

Political Tolerance and Intolerance: Using Qualitative Interviews to Understand the Attitudes of Holocaust Survivors

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Abstract The attitudes of victims toward their perpetrators have not been well documented. In examining qualitative interviews of Holocaust survivors, survivors evidenced three different political attitudes. Survivors were intolerant, limited-tolerant, or tolerant toward the perpetrators. Analyzing the political factors of perceived threat, worldview, strength of in-group identity, political ideology, and voting behavior revealed the differences among the three groups. Only intolerant and limited-tolerant survivors perceived the world as a threatening place. Some intolerant and limited-intolerant survivors exhibited anger and acts of revenge toward the perpetrators and the groups they represented, while only tolerant survivors targeted their altruistic behavior to help non-Jews. Finally, more survivors in the tolerant group hid during the war than in the other two groups. They were also more likely to have survived with one or both parents and/or other key family members, which may facilitate the transmission of messages of tolerance to the survivor.

Keywords Political tolerance · Political intolerance · Holocaust survivor · Perceived threat · Worldview · In-group identity

Introduction

The attitudes of the victims toward their perpetrators have not been well documented.¹ Using data from the Transcending Trauma Project (TTP), a study of three generations of Holocaust survivor families, this article addresses this issue.

¹ Robinson and Metzger (2000, p. 1); Robinson (1994, p. 19).

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A startling pattern emerged from the Transcending Trauma interviews.² When the question, “Did the experience of the Holocaust affect your political views toward other groups?” was asked, a surprising number of survivors clearly stated that they did not harbor any hatred toward the national groups that perpetrated crimes against them and their families. Regardless of the crimes perpetrated against them and perhaps irrespective of their experiences during the Holocaust, many survivors in the sample were able to separate out their emotional responses toward the perpetrators of the specific crimes against them from their views of all Germans or Poles or other groups that collaborated with the German Nazi government. An example of this response from a survivor follows:

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 every one 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....³

On the other hand, many survivors expressed hatred toward their perpetrators and the entire national groups that participated in the destruction of their families and their lives. This is not an unexpected response even now, more than 50 years after the Holocaust, given what the survivors experienced. An example of a survivor with this viewpoint is:

I can never be a friend with a German person, never. I can never trust a German person.... The Gentile person stood by ... let us be killed. ...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.... And I can guarantee you none of them would.... 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.... Where was everybody ...? The fires were just burning and nobody was there to do anything about it.⁴

These diametrically opposed quotes reflect totally different views of humanity after extreme trauma. This study will examine the experience of those surviving persecution to see how it influences the political attitudes of tolerance and intolerance toward perpetrators of genocide.

Understanding factors that contribute toward tolerance is important because it gives us greater knowledge about important political attitudes within the political life of the community, nation, or world. The geopolitical conflicts around the world that have involved inter-ethnic brutality and political cruelty are numerous and span the globe. The attempts to rebuild these societies, after the hostilities have stopped,

² In his latest research on South Africa, James L. Gibson concluded that intolerance is generated at very low levels of perceived threat, and thus one would expect intolerance to be pervasive in a group of individuals who had suffered political persecution. See Gibson (2004, p. 288).

³ Survivor JA [pseud.], interview by TTP, interview transcript, Transcending Trauma Project, November 17, 1994.

⁴ Survivor WC [pseud.], interview by TTP, interview transcript, Transcending Trauma Project, February 4, 1994.

cannot succeed on the foundation of inter-ethnic or inter-group hatred. Rebuilding a society shattered by inter-group warfare depends on the victims' capacity to differentiate between the actual perpetrators and the perpetrators' national or ethnic groups. It also depends on the victims' capacity to view the world as a non-threatening place. Tolerance facilitates cooperation in the rebuilding process. Intolerance leads to separation and avoidance, and in the extreme, the long-term desire for revenge. Encouraging tolerance and understanding how tolerance is fostered are thus critical to ending inter-group conflicts.

Political intolerance is a "natural" response to one's political enemies.⁵ Thus, we expect that survivors will, until their dying days, hate the Germans and the Poles who destroyed their families, their livelihoods, their homes, their lives, and their communities. Yet, to a significant group of survivors interviewed for the TTP, this response is the complete opposite of what they believe and how they behave. We can understand the intolerant survivors, the "natural" response to what has happened to them, but have trouble accepting or understanding the response of the tolerant survivor.

To begin this inquiry, it is important to know what the literature says about the responses of victim groups toward their victimizers and toward other groups after the victimization has ceased. However, the literature on this topic is sparse. Only two studies have explored the feelings of survivors toward their perpetrators. In a 2000 study, most of the interviewees expressed intense negative feelings toward the Germans and to a lesser degree toward the people among whom they had lived during the war. Some of them revealed fantasies of revenge, which were not expressed in an earlier 1994 study.⁶

In the field of political science, political tolerance for many years was studied under normal political situations and by posing theoretical questions in surveys to Americans and others. The questions explored revolved around, "What would you do if a communist, Ku Klux Klan person, gay person, etc., wanted to give a public speech, teach a class in your town, or engage in some other civic activity?" Most of this earlier work on intolerance was quantitative and looked at group norms. Consequently, the need to go beyond the numbers into the underlying reasons for intolerant attitudes is critical.⁷ The tolerance that the literature has studied is not quite the same problem as that of examining the tolerance of victims of religio-ethnic crimes such as those experienced by Holocaust survivors; neither is the study of group norms the same as studying individuals.

The Literature on the Political Determinants of Tolerance—The Early Studies

Past research on tolerance gives us a framework from which to begin addressing the question of the impact of persecution on political attitudes. The earliest literature

⁵ Raymond Duch and Gibson (1992, p. 239), quoting Willhoite (1977, pp. 667–684).

⁶ Robinson and Metzger (2000, p. 3).

⁷ Sullivan et al. (1982, p. 251); Caspi and Seligson (1983, p. 400); Mueller (1988, p. 3).

looked at political tolerance as one-dimensional, rather than as a multidimensional syndrome of beliefs and values.⁸ It defined political intolerance as the expressed desire to deny basic civil rights such as rights of speech and assembly to certain groups.⁹ This early body of literature looked at political factors regarding intolerance and focused (1) on understanding tolerance in relation to particular political groups and (2) on understanding tolerance as accepting certain abstract norms of democratic procedure. In these studies, political tolerance, defined as a set of attitudes not of actions, is the willingness to permit the expression of ideas or interests as opposed to one's own.¹⁰ This definition thus implies that politically intolerant individuals are unwilling to permit others to express ideas that are contrary to theirs and unwilling to give others rights to the same civil liberties as they have.

