2007, p. 83). The second and third generation participants experienced signs of Holocaust-related trauma; both generations reported having nightmares that involved being chased by Nazis and exhibited an intense identification and empathy for the survivor's suffering. Both second and third generation participants exhibited a sense of curiosity about the Holocaust and tended to cry when the subject of the Holocaust was brought up. Interestingly, positive aspects also appeared to be transmitted through the generations; all three generations spoke to the intense bond that existed among them. In the families of Holocaust survivors Lev-Wiesel (2007), observed the following:

> Subsequent generations were expected to remember the atrocities committed. While it was apparent that the wound of the Holocaust would never heal, it had to be evoked and remembered out of loyalty. This remembrance seemed to be a debt paid for the suffering of the first generation, and was a lesson to be learned and taught for the sake of future generations. (p. 90)

Each of the three participants in the family headed by a Holocaust survivor emphasized the importance of their family and expressed that only family members were trustworthy. They also viewed life as delicate and temporary, and held the

value that life is to be appreciated. “Each member of the three generations expressed a common mission, which was to remember the Holocaust, never forget what happened, and to transmit this charge to coming generations” (Lev-Wiesel, 2007, p. 83).

Non-Jewish Holocaust survivors. To date, there is little psychological literature that studies the lived experience of non-Jewish Holocaust survivors. One anthropologist, Rylko-Bauer (2005) examined the life of her mother: a Polish Catholic Holocaust survivor. The author attempted to contextualize her mother’s narrative, situating it within the broader social and historical context. In her analysis, she found themes of suffering, loss, dehumanization, survival, and resilience. The author observed that her mother’s story raises issues regarding the definitions of concepts such as Holocaust survivor and collective memory. Rylko-Bauer suggested that the Holocaust occupies little space within Polish collective memory, whereas for Jewish survivors the Holocaust has complex, multiple, deep, and dark meanings that neither she nor her mother shared. In this sense, she described her mother as a “survivor of this time and event in history, but she is apart from the meaning of the Holocaust” (Rylko-Bauer, 2005, p. 37). Rylko-Bauer (2005) observed that “From her comments and reactions it was evident that she was eager to see what others recalled from this shared experience: she sought reassurance that her personal memory was also part of the social memory of those times” (Rylko-Bauer, 2005, p. 37). Rylko-Bauer (2005) concluded that it is imperative to expand the meaning and lessons of the Holocaust in a way that informs one’s capacity to understand and analyze the present.

The Cambodian genocide. From 1975 to 1979, the Pol Pot genocide occurred and 1.7 million Cambodians died from starvation, overwork, illness, and execution. Symptoms of PSTD have been found in Cambodian refugees in outpatient settings. In a study by Hinton et al. (2006), 56% of Cambodian refugee participants expressed PTSD symptoms. Moreover, Hinton, Ba, Peou, & Um (2000) found 60% of Cambodian refugee participants met the criteria for panic disorder.

Hinton, Rasmussen, Nou, Pollack, and Good (2009) obtained survey data from 143 Cambodian refugees at a psychiatric clinic in Massachusetts. The aim of the study was to investigate anger, explicitly the anger of Cambodian refugees directed toward their family members. The findings indicate that over the period of one month, 48% of participants experienced anger directed toward one of their family members (10% reported toward a spouse and 45% toward their child). This anger was almost always associated with somatic arousal in participants: 91% of participants experienced heart palpitations during episodes of anger and 71% of participants had anger episodes that met criteria for a panic-attack. These episodes of anger commonly resulted in the remembering of trauma and catastrophic cognitions (Hinton et al., 2009).

Rwandan genocide. Starting in 1959 and throughout the 1990s, the Hutu supremacists massacred primarily male Tutsis. During the genocide of 1994, even children became legitimate targets. It is estimated that one million people were murdered in thirteen weeks; 800,000 Tutsis were killed within the first five weeks (Prunier, 1995). The aftereffects of trauma have been explored with these victims of genocide. Afflitto (2000) completed a case study with a Rwandan genocide survivor

aimed at exploring the survivor's experiences during the genocide as well as the survivor's post-victimization perspectives within the current historical and political context. The Rwandan genocide survivor was 16 years old when the killing started; both of her parents, her brother, parental grandmother, two uncles, three aunts, and numerous cousins, many of whom children were killed. Afflitto observed that symptoms of posttraumatic stress disorder, survivor's guilt and shame influenced the survivors' developmental trajectory.

Concluding Summary

Throughout the last sixty years, social scientists, researchers, and clinicians have studied the experience of Jewish Holocaust survivors and their families. Many scholars have explored how the Holocaust continues to affect survivors and how the Holocaust-related trauma effects the children and grandchildren of those who survived. There are numerous research studies aimed at examining the experience of Jewish Holocaust survivors (Barel et al., 2010; Eitinger, 1961; Niederland, 1968), the children of Jewish Holocaust survivors (Mor, 1990; Shoshan, 1989), and the grandchildren of Jewish Holocaust survivors (Rosenman & Handelsman, 1990; Sigal et al., 1988). There are a few study designs aimed at exploring the experience of all three generations of Jewish families simultaneously (Bar-On, 1995; Chaitin 2000, 2002; Hirsch & Bar-On, 2006).

Millions of non-Jewish people were killed in the Holocaust; it is estimated that 1.9 million Polish (non-Jewish) citizens were killed because of their ethnic identity during the Holocaust (United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, 2012), and 1.7 million Polish non-Jews were sent to concentration camps in Siberia, 2.0

million were deported as forced laborers for the German Reich, and 100,000 were killed in Auschwitz because of their ethnic identity (Schwartz, 2012). The experience of these victims is often unseen and unacknowledged in the larger sociopolitical and cultural context of the United States or within the psychological literature. To date, there are no studies within Western psychology that address the effects of the Holocaust for this population and/or their descendants. One anthropologist who examined the life experience of her mother, a Polish Catholic Holocaust survivor (Rylko-Bauer, 2005) observed themes of suffering, loss, dehumanization, survival, and resilience. Given what we know about the trauma symptoms experienced by Jewish Holocaust survivors and other survivors of genocide, there is a need for research that explores the experience of Polish Catholic Holocaust survivors and their descendants.

Statement of the Problem

It is estimated that 1.9 million Polish citizens were murdered during the Holocaust because of their ethnic identity. However, there are almost no studies that explore the effects of the Holocaust on Polish Catholic survivors and/or their descendants. Given the known after-effects of Holocaust-related trauma for Jewish Holocaust survivors and their families, the trauma response observed in other genocide survivors, and the lack of psychological research aimed at exploring the experience of non-Jewish Holocaust survivors, there is a need to study the experience and effects of Holocaust-related trauma on Polish Catholic Holocaust survivors and their families.

Description of the Study

This is an interpretative study aimed at exploring the effects of Holocaust-related trauma on the experiences of Polish Catholic Holocaust survivors, their children, and their grandchildren. Specifically, I interviewed 12 individuals of Polish Catholic ancestry, including two families with a member from each generation. Semi-structured interviews were conducted in order to learn more about their affective and cognitive responses to the issues outlined in the research questions (1-4).

Research Questions. This study will be guided by the following broad research questions:

1. Do participants make meaning out of their Holocaust experiences? If so, how?
2. Does Holocaust-related trauma affect the everyday lives of participants? If so, how?
3. How do participants cope with Holocaust-related trauma in their daily lives?
4. Does Holocaust-related trauma affect the future generations of Polish Catholic Holocaust survivors? If so, how?

Theoretical Framework

The themes provided by participants in this study are conceptualized and interpreted using interpretative processes such as philosophical hermeneutics. From this viewpoint, it is understood that the self is socially constructed and inseparable from cultural, sociopolitical, and historical influences. Human beings do not develop in isolation; rather, we are continuously developing in response to, and as a result of, our social environment. Humans are contextual beings, inseparable

from the cultural matrix that constitutes our experience. In the last 400 years that comprise the modern era, the development of the self has been influenced by the ideology of self-contained individualism and the economic system of capitalism (Cushman, 1995).

Importance of the Study

It is has been almost 70 years since World War II ended, yet researchers and clinicians continue to debate the long-term effects of Holocaust-related trauma for Holocaust survivors and their descendants (Barel et al., 2010). It has been established that Jewish Holocaust survivors experienced Holocaust-related trauma, trauma reactions, and psychological suffering (Eitinger, 1961). It has been debated whether Holocaust-related trauma is intergenerationally transmitted to the children (Lev-Wiesel, 2007) and grandchildren (Jurkowitz, 1996) of Jewish Holocaust survivors. It is established that the after-effects of Holocaust-related trauma influence the survivors and their family for decades afterward. Time has not healed the wounds created by the Holocaust and even those who encounter artifacts associated with Holocaust have been found to experience psychological suffering, a range of stress reactions, and grief responses (McCarroll, Blank, & Hill, 1995). Moreover, it has been well documented that therapists exposed to traumatic material through their work with clients can experience vicarious traumatization (McCann & Pearlman, 1990). Given the trauma that Jewish Holocaust survivors experienced, the psychological suffering of their descendants, the vicarious trauma experienced by the therapists who work with Holocaust survivors, and trauma reactions experienced by those who are exposed to archival Holocaust material, it is

imperative that researchers continue to gain understandings of the effects of the Holocaust—for all who were touched by it.

Invisibility is an insidious form of non-violent oppression that pervades and maintains oppressive systems within the United States (Leary, 2000). Future research needs to acknowledge all forms of sociopolitical oppression, attempt to see what is commonly unseen, and strive to understand the wounds of collective trauma. The experience of non-Jewish Holocaust survivors is often unseen, unheard, and unacknowledged in Western psychological science and research. The aim of this research is to explore the lived experience of Polish Catholic Holocaust survivors and their descendants in the hopes that it will give voice to some of those who have not yet been heard.

Definitions of Terms

The following terms are specifically defined for this study and will be used in the context of the present study.

Holocaust survivors are defined as individuals who "spent the war in Nazi-occupied Europe, either in concentration/ labor camps, or in various hideaway shelters, being 'adopted' by gentile families, or using a combination of escape and survival strategies" (Sagi-Schwartz et al., 2008, p. 111). The individual must currently reside in the United States.

Second generation participants are defined as the child of a Holocaust survivor. The individual must currently reside in the United States.

Third generation participants are defined as grandchildren of Holocaust survivors. The person must be 18 years old. The individual must currently reside in the United States.

Intergenerational transmission of trauma refers to "traumatic effects of events that did not take place in the lives of the second-generation participants themselves, but in those of their parents who may or may not have communicated their experiences in a verbal or nonverbal way" (Schuengel, Bakermans-Kranenburg, & Van IJzendoorn, 1999, p 112).

Method

This is an interpretative study of the effects of the Holocaust on the lived experience of six Polish Catholic Holocaust survivors and their descendants. This study employed interpretive processes and sought to generate new theoretical understandings of the long-term effects of Holocaust related trauma on the lives of Polish Catholic survivors and their descendants. A qualitative method was used in order to research and generate new understandings of the lived experience of participants. Qualitative research is an established method for "exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem" (Creswell, 2009, p. 4) and allows the researcher to seek data through asking questions that may challenge one's assumptions and result in arriving at new understandings. This is an inductive form of inquiry focused on individual meaning and places importance on depicting the complexity of a particular situation (Richards, 2005).

Research Approach

An interpretative form of hermeneutic qualitative inquiry was used to explore the influence of Holocaust-related trauma on the lived experience of Polish Catholic Holocaust survivors and their descendants. Hermeneutic research methods were utilized to interpret and understand the meaning an individual ascribes to numerous aspects of their lived experience. The term hermeneutic originated from the Greek word for interpretation. Hermeneutics has been conceptualized as the art or theory of interpretation (Richardson, Fowers, & Guignon, 1999) originated in the study and analysis of religious text (Stigliano, 1989) and is perhaps best understood

as a philosophy rather than a research method (Cushman, 2005). Hermeneutics is the practice of reflective interpretation and has inspired research processes that are emerging within the human sciences. Hermeneutics is not a methodology per say rather the aim of hermeneutics is often described as the understanding of historical traditions and cultural broad traditions and everyday unspoken interpretations. The purpose is not to uncover the truth of these interpretations; it is to explore how traditions and interpretations both shape as well as determine one's way of living in the world (Stigliano, 1989).

Fundamental to hermeneutics is the principle that language constitutes human being. The practice of hermeneutics aims to understand the human experience as it is embodied in sociocultural and linguistic practices. Hermeneutics is the study of understanding "as it is constituted in practice by and for an interpreting community for whom the practices have significance as practices are expressed in and by institutions, shared stories, narratives and myths which comprise an identifiable tradition" (Stigliano, 1989, p. 50).

This study explored the lived experience of participants and developed new understandings about the experience of Polish Catholics Holocaust survivors and their descendants. A semi-structured interview schedule was used (see Appendix F) to create a dialogue with participants on the issues outlined by R. Q. 1-4. The text generated by the interviews with participants was analyzed through a hermeneutic phenomenological interpretative lens.

Description of Participants

Participants were Polish Catholic Holocaust survivors and their descendants. In total, 12 individuals of Polish Catholic ancestry were interviewed. Six of the 12 participants interviewed comprised two families headed by a Polish Catholic survivor and included a participant from each generation, i.e. the Holocaust survivor, second-generation participant, and third generation participant. Participants were recruited via convenience sampling through personal networking and attendance at events hosted by a Polish organization in the Midwest. A semi-structured interview was used to guide the individual interviews (see Appendix F). A hermeneutic process of interpretation was used to explore the experiences of each individual interviewed and to examine the text generated by each participant.

Criteria for Participant Selection

The inclusion criteria for participant selection included being of Polish Catholic ancestry. The survivor will have endured Nazi persecution during the Holocaust. This includes individuals who were imprisoned in labor or concentration camps and/or those who were abducted as forced laborers for the German Reich. The second-generation participant is defined as the child of the Holocaust survivor. The third generation participant is defined as the grandchild of the Holocaust survivor. The exclusion criteria for participant selection included participants who reported neurological disabilities, developmental disabilities, and/or severe psychopathology, such as psychosis.

Recruitment of Participants

Participants were of Polish Catholic ancestry and ranged in age from 34 years to 87 years and reported no history of neurodevelopmental or developmental disabilities and/or severe psychopathology. Participants were recruited through a convenience sampling method, i.e. personal networking and attending events sponsored by Polish organizations in the Midwestern United States. A script was used when talking to potential participants that outlined my familial connection to the research topic and gave a brief overview of the research project (see Appendix A).

Interview Design

The purpose of this study was to examine the lived experience of Polish Catholic Holocaust survivors and their families. One-on-one, in-person semi-structured interviews were used with the aim of creating a dialogue with each participate about their experience of the Holocaust as either a direct survivor or understandings gained through familial communication (Creswell, 2009). In two of the interviews with survivors (i.e. participants Martha and Anna), their adult children (second generation participants Kristina and Irina) were present throughout the interview and assisted occasionally in the translation of the survivor's responses. For all interviews, a semi-structured interview schedule (see Appendix F) was used. These semi-structured interviews used open-ended questions to address research questions 1-4. The time spent in each interview varied; the duration of each was between 45 and 120 minutes. Interviews took place in a mutually agreed upon location that ensured the privacy of the participants.

Each participant was offered the option of completing the interview in a private confidential location, a psychotherapist's office, or the participant's home. Each participant who was interviewed requested that interviews take place in his or her home.

Pre-screening

During the initial contact, the researcher briefly talked with each first generation participant to assess whether he or she could adequately understand and respond to interview questions presented in English. When participants appeared to struggle with comprehending the question presented in English, a second generation participant was asked to be present during the interview process to translate for the first generation participant. Prior to the interview, I screened potential participants for a history of cognitive impairment, neurodevelopmental and/or developmental disabilities and severe psychopathology. This was accomplished during the initial phone conversation through participant self-report (see Appendix B). I asked, "Do you have a history of mental illness? Do you have any form of neurodevelopmental or developmental disability?" During this initial contact, I briefly summarized the purpose of the research project (see Appendix A). The participant and I then mutually determined a convenient and private location for the interview to take place.

Interview Structure

First, I described the purpose of the study and my personal and familial connection to the subject matter (see Appendix A). Second, I obtained the participant's informed consent to participate in the study (see Appendix C). Third, I

asked the participant to fill out a basic demographic form in order to obtain information about the participant's gender, race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, sexual orientation, and age (see Appendix D). Fourth, I proceeded with the introduction to the interview (Appendix E). Fifth, I utilized the interview schedule to generate a dialogue with each participant (Appendix F). Each interview was audio taped and professionally transcribed. Identifying information was removed from all written records. At the time of the interview, participants were given the opportunity to choose a pseudonym that would be used to indentify their interview record.

Introduction to Interview

I began the interview in this way: "I am going to ask you some questions that will help me in better understanding the effects of the Holocaust on the lives of Polish Catholic Holocaust survivors and descendants. The main focus of my interest is your unique experience. I want to know how you believe the Holocaust has affected your life. I am interested in your thoughts, feelings, and reactions. Your identity will remain confidential. Please talk as long as you need to in response to each question or to a topic you want to tell me about. If you remember something important about a prior question, please let me know and we can go back to that topic. You may talk for quite awhile on each topic and I am interested in all that you have to say. If you say something that I do not quite understand, I may ask you to tell me a bit more about that topic or to clarify.

If there is a question that you do not want to answer, please let me know. My sense is the interview will take 1-2 hours. If you have any questions after we

complete the interview, please ask. If in the process of discussing this material causes you discomfort, I am available for further discussion or to give a referral for counseling."

Interview Schedule for Holocaust Survivor

The effect of the Holocaust on the lives of Jewish Holocaust survivors and their descendants has been widely researched within the field of psychology. The experience of Polish Catholic Holocaust survivors, their children, and their grandchildren have yet to be accurately acknowledged and explored. I am hoping this research will contribute to understanding more about Polish Catholic experiences in the Holocaust and in their family life in the years since that time. Your experiences will be helpful to this project. So I want to know about your story.

1. Can you tell me a bit about your life before World War II and the Holocaust? (Interview question collects material for R. Q. 1)
2. Tell me about your life during the time the Nazi regime influenced your community, especially your life in the concentration camp. (Interview question collects material for R.Q.1)

   Prompt: Can you tell me about your life during the years of 1933-1945?
3. Can you tell me what your life was like after the Holocaust? (Interview question collects material for R.Q.1)

   Prompt: For instance, what happened to you when the war ended?

   Prompt: Why did you decide to come to the United States?

   Prompt: How and when did you manage to come to the United States?

4. Did some of the painful experiences you had during the Holocaust continue to affect you after the war ended, say in the first several years after? (Interview question collects material for R.Q. 1)
5. Are there ways that memories of Holocaust-related events continue to stay with you and affect you now? (Interview question collects material for R.Q. 1)
6. How do you handle these effects? (Interview question collects material for R.Q.3)

   Prompt: What do you do when these things happen?
7. How do you these days make sense of or understand the experiences you had during the Holocaust? (Interview question collects material for R.Q.2)

   Prompt: How do you keep going, make a life, have a family, after what happened?
8. Do you have children, grandchildren, or nieces/nephews? (Interview question collects material for R.Q. 1)
9. If yes, have you talked to them about the Holocaust? (Interview question collects material for R.Q. 1)
10. Have you talked with them about your own experiences during the Holocaust? (Interview question collects material for R.Q. 1)

    [If yes] Prompt: What did you tell them?

    [If yes] Prompt: What was it like for you to talk with each of them?

    [If no] Prompt: What contributed to your decision to not talk with your children or grandchildren?

    [If no] Prompt: How did you avoid telling them?

11. Do you think your experience during the Holocaust influenced the way you interacted (or interact) with your family? (Interview question collects material for R.Q. 1)

    Prompt: How do you think it may have influenced the way you interact with your children/grandchildren?

12. Some Polish people feel their suffering in the Holocaust is not known or acknowledged in the general public and I want to know, has this been your experience? (Interview question collects material for R.Q. 4).

Interview Schedule for Second Generation Participants

The effect of the Holocaust on Jewish Holocaust survivors and their descendants has been widely researched within the field of psychology. The experiences of Polish Catholic Holocaust survivors, their children, and their grandchildren have yet to be accurately acknowledged and explored. I am hoping this research will contribute to understanding more about Polish Catholic experiences in the Holocaust and in their family life in the years since that time. Your experiences will be helpful to this project. So I want to know about your story.

1. What do you know about what happened to your parent or parents during the Holocaust? (Interview question collects material for R.Q. 1)
2. What does it mean to you to be the child of a Polish Catholic Holocaust survivor? (Interview question collects material for R.Q.2)

   Prompt: You are the child of a Polish Catholic Holocaust survivor and I want to know how you think about yourself and that part of your family's history? What sense do you make of what happened to your parent/s?

3. Take a minute and think about a time or times you heard your parent talk about the Holocaust. Can you tell me about it? (Interview question collects material for R.Q.1)

   Prompt: How did they communicate about the Holocaust?

   Prompt: Did you and your mother/father talk about the Holocaust?

4. Take a minute to think about the first time you came to understand that your parent was a Holocaust survivor. What was that like? (Interview question collects material for R.Q.2)

5. How do you think the Holocaust has affected your life? (Interview question collects material for R.Q.1)

   Prompt: Think about a time when you became aware of the effects of Holocaust on your parent. Can you tell me about that?

   Prompt: How do you experience the effects of the Holocaust in the relationship between your parents and you, even if it wasn't discussed?

6. How do you cope with the effects the Holocaust has had on you and your family? (Interview question collects material for R.Q. 3)

7. How do you think your parent's experiences in the Holocaust affect his or her parenting? (Interview question collects material for R.Q.1)

8. Do you have children?

   [If yes] Prompt: How did the way your parent's parent affect the way you parent your children?

9. Some Polish people feel their suffering in the Holocaust is not known or acknowledged in the general public and I want to know, has this been your experience? (Interview question collects material for R.Q. 4)

Interview Schedule for Third Generation Participants

The effect of the Holocaust on Jewish Holocaust survivors and their descendants has been widely researched within the field of psychology. The experiences of Polish Catholic Holocaust survivors, their children, and their grandchildren have yet to be accurately acknowledged and explored. I am hoping this research will contribute to understanding more about Polish Catholic experiences in the Holocaust and in their family life in the years since that time. Your experiences will be helpful to this project. So I want to know about your story.

1. What do you know about what happened to your grandparent or grandparents during the Holocaust? (Interview question collects material for R.Q. 1)
2. What does it mean to you to be the grandchild of a Polish Catholic Holocaust survivor? (Interview question collects material for R.Q.2)

   Prompt: You are the grandchild of a Polish Catholic Holocaust survivor and I want to know how you think about yourself and that part of your family's history? What sense do you make of what happened to your grandparent/s?
3. Take a minute and think about a time or times you heard your grandparent talk about the Holocaust. Can you tell me about it? (Interview question collects material for R.Q.1)

   Prompt: How did they communicate about the Holocaust?

Prompt: Did you and your grandparent talk about the Holocaust?

Prompt: Did you and your mother/father talk about the Holocaust?

4. Take a minute to think about the first time you came to understand that your grandparent was a Holocaust survivor. What was that like? (Interview question collects material for R.Q.2)
5. How do you think the Holocaust has affected your life? (Interview question collects material for R.Q.1)

   Prompt: Think about a time when you became aware of the effects of Holocaust on your grandparent. Can you tell me about that?

   Prompt: How do you experience the effects of the Holocaust in the relationship between your grandparents and you, even if it wasn't discussed?
6. How do you cope with the effects the Holocaust has had on you and your family? (Interview question collects material for R.Q. 3)
7. How do you think your grandparent's experiences in the Holocaust affect his or her parenting? (Interview question collects material for R.Q.1)
8. Do you have children?

   [If yes] Prompt: How did the way your parent's parent affect the way you parent your children?
9. Some Polish people feel their suffering in the Holocaust is not known or acknowledged in the general public and I want to know, has this been your experience? (Interview question collects material for R.Q.4).

Data Analysis/Interpretive Processes

This was an interpretative study aimed at exploring the influence of the Holocaust on the experience of six Polish Catholic Holocaust survivors and their descendants. The research processes utilized in this study are guided by philosophical hermeneutics (see below). The aim of this approach is to examine in detail the process by which participants made sense of their individual experiences of their social world by exploring and interpreting the meanings certain psychological states, experiences, and events held for participants.

Hermeneutics is the practice of reflective interpretation and self-reflective understanding encompassing many different levels of reflection. It is the art of understanding that is used when meaning is unclear or unambiguous (Gadamer, 2006). "Understanding is to be thought of less as a subjective act than as participating in an event of tradition, a process of transmission in which past and present are constantly mediated" (Gadamer, 2004, p. 290). Heidegger, Gadamer explained, "placed hermeneutics in the center of his analysis of existence in showing that interpretation is not an isolated activity of human beings, but the basic structure of our experience of life. We are always taking something as something" (Gadamer, 1984, p. 317). Heidegger discussed the importance of history and everyday traditions; out of those traditions the process of interpretive meaning making develops.

> The projecting of the understanding has its own possibility- that of developing itself [*sich auszubilden*]. This development of understanding we call *interpretation*. In it the understanding appropriates understandingly that which is understood by it. In interpretation, understanding does not become something different. It becomes itself. Such interpretation is grounded existentially in understanding; the latter does not arise from the former. Nor

> is interpretation the acquiring of information about what is understood; it is rather the working-out of possibilities projected in understanding. In accordance with the trend of these preparatory analyses of everyday Dasein *[being/existence*], we shall pursue the phenomenon of interpretation in understanding the world—that is, in inauthentic understanding, and indeed in the mode of its genuineness. (Heidegger, 1962, p. 189)

Hermeneutics does not employ a distinct method that delineates a specific set of a priori steps from the known to the unknown. The research interpretation is thought of as an encounter taken-for-granted or unquestioned assumptions and practices of the world. Because the interpreter lives in the social world he or she is interpreting, the interpretative process starts by the researcher posing his or her approximations of the participant's understandings; this dialogue sometimes generates conflicting interpretations that are explored for new understandings (Stigliano, 1989). A hermeneutic phenomenological approach emphasizes that the research process is dynamic and the researcher plays an active role in the process (Smith & Osborn, 2003). To engage in interpretation, some hermeneuticists (e.g., Stigliano, 1989) believe at some point in the process that researchers have to intentionally distance themselves from the sociocultural, political, and historical context they find themselves in with the intention to become a historian of their present day experience or an anthropologist of their social world. Stigliano (1989) believed this distancing is done in order " to become aware of the textual nature, the discursive historical nature of the everyday as expressed in our shared practices" (p. 51). Others (e.g., Cushman, 1999; Richardson, Fowers, & Guignon, 1999) conceptualized the process as one of more deeply engaging with, rather then distancing from, the subject matter and context in question. However, both

approaches appreciate that interpretations encompasses a dialectical process of both distanciation and appropriation.

Pre-judgments

It is important that researchers gain awareness of their prejudgments or fore-meanings both prior to and throughout interpreting the text. According to Gadamer (2004),

> The important thing is to be aware of one's own bias, so that the text can present itself in all its otherness and thus assert its own truth against one's own fore-meanings….It is the tyranny of hidden prejudgments that makes us deaf to what speaks to us in tradition. (pp. 271-272)

A researcher is continually projecting while attempting to understand a text. The person initially projects a meaning for the whole text almost as soon as some form of meaning emerges. Importantly, the initial meaning emerges because the researcher is reading and analyzing the text with certain expectations with regard to meaning. It is through the process of working out these fore-projections and continually revising the meanings that emerge that is key to the process of hermeneutical understanding (Gadamer, 2004). Therefore, it was important that as a researcher I identified and acknowledged the beliefs and assumptions that I had in regard to this research project. This was an intentional and continued process throughout thematic analysis where I examined my personal beliefs and prejudgments and attempted to maintain awareness of those beliefs. In an effort to observe the process of identifying and subsequently challenging my assumptions, I kept a journal in which I recorded my perceptual and affective responses to the studies found in the review of the literature, my post-interview reflections, and my reactions throughout the process of thematic analysis.

