

Running Head: CHILDREN AND GRANDCHILDREN

Children and Grandchildren of Holocaust Survivors

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## **Abstract**

This ethnography examines how children and grandchildren of Holocaust survivors are affected in their political and social views, affected emotionally and psychologically, and how the family as a whole was affected. This study is important because it keeps the memory of the Holocaust alive, which is becoming more important than ever as the survivors are dying. Information was gathered through four interviews and 20 survey responses from children and grandchildren of survivors as well as from various articles. It was discovered that children and grandchildren do have values shaped by their family's past, they do have emotional effects, but only about half have psychologically effects, and family function is lower in children of survivor's families but raised as children of survivors raise their families. This ethnography provides potentially new information and analysis about what affects Holocaust Survivors passed to their children and grandchildren after facing horrible adversity. It also sets up new questions to be researched.

*Keywords: children and grandchild, Holocaust, survivors, values, family function, psychological*

## Literature Review

It is important to teach and remember the Holocaust so it does not happen again, and society can work to end genocide. It was once the survivors who shared their stories so the world would not forget. However, as time moves forward there are fewer and fewer survivors left to share those stories and it has become dependent on their children and grandchildren to share them. Understanding the psychological effects on the children and grandchildren of Holocaust survivors is significant. The trauma their parents and grandparents experienced many have unintentionally been passed to them. It is essential to understand so they can continue to tell their family's stories, so it is understood how something that happened 71 years ago is still relevant. There has been a debate about whether or not psychological effects are passed down from Holocaust survivors to their children, if there is a higher degree of dysfunction in families with Holocaust survivors or if family involvement is improved and children and grandchildren feel more connected and feel a responsibility to share their families' stories.

Over the years it has been debated if Holocaust survivors' trauma is passed down to their children and grandchildren. Hearing the tragic stories from parents and grandparents and living with family members who have experienced great trauma could have profound psychological effects on children. In a study done by IJzendoorn, Bakermans-Kranenburg, and Sagi-Schwartz (2005) they found that most children of Holocaust survivors were well adapted and were protected, by their parents, from receiving secondary traumatization due to the Holocaust (p. 465). In their study, they tested thousands of participants, both children of Holocaust survivors and a control group, and found that there was some evidence of secondary traumatization in the children of Holocaust survivors. However, effects of traumatization were only present in the children of survivors who had other encounters with events unrelated to their parents' stories in the Holocaust,

such as combat stress or breast cancer, that could cause psychological distress. In general, the study concluded that children of Holocaust survivors are well-adapted (IJzendoorn, Bakermans-Kranenburg, and Sagi-Schwartz, 2005, pp. 464-467). Many Holocaust survivors were able to protect their children from the trauma of their past. A limitation of this study is the age range. Secondary traumatization in children of Holocaust survivors could appear later in life than the age of the subjects tested, early to middle adulthood. Another limitation is the date of this study. It was done 11 years ago and new studies, utilizing new testing techniques could show a difference in results. Their study shows that members of this subculture, despite growing up with traumatized parents or grandparents, are average, well-adjusted members of society.

Other studies have been conducted and show that there are psychological effects, such as PTSD and depressive and anxiety disorders, present in children of Holocaust survivors. In a study Yehuda, Schmeidler, Giller, Siever, and Binder-Brynes (1998) interviewed and assessed 22 sets of Holocaust survivors and their children for levels of trauma and symptoms of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) (para. 1). Their participants were of both genders and their ages were from 31-75. 15 of the Holocaust survivors were showing current symptoms for PTSD, major depression, dysthymia, and other general anxiety disorders, and three more, in the past, had depression. The distribution of disorders was even across genders. In the children, five of them had current or past PTSD, and all five of their parents also had it while six of the children of the survivors whose parents did show symptoms, did not show symptoms (Yehuda et al, 1998 para. 8-12). Their study concluded that there may be a genetic factor or environmental factors for the transmission of PTSD but, “regardless of whether these findings ultimately are shown to reflect genetic or other types of transmission, they imply that chronic PTSD not only affects trauma survivors for decades, but also can affect offspring of trauma survivors” (Yehuda et al, 1998 para. 14-15). Children of Holocaust

survivors may have an increased chance of having PTSD. A reason for that could be because as they learn about the Holocaust and learn about those horrible things their parents were subjected to, left a lasting emotional impression on them that they did not learn to cope with. Limitations to this study, like the IJzendoorn, Bakermans-Kranenburg, and Sagi-Schwartz 2005 study, is it is dated, and their sample was a very small one.

A recent study done by Fossion, Leys, Vandeleur, Kempenaers, Braun, Verbanck, and Linkowski (2015) support that there are psychological effects passed from Holocaust survivors to their children. They tested 49 children of Holocaust survivors for depressive and anxiety disorders (DADs) and found that compared to the general population children of Holocaust survivors are in more damaged families. That damage in the family leads to the development of coping strategies to be delayed and DADs could be heightened (para. 19-23). Limitations to this study are the sample size was small and not diverse because they were all French. The results would have likely been different with a larger, more diverse sample. The studies done by Yehuda et al (1998) and by Fossion et al (2015) support each other in that they both conclude that there is some intergenerational transmission of trauma from Holocaust survivors to their offspring. The transmission of trauma and disorders could be caused by simple to complex knowledge of what happened during the Holocaust and that it happened specifically to close family. Also, due to the reality that it would have been easy for the children and grandchildren not to be alive if their family had perished like the 11 million others who did. It is possible that Holocaust survivors effect their families in more ways than just psychologically.

There is evidence that indicates family function is disrupted by the past of Holocaust survivors. Yaroslawitz, DeGrace, Sloop, Arnold, and Hamilton (2015) studied the effect of intergenerational transmission of survivor's guilt felt by Holocaust survivors on family function

of the Chareidi. Chareidi refers to the ultra-Orthodox branch of Judaism, who follow strict Jewish law (p. 501). Their study was done through the interviews of four female and one male Chareidi between the ages of 30-61 whose parents or grandparents survived Nazi death camps (Yaroslawitz et al, 2015, p. 503). Their study found that a great degree of dysfunction existed in the Chareidi families. Those interviewed stated that they have to work on family function every. Many interviewed discussed an emotional aspect that the children of Holocaust survivors never experienced due to the coldness of the survivors after the War. That coldness is transferred to the next generation because their parents never learned how to pass it along. There was also a lack of physical affection given by survivors to their children. Many participants stated that their parents were somewhat detached, emotionally, from them growing up. Many were never hugged or physically touched. Many of the others expressed the same sentiment. They felt a coldness from their parents because of what their parents experienced in the Holocaust. Due to the way the children were raised, with a perpetual coldness, when they had kids, they have to work daily to make sure their family function with their kids is improved (Yaroslawitz et al, 2015, pp. 506-507). The limitations of this study are it is a small sample size and all the participants are Chareidi and from the same area. Family dysfunction was high in the childhood of children of Holocaust survivors. As parents, they do not want their children to grow up with that coldness, so they are trying to improve family function for their children. That effort could make all the difference in how the grandchildren grow up. It is possible that the coldness the children grow up with contributed to the psychological factors found in the studies done by Yehuda et al (1998) and by Fossion et al (2015). If that is the case, then it is also possible that the reason IJzendoorn, Bakermans-Kranenburg, and Sagi-Schwartz's (2005) study found little occurrence of psychological problems could be that the majority of the participants who were studied parents did

not have that coldness present when they raised their children. The limitations of Yaroslawitz, DeGrace, Sloop, Arnold, and Hamilton's study are it is a small sample size and all the participants are Chareidi and from the same area. Experiences of children and grandchildren of Holocaust survivor's family function, or lack of function, might be different depending on location and degree of religion.