These earlier studies on intolerance focused on trying to determine the best way to quantify the measurement of intolerance. Sullivan and others postulated that allowing survey participants to choose their own least-liked group generated a more accurate measurement of intolerance. Yet, others like Gibson¹¹ and Mueller¹² have criticized Sullivan's research. These researchers concluded that although Sullivan's strategy of measurement responds to a clear flaw in earlier research, it might mask important characteristics of political tolerance by looking only at attitudes toward a least-liked group. Beatty and Oliver found that tolerance might not be as much of an issue or as group dependent as Sullivan, Piereson, and others suggested.¹³ They postulated that religious theology, intolerant leadership cues, and a history of persecution for religious beliefs may interact to create distinctive denominational patterns of tolerance.¹⁴ A history of persecution may encourage tolerance of other groups.¹⁵ This article explores that premise in order to identify what political factors encourage tolerance of other groups. In addition, the earlier research designs focused on relatively abstract and context-free questions and did not necessarily generate successful predictions on whether individuals in real life circumstances will tolerate a specific group acting within a specific context.¹⁶

Broadening the Scope of the Research

As a result, some researchers have moved away from the earlier narrow exploration and definition of political tolerance. Their research has begun to look at tolerance in other ways that relate more to real political conditions, real political experiences, and

⁸ Gibson and Bingham (1982, p. 604).

⁹ Stouffer (1967); Gibson (1992, p. 562).

¹⁰ Sullivan et al. (1981, p. 93); Gibson (1992, p. 562); Wilson (1994, p. 553).

¹¹ Gibson (1986, p. 285).

¹² Mueller (1988, p. 2).

¹³ Beatty and Walter (1984, p. 327).

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 328.

¹⁵ Ibid., p. 328; Sigal and Weinfeld (1989, p. 137).

¹⁶ Marcus et al. (1995, p. 9).

how people actually behave in their lives. In one such move, Davis¹⁷ noted that black political intolerance is used as an emancipatory strategy to protect blacks from groups who directly threaten their physical and psychological security, allowing them to distinguish between everyday racists and bigots, and also the anxiety and fear generated by the Klan. This study follows Davis's work in showing that the narrow application of political tolerance in the earlier literature does not apply in all situations and with all groups. In order to illustrate a broadened application of tolerance, this study focuses on four political factors identified in the literature as important components of tolerance: perceived threat, worldview, in-group identity, and political ideology. Moreover, this article looks beyond the surveys to study the differences in how individuals who are tolerant and those who are intolerant define these components. Identifying these differences helps us better understand the political factors that influence tolerance or intolerance in an individual who has suffered through persecution.

Research on Political Factors—Perceived Threat

Intolerance may be triggered by threats, real or perceived. In fact, many studies stated that one of the strongest predictors of political intolerance is the perception that one's political opponent is threatening.¹⁸ In perceiving an ethnic or political group as a threat, individuals will evaluate the political strength of and the danger posed by the dissident groups. Because such perceptions are subjective, they will be affected by psychological factors.¹⁹

The early research studies on this factor looked at symbolic threats, not real ones. Chanley's research tried to rectify this by looking at situations that affect a respondent's family or community. She found a difference between support for democratic rights in an abstract general situation and support for rights in a specific known context. She and others concluded that tolerance declines as the perception of threat increases in a given situation.²⁰

Threat has been defined as a multidimensional factor consisting of sociotropic threat and egocentric threat.²¹ Sociotropic threat is defined as "a generalized anxiety and sense of threat to society, the country as a whole or the regions where one lives"²² and a threat to one's community, group, or way of life. Egocentric threat is a "threat to oneself or one's family." Many American Jews, as in Davis's research on Blacks, view threat as sociotropic, as a danger to their community and way of life. As a community, they look at the world through glasses influenced by a historical memory of centuries of persecution and pogroms. They are vigilant about

¹⁷ Davis (1995, p. 1).

¹⁸ Beit-Hallahmi and Argyle (1997, p. 220); Gibson (1998, p. 833; 1992, p. 570); Sullivan et al. (1981, p. 99); Canetti-Nisim et al. (2008, p. 90).

¹⁹ Sullivan et al. (1981, p. 99); Quillian (1995, p. 591).

²⁰ Chanley (1994, p. 344); Giles and Hertz (1994, p. 317); Shamir and Sullivan (1983, p. 916).

²¹ Gibson (2006, p. 22).

²² Davis and Silver (2004, p. 34).

anti-Semitism. Added to this perspective is the survivor's post-Holocaust view of the world. Holocaust survivors' perceptions of danger and insecurity come not only from a historical memory of persecution, but also from their actual experiences in World War II. Their perceptions of threat are based on a past that contained sociotropic and egocentric threats, one that not only threatened but also actually destroyed their communities and way of life in addition to their families and the lives of people who were important to them. The perception of threat that informs their political attitude is one based on sociotropic threats, a generalized feeling of anxiety that their community, group, or way of life is still threatened by the same forces that attacked them in World War II. Given this framework, what explains the survivors who do not frame their views toward other ethnic groups in terms of perceived threats and fears of survival? The data from the Transcending Trauma interviews will begin to answer this question.

Group Identity as a Factor

Gibson has looked more carefully at the question of political tolerance within real situations. In a recent article, Gibson found that strong group identity is not related to intolerance.²³ He concluded that the lack of connection between strong in-group identity and intolerance poses a major challenge for the Social Identity Theory and requires an extensive reworking of the major processes that comprise the theory.²⁴ Gibson and Gouws also said that preexisting threat perceptions strongly dominate perceptions of the context, rendering impotent the "facts" of the dispute itself. In South Africa, where inter-group animosities are so strong, the actual situations and experiences matter little in deciding whether or not to tolerate a hated political enemy.²⁵ Hurwitz and Mondak called this discriminatory intolerance, directed at a specific actor. They noted that the antecedents of discriminatory intolerance are different from that of generic intolerance; that is, it is dependent on a reaction to a specific group, not a blanket objection to a particular act regardless of who commits the act.²⁶ It is clear that most Holocaust survivors fall into the category of discriminatory intolerance. As recently as the year 2000, Gibson and Gouws noted that they do not have effective models of why some feel threatened and why others in similar circumstances do not.²⁷

Worldview as a Factor

One aspect of worldview is trust. Lifton observed a process of reformulation of worldview among victims and survivors of the atomic bomb in Japan. This

²³ Gibson (2006, p. 667).

²⁴ Gibson (2004, p. 297).

²⁵ Gibson and Gouws (2001, p. 1067).

²⁶ Mondak and Hurwitz (1998, p. 315).

²⁷ Gibson and Gouws (2000, p. 291).

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 meeting, and an orientation toward the future.²⁸ Janoff-Bulman proposed that during a trauma, the worldview of individuals could 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 toward others.²⁹

Researchers have assumed that political attitudes reflecting trust or mistrust and future orientation are part of the reformulative belief structure of Holocaust survivors.³⁰ This belief structure of survivors, defined as their worldview, comprises the values of trust/mistrust, optimism/pessimism, and altruism/self-centeredness. A few studies on Holocaust survivors and their worldview exist. Specifically, they looked to find if their worldview contributes to tolerance. They included, in the definition of worldview, attitudes toward the future expressed as optimism or pessimism, trust or mistrust toward others and compassion toward others.³¹

One such study, by Carmil and Breznitz, interviewed Holocaust survivors and their offspring; and non-Holocaust controls and their offspring in Israel. They found that differences in belief in a better future were found to be significant. Many of the survivors, 42%, held an optimistic view of the worldview, believing in a better future compared to 28% of the controls. Thus, Carmil and Breznitz concluded that the Holocaust had a major effect on political attitudes and future orientation.³² Peter 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 the survivors.³³

Sigal and Weinfeld also looked at tolerance in Holocaust survivors, asking the question, "What is the impact of the Holocaust on survivors' political beliefs?" They hypothesized that those affected by the Holocaust would be more opposed to the principles of Nazism and thus more committed to democratic beliefs and civil liberties, and more tolerant of minorities. Survivors would, as former victims, have more compassion for other victims, and they and their descendents might undertake actions that would prevent a repetition of the victimization they suffered.³⁴

Because previous research already expanded the definition of tolerance, this study does the same, creating new definitions that arise from the language of the survivors' interviews. Tolerance in Holocaust survivors is the capacity to put up with and endure associations with individuals or groups, specifically the perpetrators and the ethnic groups that they belong to.