Hermeneutic Circle

Fundamental to hermeneutic interpretation is the posing and rejecting of pertinent counter-interpretations, understanding the interplay of historical traditions and interpretations, and engaging in a process of understanding that Heidegger (1962) and Gadamer (2004) referred to as the *hermeneutic circle.* Many hermeneutists (e.g., Cushman, 1995, Gadamer, 2004) believe "researchers can only understand an object by attempting to place it within its larger context, and they can only understand the whole by studying its elements" (Cushman, 1995, p. 22). Researchers are embedded in a historical and cultural frame of reference and their ways of thinking and understanding are influenced by their social world. My attempts to understand experiences and events described by participants involved situating their narratives within the larger historical context. I constructed meaning about participants' narratives by continually examining the entirety of the events they described, the details of those events, and the aspects of their narrative in relationship to the whole event and larger historical context (Gadamer, 2004). This form of tacking between the part and the whole, between oneself and the other, the seemingly familiar and the unfamiliar describes the hermeneutic circle, the means in which interpretative understandings are gained (Cushman, 1995). "The movement of understanding is constantly from the whole to the part and back to the whole. Our task is to expand the unity of the understood meaning centrifugally" (Gadamer, 2004, p. 291). The hermeneutic circle of understanding is not a methodological circle per say it is not completely subjective nor entirely objective, rather it is a form of understanding that encompasses the interchange of the movement of tradition

and the interpreter is part of the ontological organization of understanding (Gadamer, 2004). “Tradition is not simply a permanent precondition; rather, we produce it ourselves inasmuch as we understand, participant in the evolution of tradition, and hence further determine it ourselves” (Gadamer, 2004, p. 293). “ This circle of understanding,” Heidegger (1962) explained,

> Is not an orbit in which any random kind of knowledge may move; it is the expression of the existential fore-structure of Dasein itself. It is not reduced to the level of a vicious circle, or even a circle which is merely tolerated. In the circle is hidden a positive possibility of the most primordial kind of knowing. To be sure, we genuinely take hold of this possibility only when, in our interpretation, we have understood that our first, last, and constant task is never to allow our fore-having, fore-sight [“something we see in advance” p. 191], and fore-conception [“something we grasp in advance” p. 191] to be presented to us by fancies and popular conceptions, but rather to make the scientific theme secure by working out these fore-structures in terms of things themselves. (p. 195)

Moreover, according to Gadamer,

> The process that Heidegger describes is that every revision of the fore-projection is capable of projecting before itself a new projection of meaning; rival projects can emerge side by side until it becomes clearer what the unity of meaning is; interpretation begins with fore-conceptions that are replaced with more suitable ones. This constant process of new projection constitutes the movement of understanding and interpretation. (Gadamer, 2004, p. 269)

For example, one cannot fully understand the meaning of a sentence, if one does not understand the meaning of each word in the sentence and each words relationship to other words and the meaning of the whole sentence (Cushman, personal communication, 2012). Meanings are not understood in a capricious way.

> Just as we cannot continually misunderstand the use of a word without it affecting the meaning of the whole, so we cannot stick blindly to our own fore-meaning about the thing if we want to understand the meaning of another. (Gadamer, 2004, p. 271)

The hermeneutical process becomes one of questioning — of experiences, objects, and things. According to Gadamer (2004) "It is in the play between the traditionary text's strangeness and familiarity to us, between being a historically intended, distanciated object and belonging to a tradition. The true locus of hermeneutics is this in-between" (p. 295).

It is important that the interpreter is open to the meanings in the text and of the other, of what seems unfamiliar as well as what seems so familiar that it is not questioned. This openness involves the researcher situating other meanings that emerge in relation to the whole or entirety of one's personal meanings and the relationship of oneself to it. Alternative meanings often enact a fluidity and multiplicity of interpretations and possibilities. In understanding historical and present day traditions and texts, new insights and truths become understood and known (Gadamer, 2004).

The human experience is multifaceted and historically developed and influenced, which contributes to the difficulty of being human. The analysis of texts and writing about experiences of the past are hard because no matter what historical era we are writing about we are writing through our historical understandings. History is always interpretative, we interpret the past, and we interpret through our cultural frame of reference. We always see through our framework and we cannot escape it (P. Cushman, personal communication, 2011).

Understanding the experience of Polish Catholic Holocaust survivors and their descendants' matters to me. It is part of my history, the experience of my people, and it has both motivated me to engage in this research and sustained me

during the process, and without a doubt it has influenced the way I understand the participants' texts and my experiences during this research.

Our historical traditions are embedded in our everyday ways of being, knowing, and understanding. In fact, these traditions are interwoven in the very questions and psychological phenomena that researchers consider, ask, and dismiss, and in the epistemologies we ascribe to in our attempts to understand psychological phenomenon —of the familiar and unknown, of the other, and of ourselves.

Analysis of Individual Interviews

First, with the text generated by the individual interviews, I read the whole text generated by one individual participant interview. Then, I read the participant's response to each specific interview question. Next, I re-read the transcript from the individual participant interview in its entirety. With participants that constituted a family, I read each individual family member's transcript as a whole, starting with the Holocaust survivor, then the second-generation participant, and lastly the third generation participant. I then read each family member's response to each specific interview question. Then, in an effort to step back and examine the historical and sociopolitical context from which these narratives emerge, I read a book on the Holocaust, Man's Search for Meaning by survivor Viktor Frankl, and then re-engaged through the following steps: re-read the individual interview transcript, re-read the participant's response to each interview question, and re-read the individual transcript in its entirety. I also completed the process outlined above with interviews that constituted the two families. Then, in an effort to distance myself from or more deeply engage with the present moment and in an attempt to gain a

greater understanding of the sociopolitical and historical context that the survivors were embedded in, I took a trip to the Illinois Museum and Education Center. I spent several hours witnessing the displays and listening to Jewish survivors' testimony, thereby gaining understandings of the sociopolitical climate in Poland and Germany during World War II. I then reengaged in thematic analysis as outlined above.

The hermeneutic interpretive process challenges the invisible ontology in which we are embedded in an effort to make the invisible visible. Through this process of questioning and examining the ordinary, identifying and redefining themes, and through the rejecting of plausible and relevant counter-interpretations, the researcher starts to reconstruct an understanding. In hermeneutics, this process is referred to as reconstruction (see Stigliano, 1989). These reconstructions may first appear to be isolated acts or events, and it is often through the process of reconstructing understandings that these seemingly isolated acts, experiences, or themes gain context and continuity. Reconstructions signify the final stages of a hermeneutic study. Often, an interpretation that is helpful in creating new insights and understandings emerges (Stigliano, 1989).

Journaling

I engaged in a process of journaling about my thoughts and affective responses through the dissertation process, from the development of my research questions and subsequent interview schedule to the emotional difficulty and humbleness embedded in interviews with Holocaust survivors. I used journaling as a form of documenting and understanding my experience as researcher, who is also the granddaughter of a Holocaust survivor. It was during the interview process that

I was most diligent and intentional about using journaling as a form of documenting this process. Immediately after each interview, I spent time writing about my felt sense of the interview experience along with my cognitive reactions. I also documented somatic reactions I had while engaging in the interview process and throughout textual analysis. I had dreams about the Holocaust and had an increase in what I call protection dreams. I used journaling as a form of bringing awareness and understanding to these experiences.

Ethical Considerations

There was the possibility that participants could have experienced emotional pain, discomfort, embarrassment, stress, and/or invasion of their privacy depending on the content of disclosure. There was a possibility that participants could have experienced re-traumatization from telling their personal accounts of the trauma they experienced during the Holocaust. Minimization of the emotional risks was attempted by explaining the possible negative impact associated with participating in this research during the informed consent and by monitoring participants throughout the interview gathering process. A therapist was available during the interview process to assist if participants experienced re-traumatization. Participants were given the option of the name and the contact information for one local therapist who was willing to provide one therapy session free of charge, if needed. None of the participants requested counseling services as a result of being interviewed.

Brief Personal Statement

"Get to America, my father told me. Your life will not be much better, but your children's lives will be a little better and your grandchildren's lives will be much better" (Carol, personal communication, summer 1991).

My maternal grandmother was born in Poland. During the Holocaust, when she 14 years old, she was deported to a concentration camp in Siberia for 22 months. She immigrated to the United States when she was 24 years old. It was not until I was 19 years old that she told me she had even been in a concentration camp. While we were watching a documentary on the Holocaust, she started crying and said, "It wasn't only Jewish people there, and I was there, too." We held each other as she cried and told me of the horror she experienced. She taught me to forgive, as she told me stories of her forgiveness, survival, and strength. In my experience I encountered many individuals in the United States who are unaware of the estimated 2 million Polish Catholic people killed in the Holocaust because of their ethnic identity. The invisibility of this part of her identity, and thus my identity, has greatly influenced my conceptualization of human beings and understanding of forms of oppression.

My interpretations of the participants' experiences are influenced by my identity as a Polish Catholic (non-practicing), the granddaughter of a Holocaust survivor. My identities are dynamic and continuously evolving on unconscious and conscious levels and are embedded in a political, sociocultural, and historical context. I believe self-awareness and a continuous curiosity contributed to a path of self-discovery while completing this project.

Results

Introduction of Results

This interpretative study explored the effects of the Holocaust on six Polish Catholic survivors and their descendants. Semi-structured interviews were completed with 12 participants; the sample was comprised of 6 survivors, 4 second generation participants and 2 third generation participants. This chapter reviews the results of the textual interpretation. Demographic information was acquired through participant self-reports (see Appendix D) and displayed in the description of sample (Section 1). This is followed by an analysis of participants' demographic information (Section 2), and the interview structure (Section 3). Next, the themes are explored in depth (Section 4) and are presented in accordance with themes for each generation, that is the survivor (4A), second generation (4B), and third generation (4C) followed by intergenerational (4D) and second level themes (Section 5). Themes that emerged in response to research questions (1–4) are also presented (Section 6). Within each section, themes are resituated in the historical context in which they were originally experienced. The Results chapter is organized in the following sections:

Section 1: Description of Sample
Section 2: Analysis of Demographics
Section 3: Interview Structure
Section 4: Responses in Terms of Themes
    A). Survivors
    B). Second Generation
    C). Third Generation
    D). Intergenerational Themes
Section 5: Second Level Themes
Section 6: Themes organized by Research Questions (1-4)

Section 1: Description of Sample

The sample for this study was composed of 12 participants. Six of the participants were Polish Catholic Holocaust survivors, four of the participants were children of survivors, and two were grandchildren of survivors. I interviewed two families headed by a survivor. Each family was composed of the survivor, one of their children (i.e. a second-generation participant) and one of their grandchildren (i.e. a third generation participant). All participants in this research study live in a small town in the midwestern United States, where they are part of a strong Polish community comprised of other Polish Catholic survivors and Polish immigrants. Pseudonyms are used in place of numeric codes to identify participants and to protect their confidentiality.

Survivors. Anna is an 86-year-old Polish Catholic who woman was born in a rural town in Poland. She was 14 years old when Nazi soldiers forcibly took her from a Catholic Church while she was attending mass. Anna was separated from her family, deported by train to Germany, where she was imprisoned as a forced laborer for the German Reich. Anna was imprisoned for three and half years on a work farm owned by a German soldier in Houseaii, Germany. When World War II ended, American soldiers liberated Anna and others who had been enslaved on the farm. Anna was sent to a displaced persons (DP) camp in Augsburg, Germany. Anna remained in the DP camp for six years; this is where she met her husband, married, and gave birth to her first child Irina. Anna's husband was Polish Catholic and also a survivor of the Holocaust. He endured forced labor by the German Reich. Anna has two children, five grandchildren, and eight great grandchildren. She currently lives

with her daughter Irina in a small town in the midwest. She is now retired. She identified her socioeconomic status as *poor*, and said that she has held various jobs in the United States, most of which were centered on preparing and baking Polish food.

Martha is an 87-year-old Polish Catholic woman who was born in Turek, Poland. She was 15 years old when she was captured by Nazi soldiers and deported by train to a concentration camp in Treblinka in German-occupied Poland. Martha was then taken to a labor camp in Kaliis in German-occupied Poland. At the labor camp, a SS officer chose Martha for slave labor on his farm. Martha endured forced labor on two different farms owned by SS officers for a total of four years. After World War II, Martha was liberated by American soldiers and sent to a displaced persons (DP) camp in Augsburg, Germany. Later she was sent to a DP camp in Amberg, Germany. Martha spent a total of six years in these two DP camps. Martha met her husband at the DP camp, married, and had her first child Kristina. She is currently widowed; her deceased husband was Polish Catholic and survived imprisonment in two different concentration camps where he was forced to extract the gold from the teeth of those who were murdered in the camp. Martha arrived in the United States in 1952 and gained employment as a cook. Martha has five children, seven grandchildren, and twelve great grandchildren.

Osnabruck is an 81-year-old Polish Catholic male. He was born Belchatow, in the town of Balavto, near the center of Poland. Osnabruck had an older brother who was 18 years old when he was captured by a Nazi soldier on the way to the store and taken to a labor camp. Osnabruck was 9 years old when Nazi soldiers invaded his

family's home at 3:00 a.m.; his family was forced onto a cattle train to Osnaburg, Germany where Osnabruck and his parents endured forced labor on a German farm for three years. American soldiers liberated Osnabruck and other forced laborers on the farm. When the war ended, Osnabruck and his parents spent three years in a DP camp. Osnabruck and his parents immigrated to the United States in 1951; at that time, they were reunited with Osnabruck 's brother. Osnabruck is married to a Polish Catholic woman whom he met at a Polish community sponsored event in the United States; they have five children and seven grandchildren. Osnabruck earned his high school diploma after immigrating to the United States. He joined the United States Army. He was promoted to the status of corporal within 17 months and was employed as a tool and die designer.

Mary is an 87-year-old Polish Catholic woman who was born in a rural area of Poland. She was 14 years old when Nazi soldiers captured her and her family. The Nazi soldiers invaded her house at 4:00 a.m.; she and her family were captured and deported to a labor camp in Reichsburg, Germany. After a physical examination by medical doctors working for the German Reich, Mary was sent to a labor camp in Germany where she was imprisoned for four years. When the war ended, American soldiers liberated Mary and other prisoners in the camp, and she was sent to a DP camp in Germany before immigrating to the United States. Mary met her husband at the DP camp; he was also a survivor. In the United States, they married, had two children and five grandchildren. She was employed as a cook and in a Polish bakery.

Carol is an 86-year-old Polish Catholic woman who was born in Stefanowka, Poland where she lived with her family on a farm. Her father was a member of the

Polish intelligentsia and was a mayor of their town. Carol was 14 years old when the Russian soldiers invaded her family's house at 3:00 a.m.; they forced them from their home and deported them to a concentration camp in Siberia. Carol and members of her family were imprisoned in the concentration camp Lesny Chrystoforo in Siberia for 22 months. English soldiers liberated the concentration camp where Carol and her family were imprisoned, and it was during the liberation that Carol's youngest sister, who was eight years old, died. After the camp was liberated, Carol was separated from her family and sent to a girl's school in Palestine. She later immigrated to England where she joined the Royal Air Force of the British Armed Forces working as an airplane mechanic. She met her husband in England; he was also a Polish Catholic survivor. Her future husband was 17 years old when the Nazis hung his father, who was a Polish officer. Shortly after, he was taken to a concentration camp, where he was accused of being a political spy. After the war, Carol and her husband married while in the British Air Force and they had their first child in England. In 1950, Carol and her husband immigrated to the United States. In the U.S., Carol held various factory jobs and her husband worked on the railroad. They had four children (two of whom are now deceased), and her two living children are aged 60 and 57 years old.

Gina is an 84-year-old Polish Catholic woman. She was born in Lida, Poland, which during World War II was occupied by the Russians. Gina was a child when Russian soldiers invaded her family's home at 4 o'clock a.m. and took them to a concentration camp in Siberia. At that time, Gina's mother had typhus and died soon after. Gina and her siblings were separated from their parents and sent to an

orphanage in Russia. A few months later, when the German and Russian alliance dissolved, she and her siblings were released from the orphanage and sent to live with her father and new stepmother at their home in Poland. Gina was 14½ years old when Nazi soldiers captured her a second time. She was on an errand for her stepmother and was walking to a store in her hometown when Nazi soldiers captured her and deported her on a cattle train to a labor camp in Germany. At the labor camp, German farmers came and took prisoners for forced labor. Gina endured forced labor for four years on a farm in the village of Clainhartmansdorf. Gina was liberated by American soldiers and sent to a DP camp for six years. She met her husband at the camp, married, and had her only child there. She had spent a total of ten years in Germany in forced labor and in the DP camp. Gina immigrated to the United States in 1952 with her husband and child. She gained employment as a cook for a local Polish organization. Gina's husband and her son joined the United States military. Gina is currently a widow and has two grandchildren.

Second generation. Irina is a 64-year-old Polish Catholic woman. She was born in a DP camp in Augsburg, Germany to Anna and her husband. Irina and her parents immigrated to the United States in 1951 when she was five years old. Irina was married to a Polish Catholic male with whom she had two children (age 37 and 41). Irina is currently divorced, employed as a banker, and identified her socioeconomic status as middle class. Irina is active in taking care of her mother, Anna, who currently lives with her.

Kristina is a 61-year-old Polish Catholic woman. Kristina was born in a DP camp in Amberg, Germany to Martha and her husband. Kristina and her parents

immigrated to the United Stated in 1952 when Kristina was 4 years old. She spoke English for the first time when she attended 1st grade in the United States. Kristina is married to a Polish Catholic male and has three children (age 37, 34, and 28 years). Kristina completed high school, is currently employed as a sales clerk, and identified her socioeconomic status as middle class.

Jean is a 61-year-old Polish Catholic woman. She was born in Brooklyn, New York to the parents of two Polish Catholic survivors. Both of her parents were detained in labor camps during World War II. Her father was imprisoned at a labor camp in Brakel-Steinheim, Germany, and her mother was imprisoned a labor camp somewhere in Germany. Her mother was forced to cook for the German soldiers in the labor camp. Jean spoke only Polish until she attended 1st grade where she was exposed to English. Jean completed high school, and she is currently employed in wholesale operations. She is married to a Polish Catholic male. Jean and her husband do not have any children.

Tomec is a 51-year-old Polish Catholic male. He is Osnabruck's son. Tomec was born in a small town in the Midwest. He identifies as heterosexual and was married to a woman with whom he had two daughters (age 21 and 18). Tomec is currently divorced. He earned his Bachelor's degree, is employed as an industrial engineer, and identified his socioeconomic status as upper middle class.

Third generation. Josephina is a 34 year-old Polish Catholic woman. She is first generation American and was born to Kristina and her husband in a small town in the Midwest. She is married to a male, and currently has three children (age 5,

fraternal twins, age 3 years). Josephina earned her Bachelor's degree, is employed as a process manager and identified her socioeconomic status as upper class.

Kasha is a 37 year-old Caucasian female of Polish Catholic descent. She is married to a male and has five children (age 13 years, 10 years, 9 years, 8 years and 7 months old). Kasha completed her Bachelor's degree, and she identified her socioeconomic status as middle class. She is currently staying at home to take care of her five children.

Section 2: Analysis of Demographics

The sample for this study composed of 12 participants. Six of the participants were Polish Catholic Holocaust survivors, 4 of the participants were children of survivors, and 2 were grandchildren of survivors.

Gender. Ten of twelve participants (83%) were female and two of twelve participants (17%) were male.

Ethnicity. Twelve of twelve participants (100%) identified their ethnicity as Polish.

Sexual orientation. Seven of twelve participants (58%) identified their sexual orientation as heterosexual. Five of twelve (42%) participants did not indicate their sexual orientation on the demographic from.

Age. Average age for survivor participants was 84.8 years old, with a range of 80 to 87 years. Average age for second generation participants was 59.25 years, with a range in age from 51 to 64 years. Average age for third generation participants was 35.5 years, with a range of 34 to 37 years.

Table 1.1

Age of Participants

Survivors		Second Generation		Third Generation	
Age	N	Age	N	Age	N
87	2	64	1	37	1
86	1	61	2	34	1
84	2	51	1		
81	1				

Table 1.2

Highest Educational Degree completed

Survivors		Second Generation		Third Generation	
Age	N	Age	N	Age	N
2nd grade	1	High School	3	Bachelors Degree	2
5th grade	1	Bachelors Degree	1		
7th grade	2				
*H.S. Diploma	1				

*Survivor earned high school diploma after immigrating to the United States.

Section 3: Overview and Structure of the Interview

All interviews were conducted in a confidential location that was mutually convenient for both the participants and myself. Participants were given the option of having the interview take place in a therapy office space I had secured or in the participant's home. Twelve of twelve participants (100%) requested that I come to their home for the interview. When the participant and I were seated, I described the purpose of the study and my personal and familial connection to the subject matter (see Appendix A). I then obtained the participant's informed consent to participate in the study (see Appendix B). Then I asked participants to fill out a basic demographic form to obtain information about gender, race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, sexual orientation, and age (see Appendix C). In two of the six

interviews with survivors (33.3%), one of their children (second generation participants) were present and assisted in translating the survivor's responses from Polish to English and filled out the demographic information for the survivor. After obtaining demographic information, I proceeded with the introduction to the interview (see Appendix D). Then I utilized the interview schedule and interview questions (Appendix E) to generate a dialogue with each participant. I adhered to the interview schedule closely in an effort to maintain consistency for each participant; however, throughout the data collection stage and interview process, I tried to remain open to new and different topics and possibilities that emerged. The interview structure allowed opportunities for participants to show me Holocaust-related materials. Each interview was audio taped and professionally transcribed. At the time of the interview, participants were given the opportunity to choose a pseudonym that would be used to identify their interview record.

Importance of home. Four of the six survivors (67%) gave me a tour of their homes and described the hard work they had put into their homes. These tasks ranged from securing tile, painting, wallpapering, to completing all of the interior construction once the frame was built. Survivors Osnabruck, Mary, Gina, and Carol all described and placed much value on the work they had put into their homes and their ability to have a home and transform it with their own hands. The survivors and their descendants all described possessing a strong work ethic.

Importance of familial relationships. Six of six survivors (100%) placed importance on the role of family. During the interview, three of six survivors (50%) emphasized the importance of familial relationships and showed me pictures of

their spouses, children, and grandchildren before the interview started. All described a sense of pride in their children and grandchildren's accomplishments. Two of the six survivors (33%) Martha and Anna were interviewed in the presence of their daughters, second-generation participants Kristina and Irina. One survivor was interviewed in the presence of his wife. During these interviews, it was the participants who stated that having family members present during the interview process was important to them. Families of the survivors appeared to be protective of the survivor and it is my sense that some of the survivors who participated in the interview process did so in large part as a direct result of the urging of their children. For instance, when I arrived at Kristina's house to interview her, I was surprised by the presence of her mother, one of the survivors interviewed in this study. Prior to the interview, Kristina had expressed that likely I would only be able to interview her and that her mother did not talk about her Holocaust related experiences with others. I also believe that some of the survivors placed trust in me because I am an offspring of a member of the Polish community. The interview structure made room for participants to show and discuss material objects with the examiner. Osnabruck spontaneously showed the researcher a picture that he and his family had taken to send to his brother who was imprisoned in a labor camp. Osnabruck described the day he and his father acquired his new suit, which was tailored specifically for the picture. As Osnabruck recalled the day he traveled to take the picture and send it to his brother, he displayed a great deal of emotion that appeared to reflect both sadness and a sense of pride.

With tears running down his face, he expressed that,

> The objective of the new… suit… was because we want to make a picture, family picture. I didn't have any. I wasn't dressed good. Everything was too tight on me because the objective was to send a picture. We went to photographer fast and then made a picture to send to my brother in Germany so he, at least, could have some pictures. I never forget my family….[showing photograph]That is my mother and dad, that is me and that is the suit that was made for me. (Osnabruck, survivor, 10:21)

The role of food during the interview. Eleven of twelve participants (91%) interviewed offered me food and drink. The importance of the role of food in the participants' interpersonal interactions manifested during the interview and emerged during the textual analysis and interpretation. It seemed that the offering and consuming of food was particularly important for the interpersonal connection with the survivors. In fact, two of six survivors (33%) interviewed gave me food (i.e. kiflis, and pierogies) to take with me at the end of the interview.

Transformation of liberators' parachutes. Three of six survivors (50%) interviewed described how parachutes from the soldiers who liberated them were transformed into different items that hold potential symbolism a wedding dress, a coat, and a pillow. For instance, one second-generation participant recalled how her mother wore a wedding dress made out of a parachute used by the American soldiers who liberated her and other labor camp survivors from the Nazi regime.

> My mother told me that when the American soldiers parachuted in, the women would want to get the parachutes because they were made out of silk. And then they would make a wedding dress out of it. And then they would pass the wedding dress on from one girl to another as she was getting married. And they didn't have buttons. So what they did was they basically looked for small stones that were similar in shape and wrapped a fabric around it and tied it off with a string and that was their buttons. (Jean, second generation, 10:20)

One second-generation participant described how the survivors she grew up around, including her mother, transformed the parachutes of American soldiers into important items of clothing, such as a wedding dress or a coat.

> Like my mom was given a blanket by Army soldiers and the American soldiers and [she] made a coat out of it…the parachute wedding dress. (Kristina, second generation, 41:00)

Survivor Carol described how she made a pillowcase from a parachute from the soldiers who liberated her and her family. This pillowcase was the gift she gave to me at the end of the interview (see photo, Appendix G).

Gifts given to researcher. Three of the six survivors (50%) interviewed gave me a gift at the end of the interview. Carol gave me a pillow case made out of a parachute (see Appendix G), Gina gave me a knitted pink and white house (see Appendix H), and Mary gave me a knitted pot holder that she made in the shape of a dress (see Appendix I). I understand that it is unusual for researchers to accept gifts from participants and it is important from me to acknowledge that all three gifts seemed to be highly symbolic and saturated with meaning; they were hand made by participants and were of little monetary value. These three survivors conveyed to me a sense of pride, in part, about telling their story. Survivors conveyed to me that these gifts were given as a means of expressing gratitude for the interview, for my having taken interest in their experiences. I was the first researcher who took interest in their Holocaust related experiences and asked them to share their story.

Section Four: Responses in Terms of Themes

In this section, themes are organized by topics that emerged for each participant: survivor, second generation, third generation, followed by

intergenerational and second level themes. Within each section, themes are situated in the historical time period that they were experienced by participants.

Section 4A: Survivors and the years of 1938-1945: The Nazi regime and a Sociopolitical Climate of Terror. All survivors (100%) described a sociopolitical environment of terror, dehumanization, and unpredictable violence during the Holocaust. During the years the Nazi regime was in power and persecuted and enslaved the Poles, the following themes emerged for survivors: 1) Abduction: the experience of being taken; 2) the train ride; 3) the loss of family; 4) witnessing the killing and unpredictable violence of the Nazi soldiers; 5) the continual threat to survival; 6) the fear of not knowing; 7) survival during the Holocaust; 8) acts of humanity.

Abduction: The experience of being taken. Six of six survivors (100%) described the experience of being captured by Nazi soldiers as *being taken*. The perceptual experience of being taken by Nazi soldiers was embedded in the language participants used to describe being captured and enslaved by the Nazis. The dehumanization inherit in being taken by Nazi soldiers was conveyed by each of the survivors interviewed. Three of six survivors (50%) described attempts by themselves or family members to hide from the Nazis in an effort to evade being captured.

> They had heard about the Germans snatching up kids and taking them to work in the camps and stuff like that. And so one day they were, her and her siblings and cousins were in the woods behind her parents' house looking for places to hide that the Germans should happen to come. (Martha, survivor, translating by second generation, 01:14)

> They divided Poland and we was on the Russian side. And every time the plane passes we were hiding, you know, in potatoes [holes]… In the ditch,

> something like this... We were hiding from airplane…. [We] can't hide [in the house]…Because they're bombing the house. (Carol, survivor, 06:32)

> My brother's godfather came to our house and told my father to run from Russian [soldiers} because we are on a list. We are going to go to Siberia. So, my father went and got some money because the Polish money wasn't working. You could buy nothing where we live in our city, city, Lida. And so he went to his friends and got this money because on the other side of Poland, because the money was okay. So, he left 7 o'clock and 4 o'clock at night the Russians came to pick us up to take us to Siberia. But they couldn't because my mom had typhus and this is a very bad sickness. People die from that. And they [Russian soldiers] left. They ask us and we were telling them we didn't see father for long time. We don't know where he is and things like that… They [Russian] took me and my brother to orphanage. (Gina, survivor, 00:45)

One survivor described how she and her siblings made plans to hide in the woods near her family's house. On the day that Nazi soldiers came through her town of Turek in Poland, Martha's siblings and cousins were able follow the escape plan and run, but Martha described the experience of being paralyzed or frozen with fear.