While many families are left dysfunctional by the past of a parent or grandparent, some families become more open through discussion of the Holocaust and family involvement increases. Kidron (2015) does a study of children and grandchildren of Holocaust survivors and their emotions at sites of Holocaust memory (p. 46). Through a series of interviews with grandchildren of Holocaust survivors taking school trips to Holocaust sites she discovers that they run into some unexpected emotions. Guy, a grandchild of a survivor who was interviewed, first heard the story of his grandmother's horrifying experience in a letter she wrote him that he read at a concentration camp. He ended up share his family's story with his classmates to give them a story to connect to so they could have the full emotional experience. He was shocked to feel pride in his telling and a responsibility to pass on his story. Guy, as well as some of the others interviewed, felt like there was a new openness for discussion in the family and it brought them closer (Kidron, 2015, pp. 46-47). A study done by Palgi, Shrira, and Ben-Ezra (2015) similarly found that family involvement in families with children and grandchildren of Holocaust survivors was higher compared to other families. Their research included two studies. The first study had 36 children of Holocaust survivors and 39 other participants and found that children of Holocaust survivors had more family involvement than the other (Palgi, Shrira, & Ben-Ezra, 2015, p. 15). The second study had 92 sets of children of Holocaust survivors and their children (grandchildren of Holocaust survivors) and it found that family involvement is higher in children rather than grandchildren of Holocaust

survivors. From the results of their study they concluded that intergenerational trauma is related to family involvement, possibly because Holocaust survivors wanted to connect more with their children after what they went through because they were all they had. However, family involvement decreases among grandchildren of Holocaust survivors' families (Palgi, Shrira, & Ben-Ezra, 2015, p. 15). A limitation of this study is small sample size. It is possible many of the participant's parents (Holocaust survivors) in Palgi, Shrira, and Ben-Ezra's study were open to talking about their experience in the Holocaust and that could have been part of why the family involvement increased. That complements what Kidron found in her study; once the family opened up about their past, they grew closer.

Many of these studies contradict each other. The study by IJzendoorn, Bakermans-Kranenburg, and Sagi-Schwartz (2005) found that there was generally no intergenerational trauma passed from survivors to their children but the studies of Yehuda et al (1998) and Fossion et al (2015) found that intergenerational trauma is passed. Additionally, the studies of Palgi, Shrira, and Ben-Ezra (2015) and Kidron (2015) found that family communication and involvement were increased because of the family's ties to the Holocaust but the Yaroslawitz et al study (2015) found that there was increased family dysfunction. This shows that results of tests and studies largely depend on size of sample and location. Many of the studies have participants from the same areas and are lacking in that diversity. The individual stories of the participants involved in the studies. Those individual stories are a key part in family function and if trauma is passed through the generations, and for the most part, were not talked about in any of the studies. Other things not discussed in the studies are how children and grandchildren of survivors view modern social justice and political issues because of their families stories and how the children of survivors experience



growing up has effected the way the raised their kids which makes a difference on the impact of the grandchildren of holocaust survivors.

### **Hypothesis**

The questions I am focusing on are: how did Holocaust survivors as parents or grandparents affect their children and grandchildren, psychologically, and emotionally, and how has that effected the way that they look at the Holocaust and other genocides of injustices in the world? I will be looking for how their personalities were shaped by their childhood and how that shaped their political and social views. I believe that I will find, through personal interviews with children and grandchildren of Holocaust survivors, that they view certain political or social issues more strongly due to the individual stories of their families. Also, that many of them do, or have had psychological effects unintentionally caused by their parents or grandparents just by knowing a little bit about what they went through and that there were both negative and positive effects on family function related to the individual stories of the families.

### **Research Questions**

There is a lot to learn about the affects Holocaust survivors had on their children and grandchildren. Did growing up with Holocaust survivors affect their children and grandchildren, physiologically and emotionally and if so in what ways? Did children of Holocaust survivors raise their children in a particular way due to the experiences of their childhood? How do the lives and childhoods of children and grandchildren of Holocaust survivors reflect how the survivors themselves were able to move past what happened to them and start a new life? How have the personal accounts of facing and overcoming unimaginable adversity of family members that were Holocaust survivors affected the way they view other genocides or injustices in the world? Did Holocaust survivors pass down values from their experiences that shaped children or

grandchildren's values or political views? Oftentimes the effects of the Holocaust are focused on survivors and the Jewish population as a whole. Most do not think about what was passed on intergenerational to survivor's children and grandchildren and what effects continue to be around today.

## **Method**

The interviews I conducted for this study were with people whom I knew personally or had connections to through my synagogue and parents. My first interviewee, Hannah, is a child of two Holocaust survivors. She is in her 60s and has two adult children. Due to geographical distance, I did a phone interview with her. She was in her home during the interview and I was sitting at my desk in my dorm room. My second interview was with a friend of mine, Nala. She is 19 and a student at a Harvey Mudd College in Southern California and a grandchild of two survivors. Our interview was conducted over Skype, but due to technology issue, we could not see each other, only hear. We were both in dorm rooms at the time of the interview. The third interviewee, Dani, is also a grandchild of two Holocaust survivors. She is in her 50s and has two children of college age. I also conducted her interview on the phone. For the first three interviews I did not recorded the conversations. All three of them spoke slowly enough that I was able type the conversations as they happened. My fourth interview was conducted with, Lily, another one of my friends and a second year at the University of Denver. This interview was face to face. It was done in her dorm room and we were both sitting on the floor. I recorded the interview so I could show that I was engaged and make I contact. All of the people I interviewed are women, possibly giving a gender bias to my results.

All of the interviews were semi-structured. I knew there were some questions I wanted to ask, but I also wanted to keep the option open to go in a different direction with the interviews if

the interviewee sounded passionate about something. The times I conducted my interviews varied depending on the participant's schedule and mine. The interviews with Hannah and Dani I did on weekends in the mid-morning to afternoon, and the interviews I did with Nala and Lily I did weekday evenings. I decided to conduct one-on-one interviews because a lot of the information being shared was extremely personal. One-on-one was more appropriate for this topic and I thought that I could get more honest answers. I conducted semi-structured interviews. I had some questions I knew I wanted to ask, but asked different questions depending on how the conversation was going. In each interview I asked between five and six questions. Of those two were direct and two or three were indirect questions.

In addition to those four interviews I also send out a survey. I posted the survey on Facebook, directly on my wall, as well as in various group walls. I had the survey posted for seven days and got 20 responses from people ages 18-65. I posted the survey on the University of Denver Class of 2019 page and the University of Denver Hillel page. The population on those pages are of a younger age range participant would be grandchildren not children of survivors. I also posted it in the North American Federation of Temple Youth Alumni page. There are thousands of people in the group from all over the United States and some from Canada, of all different ages. They are also all Jewish, so the perspective I will be getting from these surveys is a predominantly Jewish one. However, that makes sense because although the Nazis targeted more than just Jews in the Holocaust, the majority were Jewish. There is a trend that most Jewish people in the United States are Democrats or left leaning. Because a majority of the participants are Jewish there is also a trend in political affiliation to be on the left, left leaning or moderate. Also,  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the responses to the survey were from females, giving a gender bias. I do not know why that happened because I posted the survey on pages that had about the same number of males as females.