²⁸ Lifton (1967, p. 576).

²⁹ Janoff-Bulman (1983, p. 1).

³⁰ Carmil and Breznitz (1991, p. 394).

³¹ Ibid.

³² Ibid., p. 403.

³³ Suedfeld et al. (2005, p. 238).

³⁴ Sigal and Weinfeld (1989, p. 137).

Methodology

This study is a secondary analysis of the data from TTP, conducted under the auspices of the Council for Relationships in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Coping and adaptation after extreme trauma was the focus of the original study: it used semi-structured interviews in which the survivors discussed many different topics, including their attitudes toward their perpetrators. After the devastating experience of the Holocaust, it was inevitable that the survivors would have strong feelings toward their perpetrators. Their reactions were discussed in the course of interviews that explored how the survivors coped with the aftermath of the Holocaust and adapted to life in a new country. Attitudes of tolerance and intolerance were often revealed in the course of discussing post-war adaptation. This is not an unusual occurrence in secondary qualitative research relying on grounded research methodology.³⁵ In fact, it is in the nature of grounded research that the interrelationships of significant issues are revealed and that new questions arise from the data. These observations spur additional areas of investigation. The life histories that comprise the data of TTP are rich, detailed guided conversations that yielded complex areas of inquiry through the analysis process.

This study relies on several instruments utilizing different methodologies to explore the political factors that contribute to intolerance and tolerance in survivors. The primary source of information for the political factors comes from the TTP qualitative interviews. As narrative stories of the survivors' lives, they contain the words the survivors use to describe their attitudes. In order to capture these words and the political factors contributing to tolerance revealed in the interviews, this study relied on coding through a qualitative computer-coding program. Additional information on the political attitudes as well as religious beliefs and identities was obtained from the Transmission of Jewish Identity Survey, hereafter called the JIS, and the Demographic Coding Form, a form used to collect data for an SPSS analysis of the demographic characteristics of the TTP sample.

Due to the availability of a large dataset and the ability to take the data from several instruments to explore multiple factors, this study utilized a comparative design. The comparative design analyzed political factors to see how they are related to three groups of survivors holding different types of attitudes of tolerance, tolerant, limited-intolerant, and intolerant attitudes. Tolerant survivors do not hold hostile attitudes toward persons on the basis of their ethnic, religious, or political group affiliation. Limited-intolerant³⁶ survivors confine their intolerance to the perpetrators or the specific groups representing the perpetrators who persecuted them. They otherwise hold tolerant attitudes toward many other groups. Intolerant survivors express a more generalized hatred: first, toward the perpetrators and the groups representing the perpetrators who destroyed their families, livelihoods, and homes during and right after World War II and continuing to the present time; and second, toward ethnic, racial, and religious groups outside of their own group.

³⁵ Lindsey (1998, p. 245).

³⁶ This category of limited-intolerant speaks to the question posed in the field about intolerance, whether it is broadly or narrowly based in scope as discussed in Mondak and Sanders (2003, p. 497).

Out of 95 survivor interviewees in the original TTP study, 18 were selected to be in the sub-sample of this study. These 18 were chosen based on the following criteria: their views on tolerance were thorough, detailed, and clearly stated in the interview;³⁷ their interviews were complete documents discussing pre-war, during, and post-war years according to the semi-structured interview guide; and they had completed the Jewish Identity Survey (JIS).³⁸ The demographics of the 18 cases were not substantially different from the rest of the 95 TTP survivors; nor were they different from the demographics of the 2000 National Jewish Population Survey's special report on survivors.³⁹

The definitions for each category of tolerance grew out of the words of the survivors in their interviews. Interviews placed in the tolerant category contained language such as "color blind," "harboring no hate toward other groups," "respect and love for everyone," "tolerance," or "lack of prejudice." The interviews in the limited-intolerant category contained phrases that targeted one group for hatred but not others, expressed contradicting views of tolerance and prejudice, or talked about respect and love for all people but declared an aversion to buying German products. Those in the intolerant group expressed a range of negative attitudes. They ranged from ideas of superiority—that Jews are better than other groups—to feelings or acts of revenge. Intolerant survivors' hatred toward their perpetrators often manifested itself as not tolerating being in a room with people of the same ethnic group as their perpetrators or working with them or hearing their language. Finally, intolerant survivors often labeled all members of the perpetrator group then and now as anti-Semitic.

Tracking the Political Factors

This article only tracks key political factors identified in the literature, which could possibly have an impact on tolerance through examining the statements of the survivors.⁴⁰ These factors are the presence of symbolic or real threats and worldview comprising four aspects. They are mistrust/trust, pessimism/optimism, self-directed/other-directed, and altruism. In addition, acts of revenge were coded separately, as were acts of kindness by non-Jews either during or after the war.

³⁷ The definitions of tolerance resulted from the coding of the survivor interviews through the N4 qualitative computer coding program. Any statement about tolerance or intolerance in the interviews was highlighted and coded into two overlapping categories called "people, groups" and "tolerance." Interviews lacking any statements on tolerance, or where the statements were so vague that a position on tolerance could not be clearly discerned, were eliminated from the sub-sample.

³⁸ Only 50% of the original sample of survivors completed the JIS. The JIS has information about the religious observance of the survivors and also about their political beliefs. Matching the completed JIS forms to interviews that talked about tolerance yielded 18 subjects.

³⁹ Kotler-Berkowitz et al. (2004).

⁴⁰ Briefly summarizing the demographic findings reveals that in the eighteen cases studied, no discernable pattern was found regarding education, religion, country of origin, and socio-economic status. The only demographic characteristic that differed in the three groups was gender, with males representing five out of six intolerant survivors and no tolerant survivors. A more detailed discussion of these and other demographic factors can be found in Isserman (2005b).

Strength of group identity and political ideology gleaned from voting behavior also explained differences in tolerant and intolerant survivors.

Perceived Threat

In order to determine the presence of symbolic or real threats, the interviews were coded for words describing threats. Interviewees who saw the world as a threatening place attributed remarks to others such as phrases like, “We’ll do better than Hitler (re killing you).” They described others as anti-Semitic, noting a rise in anti-Semitism or that the world was full of anti-Semitism. Often in these interviews, members of other ethnic groups were described in negative stereotypic terms. In addition, some survivors described conditions as “just right for a reoccurrence” of the Holocaust. These survivors, who stated their belief and concern that the Holocaust could reoccur, who defined other groups by using stereotypes, or who viewed the world as full of anti-Semitism, were coded as perceiving the world to be a threatening place.

