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A Preliminary Look At The Individual Determinants Of Political Intolerance And Tolerance In Holocaust Survivors

Democratic political attitudes are an important component of the American political culture. They contribute to shaping behavior in the political arena. Intolerance and tolerance form a continuum in the realm of political attitudes. Political intolerance is narrowly defined in the literature as an unwillingness to permit the expression of ideas or interests from a group or groups that an individual opposes; political tolerance is the willingness to permit the expression of these ideas[1]. However, this definition does not adequately reflect how people define intolerance in everyday conversations in their lives. What definition of intolerance arises upon analyzing these conversations? What factors contribute to determining who is intolerant and who is tolerant? An examination of the political attitudes of intolerance of Holocaust survivors towards the perpetrators of their persecution will begin to shed light on these questions.

Research has focused on the determinants of political intolerance. Determinants of intolerance come from three categories of factors; political factors such as ideology, perceived threat, political involvement, and commitment to abstract democratic principles; social/demographic factors such as education, social status, age, gender, and religion; and psychological factors such as mistrust of other groups, being close-minded, being self centered, and exhibiting low self-esteem.

Intolerance may be triggered by threats, real or perceived. In fact, some studies state that one of the strongest predictors of political intolerance is the perception that one's political opponent is threatening.[2] What can explain when threats are perceived and not actual threats? In perceiving an ethnic or political group as a threat, individuals will evaluate the political strength

[1]Samuel Stouffer, *Communism, Conformity, and Civil Liberties,* Doubleday, New York, 1955; John L. Sullivan, George E. Marcus, Stanley Feldman, and James E. Piereson, 'The Sources of Political Tolerance: A Multivariate Analysis,' *The American Political Science Review,* Vol. 75, Issue 1, March, 1981, pp. 92-106; James L. Gibson, 'Alternative Measures of Political Tolerance; Must Tolerance Be "Least-Liked?"' *American Journal of Political Science,* Vol. 36, May, 1992, pp. 560-77; John L. Sullivan, James E. Piereson and George E. Marcus, *Political Tolerance and American Democracy,* University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1993.

[2]Raymond M. Duch and James L. Gibson, '"Putting up with" Fascists in Western Europe: A Comparative, Cross-Level Analysis of Political Tolerance,' *The Western Political Quarterly,* 1992, pp. 237-273; Gibson, 'Alternative Measures of Political Tolerance; Must Tolerance Be "Least-Liked?"' p. 560-77; Benjamin Beit-Hallahmi and Michael Argyle, *The Psychology of Religious Behavior, Belief and Experience,* Rutledge, New York, 1997, pp. 218-227; Sullivan, Marcus, Feldman, and Piereson, 'The Sources of Political Tolerance: A Multivariate Analysis,' p. 92-106.

of and the danger posed by the dissident groups. Since such perceptions are subjective they will be affected by psychological factors.[3]

Shamir and Sullivan[4] found that in the United States personality and perceived threat had very strong impacts on political tolerance. In their study such aspects as age, status, education and religion have an impact on intolerance through their effect on ideology and psychological security. Psychological security consists of the traits of dogmatism or closed mindedness, self-esteem and personal trust.

They also found[5] that these social background variables, that played such an important role in selecting the political groups to target, had no direct effect on intolerance. They noted that democratic norms and political threats cancel each other out. In the absence of a strong threat, belief in abstract norms will constrain responses to specific instances in which citizens' tolerance is tested. If the threat is strong enough it will override these abstract beliefs.

According to scholars, one factor that facilitates tolerance is a benevolent world view, one that is optimistic and future oriented. Tolerant individuals are trusting and believe in the equal worth of all individuals regardless of their race, religion, culture, ethnicity or gender.