> I was so scared. I mean I couldn't run you know…. I was so scared to run. (Martha, survivor, 01:45)

> And that day they heard the trucks coming through the woods and everybody scattered but her. She froze in her spot and so they snatched her up. They did take her to her parents' house and let her take a couple of personal things…They surrounded the house so she wouldn't be able to run away…They almost killed her father because he was trying to stop them from taking her. (Kristina, second generation, translation for survivor, 01:47)

Three of six survivors (50%) interviewed described that the Nazi soldiers invaded their family's home in the middle of the night or in the early morning hours and that they were forcibly taken from their homes.

> And then when they took us...When they came over, picked us up at four o'clock, February 10, 1940. They pick us up, you know, four o'clock in the morning and take us for the train. (Carol, survivor, 07:09)

> [In] '42 at 3:00 in the morning, the German soldier knocked on the door…He told my dad... There were just mom, dad and I... He told my dad to have the

> family ready to travel in 15 minutes. They were going from house to house. Some houses they pass, but some houses were on the list for people to be taken out. And they took us to Balavto only five kilometers. We went through a medical screening by a doctor and we qualified as healthy people. After the medical screening, they put us on a train, it took two days to travel to Osnaburg, Germany… luckily we didn't end up behind barbed wires but put us on the farm. (Ted, survivor, 01:06)

> [At] 4 o'clock at night the Russians came to pick us up to take us to Siberia. But they couldn't because my mom had typhus and this is a very bad sickness…. They ask us and we were telling them we didn't see father for long time. We don't know where he is and things like that… They [Russian] took me and my brother to orphanage. (Gina, survivor, 1:00)

Mary was 14 years old when Nazi soldiers invaded her village in Poland and captured her family and other Poles and forcibly took them to a labor camp.

> The war started in 1939 and then later on, one day, the German [Nazis] came to the village and in the trucks and they have guns and they was singing... Not singing but talking to people, give us one hour to pack. And then they said, "Now you start packing and we'll be back and we're gonna take you to Germany," to the train station but we walk like 10 miles...with the bags and everything. For the old people, there were some cars, few cars going, but the young kids like I was there, single girl and everything thing, so we all walk and then to station and then put us on the train to Germany…you know something [pause] and then they took us to Germany over there then they already had the place for us in a German camp. (Mary, survivor, 00:39)

Gina was released from a Russian orphanage when the Russian and German alliance dissolved and was walking to the store when Nazi soldiers captured her a second time. She recalled the day she was taken and how her family did not discover she was captured until she was already on a cattle train to Germany.

> There was no orphanage when German came. I went and lived with my mom, my step-mom and their two children. Until one time, my mama asked me to go to store to buy something and the German caught me. I was 14 ½ years old. By the time my mom and my sister find out, I was already on the way to Germany. And the men came and some farmers came and picked some people to work. And I was very young. I was 14½ years old. The farmers took me so I went to... We went to the farm (Gina, survivor, 04:11)

Anna recalled that she was in a Catholic church with other Polish Catholics attending mass when Nazi soldiers surrounded the church captured her and other children they marked fit for forced labor. Anna was taken to a labor camp where German farmers chose prisoners for forced labor.

> She was in church and they took...They were taking these girls to work on farms and she was a healthy girl so they took her away…. They just came in. They owned everything. I mean, they thought they did. (Irina, second generation, assisted in translation, 17:57)

The train ride. Six of six survivors (100%) interviewed described the train ride and humiliation they experienced in cramped and uncomfortable conditions as they were forced onto a train intended to transport livestock and deported to concentration camps and labor camps or to situations they would be imprisoned as forced laborers for the German Reich. This theme emerged spontaneously for each participant. One survivor described that she was with her entire family when she was captured and deported to Siberia on a cattle train. Carol described the dehumanizing conditions of the train ride, how animals were removed from the cattle train and their excrement still remained. She recalled that she and her family members were given only salty fish to eat and no water during the train ride. She recalled when Nazi soldiers chopped off a prisoner's hand when he tried make water out of snow.

> They moved the cow from the train and pushed us in the train. There was shit and it was still stinky and it was cold. And then the train... The boards wasn't too close together, there was holes, and they give us salty fish…. they give us sardine, salty. It was so that you can shake that off, and you're hungry and you eat. And nothing to drink, no water nothing. One guy he stick the hand to get some snow. They [Nazi soldiers] cut his hands off. (Carol, survivor, 07:15)

Three of six survivors (50%) described the humiliation inherent in being forced to defecate in the middle of the train, in front of the other prisoners.

> [Nazi soldiers] put me on a train and took me to Germany. They didn't transport us in the regular train. It was a train that they transport animals. There was lots of people, little bit straw and a bucket to pee and poop in there, in the middle. And took two weeks to get to... [the labor camp]. (Gina, survivor, 4:15)

> And no toilet. And there was family, you know. If you wanna go to the bathroom, they make a hole in a the middle…Yeah and get a blanket and some family hold the blanket. (Carol, survivor, 8:20)

> She always talked about the train to Treblinka and how it was on the train. It was a cattle car and she said for the whole trip there they stood because there were so many people packed in there. And she said there were barrels for the bathroom, if you could. If you couldn't get to them, you just went there. And I don't know how far Treblinka is from where my mother's home is. (Kristina, second generation, assisted in translation, 45:00)

One survivor described the dehumanizing conditions of the train ride and how the train was used to deport human beings in conditions meant for livestock. Anna recalled how she and other prisoners slept on the floor of the train, which was often the same place in which they were forced to eliminate bodily waste.

> We were on a train just like for cows or horses, you know that kind of train. No. We're sleeping on the floor, sometimes with straw and sometimes no straw…. sleeping where you went to the bathroom or (where] we were sitting and that train brings you to Germany and then a farmer come and pick [forced laborers] who he wanted. (Anna, survivor, 02:48)

The loss of family. Six of six survivors (100%) interviewed were children (ages 9-15 years) when Nazi soldiers abducted them and they became prisoners of the Nazi regime. The loss of their family was a theme that emerged for six of six survivors (100%) interviewed, and three of six survivors (50%) displayed feelings of grief and suffering and were tearful as they discussed the loss of their family. Four of six survivors (67%) were never reunited with their family of origin after the war.

Survivors Gina and Mary never saw their parents or siblings again; neither survivor ever returned to Poland.

> She never saw her parents when she left…. Never saw them. She finally found that one brother was killed. (Irina, second generation, assisted in translation, 17:10)

> He was in the service, my brother. He was hurt. I didn't know where he was shot. He was kind of you know sick for a long time. They [Nazis] wanted to kill him at the woods. He crawled home. He was killed, my oldest brother. The youngest one, he was walking with the army. He couldn't do it so he skipped. (Anna, survivor, 19:48)

Gina described the last time she had knowledge of what happened to her father during World War II.

> We all talked when my father died when he was crossing the border. [He was with] some of his friends, he went with other friends, and he was from Warsaw." (Gina, survivor, 11:05)

Two of six survivors (33%) described never seeing their parents again and having contact with one of their siblings only decades after World War II ended (Carol, survivor, transcript 15:25, II; Martha, survivor, transcript 01:45) Carol recalled that some of her family died in the concentration camp due to starvation and that her youngest sister, who was eight years old at the time of liberation, died shortly after the camp was liberated (Carol, survivor, 08:10, II). After she and her family were liberated, Carol was separated from her family and sent to a girl's school in Palestine (Carol, survivor, 19:35). Carol never saw her parents again; she has had contact with the only brother who survived the Holocaust.

> In Palestine, Jerusalem, where Jesus was born, where Jesus will die, you know I was over there... No family. Nobody got family over there. (Carol, survivor, 22:27)

Martha, who was 14 years old when the Nazi's captured her, did not have contact with her family for 25 years. Her younger sister, who was born after the Nazis captured Martha, started to write Martha in the United States.

> Yeah, there for a long time, they didn't know if her family was still intact, if anybody else was missing…. You know, leaving your family, getting taken away from your parents at such a young age. Yes, she cries a lot. (Kristina, second generation, 13:15)

Kristina discussed the emotional suffering her mother experiences from being forcibly separated from her family and how her mother's suffering impacts her.

> I can't imagine being away from my parents and family the way she was away from hers. I just can't fathom how you could go on with your life not seeing these people, being around [pause] Not knowing them is a better word because she, my God, the first time she went back to Poland was 25 years after she was gone and so she didn't know them anymore. They were just... She knew them for 15 years when she was home and then to be gone for 25 years [pause] and try to get reacquainted with these people that are your family, your parents and your brothers and sisters. (Kristina, second generation, 33:26)

Osnabruck displayed grief and tearfulness when he recalled his brother being captured, separated from his family, and sent to a labor camp. He and his parents remained on the same work farm together and Osnabruck was reunited with his brother after the labor camps in Germany were liberated.

> But what they have done... The Nazis were terrible. For example, there were only two of us, myself as a younger son, and my brother... I was 9, my brother was already 18 years old, and my mom sent him into the town of Balavto to get something that she needed for the housework, whatever it was. I don't know what item she sent him after. But he never returned home. He was 18… in this case, a civilian walks up to my brother on the street in Balavto and had a pistol in his pocket and he said, "You come with me." My brother never returned home again. He was taken, and he didn't come home. He was taken to Germany as a forced laborer and put behind barbed wire. And he worked in a factory that produced batteries for the tanks and whatever... It was the war machine, Hitler's war machine. And he had to work. They gave him maybe one cup of soup a day and he was hungry continuously. (Osnabruck, survivor, 03:39)

Witnessing the killing and unpredictable violence of the Nazi soldiers.

Two of six survivors (33%) interviewed Martha and Anna spoke about the senseless and unpredictable killing they witnessed perpetuated by the Nazi soldiers. Martha described witnessing the German soldiers killing Polish people and livestock at random. Second generation Kristina, who translated for her mother stated that,

> When the Germans first came to Poland; they were just shooting at everything and anything randomly…. Just shooting. (Martha, survivor, 15:10)

Martha recalled the day Nazi soldiers came to her village of Turek in Poland. She was at her Aunt's house helping her with her cousins, when the Nazi soldiers came through their town and started killing people and animals at random.

> And my Aunt lived over there. I was going to her to help her kids, then [Nazi soldiers] started shooting. Then that is the German are coming. Oh, boy! Playing [music, and] command [everyone and] everything together, people gather, cows, horses, everything together. [To see] How much people left over there. Yeah, I was saved. Thank God. (Martha, survivor, 15:16)

Martha described how the Nazis left the bodies of those who they murdered, unburied, where they were killed.

> Whoever was on the road, whatever, people, cows, horses, they just randomly shot everybody and just left them all laid there and then, go on their merry way…. She was staying at her aunt's house, with her aunt, and she saw all that happened. (Martha, survivor, 16:07)

Anna described witnessing the Nazi soldiers killing people and stealing goods and livestock of the Polish people and recalled hearing stories of atrocities the Nazis committed; this included the Nazi soldiers burying Poles alive in their basements (Anna, survivor, 21:17).

One survivor described witnessing Nazi soldiers murdering Jewish Poles in her community. When Gina recalled what she witnessed she displayed great sadness

and tearfulness. While crying and describing what she witnessed, Gina repeatedly apologized to me for her emotion. Gina was 12 years old when Nazi soldiers forced her to watch as they tortured and murdered Polish Jewish men, women, and children in her community. She recalled how the Nazis forced the Jews to stand on the street corner of the house she grew up in and hold their hands over their heads throughout the day and night, before Nazi soldiers killed them by running their tanks over the people.

> And German, they were as bad as Russian, even worse to some people. And they catch all the Jewish people, put them in the ghettos. We live on the corner of [polish street name] and corner of [polish street name] Okay, because we live not too far from airport. And they will catch Jewish people and they have to stand on the corner like this [hands above their head in a triangle position]…. The Jewish people the whole night. And then big tank came. And they have to lay down on the street and the tank ran over them. Blood was over our house because we live on the corner. Killed, killed all those people, that tank…. Yeah. I've seen that. I still, sometimes, I wake up and I can hear the screams. Little kids. (Gina, survivor, 02:20)

Gina explained that she still experiences feelings of intense sadness and sorrow about the violence and killing she witnessed.

> I was 12, 13 years old and I've seen those people standing there for hours and hours and then they had lay on the street and go back. Blood was spraying all over the house and everything and you washed the house and the stains were still there. Even my mother painted one wall and it still couldn't cover that. [Crying] I'm sorry, I'm sorry…. I'm sorry. But the Russian were bad too. They kicked everybody to Siberia... Lots of people to Siberia and most of them died…. Yeah, most of them died. (Gina, survivor, 0:35, II)

Two of six survivors (33%) discussed hearing about Polish Catholics being taken from church. In fact, Nazi soldiers captured one of six (17%) survivors interviewed in this study while she was in a Catholic church.

> Mrs. Rose was only 14 or 15. She was in church and they grab her then from the church…. They were surrounding... While the people were in church, they surrounded the church and they never allowed anybody to go back home.

> They just screamed while the people went home. The people they wanted, they look strong, performed work, they took them without allowing them to go with their own belongings, nothing. (Osnabruck, survivor, 12:56)

> They don't talk about people that the German [Nazis] will come to church, close the doors and pick out young people and take to work. Nobody talks about it, no…. They just take abled people that could work. They took from church. They, the city is housed by the house and then you have a key to go upstairs to the apartments. So, if they close the street then people in this area have no way to escape. So they will pick out able to work people, put them on the train, and take them too. And politics they sent to concentration camp, they did. (Gina, survivor, 36:05)

The continual threat to survival. Five of six survivors (83%) described the threat of violence and the campaign of terror and dehumanization enacted by the Nazis and explained that the violence held the message that Poles were expendable and the threat of death was consistently present. One survivor described how the Nazis used murder and violence as a form of communicating to the Poles their inferiority and expendability while ensuring Nazi dominance and control.

> They hung one fellow and had everybody look. This is what can happen to you. I mean, when you come right down to it, their lives were constantly in jeopardy if they didn't do what they were told or behaved, listened, or whatever. The threat of losing your life was always there. (Martha, survivor, 04:30)

Martha described how the Nazi mentality that treated Poles as an expendable work force and inferior to the German race; it was evident in the way she and other prisoners were treated.

> I know what I want to say; they didn't acknowledge these people as humans. They just tossed them around like garbage. They didn't care about their feelings or anything and my mom said whenever she thought about that, that bothered her and that hurt her that they were treated so badly. They just weren't acknowledged as people. They were just work force, whatever. Expendable, they were all expendable. (Martha, survivor, 21:00, II)

> [I] was never beaten, but [I] was raped and… was constantly reminded that, "I could kill you. You're nothing to me. You're expendable. There's plenty

> more where you came from," because the camps were all full of people. There were plenty more there. (Martha, survivor, 52:31)

Three of six survivors (50%) described experiencing the Nazi mentality of enslavement and having experiences that were humiliating and cruel. With agitation and trembling hands, Carol described that in an environment of starvation, acquiring food was a part of daily survival and that a Nazi soldier gave fresh bread to a dog while he mocked her and another prisoner of the camp.

> They [Nazis] didn't ask you. They just told you to go. The snow was six foot [deep at the concentration camp] and they put [prisoners] every place you know that they [the Nazis] need. Me and this one girl, we go and saw the wood for the stove. He was bakery [baker], you know. The guy was at bakery. He baked some bread. And, you know, he was so nice, take the bread out from the oven and he got big dog and he throw pieces and throw it for the dog. We want to kill the dog because we want that piece of bread and he throw it [pause] and he laugh. (Carol, survivor, 09:44)

With a lowered voice and tears in her eyes, Mary said:

> You are their slave and you do straight, so nothing happened to you. So you work, work, pray, and work and don't show too much that you don't like it. No, you just cover everything because you're not working and you're not thinking about today, you're thinking for tomorrow and the day after. So you just try to be good because you know that it's gonna be tomorrow day too. You don't have a chance. They make their choice and you just have to do it. (Mary, survivor, 00:49 II)

Martha described abusive experiences where the Nazi soldiers humiliated her and other prisoners.

> And then they took… [me] to a camp that was in Kalisz. And in that camp was where they had made the young girls disrobe. Just like you see in some of the TV programs, they made… [us] run around in a circle in front of the German soldiers and they were picking out the ones that were the healthy ones, the ones they were gonna to hold on to…They shaved… [our] heads…. deloused [us]. They put… [us] in the showers…. Then… [we] stayed. They took …[us] to the labor camps in Germany and then put [us] where they wanted…[us] to work. (Martha, survivor, 03:14)

The fear of not knowing. The Nazis believed that the Polish people were racially inferior and allocated them for enslavement and eventually annihilation; they utilized methods of degradation, enslavement, exposure, and threat of violence. Six of six survivors (100%) interviewed were witness to and heard stories of senseless and unpredictable violence and killing that evoked an embodied terror connected to the unknown.

> You can't. You know, what those people were put through, how they had to live. It's just the fear. Oh my God! (Kristina, second generation, 14:29)

> Whoever got in the Germans way, they.... They didn't hesitate to just line you up against the wall and shoot you. It didn't matter…. They got to see all of that and yeah, and that put the fear of not knowing. (Kristina, second generation, 26:03)

Osnabruck described experiencing fear and that he would tremble in reaction to seeing Nazi soldiers or materials that produced an association with the Nazi soldiers, such as their uniforms.

> If you saw a black uniform, because that is the Nazis they wore their black uniform with the rest. You could help but tremble because you were scared because that man had the right... If he just didn't like you, how you look like, he could have the right to take the pistol out and shoot you to death and just report it to the authorities that he just shot somebody. (Osnabruck, survivor, 32:28)

Second generation Jean explained that her mother experienced terror and fear in response to police officers in the United States. She recalled how one time her brother was lost and how her mother was terrified to approach a police officer for help, given the embodied response of terror she experienced in association with the police officers uniform.

> I remember one time my brother was in a parade and he somehow wandered off from the parade and my mother did not want to tell a policeman that she lost her son because, of course, in Germany, they took your children away. So

> that was the last thing that she wanted to do approach a policeman, they were afraid of them…. So it turned out my brother walked all the way home…. Like I said, they feared the police… I would say that, I probably saw a lot of that until maybe the late '60s. Maybe that's when they realized, by that time I was older and I was telling them that the police were supposed to help, not hurt us. (Jean, second generation, 12:01)

Survival–during the Holocaust. Three of the six survivors (50%) interviewed described that while they were enslaved by the Nazi regime, they survived by complying with the demands of the Nazi soldiers.

> Well it's hard to say it if you don't have some idea. You just have to... You know that you are a slave, right. And you have to do whatever they tell you to do, you do it, and you do the double, so they'll be satisfied and you'll feel like maybe you're going to be safe for a while. Yeah. So you just live from day to day. Work double. (Mary, survivor, 14:42)

> Well, all you can do is survive and be quiet. That's how you survive. Because if you talk, you gone. (Gina, survivor, 34:15)

> I didn't have no choice. I try my best. Yeah…. if you try to leave, they shoot you. (Carol, survivor, 19:38)

Catholicism- prayer and belief in God. Three of six survivors (50%) explained that their faith in God and prayer were a source of strength and survival during the Holocaust.

> Everybody is in the same place. Everybody tried to live until tomorrow. And you prayed that tomorrow is going to come, and then tomorrow comes, and then again you prayed for next day to, so they come…. You pray to the God that one day he'll hear and the war will end. And then you say, "Thank you, dear God. (Mary, survivor, 15:52)

> I was crying everyday, everyday. But I cried and I pray to God to help me, say prayer, "God help me. God help me." That's why I think God helped me (01:34)…. So it was a hard life but God helped. It's good now. (Anna, survivor, 23:56)

> Yeah. That's what she did, she just prayed a lot. (Irina, second generation, 28:20)

One survivor described using prayer to end her suffering when she was in a concentration camp.

> It [the Holocaust] was awful, yeah. You just ask God, "Take me!" Because you not live, you suffer. But that was war, you know can do nothing about it. (Carol, survivor, 03:09)

Mary stated that prayer was a source of strength for her and other prisoners in the labor camps.

> I'm telling you, if you went with [through] something like that and after it's done, then you sit down or lie down or dreaming and then, how did we do this? How can we put up with this? God give you some sign and you going. You just pray, doesn't matter what kind of prayer you are using, your own prayer or [a prayer] you learn in church or school or between the family, [long pause] but everybody pray. (Mary, survivor, 28:15)

Anna recalled that, at times, the wife of the German soldiers on whose farm she was imprisoned allowed her access to her religion.

> Not everything I could understand. I had to do myself, on my own. Prayer, when I was anger, she [wife of German soldier] allowed me to at least go and see a church but it was okay. I couldn't complain. She used to buy me shoe… or give me a dress because I have a nothing. (Anna, survivor, 46:14)

Family as a means of survival. Two of six survivors (33%) discussed the important role family or the development of a family of choice had in their survival. Mary described how thoughts of her family helped her survive while she was imprisoned in a labor camp.

> You tried to do it [survive] because you're always thinking for tomorrow. Not only for yourself, but you thinking for your family behind you because you don't know exactly where your family are and you want to get so bad and so fast to them that you just work and work and pray to God that it's gonna be soon…. Please God let it be soon. (Mary, survivor, 01:48)

> You know, so I was worried about my family, and I wasn't worried about myself. I just lived and wait, and hear what they said and decide when its going to be the end of that war and everything. (Mary, survivor, 15:52)

Carol discussed how she focused on trying to help feed her family while they were imprisoned in a concentration camp in Siberia. Carol recalled an incident in the concentration camp where she attempted to steal food for herself and her family and was caught.

> Yeah, but I wasn't worried about me I got some potatoes in a sack, that's what I'm worried about it because you know my family was waiting for the potatoes…. a Russian policeman caught me…. They call the police station you know, stay overnight. And they were so big that you cannot sit down. And during the night over there and during the day you go to work…. That was punishment…. But they didn't stop me because my family, you know. I try to help. (Carol, survivor, 12:40)

Acts of humanity. Four of the six survivors (67%) interviewed discussed acts of humanity, hope, and courage during the Holocaust. Mary described how in a concentration camp she believed that her mother was going to be killed by the Nazis because she was unhealthy. So she decided to take her mother's place.

> They [Nazi soldiers] come in that [concentration] camp and he [Nazi soldier] said, "Be ready, see that room," he shows us the building, you know and said that, "Over here is gonna be doctor, over here it's gonna be nurses…" So you went through the hell and they asked you all kinds of questions, and [of] the family and yourself. And then tomorrow you go to the doctor and they said if they pick your name that you sick, you have to go to this [concentration/labor] camp, to this building…. I was a single girl you know. But I have my family with us, the whole family, mom and dad, and five of us kids, and everything. (Mary, survivor, 02:35)

> They [Nazi soldier] went on the highest steps, and he said that if the doctor is going to find out that you're sick, then you have to go to this building over here. And then they're going to decide what kind of sickness you have…and then they're going to decide what to do with you. So, I was the oldest one in the family…So I said to my dad that if they going to, by any chance, if they're going to call Rosalie's [her mother's] name, then I'm going [to] go, I am going to take my mother place, take my mother's name and go in her place and she have to... If they call Mary, then she will be here with you and with the kids… he [Mary's father] took me again and to his side and [in] his way and he said, "Child do you know what you want to do? If you do something like that, then if they find out, then you know what, then you could be shot …if they find out, they could kill you right away. (Mary, survivor, 04:41)

Mary described that she wanted her mother to be able to be with her father and her siblings in the hopes that her mother could take care of them. Mary described how her father and she said goodbye before she took her mother's place, after which she underwent a second medical screening and was sent to a labor camp in Germany for four years. Mary never saw her family again.

> So, I said, "Okay Dad, I'm alone. I'm not married, but if they do something to my mom, she already lost one son, and if they do something to her, but anything has happened... If they [Nazis] do it to [kill] me, that's okay because I'm single. But my mother had the family and she's going to have you, and the kids. So, Dad said, "Well," he gave me a cross like that and he said, "I bless you and let the God do his way. But you sure you want to do it like that?" And I said, "Yes." (Mary, survivor, 07:39)

One survivor described how she and her family helped hide Polish Jews in their community before she was imprisoned as a forced laborer. Gina discussed this experience immediately after expressing a sense of helplessness about coping with Holocaust related trauma. It appears she found great meaning in the heroic and courage acts committed by her and her family.

> I think this is very important. My stepmother before she married my father, she was working for people that own restaurants and bakery. And they were Jewish people. And you know some Jewish people will put cross on their kids and ask us to take care of them. And one time, families, some family from that restaurant from those people that my stepmother worked with them for long time bring three little kids. So my mother was supposed to keep them for a few days or few weeks. So we put them up on the attic. There was by the house at one end of the house that we keep coal and wood to cook, to heat the house. So we have to go take a... How do you say, that you can climb?.... Ladder. Put up ladder and take a bucket with water for them to pee and poop. Have to take care of baths and take food to them. And maybe they live there for three months or so, I don't remember exactly how many days, and then some family came and took them away, but the Germans didn't got them. (Gina, survivor, 8:39)

Gina discussed the danger present in these acts of courage and described how the Nazi soldiers would have killed her and her family if the Nazis' discovered they

were helping Polish Jewish families in their community. With great sadness and while crying, Gina conveyed,

> My mom, dad, if they would find [out] they [Nazis] would have killed us. The German would have killed us. But we saved three kids. Yeah, before they caught me. But you know, I don't know how they could do that. They were killing people and putting them in a ghetto and [crying]…Yeah. Well, my mom because she worked for these people for many, many years… Yeah. [We saved] Three little kids. But lots and lots of people done good things for Jewish people, because they lived with Jewish family living in our building. And they were nice. They're like regular people, only they pray a little bit different… I've been to a synagogue. (Gina, survivor, 31:01)

Martha described that while she and other prisoners were imprisoned on the SS officer's farm, she stole food to give to others prisoners who were not being fed.

> [I] stole some apples on the first farm. And… was giving them to somebody else that wasn't getting fed like…[I] was getting fed…. The people that were working in the factory they were not getting fed. So anybody that was working on any of the farms was taking what they could and feeding the factory workers because they didn't have. (Martha, survivor, 7:08)

Anna described how she developed a connection with the wife of a German soldier who owned the farm where she was imprisoned. Anna said this woman showed her kindness in different moments. Anna described how this woman helped her when Anna started her menstrual cycle. Anna also described how during the day of liberation, this women gave her a small pillow as a symbol of kindness.

> Then I went to the camp. She [soldier's wife] give me a little pillow, that lady…Yeah. She was nice. (Anna, survivor, 10:09)

Mary described that while she was imprisoned in the labor camp some of the prisoners showed compassion and displayed acts of kindness toward one another.

> Everybody try to help themselves and everybody helps each other too. And in place like that, everybody help each other. Because if you're not going to help anybody, nobody's going to help you, and then you see helping here and helping here. How come nobody helps me? Well, then you asking your

> question and asking your question and somebody else, and then you put together, you have the answer. (Mary, survivor, 07:46)

> Yeah, everybody [other camp prisoners] in the war time, then everybody tried to be helpful to each other. (Mary, survivor, 18:29)

The post war years 1945-1955. In the decade following the end of World War II and the Holocaust, survivors' described their experience of liberation, and the years they spent in DP camps, where four of six survivors (67%) met their husbands, married and had children. Survivors' described this as a time period when they developed a family of choice, their *camp family*, and started the development of their own families and then immigrated to the United States. The following themes are outlined in this section: 1) the experience of liberation; 2) experiences in the displaced persons camps; 3) development of camp family; 4) making meaning from persecution and immigration to the United States.