The survey consisted of 14 questions, 12 closed-ended and 2 open-ended. The first few questions consisted of demographic questions, such as age, gender, political affiliation, relationship status, if participants have children, and if they are children or grandchildren of survivors. The rest of the questions were scale, multiple choice, or longer answer questions about the way they thought having a survivor in their family has affected them. I tried to keep the survey short, with as few open-ended questions as possible to encourage participants to answer each question without the survey taking up too much time.

## **Discussion**

Through interviews and surveys, I attempted to discover how children and grandchildren of survivors are affected knowing a close family member went through terrible adversity. During my research I expected to find that children and grandchildren of Holocaust survivors view certain political or social issues strongly due to the experiences of their family, have psychological or emotional effects unintentionally caused by their parents or grandparents just by knowing a little bit about what they went through, and that there were both negative and positive effects on family function. Through my research, I discovered that my hypothesis was partially correct. Much of the information I gathered confirmed my previous conception, yet much of what I discover surprised me. What I found is that children and grandchildren have a wide range of political and social justice issues they care deeply about as a result of their family's past, some children and grandchildren of survivors think that they have psychological or emotional issues their parents and grandparents passed down, and that on average, family function was negatively affected.

*How have the personal accounts of facing and overcoming unimaginable adversity of family members that were Holocaust survivors affected the way they view other genocides or injustices in the world? Did Holocaust survivors pass down values from their experiences that shaped children or grandchildren's values or political views?*

Throughout my interviews and surveys, I discovered that children and grandchildren view different issues, political and social, as well as genocides and other world injustices very passionately, because of their family member's experiences. One of the biggest ideas that came up in interviews and surveys was the idea of "Never Again." The main idea behind "Never Again" is to make sure people know about the Holocaust so it does not happen again and to educate people that there are still genocides that have happened since the Holocaust and that are still happening. In a survey, I asked, "on a scale of 1 to 5 (1 being not important 5 being very important) how important is the idea of 'Never Again?'" 95% of participants said 5 and 5% said 4. In my interviews with Nala and Lily "Never Again" also came up: Nala stated, "That saying was a lot of it for me, it is our responsibility to make sure it never happens again and for us to remember. It is always in the back of my mind" (Personal communication, April 12, 2016). Children and grandchildren of Holocaust survivors take the idea of "Never Again" to heart. They have a very personal connection to what a genocide does and that is part of the reason "Never Again" is so important and always in the back of their minds. Lily takes that idea even farther in applying the never forget idea of "Never Again" to genocides:

All a holocaust is, is genocide and persecution. This is not the only holocaust. Um the motto of this Holocaust is you remember it to never forget it, and that is why these concentration camps are still there. The Rwandan Genocide, that is a holocaust, what is happening in places like Nigeria with Boko Haram, that it is a holocaust. This one just might have been on a bigger scale. Never forget them on any scale (Personal communication, April 26, 2016).

She finds the idea of remembering to never forget most important because we have to know about all of them, even the smaller less publicized ones because any genocide is horrible and there should be an end to them. There were many other social justice and political issues that I discovered in my research that were important to children and grandchildren of survivors due to the fact that they had family in the Holocaust. One of the biggest themes I found was about protecting the

minorities. In my interview with Hannah she said one of the things that upsets her most is what the US presidential candidate, Donald Trump, is saying about immigration.

Looking at the political election this year, it makes me want to do something about all the hate that is being said. On social media I have been posting stuff about what Trump is saying, especially about the wall and immigration because it makes me so angry. It was so hard for my family to try to get into the US and I cannot imagine why anyone is saying such awful things about immigrants. My parents struggled to get into this country so they could survive. Those people are just looking for a better, safer life and should be treated as people too (Personal communication, April 2, 2016).

During WWII many Jews were turned away from entering the US as well as many other countries, and because of that died. Dani did not talk about immigration but of how she feels it is her duty to protect and work for the underdogs. She stated, “I am a social worker that is constantly working for the Underdog to let them have a voice and rights. Also, I never feel like I am doing enough, and I think that came from them (grandparents). I feel like I should be in Syria rescuing refugees” (Personal communication, April 14, 2016). She feels like she must protect the underdogs so what happened to Jews, Romani, homosexuals, the disabled, and all the other groups targeted by Hitler does not happen to today’s underdogs. Other common social justice issues children and grandchildren of survivor’s care about as a result of being related to survivors were social justice for all, ending racial, religious discrimination and bullying, equal rights, inclusion, fears of extremism, and ending hatred, and violence. These issues that children and grandchildren of survivors care deeply about connect in some way to the Holocaust. Hatred, discrimination, racism is what the groups who were targeted in the Holocaust felt. Family of survivors feel that they should fight to protect minorities and fight for equal rights because not enough people did that for their families in the 1930s and 40s.

*Did growing up with Holocaust survivors affect their children and grandchildren, psychological and emotionally and if so in what ways?*

In addition to finding out how children and grandchildren of survivors social and political views were shaped by being raised by a parent or being around a grandparent who suffered great trauma, I wanted to find out if children and grandchildren of Holocaust survivors suffered emotional or psychological affects that were passed down. I found that many had some emotional affects passed down, but only about half felt there were psychological effects. One of the biggest emotional effects I discovered in children and grandchildren of Holocaust survivors was an emotional and personal connection to the Holocaust. From my survey, 95% of participants reported that they thought learning about the Holocaust was more meaningful for them because they had a family connection and that it was more personal for them. Nala talked about the personal value of learning about the Holocaust in Religious School:

It was more personal and more meaningful because I had a person to connect to it. If you don't have that connection, you just think of it as a lot of people that horrible things happened to but being able to tie it to people, I am related to and that I am here because they got out made it almost more relevant. It sharpens it, it makes it personal and makes you feel the need to understand it, I want to say I related to it because more because it was my family but at the same time I was not there. I think I got more value out of it than the others in the class. I think for people who don't have that connection makes it harder for them to fully understand and appreciate. Learning about the Holocaust in a class room setting is weird because you learn about it as it happened to 11 million people, but it is really important to learn it that way, but it is also important to learn about it with just one or two peoples stories because it really helps you understand and center yourself (Personal communication, April 12, 2016).