Worldview

As noted previously, three aspects defined the worldview of survivors. They are optimism/pessimism, trust/mistrust, and compassion toward others. Compassion toward others was revealed through tracking of the trait of being self-centered or other-directed, and through tracking two new categories: altruistic behavior and acts of revenge. In grounded research, the data itself often yields new categories of analysis. In this study, altruistic behavior and acts of revenge further clarified the self-centered/other-directed component of the worldview.

In the interviews, the survivors were asked to characterize their personalities as pessimistic or optimistic, trusting or not. Survivors were coded as other-directed individuals if they engaged in volunteer philanthropic activities in the community or focused on attending to the physical and psychological needs of their families and friends. Finally, altruistic behavior and acts of revenge were noted through the survivor stories, especially those about the Holocaust. Initially, the experiences of anti-Semitism pre-war and the experiences of being the recipient of kind acts by non-Jews during the war were tracked as potentially having an impact on the survivors’ worldview. However, almost all of the interviewees in the study had experienced anti-Semitism prior to the war and all were recipients of acts of kindness by non-Jews; therefore, these factors did not illuminate the differences between tolerant survivors and intolerant survivors and were eliminated from the study.

Strength of In-Group Identity

Strong in-group identity might be a predictor of political intolerance. In order to determine the strength of the in-group identity of Holocaust survivors, relevant items on the JIS were tracked. Statements from the JIS were selected, which

matched in intent the statements in the research of others who looked at this factor. Nine statements were chosen from the JIS. These statements ranged from expressing pride as a Jew and the importance of being Jewish to statements supporting solidarity with the group. In addition, the current religious affiliation of the survivor and the size of the network of close Jewish friends of the survivor were also compared. The article tracked religious affiliation because social scientists often equate level of observance with the strength of in-group identity. Thus, the measure of the strength of in-group identity would be whether a Jew is Orthodox or some other Jewish movement affiliation. However, in fact, determining the strength of in-group identity among Jews is more complex than just comparing one variable, movement affiliation. This study shows that religious affiliation is just one aspect of in-group identity strength and ultimately is not the deciding factor. To further clarify the strength of in-group identity, statements about Israel were coded. Support for Israel, visits to Israel, and thoughts about living in Israel recorded in the JIS further defined in-group identity.

Political Ideology

The literature also suggests that people who are more conservative are more intolerant. Political beliefs were determined through two methods: (1) statements in the interview on political beliefs, party affiliations, and positions on public policy issues were identified; (2) the JIS noted a survivor's attitude on some key social policy issues such as abortion, welfare, and affirmative action. Information on these two instruments were compared to determine whether a survivor held conservative or liberal views on politics and public policies, and whether there was a relationship between these views and their attitudes on tolerance. An additional comparison was made between the statements on tolerance coded in the qualitative interviews and the quantitative information in the JIS on the survivors' attitudes toward different ethnic, religious, racial, and political groups in American society. On the JIS, the question was framed as, "What proportion of each of the following groups in the U.S. is anti-Semitic?" The answers ranged from most to few.

The Analysis of Political Factors—Factor #1: The World as a Threatening Place

The literature identified the perceived or experienced real threats to be a critical predictor of intolerance. These categories collapse into one with survivors. In this sample, all the interviewees experienced real life-and-death circumstances that had devastating consequences for them and their families. The primary consideration is that they see Holocaust-like conditions in the world today. While five of the six intolerant survivors and two of the limited-intolerant group of survivors expressed such views as, "The world is a dangerous place, where the Holocaust could happen again," none of the tolerant survivors did so. Specifically, intolerant survivors and those who hold limited-intolerant views perceive the world to be a threatening

place. In their interviews, there are constant references comparing the current view of the world to the Holocaust. These references fall into several groups: constant vigilance and preparedness for the next Holocaust; comparisons to the Germans; concern about the Holocaust deniers and those who have forgotten what happened; and the prevalence of anti-Semitism and the pervasiveness of the enemies of Jews. Each of these references places current fears and threats within the framework of the Holocaust, conditioning the survivors' response to other groups, current political events, and sometimes every day life events.

Some survivors are constantly vigilant and prepared for another Holocaust. LE, who is in the intolerant group, notes that when he was a young adult and celebrating his parents' anniversary, an uncle brought the parents a beautiful silver tea set. LE's father, also a Holocaust survivor, looked at it but LE could tell that he was not happy with the gift. A few weeks later, LE asked him,

'... I thought you liked silver.' And he said to me, 'How far can you run with the silver?' That really hit me. ...From that time on ... I always have my passport in order. I've got my children's passports in order.... My middle son was talking just recently about moving to Arizona. And I'm thinking, 'How am I going to tell him to have a lot of cash on hand, in case something happens, without him looking at me like I'm completely insane?'⁴¹

Other survivors couch vigilance in slightly different ways, cautioning their listeners to remember and, "Don't get so smug and pretend that nothing can happen to you ... realize what humans are capable of."⁴²

Some intolerant survivors compare extremist groups, like the Ku Klux Klan, to the Germans, combining stereotypes of groups with anxieties based on past experiences. DH, another intolerant survivor, asks:

... It's terrible. How can they allow them (the KKK) ... like Germans ... how can America repeat it? Oh, all the blacks and the Jews, they (the KKK) will kill them off.... If we will not fight them, if we will not destroy them, it can happen, because they are growing, they are learning [teaching] the children to hate other people....⁴³

Several intolerant survivors also express attitudes that fall into two or more of the above categories combining perception of threat, stereotyping, and anxieties toward other groups. Intolerant survivor SO decries the Holocaust deniers, identifies several enemies of the Jews, and combines these views with a concern that anti-Semitism still exists.

I'm always concerned that for some reason the Jewish life may be lost again and may be squashed ... because we have too many enemies and too many

⁴¹ Survivor LE [pseudo.], interview by TTP, interview transcript, Transcending Trauma Project, May 8, 1996.

⁴² Survivor BL [pseudo.], interview by TTP, interview transcript, Transcending Trauma Project, August 13, 1995.

⁴³ Survivor DH [pseudo.], interview by TTP, interview transcript, Transcending Trauma Project, October 6, 1994.

people who wish us ill. ...The churches, the religions are all more or less against the Jewish faith ... and they are preaching and continuing to preach everything negative about the Jews. ...I don't think it will ever disappear....⁴⁴

Thus, the data on intolerant and limited-tolerant survivors who view the world as a threatening place reveals that the distinction between symbolic threats and real threats does not hold when the reference frame for survivors is the real extreme trauma that they experienced. This perspective, defined as a sociotropic view of threat, shapes their attitudes in a general sense toward non-Jews, resulting in their fearing other groups irrespective of any interactions they may have had with these groups in the United States in the post World War II era. To Holocaust survivors in the intolerant and limited-tolerant groups, the world as a threatening place is real; stereotypes based on past experiences with their perpetrators create anxieties toward other groups; and perceptions of danger and insecurity stem from their war experiences coloring their current worldview. The influence of persecution is evident in the statements of the intolerant and limited-intolerant survivors.