The experience of liberation. Six of six survivors (100%) described the day that they were liberated from the control of the Nazi regime. One survivor who was imprisoned in a labor camp in Germany described the day she was liberated and the myriad of emotional and physical responses to the experience of being liberated.

> And then one day they end the war…. the day they announced that the war was over, there was a hell of a day…Oh, gosh! Then there was... Boy! If you remember the day how people cried and prayed on the street, in the homes, in every place, mixed up, the old people with the young people. Oh God! There was show. There was show. Yes. I mean, now don't take me wrong, there was show. The happiness came and the end of the war, and then again, what's gonna happen to us now? What are they gonna do to us now? Where are they gonna send us? They've already said, they're gonna put us in a... Evacuate us to America or to a different country. Oh, gosh! There was lot of excitements and everything. A lot of worry too and then with the old people, some of the old people they were part of your family. (Mary, survivor, 22:26)

Mary described the emotional experience of being liberated as *lightening* between survivors. She recalled experiencing a sense of relief and happiness mixed with a terror like confusion.

> Yeah. Everybody say... they said that [it is] the end of the war, then lightning... That is like lightning struck with between the people. People saw the news. Then the people start running. They don't know where they're going…Cry people cry. Then between them, they find some liquor some place from the Germans, stealing it from the German people, steal and drink it all. (Mary, survivor, 24:36)

Carol described the day she and her remaining family members were liberated from a concentration camp in Siberia. Carol, whose family was Polish intelligentsia, described how the soles of their shoes were missing and how few possessions the family had on the day of liberation.

> And we was released because, General Sikorsky goes to Stalin and he told him, he said, "You got so much..." not only Polish people but people in concentration camp and then nothing just to die in from. He said, "Release them, they go fight for you," and they did…. And we wait. My dad said to my stepmother that she better get a blanket and put some stuff wherever she can and we going to walk. We walk on the railroad track and we got shoes, and over here, with nothing under [pointed to the soles of her feet]…. Because we work too much. (Carol, survivor, 05:53)

Carol described the day of liberation as one filled with tremendous grief. She recalled that she and some of her family members survived starvation while imprisoned in a concentration camp. On the day of liberation, British soldiers provided unlimited amounts of crackers and corned beef for the survivors of the camp. Carol reported that her eight year old sister, along with other camp survivors, died due to complications caused by starvation followed by the sudden introduction of fatty foods.

With her voice trembling and tears in her eyes, Carol described the scene:

> [The] English Government took over. They gave us crackers and corned beef… And with the people dying, dying like flies, because [for] almost two years, they didn't have that stuff. The corned beef got the grease inside. Yea, they give us, you know, so much, as much as you wanted. That's why my little sister die…she was eight years old…. I was with her [when she died]. She was nice. Stashu was nice. (Carol, survivor, 08:10)

American soldiers liberated Anna. When Anna described the day of liberation, she recalled how she and other forced laborers hid with the wife of the German soldier who owned the farm.

> Yeah, after the war. There was shooting. We're hiding under the table in the kitchen. She took one boy and one or three with me on the table because the airplane...you know they were making airplanes… like big factory, I was in a farm but close…I guess God saved me… And then after the war, everybody said go to the camp. American soldiers come and tell the Polish or the English, you have to get out of here. You have to go to the camp to get a nice camp. (Anna, survivor, 08:57)

Osnabruck described the day of liberation with great emotion, which appeared to reflect a mixture of sadness and relief. With tears running down his face Osnabruck described the experience of liberation.

> And then came the liberation… the United States army liberated us from being forced laborers…. In '43, the Luftwaffe was destroyed to the point where they didn't have to fly during the night to bomb the cities but in broad daylight. So, I didn't have to worry about getting hurt, they have to go to bunk because they fire on open field. I just laid on the ground and looked, the earth was vibrating from the noise but we were happy because our freedom was closer and closer every year. And then in 1945, I'll never forget the day, it was May 22nd, that the United States Army liberated that part of the country. (Osnabruck, survivor, 08:42)

> They were coming through the town and everybody that was working on these farms or in the factories, they knew what was happening and they just stopped doing what they were doing and... And left… we all ended up in determent camps. (Martha, survivor, 05:10)

Experiences in the displaced persons camps. Five of six survivors (83%) interviewed were sent to DP camps after World War II ended and they were liberated from the Nazi regime. Three of six survivor (50%) described that many Polish survivors lacked the opportunity to return to Poland or did not want to return.

> There was nowhere to house most of these people, because a lot of… [us] didn't know if…[we] had families left…[We] didn't want to go back to Poland because…[we]were afraid to. So they housed…[us] in determent camps…Abandoned Army camps is what they were. (Martha, survivor, 05:29)

> And mostly people who were going back to Poland, they couldn't wait to go to the country that they came from, their homeland. But there were also people that were not eager to go back because the smarter people knew that Poland is not free, the communists took over and they are not any better than the Nazis were. (Osnabruck, survivor, 12:40)

> Well, they, first, they started to putting up or using military barracks. And they put all the Polish people there, and they have Russian people. They have all kind people in Germany, because all German were fighting all over the world. So they need people to work, so they have from every country that they occupied, they send the young people able to work to Germany. So after the war, people walked back to their country…. And England and America didn't want us to go back to Poland, because Poland that time was communist…so, we were in [one] camp and from one camp to another. I was in Bergen Prison where lots and lots of Jewish people, but Polish people too, were killed and out there they have graves with 5,000 people in one. (Gina, survivor, 12:15)

> And then after the war, everybody said go to the camp. American soldiers come and tell the Polish or the English, you have to get out of here. You have to go to the [DP] camp to get a nice camp. So everybody... Then I went to the camp. (Anna, survivor, 09:53)

Living conditions in DP camps. Three of six survivors (50%) interviewed described the living conditions of the DP camp as cramped and recalled that they had few material resources.

> [We] were in one big room where 10 families were in there and you're separated by rags hanging, makeshift curtains…. Yeah. Then we lived together." (Martha, survivor, 07:25)

> They were taking them from one place to another because there weren't just many places to house all these people and they wanted them to go home and then a lot of them didn't want to go home…. In the first camp she was in, there were a lot of bed bugs, a lot of bugs…. They were put in...You know, there were stables that they housed horses on the German bases there, the Army camps. They had people housed in every nook and cranny of the base that was empty and abandoned. (Kristina, second generation, 22:08)

> Oh, we have one room and bed, that little shack where we put the clothes and that's all. (Anna, survivor, 11:35)

> I had one dress. If I washed that dress then I have to sit in the bed under the covers because I didn't have any more, nothing. (Gina, survivor, 20:30)

Food in DP camps. Two of the six survivors (33%) described that there were times when it was difficult to acquire food or food with adequate nutrition in the DP camps.

> They didn't have enough foods. They used to have stems and everything. So we had food like corn, three times a day, three times. Breakfast corn. I find a container and put a handle on it and go to kitchen and get some breakfast, lunch and dinner. And so it was corn for breakfast, corn for lunch, [and] and corn for dinner. You even pooped with corn. [Laughing] (Gina, survivor, 19:29)

> The food we get every week from the kitchen. They're cooking for the people then…. Yeah. So we gotta a plate... The guy is checking to go and get soup. He still had kids get milk, one glass. She was little so she got milk. It was hard but we made it. And then, I don't know how. I don't know but I just made it. (Anna, survivor, 11:45)

Four of six survivors (67%) interviewed met their future husbands and had their first child in a displaced persons camp. Gina described how her son was born food deprived.

> And I went to have him and one lady... I first I had him and he was okay. But he had lots of... Like he's...[he had] on his head kind of pimples because we didn't have food. (Gina, survivor, 25:16)

Development of camp family. Six of six survivors (100%) interviewed were children (range 9-15 years) when they were captured and enslaved by the Nazi regime. Three of six survivors (50%) never saw their family members again. Two of six survivors (33%) never saw their parents and reconnected with one sibling 20-30 years after the war ended. One participant was reunited with his brother, and they lived in the same city after immigrating to the United States.

Three of six survivors (50%) discussed how they developed familial like relationships with other Holocaust survivors who were in labor camps or concentration camps and in the years after the war, when the survivors were in displaced persons camps. Anna described how she developed familial type relationships with other forced laborers on the farm. Mary described the close, familial type relationships that she developed with other camp prisoners in the camps.

> People. And the old people from Poland, Germany, but people around you are people you know from next village or two villages from you or something like that was almost like family again. Yeah, in the camp, they became a part of your family. (Mary, survivor, 17:53)

> I work on the farm, the boys on the farm, they're like my brothers. I take care of them. They were back to school and I tried to clean clothes. (Anna, survivor, 05:59)

Anna recalled how she began menstruating while on the farm and how the wife of the German solider helped her understand what bodily change meant, including what precautions to take almost like an older relative might do for a younger relative (Anna, survivor, 7:25). Martha expressed the importance she placed on the familial type relationships they developed with other survivors.

Kristina translated for her mother and said,

> [I] wasn't missing …[my] family. When the camp people were coming to the United States those were the ones that…[we] were missing because that was... [we] experienced something that the rest of the families didn't experience and that made…[us] closer. The tragedy, the.... Yeah…[we] bonded. (Martha, survivor, 34:58)

Kristina recalled her father who was a survivor discussed the value he placed on the relationships made with those he met in the camps.

> See the people that they met in the camps that they were close to and the people that they knew here, they were all in the same camps. My dad always told me it doesn't matter if you like those people or not. Those are camp people and they are family, that's the only family that we knew. They were closest to those people and that was more their family than the families that they left behind. (Kristina, second generation, 34:25)

Making meaning from persecution and immigration to the U.S. Survivors and their descendants described a form of what I interpret as meaning making associated with surviving persecution by the Nazi regime, their subsequent immigration to America, and the life they created for themselves and their children in the United States. For three of the six survivors (50%) interviewed, one way of making meaning was seemingly to minimize the atrocities they experienced and focus on their ability to immigrate to America and start a new life.

> My mother always said that she was grateful to the Germans. Because if they had not taken her, she wouldn't be here [United States]. So she doesn't want to say anything bad about them because it's because of them that she's here and she was glad to be here. She never really wanted to stay in Poland all her life. (Kristina, second-generation, 11:53)

> It was a horrible thing to do. No right. Nobody's got the right to take anybody else's freedom away, right?...But, honestly, we consider ourselves happy that we were taken by the Nazis to Germany and are still alive and enjoying the good life in this country, United States of America, because if it was Stalin, the communist, if we were living in the eastern part of Poland we would end up in Siberia and I am positive I wouldn't live there very longer. (Osnabruck, survivor, 34:48)

> It [the Holocaust] was awful, yeah…But one thing, if that wasn't happen, I won't be here…That's the only thing. (Carol, survivor, 03:09)

The years of 1960-1980s: Working through trauma as a means of survival—survivors' way of being in the world. Six of six survivors (100%) were children (range from 9-15 years) when they were persecuted, captured, and enslaved by the Nazi regime. From a philosophical hermeneutic perspective, it is understood that one's sense of self is developed within and in response to the sociocultural context one lives in. Themes emerged that were associated with the survivors' way of being in the world, the values they hold, and the familial messages they convey to their descendants. Survivors' themes appear to reflect aspects of their Holocaust related experiences. Their suffering and loss contributed to their present way of being in the world and the values they hold, which I interpret as the survivors' ability to work through the Holocaust related trauma (loss of family, loss of personal freedom, persecution and enslavement), they suffered. Importantly, these values have been central to the survivors' way of being in the world: 1) survival embedded in family's actions, *we made it*; 2) Polish work ethic; 3) the United States as a symbol of freedom.

Six of six survivors (100%) were forcibly separated from their family members and lost important familial relationships. The survivors' way of being in the world focuses on the importance of family. This manifested in their very survival during the Holocaust, where participants described living for their family members, or with the hope of helping their family survive during the Holocaust and in the years after.

Survivors developed familial relationships with other Holocaust survivors, who were often referred to by second generation participants as *camp family.*

Survival embedded in family's actions, "we made it." Three of the six survivors (50%) used the phrase and language *we made it* to express the achievement of survival during and after the Holocaust. When one of their family members or descendants succeeded in some way often this was vocationally, educationally, or financially, the family would apply the expression *we made it* and by doing so interpret the achievement in such a way as to connect it with surviving the Holocaust.

> But see and now he made it. He was lieutenant colonel, that's a high-ranking officer, very high and he is working now for a company and he works for government. So we made it. (Gina, survivor, 22:40)

> While him [her husband], he was working hard, well; he made it [pause] we made it. (Anna, survivor, 22:47)

> But we made it. We made it through. (Anna, survivor, 42:05)

Carol described how she successfully stole food for her family while they were imprisoned in the concentration camp; while discussing the punishment she received, which involved sleep deprivation, forced standing all night, and forced working through the next day, she stated,

> Yeah, it was [against] the law…but I don't care, we made it. (Carol, survivor, 09:16)

Osnabruck described the sense of happiness he experienced when he and his family members were reunited and were able to remain together and immigrate to the United States. He displayed a great deal of emotion and tearfulness when he

discussed the importance of his family being with him as he immigrated to the United States.

> And then, I was on the lookout for the lady there and I knew it was on the right side, the Statue of Liberty. I knew all about it. And I admit now I'm crying because I am old, but I was only 21 and it brought tears of happiness, the joy that I'm finally coming to the best country in the world and it was. I was , we were so happy and not only because I speak for myself but our entire family, 7 people: My parents, myself and my brother, his wife and 3 children, we were all together. (Osnabruck, survivor, 16:04)

The Polish work ethic. During the Holocaust, the Poles were targeted for enslavement and the Nazis intended to work the Poles to death (Lukas, 1997). The infamous chilling words on the gates of Auschwitz provide the illusionary, deceiving message *Arbeit Macht Frei* which translates to "work will set you free" (United States Holocaust Museum, 2012). Five of the six survivors (83.3%) described working countless hours, with little food or water, in horrific conditions during the Holocaust. Working hard was indispensible to the survival of participants. The value of having a strong work ethic became an important element in the identity of participants from all three generations. Eleven of twelve participants (92%) interviewed described themselves as hard workers and believed that Poles, as a people, are hard workers. Three of four second generation (75%) described the strong work ethic of their parents and other Poles.

> We work hard. We don't have a problem with working, working any job. I mean, I would always get upset when people made fun of us, Polish jokes that... You know we're not like that. We're not dumb, we're not stupid. We've learned something….They [Polish people] are very honest and they work. If you give them a job to do, they're going to do it. And they're going to go beyond the call of duty on doing the job. (Kristina, second generation, 41:41)

> They [Polish survivors] were hard workers. They wanted to make sure you had food, something to drink and a house over your head. They wanted you to have a house. (Irina, second generation, 44:59)

> My work ethics are a lot different than other people. It's because of the way we were brought up…It's determination to get a job done and do it right. Basically, the bottom line is if I were fired today, I probably would not go for unemployment benefits. I would take a less meaningful job just to bring money home. The pride is just bring money home and not take charity. (Jean, second generation participant, 05:39)

Three of six survivors (50%) and two of four second generation (50%) displayed a strong work ethic through their actions and a willingness to take on extra work related tasks and additional hours.

> She took all the overtime they offered her. She did anything they wanted her to do. She worked in a factory. (Kristina, second generation, 45:43)

> I was working 22 ½ years, I took overtime…. I want to stay and work, but they just said no. But I turned 65 then I quit. But still my boss coming and asking why don't you working more…. I'm not quitting. (Martha, survivor, 45:36)

> They're going to do extra for you or stay longer. You know I'm a schlep. On the days that I'm not scheduled to work, if my boss calls me up and says can you come to work today, you know even though I look like something that came out of Halloween, I put myself together. I go to work. My husband says, "Now why are you doing that? The other idiot called off and you're going to go and..." [pause] You go. (Kristina, second generation, 41:41)

Third generation Kasha described how the familial value of having a strong work ethic influenced intergenerational interactions

> I think that [work ethic] was a big thing. I think as growing up the work ethic thing would come up. I can remember a time when my dad was laid off because it was like, "Oh we don't tell grandma and grandpa that." Not being my dad's fault even, but just the fact that he was laid off and nobody gets laid off because you should have a job and things like that, so that definitely comes into play. (Kasha, third generation, 11:40)

The American ideal of productivity embedded in the cultural message that one can work hard enough and pull oneself up by one's own bootstraps appeared to offer hope and a sense of control over their lives. For the survivor and their descendants

the effects of being entrenched in a sociopolitical context that delivers the illusory message that if one works hard enough one can change one's class status and accomplish anything, caused some survivors to work hard without awareness of the negative impact it could have on them or their children.

> They all work until they drop…They do. It's just what they went through and stuff and they're not going to go back to that and they're not going to go hungry anymore. And that was basically what drove them. It still drives them. (Irina, second generation, 34:42)

> My grandma [a survivor], she killed herself at the bakery. She just killed herself, literally. She's filled with arthritis up and down and she gave herself to that place and my grandpa was the same way. Always working and when they weren't working their job, they were out working in the field, in the garden, things like that. (Kasha, third generation, 10:15)

One survivor described that when she and her husband first came to the United States he worked for three days in a row without food or water before collapsing at work from exhaustion.

> He was shoveled this... He worked three days. He didn't eat anything. He passed out. And the guys took him to the restaurant, you know and feed him. The same thing, when they feed him, he …[became ill]. (Carol, survivor, 52:30)

Two of four second-generation participants (50%) described how the extreme value their family placed on work impacted some of their social experiences as a child.

> For a long time I was upset with my parents because they wouldn't let me go and have a slumber party or go to basketball games or dances. I just realized that their life was so different. They didn't have that because when they were teenagers they were already subject to long hours of working. My father one time told me he worked 18 hours out of 24. So, that's what they went through when they were 14, 15, 16, 17 years old. So, we should be grateful that all we had to do was schoolwork. (Jean, second-generation, 14:09)

> The biggest problem was when all these Polish people came over and as time went by, they didn't believe in sports or anything. It was work, work, work, work, work. Whereas I grew up, I mean, I played volleyball and softball. So I

> wanted mine to do that because it kept them out of trouble. (Irina, second generation, 49:55)

The United States as a symbol of freedom. Six of six survivors (100%) interviewed in this study were forced to leave their country of origin during the Holocaust, and when World War II ended they had little desire or opportunity to return. Six of six survivors (100%) in this study immigrated to the United States. Another theme that emerged in association with the survivor's way of being in the world involved the hope embedded in the western modern-era ideal of freedom. Two of the six survivors (33%), one second-generation (25%), and one third generation (50%) participant expressed the intergenerational belief in the ideal of freedom that the United States often signifies.

Carol described that while she was in a concentration camp in Siberia her father told her to immigrate to the United States. She recalled her father's message held promise for a better life for her family in the future.

> And he [her father] said, "You're the oldest one from the family, try get in to United States…. try and get to America. Life will not be better for you, but it will be a little better for your children and much better for your grandchildren." (Carol survivor, 27:58)

> I have the right to be proud of it [American citizenship] because I had accomplished much in this country. (Osnabruck, survivor, 00:54, II)

Osnabruck conveyed that he finds great meaning in being a United States citizen, particularly being connected to the U.S. Army that liberated him from the Nazi regime and the symbol of freedom that America represented. With great emotion and tears he expressed,

> I am proud of it that I am American. I served my country, the army that liberated me. I had the privilege to wear their uniform and I'm going to

> emphasize it again and again that the best part of my life was in this country. (Osnabruck, survivor, 28:21)

Second generation Jean recalled how the Nazis enslavement campaign took her parent's freedom away from them. Jean expressed how she appreciated the ideal of freedom and recalled how parents struggled to have a sense of freedom in the years after the war.

> Personally, I appreciate freedom. And I don't think people understand what it really is. I know my father-in-law, he's passed away, but he was in Patton's army and they were the first ones to go in and he said you could smell death 10 miles away. He said he could not believe that people who swore that they didn't know what was going on because the stench was so bad. And I don't have any of the pictures but there are pictures out there of piles of bodies and a lot of the Polish prisoners had to carry the bodies to the incinerators and they used tongs or stretchers or whatever. I'm thinking, there are people here that don't believe that it really happened. And I believe it because I saw how hard my parents struggled to be here and stay free. (Jean, second generation, 15:49)

> Yeah, and I think it goes back to a lot of the values that grandpa brought with him. He wanted to be free. He knew the importance of being free. I think I could see that in him….So I think maybe he carried that into our family. (Kasha, third generation, 08:15)

Kasha also observed that her grandmother displayed behavior that was associated with the valorization of freedom in the United States.

> I think that sometimes in her behavior like she likes to shop. She likes to go to K-Mart and buy junk and things like that. I think sometimes she holds on to things like that because she lived so deprived for so long. I mean, because she was an adult, you know what I'm saying? All of those years she was working, 10 or 12 or something. She had worked and done this and done this and whatever, so now it's funny that she's here... I can remember my whole life, "Oh grandma wants to go shopping. Grandma wants to... "And maybe that had some effect. Maybe not, but maybe just the ability to be that... Have that freedom. (Kasha, third generation, 08:41)

Section 4B: The post World War II years and the lived experience of second generation. Three of four second generation participants (75%) had parents who were both survivors and who met in a displaced persons camp. Two of four second generation participants (50%) were born in displaced persons camps in Germany. This section is organized by the following themes: 1) Polish *camp family* community; 2) coming to understand parents as survivors; 3) meaning making — being the child of a survivor; 4) the value of education.

Polish camp family community. The development, and importance of camp family was a theme expressed by survivors. For survivors, they developed family-like relationships with other survivors. For the second generation, they were raised within this community comprised of camp survivors, their family and community. Four of four second generation participants (100%) described being raised in a Polish Catholic community comprised of Polish Catholic Holocaust survivors. Many of the survivors knew each other when they were in concentration or labor camps as forced laborers or in the DP camps. Two of four second generation participants (50%) referred to this intimate Polish community and family of choice as camp family.

> See the people that they met in the camps that they were close to and the people that they knew here, they were all in the same camps…. Those are camp people and they are family, that's the only family that we knew. They were closest to those people and that was more their family than the families that they left behind**. ...**That was their family. Everybody that belonged to [local polish organization] most of those people were in the same camp. (Kristina, second generation, 34:25)

> But the whole community lived in this camp. All of them are Polish. And then, one by one, they were coming to America or going to Australia. Most of them came here [midwestern town] that they [her parents] hung out with.

(Irina, second generation, 38:38)

> We lived in an all-Polish community for several years…I just remember all of our free time was always with Polish people. Sundays it was with the [Polish family] or the [Polish family] or you went and saw the [Polish family], and they all lived within a four or five block radius. It was a very secure time, I guess. You felt that you could go anywhere within that community and nothing would happen to you. (Jean, second generation, 30:04)

> I'm more proud of being Polish… being Polish is something growing up on this side of [town] you can get a lot of pride. It was nice growing up in a community like this.... Kind of like little Poland here just like Chicago, very strong Polish community with all the churches and the parties and the weddings…And all my classmates had Polish names. Yeah, it was very good. Yeah, you know we went to a school named after a Polish saint… So, all of our nuns were Polish nuns and some of the white teachers. Our school was probably half nuns' half white teachers and pretty much I'd say, 80% to 90% of my classmates all through grade school were Polish…. I mean all of us were first or second generation… (Tomec, second generation, 02:29)

Two of the four second generation participants (50%) spoke primarily Polish until the first grade (Kristina, second generation, 37:00; Jean, second generation, 30:00). Jean recalled the first time she left the Polish community she was raised within and came to understand that Polish was not the only language people spoke.

> Oh, we never went outside of it [the Polish Community]. It was like you knew your boundaries. You knew you didn't go beyond the railroad tracks or you didn't go beyond this street corner…So, I think one time I went just all the way to the end of the block and that's when I found out there was someone speaking a different language down there. [laughter] And I ran home and I told my mom, there's something wrong with the way that girl talks. And my mom said, "I got some bad news for you. You got to learn to talk like that." (Jean, second generation, 31:21)

Coming to understand parents as survivors. Two of four second generation participants (50%) spoke about their experience of first understanding that their parents were Holocaust survivors and expressed their amazement and shock.

> It was unreal. It was unreal. Especially, as you get older and you understand more because when you're little, big deal. So people get killed all the time. But as you go to school and you learn history and then you hear this, it was

> unbelievable that they made it. That so many made it because living in the [area of town] there, all of them went through that [persecution during the Holocaust]. It was just amazing how many made it. (Irina, second generation, 43:02)

Kristina described experiencing a sense of shock and a surreal feeling when she realized her parents were survivors and thought of the suffering they likely endured.

> And I was just shocked that my parents were part of that, but then when I found out that all their friends, pretty much everyone they hung around with here in [Midwest town], they were all a part of that. I didn't realize how many people. (Kristina, second generation, 30:16)

Tomec expressed that he first came to understand his father was a survivor when he went to visit Poland with his parents; Tomec was the same age his father was when he was imprisoned by the Nazi regime.

> The first time probably was when we were visiting Poland. Yeah, we were standing on his old farm, right? So the house was still there, I mean literally crashed that roof and the old barn and... we were driving through, we were there for four weeks, so as we were driving. …We stopped at his old farm, ran into his mother's brother which I think of like our grandfather's brother I guess… that's when he told us and showed us, "This is the farm, the town where his brother got snapped up," and how they were hauled out in the middle of the night back then. They shot his dog. I remember that story. So that was that. I remember that part when I first heard probably when we went over there, so I was 9 when I heard that because I remembered him always making a point that I was the exact same age then he was when he got pulled off. So it was just a coincidence more than anything. (Tomec, second generation, 08:32)

Jean described understanding that her parents were survivors when she understood she was different from some of her peers and that her parents' Holocaust related experiences influenced the way she was raised.

> Well, I knew other people wouldn't understand that I didn't speak English until I was seven. And I think that they wouldn't understand that my parents went through a rougher time and the reason that they were so protective of us. So, I think that a lot of my friends didn't realize that and for a long time I was upset with my parents because they wouldn't let me go and have a slumber party or go to basketball games or dances. I just realized that their

> life was so different. They didn't have that because when they were teenagers they were already subject to long hours of working. (Jean, second generation, 14:09)

Meaning making about being the child of a survivor. Two of four second generation participants (50%) spoke about the pride and sense of amazement they felt about their parents' survival and being the child of a survivor.

> I'm proud that my mother's a survivor. My father was a survivor. I don't want my kids to forget that something like that happened… You know, I don't know how to... I really don't know how to feel because I wasn't there to see their pain, their hurt. You know, I just... You feel all of that when you hear them talking about it. (Kristina, second generation, 28:47)

> It's amazing…. It's amazing because some didn't make it. So, it's really amazing to hear this and listen to it. They were so sad, the stories and...But it's amazing. (Irina, second generation, 39:27)

One second generation participant continued to speak about the Polish work ethic as a part of the meaning she held about being the child of two survivors.

> Well, you know I've realized probably my work ethics are a lot different than other people. It's because of the way we were brought up….It's determination to get a job done and do it right and. Basically, the bottom line is if I were fired today, I probably would not go for unemployment benefits. I would take a less meaningful job just to bring money home. The pride is just bring money home and not take charity. (Jean, second generation, 05:39)

The value of education. Six of six survivors (100%) interviewed were children (ages 9 to 15 years) when the Nazis captured them and lost access to formal and other forms of cultural education. One survivor stated, "Education is something no one can take away from you" (survivor, Ted, 15:20). The value of education manifested in the survivors' parenting and in the values of their children emerged as second generation theme. Four of four second generation participants (100%) said that their parents valued the pursuit of education. Tomec postulated

that his father valued pursuing education due to his Holocaust related experiences and missed educational opportunities.

> Maybe he pushed education a little more if he'd just been growing up on his farm… I think they probably pushed education a little stronger than they would have had there not been the war. (Tomec, second generation, 14:29)

> My dad went through…5th grade. And so they realized enough being here, the language barrier, and the lack of education, if you don't go to school you're not going to get anywhere. (Kristina, second generation, 36:10)

> School was for education and that was where it stopped. It [the sole focus on education] was different [from my peers] but I realized what they [parent's] wanted. They wanted me to be smart and get an education and yeah, do something with my life. (Jean, second generation, 09:53)

> It was a whole different world here, being protected, doing this and that, and having an education, and be able to go out, and do things. (Irina, second generation, 43:00)

Two of four second generation participants (50%) recalled that their parents did not understand the value in extracurricular or after school social activities; participants expressed this was a difficult aspect of their parents' parenting style.