One study, which looked at political attitudes, religious identity, and future orientation in Israeli survivors, sheds some light on what to expect from a traumatized population. Carmil and Breznitz[6] hypothesized one of two possible scenarios. Victims might have more compassion for other victims and try to prevent repetition of such episodes of victimizations, or, conversely, those affected by the Holocaust and the isolation of the Jews in the face of the impending disaster might turn inward and become less concerned for the civil liberties of others. This is one of the few studies to look at how Holocaust survivors and their descendants see the future.

The Carmil and Breznitz study interviewed Holocaust survivors and their offspring; and non-Holocaust controls and their offspring. All the study participants were Israelis of European descent. Their study found that differences in belief in a better future were found to be

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[3]Sullivan, Marcus, Feldman, and Piereson, 'The Sources of Political Tolerance: A Multivariate Analysis,' *The American Political Science Review,* Vol. 75, Issue 1, March, 1981, pp. 92-106; John Mueller, 'Trends in Political Tolerance,' *The Public Opinion Quarterly,* Vol. 52, spring, 1988, pp. 1-25.
[4]Michal Shamir and John L. Sullivan, 'The Political Context of Tolerance: The United States and Israel,' *The American Political Science Review,* Vol. 77, Issue 4, December, 1983, pp. 911-928.
[5]Ibid.
[6]Devora Carmil and Shlomo Breznitz, 'Personal Trauma and World View -- Are Extremely Stressful Experiences Related to Political Attitudes, Religious Beliefs, and Future Orientation?,' *Journal of Traumatic Stress*, Vol. 4, No. 3, 1991, pp. 393-405.

significant. Belief was expressed as an optimistic view of the world or a pessimistic view. Forty two percent of the survivors believed in a better future compared to 28% of the controls. Thus, Carmil and Breznitz concluded that the Holocaust had a major effect on determining political attitudes and future orientation.

Sigal and Weinfeld[7] looked at tolerance in Holocaust survivors, asking the question what is the impact of the Holocaust on survivors' political beliefs. They hypothesized that those more affected by the Holocaust would be more opposed to fundamental tenets of Nazism and thus more committed to principles of democracy and civil liberties, and more tolerant of minorities. Survivors, they speculated, would, as former victims, have more compassion for other victims, and they and their descendants might undertake actions that would prevent a repetition of such episodes of victimization. Monroe's theories[8] espoused in *The Heart of Altruism*, help explain politically tolerant individuals as people who hold a universalistic world view and have an identity that is based on core moral values. Her work complements that of Sigal and Weinfeld.

Social/demographic factors are a second category that some social science researchers claim can lead to intolerance. At one time or another age, education, level of religiosity or gender have been linked to increasing levels of intolerance. Stouffer[9] conducted the primary study on which much of this research has been based as well. He found that rank and file citizens are less tolerant of socialists, atheists and communists than civic leaders; that the young and well educated are more tolerant; and that levels of tolerance should increase with increased education. Thus in his study age and education were key factors.

In a study of white opposition to the establishment of the Martin Luther King birthday as a national holiday in Arizona, Alozie[10] found that education, income, age, party status, gender, religion, political ideology and urbanism all contribute to intolerance. He found education, age, and political ideology were the most decisive factors affecting the positions of the whites.

Other studies have disagreed on the importance of age and education. Some researchers found increasing education was associated with decreasing tolerance of the political right groups

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[7]J.J. Sigal and Morton Weinfeld, *Trauma and Rebirth,* Praeger, New York, 1989.
[8]Kirsten Monroe, *The Heart of Altruism*, Princeton University Press, 1996.
[9]Stouffer, *Communism, Conformity, and Civil Liberties.*
[10]Nicholas O. Alozie, 'Political Tolerance Hypotheses and White Opposition to a Martin Luther King Holiday in Arizona,' *The Social Science Journal,* Vol. 32, no. 1, 1995, pp. 1-16.

and had no systematic effect on the tolerance of political left wing groups.[11] In fact, Sullivan, et al.[12] found that the increase of tolerance linked to education was illusory.