Lily also stated that when learning about the Holocaust she felt that she had a more personal connection that comes from being a 3<sup>rd</sup> generation survivor. She stated, "It makes me feel connected to this moment in history specifically. I am very invested and interested in things related to Germany or WWII or the Holocaust" (Personal communication, April 26, 2016). There are several other emotional affects that children and grandchildren of survivors feel other than an emotional and personal connection to the Holocaust. One of the biggest is a feeling of gratefulness. Children and grandchildren of Holocaust survivors are aware that they are lucky to be alive and

have the lives that they do. Nala addressed this feeling, “I always know that whatever I’m going through, my grandparents had it worse. It puts my life in perspective” (Personal communication, April 12, 2016). Lily similar thoughts about the perspective her grandparents past has given her. “It (the Holocaust) is not something that I could ever forget, and it just makes me very grateful and introspective about how I am a University of Denver student” (Personal communication, April 26, 2016). While many children and grandchildren find that they have values or certain emotions due to their family’s past, only about half have or think they have psychological effects. In my survey, in response to the question “Do you believe that your parents or grandparents passed down to you their trauma of psychological issues as a result of the holocaust?” 50% of participants said yes and 50% said no. In the study done by Fossion, P. et al (2015), they did discover that, “CHS (Children of Holocaust Survivors) having grown in these damaged family types present, as adults, higher DAD (depression and anxiety disorders) and less abilities to cope with adversity” (P. 51) As a result of their parents psychological issues from the horrors from the Holocaust children of Holocaust survivors have a higher chance of developing the same or similar psychological issues. Yehuda, R. et al (1998) study concluded something similar, “they imply that chronic PTSD not only affects trauma survivors for decades, but also can affect offspring of trauma survivors” (para 15). Psychological issues Holocaust survivors can be passed down to their children. In IJzendoorn, M., Bakermans-Kranenburg, M., & Sagi-Schwartz, A, they found something different; Holocaust survivors in general, did not pass down any psychological issues as a result of their experiences to their children and that overall children of Holocaust survivors were well adjusted. (P. 465). IJzendoorn, M., Bakermans-Kranenburg, M., & Sagi-Schwartz’s study does not support that idea that trauma is passed down to second and third generation survivors but Yehuda, R. et al’s study supports that trauma can be passed down



intergenerational. The conflicting information in those two studies helps explain why my survey is split 50/50. In interviews, also found inconclusive data. Three of my interviews did not address psychological issues they may have as a result of their parents or grandparents passed to them. Only Lily really had anything to say and she addressed more of how the Holocaust made her think. “So, one I think it makes me think very paradoxically and lets me see both sides. But it also makes me, just because I have certain ideas like that, which are not readily accepted it makes me sometimes more cautious with my thoughts” (Personal communication, April 26, 2016). Psychological issues are in some cases passed down from survivors to their children and grandchildren. Those issues might be PTSD, Depression and Anxiety disorders, or coping issues or even just affect how they think about different situations. However, in many cases, there are no issues passed down from survivor to child or grandchild. It likely depends on each individual family and how well the survivors were able to get help for themselves and protect their children from their troubles.

*How did growing up with family a member who survived the Holocaust effect family function? Did children of Holocaust survivors raise their children in a particular way due to the experiences of their childhood?*

If it is possible, even only half of the time, for trauma to be passed intergenerational, then it seems plausible that family function could also be disrupted by that trauma. Growing up with a parent or grandparent who was a Holocaust Survivor has an effect on the family dynamic which could affect how children of survivors raise their children. Yaroslawitz, S. et al found that family function was affected by Holocaust survivors’ experiences, for some Chareidi families. Chareidi is a branch of Judaism that strictly follows the Jewish laws written in the Torah (the Jewish holy book). All the participants who are children of Holocaust survivors, in this study talked about how their parents on some level were emotionally distant and unaffectionate. One participant stated:

I was never kissed. . . I was never hugged...I never. . . I never. . . touched physically; I never had a physical touch with my mother. And I think this is for sure, they became so cold blooded from the war. They got so detached from. . . from the warmth. And this is one thing that I always was longing and longing and longing. That when I got married. . . I said. . . you know, this is quite private, but I said to my husband, “Just please hug me, hug me, hug me” because this is one thing that I just felt nobody hugged me ever (P. 506).

That detachment from warmth and lack of physical affection was also present in the interview with Hannah. She talked about how lines of communication were not open in her family; she knew her parents’ stories, but it was never talked about. That lack of communication came with a lack of “warm fuzzies” and affection (Personal communication, April 2, 2016). In both Hannah’s case and participants of Yaroslawitz’s studies case, children of survivors who experienced that lack of warmth and affection tried to change that for their children. Hannah said, “For me, growing up was not happy and not a lot of happiness so for my children I consciously tried to change that.” Participants of Yaroslawitz’s study addressed how hard it is for them to make those changes and be more affectionate with their children because they never learned how to do it with their parents. One participant talked about how she works hard every day to make that personal connection with her children (P. 506). Despite the fact that many children did not grow up with high family function and high affection, that is something they try to change every day for their children, the grandchildren of survivors. Data from the survey supports that idea. Several respondents in the survey when asked, “How did being raised by Holocaust survivor/s affect the way you raised your children?” talked about attempting to raise their children with more affection. Also, when asked, “On a scale of 1-5, how high was your family function growing up?” the average response from children of holocaust survivors was 2.5, while the average response from grandchildren of survivors was 4. That may show that children of survivors purposely tried to increase their family function and affection. Family function was often not high for children of Holocaust survivors were growing up, due to what their parents had experienced. They actively tried to change that for

their children, resulting in higher family function when grandchildren of Holocaust survivors were growing up.

*How do the lives and childhoods of children and grandchildren of Holocaust survivors reflect how the survivors themselves were able to move past what happened to them and start a new life?*

My final research question, I was unable to answer. During my interviews, I was never able to ask questions that addressed this question. The reason for that is because the direction of the conversation never really touched on how much survivors were able to move on, and if it did it was brief and not very in-depth. In addition, when the conversation started to move in a direction that would lead me to be able to ask questions to address this issue, participants seemed to want to talk about other issues, so I did not push them in this direction.

Throughout my research, I noticed some other patterns and divergences unrelated to my specific questions. One pattern I saw was in regard to participant's reactions when they were told about their family in the Holocaust. When I asked Hannah and Lily when they were told their families stories and what their reaction was, they both talked about how they do not know when they were told, it is just something that they have always known (Personal communications, April 2-26, 2016). Nala and Dani both addressed how it made sense to them. Dani said when she was told:

I always knew about the Holocaust and that they were a part of it so when they told me it made sense. I knew from a little age about it because I saw my grandma throughout growing up crying and talking about the Nazis and it really made sense when I found out and it really impacted me. ... It took away the mystery of why my grandparents acted the way they did (Personal communication, April 14, 2016).

Nala said something similar; she knew her grandparents had survived something terrible, but when they told her and when she learned about the Holocaust in school everything just made sense (Personal communication, April 12, 2016).

There were also several divergences in my research, not related to my questions. The biggest and most surprising was how little Judaism came up. All the people I interviewed identify themselves as Jewish, but the only one who mentioned it was Lily. She is not currently a practicing Jew, but she still mentioned in our interview, “. It also makes me unable to detract completely from my Judaism, religiously or culturally. I don’t know how religious I will ever be, right now I am not, but I know that I am not okay with my kids growing up without Judaism, in some way” (Personal communication, April 26, 2016). The topic of Judaism was one I expected to see more of, but it only came up once. Another divergence was in the interview with Dani. She mentioned that something she feels that she learned from her grandparents was, “you have to question authority to be able to survive” (personal communication, April 14, 2016) because of what the Nazis told the Jews and what they actually did. It would be interesting to look in more depth in to how children and grandchildren of Holocaust survivors view their Judaism and how they view authority.