> And I was a lot different than other children because my parents felt that school was for education. So when they had field trips, like going to the zoo or going to a puppet show, I was not allowed to do that because that was not a school function. So all the other kids would go out to the puppet shows and I had to sit in a classroom with the teacher. And she would just say at me like read a book or something until the classes came back…. And it was basically neither one of us [Jean or her brother] were allowed to really participate at like after school activities because basically, school was for education and that was where it stopped. (Jean, second generation, 08:48)

> The biggest problem was when all these Polish people came over and as time went by, they didn't believe in sports or anything. It was work, work, work, work, and work… That is almost all of them because, as I grew up, it was really hard for them [survivors] to understand [the value of extracurricular activities] or go to a game or anything. (Irina, second generation, 50:00)

Section 4C: Late post World War II years and the lived experience of the third generation. Two of two third generation participants (100%) in this study are grandchildren of two Polish Catholic survivors who met in DP camps and married. Both women are married to males and have children. The following themes emerged for the third generation participants: 1) importance of Polish traditions; 2) shame in the silence; 3) grandfathers: barriers to communication.

Importance of Polish traditions. Two of two third generation participants (100%) described the importance of engaging in Polish traditions as a child and in their present lives.

> Growing up, there would be the tradition where we'd go and we'd have to dress up and sing the Polish songs and do things like that. But besides that, there wasn't much more talked about in our family. (Kasha, third generation, 01:46)

> I've been trying, on my own, [to] make Polish food… Pierogies are next, that one's next. But I've done *Galumpki* recently…*kiefliess*… Those are big ventures of mine. I do the kluski noodles and I do sweet and sour cabbage. So I'll have like Polish meals at least for them [her children]. And we've got a Polish store not far from my work. So I'll get sausage and the smoked sausages and stuff and I'll tell the kids, we're eating Polish tonight…. Well when I was making the *Galumpki,* I turned on Polka music and the kids were like, "What are you listening to?" (Josephina, third generation, 30:33)

Grandfather: barriers to communication. Two of two third generation participants (100%) described barriers to communicating with their grandfathers about their Holocaust related experiences: Kasha described language as a communication barrier, and Josephina described her grandfather's alcohol abuse and using Polish to talk about his Holocaust related experiences as a communication barrier.

> I would say I never heard Grandpa talked about it. And if they did talk about it, it was in Polish. So there was a big...[language barrier] Even when I was

> younger, they always talked in Polish. They would have all their friends over and they'd talk in Polish. So I couldn't really understand too much. …. I had no clue because even when Grandpa was alive it wasn't really something that they talked about, and again it was the whole language barrier…. I can remember being a little girl and Grandpa sitting at the table with some of their friends from Chicago or whatever and they were talking about those kinds of things, they are about political things, but I don't remember much. I feel so bad. (Kasha, third generation, 03:43)

> My *Dziadz* [grandfather], he just... He never talked about it with any of us. I mean, his way of dealing with it was probably drinking a lot and talking in Polish, so we never heard it from him before he passed. You know I told you before when he drank, he babbled, we didn't pay attention. But before he died, he felt like he needed to [talk about his Holocaust related experiences] (Josephina, third generation, 09:57)

Josephina suggested that the trauma her grandfather likely endured during the Holocaust was the reason for his drinking.

> He was a guard at one point. I know he had to take the gold out of teeth after people died…. Yeah, but I don't know what other duties he had, but I know that was one of them. So I know that couldn't have been... He had to be around dead people all the time. So I know he had a lot of... He drank for a reason…It always seemed like it affected him more, so we always... We just always knew it affected him more because he was in the camp more than she was. (Josephina, third generation, 34:46)

Shame in the silence. Kasha described her belief that part of her grandparents' lack of communication around their Holocaust related experiences was reflective of the shame they experienced about their Holocaust related trauma.

> I think maybe they were ashamed of what happened to them. They don't understand that it wasn't their control. They had no control over what the governments were doing to them…. Yeah, I think they were just ashamed. I think that was a big thing. I think as growing up the work ethic thing would come up. I can remember a time when my dad was laid off because it was like, "Oh we don't tell grandma and grandpa that." Not being my dad's fault even, but just the fact that he was laid off and nobody gets laid off because you should have a job and things like that, so that definitely comes into play. (Kasha, third generation, 11:28)

Section 4D: Intergenerational familial communication patterns. In this section, communication patterns that were expressed intergenerationally are categorized by their topics: 1) survivor Holocaust-related communication with their children: the second generation; 2) survivor Holocaust-related communication with their grandchildren: the third generation; 3) communication patterns for Pogoda family 4) communication patterns for Sieroslawski family. Each family is composed of the survivor, one of their children and one of their grandchildren. Five of six survivors (83%) married and had children with another Polish Catholic survivor. Six of six survivors (100%) married a Polish Catholic immigrant. Three of four second generation participants (75%) had parents who were both survivors of the Holocaust. Two of two third generation (100%) had grandparents who were both survivors.

Survivor Holocaust-related communication with their children: the second generation. Four of four second generation participants (100%) stated that their parents did not talk about their Holocaust related experiences and that they were often silent about their suffering in the Holocaust.

> No, they didn't really want to talk about it. And if we ever went to somebody's house that was in the labor camps with them, the children weren't allowed to listen. We had to be off to another room. Because it was not something that they wanted us to be a part of. They didn't want us to know what they went through (Jean, second generation, 12:01)

> She never went into detail how she was chosen to go. And you know what, there were times when you were told not to pry. And you know what, you respected your parents. When they told you not to ask those questions, you didn't ask…. so, there were things that they just said no, you don't need to know that. (Jean, second generation, 32:47)

> They didn't want it to seem like it was a bad life for them because when you're young, you don't understand anyway. So they would protect by not talking about it in front of kids. (Irina, second generation, 43:48)

> Yes, oh yes, For a long time, they didn't. We would overhear them talking amongst themselves with the people they were in camps with. And that was their conversations. We weren't privy to it, but after we got older I was... After I learned more in school, we were starting to pull things out of her and I'm just sorry we didn't pay attention to my dad. Well, he drank and he babbled a lot when he drank and we thought it was all babbling, but he had a lot to say and now we missed out on a lot of what he could've told us. . (Kristina, second generation, 18:35)

> Yeah, he's [Tomec's father] been talking about it now more recently or more in the recent years than I did back when we were children. (Tomec, second generation, 03:52)

For three of four second generation participants (75%), their parents started to discuss their Holocaust related experiences more as the survivors and their children aged.

> I'd say I've learned more about it in the last 10 years than I did the first 40 years. I'm 51 and he's probably talking more about it in the last 10 years than he did before then. (Tomec, second generation, 07:22)

> They really didn't talk a lot about it in front of the kids. Like I said, until I got older, and then my dad started really telling me how hard they had it and how bad it was because we had it made here. …As I go older, he felt that and I could hear him sometimes. He would read books and stuff and ask him what happened and that. It was just amazing. Totally, unbelievable and amazing that they made it through and how life turned out. (Irina, second generation, 39:57)

Kristina described that it was when she started to learn about the Holocaust in high school that it increased her understanding of the magnitude of the Holocaust and the suffering of the survivors, including her parents. Kristina started to ask her mother questions about her experiences in the Holocaust.

> Well, I didn't know what it was until we were in high school. And we were learning about the Holocaust in high school in the history classes and then I started remembering what I had heard them talking with their

> friends....When nobody was, you know, when we weren't supposed to be listening on what it was like in the camp. So then I started asking her, "Well, what kind of camps are you talking about? Where were you? What happened? How did you get here?" You know, as little kids you don't care, but when you start learning about that then you start wondering. (Kristina, second generation, 29:39)

Survivor Holocaust-related communication with their grandchildren: the third generation. Two of two third generation participants (100%) stated that their grandparents, who are both survivors, rarely discussed their Holocaust related experiences with them. Josephina recalled that neither her grandmother nor grandfather did so. She observed that it was her mother who discussed their experiences with her.

> Because she [grandmother] doesn't like to talk about what actually happened in the camp sometimes, but at least she'll go back to when she was on that farm and she'll filter stuff through mom, and mom will tell me about the horrible stuff that happened on the farm. But Babcia [grandmother] kind of filter it to be... I did get some not benefit but like learn how to cook, and if it wasn't for going to the farm, it could have been even worse than what it was. (Josephina, third generation, 09:04)

> Yeah. Him [her grandfather], he just... I can't remember ever a time where he openly discussed it. If we were all in a room together, my mom might have said something in general with him there, but it's not like he ever said anything directly to us. (Josephina, third generation, 13:38)

Third generation Kasha described that her parents and grandparents rarely talked about their experiences during the Holocaust.

> See, I don't. Nobody ever talked about it. Nobody ever.... So it was always, "Oh, it was bad over there." They had to escape to come here. That was the whole picture that we got…. Only what little I knew was that grandma and grandpa were over there, Mom was born in Germany. I mean, I knew things had happened there, but you don't think "oh gosh! That happened to my grandfather." But then, he had said at times how he was taken from his family and all of that. So that's as far as I really know, which is kind of sad. (Kasha, third generation, 02:29)

> He [grandfather] never talked about it [his Holocaust related experiences] much... To us, other than he said it was sad. He doesn't know where his parents were…. The only thing she [grandmother] really said was that she worked in a hospital and that she got taken away from her family. But I don't think she understood, you know what I mean, without any education, I don't think she really understood what was going on. (Kasha, third generation, 00:45)

While discussing the lack of communication between her and her grandparents about the Holocaust, Kasha said,

> I think if I would've known more it would've been more of impression on me. (Kasha, third generation, 20:05)

Pogoda Family. The first family interviewed in this study was comprised of survivor Martha (87 years), her daughter, Kristina (61 years), and her granddaughter, Josephina (34 years). Martha and her husband are both Polish Catholic survivors. Martha endured forced labor on two farms owned by SS officers for four years. Her husband was imprisoned in a concentration camp. Martha and her husband met and were married in a DP camp in Germany and they had five children (now 63, 61, 59, 56, and 50 years). Kristina was born in a DP camp in Amberg, Germany.

From the silence of the survivors emerges the voice of the second generation. This family system conveyed an intergenerational communication pattern in which the survivors did not talk about their Holocaust related trauma with their children or grandchildren. It was when the second generation approached the survivor with Holocaust related questions, and the survivors answered, that a dialogue about the Holocaust was begun that has continued at the urging of the second generation (Kristina, second generation, 18:35). Martha did not talk with her granddaughter about her experiences in the Holocaust although the effects of the

Holocaust emerged within her interactions and in the role of cooking food. The second generation acted as a mediator and facilitated Holocaust related communication and interactions between the survivor and her grandchildren (Josephina, third generation, 09:20); it was the second generation who told the daughter about the family's history and that her grandparents were Holocaust survivors. The second generation also mediated family conflicts between the survivor and third generation

> When there's stuff going on in the family or when I want to be upset, hurt or something, my mom's always like, "Be gentle. She's a...[survivor] " [to] My mom, it's an excuse not to be upset at her…. My mom always says, if my mom concedes on something, my mom's always like, "Oh, she's had a hard life. She doesn't have any peace. Could you just do this for her?" Because there's been things that I've been upset about or I didn't want to do and my mom is always, "Look, it will make her happy, would you just do this? She's had a hard life." That's like, there's always that card being played….It's like, "Oh, did you have to go there," kind of thing. [laughter] It's like it always then my mind has to get changed. So then, of course I look at it differently, I'm like, "Oh man, okay, I guess I don't have to be so angry," or it's like, "Okay." (Josephina, third generation, 31:53)

The third generation described a sense of always knowing her grandparents were *camp survivors* (Josephina, third generation, 11:37). The second generation also mediated Holocaust related communication between the survivor and those outside of the family. Josephina offered an illustration of when her third grade teacher discovered her grandmother was a survivor and requested that the grandmother speak to her class. It was the second generation who spoke with the teacher, communicated the survivor's unwillingness to speak, and offered to come in the survivor place and talk with the class about the Holocaust.

Passing on the awareness. Kristina said that as a child of a survivor, she believes it is important that her children understand that her parents were Holocaust survivors and remember that the Holocaust occurred, which she did.

> Just making sure that my kids would know it….I'm trying to document as much as I can because so many of these people are dying that there's not many left to talk about it anymore….I don't think enough people my age are talking to their kids who had grandparents that experienced that because so many kids don't know…I really don't. You just go on and make sure that it's not forgotten. (Kristina, second generation, 32:14)

Josephina described a sense of always knowing that her grandparents were survivors and recalled gaining a fuller understanding of the intensity of the Holocaust and Nazi terror when she started to learn about the Holocaust in elementary school.

> We always knew to some degree…My parents talked about the gas chambers and stuff with us as little kids, and how they had some friends that had died because of it. They didn't shelter us from too much of... They lost their families, they didn't know if there was anybody left behind. They had a hard life and, "We're struggling Polocks and that's what we do," kind of thing. But it was in grade school, actually learning about some of the horrible things. (Josephina, third generation, 15:13)

Josephina described growing up among other Polish Catholics and expressed a sense of feeling different from other Polish families and that the knowledge of her family's persecution in the Holocaust felt like a weight.

> It's very unique because I don't know very many people like that because I grew up with tons of Polish friends, but their grandparents had already been here for a long time….They always had the same traditions and everything, but we always had this huge, it seemed like, weight in our family. It's a different... It was like a weight (Josephina, third generation, 2:30)

The role of food. The role that food played in family life and interpersonal interactions was observed by the second and third generation. In Pogoda Family, Kristina and Josephina both spoke about the role of food within their family.

Josephina recalled that her grandmother mainly spoke about her Holocaust related experiences in the context of food, in particular, cooking.

> You know, probably the only time I've really heard *babcia* [grandmother] talked about it [the Holocuast] was when I've asked her for cooking advice because she doesn't like to talk about it, and when I want to know how to cook, she always referenced back to how... When she was working for the German soldier, how she learned how to cook most of the stuff from... I don't know if it was from his wife, but that's where she learned how to cook a lot of stuff…she learned to do most of the cooking there…So when I ask her how to make stuff, a lot of times she'll reference back to, "Oh, that's how I learned to make it from the Germans," she'll say. But she'll reference back to that. So she'll kind of jump around, "Well, I don't know if I'm doing it right or not, but that's how the Germans taught me. (Josephina, third generation, 08:09)

Second generation Kristina observed the role of food within her family and described her observation about her mother and food. She expressed,

> My mother always made sure that there was food. If nothing else, there was always food. That's the one thing because you don't have that much food…. And anybody that came to the house, she fed. She didn't... My dad would bring people home 2 or 3 o'clock in the morning and would feed them. She got up and fed them. [laughter]….Any friends that we brought home, any kids that we hung around with, everybody had to eat; you weren't leaving the house unless you ate. (Kristina, second generation, 20:50)

Kristina observed how the role of food was important in raising her children as well as in interpersonal interactions.

> She yells at me now but I was worse, when my kids brought their friends home, Jesus, I fed so many children and housed so many kids here, I forgot how many I actually had. [laughter] (Kristina, second generation, 23:43)

Pogoda family members' reactions to family being interviewed. I interviewed survivor Martha and second generation Kristina together. Kristina assisted in translating her mother's responses from Polish to English. I went to third generation Josephina's home to interview her, and Kristina was in the home watching Josephina's children. At the end of the interview with Josephina, her

mother joined us and I had the opportunity to ask Kristina, “What was it like for me to talk with you and your mother?” Kristina stated,

> I think it's awesome that young people, a young person that are still interested in what happened what, 60 years ago now? Because a lot of kids aren't and to research it, to keep it going….And my mother didn't tell you everything either. I mean, when my mom was working for the soldiers on their farms she was raped repeatedly with the other women that were... You know. When you're talking SS officers they were the worst of it. (Kristina, second generation, 48:10)

I also had the opportunity to ask third generation participant Josephina “What is it like for you knowing that I interviewed your grandmother?”

> I'm wondering how it was for her. How it was for her thinking about that stuff. Just remembering because I'm sure in her it goes away and then it comes back and goes away, and you know just having to think about it, how it was emotionally for her. Because it's hard to hear the things, let alone, how... I don't know how much she still remembers but I don't know if she could ever forget some of that stuff….How much it just sticks with her everyday or if it just seems like a distant memory. What it's like for her. I don't know. It just seems surreal that something like that happened. (Josephina, third generation, 53:11)

Sieroslawski Family. The second family interviewed in this study was comprised of Polish Catholic survivor Anna (84 years), her daughter Irina (64 years), and her granddaughter, Kasha (37 years). Anna and her deceased husband are both Polish Catholic survivors. Anna endured forced labor on a German farm. Her husband was a forced laborer who dug ditches and worked in a factory owned by the German Reich. Anna and her husband met and were married in a displaced persons camp in Germany and they had two children. Anna’s daughter Irina was born in a DP camp in Amberg, Germany.

Family communication patterns: Intergenerational bonds of silence. The Sieroslawski family conveyed an intergenerational communication pattern in which

survivors did not talk about their Holocaust related trauma with their children or grandchildren, which over time seemed to form a silence agreement. Anna did not discuss her Holocaust related experiences with her children as they were growing up (Anna, survivor, 31:10). Irina interpreted her parents' silence as a form of protection for her—as a means of not exposing her and her brother to the Holocaust related trauma they suffered (Irina, second generation, 44:00).

> You have the protection but we also asked dad [about his Holocaust related experiences]. They try to... They didn't want it to seem like it was a bad life for them because when you're young, you don't understand anyway. So they would protect by not talking about it in front of kids. But as I go older, he felt that and I could hear him sometimes. He would read books and stuff and ask him what happened and that. It was just amazing. Totally, unbelievable and amazing that they made it through and how life turned out. (Irina, second generation, 43:48)

Irina asked her parents about their Holocaust related experiences as she aged, and started to learn more about her parents' Holocaust-related experiences once she became a caregiver for her parents and they lived together.

> And then, towards the end [of my father's life] when I was old, probably in my '40s and '50s, he'd really start telling me stuff. And at the very end, him and I would just sit here [and talk]. (Irina, second generation, 42:14)

Irina observed that the processing of remembering Holocaust related experiences was difficult for her mother, and as a means of protecting her mother from the emotional suffering she experienced while recalling and discussing the Holocaust, Irina stopped asking about her mother's Holocaust experiences. A protective silence emerged to bond the two generations.

> She [Anna] tries not to think about it is what... My dad used to talk about it a lot just so I would know. But for her, it was too hard, so we just... don't talk about it. (Irina, second generation, 27:48)

It is noteworthy that second generation Irina did not discuss her parents' Holocaust related experiences with her children (Irina, second generation, 51:52), and the grandchild and grandparents had little Holocaust related communication, which solidified a bond of silence between the generations. Third generation Kasha observed the silence around Holocaust-related communication within her family.

> No [my mother and I didn't talk about my grandparents experiences in the Holocaust] And [that is] kind of sad…. And I think it's even worse now, but I don't think my generation even understood, fully understood, the Holocaust. So to think now and say, "Holy cow! This happened" and the fact that it's somebody in my family, is really scary and that it's scary because they never talked about it, never. So yeah. It's one of those, "Wow! This really happened" kind of things. I think it's more of... But again, my generation, you didn't learn much about that in school, you didn't learn much about that. My parents never talked about it. So it's not like I talk about it to my kids. So the only thing they know is oh, yeah, grandpa and *babcia* [Grandmother] came over on a boat and they lived in Germany," but they don't get it. (Kasha, third generation, 4:22)

The role of food. The importance of feeding others and the role food played in family life and interpersonal interactions was observed by the second and third generation. Irina and Kasha discussed the role of food within their family and the importance of offering others food.

> They always had to make sure you had food. I mean, it was kind of unreal. I'm thinking okay, what is this. Yeah. It [the Holocaust] made them look differently on life. It did…They wanted to make sure you had food, something to drink and a house over your head. (Irina, second generation, 44:47)

Kasha observed the importance of food in interpersonal interactions with others and recalled that when a friend or guest came over it was important to her grandparents that they were offered food.

> Well, growing up, grandma used to make pancakes and she'd be in such in a hurry and make the house smoke up. And we'd have people stand in the hall and wave over the fire extinguisher to get some of the smoke to go away and grandpa used to yell, "You've got to do it right, you've got to cook." So

> anytime anybody comes over, you gotta feed them. And if you don't feed them then it's like an insult almost. So yeah, that's a big, that's a big thing. (Kasha, third generation, 13:30)

Sieroslawski family members' reactions to family being interviewed. For the participants in Sieroslawki Family, I interviewed Anna and her daughter Irina together. When I interviewed Anna's granddaughter Kasha I had the opportunity to ask her, "What is it like for you knowing that I interviewed your grandmother? Third generation participant Kasha replied,

> I think it's kinda cool... It was fun to sit and listen to grandpa because he had a lot of stories. The older he got, the more stories he would tell. He never... When I was older, married or whatever, could sit down as an adult and talk with him, he never specifically went into too many details, but he would tell stories about things, especially like when they first came over here... Talking about how they went to Chicago and decided to come here looking for work, all of those kinds of things. How it just was such a different life and the freedom. (Kasha, third generation, 20:28)

Section 5: Second Level Themes

Two second level themes emerged: 1) the ideal of protection embodied by participants and 2) participants' perception that there is a lack of sociocultural awareness of the suffering of the Poles during the Holocaust. The ideal of protection appeared to be embodied by participants and manifested in the survivors' parenting style, Holocaust related communication and/or silence, and through intergenerational interactions.

The ideal of protection embodied by participants*.* Protection was a dominant theme expressed by participants from each generation. The ideal of protecting family members was interwoven throughout intergenerational communication and was the intent of the survivors' silence as a means of attempting to protect their children from the suffering they experienced. The second level

theme of protection emerged in the following ways: 1) protection embedded in the survivors' silence; 2) protection in survivors' parenting style; 3) protection embedded in second generation parenting style; 4) protection of the survivor.

Protection embedded in the survivor's silence. Three of six survivors (50%) conveyed that the theme of protection was embedded in familial communication and parental silence around the survivor's Holocaust related experiences. Three of the six survivors (50%) reported that they did not discuss their Holocaust related experiences with their children or grandchildren (unless their children approached them with questions) and expressed a desire to protect them from their Holocaust related trauma.

> [Discussed Holocaust related experience] Very little. Very little, very little because this is kind of stuff that's very hard to talk about. And you don't wanna hurt your child. You have one kid and you love him so much. You do anything for him because he lived through a hard life too. (Gina, survivor, 23:04)

> As children, you know they couldn't comprehend the way we suffered… [Now] they know the story of us very good. They know the stories. They hear it over and over. (Osnabruck, survivor, 37:02)

An exception to the silence was when their children or grandchildren came to the survivor with specific questions about their experiences during the Holocaust. Two of six (33%) survivors described how they did not talk with their children unless they came with specific questions.

> No, I don't want to [talk with my children about Holocaust related trauma]…they're learning in school. They're showing people, kids especially, in school and TV and everything. And the kids, they have to come to you with some question and then you help them… Not too many questions. But yes, yes…. then from time to time, come with some question. They ask you question and you try again. (Mary, survivor, 10:27)

> No, we don't talk about it…. First, we didn't have time because when we come over here we got 13 cents in our pocket and his uncle gave us 24 hours from England to come over here…. Oh, they ask. They ask whatever, you know but we never really got time to talk about that because there were always have something to do…. it's not really pleasant to talk about it. (Carol, survivor, 09:43)

Three of four second generation participants (75%) described overhearing their parents talk about Holocaust related experiences and perceived the lack of direct Holocaust related communication as a form of parental protection.

> You have the protection but we also asked dad [about his Holocaust related experiences]. They try to... They didn't want it to seem like it was a bad life for them because when you're young, you don't understand anyway. So they would protect by not talking about it in front of kids. But as I go older, he felt that and I could hear him sometimes. He would read books and stuff and ask him what happened and that. It was just amazing. Totally, unbelievable and amazing that they made it through and how life turned out. (Irina, second generation, 43:48)

> No, they didn't really want to talk about it. And if we ever went to somebody's house that was in the labor camps with them, the children weren't allowed to listen….They didn't want us to know what they went through. And they were probably afraid of the nightmares that we might have or being scared. (Jean, second generation, 12:03)

> Yes. For a long time, they didn't. We would overhear them talking amongst themselves with the people they were in camps with. And that was their conversations. We weren't privy to it. (Kristina, second generation, 18:35)

Josephina, a third generation participant, observed that her grandmother attempted to filter her Holocaust related experiences in such a way as to minimize the atrocities. She said,

> *Babcia* [grandmother] kind of filter it to be... I did get some not benefit but like learn how to cook, and if it wasn't for going to the farm, it could have been even worse than what it was. (Josephina, third generation, 09:04)

Protection in survivors' parental actions. The theme of protection was embedded in survivor's ways of being and parental actions and choices.

> Well, they just wanted to make sure that their kids didn't have to go through what they went through. So, protection, make sure, like I said, they have a roof over their head, the food, the clothes. It meant a lot because when they first came here, they didn't have much but they always wanted to have friends to play with and their own home. ... And the whole theory of them, when they came here, was just to protect their kids and make a life that you wouldn't have to go through hell like they did. (Irina, second generation, 47:17)

> I think that they [non-survivor families] wouldn't understand that my parents went through a rougher time and the reason that they were so protective of us. So, I think that a lot of my friends didn't realize that and for a long time I was upset with my parents because they wouldn't let me go and have a slumber party or go to basketball games or dances. I just realized that their life was so different. (Jean, second generation, 14:09)

> And that sums it up I think just for everybody because everybody wanted to make sure that the kids would be protected, would have stuff, and not go hungry because they went hungry many times. So that was their main objective. (Irina, second generation, 48:25)

Second generation participant Irina described her belief that the protection provided by her parents shielded her from the effects of Holocaust related trauma. When asked, "How do you think the Holocaust has affected your life?"

> It really hasn't because of the concern of the parents, the protection. (Irina, second generation, 43:33)

Protection embedded in second-generation parenting style. Kristina, a second generation participant discussed the how the theme of protection manifested within her parenting style and interactions with her children.

> I was very protective of my kids. I watched them like a hawk. I was in school with them all the time. I was just afraid. If I would have had my way I would have kept them locked in my house for forever, but now that they are gone I'm glad. (Kristina, second generation, 37:46)

Protection of the survivor. One of two third generation participants (50%) discussed how the theme of protection was intertwined throughout the generations

within her family. Josephina expressed that this sense of familial protection influences both her and her mother's interactions with her grandmother.

> My mom always says, if my mom concedes on something, my mom's always like, "Oh, she's [grandmother] had a hard life. She doesn't have any peace. Could you just do this for her? ...When there's stuff going on in the family or when I want to be upset, hurt or something, my mom's always like, "Be gentle. She's a... [camp survivor] "[to] My mom, it's an excuse not to be upset at her. (Josephina, third generation, 31:53)

Josephina described how this familial sense of protection influenced her interactions with her grandmother.

> You know, it's, "Could you just do this for her?" Because there's been things that I've been upset about or I didn't want to do and my mom is always, "Look, it will make her happy, would you just do this? She's had a hard life." That's like, there's always that card being played…. It's like, "Oh, did you have to go there," kind of thing. [laughter] It's like it always then my mind has to get changed. So then, of course I look at it differently, I'm like, "Oh man, okay, I guess I don't have to be so angry," or it's like, "Okay." (Josephina, third generation, 32:37)

Josephina discussed her grandmother will discuss her Holocaust related experiences in such a way that minimizes the atrocities she experienced as form of protection (Josephina, second generation, 23:00). In addition, Kristina often acts in the role of a protector between her mother and others outside of the family (Kristina, second generation, 15:00).

Another illustration of protectiveness displayed by a daughter of one of the survivors interviewed. One of the second generation daughters called me prior to the scheduled interview with her mother and wanted to know who exactly I was, how I acquired her mother's phone number, and why I was coming to her home to interview her. I interpreted her behavior as a reflection of her protectiveness of her mother.

