Youngstown, Ohio Responds to Holocaust Era Refugees

by

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ABSTRACT

Beginning in the 1930s and ending in the 1950s, approximately one hundred and fifty European Jews came to Youngstown, Ohio in response to Nazi persecution. Many came to Youngstown because they had relatives already living in the area. These relatives connected Holocaust-era refugees to a new life in the United States. In the case of many displaced persons, who arrived after the end of the Second World War and the liberation of concentration camps, national and local social service agencies worked with members of the Youngstown Jewish community to facilitate their resettlement.

Some stayed for a very short time and rebuilt their lives in other places in the United States. Some followed patterns similar to native residents of Youngstown. They stayed until economic conditions compelled them to leave the area. Others found remarkable success in Youngstown. They built businesses that employed others, established relationships within the community, and became another layer in the history of an area shaped by the cultures and experiences of the immigrants who came to call Youngstown home.

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INTRODUCTION

Beginning in the 1930s and ending in the 1950s, approximately one hundred and fifty European Jews came to Youngstown, Ohio in response to Nazi persecution. Many came to Youngstown because they had relatives already living in the area. These relatives connected Holocaust-era refugees to a new life in the United States. In the case of many displaced persons, who arrived after the end of the Second World War and the liberation of concentration camps, national and local social service agencies worked with members of the Youngstown Jewish community to facilitate their resettlement.

Resettlement in the United States meant starting life anew. This process included overcoming physical, economic, and psychological obstacles. Survivors of the concentration camps began the physical process of recovery in displaced persons camps and hospitals prior to leaving Europe as they had to be in adequate physical condition to travel to the United States. Family members and social services agencies helped economically to fund their travel and provide necessities upon arrival. Psychological recovery associated with being the targets of genocide, as well as the loss of dear friends and family members, was an ongoing process. Many survivors of the Holocaust found that sharing the stories of their wartime experiences helped them to cope.

Several of Youngstown's Holocaust survivors shared their stories in the form of interviews with Youngstown State University scholars and students, as well as the USC Shoah Foundation. These interview transcripts and video footage provide insight into the lives of these survivors prior to and during the war, as well as how they came to live in Youngstown. I have used documentary evidence in the form of social worker case files,

immigration records, court records, death records, obituaries, and city directories to answer questions that interviewers did not ask during their oral history interview sessions. In some cases, I have used documentary evidence alone to piece together a narrative detailing the experiences of Youngstown's Holocaust survivors.

I have compared these specific case studies to the more generalized findings of scholars who have examined a geographic sampling of Holocaust survivors in larger cities throughout the United States. This comparison revealed that though the Jewish Community of Youngstown was financially and ideologically supportive of the resettlement of Holocaust-era refugees in Youngstown, this did not result in an easy transition for the refugees themselves. Holocaust-era refugees experienced economic and social difficulties and coped with them in a variety of ways. Many did not remain in Youngstown permanently and moved to larger cities. Those who did remain in Youngstown became a part of the community as a whole and made positive contributions as business owners, employees, educators, elected officials, parents, spouses, and friends.

CHAPTER ONE

Prior to and after the Holocaust, Jewish refugees left their native countries and sought safety in the United States. When Adolf Hitler and the Nazi Party came to power in 1933, German Jews knew that their livelihoods and their safety were in jeopardy. Those who had the means to leave the country did so. Unfortunately, many fled to countries that later fell under Nazi control. The United States' immigration quotas limited the number of people who were able to come to the United States. By the end of the Second World War, six million European Jews had died. Some were murdered by mobile killing units. Some starved in ghettos, labor camps, and concentration camps. Others were exterminated in the gas chambers.

Most who survived the Holocaust were unable or unwilling to return to their homes after the war. Their villages were wiped out or their homes destroyed. Many were alone, the only surviving members of their families. Jews continued to face anti-Semitism after the liberation of the camps, and many no longer felt safe in Europe. Some feared life under a communist government would be just as horrific as life under the Nazi regime. They flocked to displaced persons camps and began the process of physical and psychological recovery from wartime trauma. They grieved the loss of loved ones. Many learned trades, married, and started families while they waited for permission to leave Europe.

German refugees and Holocaust survivors who came to the United States were different from prior emigrant populations. Most never envisioned leaving their native countries and would not have considered emigrating to the United States under ordinary

circumstances. The narrative of the emigrant seeking freedom and economic prosperity in the promised land of the United States did not apply to Holocaust survivors. Many did not have a say in where they would begin the process of rebuilding their lives. This decision was made based on which country was the first to agree to admit them as refugees.[1]

It is obvious that the Holocaust had an impact on the family lives of European Jews. During the earliest years of Nazi Party rule, Jewish families struggled financially as a result of the Nuremberg laws. The works collected by Dalia Ofer and Lenore J. Weitzman in *Women in the Holocaust* make clear that despite the extreme conditions endured during the Holocaust, traditional gender roles of the 1920s and 1930s still applied. The physical survival of the family was the responsibility of the men while women were responsible for its spiritual and emotional health. Ofer and Weitzman state that as Jewish families in Germany adapted to a harsh standard of living under the Nuremberg Laws, Jewish women learned to stretch resources in order to maintain their households. As men and children dealt with social pressures, such as anti-Jewish sentiment in the public sphere, women served as a source of refuge and comfort at home.[2] Despite their efforts to provide moral support and maintain family unity, most parents were unable to shield their children from the harsh realities of Jewish life under the Nazi regime. Historians examined the impact of the Holocaust on family life through the study of the children of survivors. Their focus is on the parent-child relationship and the ability

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[1] Beth Cohen, *Case Closed: Holocaust Survivors in Postwar America* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2007), 2.
[2] Dalia Ofer and Lenore J. Weitzman, ed., *Women in the Holocaust* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998), 8-12.

of the Holocaust survivor to connect emotionally with his or her children while facing the lifelong process of psychological recovery from severe trauma.[3] Psychologists have also studied Holocaust survivors to increase knowledge of human coping mechanisms and emotional recovery after trauma.[4]

Historians also studied the wartime experiences of Jewish women and illustrated how they differed from those of men. In *Women and the Holocaust,* the collected works of several scholars examine the role of gender in Jewish communities during the early days of Nazi rule, in ghettos, and later in concentration camps. It is clear that gender was a factor that often determined whether an individual lived or died. In addition, women faced risks associated with sexuality and sexual violence that men did not, such as rape or unintended pregnancy. Women struggled with their identities as caregivers, wives, and mothers as circumstances often forced them to choose between self-preservation and self-sacrifice.[5] Barbara Burstin notes that during the postwar years, young women who were new wives and mothers faced with the daunting task of childrearing usually did not have the benefit of leaning on their mothers for support and advice, as their mothers had not survived the Holocaust.[6]

Men struggled with the loss of identity as providers when Nazi rule mandated that they could no longer operate their businesses or forced them to work as slave labor. The opportunity to reclaim, or claim for the first time, the role of provider was not present for

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[3] T.L. Brink, ed., *Holocaust Survivors' Mental Health* (New York: The Haworth Press, Inc., 1994), 119-131.
[4]Boaz Kahana, Zev Harel, and Eva Kahana, *Holocaust Survivors and Emigrantss: Late Life Adaptations* (New York: Springer, 2005).
[5]Ofer andWeitzman,5-12.
[6] Barbara Burstin. "Holocaust Survivors: Rescue and Resettlement in the United States." *Jewish Women's Archive.*http://jwa.org/encyclopedia/article/holocaustsurvivorsrescueand resettlementinunitedstates

most until resettlement during the postwar years. Many Holocaust survivors went on to have successful careers, but most experienced hardship during the transitional period of the immediate postwar years. Beth Cohen and Leonard Dinnerstein both mention the hardships of new emigrants, who had been respected professionals or highly educated people in their native countries, and were forced to take menial jobs upon resettlement in the United States.[7]

Familial relationships were often difficult for Holocaust survivors and their relatives during resettlement. The circumstances of the postwar years brought extended families together who might not have otherwise connected. In some cases this was a positive experience for those involved as they developed meaningful connections with previously distant relations. In other cases, meaningful connections did not develop, placing further emotional strain on family relationships and increasing the emotional burden of Holocaust survivors. In *Case Closed,* Cohen provides examples in which relatives agreed to sponsor previously unknown family members, and were unwilling, or unable, to deliver the financial and emotional support initially promised. She argues that many American Jews feared that the presences of newly resettled European Jews would threaten the social status of assimilated American Jews. Additionally, American Jews were not ready to confront their own guilt surrounding the fact that they had been spared from the horrors of the Holocaust.[8]

It is impossible to describe the postwar experiences of Holocaust survivors in a

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(accessed October 10, 2016).

[7] Cohen, 51-60 and Leonard Dinnerstein, *America and the Survivors of the Holocaust* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1982), 212-215.

[8] Cohen, 45-48.

"one-size-fits-all" manner. Just as their prewar and wartime experiences varied greatly, so did their postwar experiences. The character of the communities in which they resettled shaped the futures of refugees. In *Against All Odds: Holocaust Survivors and the Successful Lives They Made in America*, William B. Helmreich states that initially refugees were only resettled in large communities with existing Jewish family service agencies, Jewish schools, and even Jewish hospitals. As the number of Jewish emigrants increased, it became more common to resettle refugees in smaller communities where assistance programs were run by volunteers. Helmreich states that most emigrants who resettled away from large Jewish populations felt isolated and unhappy. They did not remain in these smaller communities any longer than necessary.[9]

Beginning in the 1930s and ending in the 1950s, approximately one hundred and fifty European Jews came to Youngstown, Ohio in response to Nazi persecution. Many came to Youngstown because they had relatives already living in the area. These relatives connected Holocaust-era refugees to a new life in the United States. In the case of many displaced persons, who arrived after the end of the Second World War and the liberation of concentration camps, national and local social service agencies worked with members of the Youngstown Jewish community to facilitate their resettlement.

Youngstown, Ohio was a smaller city. The Jewish Federation of Youngstown was newly established and relied on a small staff as well as volunteers.[10] Despite

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[9]William B. Helmreich, *Against All Odds:Holocaust Survivors and the Successful Lives They Made in America* (New York: Simon and Schuster,1992) 62.
[10]Samuel Di Rocco II, "One Jewish Community's Response to Nazism and the Refugee Crisis: The Formation and Fund-Raising Objectives of the Jewish Federation of Youngstown, Ohio, 1935-1941," *Ohio History* 116 (2009): 41-61.

Youngstown's limited resources and modest capacity to absorb displaced persons, many Holocaust survivors made Youngstown a permanent, or at least long term, home after the Second World War. Youngstown's Jewish community was instrumental in the successful resettlement of European Jewish refugees prior to and after the Second World War. The community was personally and financially invested in the well-being of these individuals and families. This combination was vital to the successful resettlement of the refugee population. The fact that Youngstown was home to a large population of economically prosperous, assimilated Jewish emigrants played a large role in shaping the reception of the Holocaust era refugees. The Youngstown Jewish community's willingness to invest in the well-being of refugees financially and personally, combined with refugees' ability to overcome adversity, ensured that the resettlement process resulted in assimilation.

Within one week of Adolf Hitler's appointment as chancellor of Germany, the Nazi party ordered a boycott of Jewish-owned businesses in Germany. According to the Associated Press report, the Germans treated the day as a holiday. German businesses closed early to allow employees to listen to Joseph Goebbels deliver a speech. Supporters of the Nazi party vandalized Jewish businesses with hateful images in black and yellow paint. Goebbels stated that the Nazi government would decide if it would continue the boycott based on the Jews level of compliance with the newly passed laws that restricted their personal and economic activities.[11]

The Youngstown *Vindicator* reported the Associated Press coverage of the 1933 boycott. The article did not attempt to convey the fear that the Jews of Germany must

[11] Tom Wilhelm, "Few Disorders Mark German Boycott Against Jewish Race," *The Youngstown Vindicator,* April 2, 1933.

have experienced. The reporter described the mood in Berlin as "exhilarated, but orderly" and referred to the boycott as "the greatest organized anti-Semitic movement of modern times".[12] The tone of this article is non-judgmental of the actions of Nazi supporters and does not sympathize with Jews deprived of their livelihoods. Reporting such as this influenced how the American people felt about the plight of German Jews and played a role in determining how willing Americans would be to help them.

The American Jewish Committee began reporting and responding to anti-Semitism at the beginning of the twentieth century. The AJC published *The Jews in Nazi Germany: The Factual Record of Their Persecution by the National Socialists* in 1933. This was the first significant attempt of an American organization to educate other Americans about the situation of Jews living under Nazi rule. Though the general public probably did not read the pamphlet, it circulated among members of the government and journalists after its publication in the spring of 1933.[13] During this time, Americans were preoccupied with addressing the domestic problems associated with the Great Depression and less concerned with human rights violations in Germany.