The words of the tolerant survivors are different. The world is not threatening. There is no mention of the themes of vigilance, concern about Holocaust deniers, the numerous enemies of the Jews, or the worry about a reoccurrence of the Holocaust.

Factor #2: Worldview as a Predictor of Intolerance

In the literature, some researchers found the worldview of Holocaust survivors to be different from that of other Jews in their cohort. Compassion for other victims and optimism were two of the differences.⁴⁵ Mistrust of others was another difference. Altruistic behavior and acts of revenge were additional differences in worldview that the grounded research methodology uncovered. The examination of the three groups of survivors found differences among the worldviews between the intolerant and tolerant survivors. Worldviews in this study consisted of the following factors: trust/mistrust, optimism/pessimism, and self-directed/other-directed as determined by altruism/acts of revenge.

The Trust/Mistrust Component

In the course of the interviews, the survivors noted if they trusted people or if they were suspicious of people. As Peter Suedfeld stated,⁴⁶ mistrust predominates among survivors. This is regardless of their attitudes on tolerance. The statements of the survivors in all three groups look similar. An intolerant survivor states, "I have a

⁴⁴ Survivor SO [pseudo.], interview by TTP, interview transcript, Transcending Trauma Project, May 25, 1995.

⁴⁵ Carmil and Breznitz (1991, p. 402); Sigal and Weinfeld (1989, p. 137).

⁴⁶ Suedfeld et al. (2005, p. 240).

hard time with trust. That people really will be nice, if I could only trust them.”⁴⁷ A tolerant survivor uses similar words,

Well ... I learned from my experience that it's not good to trust, and it's not good to believe, because people don't ... say the truth. I ... wouldn't lie, or wouldn't do harm to nobody. If everybody would be like this, I could trust.... The experience I went through unfortunately, it's not like that.⁴⁸

In fact, in all three groups, there were only two survivors who expressed trust in their fellow humans, one in the intolerant group and one in the limited-intolerant group. Thus, the degree to which survivors view others with suspicion or with trust is not a critical factor in creating tolerant individuals. Their Holocaust experiences have left most of the survivors in this sample expressing mistrust in their initial contacts with others. As Suedfeld noted, the survivors experienced situations where

the thoroughly learned rules concerning antecedents and consequences no longer held. Outstanding accomplishments did not shield Jews from losing their job; police became persecutors and killers instead of protectors; neighbors betrayed, robbed, and sometimes murdered former friends ...; in Janoff-Bulman's (1992) poignant phrase, “It was the shattering of the assumptive world.”⁴⁹

The survivors learned to mistrust everyone they encountered. This mistrust remains with them. Thus, mistrust/trust is not a distinguishing factor of worldview among the three groups.

Optimism/Pessimism Component

Optimism or pessimism, another component of worldview, was determined by the survivors' own words where they directly or indirectly categorized themselves as one or the other. Those survivors who were in the tolerant group overwhelmingly characterized themselves as an optimistic person. Only one tolerant survivor called herself pessimistic. In the limited-intolerant group, five of the survivors labeled themselves optimistic people. Of the intolerant survivors, four placed themselves in the optimistic category. Thus, in every group of survivors an optimistic viewpoint dominated. A tolerant survivor states, “I made the best of bad situations.”⁵⁰ An intolerant survivor remarks, “You'll feel better tomorrow. It will go away, you know. You always have to live with hope.”⁵¹ Many of the survivors in all three

⁴⁷ Survivor LJ [pseudo.], interview by TTP, interview transcript, Transcending Trauma Project, November 15, 1995.

⁴⁸ Survivor KS [pseudo.], interview by TTP, interview transcript, Transcending Trauma Project, December 8, 1994.

⁴⁹ Suedfeld (2003, p. 133).

⁵⁰ Survivor PE [pseudo.], interview by TTP, interview transcript, Transcending Trauma Project, 1994.

⁵¹ Survivor DH [pseudo.], interview by TTP, interview transcript, Transcending Trauma Project, October 6, 1994.

groups cast optimism as hoping for a better day in the future. Only two survivors in the intolerant group, two in the limited-intolerant group, and one in the tolerant group characterized themselves as pessimists. It appears that similar to mistrust/trust, optimism/pessimism does not contribute to defining differences in worldview among the three groups.

Self-Centered/Other-Directed and Altruism Components

A third component of worldview is the trait of being self-centered or other-directed. Self-centered survivors place themselves at the center of their world and focus almost exclusively on their own needs to the exclusion of the desires and needs of others. Others who are other-directed are able to take into consideration the needs of others. In looking at the three groups of survivors, the distinctions among them are small. Overall, most survivors were categorized as other-directed. This is not a surprising finding because these survivors are also high on altruism. Only three survivors out of the 18—two in the limited-intolerant group, and one in the intolerant group—were found to be self-centered. Two-thirds of the survivors reported altruistic behavior. Most of the survivors in all three groups told us stories about their behavior that reflected their commitment to helping others, often even in perilous situations. As one survivor in the limited-intolerant group reported,

To do a *mitzvah* [good deed] for somebody, I would go in the middle of the night to do it.... If somebody moved, and I could help him, I did it. I didn't count the hours.... Even now, what I'm older, and I try to do things for people.⁵²

What may be different about the tolerant survivors is whom they help. One survivor in the tolerant group spent a considerable amount of her time and resources on helping the families of the non-Jews who helped her family survive. She stated in the interview,

A very kind man [the man who helped her family during the war]. And this is why we have not forgotten his children, and his grandchildren. We constantly come. We send them parcels from here. ...We felt that ... those people deserved it.⁵³

A second survivor in the tolerant group worked on interracial issues after liberation and immigration to the United States. She noted,

I was horrified about the racial issues here in America, and I had joined the League of Women Voters, although I was a bloody foreigner. And for equal housing, and I had worked for all kinds of inter-racial intergenerational ways.

She explained her need to help others in the following way:

⁵² Survivor RA [pseudo.], interview by TTP, interview transcript, Transcending Trauma Project, November 7, 1994.

⁵³ Survivor JA [pseudo.], interview by TTP, interview transcript, Transcending Trauma Project, November 17, 1994.

I always felt that I need to repay: not repay; that's the wrong word. I need to help others. I still feel that I have a contribution to make, and it's my obligation to do [so], to pay back and not to take for myself....⁵⁴

A third tolerant survivor helped Russian prisoners of war during the war. During the interview, she noted that she spoke about her experiences in public primarily because she wants people to know that many non-Jews helped the Jews.⁵⁵

Unlike the tolerant survivors, the altruism of the intolerant and limited-intolerant survivors was directed at and for helping only Jews during the war and after. This is in spite of the fact that all the survivors, even the intolerant and limited-intolerant ones, experienced acts of kindness by non-Jews during the war, which facilitated their survival. Conversely, almost all the survivors, even the tolerant ones, experienced anti-Semitism prior to World War II. Only one tolerant survivor and two limited-intolerant survivors did not. Yet, only the tolerant survivors mentioned acts of altruism directed toward helping non-Jews as well as Jews. These survivors felt motivated to help non-Jews as a form of repayment for the non-Jewish help they received during the war.