Further complicating the question of the importance of education Bobo[13] found that the effects of education occurred regardless of political ideology, trust of people and feelings of disapproval of target group and without regard to the left or right wing stance of groups. He concluded that education is important for tolerance of the 'merely disliked' groups but unimportant for the tolerance of 'extraordinarily disliked' groups. This meshes with Shamir[14] who found that those with higher education are not always more tolerant.

Moore[15] found that intolerance towards out-groups is influenced by religiosity, the salience of national civic identity, national security issues and political ideology. She found strong relationships among political ideology, class, ethnic origin, religiosity, and education.[16] She stated that religiosity influences the salience of national and civic identities. They in turn influence specific and general political attitudes, which influence the degree of intolerance. Her research concluded that being religious strengthens national (Jewish) identity and weakens civic (Israeli) identity, strengthens support for security issues, weakens support for democratic issues, and is associated with right-wing political ideology.

Corbett and Corbett[17] wrote that the 1990-1994 NORC GSS survey examined relationships between a series of political variables and three religious variables; religious identifications, biblical literalism, and religious commitment. All were found to be important predictors of political identification and attitudes.

[11]Allan L. McCutcheon, 'A Latent Class Analysis of Tolerance for Nonconformity in the American Public,' *Public Opinion Quarterly,* Vol 49, Issue 4, Winter, 1985 pp. 474-488; Alozie, 'Political Tolerance Hypotheses and White Opposition to a Martin Luther King Holiday in Arizona,' pp. 1-16.
[12]Sullivan, Marcus, Feldman, and Piereson, 'The Sources of Political Tolerance: A Multivariate Analysis,' pp. 92-106;
[13]Lawrence Bobo, Frederick C Licari, 'Education and Political Tolerance: Testing the Effects of Cognitive Sophistication and Target Group Effect,' *Public Opinion Quarterly,* Vol. 53, Issue 3, Autumn, 1989, pp. 285-308.
[14]Michal Shamir, 'Political Intolerance Among Masses and Elites in Israel: A Reevaluation of the Elitist Theory of Democracy,' *The Journal of Politics,* Vol. 53, November, 1992, pp. 1018-43.
[15]Dahlia Moore, 'Intolerance of Others among Palestinian and Jewish Students in Israel,' *Sociological Inquiry,* Vol. 70, No. 3, Summer, 2000, pp. 280-312.
[16]Ibid.
[17]Michael Corbett and Julie Mitchell Corbett, *Politics and Religion in the United States,* Garland Publishing, Inc. New York, 1999.

Others have specifically explored the religious dimension as a contributing factor of intolerance. Eisinga found that the link between church membership and prejudice could be explained by localism and authoritarianism.[18]

However, not all researchers think that social/demographic variables will be predictors of politically intolerant individuals. Scholars have linked altruism and tolerance. Altruistic individuals are tolerant. Altruistic individuals believe in the sanctity of life and a sense of shared humanity. Ethical political attitudes such as tolerance come from individuals' view of the world, their identities, the nature of their belief systems, and the degree to which they are able to empathize with others. These attitudes do not appear to come from socio/demographic factors.[19]

What role does identity play in determining who is tolerant and who is not? Studies show that personality plays a major role. Knutson[20] relied on a conceptualization of the personality developed by Maslow, the hierarchy of needs. Human personality is dependent on the satisfaction of various needs, along a continuum with 'concern for self' at one end and 'concern with self in relation to one's environment' at the other end. She speculated that abstract ideas such as tolerance are unlikely to receive much attention from self-centered persons. Thus building on Knutson, we may expect that survivors who are 'other' directed people will be found to be tolerant.