The Jews in Nazi Germany detailed the increasing number of laws meant to exclude non-Aryan Germans, particularly Jews, from participating in public life.Under these laws, many Jews were left unable to make a living. During this time Jews began to leave Germany when they were able to do so. Many were so overwhelmed and hopeless they committed suicide.[14] In 1933, some Americans were initially suspicious that the

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[12] *Ibid.*
[13] Robert H. Abzug, *America Views the Holocaust, 1933-1945: A Brief Documentary History* (Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 1999), 8-9.
[14] Abzug,14.

general public had exaggerated reports of violence against Jews. In order to communicate the urgency of the situation affecting Jews in Germany, the AJC cited newspaper reports from *The Chicago Tribune*, *The New York Evening Post* and *The Manchester Guardian*, as well as letters sent from Jews in Germany to their American friends and family. These sources reference the fact that Jews were murdered, removed from their homes, beaten, harassed, and often imprisoned in concentration camps though they were not proven guilty of any crimes.[15]

In the days following Kristallnacht, the *Vindicator* ran Associated Press stories detailing the physical and financial harm facing Jewish business owners. The articles mentioned financially crippling fines, as well as the arrests of many moneyed and educated Jews. The reports stated that thousands were arrested, held indefinitely at local police states, and were likely to be imprisoned in Dachau or Buchenwald.[16] The articles also mention threats made to Cardinal Michael von Faulhaber, Roman Catholic Archbishop of Munich.[17] Cardinal von Faulhaber publicly opposed the Nazi party and encouraged his parishioners to do the same. In *History of the Youngstown Jews*, author Irving Ozer notes that a young attorney, Murray Nadler, began organizing Youngstown gentiles in protest against the Nazi treatment of Jews. He states that Nadler found most Youngstown residents were supportive, with the exception of Catholics.[18] Youngstown Catholics may have feared, based on the story of Cardinal Michael von Faulhaber, that

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[15]Abzug,19-21.
[16] Associated Press, "Reich Jews Fined 400 Million: Must Pay for Death of Diplomat," *The Youngstown Vindicator,* November 12, 1938.
[17] Associated Press, "Storm Palace of Cardinal. Attack Follows Reading of Archbishop's Plea for Protection," *The Youngstown Vindicator,* November 12, 1938.
[18] Irving E. Ozer, *The History of the Jews of Greater Youngstown, Ohio 1865-1990* (Youngstown, Ohio: Irving E. Ozer,1994), 255.

they would experience repercussions if they became actively involved in the opposition to the Nazi party. It is also possible that they valued stability and did not want to upset their own places in Youngstown's social order.

In a 2009 article, Samuel DiRocco II examines the response of Youngstown Jewry to the refugee crisis. He illustrates that the Youngstown Jewish Federation raised considerable funds despite being a relatively new organization. He compares Youngstown to other communities within Ohio and praises the efforts of the city's Jewish community. He states that the results of fundraising campaigns reveal that Youngstown knew about the conditions facing German Jews during the early years of Hitler's reign, and they were ready to help. While DiRocco's work proves that Youngstown Jews were prepared to help financially,[19] it does not address the willingness of the Jewish community to help on a personal level.

During the early Twentieth Century, the United States experienced high rates of immigration. This fulfilled the need for industrialized labor.Emigrants settling in Youngstown were able to find work in the city's steel industry, yet were not immediately accepted by the community. Many native-born Americans believed that certain ethnic groups assimilated more easily than others. Eastern Europeans were among those believed to be unlikely to assimilate.[20] In an effort to reduce the numbers of emigrants from Southern and Eastern Europe, Congress passed the First Quota Act of 1921 and the Immigration Act of 1924, also known as the Johnson-Reed Act. The quotas determined the number of emigrants allowed from each country. These figures were based on the

[19] Di Rocco II, 41-61.
[20] Reed Ueda, *Postwar Emigrants America: A Social History* (Boston: Bedford/St. Martins, 1994), 37.

1890 census and favored older, established emigrants groups from Northern and Western Europe.[21] By 1924 restriction of immigration was the norm and generally supported by the public and federal government.[22] The passage of this legislation reflected the desire of those with political power to control the American public and prevent unwanted challenges to nationalistic ideals. The American people's support of this legislation reflected their desire for stability in a rapidly changing world.

No changes to immigration quotas were made between 1938 and 1941. This meant that many European Jews who wanted to come to the United States were turned away. They were not turned away because they lacked the means to support themselves in the United States, but they were not permitted to enter the U.S. simply because quotas had already been filled. Leonard Dinnerstein argues that in the 1930s American Jews were disorganized, timid, and feared worsening existing anti-Semitism in America.[23] The American public was largely apathetic to the plight of Jewish refugees and did not pressure Congress to make changes to accommodate those trying to leave Europe.

By 1942, the news of the concentration camps and inhumane treatment of European Jews challenged the apathy of the American public. Nearly every American Jewish organization supported the creation of a Jewish homeland in Palestine. Though Zionism existed since the late 19th century, it had not previously seen this much support from American Jews. American Jews were a largely assimilated population who had found success in the United States, or at least believed in the possibility to do so. German

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[21] "Who Was Shut Out?: Immigration Quotas, 1925-1927 - History Matters" http://historymatters.gmu.edu/d/5078. Accessed 17 Jan. 2017.
[22] Ueda, 38.
[23] Dinnerstein,7.

Jews who found success in America were the exception, as they did not shift their views to support Zionism.[24] During the 1940s and 1950s, a large portion of the American public felt that the United States should make provisions for those fleeing the effects of Nazism, fascism, and communism. They did not think that existing immigration quotas should apply under these extreme circumstances.[25]President Truman's executive order in 1945 permitted 40,000 refugees and displaced persons to enter the United States. Leonard Dinnerstein argues that this action was more symbolic than practical. There were over one million displaced persons in Europe. The number allowed into the United States was miniscule in comparison.[26]

Gradually, legislation developed which allowed additional postwar emigrants into the United States. Much of this legislation did not offer additional opportunities for Jewish Holocaust survivors. Under the War Brides Act of 1945, foreign born spouses and children of members of the American military were allowed to enter the United States.[27] These circumstances did not apply to the majority of the European Jewish refugee population. It was more common for Holocaust survivors to marry one another than to marry members of the American armed forces. The displaced Persons Act of 1948 increased opportunities for European immigration to the United States, but fell short in helping many survivors of the Holocaust. The law discriminated against Jewish emigrants by means of restrictions that were difficult for many to circumvent. The DP Act of 1948 required that thirty percent of displaced persons admitted to the United States be farmers.

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[24]*Ibid*.
[25] Ueda, 36-37.
[26]Dinnerstein, 7.
[27] Ueda, 36-37.

This excluded the majority of European Jews who worked as educated professionals and merchants.[28] Though the DP Act of 1948 did not help as many European Jews as it could have, this legislation did establish procedures that enabled future emigrants to enter the United States during and following times of crisis. This legislation allowed "mortgaging" of up to fifty percent of the following year's quota, which cut down the waiting time for prospective European emigrants.[29] In addition, it established the practice of corporate sponsorship, allowing philanthropic organizations to act as sponsors when refugees had no American friends or family members willing and able to do so.[30] In 1950, the government amended the DP Act. The updated legislation removed discriminatory restrictions and increased the number of emigrants permitted to enter the United States. The 1953 Refugee Relief Act allowed over 200,000 non-quota visas and made it easier for refugees to transition to permanent resident status.[31]

The United Service for New Americans was the major resettlement agency responsible for facilitating the emigration of Jewish DPs in the late 1940s and early 1950s. The USNA collected data about the experience of postwar refugees in order to determine the effectiveness of their programming efforts. A USNA field report from 1952 indicates a difference between those who were resettled in large cities and those who were resettled in medium and small communities. The report indicates that even when the smaller, local communities attempted to make newly resettled refugees feel welcome, the refugees felt isolated. Many did not stay in these communities long.

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[28] *Ibid.*
[29] *Ibid.*
[30] Dinnerstein, 113-114.
[31] Ueda, 36-37.

Refugees who chose to remain in smaller cities stated that they did so because they had established a support system there. This support system usually consisted of family members.[32]

The Jewish community of Youngstown, Ohio, had previously established a Jewish Federation and raised significant funds for the assistance of Jewish refugees in the 1930s and early 1940s.[33] Many refugees who settled in Youngstown during this time assimilated quickly and were well-received by the community. The Jewish community continued to raise funds and began work to assist a new type of emigrants: the Holocaust survivor.[34] Beth Cohen states that the American people assumed that Jewish DPs were the same as European Jewish emigrants who arrived in America earlier in the century. They held them to the same standards of self-reliance and adaptation. Cohen notes that the previous emigrants came to the United States in search of economic prosperity and a better quality of life. They were motivated by different factors than postwar DPs who were forced away from their homes to avoid being the targets of genocide.[35]

A 1948 newspaper article depicts the efforts of the Youngstown Council of Jewish Women to raise funds for war orphans and homeless women both in the United States and still in Europe. The photographs included in the article feature several women working to deliver donated merchandise and display it in the store. The article notes that the store was managed by Mr. and Mrs. Gustav Polk, refugees.[36] This collaborative effort

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[32]Helmrich, 63.
[33]DiRocco II, 41-61.
[34] Leah Ifft, "The Jewish Community of Youngstown, Ohio Responds to Holocaust Era Refugees, 1938-present" (Seminar Paper, Youngstown State University, 2016).

[35] Cohen, 2.
[36] Youngstown Vindicator. "Thrift Shop Helps Needy Here and Abroad." *The Youngstown Vindicator*,

between the established Jewish community and Jewish refugees indicates that the refugee population was assimilating successfully. The placement of the Polks in a leadership role indicates that the Council of Jewish Women was invested personally in helping refugees and recognized their value as members of the community. Despite the efforts of the Jewish community of Youngstown, many refugees and displaced persons who passed through Youngstown did not remain there permanently. Many of those who left did so in pursuit of economic opportunity elsewhere as they did not wish to remain dependent on local relatives, especially when those familial relationships were strained.

January 4, 1948.

CHAPTER TWO

While all refugees required some degree of assistance during the resettlement process, children separated from their parents required extra help. In addition to financial backing, unaccompanied minors required the care and supervision of adults. The cases of children resettling in Youngstown, Ohio in the absence of their parents indicate that there must have been people in Youngstown willing to assume responsibility for them. Prior to and during the Second World War, it was not uncommon for families unable to emigrate together to send their children to safety first. An examination of several cases of unaccompanied minors who settled in Youngstown in provides insight into the character of the Jewish community of Youngstown and the nature of assistance it was willing to provide. In these cases, the children assimilated well and led successful adult lives. The Youngstown Jewish community welcomed refugees and invested in their resettlement personally as well as financially.

Ernst R.[1] was born in Dornham, Germany in 1932. Before the war, he lived a comfortable life in Germany with his family. His parents were respected in their community and able to provide for their young son. By 1935, Ernst's parents knew that the security of their standard of living, and eventually their physical safety, would be at risk if they remained in Germany. In 1941, Ernst's parents made arrangements for him to travel to the United States. German Jewish Children's Aid sponsored him, placing him in the home of Mr. and Mrs. Louis Green in Youngstown. Simultaneously, Charlotte

Wilkoff, the Vice President of the Jewish Federation of Youngstown, worked with the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee to make arrangements for them. In a series of letters, Mrs. Wilkoff attempted to communicate the urgency of bringing Ernst's parents, Wilhelm and Ilsie, to Youngstown as it became increasingly difficult for Jews to leave Germany. At this time, the JDC received up to three hundred letters daily requesting the same assistance, with the same urgency, under similar circumstances. Wilhelm and Ilsie arrived in the United States in July 1941. They were reunited with Ernst and resettled in Youngstown with the assistance of the National Refugee Service. By January 1942, Wilhelm, Ilsie and Ernst had rented rooms in the home of Mr. C., who lived in the home while his wife and children spent the winter in Florida.[2] Though the R. family was safe from Nazi persecution, they experienced a decrease in standard of living upon arrival in the United States.

Though Mr. C. provided housing Ernst and his family, he was not able to empathize with their experience as refugees. After the United States officially entered the war in December 1941, Germans living in the United States were classified as enemy aliens. Though the R. family was more accurately classified as victims rather than enemies, this was not understood by all Americans during this time. Mr. C., became concerned because he owned a shortwave radio and the R. family, classified as enemy aliens, was living in his home. This violated wartime policies as it could be dangerous if

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[1] In the interest of protecting the privacy of the individuals I have studied, I have chosen not to identify them using surnames.

[2] Youngstown Area Jewish Federation, "Selected Jewish Family and Children's Service Case Files", unpublished, 1938-present.

German spies gained access to such equipment. Mr. C. wrote to the Jewish Federation seeking guidance. After the exchange of several letters, the Jewish Federation determined that it was acceptable to leave the radio in the home, as long as the R. family did not have access to it. This incident indicates that there was at least some level of uneasiness among Youngstown's Jewish community with the idea of German Jews living among them.

Though there may have been some temporary difficulties, as well as financial hardship, Ernst adjusted and made friends at school and in the community. He became a naturalized citizen of the United States in 1946. His family began to establish roots in Youngstown. Wilhelm worked in the wholesale meat industry, and Ilsie was a homemaker.[3] Ernst attended The Rayen School. According to a written personal statement kept in his Jewish Family Services file, he received a well-rounded education that included the study of several languages, history, music and the sciences. He participated in numerous extracurricular activities, including the Boy Scouts of America. After graduation, he began classes at Georgetown University in 1951.

At Georgetown, Ernst studied biology and was involved in the Reserve Officers' Training Corps. In 1955, he entered the Georgetown University Medical School, but ran into financial difficulties and resigned. Due to the expense and later financial repercussions associated with immigration, the R. family was unable to assist Ernst with all of his educational expenses at this time. By 1956, Ernst was a graduate student at The Ohio State University. He studied anatomy and financed his education by assisting in a laboratory. His parents eventually received restitution funds from the German government that enabled them to help with the cost of his education. In addition, he

received an offer of financial assistance from a family friend in Youngstown.[4] This indicates that, although the Youngstown Jewish Community may have initially been uncomfortable with the refugee and DP population, this sentiment did not last. Ernst earned the respect and support of a community that was financially and personally invested in his success. Though his studies were again interrupted when he was called to serve in the United States Army, Ernst eventually graduated from Case Western Reserve University with a degree in dentistry.[5] He married, had five children, and worked as a dentist in the Youngstown area for thirty years. He served in several leadership positions within the community and local government while practicing dentistry.[6]

Young Ernst faced adversity as a nine year old boy, separated from his parents, and sent to a foreign country to live with strangers during a time of war. In Germany, Jews were being deported to Poland and forced into ghettos and concentration camps. Ernst's family was among some of the last to be able to leave Germany. It is likely he feared that his parents would be killed. Yet, he performed well academically in his Youngstown school, even in their absence. He continued to pursue his educational and career goals despite financial obstacles. This demonstrates that Ernst's ability to overcome adversity was present at a very young age. He continued to use this ability throughout his young adult life.