## **Conclusion**

My research leads me to discover fascinating information. I was able to answer most of my research questions and my hypothesis was partially correct. I discovered that children and grandchildren of Holocaust survivors have certain social view, political views, and values due to the horrors their parents and grandparents faced in the Holocaust. Many children and grandchildren of survivors have emotional and psychological effects that were passed down to them by their parents and grandparents because of the trauma of the Holocaust, but about 50% feel like they do not have psychological issues that were passed down to them. Also, that family function was often lower for children of survivors, and they did not get the love and affection many other children got, and they work every day to change that for their children.

There are several factors that limited my research. My sample size was very small, four interviews and 20 survey participants. Also, a majority of my participants were female, all four of my interviews as well as 75% of my survey participants, giving my results a gender bias. The reason for only having female interviewees was because I reached out to people I knew, and they just happened to be all female. I did reach out to one male grandchild of a survivor, but he did not want to be interviewed. I do not know why the survey data came back so heavily female. The groups I posted the survey in on Facebook were mostly gender equal. Another limitation was time. All of my research, primary and secondary, has taken place in less than 10 weeks, limiting the amount of information I could have possibly received. The survey was also only posted for six days, limiting how many people could fill it out. Also, two of my interviews were only 15 minutes, limiting the amount of information I received from participants. Two of my interviews were 30 minutes, and both of those happened on weekends, while the shorter 15-minute ones took place on weekdays. In addition to my primary research, two secondary sources were over 10 years old. The IJzendoorn, M., Bakermans-Kranenburg, M., & Sagi-Schwartz, A. study was done in 2005 and the Yehuda, R. et al study was done in 1998, making these two studies not as relevant as the others.

There are several unanswered questions in studying children and grandchildren of Holocaust survivors. There is more to be learned about how children of survivors raised their children due to the way they were raised. Also, in looking at the lives and childhoods of children and grandchildren of Holocaust survivors and seeing how it reflects how the survivors themselves were able to move past what happened to them and start a new life. Another question is to look at how much religion has been a part of the lives of children and grandchildren of survivors. Many Holocaust survivors lost their faith after the Holocaust, but does that extend to their children and grandchildren? I addressed the passage of transgenerational psychological effects due to trauma,

but there is still not a great answer. There could be more research into this particular topic. My research focused mostly on the Jewish group that was targeted in the Holocaust. There could be research done comparing affects the Holocaust has on children and grandchildren of other groups that were targeted to the effects of the Jewish group.

This ethnography adds to the already existing literature on this topic. It addresses and studies how the descendants of Holocaust survivors feel about certain political and social justice issues. The importance of this topic, children and grandchildren of Holocaust survivors, is more important today that it has ever been. Holocaust survivors are passing on and will not be able to tell their stories. It is important that the world never forgets this tragedy, so we can work to ending genocides. Children and grandchildren of survivors will likely be the ones who pass on their family's stories. It is important to know how they were affected to know if they can and will pass on those stories and how they will tell their families stories, so the world does not forget.

## Appendix A: Full Transcribed Interviews

Writing 1133 Interviews

### Hannah

1. What is the story of your parent or parents in the Holocaust?

My mom was born June 16, 1924 in Trire, Germany. Her father Born Trier on March 15, 1882, and her mother Dec 9, 1887. My grandfather fought for Germany in WWI. He had a furniture store and they lived above it. Things started getting bad in early 30s. Immigration to US was 20,000 people annually, and you had to have a sponsor in the US so you would not be a burden to the public. The sponsor could be a blood relative or close friend. Friends of Grandmother got an affidavit in 1937 to for one of my uncles to come to New York. He settled in Portland and he was a dentist, but he could not get a job in Germany. He had to go back to school to get his dentist degree in the US. George got an affidavit got for my other uncle. Mom was still in Germany, she got out on the last ship of children out of Germany to England at 16. She was in England for one and a half years until she got to the US and made her way to Portland and went to University of Washington. Then she got married to father. My grandparents ended up in a detention camp in France; Grandmother was very savvy. She hid money at a cousin's house in Luxembourg; sewed money into the lining of her coat and used it to bribe guards to get out of dentation camp. My grandparents were put in different camps. My grandmother was in one called Gurs and my grandfather was in one in an old brick factory for men only. No one knows how they found each other again. Many of the people in the camps ended up in Auschwitz and no one knows how they did not end up there. They made it to US on last US ship out. They made it to Portland in 1941 in poor health and met my mother there in 1942. They were extremely fortunate. My father was born in Wirtgen Germany on June 2 1922. Dad had brother two years older and lived above the shoe store that my grandfather owned. Dad was taunted and beat up walking home from school, he got back at kids and then they left him alone. When they got to high school, other kids were not allowed to talk to him because he was Jewish. My grandfather fired a man that worked for him. That caused the SS to set his shop on fire then they had a problem with police. The family then had to leave town. They went to Auckburg. When my father was 14, they took him out of school because the situation and the bullying was so bad because he was the only Jew. He went to work at a shirt factory. My grandmother has a cousin in New York City that helped him get to US. He also had to go to England to get to US, but he did not have to stay there as long (90days) as my mother did. Dad's older brother left a week before Kristlenought. And they all ended up in Portland and that is how parents met. Dad went into the army. His parents got out too but made it over with nothing. Mom's side made it out with money.

2. When did you parent(s) tell you their story and what was your reaction?

It is just something that I have known my life. Probably started to tell me when I was young. It just happened over time. 20 Years ago, mom and dad wrote down their stories, but I know.

3. Did your parents past as a survivor give you any particular outlooks on live?

Looking at the political electing this year, it makes me want to do something about all the hate that is being said. On social media I have been posting stuff about what Trump is saying, especially about the wall and immigration because it makes me so angry. It was so hard for my family had to try to get into the US and I cannot imagine why anyone is saying the things that he is.

4. Did knowing your parent's story affect you emotionally and psychologically when you first found out and later in your life? Do you think your childhood was different from other's childhoods because of your parent's past?

One of thing I thought was strange growing up, was that our parents spoke German to each other but none of the kids learned it. But what that did for me was put a block up. I could never really learn a language after that. From parent's perspective, I think, they did not want us to stick out, so they did not teach us German. We also made Easter eggs and did Christmas, so they were not picked on. Not that many Jewish kids because they were picked on so much by other kids. I think they were worried, because of what being Jewish and different meant in their childhood, they wanted to make us fit in and be as similar as everyone else as much as possible. Speaking German and being Jewish would have made us too different.

5. Did your experience as a child, being raised by Holocaust survivors help shape the way you raised your children?

I think that I tried to be more open and loving with my children because that is something that was never really there for me when I was being raised.

6. Anything else?

Assimilation was such a big thing for me. As a kid you have a different sense of life. Germans are not a warm people. Warm fuzzes were not there. Lines of communication were not open; I did not feel like I could go to them and talk about that stuff. And I do feel like I lost something in that. When asked mom if they could video tape it to tell her the story, she would not do it. It was hard for her to talk about Germany. She wanted to stay there but if she had she would have died. Dad compartmentalized but she couldn't, and she was never happy, and growing up was not happy and not a lot of happiness so for my children I consciously tried to change. Which is sad because she should have been over the moon that that all made it out, which is very rare. I think a big part of that was her father died after only a few years in the US. There is something called the steppingstone program. It allows family members of Holocaust survivors to place a stone in the towns that the survivors were born in- mom placed a stone in front of the house in Trier for her father and it says he died of a broken heart. One side of that street was bombed the side that their house was on and the other wasn't. I and my sister went to see it and it was really emotional.