Another key aspect is expressed as trust towards others. Lifton[21] observed a process of reformulation of world view among victims and survivors of the atomic bomb in Japan. This reformulative process is an effort to build a bridge between oneself and the world, reestablishing three essential elements of psychic functioning: A sense of belonging, a sense of meaning, and an orientation toward the future. Janoff-Bulman[22] proposed that during a trauma the world view of individuals can be shattered. She wrote that in the aftermath of traumatic events, victims experience their own vulnerability. Trust in others is disturbed. She saw this as manifesting itself in political attitudes as a deep, almost paranoid distrust of government and authority and as an absence of trust in and tolerance towards others. Researchers have assumed that political attitudes reflecting trust or mistrust and future orientation are part of the reformulative belief

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[18] Rob Eisinga, and Albert Felling, 'Religious Belief, Church Involvement, and Ethocentrism in the Netherlands,' *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion,* March, Vol. 29, Issue 1, 1990 pp.54-76.
[19] Monroe, *The Heart of Altruism.*
[20] Jeanne N. Knutson, 'Personality in the Study of Politics,' in Jeanne N. Knutson, ed., *Handbook of Political Psychology,* Jossey-Bass Publishers, San Francisco, 1973, pp. 28-56.
[21] Robert Lifton, *Death in Life, Survivors of Hiroshima*, Random House, New York, 1967.
[22] Ronnie Janoff-Bulman,, *Shattered Assumptions: Towards a New Psychology of Trauma*, Free Press, 1992.

structure of Holocaust survivors.[23] Accordingly, world view, defined by trust/mistrust and optimism/pessimism as well as a belief in the equal worth of all individuals regardless of their race, religion, culture, ethnicity or gender will be a significant indicator of who is tolerant and who is intolerant. Suedfeld in a recent study of Erikson's 'components of a healthy personality' found that while survivors exhibited favorable resolutions for most Eriksonian crises, on the mistrust versus trust scale, mistrust predominated among survivors.[24]

The political psychology literature has in the past linked the concept of the authoritarian personality to intolerance. Adorno, and others in *The Authoritarian Personality* studies[25], looked at psychological factors leading to intolerance. These studies found that the interrelationships of the subjects with their parents and sibling were of paramount importance in determining their future political activities. According to Adorno, tolerant individuals demonstrated good psychological health and intolerant individuals exhibited poor psychological functioning. Others also found disturbances in interpersonal relationships for intolerant individuals in childhood.[26] Though Adorno's methodology has been criticized by later studies, the link between authoritarian personalities and tolerance remains.[27]

In addition, some report that the best predictor of intolerance is dogmatism, i.e. the more closed minded persons are the more intolerant they are.[28] Others state that the most consistent finding links low self-esteem to political intolerance.[29] Low self-esteem may enhance the tendency to project a person's inadequacies onto hated scapegoats.[30]

How do these categories of political, psychological and social/demographic factors interact to lead to intolerance in individuals? To gain clarity about the factors that lead to intolerance this paper analyzed interviews of Holocaust survivors. Holocaust survivors actually experienced an extreme form of intolerance directed towards them and suffered greatly as a

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[23]Carmil and Breznitz, 'Personal Trauma and World View -- Are Extremely Stressful Experiences Related to Political Attitudes, Religious Beliefs, and Future Orientation?,' pp. 393-405.

[24]Peter Suedfeld, Erin Sorano, Donna Louis McMurtry, Helen Paterson, Tara L. Weiszbeck, and Robert Krell, 'Erikson's "Components of a Healthy Personality" Among Holocaust Survivors,' Unpublished manuscript.

[25]T.W. Adorno, Else Frenkel-Brunswik, Daniel J. Levinson, R. Nevitt-Sanford, *The Authoritarian Personality,* W.W. Norton and Co., New York, 1950.

[26]Eugene Hightower, 'Psychosocial Characteristics of Subtle and Blatant Racists as Compared to Tolerant Individuals,' *Journal of Clinical Psychology,* Vol. 53, June, 1997, pp. 369-374.