The ability to overcome adversity alone does not explain Ernst's rapid assimilation in the United States and his successful adult life. He benefited greatly from a

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[3] *Ibid.*
[4] *Ibid.*
[5] *Ibid.*
[6] "Tributes: Dr. Ernst Rose", *Vindy.com* (October 3, 2013) http://www.vindy.com/

community that was invested personally and financially in his success. The community clearly embraced him as a trusted medical practitioner and government official. Ernst's life would have been dramatically different if he had remained in Germany or resettled in an American community that did not have the resources or desire to assist refugees.

Sonja S**.** was born in Mambourg, Germany in 1927. Her father, Hirsch, worked first as a salesman, and later as an office manager, in the fertilizer industry. He was highly regarded by his employers, but lost his job when the business he worked for was forced to fire all Jewish employees. Without regular work he was unable to provide for his family. Sonja's mother, Frieda, came from a wealthy family and operated a fabric and sewing store. This business kept the household afloat until it was seized by the Nazis in power.[7]

In 1936, her mother fell ill with pneumonia. She did not receive medical treatment and did not survive. As an adult, Sonja stated that her mother died due to lack of medical care.[8] This circumstance was a result of Nazism and anti-Semitism in Germany during the 1930s. The Nazi party placed restrictions on Jews practicing professions, such as medicine. After the death of her mother, Sonja lived at a Jewish boarding school in Bad Neuheim, Germany. This arrangement provided her with relief from the poor treatment she received at the public school in her hometown. In addition, it ensured that she would be cared for while Hirsch struggled to earn a living and made arrangements to leave Germany. This arrangement did not last. After Kristallnacht, the children of the boarding

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news/tributes/2013/oct/03/dr-ernst-ros/ (accessed September 30, 2016).

[7] Saul S. Friedman, *Amcha: An Oral Testament of the Holocaust* (Washington D.C., University Press of America, 1979) 60.

[8] Youngstown Area Jewish Federation

school, including Sonja, were loaded into cattle cars and transported to the Jewish Rothschild Orphanage in Frankfurt.[9] Sonja was able to contact her father. As he attempted to retrieve his child from the orphanage[10], Hirsch was arrested by the Nazis and later imprisoned in Dachau.[11]

Dachau, established in March of 1933, was the first of the Nazi-built concentration camps. Initially, Dachau held relatively few Jewish prisoners. Jews interned in Dachau during this time were generally German Communists, Social Democrats, trade-unionists, or individuals who had violated the Nuremberg laws. After Kristallnacht, in November of 1938, the Jewish population at Dachau increased significantly. Over 10,000 Jewish men were held there by Nazi guards. Prisoners who could prove they were able to leave Germany were often released after serving a term of a few weeks to several months.[12]

Recha Freier established the Youth Aliyah organization in 1933 to protect German Jewish children from Nazi persecution.[13] Prior to the Second World War, approximately five thousand teenagers escaped to Palestine where they remained safe in Youth Aliyah boarding schools.[14] In a 1939 letter, Hirsch urged his young daughter to attempt to leave Germany on a kindertransport, or travel with Youth Aliyah to Palestine,

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[9] Friedman, 1979, 62-64.
[10] *Ibid.*
[11] Youngstown Area Jewish Federation
[12]The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, "Dachau", *Holocaust Encyclopedia* https://www.ushmm.org/wlc/en/article.php? ModuleId=10005214 (accessed April 1, 2017).
[13] Youth Aliyah Child Rescue, "History", http://www.youthaliyah.org/about/history (accessed July 19, 2017).
[14] American-Israeli Cooperative Enterprise."Youth Aliyah", *Jewish Virtual Library.* http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/youth-aliyah (accessed June 7, 2017).

if presented with the opportunity. Fortunately, Hirsch was able to leave Dachau. In 1939, the S. family secured an affidavit of financial support from Hirsch's cousin, Abraham. Sonja used this affidavit of support and her father's status as a Russian citizen to facilitate his release from Dachau. Hirsch retrieved Sonja from the orphanage in Frankfurt and they returned to Neustadt until they were able to emigrate to the United States.[15] They settled in Youngstown, Ohio. They lived in an apartment on Oakland Ave, and Hirsch worked at a scrap yard in nearby Sharon, Pennsylvania.[16]

In 1941, Sonja's father re-married.[17] His second wife, Dina, a widow, was also born in Russia. She arrived in the United States in 1911.[18] Waves of anti-Jewish pogroms swept through Russia between 1880 and 1920. Dina was the mother of nine children, meaning Sonja, an only child, was suddenly a part of a large family. The 1930 and 1940 census records show Dina, her children, and an African American domestic worker living in a three bedroom home which they owned, on the south side of Youngstown. The home they lived in at the time of the 1940 census was built in 1935[19]. The fact that they lived in a newly built home, and were able to employ domestic help, indicates that the family was not struggling financially. It is likely that Sonja and her father moved into the established family home after his marriage to Dina, rather than relocating all of the home's inhabitants.

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[15] Friedman,1979, 65-67.
[16] The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, "Sonja Schulmann Schwartz Papers", *Collections Search United States Holocaust Memorial Museum* 1919-1988 http://collections.ushmm.org/search/catalog/irn76663 (accessed November 1, 2016).
[17] Courtview Justice Solutions. "Mahoning County Probate Court Records", *Courtview.com* (May 30, 1941) http://eprobate.mahoningcountyoh.gov/eservices/home.page.2 (accessed October 20, 2016).
[18] US Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Youngstown, Ohio, 1920-1940.
[19] Mahoning County Auditor. *Mahoning County Auditor Property Search*

Adjustments are often difficult when single parent families are merged and become blended families. Sonja had to make the transition from only child to one of many. The details of this transition are not known. Her stepsister's obituary refers to Sonja's father as the deceased's "stepfather", but refers to Sonja as "sister", not "stepsister."[20] Unless this was an error made by the writer of the obituary, it indicates the development of a sisterly bond. Little is known about Sonja's relationship with her stepmother, but it is clear that she felt a strong loyalty to her biological mother in her adult life. In 1987, Israel extended certificates of commemorative citizenship to all Jewish victims of the Holocaust. In order to receive this certificate, a surviving family member was required to submit a page of testimony detailing the circumstances of the victim's death. In 1988, Sonja submitted a page of testimony to Yad Vashem on behalf of her mother. This indicates a feeling of connection to her mother and a desire to honor her memory.[21]

Sonja appears to have adjusted well socially and was liked by her peers. She attended South High School where she was a member of the stagecraft club in 1946.[22] As an adult, Sonja donated several items to the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. Among these artifacts was an autograph book filled with signatures and notes from her teenage years. She clearly had many friends. Several of the notes included the phrase "American girl" and referenced the ability to overcome adversity.[23] Sonja's peers

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http://oh-mahoning-auditor.publicaccessnow.com/AddressSearch.aspx (accessed October 20, 2016).

[20] "Tributes: Helen Chevlen." *Vindy.com* (July 11, 2014) http://www.vindy.com/news/tributes/2014/jul/11/helen-chevle/ (accessed October 20, 2016).

[21] Youngstown Area Jewish Federation.

[22] South High School. "U.S., School Yearbooks, 1880-2012", *Ancestry.com.* (1946) http://www.ancestry.com (accessed October 20, 2016).

[23] The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum.

provided with encouragement and acceptance. This reflects their willingness to embrace Sonja, easing her transition from grieving, young refugee to assimilated United States citizen.

Sonja faced many emotional challenges associated with the loss of her mother, experiences of anti-Semitism, separation from her father, unexpected immigration to the United States, and her father's remarriage. She met these challenges by continuing to honor her mother's memory. She became involved in the Youngstown community very shortly after her arrival in the United States, and embraced the opportunity to build relationships with her new siblings. These actions reveal much about her character. Similarly to Ernst R., Sonja's ability to overcome adversity, combined with the support she received in Youngstown, led to successful assimilation and transition into adulthood.

The experiences of Ernst R. and Sonja S. reflect cases where the economic and social circumstances favored remaining in Youngstown. Ernst and Sonja were both children and had little control over where their parents settled. Their parents went to great lengths to leave Germany in an effort to protect their children. Both sets of parents supported sending the children to safety first, putting their own safety second. They continued to make decisions based on the welfare of their children after they reached the relative security of the United States. Those decisions included remaining in Youngstown. Ernst lived away from Youngstown while attending college, yet still came back to the area to practice dentistry. Sonja remained in the Youngstown area throughout her adult life.[24] Youngstown was generally a hospitable place for Holocaust era immigrants and refugees. Though the economic and social factors were generally

hospitable, this does not mean that all who came to Youngstown in an effort to avoid Nazi persecution remained there.

Henny P**.** was born in Stuttgart, Germany in 1925. Before the war, her father owned a number of shoe stores throughout Germany. Henny's mother worked with him. The family business employed many people outside the family. Since they both worked, Henny's parents employed outside help to care for Henny and her younger brother, Julius. The family lived in a comfortable apartment and regularly invited friends and family to their home for parties and special occasions.[25]

Though she was just eight years old, Henny recalled years later that her parents cried when they learned that Hitler had won the 1933 election in Germany. With the rise of Nazism, they feared changes in their economic stability, social standing, and physical safety. In 1938, their fears were realized when the Nazis took Henny's father to a concentration camp. The Nazi government required the family to relinquish their business. Henny's mother refused to sign the paperwork without her husband present. Nazi authorities allowed him to leave the concentration camp briefly in order to sign the store over to the Nazi government. He used this opportunity to flee to Switzerland. Unfortunately, he had to leave his family behind.[26]

Eventually it became impossible for Henny's family to remain together safely. Leaving Germany became the top priority. Henny's younger brother, Julius, was sent to

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[24]B. Coupland, "Holocaust Survivor Shares Story", *Warren Tribune Chronicle* (April 28, 2014).
[25] Henny Porter, interview by Pamela Travis, *USC Shoah Foundation Visual History Archive*, (March 24, 1996) https://digital.maag.ysu.edu:8443/xmlui/handle/1989/11781/browse?value=Henny+Porter+%5Binterview%5D&type=title (accessed April 3, 2017)
[26]*Ibid.*

England. Henny remained at home with her mother, waiting for permission to leave Germany. When Henny's mother received permission, she feared losing the opportunity if she waited and chose to leave thirteen year old Henny behind.[27] At a young age, Henny was forced to endure instability, anxiety, and fear. Initially, she stayed with family friends while she waited for her visa. When the family she was staying with received permission to go to the United States, Henny was again left behind. She worked in a nursing home in exchange for room and board until she was able to join her parents. Henny was later reunited with her parents in Italy. They traveled through Europe until they were able to enter the United States.[28]

When Henny first arrived in New York City in 1941, she was traveling with only her parents. Julius was unable to leave England. She recalled seeing the impressive New York City skyline and the Statue of Liberty for the first time. Her family received assistance from Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society for temporary housing. Originally established in New York City in 1881, HIAS first provided help to Jews fleeing pogroms in Russia and Eastern Europe and later helped Jews who were displaced by the Nazi regime.[29] Henny's family stayed in the city a very short time, but Henny still attended school, and even found time for socializing. She was sixteen years old and went on a date with a boy she met on the voyage to the United States. He took her to a movie: *Gone with the Wind.*[30]

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[27] *Ibid.*
[28] *Ibid.*
[29] Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society, "History", https://www.hias.org/history (accessed July 19, 2017).
[30] Henny Porter, 1996.

Henny's uncle lived in Youngstown, Ohio. He sponsored the family so that they were able to come to the United States. After a short time in New York City, Henny's family traveled to Youngstown. She had the opportunity to meet several American aunts, uncles, and cousins. She felt welcomed by her Youngstown family. She did not feel quite as welcomed while attending school. Though Henny spoke English, she did not speak American English. She did not understand American slang and social customs. She felt this made her stick out when she wanted nothing more than to blend in.[31]

Henny did not have much time to overcome the social challenges she experienced with her peers in Youngstown. Shortly after their arrival in Ohio, Henny's family moved to Cleveland. She began to adjust to life in America, but was burdened by shyness. Henny recalled difficulty in overcoming the feeling of being different from her peers. She acknowledged that she had a different upbringing.[32] Her classmates did not have a parent who had been in a concentration camp. They had not been forced to flee homes they loved. They had not been separated from their siblings by war. She wanted very much to not only be an American, but to feel like an American as well.

Henny attended high school in Cleveland and excelled academically. Her teachers were impressed by her ability to achieve academic success in spite of the obstacles she had faced during her childhood. They attempted to present her as a positive example and an inspiration to her classmates. This mortified Henny. She wanted nothing more than to blend in.[33]

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[31] *Ibid*.
[32] *Ibid*.
[33] *Ibid*.

Henny's father was self-employed while living in Germany. He did not want to work as a wage laborer upon arrival in the United States.[34] It is likely the decision to leave Youngstown was based on an economic opportunity available in Cleveland. Shortly after arrival in Cleveland, Henny's father opened a shoe store. The family struggled financially. Henny remembered that her mother took a job in the garment manufacturing business. She was happy to work and very proud to present her first paycheck to her husband. Her husband did not share her enthusiasm. He believed it was his duty to make sure that his wife did not have to work.[35] Henny's mother returned to her role as a homemaker.