Awareness of the persecution of Polish Catholics during the Holocaust.

Within the United States there is a lack of sociopolitical and cultural awareness in the general public of what the Poles as a people experienced during the Holocaust (Schwartz, 2012). Yet, to date there are no research studies that examine the effects of the Holocaust on the lived experience of Polish Catholic Holocaust survivors' and their descendents. Twelve of twelve participants (100%) in this study described a lack of sociocultural awareness in the general public of the United States about the persecution, enslavement, and suffering of Polish Catholics during the Holocaust. This section is organized according to these categories: 1) survivors' reactions; 2) second generation reactions; 3) third generation reactions.

Survivors' reactions. Six of six survivors (100%) described their belief that the suffering of Catholic Poles during the Holocaust is not widely understood or acknowledged within the United States. Two of six survivors (33%) described how the Nazis persecution and attempts to annihilate the Jewish people should not go unacknowledged, and that the same acknowledgment should be granted.

> [I] will acknowledge that they [Jewish people] did have it the worst. But people need to know that it just wasn't them [Jews] that they [Nazis], you know...[persecuted]. Whoever got in the Germans way, they didn't hesitate to just line you up against the wall and shoot you. It didn't matter…. Well, anybody that housed any of the Jewish people, if they ever found out if... Helped them out…. once they killed off all the Jews they were going to start working on the other nationalities, the Polish people, and then whatever came after them. They had a goal of doing more damage than what they originally had…. They [Poles] got to see all of that and yeah, and that put the fear of not knowing. (Martha, survivor, 26:03)

> You cannot miss ghettos. You cannot miss or think what the German did. But what can you do? Some people helped, some people hide Jewish people, some helped them or bring them food. And some didn't because they didn't have themselves nothing. (Gina, survivor, 34:59)

Gina discussed how the Nazis persecuted Polish Catholics and that many people did not discuss that Catholic Poles were abducted and enslaved by the German Reich.

> Very, very little. Very little, because what it is, Jewish people are rich. They have more voice than we do. See? They don't talk about people. The German will come to church, close the doors and pick out young people and take to work. Nobody talks about it….They just take abled people that could work. They took from church. The city is housed by the house and then you have a key to go upstairs to the apartments. So, if they close the street then people in this area have no way to escape. So they will pick out able to work people, put them on the train, and take them too. And politics they sent to concentration camp, they did. But see, like me I didn't know much about politics, I was too young. Because when war started I was only 12 years old, so not much, only what I've seen. (Gina, survivor, 35:45)

One survivor described her perception that Jews and Catholic Poles suffered from a similar problem, Nazi persecution.

> Jewish people were smart they talk all different language. And you can speak Polish you can speak any language they understood you…. we nice to them because we were on the same problem. We have the same problem [Nazi persecution]. (Carol, survivor, 14:32)

Another survivor spoke about the lack of teaching in United States schools that the Nazis persecuted and enslaved Polish people.

> No. I don't think they do. They don't know. They know that there... At least the present generation, they know that there was a World War II and Hitler was a bad man and so on. But they don't know too good the history the way I do…. But probably the intelligent people know, but they don't teach it in school. (Osnabruck, survivor, 42:04)

One survivor appeared to believe that people of a similar ethic group tend to stay together and that Jewish people in the DP camps had more privileges than Catholic Poles.

> That, again, is hard to say it or to answer that kind of question because Catholics were in German camps…In [the DP] camp after the war… they [Jews] start building some smaller organization and Jewish have the privileges, big privileges. If you Jewish, you put yourself, somehow, on the first place… In Germany and United States…. It's up to you how you acted

> yourselves…. then the Jewish tried to be with their own people…they usually think then "Oh, you're Polish, okay. It's more Polish people here?" They tried to get ideas from the Polish organization of Jewish. Jewish, they had more privileges but everybody, for their own safety, health, and a safety place; they try to be friendly with each other. You don't have too much time to think because you have to work… (Mary, survivor, 16:16, II)

Anna's response was brief:

> That's right…[most people are unaware of what the Poles experienced] No. No. [no one talks about it] (Anna, survivor, 33:46)

Her daughter Irina added that Polish Catholic survivors tend to talk about their Holocaust related experiences within their own community. Irina stated,

> Yeah. They [Polish survivors] talk amongst themselves but not to others. (Irina, second generation, 33:48)

Second generation reactions. Four of four second generation participants (100%) explained that they experienced a lack of cultural awareness in the United States about the suffering of Polish Catholics during the Holocaust.

> Yeah. People don't realize that and honestly I didn't realize it until years ago because they only talk about the Jews and the stuff how the Jews were buried and stuff. But they didn't understand how the Polish people went through hell too…. And people today just don't realize it. All they heard about is the Jews…. It would be nice if they did publish papers or something and just like they did about the Jews and so the future generation.... I would like to see something out, so then my kid could read it. I mean, I know about it and they know some stuff but their kids will never know. (Irina, second generation, 53:03)

> Sure, yeah. It's [the suffering of Polish Catholics is] not [adequately acknowledged]…. because they'd gotten so involved with the Jewish community with the Jewish people always being…because that was the main goal [of the Nazi regime], was for the Germans to get rid of the Jewish people, to annihilate all of them that they... They just went crazy and so they were killing everybody else. And you need to know that because of that that they went nuts and were killing all these other people without a conscience, without even knowing why they were killing them, but that's not brought up enough. It's just always concentrated on the one group of people [the Jews] and granted they.... My mom said that they said that once they killed off all the Jews they were going to start working on the other nationalities, the

> Polish people, and then whatever came after them. So, they [the Nazis] had a goal of doing more damage than what they originally had. (Kristina, second generation, 39:16)

Two of four second generation participants (50%) noted that Polish survivors are not talking with their children or grandchildren about their Holocaust related experiences.

> Well yeah, I don't think enough people my age are talking to their kids who had grandparents that experienced that because so many kids don't know. I mean, I think what really upsets me the most is there's still so many people that think it [the Holocaust] never happened, that it was just a myth, something somebody made up…. And I can't imagine after all the documentation that the Germans did of what they did, that you could sit there and say it never happened, especially when it's still happening in all these other countries. (Kristina, second generation, 32:43)

Second generation Jean described how her parents, who were both survivors, did not discussed their Holocaust related experience and that the survivors' silence contributes to the not knowing:

> Well, it's, again, something that I didn't talk about because my parents wouldn't talk about. And I know that whatever they experienced, that will go away with my generation because I even see in my girlfriend, she has children and grandchildren, and I don't think they know anything at all about the Holocaust. So it's just basically the first generation that understands what the parents went through and, eventually, it would just be nothing, but history. (Jean, second generation, 19:13)

Tomec discussed that he was raised among other Polish Catholic survivors and their children and that the community of people he knew were aware that the Poles as a people were targeted by the Nazi regime. He observed that once he moved outside of this Polish community, many individuals he encountered were unaware of the Nazi persecution of the Poles during the Holocaust. Tomec described his belief that many individuals within the United States are not interested in history or having knowledge about the Holocaust.

> That's probably true…. But remember I grew up around...The people I grew up around knew it. But you know when I moved to… I went to college… in California. The people had very little knowledge of history, the Polish Catholic history, or anything like that. They were lucky if they could find... I don't think 80% of them could find Poland on the map. I think there seems to be a general disinterest in history and even war, which is sad. I don't know, unless.... I think most people are pretty clueless and then honestly I don't think many of them care. It is just not knowledge they're interested in having. The media and the newspapers have kind a played up the Jewish part of it because there was a much more as far as from the numbers standpoint.

Third generation reactions. Two of two third generation (100%) participants reported their belief that the experience of Polish Catholics during the Holocaust is not adequately acknowledged in the United States.

Josephina appeared to experience emotion and feelings of sadness as she stated,

> Oh yeah. And because you have all these organizations that's all about Jewish survivors, but nobody really realized how many Polish survivors there were and came out of it to live it... Live and tell what happened to them because it was all just centered around their hatred and how Hitler was just after them. But he captured and killed a lot of other people and I don't think people understand how bad his demise for a lot of different people were, that he was actually after a lot of different races, not just them [Jewish people] and what he was actually doing there. (Josephina, third generation, 17:10)

Kasha appeared somewhat agitated as she stated,

> Maybe I'm different than... Yes, I think it should be known, but do I think we should sit around and feel sorry for ourselves? No. This is something that... I'm so far removed from it, that I don't have a clue to what really happened….Would it be good to be out there, and be known, you know, because they do... They think it's just the Jews, and whatever. I think it would be good to be known…I'm just kind of thinking, it would be nice to know more about all of this that happened, but I don't feel like... I guess the education would be nice to know if you want to know it. I don't feel like I'm entitled to anything because of it. (Kasha, third generation, 18:19)

Themes in response to Research Questions

In this section themes are presented in relation to research questions R.Q 1 through 4. Interview questions were developed with the intention of generating a

dialogue with participants about R. Q. 1 through 4. R.Q. 1 through 3 primarily focused on the survivors' lived experience and R. Q. 4 addresses the effects of the Holocaust for future generations.

R.Q. 1: **Do participants make meaning out of their Holocaust experiences? If so, how?** None of the six survivors interviewed (0%) made explicit conscious meaning that they articulated from their Holocaust experiences. Two of the six survivors (33%) conveyed that they could not make sense of their Holocaust experiences.

> There is no sense…[pause] there is just no sense to what happened during the war. It was just an insane man that thought he was God. I don't know how else to...You can't. You know, what…[we] were put through, how…[we] had to live. It's just the fear. Oh my God! (Martha, survivor, 14:10)

> I really don't know. I really don't know about that. They were saying like German, they want to make pure blood. If there was one, they take all the people that's not together, put in a house, and burn them. So, they didn't wanna a crippled people, they don't wanna not right people. He was a very mean person…[pause] I don't know (Gina, survivor, 33:27)

Two of six survivors (33%) discussed the difficulty in even remembering their Holocaust related experiences.

> Nobody even wanna think about it. They wanna forget about it, like I say, because that it wasn't pleasant…. The people get sick. The people die. And like me, I don't wanna think about because I have rough time. (Carol, survivor, 00:24, III)

> It was hard. Believe me, it was hard. It was so hard. People are dying and killing. You see it still like it is happening you know laying on the... God it was, it was hard. (Anna, survivor, 27:29)

Anna's daughter observed,

> She tries not to think about it is what... You can't go back to the past. It's always with you but you don't dwell on it. And so, eventually, their life got better here and you just move forward. My dad used to talk about it a lot just so I would know…. But for her, it was too hard, so we just...[don't talk about

> it] (Irina, second generation, 27:48)

One of six survivors (17%) explained that she focused on the future rather than made meaning out of her Holocaust related experiences. Mary expressed,

> Oh, it's just like I said... Keep thinking about tomorrow. You pass what's worse, but you're thinking. You still think for tomorrow and try to do something for tomorrow for better days. (Mary, survivor, 06:33)

One of six survivors (17%) appeared to make meaning out of his Holocaust related experiences and surviving the war by focusing on the opportunity he had to immigrant to the United States.

> It was a horrible thing to do. No right. Nobody's got the right to take anybody else's freedom away, right?**....** But, honestly, we consider ourselves happy that we were taken by the Nazis to Germany and are still alive and enjoying the good life in this country, United States of America because if it was Stalin, the communist, if we were living in the eastern part of Poland we would end up in Siberia and I am positive I wouldn't live there very longer. (Osnabruck, survivor, 34:48)

R. Q. 2: Does holocaust-related trauma affect the everyday lives of participants? Five of six survivors (83%) interviewed described that their specific Holocaust related trauma continued to affect them in their present lives. Survivors described feelings of sadness and tearfulness, flashbacks of Holocaust related trauma, and nightmares and physical pain. Three of six survivors (50%) described having feeling of sadness about Holocaust related experiences and described being tearful and crying often.

> I was crying everyday, everyday. But I cried and I pray to God to help me, say prayer, "God help me. God help me." That's why I think God helped me…. I think of bad time, crying…sometimes I say, "No, I'm not going to do that." I say my prayer first…It was I don't know, Now, I'm still crying everyday. (Anna, survivor, 23:56)

> I'm always crying before. (Carol, survivor, 34:42)

> Oh yeah…leaving your family, getting taken away from your parents at such a young age. Yes…[I] cried a lot. (Martha, survivor, 12:39)

One participant Carol described that although she longed to forget her Holocaust related experiences, her body reminded her daily of her Holocaust related trauma. Carol described how the pain in her hands and feet serve as a daily reminder.

> But now, summertime, even the winter times, I've got blister on them, under Yeah…**.** because my feet…. I got frozen, you know and I cannot... See now, I got poor circulation to my feet and the doctor, she said, 'you have to walk. You have to walk. You have to walk.' I go to the mailbox, picking up the mail, halfway I have to stand up because my feet collapsed…I just hope I just forget about it. (Carol, survivor, 13:04)

Flashbacks of Holocaust-related trauma. Three of six survivors (50%) reported they experienced flashbacks associated with the Holocaust related trauma they suffered.

> Yeah, it stays, you. If something bad happens, for instance, if I see accident and I see blood it comes back…Now if it's an accident or something they have water, they wash it up but at that time there was no water or sprinklers or anything that blood stayed there forever. We go to streets where the asphalt streets it used to be brick streets. (Gina, survivor, 01:19)

> Just like I said, you're sitting here watching TV but they're showing something on TV and it somehow connect [to the Holocaust], not exactly you, your country, but different country, but they have trouble so you matching and try to [understand]…. It's so much different things but it stays with you. Your past stay with you. (Mary, survivor, 03:53)

> It was hard. Believe me, it was hard. It was so hard. People are dying and killing. You see it [Holocaust related experiences] still, like it's happening [now], you know laying on the...[floor]. God it was, it was hard. (Anna, survivor, 27:29)

Holocaust related trauma coming back at night. Three of the six survivors (50%) described how the Holocaust-related trauma they experienced returned or *came back at night*. Two of the six survivors (33%) reported that the Holocaust

related flashbacks and emotional suffering they experienced was still present and that over time the flashbacks lessened in frequency.

> I still, sometimes, I wake up and I can hear the screams…at night. At night, yeah. Not often. Not as often as it used to be. In the beginning, I always see the blood on our house and I hear voices for a while but not very often now…[the voices of] the people that were ran over with the tank. (Gina, survivor, 4:11)

> I forget it sometimes, I know, it come to me at night when I sleep. Everything, how I was there you know, how we did, how I was a girl, go with the farmer and pick potatoes. It was terrible. It was sometimes, everything come to the head. But, its no good, you know, God got us through. Yeah, at night when I go... She's [Anna's daughter, Irina] not home and I lay down with Jojo [Anna's dog] and all, everything comes to my head. I say, "Well I better say prayer that God forgive me" and that's it. It's better. (Anna, survivor, 56:28)

> Through the night, you don't see it because if you're working, you're always tired and yeah, but it's coming back, coming back, the memory is coming back… If you once in a trouble like that even if you pass by that's just for little bit, but it stays with you… your past stay with you. (Mary, survivor, 4:48 III)

R. Q 3: If so, how do participants cope with Holocaust-related trauma in their daily lives? Six of six survivors (100%) seemed to find ways to cope with the Holocaust related trauma they endured. Two of six survivors (33%) described acceptance and resignation in their coping. Two of six survivors (33%) engaged in a process of remembering that appeared to assist survivors in coping with their Holocaust related trauma. One survivor (17%) engaged in future focused thinking as a means of coping. One survivor (17%) used meaning making and minimization of his Holocaust related experience as a means of coping. Three of the six survivors (50%) used the language *we made it,* to express the achievement of survival during and after the Holocaust.

Acceptance. When survivors were asked directly how they cope with Holocaust related trauma that remains in their daily lives, two of the six survivors (33%) expressed a sense of resignation and acceptance in their coping.

> What can I do? What can I do? Nothing. (Gina, survivor, 28:39)

> Nothing. [I] just talk about it…[I] cry…[I am] sad. (Martha, survivor, translated by Kristina, 12:53)

Martha's daughter, Kristina observed,

> You pretty much don't have a choice. You have to just either make up your mind that you're going to survive and go on living, or you're going you know to shrivel up and die. My mother is a very strong woman. She's a bull; a stubborn bull. She's a survivor…. They are all survivors. (Kristina, second generation, 16:56)

One of the six survivors (17%) expressed a focus on future thinking and survival and how the promise of another day motivated them to survive.

> Keep thinking about tomorrow. You pass what's worse, but you're thinking. You still think for tomorrow and try to do something for tomorrow for better days…."Tomorrow's going to be better. It's going to be tomorrow. I always said that. Tomorrow's going to be better, and it's gonna be tomorrow…. It's not easy…. But everything pass by. (Mary, survivor, 06:38)

Second generation Irina observed the future focused thinking in her mother's survival.

> They just realized coming here was like heaven and they could start all over and you have to move forward. You can't go backwards. (Irina, second generation, 48:48)

Dissociation and the process of remembering. Two of the six survivors (33%), one of four second generation participants (25%), and two of two third generation participants (100%) spoke about the survivors' process of remembering their experiences during the Holocaust. Two of the six survivors (33%) discussed the difficulty in remembering their Holocaust related experiences. Survivors Anna

and Carol both expressed the difficulty they experience in remembering their lives during the Holocaust. During the interview with Carol there were moments when she expressed difficulty in remembering and recalling various details of her experiences during the Holocaust. While Carol and I were clarifying the name and spelling of the Siberian concentration camp in which she was imprisoned, she said:

> Yeah, this... Hold it. I can't even remember no more now… Because this was... I didn't want to remember. (Carol, survivor, 01:51)

When asked about the process of remembering, Carol admitted,

> Sometimes, it is not easy because you don't want to remember because it was everything [long pause] we made it, yeah…. Nobody even wanna think about it. They wanna forget about it, like I say, because that it wasn't pleasant…Yeah. The people get sick. The people die. And like me, I don't wanna think about because I have rough time. (Carol, survivor, 33:49)

> No. I don't want to think about it. I just want to just forget about it because I ruin my stomach because I was picking up the roots from the grass, I didn't even wash what I ate because I was hungry. (Carol, survivor, 45:53)

Third generation Josephina conveyed her observations of her grandparent's process of recalling her Holocaust related experiences.

> I know that when they were taken, their memory of their family diminished quickly because they had trouble remembering number of brothers and sisters…so their recollection of their siblings... I mean they couldn't remember hardly any of their childhood from that point on. So when they were put into the camps and then when they tried to recall people who they knew, it was a very fuzzy memory for them, because it was like they lost their childhood. (Josephina, third generation**,** 00:38)

Josephina went on a trip to Amberg, Germany and visited the remains of the DP camp where her mother was born. She recalled discussing details of the camp with her grandmother Martha who had difficulty remembering. She stated,

> We talked to her [her grandmother] all about the places we went and we tried to show her some of the pictures we took, and all she could really remember about Amberg was, she's like, "I remember water running through

> it." And they did have a river that ran through the main part of town and she remembered a wall around the town and the whole place is encircled by a big wall and she kind of remembered... We showed her the new pictures of the barracks and she's like, "Yeah, I kind of remember that," but the details, she didn't remember too much. And Augsburg, [other DP camp] all she can really remember was the wedding, but she couldn't remember like the name of the church or anything like that so all we had to go by was the address, I think, which was on her certificate. But it's still a lot of the... It's more stories, not details kind of [she recalled]. (Josephina, third generation, 26:08)

During the interview with Anna, she could not recall the day she was abducted by Nazi soldiers nor details of her life during the time the Nazi regime was in power.

When asked to say more about the day she was taken, she said,

> No, I can't tell you that…my daughter [Irina] will remember more than that, not me. Now, I forget it." (Anna, survivor, 03:20)

Anna indicated that her daughter knew the details of her experience during the Holocaust and she did not. When asked about her experience of recalling her Holocaust related experiences, she admitted,

> And she [her daughter, Irina] knows already. I don't now. I forget it though. (Anna, survivor, 36:16)

Later during the interview, Anna expressed,

> I forget it sometimes, I know, come to me at times when I sleep. Everything how was that. How was I was a girl on the farm and pick potatoes. It was terrible. (Anna, survivor, 56:28)

Anna's daughter Irina and granddaughter Kasha observed the process of recalling Holocaust related trauma:

> I think just hard times they don't want to remember. Why would you want to remember that? It was awful…. I think that it was just so hard and I think they did block a lot of it because you tend to block out. You can block that out of your mind. (Kasha, third generation**,** 03:06)

> She [Anna] tries not to think about it is what... My dad used to talk about it a lot just so I would know… Some things he remembered and some things he

> just doesn't want to remember right…. But for her, it was too hard, so we just... don't talk about it." (Irina, second generation, 27:48)

Denial, dissociation, and minimization. One of six survivors (17%) did not believe that the trauma he experienced during the Holocaust continued to affect him in his present life. Osnabruck said he found great meaning in becoming an American citizen, in part because he was able to serve the country composed of the men and women who liberated him and his family. Osnabruck appeared to make meaning out of his Holocaust related experiences and surviving the war by focusing on the opportunity he had to immigrant to the United States.

> Nobody's got the right to take anybody else's freedom away, right?... But, honestly, we consider ourselves happy that we were taken by the Nazis to Germany and are still alive and enjoying the good life in this country, United States of America because if it was Stalin, the communist, if we were living in the eastern part of Poland we would end up in Siberia and I am positive I wouldn't live there very longer. (Osnabruck, survivor, 34:48)

Tomec discussed his understanding of his father's experiences during the Holocaust and how this influenced his thinking. He stated,

> If anything he feels lucky to have survived it. It was an avenue of not being under a communist regime because he got away from Poland, he ended up in Germany, and then never went back to Poland. So he would have grown up in communist Poland, yet he had not. So in effect, the Germans did him favor. My grandfather flatly refused to go back to Poland because it was under communist structure basically. I think I never saw it as really a negative. It was always a positive. It was fortuitous that he was lucky enough to get to America. (Tomec, second generation, 11:06)

Tomec discussed how his father perceived his Holocaust related experiences and that he conveyed this perceptual message to his children. Tomec articulated his belief that in comparison to other Holocaust survivors, his father and his family were fortunate to be forced laborers on a farm.

> It's been the way he has always spun it and, I guess, I agree with him, right? I mean, it was horrible for many other people, but for our family it was a piece of good luck actually…. It goes back to us feeling you know kind of like we got the lucky end of the stick where as other folks who obviously had it much, much worse (Tomec, second generation, 11:14)

Tomec spoke about the suffering his family experienced in the Holocaust and minimized the magnitude by comparing his father's experience to other Holocaust survivors. He articulated his belief that the Holocaust did not have a negative impact on him or his family. With great seriousness, Tomec expressed,

> No one in our family was ever killed or suffered or anything like that other been being pulled from your roots and separated from your family, dragged off to a country that you are not familiar with, and living in Germany basically for what, 19 years…. I mean, it was horrible for many other people, but for our family it was a piece of good luck actually (Tomec, second generation, 11:55)

Later in the interview, Tomec appeared to have a vague sense that his father's persecution and imprisonment in the Holocaust influenced him and his family. Tomec spontaneously said,

> I don't know. I guess I never thought about it affecting us, but maybe it has on some level. (Tomec, second generation, 17:03)

R. Q 4: **Does Holocaust-related trauma affect the future generations of Polish Catholic Holocaust survivors? If so, how?** Themes are organized by second generation, followed by third generation. Second generation and third generation themes that emerged in association with this research question are the following: 1) loss of family; 2) the effects of the Holocaust on survivor's parenting; 3) effects of the Holocaust on the second-generation parenting 4) the effects of the Holocaust on third generation parenting; 4) effects of the Holocaust on family interactions.

Loss of Family. Four of four second generation participants (100%) spoke about the loss of family as a consequence of the Holocaust.

> Yes, she cries a lot…. That hurts me. That hurts me to see her crying and to know that she's been [pause] I can't imagine being away from my parents and family the way she was away from hers. I just can't fathom how you could go on with your life not seeing these people, being around [long pause] Not knowing them is a better word because she, my God, the first time she went back to Poland was 25 years after she was gone and so she didn't know them anymore. And [to] try to get reacquainted with these people that are your family, your parents and your brothers and sisters. (Kristina, second generation, 33:26).

> Yeah, [my father] mostly [talks about]… his brother being separated from him when they were little. He got sent to a different work camp. I don't remember the story that clearly. I think his brother, he's my uncle, his older brother got snapped up by the Germans [Nazis] well before the family got picked up because he was... He would have been a teenager, he probably was 15 or so, and my dad was 11, I think my uncle was several years older than him…I think the story is he went to town for a loaf of bread and he got nabbed by a German and taken off to a work camp. (Tomec, second generation, 05:01)

> She [survivor Anna] never saw her parents when she left…. Never saw them. She finally found that one brother was killed. (Irina, second generation, 17:10)

Jean, a second-generation participant and the daughter of two survivors recalled that her parents never saw their parents or siblings after they were separated during the Holocaust. As a child she and her brother both had nightmares associated with her parent's loss of their family.

> I think the only times we [Jean and her brother] had some bad dreams was we knew that my parents never really connected with their family. After the war, they were able to write to them because they found them that way. But as far as actually going back and seeing their parents and their siblings, I don't believe they ever did that. And we did get pictures of them when they passed away but short of that, they really didn't want to talk about it. (Jean, second generation, 13:02)

Two of two third generation participants (100%) described their realization of their grandparents' loss of family as a result of the Holocaust.

> I know that they were taken at a very young age. I know that when they were taken, their memory of their family diminished quickly because they had trouble remembering number of brothers and sisters. What had happened to their family, they didn't know. They knew... Like my grandmother knew who died when she... She was with... I think a brother got shot right away when she was taken. And she knew some of her siblings were hiding, but she was taken and then my grandfather, he was very young. I think one was 13 and one was 15. So their recollection of their siblings…. They lost their families, they didn't know if there was anybody left behind. (Josephina, third generation, 00:38)

> Oh gosh! Just that grandpa was reported to be taken from his family. He never talked about it much... To us, other than he said it was sad. He doesn't know where his parents were…. The only thing she [grandmother] really said was that she worked in a hospital and that she got taken away from her family (Kasha, third generation, 00:45)

The effects of the Holocaust on survivors' parenting. Three of four second generation participants (75%) reported their belief that the specific Holocaust related trauma their parents experienced influenced the survivors' parenting style.

> I know they... The belts, the spankings, ... because that's how they were treated, that's what they knew so that's how they disciplined us, making us... They had to listen when they were beat so we had to listen when we were beat. (Kristina, second generation, 35:36)

> Well, they just wanted to make sure that their kids didn't have to go through what they went through. So, protection, make sure, like I said, they have a roof over their head, the food, the clothes. It meant a lot because when they first came here, they didn't have much but they always wanted to have friends to play with and their own home.... And the whole theory of them, when they came here, was just to protect their kids and make a life that you wouldn't have to go through hell like they did. (Irina, second generation, 47:17)

> They were very strict with me, with the girl. They were very religious and I think that's one thing. The religion helped them through some really bad times. So that is one thing, very strict and very religious. I would think that, basically, they would do anything for their children, but they also wanted them to be on their own two feet to survive. (Jean, second generation, 18:18)

Tomec described that his father had a strict parenting style, however, he did not believe that his father's Holocaust related experiences influenced his parenting style. Tomec described his father's parenting style as one that is reflective of the historical time period he was raised, and explained that in his opinion, corporal punishment was a common form of punishment for children.

> I don't know that it [the Holocaust] affected them in any way. You know it's kind of a generational thing. I think they were going to raise me the same way whether I was in Poland or in America. I have a hunch that they would have been the exact same parent either way.... I think they probably pushed education a little stronger than they would have had there not been the war. Parenting was the same. I'm trying to think, everybody in our neighborhood pretty much parented the same way, Right? Everybody got their butts beat once in awhile. There was corporal punishment in school. The nuns had wielded paddles, right? That was just... In the '60s and '70s that was routine, especially in the catholic schools. So, I don't... I don't know that it affected the way... The type of parent he was…I think he just, he pushed the Polish pride a little bit and made sure we understood how valuable it was to be Americans. (Tomec, second generation, 14:29)

Two of two third generation participants (100%) described their perception of their grandparents as strict and that their grandparents' parenting style reflected Holocaust related trauma.