## **Nala**

1. What is the story of your grandparents in the Holocaust?

My grandma was really young. Just a few years old, she and her parents were taken together. She was born in Austria and taken to Auschwitz and was there when the war ended. Grandpa was born in Prague and he was 9 when war started. He got separated from family towards begging and got taken to camps. He escaped from two or three camps and at one point he was hiding at a monastery and pretending do study as a Christian, but he was caught. He was in Poland at one point and went to a death camp towards end of war. He was shot in leg and eye, because he was supposed to die in a firing squad but got help from a doctor. He was also in the Budapest ghetto. At end of war he was somehow reunited with his parents then they came to US after the war. My grandma finished High school in Vienne. My grandpa landed in New York with like \$5. I don't remember much of their stories because I had told them when I was pretty young.

2. Did you parents or grandparents tell you their story and what was your reaction?



Grandpa told story when I was 10, pretty young. I wish had heard it when I was older because I think I would have understood and appreciated it more. I had no background on WWII. I did not know a lot about the Holocaust. I just knew that my grandparents had survived some terrible war, I had no context because I was really young. My brother was older enough, so I think that is why he told us. It was after a Passover Seder. I wish I had gotten more out of it. He passed away a few weeks ago and at his funeral people were talking about what he lived though and how amazing it was that he survived and lived for so long and I wish I knew more/remembered more about his story.

3. How do you think learning about the Holocaust in school/Sunday School was different for you than it was for others?

I think, like, in terms of the personal value, it was more personal and more meaningful because I have a person to connect to it. If you don't have that connection, you just think of it as a lot of people that horrible things happened to but being able to tie it to people, I am related to and that I am here because they got out made it almost more relevant. It sharpens it, it makes it personal and makes you feel the need to understand it, I want to say related to it because more because it was my family but at the same time I was not there. I think I got more value out of it than the others in the class. I think for people who don't have that connection makes it harder to fully understand and appreciate. I don't want to say I enjoyed it, but I valued it. Learning about the Holocaust in a class room setting is weird because you learn about it as it happened to 11 million people, but that it really important to learn it that way, but it is also important to learn about it with just one or two peoples stories really helps you understand and center yourself.

4. Did your grandparents past as a survivor give you any particular outlooks on live (politically or socially)

There is the whole thing about never again. And when we were learning about it in 7<sup>th</sup> grade and that really set in. And around that time my grandparents got invited to a thing with other survivors where they put together a book of their stories. My grandparents did not put their stories in it, I don't know why. But reading that book really made the "never again" idea set in. That saying was a lot of it for me, it is our responsibility to make sure it never happens again and for us to remember. I don't think it has change everything in my life, but it is always in the back of my mind. When people ask me about my family it comes to mind because it will likely come up. Also, I always know that whatever I'm going though, my grandparents had it worse. It puts my life in perspective. It helps me make sure I'm able to stand up in what I believe in and defend what I think right. I do not think it has a lot to do with just that they were in the Holocaust and hearing their stories. I think that has more to do with the values they taught my mom and that she was raised with then I was raised with those values. I think that my grandparents had those values and they were built though going through what they went thorough and that they passed along those values.

5. Did knowing your parent's story affect you emotionally and psychologically when you first found out and later in your life?

Um honestly When I first found out I was too young to fully understand; I did not understand what it meant. I think like 7<sup>th</sup> grade when we learned about it, I never really ever to put it into context. And I think that was because they hid their pain well and I don't remember thinking that is the worst thing I have heard. You don't want to hear that your family went thought that horrible. I think that they put it in the past and moved on, so it was not talked about. A lot came up at his

funeral when people were talked about how much he did and that really made me realize a lot of things about his life.

#### 6. Anything else?

When I was little, before I heard the full story, I did not know much at all, they did a good job of hiding their pain and their stories. I don't know if they did the same with my mom and I don't know when they told her, but the fact that they were able to lead normal lives is increasable and set up normal lives for their kids and leave it all behind is amazing to me.

### Lily

#### 1. Tell me about the story of your grandparents in the Holocaust?

Let me think about what it is because I always hear, like, different stories especially about my grandpa. Um but like all four of my grandparents are Holocaust survivors and they all came from different places in Poland. So, the story that I know, like I can tell you all of the, but the best one I kind of know is the one of my grandpa and grandma on my dad's side especially my grandpa. So, my grandpa was, he was born in 1917 so he was like 28 when WWII started. He grew up with, he had 11 sisters because he had a stepmom. He was one of the youngest. And they all died in the Holocaust. I don't know like concentration camps or exactly where or anything, but my grandpa, the story is that he, um, ran away to Russia. He made, he was a shoemaker, so he made shoes and weaponry and other things for the Russian army during the war. Um and at one point he got sent to Siberia. He had one story where he fell asleep on a Tuesday and woke up on a Thursday because he drank so much Vodka, because what else do you do during a war. Then he met my grandma, I don't know the year but before 1948, he met her I think in Russia because she was also from Poland and ran away. She was born in 1919 and worked on the railroads in Uzbekistan and then they met and got married. Then they were put in a displaced persons camp in Italy, where my dad's older brother was born in Torino, and then they got word that they could go to the United States. And they came in in like 1950....in 1952 they came to Denver because... and because there was a sizable Jewish population and actually some of the people my grandparents knew in Poland they came and found here. So that is mostly the story of my grandparents on my dad's side. On my mom's side, again they are both Holocaust survivors both born around 1922ish. I don't know their story as much, but I know that my grandparents ended up getting married then getting put in a displaced persons camp in Salzburg, Austria. Um and my mom's oldest sister was born in Salzburg (...) Not at the same time but they all eventually ended up in Denver. My grandparents knew my other grandparents back in Poland or have known them for 50 years (...) So none of my grandparents were specifically in Concentration Camps but a lot of their family members were.

#### 2. Did you parents or grandparents tell you their story, if so when and what was your reaction?

Honestly, I don't know. I think it was just something that like I honestly probably knew when I was four or five years old. Especially with my grandparents it is just something that is so ingrained into their nature, um, because my grandparents weren't five years old during the war. They were, you know, mid 20s and 30s. So, they really remembered it. They all still their accents and their stories were something that I grew up on. So, my reaction to the Holocaust has never been one of shock, it is just like something that I have always known about. I know when I was nine years old, I can remember sitting in an office with my brother and paternal grandparents and going over documents to get monetary funds from the US from the Holocaust and filling our records. My grandparents are part of a book study...that documents a lot of the stories of Holocaust

survivors from Colorado. I have really just been accustoming to it. When people are shocked when they meet a Holocaust survivor, it is weird for me because I have grown up with them.