Henny's brother, Julius, was finally able to join the family in Cleveland in 1943. Henny stated in her Shoah Foundation interview that he was never the same.[36] He was fourteen years old and had spent vital developmental years away from his birth family, under terrifying circumstances. He was outgoing and jovial prior to the war. Upon his return he was painfully shy, even around family members.

While attending high school in Cleveland, Henny worked in her father's store. She stated that she enjoyed working and the feeling of playing an important role in her family's business. Despite her pride in her contributions, she remembered her father as being a strict disciplinarian. She was beginning to be involved in social activities and was finally becoming accepted by her peers. Her parents did not require her to attend college,

[34] *Ibid*.
[35] *Ibid*.
[36] *Ibid*.

as they did her brother, but she viewed college as an opportunity to establish her independence.[37]

Henny finished high school in Cleveland, then attended college at Ohio State University. She stated that she was unsure of what she wanted to study or who she was. She had spent her life fleeing from a dangerous government, then lived under the control of strict parents. She did not have the opportunity to discover who she was or what she wanted until later in her life. She studied business administration and attended classes for two years before she met her husband.[38]

Henny's husband, Mort, appeared in the final segment of her USC Shoah Foundation video testimony. The interviewer asked him if there was anything he would like to say to Henny. When he spoke about his feelings for his wife, and the story of her childhood, he began to cry. He was obviously very much in love with her and proud of her. Throughout Henny's video testimony, recorded in 1996, she appeared reflective and at peace. She clearly overcame adversity through her own self-reliance and the support of a partner who treated her with respect.[39]

While Henny did not endure the trauma of a concentration camp, she did experience fear and familial instability at a very young age, and over an extended period of time. Henny did not express feelings of guilt that she was reunited with her parents sooner than Julius, or that she recovered from wartime trauma more easily than he did. Henny did not mention her adult relationship with her brother.

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[37] *Ibid*.
[38] *Ibid*.
[39] *Ibid*.

Though Henny's family did not remain in Youngstown, their time here reflects the similar experiences of both prewar and postwar refugees in the Youngstown area and throughout the United States. Henny experienced initial social difficulties combined with the difficulties of not having a stable home during the Nazi reign. These difficulties were compounded by the lack of control she had over her own life. She was a minor child. Decisions about where to live were made by the adults in her life, particularly her father.

Henny did not specifically address how she felt about moving from Youngstown to Cleveland. It is not clear if she wished to remain in Youngstown near the other members of her extended American family, or if she expected that she would more easily connect with her peers in Cleveland than she did in Youngstown. Henny's time in Youngstown, surrounded by their extended American family provided her parents time to plan their next steps establishing economic self-sufficiency. Without the help of their Youngstown family members, Henny's family may not have been able to leave Europe. Henny's father was able to remain self-employed, as he wished, while living in Cleveland. There, Henny finally found the stability of a permanent home. This provided her with the opportunity to decide what she wanted for herself as an adult.

The stories of Henny and Ernst illustrate the experiences common to many who left Europe prior to imprisonment in concentration camps. Circumstances differed for those who survived the concentration camps. As they began the process of rebuilding their lives after liberation, many did not wish to remain in Europe. Often they lost their pre-war homes. Some were the only surviving members of their families. Others faced continued anti-Semitism, despite the fall of the Nazi party and the liberation of the

concentration camps. Some feared life under the rule of newly installed communist governments would be just as difficult as under Nazi rule.

In order to permanently address the issue of displaced persons, international leaders had to be willing to agree to accept new immigrants and implement the legislation and bureaucracy deemed necessary to resettle them. Leonard Dinnerstein argues that over fifty percent of Americans were against admitting displaced persons to the United States. The Eightieth Congress of the United States was hesitant to act in opposition to public opinion. He credits the organized efforts of religious, labor, and social groups with effectively encouraging a shift in public opinion in favor of displaced persons.[40]

In *Case Closed*, Beth Cohen states that orphans experienced greater difficulty than most in the transition to life in the United States. She notes that most unaccompanied minors were male and between the ages of seventeen and eighteen years, though the media gave the impression that most were younger. Cohen states that most experienced difficulty when living with foster families or relatives. For some, living in a family home was a constant and painful reminder of the loss of their own families. For others, the difficulty stemmed from guardians who did not understand and were not sensitive to the physical and psychological damage survivors sustained during the war.[41]

The experience of William V. reflects that of many children who lost their parents during the war and traveled to the United States as teenage orphans. They were not yet adults, but had lived through experiences that their American counterparts had not.

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[40]Leonard Dinnerstein, *America and the Survivors of the Holocaust* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1982).137-182.

[41] Beth Cohen, *Case Closed: Holocaust Survivors in Postwar America* (Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2007),94-114.

William V. was born in Czechoslovakia on November 21, 1928. He came from a close family of seven children. His father worked as a shoemaker. William attended school and began to learn his father's trade. In 1939, the Germans divided Czechoslovakia. The region William lived in was annexed by Hungary at that time. From 1939 to 1944, William lived in Fascist Hungary. In 1944, after the Germans occupied Hungary, the V. family was forced into the Solotvina ghetto. After four weeks, they were taken to Auschwitz. William was sixteen years old.

At Auschwitz, William's father advised him to tell anyone who asked that he was eighteen years old, so that he would be selected for work, rather than death. He did as he was told and was separated from his mother and younger siblings. He would never see them again. He escaped selection for death twice and was sent to Gleiwitz II, a sub-camp of Auschwitz, where he labored under cruel conditions and endured severe physical punishment. Following the evacuation of Gleiwitz II in January 1945, he was transferred to Flossenburg and worked building barracks. Next, he was transferred to Plattling, a sub-camp of Flossenburg, where he helped to build bomb shelters for the SS and maintained a Luftwaffe airfield.

In May 1945, four hundred prisoners, including William, were told to prepare to leave the camp. They were marched away from the camp by SS guards. Prisoners who could not keep pace with the group were shot, and SS guards fled. William and a friend broke away from the group and hid. They made their way to an American camp wearing Nazi uniforms they found in a barn. The United States military sent William to a hospital

to recover from the physical effects of his imprisonment.[42]

In 1947, William was part of a group of surviving orphans who were taken to Bremerhaven, then to New York. Jewish Family Services placed William at the Bellefaire Children's Home in Cleveland Heights. Bellefaire was originally established in 1868 as the Jewish Orphan Asylum. By 1900, the facility housed up to four hundred Jewish children. In 1928, the JOA was renamed the Bellefaire Jewish Children's Bureau. In 1941, Bellefaire began offering services to Jewish children with behavioral and social problems, as well as those who were lacking a stable home environment.[43]

A caseworker employed by European Jewish Children's Aid described William as adapting remarkably well just one week after his arrival at the New York reception center. He expressed an eagerness to prove himself useful and talked of skills he learned while living in a DP camp. He was trying to convince authorities of his value. He had depended on this tactic for survival while imprisoned in concentration camps. He expressed a desire to work as an automotive mechanic, perhaps because he knew this was a valuable, marketable skill.[44]

William's childhood friend, Eugene, resettled in Chicago. He visited William at Cleveland's Bellefaire. Deborah Portnoy of European Jewish Children's Aid wrote to Stanley Engel of the Jewish Federation of Youngstown in December of 1947. She noted that neither boy had established roots in their respective cities, and would possibly benefit

[42]Bill Vegh, interview by, *USC Shoah Foundation Visual History Archive*, (January 28, 1998) http://vhaonline.usc.edu/viewingPage?testimonyID=40672&returnIndex=0 (Accessed May 15, 2017).
[43] Jewish Children's Board. *Bellefaire JCB History.* http://www.bellefairejcb.org/about-us/history-timeline/ (accessed August 5, 2016).
[44] Youngstown Area Jewish Federation.

from being placed together in Youngstown.[45] The case file does not mention any problems during the time William spent at Bellefaire. It is not clear why Portnoy sought alternate arrangements for William. It may be that Bellefaire was never intended to be a long term residence or the fact that William was now over the age of eighteen. Beth Cohen noted that in most cases institutional settings did not work well for orphaned Holocaust survivors. The rigid structure and crowded conditions were too similar to life in a concentration camp.[46]

William arrived in Youngstown in January 1948. He was placed in the home of Mr. and Mrs. S. and their eleven year old son. Mr. S. was the son of a Russian immigrant, and Mrs. S. was born in Russia. These factors may have encouraged them to open their home to an orphaned refugee. Jewish Family Services caseworker notes indicate that Mrs. S was responsible for the care of her father who had fallen ill. This required her to make frequent trips to and from Cleveland, in addition to caring for her son at home. These circumstances caused her to be unsure if she would be able to include meals as a part of William's living arrangements. She expressed hesitancy to commit to anything more than lodging. This may have caused some anxiety for William as he was still learning the English language and was not accustomed to ordering and eating in restaurants.[47]

Beth Cohen argued that American social workers made the mistake of holding postwar refugees to the same standard as previous European immigrants. She stated that

[45] *Ibid*.
[46] Cohen,107-114.
[47] Youngstown Area Jewish Federation.

this contributed to hardship during the resettlement process.[48] Caseworker notes in William's file indicate that this was true. The caseworker noted William's acne and nervousness, while at the same time mentioning his generally pleasant personality. She made no mention of the physical trauma he had endured or the grief associated with the loss of his family. Acne and slight nervousness are minor afflictions considering the hardships William experienced during the war. The case file mentions details of the arrangements for food, clothing, lodging, education, and employment, but there is no mention of provisions for medical or psychological care.[49]

The caseworker notes include an incident regarding William's living allowance, which was to pay his host family for lodging and meals. When it was decided that he would eat his meals with the family, this living allowance was reduced. The caseworker noted that during this discussion, William was argumentative and on the verge of tears According to the caseworker, he did not have a specific need for the additional money.[50] The caseworker did not consider that he was a young, single man. He had endured years of imprisonment and had been robbed of his childhood. It is likely that he simply wanted to be a normal teenager, with a little pocket money, so that he could enjoy social activities such as dating.

Shortly afterward, he found employment with an aluminum processing facility where he worked for a significant portion of his adult life. An owner of the company was Marvin Itzkovits, also known as Marvin Itts, an active philanthropist in the Jewish

[48] Cohen, 100.
[49] Youngstown Area Jewish Federation.
[50] *Ibid*.

community who employed several displaced persons after the war.[51] Many survivors of the Holocaust gained experience working with industrial equipment during wartime imprisonment and forced labor, but this experience could not be verified by a prospective employer via traditional means. Employers who hired newly resettled displaced persons assumed a risk as they could not rely on references from prior employers. This indicates a willingness to help on both a financial and personal level. Marvin Itts, the son of Austrian Jewish immigrants, was sympathetic to the difficulties experienced by new Americans.[52]

William eventually found the time and money for a social life. He married a woman named Lucille in June 1952.[53] She was the daughter of working class Hungarian immigrants.[54] The couple raised three children while William continued to work in the aluminum processing industry, and Lucille ran a fabric store. William and Lucille celebrated fifty years of marriage in 2002 when they were honored with a service and luncheon at their temple.[55]

William faced obstacles different from those of Ernst R. and Sonja S., but his successful assimilation after resettlement can also be attributed to his personal will to overcome adversity, and the willingness of his host community to help him. While resettlement programs may have overlooked the unique psychological needs of orphaned Holocaust survivors, William benefitted from the empathy of the Jewish community of Youngstown. The experiences of first and second generation Jewish immigrants living in

[51]James Stewart, interview by Leah Ifft (November 21, 2016).
[52] US Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, 1920-1940.
[53] Youngstown Area Jewish Federation.
[54] US Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census 1920-1940.
[55]"Service, Lunch Mark Vegh 50th at El Emeth*", Vindy.com* (July 28, 2002) http://www.vindy.com/news/2002/jul/28/service-lunch-mark-vegh-50th-at-el-emeth/?newswatch (accessed February 23, 2016).

the Youngstown area shaped empathy for Holocaust survivors, encouraging them to be of assistance whenever possible. William's host family included first and second generation Russian Jewish immigrants.[56] His employer was sympathetic to the plight of newly resettled refugees, and his wife was the daughter of Hungarian Jewish immigrants. If these individuals had not been accepting of William, or the refugee population in general, the outcome for William would have been different.

[56] US Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census 1920-1940.

CHAPTER THREE

Many survivors of the Holocaust married and started families after their horrific ordeal came to an end; they did not always wait until they had found permanent homes and employment to do so. Judy Tydor Baumel-Schwartz states that the motives for marriage were not complex. Couples married for reasons as simple as coming from the same place, speaking the same language, and both parties being single. She states that many of these marriages worked, but were less likely to succeed when women married under pressure or solely for protection. She notes that men did not experience the same pressure as women to begin marrying and having children. Baumel-Schwartz explains that when women stopped menstruating in the concentration camps, due to stress and starvation, many suspected the Nazis added ingredients to food and beverages that would lead to infertility. They were incredibly relieved when they resumed regular menstrual cycles and were able to become pregnant. While it took two partners to create a child, women bore the responsibility of carrying, delivering, and nurturing their babies.[1]

In 1945, there were very few children under the age of five years in the displaced persons camps. By 1946, children under the age of five years represented four and a half percent of the displaced persons population. According to Baumel-Schwartz, this indicated that women were recovering quickly in the physical sense.[2] Male and female survivors of the Holocaust were equally eager to establish a sense of normalcy in order to

[1] Judy Tydor Baumel-Schwartz, "The Identity of Women in the Sher'erit Hapletah: Personal and Gendered Identity as Determinants in Rehabilitation, Immigration, and Resettlement", in *Holocaust Survivors: Resettlement, Memories, Identities*, by Francoise S. Ouzan, Judy Tydor Baumel-Schwartz, Dalia Ofer, (New York: Berghahn Books, 2012): 18-45.

begin recovery in the psychological sense. The quest for normalcy included what Baumel-Schwartz refers to as a "return to gendered performance". For women this generally meant marriage, pregnancy, and homemaking.[3]

Americans also sought a return to traditional routines and uniform social standards during the postwar years. In *Perfectly Average: The Pursuit of Normality in Postwar America,* Anna Creadick states that the meaning of "normal" changed during the postwar years. It no longer meant "average" or "most common". Normality became the definition of an ideal to which Americans aspired. It was a combination of "typical and ideal" that was impossible for most to achieve. Creadick illustrates how advice literature of the late 1940s and 1950s published in pamphlets and periodicals such as *Reader's Digest* and *Ladies Home Journal* attempted to instruct the American people on how to behave. Issues such as child development, marriage, and sexuality were commonly addressed in this manner.[4] This provided direction to many Americans who were unsure of how to proceed after the war and no longer trusted their own instincts.