> It was really harsh, their parenting skills, and I'm sure it was a direct effect on how and what they saw as kids being in those [concentration] camps. Because that's all they [grandparents] knew, was how mean to be and how they got a reaction out of that. And even when we were little kids, my *Dziadz* [grandfather] hated kids. I mean that's how we grew up, was *Dziadz* [grandfather] hated kids. (Josephina, third generation, 36:25)

> I think growing up knowing Grandpa; he was very military, very strict. He was... And I think that had some affect on him because he was, I don't want to say brainwashed, but who knows what they [Nazis] did to him. I think he was very, "Save your money," and just very strict on everything. (Kasha, third generation, 06:08)

The effects of the Holocaust on second generation parenting. Three of four second generation participants (75%) have children. Two of three second generation participants (67%) with children reported their belief that the Holocaust and their parent's parenting influenced the way they parented their children and spoke about the intergenerational transmission of anxiety and fear and the value of protectiveness embedded within their parenting style.

> I didn't beat my kids with the belt, but I spanked them with a wooden spoon because I thought that was more humane. [Laughter] But I grounded them a lot not that it did any good because they weren't going anywhere to be grounded from. [Laughter] But I was very protective of my kids. I watched them like a hawk. I was in school with them all the time. I was just afraid. Just, you know. If I would have had my way I would have kept them locked in my house for forever, but now that they are gone I'm glad. (Kristina, second generation, 37:46)

> I wanted to make sure they never have to go hungry and especially when I start hearing the stories and stuff and they never did. But they were in sports because I'm a big sports fan. (Irina, second generation, 51:00)

Second generation Tomec described that he was less strict with his children than his parents were with him. Tomec perceive this difference as being reflective of the historical time period he was raised in, rather then his parenting style being influenced by his father's Holocaust related experience.

> I'm more of a softer parent than our parents were, right? I mean there's no more spanking and stuff like that. It's just, again a generational thing. Probably everybody our age is different in the way we parent than when we were raised. My kids are both real proud of being Polish. I mean I've pushed that on them. But you know what? I don't know that I [pause] I probably am the same kind of parent as all the other people around us are and coming from whether... Even the ones who didn't come from Polish families or war survivors. (Tomec, second generation, 16:10)

The effects of the Holocaust on third generation parenting. Two of two third generation participants (100%) described the influence their parents' parenting has on them and the ways they parent their children. Embedded in third

generation participant Josephina's response is the ideal of protection of herself by her mother and in the breaking of the cycle in her parenting toward her children.

> Well my parents... My mom always said that she was never going to parent me and my brothers the way she was parented. And they went out of their way to make sure that that cycle was broken. So, I took a lot of cues on her parenting skills so far because I didn't want to... I'm very paranoid. I mean, she was a stay-at-home mom and I am a working mom and it's very stressful. But I want to make sure that no patterns get repeated, you know, because I don't know if any of that can be hereditary and passed down, but I don't want to use any of the Holocaust stuff as just an excuse for bad parenting, but sometimes it is. She went out of her way with us to make sure that she wasn't a mean parent, and that her bad childhood wasn't repeated with us. (Josephina, third generation, 40:41)

Two of two third generation participants (100%) spoke about the importance of passing on family values such saving money, Polish work ethic, and Polish traditions.

> My parents were very easy going... But there were just two of us, so we didn't have a lot of responsibilities. We had some chores, I had animals and 4H and all that kind of stuff, so I had a little bit more work than my sister did…and I think like the saving money part, that was the big thing for me to pass on to the boys was okay well, you need to have a bank account and you need to have money…the work ethic…So that I think came from Grandpa because my grandparents, they were really strict and really do what is expected of you. (Kasha, third generation, 16:20)

> I'm trying to do Polish things for them with the traditions and stuff…I try to tell people about as much as I can that I know. I try to... I haven't told our kids about it yet because they're too little I think. (Josephina, third generation, 28:54)

The effects of the Holocaust on third generation interactions with the survivor. Two of two third generation participants (100%) described their belief that their grandparents' Holocaust related experiences influenced their interactions with them. Josephina described that her grandmother primarily spoke about her Holocaust related experiences in the context of food, in particular, cooking.

> You know, probably the only time I've really heard *babcia* [grandmother] talked about it [the Holocaust] was when I've asked her for cooking advice

> because she doesn't like to talk about it, and when I want to know how to cook, she always referenced back to how... When she was working for the German soldier, how she learned how to cook most of the stuff from... I don't know if it was from his wife, but that's where she learned how to cook a lot of stuff. … Yeah, and she learned to do most of the cooking there. …So when I ask her how to make stuff, a lot of times she'll reference back to, "Oh, that's how I learned to make it from the Germans," she'll say. But she'll reference back to that. So she'll kind of jump around, "Well, I don't know if I'm doing it right or not, but that's how the Germans taught me. (Josephina, third generation, 08:09)

Josephina observed how the Holocaust has influenced her present day interactions with her grandmother. She stated,

> When there's stuff going on in the family or when I want to be upset, hurt or something, my mom's always like, "Be gentle. She's a... " My mom, it's an excuse not to be upset at her…. My mom always says, if my mom concedes on something, my mom's always like, "Oh, she's had a hard life. She doesn't have any peace. Could you just do this for her?"…. You know, it's, "Could you just do this for her?" Because there's been things that I've been upset about or I didn't want to do and my mom is always, "Look, it will make her happy, would you just do this? She's had a hard life." That's like, there's always that card being played**….** It's like, "Oh, did you have to go there," kind of thing. [Laughter] It's like it always then my mind has to get changed. So then, of course I look at it differently, I'm like, "Oh man, okay, I guess I don't have to be so angry," or it's like, "Okay."(Josephina, third generation, 31:53)

Josephina described that the German Reich imprisoned her grandfather when he was an adolescent. As a result, he lost much of his childhood. She believes this influenced her interactions with her grandfather when she was a child (Josephina, third generation, 37:00).

> It [the Holocaust] was just a horrible, horrible thing when I think back of... When I was that age, the things that I was doing versus the things that they were going through, there's no way they could have had a normal childhood, and not knowing if your family was alive or not. (Josephina, third generation, 06:08)

> My mom would always just tell us, "Well, *Dziadz* [grandfather] doesn't like kids," and it was like, ouch! But we would never stay the night at their house. When we would go over to visit, it was you sat in the chair and you didn't talk. He didn't let us play and it was only after he died that we were able to

> actually play over at her house and be kids and have fun because he just was so strict, even with the grandkids. Always yelling at us and cool it, sit down, and it wasn't like we were rowdy. When I was little there was only four of us at the time and we didn't get into trouble it was... But that's how his mentality was, just be seen and not heard and that was it. (Josephina, third generation, 37:57)

Kasha reflected upon the effects that Holocaust had on her grandfather's parenting style and the influence it later had on their family interactions. She stated,

> They [grandparents] were very hard on her [Kasha's mother] they were very strict. She couldn't go and do a lot of things. Or when she did, she would make something up [a lie and say]. You know, "I'm going here," and then go with her friends. Like they didn't want her to play any sports….So it was kind of like, sports was a waste of time. You should be having a job and working… she [grandmother] was very strict. (Kasha, third generation, 15:02)

> There were things I can remember as being a kid, oh, don't tell grandma and grandpa that because that might upset them because they came from a different world where you didn't buy a new car… you didn't have the swimming pool growing up. ... You saved your money, you were really frugal, and you didn't do those kinds of things. So, I can remember when we got a pool. Oh my gosh! It was like we didn't want grandma and grandpa to come over because if they saw it, they would get mad and say, "Why are you wasting your money on that, you don't do that, you put your money in a bank…Oh, don't spend money, we gotta save, we gotta save." (Kasha, third generation, 12:04)

Discussion

This interpretative study explored the effects of the Holocaust for six Polish Catholic survivors and their descendants by conducting semi-structured interviews with twelve participants. The study was guided by the following four research questions: R.Q.1). Do participants make meaning out of their Holocaust experiences? If so, how? R.Q.2). Does Holocaust-related trauma affect the everyday lives of participants? If so, how? R.Q.3). Do participants cope with Holocaust-related trauma in their daily lives? If so, how? R.Q.4). Does Holocaust-related trauma affect the future generations of Polish Catholic Holocaust survivors? If so, how? Interview responses were transcribed into texts, which were subjected to a thematic analysis. Themes were found for the survivors, their descendants, the second and third generations, in addition to intergenerational and second level themes. Findings indicate that the Holocaust has had lasting effects on Polish Catholics survivors and their descendants. This study gives voice to the lived experience of six Polish Catholic survivors and their descendants. The findings offer ways to understand the long-term effects of persecution, suffering, and genocide, and the experience of survival in the aftermath of the Holocaust.

In the first two decades after World War II medical and mental health professionals found that Jewish survivors exhibited a distinct constellation of symptoms in response to Nazi persecution, imprisonment, and execution. Danish physicians first labeled this symptomology in 1964 as *KZ-syndrome* (*Konzentrazionslager).* It is translated as concentration camp syndrome and includes somatic complaints, anxiety, depression, suicidal ideation, emotional

instability, numbing, sleep complaints, concentration and memory problems (including intrusive memories), and difficulties in interpersonal functioning (Krysinska & Lester, 2006). Niederland (1968) coined the term survivor syndrome to label the symptoms that survivors experienced following the Holocaust, including depression, anxiety, guilt, disturbances in memory, nightmares, anhedonia, psychic vulnerability and living corpse phenomena. Jewish survivors were observed to have impairments in memory (Chodoff, 1997) unresolved grief and mourning over family members and lost loved ones (Sagi-Schwartz, et al., 2003; Schnieder 1964).

This study found that the effects of the Holocaust on Polish Catholic survivors are similar to the effects of the Holocaust observed in Jewish survivors. Survivors reported feelings of sadness, disturbances in memory or the ability to recall Holocaust related trauma, and nightmares. Survivors in this study conveyed that the Holocaust related trauma they experienced continues to affect them in their present day lives: through feelings of sadness, loss of family, and flashbacks. Themes emerged that were associated with the survivors' way of being in the world, the values they hold, and the familial messages they convey to their descendants. Holocaust related experiences appear to influence the survivors' interpersonal interactions with their offspring.

Second generation participants described growing up within a Polish Catholic community comprised in part of other camp survivors and spoke about this aspect of their upbringing as providing protection, a sense of security, and care. Children of survivors stated that their parents rarely discussed their Holocaust related experiences with them. The second generation interpreted their parents'

silence as a form of protection — a means of creating distance between the Holocaust-related trauma and the lives of their children. The second generation recalled times when they overheard their parents talking in Polish to their camp family. As the second generation aged and started to learn about World War II and the Holocaust in school they came to their parents with questions about their parent's experiences during the Holocaust and started to understand the magnitude of the suffering that occurred.

The second generation described a process of coming to understand their parents as survivors and the sense of meaning they made about being the child of a survivor. This awareness included a sense of shock, amazement, and difference from their peers who did not have parents who were survivors. Second generation participants stated that the Holocaust influenced them and their lives through their awareness of their parents' suffering. The second generation thought the survivors' parenting style had been affected by the Holocaust. They described their parents as strict and protective. As one participant stated "The belts, the spankings, ... because that's how they were treated, that's what they knew so that's how they disciplined us,...They had to listen when they were beat so we had to listen when we were beat" (Kristina, second generation, 35:36). The theme of protection was embedded in survivors' ways of being and parental actions and choices. The second generation said that their own parental values and parenting style was hypervigilant and that they were less strict then their parents.

The grandchildren of survivors, the third generation, described the importance of Polish traditions in their present lives. They recalled that their

grandparents rarely discussed their Holocaust related experiences with them. For one participant, it was her mother, a member of the second generation, who discussed the survivors' Holocaust related experiences and filtered Holocaust related communication between the survivor and the third generation. The third generation spoke about barriers to communication with their grandfathers, who were the survivors and are now deceased. One third generation member described that her grandfather only discussed his suffering in the Holocaust when he was under the influence of alcohol. Third generation members recalled that their grandparents spoke only Polish, which they could not understand, when discussing the Holocaust. One third generation member described her belief that her grandparents' silence about the Holocaust reflected the shame they experienced in suffering Nazi persecution and imprisonment.

Third generation participants spoke about the survivors' loss of family as a consequence of the Holocaust. In fact, both third generation participants first described the survivors' loss of family when asked about their grandparents' experience in the Holocaust. The third generation described their grandparents' parenting style as strict and militant, and that it was influenced by the trauma they experienced. The third generation stated that they were not allowed to voice their frustration, hurt, or anger about their grandparents. The third generation spoke about denying their feelings in family conflicts, at the urging of the second generation, because the survivor had *a hard life* and suffered greatly during the Holocaust. The third generation described hiding certain family decisions from their grandparents because they *came from a different world*. Both third generation

parents placed importance on passing on Polish culture to their children and by protecting their children from the harsher behavior of the grandparents.

Communication patterns emerged for both families interviewed. For Pogoda family, the second generation acted as a mediator and facilitated Holocaust related communication as well as everyday interactions between the survivor and her grandchildren. Within this family system, the second generation and third generation openly discussed the survivor's Holocaust-related experiences. In Sieroslawski family the second generation did not discuss the survivor's Holocaust related experiences with her children. Third generation participants from the Pogoda and Sieroslawski families both reported that the survivors, their grandparents, rarely discussed the Holocaust directly with them. However, the survivor's Holocaust-related experiences manifested in some of their interactions, especially around cooking and the eating of food. An analysis of intergenerational communication patterns also found that participants believed in the concept of freedom as a symbol of the United States and spoke about the strong Polish work ethic, two themes that were related to survivorship.

All participants in this study thought that the general public in the United States was unaware of the persecution, enslavement, and suffering of Polish Catholics during the Holocaust. There have been no previous findings of this in Western psychological research. To date, this awareness has not been discussed in the professional literature.

Who is Not Touched by Holocaust Trauma?

It has been almost 70 years since World War II ended and the Nazi sociopolitical reign of terror ended. Yet social scientists and clinicians continue to debate the long-term effects of Holocaust-related trauma for survivors and their descendants (Barel et al., 2010). And, for those who experienced the evil of the Holocaust, there is no clear path of healing or understood trajectory that is bounded by time: the effects of the Holocaust appear to deify the passage of time and time seems to do little to soothe the wounds of the spirit. The Holocaust challenges the way we think about the human spirit and the capability of human beings. The urge to dissociate from or denial of the presence of genocides in the past and those that have occurred in the years afterward often continue in the present. For many of us, being aware of the atrocities perpetrated by the Nazis is too painful — unbearable to witness for long — without the evil of the Holocaust entering our awareness; soon the seduction of denial offers an easing of the pain of bearing witness, of actively maintaining awareness.

There is seemingly a contagion that reverberates around the awareness of survivors' Holocaust related suffering. This is a phenomenon that is not fully understood and yet its presence is impossible to ignore: it is often referred to within Western psychology as the transmission of trauma. It is well understood that the Holocaust has long lasting effects for the survivors and that through processes called the intergenerational transmission of trauma, the Holocaust effects the lives of survivors' descendents. For instance, vicarious trauma has been observed in those who counsel Holocaust survivors (McCann & Pearlman, 1990). Moreover,

individuals who had no personal or familial relationships with survivors experienced trauma reactions (such as grief responses, anger, nightmares, social withdrawal and emotional numbing) when encountering survivors' stories, Holocaust artifacts, and archival material while working at a Holocaust museum (McCarroll, Blank, & Hill, 1995). And although it is less commonly acknowledged, the traumatic effects of the Holocaust extend past the victim, their families and those who bear witness. The perpetrators of torture and acts of genocide, their children and grandchildren (Rosenthal, 2002) also suffer wounds created by the Holocaust while feeling responsibility for creating the scar. Children of Nazi perpetrators suffer from chronic mental torment, guilt, and nightmares about becoming a murderer and the grandchildren have reported suffering from fearful thoughts and fantasies of being murdered and a general sense of anxiety (Rosenthal, 2002). It seems that the continued presence of genocides in the world affect us all, from those who perpetrate crimes against humanity, to those who endure these acts, to all of us who bear witness or withdraw to escape through the process of denial.

The Process of Remembering: The Experience of Post-War Survival

The survivors have lost family members and loved ones. They have witnessed indescribable, brutal, unpredictable killing and violence and lived with the consistent threat to their very survival. They have lived through inhuman treatment and abuse that for most of us, by merely hearing about it, evokes deep emotional pain and causes one to question the capability of human beings. Survivors immigrated to a new country, learned a new language and cultural practices, all

while creating a life for themselves and their descendants. Sixty-seven years have passed since the Holocaust ended, the survivors' bodies and minds have aged, and yet the atrocities and persecution they suffered during the Holocaust continue to come back in unbidden ways and unspoken moments that survivors cannot seem to fully remember or completely forget.

Six of six survivors (100%) in this study lived through persecution and enslavement by the Nazi regime: they lived through and survived a mentality that thought of them, as a people, to be expendable. In the years after the war, the effect of the Holocaust on the survivors' experience of living was omnipresent. And despite the indescribable aftermath of the Holocaust related trauma and the influence it had on survivors' daily life, they chose to live. According to Caruth (1996) "Trauma is not simply an effect of destruction but also fundamentally, an enigma of survival" (p. 58). It is my belief that 50% of the survivors in this study coped with their Holocaust related trauma through what Sullivan (1973) called selective inattention, a process that sustains dissociative processes; "Indeed, for consciousness, survival does not seem to be a matter of known experience at all" (Caruth, 1996, p. 60).

Dissociation

Six of six survivors (100%) did not articulate explicit meaning making about their Holocaust related experiences. Three of six survivors (50%) appeared to dissociate aspects of their Holocaust related experience, thereby keeping them out of consciousness. For instance, several times throughout the interview while attempting to recall aspects of her Holocaust related experiences, one survivor said: "I can't even remember no more now…. I didn't want to remember" (Carol, survivor,

01:51). “No. I don't want to think about it. I just want to just forget about it “(Carol, survivor, 45:53). Another survivor described how she forgot aspects of her Holocaust related experience and that her daughter held the memory: “And she [her daughter, Irina] knows already. I don't now. I forget it though” (Anna, survivor, 36:16). No, I can't tell you that…my daughter [Irina] will remember more than that, not me. Now, I forget it” (Anna, survivor, 03:20).

Moreover, one of these three survivors conveyed his belief that the trauma he experienced during the Holocaust did not affect him neither after the war nor in his present day life. While discussing his persecution in the Holocaust, he appeared to (through selective inattention) attend to his Holocaust related experiences by making meaning out of his survival through focusing on the opportunity it afforded him to immigrate to the United States. This message was conveyed to his children. His son articulated his belief that his father did not suffer during the Holocaust and that it did not have a “negative” affect on his father’s life (Tomec, second generation, 11:14). At one point during the interview, with great seriousness, his son described the suffering his family experienced and compared his family to survivors who he believed suffered more. Tomec stated,

> No one in our family was ever killed or suffered or anything like that other been being pulled from your roots and separated from your family, dragged off to a country that you are not familiar with, and living in Germany basically for what, 19 years…. I mean, it was horrible for many other people, but for our family it was a piece of good luck actually (Tomec, second generation, 11:19)

Tomec recalled that the first time he became aware that his father was a Holocaust survivor was when he was the same age his father was when the Nazis abducted and imprisoned him and his family. When he was nine years old, his father took him on a

trip to Poland, showed him the home from which he was abducted and recalled how the Nazi shot and killed his family dog before forcing them on a cattle train to Germany where they endured forced labor for five years. Tomec reported that his father told his story as a story of survival, of evading the Nazi concentration or labor camps, immigrating to the United States, and creating a life for himself and his family. "Trauma," Caruth (1996) explained,

> seems to be much more than a pathology, or the simple illness of a wounded psyche: it is always the story of the wound that cries out, that addresses us in the attempt to tell us of a reality or truth that is otherwise unavailable. This truth, in its delayed appearance and its belated address, cannot be only to what is known, but also to what remains unknown in our very actions and our language. (p. 4)

Dissociative states or experiences are common for survivors of trauma (Pearlman & Saakvitne, 1995). Stern's (1997) concept of defensively motivated unformulated experience describes an important aspect of the survivors' process of living in the aftermath of the trauma. Stern (2003) described this as a type of *familiar chaos* as "a state of mind cultivated and perpetuated in the service of a conservative intention to observe, think, and feel only in well-worn channels — in the service, actually, of the wish not to think" (p. 51). In other words, an individual keeps certain material or experiences unformulated so as to *not know it.* Stern used the term *chaos* to reference the natural form of a thought that is not fully developed. "Experience maintained in this state can carry with it a comforting sense of familiarity. It may be banal and unquestioned, but if feels like one's own. Interpretation is avoided; familiarity is its camouflage" (Stern, 2003, p. 51).

Survivors stated that in the years following the war they did not have time to think or talk about their Holocaust experiences because they were busy working. In

part, it seems that the Polish work ethic manifested in their lives in such a way that it provided strength. Survivors worked hard, they acclimated to a new culture and language and developed lives they were proud of; they did not give up; they worked hard and survived. But that Polish work ethic also contributed to survivors' suffering: work, work, and work, a way of living that was familiar to the survivors but took a weary toll. During the Holocaust, survivors endured various forms of persecution and engaged in forced labor as a means of survival. Once survivors immigrated to the United States they were embedded in a sociopolitical environment that perpetuates hard work as a means of achieving success and holds the possibility of transcending class status. For these survivors—to work was to survive. Perhaps the familiarity of working hard as a means to survive was further reinforced and perpetuated by the U.S. cultural messages that hard work is the means of transcending class. And this intensified survivors ways of coping with the traumatic effects of the Holocaust —the mentality of work, work, work, camouflaged the physical and emotional suffering survivors experienced and contributed to survivors' dissociation from Holocaust related trauma and functioned as a way to keep memories out of their awareness. For these survivors, surviving involved surviving the actual trauma and surviving the years afterward; survivors created a life for themselves while living in the aftermath of the Holocaust. But it was a double-edged sword.

What Was Not discussed

Six of six survivors (100%) interviewed in this study were children (ages 9-15 years) when the Nazis captured them. Each of them described the suffering they

experienced when they lost contact with family. But none of the six survivors (0%) described the loss of their childhood or acknowledged how the loss of childhood may have impacted them. One third generation participant noticed the absence of talk about the childhood of the survivors.

> I mean they couldn't remember hardly any of their childhood from that point on. So when they were put into the camps and then when they tried to recall people who they knew, it was a very fuzzy memory for them, because it was like they lost their childhood. So, but they grew up so quick from that experience is the best way I guess to...Because they never talked about things they did when they were little. They never talked about fun times or things that happened when they were kids because it seemed like all they could remember was that point in time. (Josephina, third generation, 1:11)

Josephina described how her grandparents had difficulty remembering their childhood after the Nazi regime gained power. It has been almost 70 years since the Nazi regime lost power and those who survived were liberated. How is it that 70 years later, after many survivors married and raised their own children, survivors are not discussing their loss of childhood? In western, contemporary society, in a world where genocides have continued to exist, it is surprising that the loss of their childhood is still not acknowledged and discussed.

The Interview as An Event: From Where I Stand

There are several commonalities that occurred in the context of the interview setting in the homes of the participants that coincide and illuminate some of the intergenerational familial themes. Included in these themes are the importance of familial relationships, a strong work ethic reflected in the presentation of their home, the role of food in the interview and the survivors' ability to transform their liberators' parachutes into a wedding dress, a coat, and a pillow case.

As I tried to convey the dialogue that emerged between participants and me, I find myself longing to replicate the emotional experience of the interview with the written word. I have come to care for these people and I have come to respect them. I am humbled by their strength and in awe of their courage. It feels sterile and lacking simply to recapitulate the interview experience with a transcript as a means of communicating what emerged between us in those moments**.** I want to convey the warmth that I experienced when I walked into their homes, the way their eyes shown with pride and joy when they spoke of their children and grandchildren. My regret is that this research cannot fully convey the event. The written word does make the experience fully come alive with the participant's embodied presence, the way their facial expression, voices, laughter, joy, depth of sadness and perseverance all emerged during the interview. I am honored to have had the chance to sit with these six Polish Catholic Holocaust survivors and their descendants to hear their stories. It was a humbling and profound experience. While getting a glimpse, a sense, a brief visceral understanding of some of their Holocaust related experiences, their suffering, I have been changed. The horror and terror they witnessed, heard, and experienced directly still stays with many of the survivor as do their stories of triumph, hope, and perseverance. The stories of who they became, the life they lead, and the families they created still linger. The camp survivors still look to each other for a sense of community, for survival, to live and to prosper.

Importance of Familial Connection to the Polish Community

My family's connection to the Polish community was paramount in my ability to recruit and interview participants. My family's personal history was my initial

motivator in conducting the research, and yet what that ultimately meant in terms of trust and connection with participants was unanticipated and invaluable. The twelve participants I interviewed for this study were all part of a community of proud Polish Americans. As a researcher, I would not have had the opportunity to talk with these survivors directly if it were not for my familial connection to the Polish Catholic community. My grandmother is a Polish Catholic Holocaust survivor. For many of the participants interviewed, my family connection to the Polish community and the research topic assisted in the development of trust and the participants' willingness to engage in a dialogue with me.

The dialogue that emerged with each participant was unique, and yet the conversations that emerged in all the interviews had an emotional quality that was similar. Participants disclosed more about their experience, particularly the trauma they suffered, as each interview went on. At the end of the interview with Carol, as I thanked her for the courage and strength it took for her to describe her experiences, she turned to me and stated, "I didn't even tell you half" (Carol, survivor, 00:12, transcript V). Second generation Kristina echoed a similar sentiment. Kristina was present for both the interview with her mother Martha and her daughter Josephina. At the end of the interview, Kristina said,

> And my mother [Martha] didn't tell you everything either. I mean, when my mom was working for the soldiers on their farms she was raped repeatedly with the other women that were... You know. When you're talking SS officers they were the worst of it. (Kristina, second generation, 48:27)

It is my sense that survivors withheld some Holocaust related experiences from their conscious awareness and, perhaps as a form of protection for both themselves and me, they did not tell me about all of the suffering they experienced.

The Embodiment of Bearing Witness

Vicarious reactions have been observed in psychologists who engaged in psychotherapy with Holocaust survivors (McCann & Pearlman, 1990) as well as those who heard survivors' stories and worked with Holocaust artifacts (McCarroll, Blank, & Hill, 1995). It is imperative for me to acknowledge that I have suffered throughout this research process and experienced what I believe to be a trauma response. Throughout thematic analysis, I experienced a continued state of anxiety and hyperarousal. I had nightmares almost nightly for the last seven months of the research process. I have suffered while undertaking this research and I have a desire to protect both others and myself, deny, and engage in dissociation from aspects of my experience.

Somatic reactions. Throughout the research process I used a journal to document my affective and somatic responses to the interview process and thematic interpretation. This was particularly helpful in identifying similarities in my perceptual and somatic experience during the study. During and after my interviews with the participants, I experienced headaches, fatigue, nausea, and intestinal distress, extreme sensitivity to smoke, and vivid reoccurring nightmares. The physical symptoms typically lasted for 2-3 hours after each interview. After the interview with my grandmother, survivor Carol, I had a different experience. I experienced a deep sadness, and uncontrollable sobbing. My experience of this intense emotional response was that it came in waves and last for several hours after the interview.

The research experience manifesting in my dreams. During the months that I engaged in textual interpretation I experienced an increase in a certain type of dream. Since I was a child, I have had what I have previously thought of as reoccurring nightmares themed around saving me and/or someone I love from a large abstract predatory force. Sometimes the dreams were more vivid occasionally I would get a glimpse of the attacker, and upon waking the once clear image turns into a foggy, familiar knowing, type feeling and the longer I am awake, the more the dream fades. Upon waking, I wrote what I remembered in a journal in an effort to track the content of my dreams. Prior to and while implementing this research I had an increase in what I will refer to as protection dreams, which shifted to Holocaust related and concentration camp centered dreams. Toward the end stages of textual interpretation, I started dreaming in visual images of the written word and found myself awakening to the conscious awareness that I was engaging in a form of textual interpretation in my dreams. At times, my process of remembering my dreams associated with research content often involved waking up with a visceral and conscious awareness of the Holocaust related content. At other times I would wake up, and in semi-conscious or perhaps even dreamlike state speak of dreams about being taken by the Nazis, being on a train, being in a concentration camp, trying to save others in the camp, or trying to escape.