3. Tell me about how learning about the Holocaust in school/Sunday School was different for you than it was for others?

Um, I think it was, I first came off with more background knowledge. So, I think because of that some people were more shocked about it. Um and I was already more interested in it, like in 7<sup>th</sup> grade I read *Shindler's List*. I don't think most people do that. So, I was already more invested in it, already had more background knowledge and I was just, I was able to connect more personally to it. We in 9<sup>th</sup> grade wrote papers about something dealing with the Holocaust, and mine was about, I talked about being a third generation Holocaust survivor. I remember my English teacher wrote, "no you're not on it." And I like explained to her, I get what you are saying, but that is kind of how it goes. I'm third generation, we have the same blood. And for me having that connection, I don't put myself in the place of a Holocaust survivor, but I am literally what Hitler wanted to kill. I'm not just Jewish, but I am the worst of the worst of what he wanted to go after. I'm also Eastern European and Polish, where 90% of Jews were killed. My grandparents come from very Jewish village. So, I have always had a personal connection, less shock. I mean desensitization I guess you could use too.

4. Did your grandparents past as a survivor give you any particular outlooks on life? (politically or socially)

Yeah. I wrote my college entrance essay on visiting Birkenau and I wrote about "why do I feel so comfortable at Birkenau." The way that my grandparents past has shaped me is that it's made me very tolerant and very open. For me, I don't see how I can judge a person or like be against or opposed to something they are doing if it does not bring harm to themselves or others. In the Holocaust, my family, Jews, those are the ones who they wanted to persecute, and with that kind of past how could I do that. How could I oppress somebody? It makes me very orientated towards justice and being tolerant and open, and just grateful to be here. But also, an interesting thing, and I don't tell this very much, but it gives me a different perspective I think on a lot of stuff. Because it is like, and it can sound even paradoxical, but yes, the Holocaust was an awful thing and it is also the reason why I am here. If the Holocaust hadn't happened, I would not be in College probably. My grandparents all had nothing above a 6<sup>th</sup> grade education level, so the fact that that happened was not a good thing, but it has allowed me to get to where I am today. It is not something that I could ever forget, and it just makes me very grateful and introspective about how I am a University of Denver student. It also makes me unable to detract completely from my Judaism, religiously or culturally. I don't know how religious I will ever be, right now I am not, but I know that I am not okay with my kids growing up without Judaism, in some way.

5. Do you think knowing your parent's story affect you emotionally and psychologically when you first found out and later in your life?

Yeah. I definitely do because I think it gives me, you know how I was saying the Hitler thing makes me think very paradoxically, and that is something that I often do. So, one I think it makes me think very paradoxically and lets me see both sides. But it also makes me, just because I have certain ideas like that, which are not readily accepted it makes me sometimes more cautious with my thoughts. It can perhaps make me a cautious person in general which psychologically I am. Emotionally, I think it is more on an inner emotional, spiritual level where it makes me feel

connected to this moment in History specifically. Very invested and interested in things related to Germany or WWII or the Holocaust. And in general, I am not super emotional and shocked by any of this information. Like I have seen Concentration camps and I have been fine, but I know it is sad, but I have just been so exposed to it for so long that I like just to know it. So, it is not like it is anything new when I hear some insane fact about it. But one thing I am uncomfortable with is like seeing Hitler's face. Just because, that image conjures up so much, like oh my god. I can't let myself think about his face too much or something. And then I think on another psychologically level knowing that the Holocaust was not even just Jews, it was more than that. I think that that is something that my mom has more pressed into me that, it was not just 6 million Jews, it was also millions of Romas and Christians and anyone who was non-Aryan. So, it makes me, psychologically I am not one sided, like I cannot ignore all the other people, so I am also factually person and very fact oriented probably from that as well.

#### 6. Anything else?

Um I don't know if this is going to sound caddy or something but it's kind of bugs me when people met Holocaust survivors who were 5. It is terrible that they were like in Auschwitz, but my grandparents were 30 and it is just a very different story. Realizing that many of the survivors were that age and having that age just makes a difference to me then a person who was five. It makes me connect more to someone who was older because you remember so much more. My grandparents still did not have an education when they came to this country. They worked in factories and department stores. They were not five years old and had the opportunity to go to college. They died with their accents, they died racist against Russians. They were completely psychologically and emotionally scarred from that experience because of the fact that they were so old. Not because they were in camps because they weren't. And I also think it is another thing to recognize that being a survivor does not necessarily mean they were in a Concentration camp. It can be simply that they were kicked out of their house or just instilled with fear. All a holocaust is, is genocide and persecution. Also, since I think so less one sided on things to remember that this is not the only holocaust. Um the motto of this Holocaust is you remember it to never forget it, and that is why these concentration camps are still there. The Rwandan Genocide, that is a Holocaust, what is happening in places like Nigeria with Boko Haram that it is a holocaust. This one just might have been on a bigger scale. Just like, yeah, never forget them on any scale.

#### **Dani**

##### 1. What is the story of your grandparents in the Holocaust?

My grandma on my mom sides and my grandfather, well they kept it a secret until I was in 7<sup>th</sup> grade until I had project that was ask you grandparents what is like growing up. Then my grandmother took a three-hour video of her telling her story and sent my mom all this stuff. My great grandmother was a single mother and they lived in a small village in East Germany and when Hitler was elected (...) they moved to a more populated area. My aunt looked more Jewish than my grandma, so she left school earlier because of hatred and because of the teasing. People would throw rocks at Jews. She remembers the Nazis going through the streets and saying we are not going to treat the Jew like flowers, water them and let them die. During Kristlenought, she was 19 and she was kind of a nurse and she remembers after the doctors treated the hurt, they were shipped off to concentration camp. (...) The British set up for children to sponsor them to come to England, so my great grandma arranged for that for my Aunt Ronnie. My great grandma set up and arranged marriage for my grandmother with my grandpa because he wanted to go to America that is how

they got the Torahs (**A Torah is the Jewish Bible. It is a sacred scroll. This family saved two Torahs from Kristlenought and they donated them to a synagogue in Boulder**). They never liked each other they fought all the time. My grandmother was in love with another man but if she would have stayed with him, she would have probably died in the camps. My grandfather was from Austria but was living in Germany and Hitler kicked out all the Jews who were not born in Germany so as soon. My grandparents got married in 1939 and since my grandmother married someone who was not German, so they took away her passport. My grandfather's two sisters and mom got shipped to the relocation camps, but he hid in the forest and waited for a black passport for my grandmother. My grandpa got letters written in English from his youngest sister. They had little food in the relocation camp and had to be careful not to get shot by soldiers. At night they would use them for target practice. But she was so positive about it, she talked about learning English because her English teacher was in relocation camp with her. It is amazing how positive she stayed. My grandfather's mother and sisters ended up dying there. They died in one of those pits where they lined people up and shot them all. That would have been my grandfather's fate too if he had not hidden in the forest. He hid in the forest to get an illegal visa and really only ate raw potatoes. Something I noticed about my grandfather growing up was that he never waited for us to eat with him, he always ate first and ate a lot and never let my grandmother make potatoes because of his time in the forest. He also did not like black boots I think because he was kicked a lot as a child.