[27]Sullivan, Piereson and Marcus, *Political Tolerance and American Democracy.*

[28]James L. Gibson, 'The Political Consequences of Intolerance: Cultural Conformity and Political Freedom,' *The American Political Science Review,* Vol. 86, issue 2, June, 1992, pp. 338-356.

[29]Sullivan, Marcus, Feldman, and Piereson, 'The Sources of Political Tolerance: A Multivariate Analysis,' pp. 92-106.

[30]Ibid.

result. What do the political attitudes of tolerance look like in survivors who were themselves victimized as a result of the actions of intolerant individuals? By studying the lives of Holocaust survivors who migrated to the United States shortly after World War II we can gain a greater understanding of the dynamics that lead to intolerance in individuals. Why is this so? One would expect that many survivors would, based on their Holocaust experiences, exhibit intolerance against their political enemies, those who harmed them and their families during World War II. However, analysis of the data gathered on survivors from the Transcending Trauma Project, reveals that while some survivors do have these intolerant attitudes, many do not.

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The Transcending Trauma Project of Council for Relationships has, for the past several years, undertaken the analysis of over 90 Holocaust survivors and their families through in-depth interviews. One of the objectives of the project has been to track and analyze the political attitudes of survivors towards other groups to understand their post-war coping. The overall goal of the Transcending Trauma project is to study post-war coping and adaptation. The project has found that post-war coping and adaption is mediated by the quality of family relationships, belief and faith systems, ethnic/religious identities of the survivors; their communication styles, and the impact of their Holocaust experiences.

For the purpose of this study, "Holocaust survivors" are defined as Jewish individuals who lived in Europe and were in danger after 1933 and during World War II because they resided in countries controlled by Nazi Germany.

The project interviewed almost 300 individuals who were representative of a cross-section of religious beliefs, political affiliation, countries of origin, and socio-economic backgrounds. Of these, 92 are survivors. The rest of the interviews in the project represent children, American born spouses, and grandchildren.

Lists of survivors from membership organizations were avoided in order to eliminate selection bias. Instead the project actively sought to interview individuals who were unaffiliated with survivor organizations. This was accomplished by using social connections as a way of networking. Lofland[31] notes that it is typical for outside researchers to gain access to settings or persons through contacts they have already established. He identifies this as a major principle

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[31]J. Lofland, and L. Lofland, *Analyzing Social Settings: A Guide to Qualitative Observation and Analysis.,* Wadsworth Publishing Co., Belmont California, 1995.

involved in "snowball" or "chain-referral" sampling: A method which yields a study sample through referrals made among people who either have or know of others who have some characteristics that are of research interest.

The interviewers used a semi-structured interview format. The semi-structured interview questions were based on a series on content areas such as family of origin, war experiences, liberation, immigration, and life after the war in the U.S. These content areas were based upon the earlier work done by the study group and the pilot project, and then further clarified by the research team during the developmental phase of the project.

The interviews included the war years, but there was an emphasis on pre-war and post-war experiences in an effort to gather broader information. Pre-war information included such topics as family of origin demographics, description of relationships, religious identity, family values, and any significant life experiences before the war especially pre-war experiences of anti-Semitism. Post-war information included such topics as mourning the losses, finding other survivors, emigration to the United States, marriage, children, religious identity, faith, memories, orientation toward life, and strategies for coping and adapting. Sample questions are: 'To what extent did you trust your community, your Jewish community, America and the World?' 'To what extent do you trust now?' 'Does the Holocaust affect your political views?' 'What do you think the impact of the Holocaust will be on future generations?' 'How have you made sense out of life: Predictability? Randomness?' 'Would you describe yourself as hopeful or pessimistic, trusting or suspicious?'

Regarding intolerance in survivors the question thus arises, 'Why do some survivors hold intolerant attitudes towards the ethnic groups that were their political enemies while others who seemingly suffered the same experiences do not?'