Anger and Acts of Revenge

In contrast to the altruistic behavior of tolerant survivors toward non-Jews are those of two of the intolerant survivors in this study and two of the survivors from the limited-intolerant group. All four of them tried to or succeeded in participating in acts of revenge against their perpetrators. In most cases, the objects of their revenge were Germans, and in one case, a Ukrainian.

One survivor from the limited-intolerant group encountered a Ukrainian woman living in her aunt's house. When the woman said to her, "Hitler didn't kill you yet?" the survivor told her, "You're not going to live in that house. Maybe I would have taken a few pennies from you and left you here [but] this is going to the Russian government." She then proceeded to get official papers to claim ownership of the house and gave the papers to a Russian official saying, "Now you take this piece of paper, because I don't need it. It's not worth a penny to me. And you sell the house to whoever you want or move in a family from Russia. ...If she [the Ukrainian woman] drags her feet, throw her out."⁵⁶

To another survivor in the limited-intolerant group, the revenge was vicarious. Her revenge was viewing the bombed out city of Dresden. She stated:

I was right there. And that's the only place I saw that was bombed. And I am sorry, but I honestly felt it was good to see that at least something was destroyed. Because every place else, Germany was beautiful.⁵⁷

⁵⁴ Survivor PE [pseudo.], interview by TTP, interview transcript, Transcending Trauma Project, 1994.

⁵⁵ Survivor SD [pseudo.], interview by TTP, interview transcript, Transcending Trauma Project, May 22, 1995.

⁵⁶ Survivor RE [pseudo.], interview by TTP, interview transcript, Transcending Trauma Project, March 5, 1996.

⁵⁷ Survivor BL [pseudo.], interview by TTP, interview transcript, Transcending Trauma Project, August 13, 1995.

In addition, this survivor and two of the survivors in the intolerant group engaged in boycotting German products as a means of expressing their anger. BL reported:

I couldn't buy anything that was made in Germany. I still can't. But that is my personal choice. I refuse to buy. And I don't want to go to Germany. Germany is a very beautiful country, but I cannot see the beauty. You know, if I were there, I couldn't enjoy it.⁵⁸

LE used similar language in declaring:

I can't handle anything that's got to do with Germans ... I had an offer, a business offer, to go to Germany and do some business there, and it would have paid quite handsomely, and I couldn't. I couldn't set foot in Germany. I don't think I could set foot in Poland or Austria....⁵⁹

His brother, LJ, cut off communication to his own son for several years when that son bought a German car.

Two of the intolerant survivors engaged in actual physical and sometimes violent acts of revenge against their perpetrators. One survivor described his acts of revenge in these words:

... This was my pleasure ... to kill them, shoot them. ...I ... wanted them to know I'm a Jew. ...This was enough for them. They knew they are dead. They knew they are finished. ...I wanted them to know that a Jew is going to kill them. ...This was the biggest, biggest relief that I had....

Another time this survivor found a store in Styer selling bars of soap believed to be made from Jews. After calling the military occupation authorities to the store, he told them he wanted all the soap in the stores in Styer. He arranged for all the soap in Styer that he found to be buried in the Jewish cemeteries. He told the MP:

And if this is not going to be done, we'll explode all the stores in Styer. ...That's what I did. ...You feel like doing something ... even today. It's a shame ... the way they tortured the Jews, the women, the children.... My golly, I had them dogs in my hands in the thousands and I didn't do that.

Thus, anger and revenge, whether violent and physical, vicarious, or through boycotts distinguish the intolerant and the limited-intolerant survivors from the tolerant survivors.

Factor #3: In-Group Identity as a Predictor of Political Intolerance

Gibson and Gouws speculated in their 2003 study that strong in-group positive identities create strong outgroup negative identities that are connected to antipathy toward other groups perceived to be threatening and thus to political intolerance.⁶⁰

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ Survivor LE [pseudo.], interview by TTP, interview transcript, Transcending Trauma Project, May 8, 1996.

⁶⁰ Gibson and Gouws (2000, p. 278).

While Gibson's later research contradicted these findings, it is still useful to examine this factor through the words of the individuals.⁶¹ The stronger the ties to the group, the more will the individuals seek to differentiate their group from others. Differentiation leads to psychological security and self-esteem.⁶² Through the JIS, the group identities of the survivors have been analyzed (Table 1). The questions in the JIS are similar in intent to those that Gibbons and Gouws asked of South Africans. The data in this study supports the latest findings of Gibson in his South Africa research. Strong group identities exist almost across the board in the survivors, regardless of in which group of political tolerance they fall. Almost all the survivors either agree or strongly agree with all the measures in the table: pride in their identity; means of conveying status through connecting them to their past; exclusivity, as in, "Outsiders don't understand"; and reliance on the group in times of need and for friendships.

One marker for strong group identity is support for Israel. Researchers have noted that support for Israel is stronger among all survivors than among the general American Jewish population. Survivors have visited Israel more frequently and express strong feelings of support for Israel at a significantly higher rate than the rest of the American Jewish population.⁶³ The survivors in this study follow the same pattern. Almost all the survivors, except for four, give statements of strong support for Israel in their interviews. The absence of such statements from the four is likely, given their other answers, because they were not asked in the interview if Israel is important to them. Every survivor but one had visited Israel at least once. When asked in the JIS whether they were emotionally attached to Israel, all but one answered saying "extremely," or "very." Among the intolerant survivors, all but one had considered living there, especially right after the war. Among the limited-intolerant survivors also, all but one had considered living there. And the same held true for the tolerant survivors.

From the intolerant survivors:

I'm very strong towards Israel ... very pro-Israel. I think it's extremely important that Israel survive.⁶⁴

The only time I ever really felt at home, I really felt I belonged, was the trip to Israel.⁶⁵

... All of us who survived were always enthusiastic about Israel surviving. ... We were always proud of them. ... The stronger Israel is going to be the better it is going to be for the whole Jewish world wherever Jews are.... (If) Israel would have been in existence when the Holocaust happened, they would

⁶¹ Gibson (2004, p. 288).

⁶² Taylor and Moghaddam (1994), quoted in Gibson and Gouws (2000, p. 280).

⁶³ Groth (2003, p. 116).

⁶⁴ Survivor LE [pseudo.], interview by TTP, interview transcript, Transcending Trauma Project, May 5, 1996.

⁶⁵ Survivor LJ [pseudo.], interview by TTP, interview transcript, Transcending Trauma Project, November 15, 1995.