As young female survivors of the Holocaust attempted to navigate early marriage and young motherhood, they were often unable to ask the advice of their mothers, aunts, and grandmothers. Older women were less likely to have survived the war. This left Holocaust era refugees looking for guidance in these areas while simultaneously trying to assimilate into American culture.[5] It is reasonable to believe that at least some of them

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[2] *Ibid, 21.*
[3] *Ibid, 31-34.*
[4]Anna G. Creadick, *Perfectly Average: The Pursuit of Normality in Postwar America* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2010),1-14.
[5]Barbara Burstin, "Holocaust Survivors: Rescue and Resettlement in the United States", Encyclopedia, *Jewish Women's Archive* (March 20 2009)

may have encountered publications such as those Creadick mentioned. Those who did not read these materials themselves due to language barriers likely learned from other women who did.

Sisters Pepi W. and Edith M. managed to survive the concentration camps but struggled to remain together after arrival in the United States. Both were married while still living in Europe after liberation. The decisions made by the resettlement agencies as well as their husbands' wishes often determined these women's attempts at rebuilding their lives in the United States. The limited availability of suitable work for their husbands in Youngstown meant that they were unable to remain there long.

Pepi was born in Brustura, a small village in Czechoslovakia in 1920. Her sister, Edith M. was born six years later. Their father was employed making maps and handling legal documents used to resolve disputes over land. He worked out of town during the week, but was home most weekends. As the war began, the family began to scatter throughout Czechoslovakia and Hungary. In 1940, Pepi was living in the family home in Brustura with only her older brother, Michael. Their father became involved in the production of false citizenship documents on behalf of people who needed them to avoid Nazi persecution. The police were searching for him and it was unsafe for him to live in the family home. In 1941, he managed to return for a short visit by disguising himself as a woman. This is the last time Pepi and Michael saw their father.[6] By 1942, travel for Jews was heavily restricted, but their mother managed to return to Brustura to join Pepi

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https://jwa.org/encyclopedia/article/holocaust-survivors-rescue-and-resettlement-in-united-states [accessed October 10, 2016].

[6] Pepi Weiss, Interview by Carol Stulberg, *Youngstown State University: Digital Maag* (January 23, 1995) https://digital.maag.ysu.edu:8443/xmlui/handle/1989/11781/browse?value=Pepi+Weiss+%5Binterview%5

and Michael. They were able to remain in the family home until April 1944, when they were forced into the Mateszalka ghetto. During this time, Edith was in the Uzhorod ghetto.[7] In the summer of 1944 the Nazis deported Pepi, her mother, and Michael to Auschwitz.

At Auschwitz, Pepi was separated from her mother and brother, but was reunited with Edith. They remained together for the rest of the war. Pepi, a skilled seamstress, made sweaters and slippers from scrap clothing and fabric, then traded them for extra bread. In January 1945, Pepi and Edith were transferred first to Ravensbruck, then to Lippstadt, where they worked in a munitions factory. In Pepi's Shoah foundation testimony, she mentioned that Edith struggled with depression and suicidal thoughts during their time in the concentration camp. She recalled a time that she stopped Edith from walking into the electric barbed wire fence surrounding the camp. Pepi stated that the fact that her sister needed her fueled her own will to survive.[8] Edith credits Pepi with keeping her alive.[9] In April 1945, Pepi and Edith were forced to leave Lippstadt as a part of a death march. In the chaos of the fires and bombings, the Soviet armed forces liberated them. The sisters stated that it was important to them to remain together after the war. Pepi and Edith reunited with their brother, Michael, in Budapest. Their mother did not survive Auschwitz.[10]

While living in Budapest, Pepi reunited with her cousin, Herman. Herman had

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D&type=title [accessed June 9, 2017].

[7]Edith Morenstein, Interview by Anula Ellis, *Youngstown State University: Digital Maag* (November 13,1995) https://digital.maag.ysu.edu:8443/xmlui/handle/1989/11781/browse?value=Edith+Morenstein+%5Binterview%5D&type=title [accessed June 9, 2017].

[8] Weiss,1995.

[9] Morenstein,1995.

been able to avoid the concentration camps. He made a living by selling cigarettes. According to Pepi, this was a lucrative source of income. Herman was well-off in comparison to other Jewish survivors of the Holocaust whose possessions and assets had been seized by the Nazis. Pepi had limited economic resources. Both Pepi and Herman lacked the stability that a permanent home provides.[11] Though Herman did not suffer in the concentration camps, he did endure the effects of the war and political instability in Europe. Similar to most people displaced by the war, he craved a home and stability. He asked Pepi to marry him. Pepi remembered: "He proposed to me and, you know, you don't have nothing. We were looking for a home. He wanted to marry me and I was happy. That's it. But to tell you the truth, it's cousins. We were cousins."[12] Pepi did not state that she had initial reservations about marrying her cousin, but her tone of voice when describing the circumstances surrounding her marriage to Herman indicated that she may have been uncomfortable later with her decision.[13]

Pepi, Herman, Edith, and several family members next went to Heidenheim, Germany where they lived in a displaced person's camp. Pepi states that initially they lived in a shared space with other families, but were eventually able to get a private apartment. This was important, because after marriage, she and Herman were eager to have children. Pepi and Herman's first daughter, Miriam, was born in Heidenheim.[14] There Herman learned to repair radios, a trade he hoped would prove useful as a means of earning a living after resettlement. Pepi's brother, Michael, planned to go to Israel. She

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[10] *Ibid.*
[11] Weiss,1995.
[12] *Ibid*.
[13] *Ibid.*

wanted to follow him, but Herman resisted. He feared that he would be unable to earn a living there. Without Pepi's consent, Herman began the process of emigration to the United States. In 1949, Pepi, Herman, and Miriam were approved to resettle in the United States. Edith and her husband, Abe, were also approved to emigrate to the United States at the same time. Remaining together after resettlement in the United States proved to be a challenge for Pepi and Edith.

In *Case Closed,* Beth Cohen states that social workers were often insensitive to the emotional and psychological needs of Holocaust survivors. Caseworkers placed greater emphasis on assimilation and employment than psychological recovery from trauma. Mental health and personal preferences mattered little to them. Cohen argues that the agencies' needs were placed above the needs of the survivors.[15] This was true for Pepi and Edith. Pepi, Herman, and Miriam were assigned for resettlement in Los Angeles, California. Edith and Abe were assigned to Youngstown, Ohio. Pepi initially refused and attempted to bargain with caseworkers so that she could remain near Edith. Pepi was pregnant which added to the difficulties she experienced while traveling to the United States. She recounted being very physically ill and emotional. The caseworkers responded by providing her with additional resettlement funds and comfortable lodging, but they did not comply with Pepi's wishes to be resettled alongside her sister in Youngstown. When they realized she was too far along in her pregnancy and could not safely make the journey to Los Angeles, Pepi, Herman, and Miriam were allowed to stay

[14] *Ibid.*
[15] Cohen, 5-6 and 51.

in New York.[16]

Herman found work quickly in Camden, New Jersey, but Pepi was not happy. She was pregnant with their second child at the time. She threatened to leave Herman and take Miriam with her. Herman left his job and accompanied Pepi and Miriam to Youngstown, where they were reunited with Edith and Abe. Pepi's second child, Judy was born a month after their arrival in Youngstown. Herman was initially unable to find work. Edith's husband, Abe, found a job in Cleveland. The two sisters dealt with the separation by visiting one another frequently on weekends.[17] After a year, Herman found a job in Youngstown and was successful in his employment. He transitioned from repairing radios to repairing televisions. Herman traveled frequently for his profession. Though the local Jewish women made efforts to welcome refugees, Pepi did not establish close friendships with any of them, mainly because of the language barrier. The women she encountered in Youngstown only spoke English and she was not yet fluent. She was often isolated with her two young children. This was the case for several years until Herman died unexpectedly due to a cerebral hemorrhage. Pepi requested that he be buried in Cleveland as she planned to move closer to her siblings, niece, and cousins who were living there.[18]

A year after Pepi and her children settled in Cleveland, Abe found the opportunity for career advancement in New York. Pepi and Edith faced the threat of separation yet again.[19] Initially, Edith remained in Cleveland for the first two years that Abe worked in

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[16] Weiss,1995.
[17] *Ibid.*
[18] *Ibid.*
[19] *Ibid.*

New York. She gave birth to her daughter, Nancy, in 1953. Edith was happy surrounded by her family. She was offered work as a model, but her husband protested. During this time, Edith and Abe experienced marital difficulties. She stated that she would have been willing to grant him a divorce and been content with her extended family in Cleveland. Eventually, Abe took young Nancy to New York with him, forcing Edith to follow or risk being separated from her daughter.[20] Pepi and Edith were again separated, though this time Pepi had the companionship of her female cousins.[21]

Pepi struggled financially as a single mother after Herman's death. At her cousins' suggestion, Pepi traveled to Israel to meet Herman's brother, a man they had arranged for her to marry. Pepi and her family learned that this marriage was not possible due to a Jewish law that states a widow cannot marry the brother of her late husband. Pepi was alone and devastated in Israel when she reconnected with a man named Sam. Sam had also lived in the DP camp in Heidenheim after liberation.[22] Sam and Pepi returned to Cleveland together where they were married three months later. After about a year, Sam accepted a job in Los Angeles. Pepi resigned herself to the fact that she would not be able to remain with her siblings and settled in California with her husband and children. Her brother, Michael, remained in Cleveland. Her sister, Edith, eventually moved to Florida.[23]

Despite the geographic separation, the siblings remained close. They were able to visit one another frequently. While financial status was not often a topic under discussion

[20] Morenstein,1995.
[21] Weiss,1995.
[22] *Ibid.*
[23] *Ibid.*

in their Shoah Foundation testimonies, the visibile footage of their homes and the fact that they were able to travel frequently indicates that the sisters were comfortably middle class. Their children received college educations and began families themselves. Photographs included along with the Shoah Foundation interviews revealed that Edith and Pepi made several trips to visit one another. Though their husbands' career paths caused them to live apart, the financial stability they provided ensured that the sisters were able to remain close. Pepi died in January 2002, followed by Edith in December 2006.[24]

Pepi and Edith both entered into marriage under social and economic pressure. Pepi did not mention educational or vocational aspirations, though it is likely that she worked outside the home in order to support her children as most working class women would be forced to do when faced with the death of a spouse. She struggled financially as a single mother and, upon the urging of her extended family, remarried. While she may have felt love for both of her husbands, there was no traditional courtship or youthful romance. For Pepi, and many other survivors, marriage served the purpose of creating a sense of stability and a return to normalcy. Edith implied that her professional endeavors were subservient to those of her husband. In her Shoah Foundation interview, Edith referred to her work of fifteen years as a job, but clearly states that her husband had a career and credited him for his professional accomplishments. Her body language while discussing this subject appeared tense.

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[24] "United States Social Security Death Index," Pepi Weiss, 28 Jan 2002, *FamilySearch* https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:V3GR-3YS [accessed June 9 2017]; "United States Social Security Death Index," Edith Morenstein, 25 Dec 2006, *FamilySearch* https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:V3B4-12N [accessed June 9 2017].

According to Margarete Myers Feinstein, this was the norm for Eastern European Jewish women prior to the war. Women were responsible for maintaining the household and nurturing the emotional development of the family, particularly children. In many Orthodox households it was common for women to contribute to the household finances through work so that their husbands could devote more time to religious study. These women played the dual roles of provider and nurturer, but their economic contributions were not central to their identities. Feinstein argues that female Holocaust survivors viewed this version of motherhood as vital to the reclamation of their lives during the postwar years.[25]

A second pair of sisters, Edith B. and Aranka F., survived the Holocaust and resettled in Youngstown during the postwar years. Their experience in Youngstown differed from that of Pepi W. and Edith M. Edith B. and Aranka F. married, had children, and worked outside the home. They eventually worked alongside their husbands as business owners. The siblings remained close and lived in the Youngstown area for the majority of their postwar lives.