Why do some survivors state when queried, as this concentration camp survivor did, that:

I can never be a friend with a German person, never. I can never trust a German person. As far as Gentile people, even up to this day there is a division. I cannot, I am friendly to them but I cannot really be a good friend to a Gentile person. I don't think I could. I could not. Because even the Gentile person stood by. Everyone stood by and let us be killed. And you know what I'll tell you, G-d Forbid should anything happen to our Jewish people in the United States, let's see how many of your Gentile

friends would stand up for you. Let's see how many. And I can guarantee you none of them would. None of them. I cannot forgive the people. I cannot forgive humanity that they stood by and let those six million Jews be destroyed, and burned, and gassed and shot. And nobody did anything about it. Nobody. How can people, how can nations stand by and not do anything? Where was the world? Where was consciousness? Where was everybody? What happened? The fires were just burning and nobody was there to do anything about it. So when you have Gentile friends, it is okay to have them but believe me, G-d forbid should anything happen here they would not stand up for you. They wouldn't. They don't believe in that. So you are on your own wherever you are, especially as a Jew.[32]

While others, such as this survivor who lived in a forest for many months under horrific conditions, state:

I harbor no hate against anyone. I realize that people have behaved very cruelly toward the Jews, but I realize that it's not because each and everyone of them is a cruel individual, it's because they were taught from childhood to hate Jews, and these are the effects from teaching hatred[...]This is a result, and that's why I try to always emphasize, when I talk to them, they have to stop, even in their own families. When they hear a derogatory joke made about, whether it's about Jews, or Blacks, or any other ethnic group, they should not just sit and laugh along and have fun, but it has to be stopped and explained that there is no such thing as I'm better than somebody else.[33]

This paper is a preliminary investigation of some of the factors that led to intolerance in Holocaust survivors. Intolerance in survivors is often expressed in language of negative feelings towards Germans and Poles. Thus the paper divides the research population into three groups. There are those who consistently express negative feelings or feelings of hatred towards German and Polish people. They are in the intolerant group. There are those who express negative

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[32]Survivor WC Interview, Transcending Trauma Project.
[33]Survivor JA Interview, Transcending Trauma Project.

feelings towards German and Polish people but who temper this with expressions of tolerance towards minority groups such as Blacks and Hispanics. They are in the mid continuum group. And there are those who never express hatred or negative feelings towards any group, even towards Germans and Poles. They comprise the tolerant survivors.

This paper discusses preliminary trends based on an analysis of about one third of the total number of survivors who participated in the Transcending Trauma Project, looking at many but not all of the key variables. The data from these interviews form a continuum from intolerant to tolerant survivors. Figure 1 focuses on a subset of these interviews in order to clearly identify which factors are meaningful.

Figure 1 reveals the patterns that differ among the three groups. The world view of intolerant survivors differs from the other two groups but in unexpected ways. In this analysis world view is comprised of three categories, trust/mistrust, optimism/pessimism, and altruistic behavior. Survivors who are intolerant, for the most part, mistrust others outside of their own religious/ethnic group. They express this in language that says, 'I don't think we are liked. I don't think they like the Jews. We are not liked here, in the United States either.' On this issue, survivors in the mid continuum group also mistrust outsiders. And, as we would expect survivors who are tolerant lean towards trusting others.

A surprise is the fact that the majority of survivors regardless of which group they are in, call themselves optimists. The quotes convey similar sentiments. A survivor from the intolerant group remarks, 'It's just my nature. I 'm not pessimistic. I don't foresee anything bad[...]I hope for the best and I'm optimistic about the future.'[34]

A key difference in world view among the three categories is in reported altruistic behavior. Every survivor in the mid continuum group, and in the tolerant group told us stories about their behavior which reflects their commitment to helping others, often even in perilous situations. Clearly, survivors who are tolerant are 'other' directed people who in the words of Kristin Monroe, in *TheAltruistic Personality*, believe that the sanctity of life and sense of shared humanity is supreme. This view she calls universalistic. People who hold this perspective are labeled as John Donne's people, from the poem *No Man Is an Island*.