Table 1 Social identity measures

	Intolerant	Limited-intolerant	Tolerant
Being a good Jew means advocating values of social justice and concern for the poor	4 strongly agree	4 strongly agree	5 strongly agree
	2 agree	1 agrees <i>1 somewhat disagrees</i>	1 agrees
Political lobbying in support of Jewish causes is an important right for American Jews	5 strongly agree	4 strongly agree	6 strongly agree
	1 agrees	2 agree	
I am proud to be a Jew	5 strongly agree	4 strongly agree	4 strongly agree
	1 agrees	1 agrees <i>1 strongly disagrees</i>	2 agree
Being Jewish is so much a part of me apart from traditions and customs, I couldn't stop being Jewish	3 strongly agree	4 strongly agree	5 strongly agree
	3 agree	1 agrees <i>1 somewhat disagrees</i>	1 agrees
Jewish involvement is a way of connecting with my family's past	4 strongly agree	5 strongly agree	4 strongly agree
	2 agree	1 agrees	2 agree
I feel there is something about me non-Jews could never understand	2 strongly agree	2 strongly agree	2 strongly agree
	3 agree <i>1 somewhat disagrees</i>	3 agree <i>1 somewhat disagrees</i>	4 agree
How important is it for me to be a Jew	5 very important	5 very important	5 very important
	1 important	<i>1 not important</i>	<i>1 somewhat important</i>
When it comes to a crisis, Jews can only depend on Jews	1 strongly agrees	4 strongly agree	3 strongly agree
	4 agree <i>2 somewhat disagree</i>	2 agree <i>1 somewhat disagrees</i> <i>1 strongly disagrees</i>	2 agree <i>1 strongly disagrees</i>
Jews have a special responsibility for one another no matter where in the world they live	4 strongly agree	5 strongly agree	5 strongly agree
	2 agree	1 agrees	1 agrees
Jewish denominational affiliation	1 Orthodox	3 Orthodox	1 Orthodox
	3 Conservative	1 Conservative	1 Traditional
	1 Unspecified	1 Secular	1 Orthodox/ Conservative
		1 unaffiliated	1 Cons/Reform 1 unaffiliated
Number of Jewish friends survivor has	3 all friends	4 all friends	1 all friends
	2 most friends	2 some friends	3 most friends
	1 some		1 some

Negative answers have been italicized

have screamed so loud all over the world that maybe it would, somebody would have listened.⁶⁶

And similar statements from the limited-intolerant survivors:

... Thank G-d that ... we got now a country. Is a beautiful country. ...To telling the truth, if I would be young, I would be in Israel.⁶⁷

Statements from the tolerant survivors are as strong as the other two groups:

What really gave me strength and the desire to have children, and to go on with a normal life, is the ... existence of the State of Israel. If we would not have had the State of Israel after the war, I don't think I would have continued with a Jewish life. And this is not a statement that I make lightly.... Why bring in another generation of people to expose to more suffering? This is what gave me the desire to live and rebuild my life and have children, and raise them with love for Israel, and the Jewish people. I go every year for a visit to Israel. ...I hope I'll never skip a year. ...I feel I need it. It's my "fix" you know? For justifying my good life here.

This survivor goes on to state,

... One thing that I do find in common with all the survivors is our caring and our love for the State of Israel. ...We saw what happened to the Jewish people when we didn't have anyone to care for us, and to speak for us.⁶⁸

Other statements of support from the tolerant survivors follow:

In Israel, I was a majority among the majority. I had a right to speak out. ...It felt wonderful. And that's what I really loved (about) Israel. And every other place I went afterwards I was ... an outsider.⁶⁹

I will not vote for somebody that is not supportive of Israel. ...We buy every year Israeli bonds, not because it's a good investment but because we feel that they still need support and money, and if I don't do it then who will do it? So, I want to do my share. Yes, it affects our behavior, no doubt about it....⁷⁰

The quoted statements of the tolerant survivors are as strong in support for Israel as the statements of the intolerant and limited-intolerant group of survivors. Thus, the findings show that strong identification with Israel does not contribute to defining the differences between tolerant and intolerant survivors. Their Holocaust experiences have led all the survivors toward strong commitments to Israel; and this is documented

⁶⁶ Survivor SO [pseudo.], interview by TTP, interview transcript, Transcending Trauma Project, May 25, 1994.

⁶⁷ Survivor RA [pseudo.], interview by TTP, interview transcript, Transcending Trauma Project, November 7, 1994.

⁶⁸ Survivor JA [pseudo.], interview by TTP, interview transcript, Transcending Trauma Project, November 17, 1994.

⁶⁹ Survivor PE [pseudo.], interview by TTP, interview transcript, Transcending Trauma Project, 1994.

⁷⁰ Survivor RL [pseudo.], interview by TTP, interview transcript, Transcending Trauma Project, July 31, 1996.

through clear unequivocal statements and by the number of trips they have taken to Israel, numbers that are above the norm of the general American Jewish population. The data reveals that their identification as survivors is a critical element of their support for Israel.

The explanation for this finding could be that the experience of extreme national trauma, when the individuals were persecuted based solely on their social or religio-ethnic identities, left almost all of the survivors with strong social identities. Regardless of their war experiences, or in fact because of their experiences of persecution, across all the three groups survivors expressed strong identification with being Jews. This finding is supported by the research of Beatty and Oliver who also agree that tolerance may not be an issue or group dependent as Sullivan, Piereson and others suggest.⁷¹ As their work suggests, a history of persecution for religious beliefs creates distinctive patterns of tolerance.⁷²

Factor #4: Political Ideology as a Predictor of Political Intolerance

Several researchers identified political ideology as a factor in political intolerance. They have stated that the intensity of hatred and intolerance toward out-groups reported by individuals is influenced by specific political attitudes and their collective identities, all of which interact and influence each other.⁷³ Examining the political affiliations and the positions on public policy questions of the survivors reveals their political ideologies. In this study, political ideologies are derived from the following components: party identification and presidential voting pattern; public policy positions; and perceived attitudes toward other groups in society. In analyzing these components, there were slight differences among the three survivor groups. The trend was that the intolerant survivors were slightly more conservative than the limited-intolerant survivors who were slightly more conservative than the tolerant survivors. This finding corresponds to the literature, which predicted that intolerant individuals are more conservative.⁷⁴ Among the intolerant survivors, three were identified as conservative Democrats, two as moderate Democrats, one as Independent. Among the limited-intolerant group, only one was a conservative Democrat, three were moderate Democrats, one a liberal Democrat, and one an Independent. Among the tolerant survivors, four were identified as moderate Democrats, one as a liberal Democrat, and one as a conservative Democrat. In the past 40 years, only one of the tolerant survivors ever voted for a Republican candidate for presidency, and all voted for Clinton. Among the limited-intolerant survivors, four voted for Reagan and two voted for Bush, one voting for Bush against Clinton. Among the intolerant survivors though, only two voted for Reagan, one for Bush and one for Nixon, and everyone voted for Clinton. Thus, party and voting differences among the three groups are minor, revealing a slight pattern of

⁷¹ Beatty and Walter (1984, p. 327).

⁷² *Ibid.*, p. 328.

⁷³ Moore (2000, p. 288).

⁷⁴ Moore (2000, p. 304); McCutcheon (1985, p. 481); McClosky and Brill (1983, p. 274).

more intolerant and limited-intolerant survivors voting for conservative candidates, though not in all elections.