Edith was born in Vitka, Hungary in 1925.[26] Her sister, Aranka**,** was born four years later.[27] Their father worked in agricultural sales and loved music. He provided his family with a modest, two bedroom home and land to farm.[28] Their close family included their

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[25]Margarete Myers Feinstein, "Absent Fathers, Present Mothers", *Nashim: A Journal of Jewish Women's Studies & Gender Issues,* No. 13: Jewish Women in the Economy (Spring 2007):155-182.
[26]Edith Blau, Interview by Anula Ellis, *Youngstown State University: Digital Maag* (March 8, 1998) https://digital.maag.ysu.edu:8443/xmlui/handle/1989/11781/browse?value=Edith+Blau+%5Binterview%5D&type=title [accessed June 9, 2017].
[27]Aranka Furedi, Interview by Anula Ellis, *Youngstown State University: Digital Maag* (March 8, 1998) https://digital.maag.ysu.edu:8443/xmlui/handle/1989/11781/browse?value=Aranka+Furedi+%5Binterview%5D&type=title [accessed June 9, 2017].
[28]*Ibid.*

parents, younger sister, Lily, and a brother, Andrew. By 1939, Hungarian laws offered no protection for Jews. Aranka remembered that her father warned his children to be aware of anti-Semitism.[29] After Germany invaded Hungary in 1944, Jews were identified and forced into ghettos. The majority of the family was placed in the Mateszalka ghetto. Aranka remembered the ghetto consisted of three streets, with four families living in just one room.[30] Andrew was studying at a trade school in Budapest and was living with an aunt at this time.[31]

Several weeks later, the Nazis liquidated the ghettos, forcing Aranka, Edith, and their family into a series of camps. The Nazis first took them to Auschwitz. There Edith and Aranka were separated from their parents and younger sister, but were able to remain with one another. Later, the Nazis transferred Aranka and Edith to labor camps in Trunz, Stutthof, Nagelstal, and Danzig. Their parents, grandparents, and younger sister did not survive Auschwitz. Edith and Aranka managed to remain together through the duration of their imprisonment, and looked out for one another.[32] In March 1945, the Soviet armed forces liberated them in Germany. After the war, Aranka and Edith recovered in a hospital. Aranka recalled being terrified any time she was separated from Edith.[33] After they regained their physical health, Aranka and Edith returned to the family home in Vitka, where they were reunited with their brother, Andrew.[34] Andrew had managed to

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[29]*Ibid.*
[30]*Ibid.*
[31]Andrew Lehner, Interview by Mark Turkeltaub, *Youngstown State University: Digital Maag* (February 22, 1998) https://digital.maag.ysu.edu:8443/xmlui/handle/1989/11781/browse?value=Andrew+Lehner+%5Binterview%5D&type=title [accessed June 9, 2017].
[32]Furedi,1998.
[33]*Ibid.*
[34]*Ibid.*

survive the war. He was briefly imprisoned, but escaped by wearing a Nazi uniform. He survived the war in Budapest after obtaining false identification papers.[35]

Edith dated a man named Eugene prior to the war. She helped him run his business in Budapest. They planned to marry, but the war disrupted their plans. They were separated when Eugene was forced into slave labor and Edith returned to Vitka. Reunited after the war, the couple married in November 1945.[36] Their oldest daughter, Susie, was born in 1946, followed by Agnes in 1954. Aranka married a man named Morris. The couple had known one another prior to the war, but they were not romantically involved during that time.[37] Morris was eighteen years older than Aranka. Prior to the war, he ran a store, was married and had two children. His first wife and children were executed at Auschwitz.[38] Aranka did not provide details about her feelings for Morris, though she did state that before the war she never would have envisioned they would someday marry. The couple married in Vitka in 1948.[39] Aranka stated that after the war, she and Morris were eager to start a family. Their daughter, Veronika, was born in 1949. Morris found it difficult to secure stable work in Vitka under the communist Hungarian government. He and Aranka moved to Budapest in 1953, where they remained until 1956.[40]

During the chaos of the Hungarian Revolution of 1956, Aranka, Edith, Andrew, and their families fled to Vienna briefly before emigrating to the United States.[41] Their

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[35]Lehner,1998.
[36]Edith Blau and Aranka Furedi, Interview by Helene Sinnreich, *Youngstown Area Jewish Federation Oral History Program* (July 5, 2011).
[37]Furedi,1998.
[38]Youngstown Area Jewish Federation, "Selected Jewish Family and Children's Service Case Files", unpublished, 1938-present.
[39]*Ibid.*
[40]Furedi, 1998.
[41] Youngstown Area Jewish Federation.

grandmother had five brothers in Youngstown, Ohio.[42] Among those five brothers was Joseph Ungar. Ungar was the president of the successful Ungar Bros. Meat Packing Company in Youngstown. He also served as president of the Jewish Federation of Youngstown in 1956. He used his social status and financial means to bring his family members to Youngstown. He worked with Jewish Family Services to facilitate the acceptance of Aranka, Edith, Andrew and their families prior to their arrival in Youngstown in 1956.[43] The status of the Ungar family in Youngstown proved beneficial to Edith, Aranka, and their families. The Ungars provided employment opportunities for their refugee relatives. This arrangement also ensured that Andrew, Aranka, and Edith were able to remain together during resettlement, unlike Pepi W. and Edith B. These circumstances contributed to their remaining in Youngstown, rather than making a home elsewhere.

Aranka and Morris first worked in the Ungar family's meat processing business.[44] By 1957, Morris and Eugene worked in a clothing store, Edith worked for a coil and spring manufacturer, and Andrew worked for a local furniture store.[45] Edith later worked as a seamstress in a clothing factory.[46] Eugene's elderly mother somehow survived the war and accompanied them to Youngstown. Her husband died during the First World War and her sons supported her. She looked after the children while Edith worked.[47] While local Jewish organizations provided many services to newly resettled displaced persons,

[42]Blau and Furedi, 2011.
[43] Youngstown Area Jewish Federation.
[44]Blau and Furedi, 2011.
[45] Youngstown Area Jewish Federation.
[46]Blau, 1998.
[47]Blau and Furedi, 2011.

childcare was generally not included.[48] Most families struggled to live on one income. Edith's ability to work outside the home gave her and Eugene a financial advantage. Aranka struggled with leaving her young daughter while she worked in the Ungar family's meat packing business. She was relieved when her family began operating a fruit stand and she no longer had to leave her child in order to work.[49]

The fruit stand eventually led to the purchase of Hughes Provision Company, a store that sold meats and produce. Aranka and Edith both spoke of this business as belonging to their husbands, but Ohio Secretary of State business records indicate that the Hughes Provision Company belonged to Samuel and Gertrude Ungar, and Warren Grant. Andrew became president of the company in 1981. It is possible that the Ungars invested the majority of the money in the purchase of the business and were protecting their interests, while allowing their refugee family members to run the store as their own.[50] Regardless of the specifics of the business arrangement, Andrew, Morris,Aranka, Eugene, and Edith benefitted from the financial and social support of the Ungars. Morris and Eugene retired in the mid-1980s.[51] Morris died in 1985, followed by Eugene in 2001. Aranka and Edith remained close until Aranka's death in November, 2013.

Betty Friedan's *The Feminine Mystique* described a postwar culture of women who rarely left their roles in the domestic sphere unless it was to accompany their husbands to a social event. In *A Jewish Feminine Mystique? Jewish Women in Postwar America,* Hasia Diner, Shira M. Kohn, and Rachel Kranson argued that the culture Friedan

[48]Burstin, 2016
[49]Furedi, 1998.
[50] State of Ohio, Secretary of State, Business Records https://www5.sos.state.oh.us/ords/f?p=100:1:0::NO:1:P1_TYPE:AGENT [accessed February 15, 2016].

described was not the norm for Jewish women. Most American Jewish women were the descendants of earlier immigrants. They became middle class. They lived in the suburbs and most did not work outside the home. These Jewish women found personal satisfaction as they used their skills and time to benefit their communities.[52]

There were two important differences between American Jewish women and their non-Jewish counterparts that impacted the latter group's lives in the postwar period. First, Jewish women were generally better educated. Second, they had fewer children than women of other ethnic or religious groups. American Jewish women generally believed that the use of contraception was acceptable. Additionally, their roles as mothers did not deter them from civic engagement, but actually encouraged them to engage in philanthropic and activist activity in an effort to create a better future for their children.[53] Newly resettled Jewish refugees benefitted from the philanthropic endeavors of American Jewish women, but found it difficult to relate to them due to language barriers and cultural differences .

Holocaust era refugees were in a much different social position and held values that differed from those of their American counterparts. Most actively tried to have children, rather than prevent pregnancy. Pregnancy and child rearing represented survival and endurance, as well as a return to gendered performance. Some female survivors of the Holocaust, Like Edith B. and Aranka F., worked outside the home due to financial necessity. Some, like Pepi W. and Edith M., did not work outside the home in the

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[51]Blau and Furedi, 2011.

[52] Hasia R. Diner, Shira M. Kohn, and Rachel Kranson, *A Jewish Feminine Mystique? Jewish Women in Postwar America* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 2010), 1-22 http://public.eblib.com/choice/publicfullrecord.aspx?p=847576 [accessed June 10, 2017].

immediate postwar years because it upset their husbands. Families with assets prior to the war lost them during the war years. They rebuilt their financial lives relying on social connections, luck, and perseverance during the postwar years. All four of the previously mentioned women eventually became middle class in the economic sense, but none of them attended college or developed careers that were meaningful to them. In Shoah Foundation interviews, none discussed their own desires to pursue higher education, but expressed pride in the educational and professional successes of their children.

Education had a different meaning for Esther S. than it did for Edith M., Pepi, Edith B., and Aranka. Esther's father encouraged education for all of his children regardless of gender. Before the war, she dreamed of becoming a teacher and loved working with children. Though the Holocaust delayed her pursuit of career goals, Esther eventually became an educator in the United States.[54] Esther S. was born in Rakhiv, Czechoslovakia in 1927, one of nine children. Her father was a tailor who operated a shop which sold custom made clothing and fabric. Esther attended a public school in Rakhiv until 1939 when Hungary annexed the region of Czechoslovakia where she lived. Esther was twelve years old when all Jewish students were banned from the public schools. Her father, who was no longer permitted to run his business, took responsibility for the education of his children. He taught them at home and encouraged all of them to learn a trade or profession.[55]

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[53]*Ibid.*
[54]Esther Shudmak, Interview by Beth Kurtzweig, *Youngstown State University Oral History Program:* Jewish Education in Youngstown Project (May 20, 1980) http://www.maag.ysu.edu/oralhistory/cd2/OH684.pdf [accessed June 10, 2017].
[55]The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, "Oral History with Esther Shudmak", *The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Collections Search* (1995) https://collections.ushmm.org/search/catalog/irn520382 [accessed June 10, 2017].

Esther's family remained in their home until the spring of 1944, when Hungarian authorities evacuated all Jews from Rakhiv and transported them to the Mateszalka ghetto. Esther's family endured the harsh conditions in the Mateszalka ghetto for approximately one month before the Nazis deported them to Auschwitz. Upon arrival at Auschwitz, Esther was separated from her father, but remained with her mother and several sisters. During an outbreak of scarlet fever, the camp doctors placed Esther under quarantine. Shortly after the quarantine ended, Esther and two of her sisters were part of a group transferred to Geislingen labor camp where they made airplane parts and weapons.[56] Esther recalled that the conditions were better in Geislingen than in Auschwitz. Prisoners received slightly more food and had blankets and straw for their bunks. Each day, Esther and the other prisoners marched through the town to the factories where they worked. By the spring of 1945, Esther and her sisters were transferred to Dachau. Shortly after arrival at Dachau, Esther was a part of a group that was loaded into a train for another transport. The United States army stopped this train and provided packages of supplies to the prisoners. The Americans took the S.S. guards off the train and freed the prisoners—many of whom were terrified and physically ill.[57]

After liberation, Esther reunited with surviving siblings. They traveled from country to country and camp to camp seeking a home and trying to rebuild their lives. Esther stated "As much as we were freed from a concentration camp, we were not free from all of the anxieties and all of the problems and all of the difficulties we went

[56] The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum,1995.
[57] Shudmak, 1980.

through."[58] Esther lived in a displaced persons camp in Germany where she began her education again and started a family. She stated, "The general idea was each and every girl and boy would look to get married and to start a new life. That is what happened to me."[59] She met and married Julius S. and their oldest daughter was born in the camp when Esther was eighteen years old. At the camp, she studied Hebrew as she prepared to move to Israel. Life in Israel was not easy for her. Years later she stated she was very unhappy. She took any work that she could find, including agricultural labor, and her newly formed family struggled to survive. She continued to study Hebrew and began studying education. She did not pass the required practical exam and was unable to become a teacher in Israel, but worked in a classroom as an assistant until she was allowed to run her own kindergarten. Esther lived with her husband and daughter in Israel for ten years. She had a second daughter prior to coming to the United States in the spring of 1959.[60] Julius' sister, Molly, resettled in Youngstown with her husband shortly after liberation.[61] This is why Esther and Julius came to live in Youngstown as well. Their relatives helped with the paperwork required for immigration and Julius quickly found work with the Kessler Products Company. He remained there until his retirement in 1980.[62]

Esther balanced the gendered roles of wife and mother with her professional ambitions. She helped her children through the transition from Israel to the United States as they worked to overcome language and cultural differences. Esther's older daughter

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[58] *Ibid.*
[59] *Ibid.*
[60] *Ibid.*
[61] Youngstown Area Jewish Federation.

benefitted from her mother's love of education. She earned degrees from Ohio University, Hunter College, and Columbia University.[63] Esther's younger daughter established a career as an administrative assistant and works for a Jewish congregation in Northeast Ohio. Esther continued to pursue a teaching career in Youngstown and worked teaching Hebrew and Sunday school.[64] She began speaking publicly about her Holocaust experience in the 1970s and continued as late as 2013.[65] Esther's story is an example of perseverance. After a lengthy period of struggle, she achieved her career goals and watched her daughters do the same. Though they married quickly, and under tremendous stress, Esther and Julius remained together until his death in 1992.[66] In *Against All Odds*, William B. Helmreich states that rates of marriage of Holocaust survivors were higher than that of American Jews and that not only were they more likely to marry, but they were less likely to divorce.[67] This appears to be the case among the Youngstown area Holocaust survivors as well. In each of the cases detailed in this chapter, the women married prior to emigration. Though each spoke of times where their marriages were strained, none ended in divorce.