My grandmother, since she did not have a passport she was going to be sent to Dachau. She had to go to the SS office, and they treated her so badly, so whenever she saw the police, airport security or heard sirens she would start crying and shacking because she had such bad PTDS. The visas did come though and she was in England for 6 months and worked as a servant and then she met up with my grandfather in New York City and from there they moved to LA. (...) My great grandmother got her two children out of Germany, but never got out herself. My Aunt Ronnie became an interpreter for the US army during WWII, because she spoke German. She said it was really boring, but she did it in the hopes of finding her mother, but she never did. When the camps were liberated, she also went over to be an interpreter. She said it was so horrible, the people who had been there were so unhuman because of the way they had been treated. The US army had to give the interpreters and others working there time off in the South of France to recover. (...) My Grandmother and Great Aunt knew that their mother had a cyanide pill and they hoped that she took it instead of ending up in one of the concentration camps and dying a horrible death that way.

## 2. When did you parent(s) tell you their story and what was your reaction?

I was in 7<sup>th</sup> grade, 13, at Southern Hills my grandma just unleashed this story. She brought out this trunk of photos and she never knew who took them. I always knew about the Holocaust and that they were a part of it so when they told me it made sense. I knew from a little age about it because I saw my grandma throughout growing up crying and talking about the Nazis and it really made sense when I found out and it really impacted me. I have worked with torcher survivors from Middle East and it impacted me because I have always worked for the underdog. My mom told me when I was 5 years old that if soldiers in black boots came to my door we have to leave immediately and could not bring the dog or cat. My grandfather would also say German Sheppard eat Jewish babies. I was really impacted, and it took away the mystery of it. I knew that they had to deal with the Holocaust but hearing the stories made me understand all of it, like why my grandma always cried and why my grandpa ate so much food. It was really powerful for me.

3. Did your parents past as a survivor give you any particular outlooks on live?

Yes. Protect your freedoms, don't let discrimination and hatred happen because it dangerous. I am a social worker that is constantly working for the Underdog to let them have a voice and rights. Also, I never feel like I am doing enough, and I think that came from them. I feel like I should be in Syria rescuing refugees. I always feel guilty that I am not doing enough.

4. How has being a grandchild of a Holocaust survivor impacted you emotionally/psychologically?

I grew up as my grandma's favorite, so I spent more time with her than my sibling. She would always say that you cannot trust anyone else because if what happened there it can happen here. They were more secular German than Jewish until Hitler came. So, she would always say to me, even before I heard her story that, "oh your best friend \_\_\_\_\_ you can't trust her because you'll never know when the tides will turn." I was so happy when she told me because I just understood the mystery behind why she would cry when she saw the police and why she would tell me those things.

5. Anything else?

Something that just really stuck with me was the Nazis said we will not treat the Jews like flowers, water them and let them die. Also, that people should always question authority. The Nazis said they were going to do one thing and if you listened to them you would be fine, but that was not the case. So, in some ways I see questioning authority as a way to survive.

## Annotated Bibliography

Fossion, P., Leys, C., Vandeleur, C., Kempenaers, C. Braun, S., Verbanck, P., & Linkowski, P. (2015). Transgenerational transmission of trauma in families of Holocaust survivors: The consequences of extreme family functioning on resilience, Sense of Coherence, anxiety and depression. *Journal of Affective Disorders*, 171. doi: 10.1016/j.jad.2014.08.054

This study, done by Fossion, Leys, Candeleur, Kempenaers, Braun, Verbanck, and Linkowski, looks at how negative psychological effects due to a great trauma are passed down from generation to generation in the families of Holocaust survivors. They ran 29 different children of Holocaust survivors through several different test to determine the level of depressive and anxiety disorders present among them. They found that often times, children of Holocaust survivors have more depressive and anxiety disorders than the general population and the development of coping strategies are slowed.

IJzendoorn, M., Bakermans-Kranenburg, M., & Sagi-Schwartz, A. (2005). Are children of holocaust survivors less well-adapted: A meta-analytic investigation of secondary traumatization. *Journal of Traumatic Stress*, 16(5), 459-469. doi: 10.1023/A:1025706427300

The central question in IJzendoorn, Bakermans- Kranenburg, and Sagi-Schwartz's study is if Holocaust survivors could raise children without passing down trauma of their experiences. In their study of 4,418 participants, they, in clinical studies, tested the occurrence of secondary traumatization in the families of Holocaust survivors and found that secondary traumatization was only present in participants who were stressed for alternative reasons. In general, their studies found, that children of Holocaust survivors were well adapted.

Kidron, C. (2015). Survivor family memory work at sites of holocaust remembrance: Institutional enlistment or family agency. *History & Memory*, 27(2), 45-73. doi: 10.2979/histmemo.27.2.45

The study done by Kidron examines the responsibility for family members of Holocaust survivors to share their family's stories to help others better understand the Holocaust. Her study is done by interviews with several different family members of Holocaust survivors at site of the Holocaust. She finds that families of survivors are not just victims of injustice but part of their families Holocaust story and are now the ones responsible for passing it down. She also finds that visiting sites of the Holocaust, for survivor's family members brings more than just emotions of sadness and anger but also emotions of curiosity and pride, and it also may open up channels of communication within the family.

Palgi, Y., Shrira, A., & Ben-Ezra, M. (2015). Family involvement and holocaust salience among offspring and grandchildren of holocaust survivors. *Journal of Intergenerational Relationships*, 13(1), 6-21. doi: 10.1080/15350770.2015.992902

The research done by Palgi, Shrira, and Ben-Ezra is focused on the children and grandchildren of Holocaust survivors. In study 1, with a participant pool of 75, made up of children of Holocaust

survivors and others, found that in comparison, children of Holocaust survivors had greater family involvement than the others but only some of those children of Holocaust showed stronger family involvement due to the Holocaust. The second study they did was 92 participants, both children and grandchildren of Holocaust survivors. The second study showed that there was higher family involvement in children compared to grandchildren of Holocaust survivors. The research concluded that intergenerational transmission of the trauma from the Holocaust is related to family involvement in children of Holocaust survivors.

Yaroslavitz, S., DeGrace, B., Sloop, J., Arnold, S., & Hamilton, T. (2015). A study of family health in Chareidi second and third generation survivors of the Holocaust. *Work*, 50(3), 501-510. doi: 10.3233/WOR-141961

The purpose of Yaroslavitz, DeGrace, Sloop, Arnold, and Hamilton's study is to study the transmission of Intergenerational Holocaust survivor syndrome and its effects on the family health of second and third generation Chareidi survivors and study it from their perspective. Five participants described, from their perspective, their families' health and the impact of the Holocaust and the death camps had on their family health. They found that family dysfunction does exist in the family of Holocaust survivors and that dysfunction was largely caused by the Holocaust. For these families it takes work, daily, to change this dysfunction. The study concluded family health is disrupted by intergenerational passage of trauma.

Yehuda, R., Schmeidler, J., Giller, E., Siever, L., & Binder-Brynes, K. (1998). Relationship between posttraumatic stress disorder characteristics of holocaust survivors and their adult offspring. *The American Journal of Psychiatry*, 155(6), 841-843. Retrieved from <http://ajp.psychiatryonline.org/doi/abs/10.1176/ajp.155.6.841>

Yehuda, Schmeidler, Giller, Siever, and Binder-Brynes's study address PTSD in Holocaust survivors and their adult children to see if difference in the PTSD of the parents are related to similar appearances in their children. Their methods were to interview and assess, using different tools to assess trauma, 22 Holocaust survivors and 22 of their adult children. They found that there was a relationship regarding the effects of trauma on life between the parents and children and they concluded that children with parents who have PTSD are at risk for it themselves.