Support on policy questions for the three groups also showed that, as a group, survivors tend to support the same liberal positions that the rest of the Jewish community supports. All of the survivors supported the separation of church and state. All but two, one limited-intolerant survivor and one tolerant survivor, supported keeping abortion legal. The two who disagreed did so based on their religious beliefs. On the obligation of the government to support the poor through welfare, all but four agreed with this position. Two intolerant survivors and two in the limited-intolerant disagreed. Thus, it is only on this position that we see the trend of intolerant and limited-intolerant survivors leaning toward conservative policy positions.

Attitudes Toward Other Groups as a Part of Political Ideology

Each survivor was asked on the JIS about the perceived anti-Semitism of various groups in American society. The surveys were administered around the time of the interviews in the mid 1990s. The hypothesis was that intolerant survivors would perceive more groups as anti-Semitic than the limited-intolerant and tolerant survivors. This question served as another means of identifying perceived political enemies and threatening groups. However, the findings did not support this hypothesis. In each group, the survivors labeled many ethnic, religious, and political groups at least as partially anti-Semitic. No pattern appeared among the three groups. This lack of conclusive differences among the three groups could be due to the theoretical nature of the question. The survivors were asked, "Is this particular group anti-Semitic?" The groups about which the survivors were questioned were businessmen, union leaders, Hispanics, Blacks, Democrats, Republicans, liberals, conservatives, Catholics, Protestants, Fundamentalist Protestants, and Muslims. The questions did not cite any specific incidents as references. Thus, the answers the survivors gave did not relate to any real life experiences or their feelings about their perpetrators. For example, SS, the survivor who engaged in violent acts of revenge against the Germans, only labeled one group as anti-Semitic. And one tolerant survivor, JA, labeled nine out of ten of the groups as anti-Semitic. JA was the survivor who engaged in altruistic acts toward the families of the non-Jews who helped her survive. This data thus points to the conclusion that there is no relationship between the perceived anti-Semitism of certain groups in society and tolerance in Holocaust survivors. In fact, perceived anti-Semitism may be related to mistrust which as was shown earlier is prevalent in Holocaust survivors.

Nature of War Experiences

While comparing the three groups on the kinds of war experiences they endured, some differences arise. In each group, at least half of the survivors spent time in the camps and in ghettos. However, four of the six survivors who were in hiding during

the war were in the tolerant group. This is in contrast to the limited intolerant group where only two of the six were in hiding, and in the intolerant group, where only one out of five hid. Those who were in hiding were also more likely, in this study, to have survived with one or both parents and/or other family members. An earlier article by this author⁷⁵ suggests that a relationship between surviving with family members and tolerance may exist. Surviving with family members may facilitate the transmission of messages of tolerance from parent to the interviewee. However, more research on this issue is needed.

Several categories consisted of only one survivor. One intolerant survivor was involved with the resistance. He was also involved in acts of revenge. One tolerant survivor used false papers and one the kindertransport. The survivor that used false papers spoke the language of her country of origin, thus blending in with the non-Jewish population. No intolerant survivor ended up in Siberia. Two intolerant survivors emigrated before the war with their families. These numbers are so small that no conclusions other than the factor of hiding can be discerned about the impact of the war experience on tolerance in survivors.

Summary of Results

Table 2 provides a summary of political factors based on tolerance. The qualitative analysis of the political factors contributing to intolerance in Holocaust survivors reveals that the impact of persecution was a theme that ran through the analysis of the political factors influencing tolerance in Holocaust survivors. However, examining the political factors that influence tolerance in the literature reveals that there were differences between intolerant and tolerant survivors. Although perceived threat is one predictor of intolerance shaped by the experience of persecution, only intolerant and limited-tolerant survivors perceived the world as a threatening place.

The impact of the persecutions was also evident in the worldview of the survivors. The study confirmed that almost all the survivors were optimistic, mistrustful, and other-directed. However, there were differences between the intolerant and tolerant survivors in their worldview. While most survivors were altruistic and helped others, only tolerant survivors targeted their altruistic behavior to help non-Jews. Conversely, some intolerant and limited-intolerant survivors exhibited anger and acts of revenge toward the perpetrators and the groups they represented.

The experience of persecution impacted in-group identities as well. Examining the words of the survivors revealed that survivors had strong in-group identities that they attributed in many cases to the Holocaust. However, confirming the latest research on this issue, in this study as well no differences existed between intolerant survivors and tolerant survivors. All the survivors evidenced strong in-group identities through their statements on being Jewish and their identification with Israel. Given the persecution they faced because of their identities, this strong identification is not surprising and stands in many of their minds as a testimony to the failure of Hitler to eradicate the Jewish people. In addition, while the experience

⁷⁵ Isserman (2005a, p. 565).

Table 2 Summary of political factors based on tolerance

Political factors	World as threatening	Optimism	Altruism	Other-directed	Trust	Revenge	Party label ^a	Perceive anti-semitism	Support for Israel/visits to Israel	Nature of war experience
Intolerant survivors	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	3 C 2 M	Yes	Yes	1 hiding
Limited-tolerant survivors	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	1 I 1 C 3 M	Yes	Yes	2 hiding
Tolerant survivors	No	Yes	Yes to help Non Jews	Yes	No	No	1 I 1 L 1 C 4 M 1 L	Yes	Yes	4 hiding

^a Key: C = Conservative, M = Moderate, I = Independent, L = Liberal

of persecution did not impact political ideologies in this study, intolerant survivors exhibited a slight trend toward conservative voting, party identification, and social welfare policies compared with tolerant survivors. Finally, the nature of the war experience differed in the three groups. More survivors in the tolerant group hid during the war than those in the other two groups. Those who were in hiding were also more likely, in this study, to have survived with one or both parents and/or other family members, which may facilitate the transmission of messages of tolerance from parent to the interviewee.

Thus, the qualitative methodology of this study provided a deeper understanding of the nature of tolerance in survivors. While the experience of persecution had an impact on survivors, it did not explain the differences between intolerant and tolerant survivors. Examining other political factors, such as perceived threat, worldview, the nature of the war experiences, and political ideology did reveal differences between intolerant and tolerant survivors.

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Author Biography

Nancy Isserman, PhD, has been the co-director of the Transcending Trauma Project since 1993. The Transcending Trauma Project is under the auspices of Council for Relationships, an affiliate of Jefferson Medical College in Philadelphia, PA. The Transcending Trauma Project is a large qualitative research project that interviewed 95 survivors and 180 survivor family members, many in the second and third generations. TTP used grounded research methodology and in-depth psychosocial life narratives to analyze how survivors rebuilt their lives after the war. Dr. Isserman recently completed a dissertation for the political science department of the Graduate Center, City University of New York entitled, "*I Harbor No Hate*": *A Study of Tolerance and Intolerance in Holocaust Survivors*. She received the Randolph L. Braham Dissertation Year Award in 2004-2005. She is also the Spitzer-Wachs Fellow in Trauma Studies. In addition, Dr. Isserman is the Associate Director of the Feinstein Center for American Jewish History at Temple University and the research analyst for the Philadelphia Healthy Marriage Project at Council for Relationships.