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[62] "Julius Shudmak", obituary, *The Vindicator*, June 12, 1992: B5.
[63]Association of Israel's Decorative Arts, *AIDA.org* http://www.aidaarts.org/artist/Leah-Sheves [accessed May 25, 2017].
[64]Shudmak, 1980.
[65] The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum,1995 https://collections.ushmm.org/search /catalog/irn520382 [accessed March 26, 2017]; Dave Stuckey. "Guest Speaker Mrs. Esther Shudmak", *OhevTzedekShaarei Torah* (April 20, 2013) http://www.ohevtzedek.org/2013/04/guest-speaker-mrs-esther-shudmak/ [accessed May 25, 2017].
[66] "Julius Shudmak", obituary, *The Vindicator*, June 12, 1992: B5.
[67] William B. Helmreich, *Against All Odds: Holocaust Survivors and the Successful Lives they made in America* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1992), 120-126.

CHAPTER FOUR

In order for women to return to their gendered roles as mothers and homemakers, men had to return to or establish their roles as providers during the immediate postwar years.[1] Some men were already engaged in careers or businesses in Europe when the Nazis forcibly removed them from their positions. This often meant a complete change of profession. Younger men faced different challenges. War interrupted their progress in educational pursuits and vocational training. This meant that they were professionally lagging behind their American peers. Men of all ages pursued vocational training in DP camps during the postwar years while waiting to establish a permanent home. During the war, work was intertwined with survival. Jews who possessed a talent that was valuable to their oppressors had an increased likelihood of survival. They recognized that it was important to remain flexible and able to meet the needs of the Holocaust economy.[2] This adaptability was equally important to postwar success.

In order to be approved for immigration to the United States, refugees were required to make it reasonably clear that they would be able to find work and become self-sufficient. This meant developing a marketable skill that was in demand in the United States, or securing a guarantee of employment or financial support from someone living there. In some cases, men utilized the skills they had learned under forced labor conditions during the war. Some embellished their skill sets and hoped to be successful

[1]Judy TydorBaumel-Schwartz, "The Identity of Women in the Sher'eritHapletah: Personal and Gendered Identity as Determinants in Rehabilitation, Immigration, and Resettlement" In *Holocaust Survivors: Resettlement, Memories, Identities*, by Francoise S. Ouzan, Judy TydorBaumel-Schwartz, Dalia Ofer (New York: Berghahn Books, 2012), 31.

learning on the job.[3] In other cases, they were sponsored by relatives in the United States. Those with established American friends and family generally found work more quickly than those who arrived in the United States on corporate affidavits.[4] In many cases their American connections used their own social networks or business assets to secure work for their struggling relatives.

Finding suitable work was vital to Holocaust survivors in the process of rebuilding their lives in the United States. It was especially vital to men who already had families to provide for, as well as those who wished to start families. Margarete Meyers Feinstein examined the theme of parenthood in Holocaust survivor narratives in a 2007 article. She explained that pre-war European Jewish couples worked together to provide for the entirety of the family's needs. For men, their chief role was to establish the family's future and protect them from harmful outside circumstances. This theme runs throughout the stories of Joseph M., Henry K., Martin M., Bernard G., and Leonard B. During the early days of Nazi persecution, men were stripped of their livelihoods and forced into idleness. Those who could secure work in the ghetto had a better chance of survival. Feinstein argues that loss of social and economic status threatened a father's authority within a family.[5] For survivors of the Holocaust, being an effective provider was not only essential for economic survival, but for reclaiming or establishing paternal authority.

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[2] William B. Helmreich, *Against All Odds:Holocaust Survivors and the Successful Lives They Made in America* (New York: Simon and Schuster,1992) 86-96.
[3]Helmreich, 86-96.
[4]Helmreich, 87.
[5]Margarete Meyers Feinstein, "Absent Fathers,Present Mothers: Images of Parenthood In Holocaust Survivor Narratives," *Nashim: A Journal of Jewish Women's Studies and Gender Issues,* no. 13 (2007): 161-162.

Joseph M. was born in Chust, Czechoslovakia in 1912. He completed the United States equivalent of a high school education before marrying Edith in 1940 at the age of 28. The couple had three children and Joseph supported his family by running a notion and pen repair shop in Chust. In 1944, Joseph was deported to Auschwitz and held there until liberation in 1945. Edith escaped to Hungary. The couple's three children did not survive Nazi persecution.[6] Joseph and Edith were reunited after the war and lived in DP camps in Austria and Germany. He worked as a bookkeeper for the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration and the JDC. Edith gave birth to a daughter, Rachel, while living in Austria in 1946. She became pregnant with another child prior to the couple's arrival in Youngstown, Ohio in 1948.[7]

Joseph's parents and grandparents did not survive the war. Two surviving siblings lived in Siberia and Palestine. Joseph's uncle, Beni, lived in New York, but was unable or unwilling to offer assistance in bringing Joseph and his family to the United States. Joseph called upon a distant relative, Max S., for help, in 1947.[8] He and Max had not met prior to the family's arrival in Youngstown. Edith's father was Max's wife's step brother. Max was the owner of the M&E Army Store. He, his wife, and their two children, lived in a large, six-bedroom home on the city's north side. Though he was doing well professionally, he claimed he was financially over extended with obligations to closer relatives. He had a brother still in Europe who he was trying to bring to the United States,

[6]Youngstown Area Jewish Federation. "Selected Jewish Family and Children's Service Case Files. " unpublished, 1938-present.
[7]*Ibid.*
[8]*Ibid.*

as well as a nephew attending a Yeshiva in New York. Max was paying $150 per month to support his nephew's education.[9]

Joseph, Edith, and Rachel were approved for emigration to the United States under a corporate affidavit. The JDC contacted Max and requested that he pay the family's travel expenses. He agreed, but made no further offers of help, and assumed his obligation ended there. He claimed that he did not know if Joseph's family was coming to Youngstown or staying in New York. [10]Joseph and his family arrived in New York January 29, 1948. One day later, they arrived in Youngstown. They stayed in a single room in Max's home. Max helped Joseph to find work at the Youngstown Sheet and Tube Company. Within less than two weeks Joseph was employed as a laborer for $1.09 per hour. Though this was more than double the minimum wage,[11] he was not guaranteed steady work. Jewish Federation case notes indicate that at the time Joseph sought assistance with housing and clothing, the mill was closed due to a shortage of gas.[12] Despite that fact that Max's home had six bedrooms and could have accommodated both families, Joseph was anxious to regain his independence and resume his role as provider. His Youngtown caseworker, Stanley Engel, noted that Joseph considered his family's need for housing top priority and felt he could no longer remain in Max's home. Joseph eventually moved his family to Brooklyn, New York,[13] and later to Monsey, New

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[9] *Ibid.*
[10] *Ibid.*
[11] United States Census Bureau, *Census of Population, 1950, Volume II, Part 35, Characteristics of the Population: Ohio*, *Table 32,* (United States Government Printing Office: Washington, 1952) https://www. census. gov/prod/www/decennial. html (Accessed April 4, 2017).
[12] Youngstown Area Jewish Federation.
[13] "Edith Mann in U. S. Public Records Index, 1950-1993, Volume 1", n.d., (http://ancestry. com) [accessed October 18, 2016].

York.[14] Brooklyn provided access to a larger Jewish community than that of Youngstown, as well as a larger concentration of Holocaust survivors. Monsey has historically been the home to a closely-knit, orthodox Jewish community in upstate New York.[15] In addition to housing and employment, Joseph was also searching for community and a sense of belonging.

Though Joseph and Edith did not remain in Youngstown permanently, they did leave an impression. Chaim, the son of Holocaust survivor Karl H. , recalled that Joseph and Edith's influence encouraged him to make the decision to become a rabbi. [16] Karl H. was born in Wadowice, Poland in 1919. He came from a large, working class family. His father was a vegetable peddler and Karl was one of eight children. His formal education ended in the seventh grade when he left school and began training as a shoemaker just prior to the war. When Germany invaded Poland, Karl fled to the Soviet Union to escape persecution. He worked as a laborer in various locations in Russia and the Ukraine. Eventually, he joined a Polish army unit which was formed in Moscow and liberated Lublin and Majdanek. He was hospitalized on the German border, and was recovering, while the rest of his company fought in the battle of Berlin. After the war, Karl met Laura while visiting his brother, Sam, who was living in a DP camp. Karl and

[14]"Rockland County, New York County Clerk Records",n.d., (https://cotthosting. com/NYRocklandExternal/User/Login. aspx?ReturnUrl=%2fNYRocklandExternal%2f) [accessed February 7, 2017].
[15] Cheryl Platzman Weinstock, "If You're Thinking of Living in Monsey; Low Inventory, Lots of Kugel, Some Deer," February 10, 2002, (http://www. nytimes. com/2002/02/10/realestate/if-you-re-thinking-of-living-in-monsey-low-inventory-lots-of-kugel-some-deer. html) [accessed July 18, 2016].
[16] Donald H. Harrison, "I-8 Jewish Travel: Young Israel of San Diego," October 1, 2015, (http://www. sdjewishworld. com/2015/10/01/i-8-jewish-travel-young-israel-of-san-diego/) [accessed July 18, 2016].

Laura married six months later and lived in Hungary.[17] Chaim was born shortly before Karl and Laura immigrated to the United States in 1949. The address listed on their immigration paperwork is 646 Bryson St. This was the former address of the Jewish Federation in Youngstown and indicates that Karl and Laura were sponsored by the agency rather than by family members.[18]

Chaim was raised in a conservative religious congregation which included several orthodox members and an orthodox cantor. His mother was from a Chassidic background and encouraged him to become more observant. Chaim attended secular schools and participated in athletic programs. He was torn between two worlds. When an injury kept him from attending school with his peers, neighbors Joseph and Edith invited him to celebrate Shabbat with them. Under their influence, Chaim became more observant. Soon he began studying at Yeshiva University in New York City. Later he studied in Jerusalem, leading to a career as an educator and pulpit rabbi.[19] Joseph M. not only worked to ensure the future of his own family, he influenced the future of others. The relationship between the two families reflects the spirit of a small, but closely-knit community of Holocaust survivors in Youngstown.

Leonard B. and his wife, Rachel, were married in Paris, France in 1949. Their first child, Regine, was born in March 1951, also in Paris.[20] Available source material does not include many details of their wartime experiences, but Leonard and Rachel

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[17]Saul S. Friedman, *Amcha: An Oral Testament of the Holocaust* (Washington D.C., University Press of America, 1979), 391-425.
[18] Karl Hollaender in New York Passenger Lists 1820-1957, (http:ancestrylibrary. com) [accessed February 10, 2016).
[19]Harrison, 2016.

experienced persecution during the war due to their status as Eastern European Jews. Leonard was born in Russia in 1919 and Rachel was born in Poland in 1928. The family lived in Paris until 1952.[21] Their journey to Youngstown, Ohio began when Leonard and Rachel contacted relatives in the United States. To be approved for immigration to the United States, the family needed to prove that it would not become a financial burden to the community. Leonard had two cousins living in Youngstown and an uncle living in San Diego, California. Rachel had an uncle living in New York City. It was Leonard's cousin, Marvin P., of Youngstown, who agreed to sponsor the family so that they could resettle in the United States.[22] Marvin P. first contacted Jewish Family and Children's Service of Youngstown in May 1951. He requested help in bringing his cousin's family to the United States. Case notes indicate that Marvin was initially eager to help his cousin's family in any way possible. Later case notes indicate that he was slow to respond to the agency's requests for additional information after his initial meeting with Jewish Family and Children's Service. [23]

Marvin was part owner of a successful neon sign business in Youngstown. This is evident in the affidavit of support he provided to facilitate the immigration of the B. family. In addition, he had a family of his own, consisting of a wife and two children. His brother, William, lived in Youngstown as well, and is mentioned in the B. family's Jewish Family and Children's Service case file.[24] It is unclear why Marvin took several

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[20] United States Department of Justice Immigration and Naturalization Services. "California Federal Naturalization Records, 1843-1999. " *Ancestry. com.* July 9, 1957. (http://interactive. ancestry. com)[accessed October 28, 2016].
[21] Youngstown Area Jewish Federation
[22] *Ibid.*
[23] *Ibid.*
[24] *Ibid.*

months to respond to the agency's request for additional information. He may have initially been under the impression that all that was required of him was a sponsorship in name only. It is possible that when the agency began requesting personal financial information and notarized legal documents, he grew hesitant, as the reality of the scope of his commitment became obvious. By assuming financial responsibility for the B. family, he risked losing the assets of his own family should something go wrong.

Marvin was an immigrant as well. His family emigrated to the United States from Poland in 1930. His father owned a sign business and Marvin and his brother, William, were employed there when they became old enough to work.[25] Both brothers served in the military during the Second World War.[26] Their involvement in the war effort, combined with their cultural heritage as Jewish immigrants, likely contributed to their desire to help their refugee cousins. On arrival in Youngstown in May 1952, the B. family stayed in Marvin and William's parents' house. Leonard worked in the family sign business. Their caseworker encouraged Leonard and Rachel to begin English language classes as quickly as possible. [27]

The family did not stay in Youngstown permanently. Leonard filed a petition for naturalization in California in 1957. The document lists Leonard's occupation as electrician and mentions a second child, born in San Diego in 1956.[28] Leonard worked as an electrician for several years before running his own neon sign business in San Diego.

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[25] Department of Commerce Bureau of the Census, 1920-1940.
[26] United States Department of Veterans Affairs. "United States Department of Veterans Affairs, BIRLS Death File, 1850-2010. " *Ancestry. com.* May 9, 2006, (http://www. ancestry. com)[accessed December 10, 2016].
[27] Youngstown Area Jewish Federation
[28] United States Department of Justice Immigration and Naturalization Services

[29]Though the B. family did not stay in Youngstown long, the assistance Leonard received from the family members who facilitated his family's immigration laid the foundation for the B. family's successful assimilation. The skills he learned while working in his host family's neon sign business led to a future as an electrician and business owner. This career supported his family for years to come.