Theme of Protection

The theme of protection emerged intergenerationally for the majority of the participants and came to light within my perceptual experience and dreams. Throughout the research process, I dreamt about the research content almost

nightly and had a significant increase in protection dreams or dreams centered on saving a family member or myself from a predatory force. As a researcher, I observed an urge to *protect* my colleagues and readers from the Holocaust related trauma I was witnessing. While engaging in the textual interpretation and while writing the results, thoughts like " I need to work harder" and "It is not good enough" pervaded my experience and I felt immobilized, anxious, and at times agitated.

There are a multitude of complex issues that have emerged from Holocaust studies. These involve political struggles over the historical accuracy of the ethnic and religious identities of those who were targeted, the roles these different groups had (e.g. victims, perpetrators, bystanders), the political and moral meanings attributed to those roles, and in fact the very definition of the word *Holocaust* itself. There is no one, absolute, and certain ejudification of these issues, and they all occur within certain historical and cultural frames of reference that influence the perspectives and understandings of those who directly experienced it and for those who study the Holocaust (P. Cushman, personal communication, June 25, 2012). I did not design this study to determine the truth or accuracy of those contested issues. When needed, I relied on demographic, epidemiological, and semantic content from the United States Holocaust Museum in Washington D.C.

I do not consider the participants' responses to represent one, perfect, historical truth nor did I intend to ascertain the truth of their experiences. Rather, I understand their responses as historical and cultural artifacts of a particular time and place and interpreted them as such. They described events and experiences that

occurred 70 years or more, and from a horrific historical moment profoundly different from ours today. Their understanding and interpretations of their memories have been affected by many historical, political, and personal influences, including psychological processes such as dissociation, self-protection, and self-image management (see e.g., Hales, 1985) as would any similarly constructed cohort. The cultural framework of their time and place profoundly affected survivors, and so their memories and meaning making were and continue to be affected by their cultural frame of reference.

Survivors in this study described their perception of their personal experiences, their truth, way of understanding themselves, and their life history. Some of their interpretations of events long ago might well be questioned, as would any interpretation about meanings or motivations. There are some responses that I was confused by, and I wish I had followed up on them with further questions in order to more fully understand what some survivors were trying to convey. For instance, when survivors were asked about their experience and perception of the lack of sociocultural awareness of the Poles' persecution in the Holocaust, two of six survivors (33%) made statements that alluded to the Jews somehow being in a privileged position vis-à-vis the non-Jewish Poles either during or after the Holocaust. Given the historical understanding that the Nazis intended to murder all Jews and destroy this group of people, their statements seem confusing. And without more follow-up, those statements could be understood in part as reflections of the pervasive anti-Semitism in Europe during the time survivors were born, raised, and suffered persecution rather than an accurate portrayal of events. Both

Polish Jews and Polish Catholics were persecuted by the Nazi regime and the unfortunate mechanics of sociopolitical oppression often move those who are oppressed to embody the ideology of the oppressor, and in response employ oppressive attitudes towards other similarly oppressed groups (Leary, 2005).

When removed from an event or experience by time or by the role of a researcher, it is common to believe that the experience of persecution or oppression will automatically endow victims with compassion for all other groups who are oppressed; perhaps the victims' own experience of oppression would contribute to the dissolution of previous prejudices and ideologies. Sadly, this rarely seems to be the case. Wisdom, compassion, and understanding are the result of deep and difficult introspection and study, and these valuable qualities are hard won achievements that many of us, including the participants in this study, can only seek.

Implications for Psychologists

The findings of this study have many implications for psychologists. First, it is important for psychologists to be aware that Polish Catholics, because of their religious and ethnic identity, suffered persecution, enslavement, and genocide during the Holocaust. All participants in this study reported they noticed in the United States a lack of awareness in the general public about the persecution of Polish Catholics.

Second, this study found that the Holocaust has lasting effects for Polish Catholic survivors and their descendants—a people whose suffering has been silenced, left untold and unacknowledged, and at times, denied. Invisibility is an insidious form of non-violent oppression that pervades and maintains oppressive

systems within the United States. Many individuals within the United States have identities that are influenced by the power that is created by silence, invisibility, and denial; these forces contribute to the recapitulation of America's denial of its racial and ethnic history (Leary, 2000). As psychologists, we must strive to see what is commonly unseen and to bring awareness to the wounds of collective trauma. It is imperative that we gain awareness and offer acknowledgement of current forms of sociopolitical and cultural oppression that pervade daily life. The historical environment in the United States is part and parcel of the creation and maintenance of systemic oppression that allows for differential treatment of humans and sets the stage for genocides and ethnic cleansings to occur. Yet, it seems that many people tend to ignore, deny, or dissociate from the awareness of these sociopolitical structures.

Third, as psychologists, we can gain awareness of the sociopolitical, cultural, and historical conditions that contribute to a cultural world that allows for genocide. Nazi ideology believed that the *Aryan master race* was the ideal and superior human race. Similar reasoning led to the genocides in Sudan, Bosnia, and Rwanda (Parens, 2009). Genocides are often driven by a sense of revenge for prior traumas and humiliations (Volkan, 2001). Despite the famous slogan "Never again!" there are millions of people in the world who are "persecuted and terrorized because of their ethnicity, religion, and race (as well as any other feature that distinguishes people from one another: age, social class, sexual orientation)" (Krysinska & Lester, 2006, p. 155). This begs the question: How do systems of oppression contribute to the existence of a sociopolitical environment that will tolerate genocides of the world?

The military industrial complex. The prison system in the United States is one example of the way we categorize individuals within our society as the other— separate and different from us— and, therefore deserving of different treatment. The military industrial complex system is focused on punishment, allows for inhuman treatment and abuse of prisoners for profit (Leary, 2005). This way of treating individuals who commit crimes is accepted and permitted within our society. The fact that we have valorized these types of institutions contributes to the inhuman treatment of the other, in the name of protecting society from criminals. Private businesses are paid significant amounts of money to punish, rather then care for the prisoners' dignity. There is no overall goal for supporting the human development of the person; there are many corporations that make money from the abuse, humiliation, and labor of criminals and we call that protecting society. This ideology, that promotes *othering*, this form of distancing ourselves from other human beings and claims to protect society by removing and allowing the inhuman treatment of the other, (that is criminals) shares aspects of dehumanization that are eerily similar to the Nazi ideology that deemed one race superior and rationalized ethnic cleansing in the name of protecting the Aryan race from the other, those they believed to be undesirable.

There are other incidents in American history that include the destruction or oppression of various groups, such as the many wars against Native American Nations. These historical facts have been and continue to be exceedingly difficult for white America to face (Takaki, 1993). Undoubtedly, this complicates the ability of present day Americans to face the meaning and implications of the Holocaust.

Historical trauma and present day racism. Slavery is one of United States' greatest tragedies, an example of evil that in terms of severity is similar to the genocide of Native American peoples. Laws were enacted that both created and perpetuated the institution of slavery. Human rights were not afforded to slaves. The threat of death to oneself and often one's loved ones was constant. Those who owned slaves beat them, raped them and degraded them at will, believing that Africans were inferior, animal-like, and not human. "Every day of a slave's life was an assault on their dignity, their humanity, and their soul" (Leary, 2005, p. 78). The trauma experienced by Africans enslaved in America has affected their descendants since the abolition of slavery. The multigenerational effects of slavery and the continual institutionalized racism in the United States has lasting effects for African Americans, which Leary (2005) called Post Traumatic Slave Syndrome; symptoms include feelings of anger, vacant self-esteem, and racist socialization that African Americans can embody (Leary, 2005). The psychological effects of years of enslavement, dehumanization, and domination, coupled with an ideology that held black people as inferior to white people, influence us all. Again, the question of human culpability creeps in and angst easily gives way to the relief of denial or dissociated rationalization. How do we hold both? How do we understand ourselves as a nation, divergent in race, gender, religion, sexuality, and ways of being, and yet identify collectively as Americans? How do we understand the ways in which our historical and sociopolitical past shapes us?

Psychologists have a tendency to think about social issues in terms of how we should respond in treatment to a problem, the one to one experience in the

office, as in how can we treat it? Or at most, we try to teach personal resilience before soldiers enter a combat zone, but what we do not do is look at the horrific cost of war, the human wreckage war creates, and as a profession fight against war. Understanding the effect of the Holocaust and genocides, what kind of social action should psychologist take (P. Cushman, personal communication, June 20, 2012)? As psychologists, it is important that we look around and notice the sociopolitical historical ontology in which we are embedded. Our awareness is impacted by the social world that we are in, thus it may happen in glimpses at first, then longer moments — of understanding and misunderstanding — within ourselves, our intimate relationships, and with our patients. As persons in a healing profession, it is important that we actively choose to understand the sociopolitical as well as the psychological effects of suffering and silence. It is important that we are not imprisoned by our silence and that we collectively emerge from it. Hopefully we band together and research the implications of genocide, suffering, and persecution so that we further our understanding of the experience of the persecuted, the perpetrator, and bystander and fight against injustice and oppression in all its forms.

Treatment Implications

It is important for psychologists to understand that survivors and their descendants may not discuss their suffering or personal/family persecution in the Holocaust. Many Polish survivors are not talking to their descendants about their suffering in the Holocaust, and for some families there is an intergenerational bond of silence that develops. Intergenerational communication patterns may involve the

family members, over time, developing interactional and communication styles around the topic of the Holocaust that is bounded by silence — tacit agreements or a seemingly silent way of knowing that Holocaust was not to be discussed. In some families, the second generation may break the family's silence and mediate Holocaust related communication and everyday interactions between the survivor and the third generation.

It is important for psychologists to understand that Polish Catholics may not discuss this aspect of their family history, unless asked. Given the family's history of trauma, both the survivor and their descendants may engage in denial and/or dissociation from the effects the Holocaust has on their life and daily experiences. Survivors and their descendants may not seek treatment for intergenerational trauma or the effects of the Holocaust although the Holocaust trauma may impact their daily lives in many ways. Survivors may experience sudden feelings of sadness, Holocaust-related flashbacks, disturbances in memory and difficulty recalling Holocaust experiences, and feelings of grief about the loss of loved ones. Survivors and their descendants are likely impacted by Holocaust related trauma although they may not articulate explicit awareness of it. The family members typical way of relating and communicating with each other may be patterned in such a way that further maintains the silence about Holocaust related trauma and suffering.

Survivors display a remarkable ability to work through their Holocaust-related trauma and shape a way of being in the world in which they highly value familial relationships, (often comprised of other Polish survivors), education, a strong Polish work ethic, and immigration to the United States as the symbol of

success and freedom. These strengths can be acknowledged and incorporated into treatment. It is important that as psychologists we continue to ask ourselves how we bear witness to the person who sits in front of us and bring gentle awareness to the suffering and the silence without quietly slipping into the seductive relief of our own denial or dissociation?

Limitations of the Study

There are several limitations to this study. First, I have a familial connection to the community of Polish Catholic Holocaust survivors who were interviewed for this study. I also interviewed my grandmother for this study and although I did not have previously established relationships with any of the participants, many of them know my grandmother. This familial connection had benefits and limitations that are important to acknowledge. While this familial connection contributed to the recruitment of participants, as a grandchild of a survivor I am also influenced by this part of my life experience and family's history. This likely influenced the way I came to understand the participants' lived experience and influenced textual interpretation. Second, in the interviews themselves I allowed second generation participants to assist in translation for their parents, and this may have influenced the survivors' self-disclosure during the interview process. Third, I am monolingual and I do not speak or read Polish. I believe that there are aspects of the survivors' lived experience and story telling that may have been embedded in the nuances or expressions survivors articulated in Polish, which were not understood by me.

Implications for Future Research

It has been 67 years since the Holocaust ended and the Nazi regime lost power, and yet the results of this study found that Holocaust related trauma continues to affect the everyday lives of Polish Catholic survivors and their descendants. To date, this is the only research study that explores the lived experience of Polish Catholic Holocaust survivors and their descendants. Additional research is needed to continue to examine the effects of the Holocaust for this population. The results of this study indicate the need for future research in several areas. First, twelve of twelve (100%) participants in this study reported their belief that the suffering of Polish Catholics during the Holocaust is not adequately acknowledged or understood by the general public in the United States. Future research could examine the effects that the lack of sociopolitical and cultural awareness and acknowledgement can have on the survivors' and their families healing and ways of making meaning about the Holocaust. Second, six of six survivors (100%) in this study were children (ages 9-15 years) when the Nazis captured them and lost aspects of their childhood, and yet none of the six survivors' (0%) discussed the loss of childhood. Future research could be aimed at examining the effect the loss of childhood has had on the survivors' lived experience and the lives of their descendants. Third, this study found five of six survivors (83%) married another Holocaust survivor; research aimed specifically at exploring the family dynamics and intergenerational patterns of families headed by two Polish Catholic Holocaust survivors is needed. Fourth, five of six survivors (83%) interviewed in this study were sent to displaced persons (DP) camps in Germany

after the Holocaust. Many of them remained in DP camps for five or six years after the war ended. Three of six (50%) survivors described cramped conditions in the DP camps, with little access to material good and adequate nutrition. Future research could address the cumulative traumatic effects of surviving persecution in the Holocaust, experiences in DP camps, and immigration to the United States.

Lastly, throughout the 20th and 21st centuries the world has continued to witness and tolerate genocides of various peoples in Armenia, Europe, Cambodia, Iraq (in the 1980s), Rwanda, Bosnia, and Darfur, as well as ethnic conflicts have occurred throughout several of the nations of Asia, South America, and Africa (Goldenberg, 2009, p. 18). Future research could examine the psychological processes involved in awareness, perception, and understanding of genocides in the 20th and 21st centuries. Future research aimed at exploring the individual and collective psychosocial processes that allow for the collective dissociation from the presence of genocides in the 21st century could be conducted. Most importantly, future research could explore what is happening in our sociopolitical terrain that creates the landscape for genocides to occur

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Appendix A

Script for Describing Study to Potential Participants

Appendix A

Script for Describing Study to Potential Participants

I am studying the experience of Polish Catholic Holocaust survivors and their families. When most people think of the Holocaust, they think of Jewish people and the suffering they experienced. Many individuals in the United States are unaware that Polish people as an ethnic group were also sent to prison camps. I am Polish Catholic and my grandmother was detained in a concentration camp in Siberia during the Holocaust; most of her family died there. I want to know how Polish Catholics think about themselves and this part of their history.

Appendix B

Pre-screening questions

Appendix B

Pre-screening questions

I have a few questions I would like to ask you before we proceed.

1. Growing up, did you experience any difficulties that caused you to seek the help of a physical or a psychologist/mental health professional?

   Prompt: [If yes], can you tell me a bit about that?

2. Have you ever been diagnosed with a mental illness?

   Prompt: [If yes], what were you diagnosed with?

3. Have you ever been diagnosed with a developmental disability, such as an Autism Spectrum Disorder?

   Prompt: [If yes], what were you diagnosed with?

Appendix C

INFORMED CONSENT

Appendix C

INFORMED CONSENT

Study Title: An Exploration of the Effects of the Holocaust on Polish Catholic Survivors and their Descendants

Your consent is being sought to participate in this study. Please read the following information carefully and then decide whether or not you want to participate.

Researchers: Kristen M. Montague, LMFT and Phillip Cushman, PhD, Supervisor

Purpose: I am studying the experience of Polish Catholic Holocaust survivors and their families. When most people think of the Holocaust, they think of Jewish people and the suffering they experienced. Many individuals in the United States are unaware that Polish people as an ethnic group were also sent to concentration camps. I want to know how Polish Catholics think about themselves and this part of their history. People of Polish Catholic ancestry, between the ages of 18 and 100**,** will be asked to participate.

Procedures to be followed: You will be asked to participate in one individual interview. The time spent in each interview will vary. It is likely each interview will take between 60-120 minutes. The interviews will take place at a private location. I will record each interview using a tape recorder. In lieu of your name, you will have the chance to use a pseudonym that will be used to indentify your interview record.

Benefits: You will have the chance to add to the body of knowledge within the field of psychology. The research itself will assist the psychological community by increasing our understanding of the effects of trauma, both on an individual and their family members. The results of this study may add to the process of developing psychological theories of intergenerational trauma. Future researchers may choose to study the experience of Polish Catholics after the results of this study are published. The final report will be available for any participants who request it. If you would like a copy of the final report, please indicate this by your signature on this form.

Risks: There is a possibility that you may experience sadness, emotional discomfort, embarrassment, or stress, depending on the content of your disclosure. If you would like, the researcher will provide you with a referral for a Licensed Mental Health Professional, who will provide one therapy session at no cost to you. After the free mental heath screening, if you choose, an appropriate mental health referral will be offered.

Statement of Confidentiality: Information that identifies you (such as your name) will be removed from all written records. However, many local Polish people have

close relationships with one another. It is important to note that your experience is unique. If you have shared your experience with others in the past, they may be able to identify specific, unique aspects of your report. The records will be kept private and will be available only to the researchers and her supervisor. If the results of the study are published, no names or individual identifying information will be included. Your identity will remain confidential, unless required by law.

The following are legal exceptions to your right to confidentiality. You will be informed at any time these exceptions would have to be put into effect.

1. If you report you intend to harm another person, the researcher must attempt to inform that person and warn them of your intentions. The researcher must also contact the police and ask them to protect your intended victim.

2. If you report the abuse or neglect of a child or vulnerable adult, the researcher must inform Child Protective Services within 48 hours and Adult Protective Services immediately.

3. If you report that you intend to harm yourself, the researcher will call the police or the county crisis team.

Right to Refuse/Voluntary Participation:

Your participation is voluntary. If you believe you have been pressured in any way, please inform the researcher's supervisor. You may choose not to participate or to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty. This study has been discussed with me and all my questions have been answered. I may direct questions regarding study specifics to Kristen M. Montague, M.A., LMFT or her supervisor, Dr. Phillip Cushman @ 206-268-4000, Monday-Friday from 10:00 A.M- 4:00 P. M. I have read all of the information on this form. I am at least eighteen years of age and I consent to take part in the study described above. I understand that the researcher is required to give me a signed copy of this consent form. I understand that I can withdraw from the study at any time.

Signature: _____Date: _____

Please print your name here_____

I would like a summary of the final report
(Please check) _____ _____
Yes No

Signature of Investigator: _____Date: _____
Kristen M. Montague, LMFT

If you do not consent to participate, you do not need to sign this form.
Simply return it to researcher

Appendix D

Participant Demographic Form

Appendix D

Holocaust Survivor: Participant Demographic Form

1. Where were you born?

   Country: _____ City: _____

2. What is your present age? _____
3. Gender: _____
4. Relationship Status_____
5. Number of children and ages, if any: _____
6. What is your ethnicity: _____
7. Race: _____
8. Occupation: _____
9. Socioeconomic class: _____
10. Sexual orientation: _____
11. Highest educational degree completed_____
12. When did you arrive in the United States_____
13. How would you describe your physical health? _____
14. How old were you when you were taken to a concentration camp?

    _____

15. How long were you in a concentration camp?

    _____

16. Where was the camp located? _____
17. What name would you like me to use to identify you in this study?

    _____

Second Generation: Participant Demographic Form

1. Where were you born?

   Country: _____City: _____

2. What is your present age? _____

3. Gender: _____

4. Relationship Status_____

5. Number of children and ages, if any: _____

6. What is your ethnicity: _____

7. Race: _____

8. Occupation:_____

9. Socioeconomic class: _____

10. Sexual orientation: _____

11. Highest educational degree completed_____

12. What is your relationship to the family member incarcerated in a concentration camp?

    _____

13. How would you describe your physical health?

    _____

    _____

14. What name would you like me to use to identify you in this study?

    _____

Third Generation: Participant Demographic Form

1. Where were you born?

   Country: _____City: _____

2. What is your present age? _____

3. Gender: _____

4. Relationship Status_____

5. Number of children and ages, if any: _____

6. What is your ethnicity: _____

7. Race: _____

8. Occupation:_____

9. Socioeconomic class: _____

10. Sexual orientation: _____

11. Highest educational degree completed_____

12. What is your relationship to the family member incarcerated in a concentration camp?

    _____

13. How would you describe your physical health?

    _____

    _____

14. What name would you like me to use to identify you in this study?

    _____

Appendix E

Interview Guide

Introduction to Interview

Appendix E

Interview Guide

Introduction to Interview

I am going to ask you some questions that will help me in better understanding the effects of the Holocaust on the lives of Polish Catholic Holocaust survivors and descendants. The main focus of my interest is your unique experience. I want to know how you believe the Holocaust has affected your life. I am interested in your thoughts, feelings, and reactions. Your identity will remain confidential. Please talk as long as you need to in response to each question or to a topic you want to tell me about. If you remember something important about a prior question, please let me know and we can go back to that topic. You may talk for quite awhile on each topic and I am interested in all that you have to say. If you say something that I do not quite understand, I may ask you to tell me a bit more about that topic or to clarify.

If there is a question that you do not want to answer, please let me know. My sense is the interview will take 1-2 hours. If you have any questions after we complete the interview, please ask. If in the process of discussing this material causes you discomfort, I am available for further discussion or to give a referral for counseling.

Appendix F

Interview Schedule

Appendix F

Holocaust Survivor Interview Schedule

The effect of the Holocaust on the lives of Jewish Holocaust survivors and their descendants has been widely researched within the field of psychology. The experience of Polish Catholic Holocaust survivors, their children, and their grandchildren has yet to be accurately acknowledged and adequately explored. I am hoping this research will contribute to understanding more about Polish Catholic experiences in the Holocaust and in their family life in the years since that time. Your experiences will be helpful to this project. So I want to know about your story.

1. Can you tell me a bit about your life before World War II and the Holocaust? (R.Q. 1)
2. Tell me about your life during the time the Nazi regime influenced your community, especially your life in the concentration camp. (R.Q.1)

   Prompt: Can you tell me about your life during the years of 1933-1945? (R.Q.1)
3. Can you tell me what your life was like after the Holocaust? (R.Q.1)

   Prompt: For instance, what happened to you when the war ended?

   Prompt: Why did you decide to come to the United States?

   Prompt: How and when did you manage to come to the United States?
4. Did some of the painful experiences you had during the Holocaust continue to affect you after the war ended, say in the first several years after? (R.Q. 1)
5. Are there ways that memories of Holocaust-related events continue to stay with you and affect you now? (R.Q. 1)

6. How do you handle these effects? (R.Q.3)

   Prompt: What do you do when these things happen?

7. How do you these days make sense of or understand the experiences you had during the Holocaust? (R.Q.2)

   Prompt: How do you keep going, make a life, have a family, after what happened?

8. Do you have children, grandchildren, or nieces/nephews? (R.Q. 1)
9. If yes, have you talked to them about the Holocaust? (R.Q. 1)
10. Have you talked with them about your own experiences during the Holocaust? (R.Q. 1)

    [If yes] Prompt: What did you tell them?

    [If yes] Prompt: What was it like for you to talk with each of them?

    [If no] Prompt: What contributed to your decision to not talk with your children or grandchildren?

    [If no] Prompt: How did you avoid telling them?

11. Do you think your experience during the Holocaust influenced the way you interacted (or interact) with your family? (R.Q. 1)

    Prompt: How do you think it may have influenced the way you interact with your children/grandchildren?

12. Some Polish people feel their suffering in the Holocaust is not known or acknowledged in the general public and I want to know, has this been your experience? (R.Q. 4)

Second Generation Participant Interview Schedule

The effect of the Holocaust on the lives of Jewish Holocaust survivors and their descendants has been widely researched within the field of psychology. The experience of Polish Catholic Holocaust survivors, their children, and their grandchildren has yet to be accurately acknowledged and adequately explored. I am hoping this research will contribute to understanding more about Polish Catholic experiences in the Holocaust and in their family life in the years since that time. Your experiences will be helpful to this project. So I want to know about your story.

1. What do you know about what happened to your parent or parents during the Holocaust? (R.Q. 1)
2. What does it mean to you to be the child of a Polish Catholic Holocaust survivor? (R.Q.2)

    Prompt: You are the child of a Polish Catholic Holocaust survivor and I want to know how you think about yourself and that part of your family's history? What sense do you make of what happened to your parent/s?
3. Take a minute and think about a time or times you heard your parent talk about the Holocaust. Can you tell me about it? (R.Q.1)

    Prompt: How did they communicate about the Holocaust?

    Prompt: Did you and your mother/father talk about the Holocaust?
4. Take a minute to think about the first time you came to understand that your parent was a Holocaust survivor. What was that like? (R.Q.2)
5. How do you think the Holocaust has affected your life? (R.Q.1)

Prompt: Think about a time when you became aware of the effects of Holocaust on your parent. Can you tell me about that?

Prompt: How do you experience the effects of the Holocaust in the relationship between your parents and you, even if it wasn't discussed?

6. How do you cope with the effects the Holocaust has had on you and your family? (R.Q. 3)
7. How do you think your parent's experiences in the Holocaust affect his or her parenting? (R.Q.1)
8. Do you have children?

   [If yes] Prompt: How did the way your parent's parent affect the way you parent your children?
9. Some Polish people feel their suffering in the Holocaust is not known or acknowledged in the general public and I want to know, has this been your experience? (R.Q. 4)

Third Generation Participant Interview Schedule

The effect of the Holocaust on the lives of Jewish Holocaust survivors and their descendants has been widely researched within the field of psychology. The experience of Polish Catholic Holocaust survivors, their children, and their grandchildren has yet to be accurately acknowledged and adequately explored. I am hoping this research will contribute to understanding more about Polish Catholic experiences in the Holocaust and in their family life in the years since that time. Your experiences will be helpful to this project. So I want to know about your story.

1. What do you know about what happened to your grandparent or grandparents during the Holocaust? (R.Q. 1)
2. What does it mean to you to be the grandchild of a Polish Catholic Holocaust survivor? (R.Q.2)

    Prompt: You are the grandchild of a Polish Catholic Holocaust survivor and I want to know how you think about yourself and that part of your family's history? What sense do you make of what happened to your grandparent/s?

3. Take a minute and think about a time or times you heard your grandparent talk about the Holocaust. Can you tell me about it? (R.Q.1)

    Prompt: How did they communicate about the Holocaust?

    Prompt: Did you and your grandparent talk about the Holocaust?

    Prompt: Did you and your mother/father talk about the Holocaust?

4. Take a minute to think about the first time you came to understand that your grandparent was a Holocaust survivor. What was that like? (R.Q.2)

5. How do you think the Holocaust has affected your life? (R.Q.1)

   Prompt: Think about a time when you became aware of the effects of Holocaust on your grandparent. Can you tell me about that?

   Prompt: How do you experience the effects of the Holocaust in the relationship between your grandparents and you, even if it wasn't discussed?

6. How do you cope with the effects the Holocaust has had on you and your family? (R.Q. 3)
7. How do you think your grandparent's experiences in the Holocaust affect his or her parenting? (R.Q.1)
8. Do you have children?

   [If yes] Prompt: How did the way your parent's parent affect the way you parent your children?

9. Some Polish people feel their suffering in the Holocaust is not known or acknowledged in the general public and I want to know, has this been your experience? (R.Q.4).

Appendix G

Photograph of all three Gifts Given to Researcher

Appendix G

Photograph of three Gifts Given to Researcher

All three gifts

Appendix H

Pillowcase handmade by Carol

Appendix H

Pillowcase handmade by Carol

Front of pillowcase handmade by Carol from the material of Her liberators' parachute

Back of pillowcase

Appendix I

Potholder handmade by Mary

Appendix I

Potholder handmade by Mary

Potholder in the shape of a dress handmade by Mary

Appendix J

Napkin holder in the shape of a house handmade by Gina

Appendix J

Napkin holder in the shape of a house handmade by Gina