Prior to beginning the analysis it seemed that on the intolerance/tolerance spectrum the experience of anti-Semitism, pre and post war, would make a difference as would the experience

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[34]Survivor SR Interview, Transcending Trauma Project.

of receiving acts of kindness from Gentiles during the war. In actuality, none of these factors differ across the groups. In each group, acts of kindness were prevalent. Moreover, almost all the survivors experienced anti-Semitism before the war and after the war.

Family relationships are crucial to determining how the survivors conduct their post-war lives, both the pre-war family of origin and the post-war nuclear families that are established after liberation. The Transcending Trauma Project has found that post-war coping and adaption is mediated by the quality of family relationships, and in fact, the differences in the three groups of survivors, vis-a-vis intolerance, show up in the categories of factors that relate to family relationships.

The first category where these three groups differ is in messages from the family. Survivors report receiving messages from close family members, often parents but sometimes a sibling or grandparent that they use to guide their current behavior. These messages may have been given to them just prior to the war, in the normal course of growing up; during the war; or after the war. These guiding messages from family members are only present in survivors who are tolerant and in the survivors who, while expressing hatred towards their former oppressors express tolerance towards other ethnic and racial groups. Some examples of these messages are: As one survivor commented,

> And my parents were able, after the war, to give me that comfort and strength to be able to turn that hate that I felt against the whole world, and especially all those Christians who have collaborated with the Nazis, to turn it around in a positive force. I had many discussions with him [her father] after the war about hating those people, and he always stopped me. He never let it go any further. And he said, "I know it's terrible to suffer. But will you be happier if you will turn into the type of individual that have hated us?"[35]

Another survivor stated,

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[35]Survivor JA Interview, Transcending Trauma Project.

We were taught early on in our lives to know that we were good children - that the hatred of the Jews was not a personal hatred. I never heard from my mother or father any messages of hate towards any other religion or nationality.[36]

Another striking difference among the three groups is in the category of unresolved mourning. Unresolved mourning occurs in survivors who have not, even at this late date, reconciled themselves to the loss of a loved one they were particularly close to. The violent, unexpected, and swift severing of ties between the survivors and a close family member sometimes has meant that the survivors not only still mourn that particular loss but let the loss govern or impact on their daily lives. Survivors who are tolerant do not exhibit unresolved mourning. They acknowledge the losses but their philosophy often is I mourn that person who I was close to but life goes on.

A third remarkable difference, especially between intolerant and tolerant survivors, is in family relationships. This paper looks at pre-war relationships between the survivors and their families of origin. In the literature, authoritarian individuals who are often intolerant tend to exhibit poor psychological functioning and disturbed interpersonal relationships in childhood. All intolerant survivors are not authoritarian personalities. Yet what is significant is that for the most part, survivors who are intolerant have, in their interviews, when talking about their parents and siblings prior to the war, described troubled or difficult relationships. As figure 1 moves from intolerant to tolerant survivors, the reporting of the pre-war family of origin relationships improves, to the point that all the tolerant survivors in this small sample described good pre-war family of origin relationships.

In summary, a preliminary analysis of some of the data reveals the importance of the following factors in determining what comprises the continuum from intolerance to tolerance in Holocaust survivors: Perceived threat; unresolved mourning; and poor relationships with family of origin characterize intolerant survivors; altruistic behavior; messages from the families of origin; and good relationships with families of origin characterize tolerant survivors. Further analysis of the entire population of survivor interviews from the Transcending Trauma Project will also focus on nuclear family relationships, socio/demographic factors such as age, education, religiosity, and gender, and personality factors such as low self-esteem, self

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[36]Survivor DG Interview, Transcending Trauma Project.

centeredness, and close-mindedness, to see what role they play in creating the continuum from intolerance to tolerance in individuals.

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