Henry K. was born in Lodz, Poland in 1930. Before the war, Henry's family was financially well off. His family employed a maid, and they spent summers in a country home. His father, Abraham, was a tailor and owned a large apartment building in Lodz. Henry's mother helped his father run his business. Henry remembered that his home was often filled with friends and family for social gatherings until their lives were disrupted by war.[30]

When Henry was nine years old, Germany invaded Poland and Nazi forces occupied Lodz. Henry, his parents, and older brother, Milton, left Lodz and traveled to Suchedniow, Poland to avoid becoming trapped in the Lodz ghetto. From 1940 to 1942, his father continued to work as a tailor. In 1942, the family volunteered to work at the munitions factory in Scarjisco, with the hope that they would be spared from the death camps. Henry's mother was sent to Treblinka where she was murdered. Henry, Milton, and Abraham worked in the Scarjisco factory until 1944. Henry recalled that sometimes gentile coworkers shared their food with Jewish forced laborers. In 1943, Henry suffered from typhus. He knew that if he appeared too ill to work, he would be killed. He hid in

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[29] Ancestry.com, "U.S. City Directories, 1822-1995," 1973. <http://ancestry. com> (November 12, 2016).
[30] Henry Kinast, interview by Lenore Weinstein, *The Holocaust Documentation and Education Center, Inc.* 2003.

the factory for four days until he could appear well enough to return to work. In the autumn of 1944, Skarzysko was liquidated by Nazi forces and Henry, his older brother, and his father were sent to a labor camp in Czestochowa. By January 1945, Nazi forces sent prisoners from Henry's camp to Buchenwald, where Henry was separated from his father and brother and placed in the children's camp, despite the fact that he had been working as an adult for several years. In April 1945, the German guards began to evacuate Buchenwald. Henry avoided being forced into the death march. Eventually, the U.S. Army liberated Buchenwald and Henry was reunited with his father and brother. They lived together in the displaced persons camp, Bergen-Belsen, until Henry's father became sick and was transferred to Sweden for medical treatment. Henry and Milton illegally traveled to Sweden to join him. Henry worked in a machine shop there and married his first wife, Inga. The couple welcomed a daughter before emigrating to the United States in 1948.[31]

Henry did not initially settle in Youngstown. He lived in New York and Pittsburgh but decided to move to Youngstown after visiting a Jewish friend who lived there. Inga was pregnant at the time. He found work in an aluminum plant that also employed other survivors. He recalled that he was able to work overtime, enabling him to buy a home and pay it off during the two years that he held that job. [32] Henry's ambition did not stop there. While he was obviously not experiencing the level of financial hardship that other refugees experienced during the same time period, he took the responsibility of providing a future for his family very seriously. In the late 1950s he

[31] Henry Kinast, Interview by Helene Sinnreich, *Youngstown Area Jewish Federation Oral History Program* (August 9, 2011).

started an industrial company with a partner. Later he and the partner parted ways and Henry established his own business. That business ensured his family's financial security. [33]

Bernard G. was born in Palanok, Czechoslovakia in 1922. His father, Hugo, was a tailor, and employed several other members of the Palanok Jewish community in his business. He made a comfortable living, but with six children to care for, the Gross family's small home was often crowded. Bernard's mother, Ethel, spent her time caring for her home, her children, and her husband's employees.[34] Many of the Jews of Palanok attended religious services three miles away in Munkacs. Bernard's father was very conservative, and his rabbi discouraged the congregation from leaving Europe and settling in Palestine. This rabbi died in 1937.

In 1938, the Hungarians entered Czechoslovakia. Jews were forced to make and wear yellow arm bands, the orthodox men were forced to shave their beards, and Jewish food rations were considerably smaller than the rations provided to others. In January 1939, Jewish men could no longer operate their businesses and those between the ages of twenty and fifty were taken to forced labor camps. Bernard's father and his brother, Phillip, were among those sent to a labor camp. His brother, Ben, worked in a mine in Silesia, sent some money home to his family. The remaining members of the Gross family made a small living sewing in exchange for food.[35]

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[32]Kinast, 2003. .
[33]Kinast, 2011.
[34]Bernard Gross, interview by Chaim Rosov, *USC Shoah Foundation Visual History Archive*, August 8, 1995, (https://digital. maag. ysu. edu:8443/xmlui/handle/1989/11807) [accessed April 3, 2017].
[35]*Ibid.*

By 1940, Jews were forced to give up their homes. In 1941, Bernard was sent to the first in a series of labor camps. By April 1945, Bernard was put into a train he suspected was heading to Auschwitz, where he would likely be killed. He saw German officers change into civilian clothing and run away from the train. Bernard, and a few other boys from Palanok, took this opportunity to escape the train, hiding in the snow. They made their way to a farm where the owner allowed them to hide in a barn, and gavethem eggs, bread, and milk. Soon, Bernard made the three week journey back to Palanok where he was reunited with his brother, Phillip. They found their town and home overrun by Russian soldiers. Bernard and Phillip soon joined Ben and Roslyn in Prague. Miraculously, all of Bernard's siblings survived the war. While living in Prague, Bernard met Ruth, who was also a survivor of the Holocaust. The couple was married in 1946. Bernard worked as a tailor and was able to secure a three room house in Prague where he and Ruth made their first home together.[36]

In 1949, the Gross family emigrated to the United States when their American uncles agreed to sponsor them. They settled in Ellwood City, Pennsylvania, where Bernard and Ruth attempted to earn a living as farmers while Bernard's brothers began working in the real estate development business. In 1955, Bernard, Ruth, and their three children moved to Youngstown, where Bernard worked in real estate development with his brothers.[37] The company his brothers founded was quite successful and had offices in sixteen states. [38]Ruth owned a fabric store in Niles, Ohio. She kept Jewish tradition by

[36]*Ibid.*
[37]*Ibid.*
[38] Sam Gross Obituary, *Legacy. com,* October 7, 2004, (http://www. legacy. com/obituaries/sptimes/obituary. aspx?n=samgross&pid=2682780) [accessed July 4, 2016].

being closed on the Sabbath, but open on Sundays. Bernard and Ruth raised their children in the Mahoning Valley. They lived in Youngstown until 1973.[39]

Bernard's story reflects the strength of family. Just as his family worked together during the early war years to ensure economic survival, they worked together during the postwar years. When Bernard's agricultural endeavors were unsuccessful, he began working in the new family business of real estate development. He relied on his siblings to help him provide for his wife and children until he found his own way.

Friedrich H. was born in Chemnitz, Germany in 1896.[40] He worked in the taxation office in Chemnitz and was a respected member of his profession. In 1933, Friedrich was required to give up his job under the law for the restoration of the professional civil service. This law required that all Jewish, or otherwise non-Aryan, civil servants be removed from their positions.[41] His employer provided him with a letter of reference and Friedrich found work as a taxation assistant with a private firm. In 1935, Friedrich left this job to marry Philippine and moved away from Chemnitz to Breslau. Friedrich and Philippine managed to avoid being arrested and deported to a concentration camp and they made arrangements to leave Germany. Friedrich attempted to secure work with a cousin in South Africa, but was unsuccessful. Instead, he and Philippine were granted permission to emigrate to Shanghai, China. Friedrich taught at the University of Shanghai until the Japanese took control of China. After the war, he and Philippine

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[39] Obituary: Ruth "Rifka" Weiss Gross, *Atlanta Jewish Times,* September 16, 2015, (http://atlantajewishtimes. timesofisrael. com/obituary-ruth-rifka-weiss/) [accessed July 4, 2016].
[40] Youngstown Area Jewish Federation
[41] German History in Documents and Images, "Law for the Restoration of the Professional Civil Service (April 7, 1933)," n. d. , (http://germanhistorydocs. ghi-dc. org/sub_document. cfm?document_id=1520) [accessed April 28, 2017].

remained in Shanghai and Friedrich returned to teaching.[42] In 1948, the United Service for New Americans sponsored the Hoexter's immigration to America. Though he had a cousin in New York, Friedrich settled in Youngstown. He was hired as a bookkeeper by the Renner Brewing Company. Friedrich fell ill with cancer and died in Youngstown in 1962. He was survived by his wife. The couple had no children.[43]

Feinstein found that some male survivors of the Holocaust, particularly those whose own fathers had been unable to protect them, delayed or avoided having children of their own.[44] Feinstein studied written memoirs and oral history interviews in her examination of images of parenthood in the narratives of Holocaust survivors. Friedrich left no such memoir or interview. The fact that the couple had no children could be attributed to the fact that they were older than previously mentioned survivors of the Holocaust. They did not marry until Friedrich was thirty-nine years old and Philippine was forty-five years old. They spent the early years of their marriage responding to Nazi persecution. By the time they reached safety and stability in the United States, the window of opportunity to have children had likely passed.

Bernard H. was born in Lodz, Poland in 1925.[45] Before the war, he lived with his parents, younger brother, and older sister.[46] His father was a tailor and his mother was a seamstress.[47] In 1940, Nazi forces required Bernard and his family to leave their

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[42] Aubrey Pomerance, "Reference letter issued by the Chemnitz-Ost Taxation Office to Friedrich Wilhelm Hoxter," n. d. , <http://www. jmberlin. de/1933/en/10_30_reference-letter-issued-by-the-chemnitz-ost-taxation-office-to-friedrich-wilhelm-hoxter. php> (April 28, 2017).
[43] Youngstown Area Jewish Federation
[44] Feinstein, 163.
[45] "Bernard Hochman", obituary, *The Vindicator*, October 7, 1993: B8.
[46] Youngstown Area Jewish Federation
[47] Youngstown Area Jewish Federation

apartment and move into the Lodz ghetto. Bernard made himself valuable to the Nazis as a laborer. He made saddles until September of 1944, when he was imprisoned in Auschwitz where he spent one month cleaning and piling bricks. He was later transferred to Dachau, Landshut, and Muhldorf.[48] He arrived in Youngstown in 1949. He worked in the Penner Furniture Store, and later in the personnel office of the Youngstown Sheet and Tube Company. Bernard had no blood relatives in the Youngstown area and never married[49]. Notes in Bernard's Jewish Family Services case file indicate that he suffered from chronic depression and anxiety, which manifested in physical ailments. It is reasonable to believe that Bernard's emotional issues were a direct result of his wartime experience and were instrumental in his decision to remain a bachelor and childless.

During the postwar years, male Holocaust survivors established or re-invented their roles as men. The war left many of these men fatherless. Young men substituted childhood memories for fatherly advice as they dealt with career issues and questions related to marriage and fatherhood. When they sought the help of relief programs for refugees, they prioritized needs related to employment and housing above all others. Most succeeded as employees, husbands, and fathers. Some, such as Henry K., excelled. Others knew their limitations as spouses and fathers and chose not to start or expand families after the war.

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[48] *Ibid.*

[49] "Bernard Hochman", obituary, *The Vindicator*, October 7, 1993: B8.

CONCLUSION

Beginning in 1933, the Nazi party attempted to rid Germany of Jews through the use of physical, psychological, and economic persecution so severe that Jews would voluntarily leave the country. German Jews began leaving their homes in an attempt to shield themselves and their families from the effects of Adolf Hitler's policies as well as the anti-Semitic sentiments of many of their fellow Germans. Restrictive United States immigration policies kept many German Jews from emigrating to America during this time. The American newspapers did report widely on the news of violence against Eastern European Jews in the late 1930s, but Americans were largely unsupportive of admitting European Jewish refugees to the United States. Though the American people were not subjected to violent persecution, they did experience financial hardship due to the economic circumstances of the Great Depression. Many feared that the presence of refugees would mean increased competition for jobs and a drain on resources reserved for emerging social safety net programs. This was one of the major factors that shaped American response to the refugee crisis prior to the United States' entrance into the Second World War.

The extent and nature of economic hardship in Youngstown during the Great Depression is not included in the scope of this thesis, but Youngstown suffered an economic downturn similar to that of other industrial cities. These economic factors did not discourage the formation of a Jewish federation that relied heavily on funds raised by members of the community. Jewish residents of Youngstown gave within their means and several helped German Jews to resettle in the Youngstown area.

During the postwar years, the United States returned to economic prosperity, and continued to learn of the horrific experiences of European Jews who had been imprisoned in Nazi concentration camps. The United States admitted an increasing number of Holocaust survivors to the United States during the postwar years. The Jewish Federation of Youngstown facilitated the resettlement of European Jewish Refugees in the Mahoning Valley. The Federation served as a part of larger network of local Jewish organizations with varied capacities throughout the country. Youngstown's Jewish federation received access to larger systems of resources through agencies such as HIAS and USNA, but relied heavily on the community as well. Members of the community continued to make financial donations for programming to benefit displaced persons. Local businesses, particularly Jewish-owned businesses, supported refugees by providing them with employment. In addition, members of the Youngstown community volunteered their time and opened their homes to postwar refugees. Despite good intentions, the resettlement process was difficult for all involved. The limited staff of the Jewish Federation navigated a complicated web of paperwork while balancing their official duties with their efforts to understand and show compassion for the refugees they were responsible for helping. Members of the community often found it was more difficult than they expected to share their homes with strangers. The refugees attempted to begin lives in a foreign place that did not fully understand how to best help them succeed.

Approximately one hundred and eighty Jews, who were displaced by the actions of the Nazi regime, touched Youngstown in the twentieth century. Some stayed for a very short time and rebuilt their lives in other places in the United States. Some followed

patterns similar to native residents of Youngstown. They stayed until economic conditions compelled them to leave the area. Others found remarkable success in Youngstown. They built businesses that employed others, established relationships within the community, and became another layer in the history of an area shaped by the cultures and experiences of the immigrants who came to call Youngstown home.

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